



The Gaff Line

January 2011

Behind the Wheel

by Bob Woodard JR, Club President

It is with much excitement and enthusiasm that we have rolled into 2011.

With 2011 comes another special anniversary for The Marlin Club. The club formed in 1931 will be celebrating our 80th anniversary this year. We will be making special T-Shirts and Hats that should be available by March here at the clubhouse. I also encourage all members to reach out to any past members they may know and try to get them re-involved in the Club. The annual awards dinner on Feb. 12th at the Bali Hai so save the date. It will be a reunion of sorts and all members past and present are invited to join in.

With the Holidays past and the new year upon us we move forward to a new and hopefully more productive fishing season. So far the winter has not turned out to be the typical dry La Nina winter that was forecast. In fact it has been wet and rainy a more typical winter. The one thing I know for sure is these forecasts of currents and weather that change ever so frequently, are just that (forecasts) or simple guesses based on unpredictable reality. With that said maybe we can all join together and hope for warm, blue water.

The Holiday Party was amazing, from the excellent Music of the "Clone Pony's" to the Great Food and the Hot Rod on Display! The turnout was huge around 100 people showed up to join in the celebration. It was great also to see many of our major sponsors show up and talk with members. The Harbor Police brought a boat by and it was fun to be able to talk to the officers about their new boats and other questions we all had. Officers you always welcome at our Club!

Big Thanks to the Bingham Family for their help in organizing the event. Lexi Bingham and company did a great job with the decorations and lights. Mike Bingham put together a big raffle in memory of his late father Jim Bingham. The raffle had some very valuable sports memorabilia, THANKS MIKE!

Member Greg Hord was on site helping all afternoon late into the night. To the numerous other volunteers including the day after clean-up crew Thank You All!

We have many projects and ideas for the upcoming year. The monthly membership meetings / seminars will continue. When you see these seminar speakers around thank them for donating their time and knowledge to our club members. We hope to move forward with a bay bass tournament in February or March.

We will be starting on dock repairs immediately and need volunteers so please contact me directly if you can help physically or financially.

By the next newsletter we will have a new board and a new president. It has been a pleasure to serve once again and I believe there were many positive changes at the club throughout the year.

Bob Woodard JR.

Big Budget Dream Chasing

Gary Graham

Private airplanes in Baja have become less and less common over the years, except at major airports like Cabo, La Paz and Loreto. Gone are the days of tail draggers landing on an obscure beach with their passengers hauling out their tents and inflatables and setting up camp for a few days. You can imagine my surprise recently when a private aircraft with a 40,000 lb. payload showed up in a remote camp half-way down the Baja peninsula.

I had begun one of my frequent trips to Baja that morning, crossing the line just at sunup and hurrying through Tijuana. I was soon on the toll road with the cruise control engaged tooling south. Magdalena Bay was my final destination, but I looked forward to an overnight stop in Bahia Asunción the first night. The trip was uneventful and by late afternoon I was headed out west to Bahia Asunción.

Upon my arrival, I was met by Juan and Shari Bondi, owners of a local B and B and fishing operation. The Bondi's are great hosts and over a fish taco dinner, they brought me up-to-date on the many changes in the area.

Early the following morning, I continued my trip down the dirt road, hugging the coast all the way to Abreojos. Passing through Hipolito, La Bocana and on to Abreojos, the Roadtrek handled the washboard road without a snag.

Plenty of photo stops later, by 3:00 p.m, I was past Abreojos, with plans to spend the night in Mulege at the Hotel Cuesta Real and RV Park which offers reliable Wi-Fi connection. Although I had ample time to make it there before dark, I decided to turn around and stay at the Estero Coyote in Campo Rene. A section of hard-packed road leading into Campo Rene doubles as a landing strip and allows easy access to the RV Park and its small cabins.

I will have to admit that I was feeling pretty smug as I parked my Roadtrek at Campo Rene's. I was extremely pleased with my self-contained, one-ton van with all its electronic gadgetry, including GPS, Satellite Radio, (imagine up-to-date sports and news on remote locations in Baja), and it's creature comforts, a flat panel TV, air conditioning, hot and cold running water, and even a refrigerator and microwave.

But, though I have had my share of toys over the years, I have learned there are always others with bigger and better toys. And this was the case that evening.

By the time the sun finished its plunge into the Pacific, the Roadtrek was hooked up. As I was settling in for the night, I heard a loud roar and a huge twin engine plane flew over the park just above the rooftops of the cabins. It circled and came in for a landing.

As the plane slowed at the far end of the dirt strip, the two-stories-tall tail section could barely be seen as the dark settled in. Slowly turning, the plane taxied toward the park. I could hardly *believe my eyes* as it turned into the park. Spinning around, it stopped.

Silence suddenly returned and the plane's flood lights illuminated the parking area. The cargo door flew open and seven eerie shadows tumbled out onto the dirt lot into the light.

As I walked toward the plane, I could clearly see in large letters "Billabong" emblazoned on the fuselage of the aircraft. Closer still, I could make out 9 people, several of whom were in an animated discussion with the pilot on how to hang their wet suits from the wing to dry.

I struck up a conversation with one of the two photographers unloading his camera gear. He volunteered that they had left Palomar Airport near Oceanside that morning and flew down in search of big surf. First they had landed at Scorpion Bay finding poor visibility and a crowd of surfers. Leaving there, they hit a few of their “secret spots” before coming to Campo Rene.

“Billabong Clipper” is a vintage G-111 Grumman Albatross. It combines a 50-year-old military seaplane with the latest in high-tech gear and the world's best surfers in a unique expeditionary approach to seeking out the most remote wave-riding destinations on the planet. The Grumman G-111 *“Albatross”* amphibian is 62 feet long. It features a 96 foot wingspan and a range of over 2500 miles. In its current configuration, it seats up to 13, and is equipped with a 15-foot Zodiac with Honda outboard, 2 jet skis and a rack for dozens of surfboards and surf equipment.

Encountering the *“Billabong Clipper”* served to kindle my imagination. As I watched them fly out early the next morning, I fantasized having a similar toy to ferry me to the next Baja “hot bite” .



Captions;

“BILLABONG CLIPPER” A vintage G-111 Grumman Albatross combining a 50-year-old military seaplane with the latest in high-tech gear also serves as a clothesline for wet suits.

Words of Wisdom

Somebody just back of you while you are fishing is as bad as someone looking over your shoulder while you write a letter to your girl.

~Ernest Hemingway

DATES TO REMEMBER for 2011

Awards/ Trophy Dinner	February, 2011
General Membership Meeting	April , 2011
Club Clean Up Days	April , 2011
Open House/Day at the Docks	April, 2011
Spring Shootout*	May, 2011
Sundowner	May, 2011
Don Blackman Memorial Halibut Derby*	June, 2011
Presidents' Tournament	August, 2011
Juniors' Tournament	August, 2011
Small Boat Tournament*	September, 2011
Labor Day Tournament	September, 2011
BBQ – 5pm	September, 2011
ILTT Tournament	September, 2011
Dinner Awards Banquet	September, 2011
Holiday Party 6pm	December, 2011

*Open to the public



THE MARLIN CLUB OF SAN DIEGO
2445 SHELTER ISLAND DRIVE
SAN DIEGO, CA 92106

