

From Cradle to Berth

*The Completion Of A New Yacht—
We Follow Delivery, Outfitting, And Commissioning
Of The Fleming 55.*

*by Bill Parlatore
photography by John Bildahl and the author*

Not all of us get a chance to purchase a brand new yacht, but for those who do—it is a truly incredible experience. A large cruising motorboat or trawler is something to behold—especially if it is your own!

But for even these owners, rarely is there an opportunity to understand all that happens when they take delivery of their new boat.

Some of us believe that in the total scheme of things, the broker or dealer is just a middleman in the process of buying a new boat—someone who takes our money and coordinates the details of the purchase with the factory or yard, and is responsible for filling out the required paperwork. We pay them big bucks and they make phone calls. We see these brokers when we buy the

boat, and then again when we take delivery—but they're not much involved the rest of the time.

In some cases, this may be a true scenario—but for successful and professional dealers, it isn't even close to reality. A good broker works very, very hard to make sure you are satisfied with your



Mick Shove tightens up 5-bladed delivery props. The boat will be fitted with 4-bladed props back at the Burr Yard.



Hull 58 awaits us, covered and resting on MAFI cradle.

new boat—and he or she goes quite a distance to make that happen. Acting as representative for both owner and boat builder, the broker is an integral part of the new boat process. In some cases, these guys and gals help us in spite of ourselves—urging us into making decisions that they know are better for us—based on their considerable industry and boating experience.

We recently had the opportunity to follow a new motorboat being delivered from the Far East, and to watch it go through the paces in preparation for delivery to its new owners.

The boat, the beautiful Fleming 55, is a paragon of modern boat design and attention to detail. Appointed in a traditional yacht manner with teak decks and trim, the Fleming is nonetheless a thoroughly modern boat using the latest technology. The result is a very capable cruising motorboat with all around ability. The Fleming is a great coastal cruising boat, but several have successfully ventured across oceans.

The dealer involved in this story is Burr Yacht Sales, the U.S. East Coast distributor of the Fleming—and they are responsible for 80% of the sales and customer support for Fleming customers worldwide. A longtime Bertram dealer, Burr Yachts continues to work closely with Tony Fleming, the man behind the Fleming 55, to evolve design and construction details in the 8–10 yachts that are built each year.

As you'll see, there is a good deal more involved in the process than you might imagine—a lot more. And although our experience may reflect uniquely to the Fleming 55 and Burr Yacht Sales, much of this can be applied to other boat builder/dealer relationships. The point of this feature is to understand what happens between building a boat and owner acquisition. If you understand what is involved, you'll better appreciate a quality dealer—and how he or she makes sure you are a satisfied customer with a quality boat. He earns every penny...

Delivery

It all started early morning at the Dundalk Marine Terminal at the Port of Baltimore. Located on the Patapsco River off the Chesapeake Bay, this is a major shipping port, and handles all types of cargo—from imported automobiles to overseas export.

The Fleming 55 (hull number 58) was delivered here the night before and sat

on the expansive terminal grounds—nestled among containers and cargo handling equipment. It had been a seven-week trip from the Republic of China's port of Kaohsiung to Baltimore, considered normal for such a voyage between these ports. The Fleming actually cleared customs off Norfolk while still on the ship, yet there was still plenty of paperwork to be completed before the terminal would release the boat to the dealer.

The delivery team consisted of three members from Burr Yacht Sales, which is located in Edgewater, Maryland, just south of Annapolis.

Ray Currey, John Currey, and Mick Shove have all been through this drill many times before, and they wasted no time in getting started. John headed off to the terminal office to finish the required





Following a short ride by a special MAFI-handling truck (top), the Fleming 55 waits along water's edge for lifting crew (right). A short while later, a huge crane lifts the yacht clear—and the Fleming goes in the water for the first time.

paperwork, while Mick and Ray tackled the preparations for splashing the new boat.

The Fleming sat on a MAFI cradle covered with an enormous tarp. A MAFI cradle has a set of wheels on one side and a hitch on the other, and can be easily moved about by a special tractor that handles such cargo on and off a special ship known as a "Ro-Ro". That stands for "Roll on, Roll off" and is a modern way of handling ship-bound cargo. Unlike deck-stored cargo, cargo and containers are taken inside the ship through massive side doors, and can be stacked and stored all within the confines of the ship. This avoids any potential damage caused by the elements while in transit. Since the Fleming was shipped inside of the ship, it arrived a little dusty but otherwise in perfect condition.

The boat was shipped without the installation of its bow platform or radar arch—to reduce space requirements. Even so, the tarp-covered package took up the space of thirty stacked containers. This is an expensive way to ship a large yacht, but can be justified given the total protection offered by the inside of the ship.

The boat also came without its propellers, as the large bronze props can be easily damaged during all the handling. Mick pulled out the high performance 5-bladed props they use for delivery and went to work putting these beauties on the boat.

Ray began removing the large blue-and-white tarp off the topsides and then opened up all hatches and doors. While the boat aired out from spending weeks inside the ship, Ray checked engine fluids, attached the batteries, checked all through hulls, and checked for any visual signs of theft or damage. Ray also checked the fuel—the boat normally ships with 50 gallons of fuel onboard, enough to make the nearest fuel dock.

Ray explained that this routine normally takes about 45 minutes to get ready to move the boat over to the crane that will put the boat into the water for the first time. "It used to take two-and-a-

half hours when we first started, but we have the routine pretty well down by now. We rarely have surprises, as the boat is complete, well-protected, and clean."

About the time Mick and Ray were finished loading the gear we brought up in the van—fenders, handheld VHF and GPS—John came back with all permits and papers completed. We were free to move the boat over to the crane.

After a short wait, a special tractor came over to us and backed onto the hitch mechanism of the MAFI cradle. The operator lifted the end of the cradle, and the new Fleming moved ever so slowly towards an enormous crane overlooking the river.

The process of splashing the boat took another 45 minutes, most of which were spent waiting for the terminal workers to put together a proper lifting harness. These fellas were actually quite skilled and competent, but given the size of the Fleming, and the fact that handling such cargo isn't their daily routine, it took them some time to assemble the lifting box frame and lifting straps.

Ray and Mick stayed aboard as the boat was finally lifted clear of the cradle and swung over to the water's edge. A pretty incredible sight, and everyone in the vicinity stopped to watch as the 55-footer was swung out high above the Patapsco River. This was actually the first time the boat was going into water, which surprised me. Ray told me that the Fleming doesn't really need to be sea trialed at the yard—all testing and sea trials would be the dealer's responsibility.

While engines were started, and the through hulls checked for leaks, we loaded the rest of the gear as quickly as possible and shoved off—to the waves of the assembled crowd of terminal workers. It was quite a departure from their regular fare of loading and unloading containers—which don't head off under their own power!

Our next stop was a fuel dock located farther up the Patapsco in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. Motoring

slowly past Fort McHenry (which was the inspiration for our national anthem) we got a chance to discuss the events so far. As both Mick and Ray pointed out, there were no surprises, thankfully. While they expect a problem every once in awhile, things usually go very well. Tony Fleming inspects each boat before it is shipped, and this has a lot to do with the lack of problems.

While we took aboard 150 gallons of diesel, Mick continued checking all the systems aboard the boat. He turned on the air conditioning system—which quickly cooled down the interior of the boat. I also took the time to walk around the boat's interior, and I was surprised by the completeness of the boat. With the exception of an electronic-free pilothouse, this boat was complete and looked ready to go cruising as is.

As I later learned, most of the outfitting decisions are made by the owners before or while the boat is being built—and the chosen appliances, systems, and equipment are shipped via container directly to the yard to be installed while the boat is being built. The result is a turn-key yacht that is missing only electronics and bow thruster.

The absence of electronics makes sense for several reasons. First, as the boat is often ordered with delivery way off in the future, changes in technology make the selection of electronic instruments a latest-is-often-best affair—price, value, and functionality are very dynamic.

The second reason for holding off selecting electronic gear is that the crew at Burr Yachts understands the importance of a systems approach to electronics. The equipment usually must be integrated, and it can take quite a few hours to determine the various components of a complete electronics system. Ray Currey feels strongly that any such discussion must take place over many hours with the new owners. The results must be reliable, good looking, and exactly what the new owners need. It is very important to understand the real needs of the owners and develop an instrument package that covers these requirements.

When fueling was completed, Mick came back into the pilothouse to report that all systems were operational—including the water system, head systems, engines, genset, and A/C. Again, no surprises.

The trip south was a perfect way to spend time on the glassy Chesapeake, on a day that was hot and hazy. With air conditioning running throughout the boat, the pilothouse was remarkably quiet. The engines are especially quiet, and there is almost a total lack of vibration. This is due to the Aquadrive thrust bearings and constant velocity joints that allow the engine to be soft mounted. There is extensive engine room insulation and the very effective mufflers contribute to the lack of

exhaust noise inside the boat.

The genset is also very quiet—its wet exhaust exits below the waterline, so there isn't even the familiar gurgle of cooling water. So quiet, in fact, that Mick told me they have more than once walked away from the boat and forgotten the genset was still on.

Running at speed down the bay, there was an extremely loud cracking sound coming from the forward cabin, and Ray explained that it took some time to figure out when they first heard the noise. Most of the Flemings have their bow thruster tube installed at the yard, although the thruster equipment is installed by the dealer. The result is a hollow tube in the bow, mounted perpendicular to the rush of passing water. The constant slapping of the water with the tube is transmitted throughout the bow section of the hull, and makes quite a racket. (Once the thruster is installed, however, the noise disappears.)

We took a couple of hours to finally reach the Burr yard, and we arrived just after noon. The Fleming was backed into a center slip, dock and spring lines were adjusted, shorepower cables run for power...and then it was time to begin commissioning the new boat for its new owners.

Commissioning

The two-page list of additional equipment had been prepared well in advance of the boat's delivery, and every attempt had been made to have all items onsite for the boat's arrival—so boxes and boxes of new gear sat safely together in a storage area—waiting for just this moment.

For this particular hull number, the list of equipment to be installed included the following:

- Cruising gear (shorepower cords, flares, bumpers, docklines, life vests, ...the usual stuff)
- Delta 55-pound primary anchor and 275 feet of chain, and secondary anchor and rode
- TV/Video equipment for installation in salon and forward stateroom, with antenna and cable TV hookup
- Bimini top on flybridge
- Custom low-profile davit system for boat deck
- Full feature stereo system with sound system installed in salon and pilothouse
- Flo Scan fuel monitors with totalizers, tachometer and GPS interface
- Installation of tender chocks and MX335 Novurania RIB with 30 hp Honda outboard
- Cellular phone system
- Dual control Spotlight
- Naiad stabilizers
- 10 hp Wesmar 12-inch dual prop bow thruster with separate 24-volt gel battery bank



The new interior quickly becomes a mess of boxes, tools and waiting-to-be installed equipment. Notice the paper covered floors.

- Custom AC/DC electrical system with 1,500-watt inverter, additional 100-amp charger, 2 additional batteries, and battery paralleling system
- Fire extinguisher system in engine room with auto and manual controls
- Custom decor—carpets, drapes, upholstery, bedspreads, chairs, lamps
- Custom arch-mounted mast to hold radar, satellite antenna
- Custom name boards
- Mounts for Switlik liferaft
- Compensate compasses
- Install all navigation electronics—Furuno radar; GPS with differential; two ICOM VHF radios; Robertson autopilot; Furuno 582 sounder; wind, speed, depth, waypoint multi-function digital displays; computer with navigation software; installation and custom cabinetry with antennas and interfaces; SSB antenna mount
- Closed circuit TV with two cameras.

Like I said, just some electronics and a bow thruster!

All the commissioning activity is planned well in advance of the boat's arrival—the order of activity actually determined during the planning of the boat with the owners.

All told, the outfitting phase takes about six weeks, with full-time participation by the yard's crew—many skilled in a particular specialty. Pat Flaherty oversees the overall outfitting and com-



Careful preparation and effort results in holes measured twice, but cut once (above). The result—the completed pilothouse is both beautiful and functional (left).

missioning of the boats, coordinating the many tasks to ensure people and gear are working together as a team. He is also the yard's woodworker and cabinet maker when such skills are required.

A haulout is first order of business for the new boat—to install the swim platform, the bow thruster, stabilizer fins, transducers, and bottom paint.

Back in the water, the Fleming gets ready for the boxes and tools and work crew. All interior cushions are removed, and every teak surface (especially the soles of all cabins) is covered in heavy brown paper to avoid any nicks or marring of the new boat.

Not surprisingly, one of the first jobs to be done is installation of the sound system, so the crew can work with appropriate music. I gather classical music is great for varnishing, country and pop music good for mechanical system work, and contemporary music reserved for electronics and wiring.

The radar arch is installed on the boat deck and on goes the bow platform—allowing the exterior crew to start work on the wood trim. Another technician begins fitting the various external antennas and equipment on the boat deck.

Inside the boat, the interior quickly is transformed from a beautifully complete and organized interior to chaos—a disheveled collection of boxes, holes, tools, wires, and people. It is almost frightening to see. Total chaos, but beneath it all is an air of competent madness that everyone has a role to play and that all the boxes and tools some-

how need to be there, figured into a master plan. And indeed there is one...

Up forward, the major project in the master stateroom involves installation of the bow thruster and controls, with co-located battery box and control wiring. The thruster is under the forward berth, and the top of the berth is removed to reveal the work area. A photograph of another bow thruster installation is taped alongside the

ongoing installation, and I was told that the crew tries hard to make all installations look and work the same for the critical systems. Once the boat leaves the dock, the yard can still answer many questions over the phone because they have made a point of finding out the best way to install each piece of gear on the boat—and being consistent from boat to boat. (An added benefit of this thinking is that when an owner wants to add some new



Once the commissioning is completed, the main salon is revealed to be a comfortable and elegant living area.

Pat Flaherty checks installation of davit system for handling dinghy.



equipment later—it no doubt has a spot already laid out and available—just a picture away!

The only other major outfitting in the owner stateroom is audiovisual—the entertainment TV/stereo, intercom, and maybe a telephone.

The other two staterooms are pretty much left alone, although they are bare as all cushions and other accessories are removed from the boat during the commissioning activity.

The galley is usually complete since all decisions about countertops, appliances, and trim were made beforehand—and the equipment shipped to the R.O.C. in a container for installation while the boat is under construction.

The salon gets all the stereo, entertainment system, and related communications equipment. Most of the rest of the salon is already complete, although you can't see much of the salon, as it is the staging area for all the boxes and tools.

As Ray Currey explained, even though most of their commissioning work involves installing ancillary equipment, the truth of the matter is that the entire boat is worked on. Though it isn't obvious that work is performed in a certain area, in most cases, work passed through that area, so the entire boat is involved with just about everything that goes on.

Added boat deck seating and table augment flybridge comfort and entertaining underway or at anchor. Very nice.



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For example, the majority of the stabilizer work takes place in the engine room—which is where you find the hydraulic pump (connected to the starboard Cat 3208) and its reservoir connected by hydraulic lines, but you need discharge cooling lines. Since the folks at the Burr yard like to isolate all through hulls in one area in the stern, these cooling lines run all the way aft to the transom, exiting into a seachest.

At the same time, there are electrical controls for handling the stabilizers, and those control heads and wires have to be led up to the pilothouse. There are additional thruster controls located on the flybridge as well as on a separate aft deck control station—so most of the boat is passed through—starting in the middle and going out to the ends of the boat.

As to the stabilizers, the crew spends hours shaping stainless steel tubing that connects the stabilizer hydraulic pump to its reservoir. This custom work, rather than simply running hoses through the engine room, results in a bullet-proof installation that looks like it is part of the boat. Very clean and professional—and impressively shippy.

The pilothouse's collection of navigation and communication electronics comes together as a total system. Long before any holes are cut, the entire console area is designed as an integrated command center—a result of the long hours of discussion with the owners while the boat is under construction. The black surface of the console is completely taped over with masking tape, and the placement of the various equipment displays and

controls is literally drawn onto the taped surface. Before anyone starts drilling, all the boxes are assembled, and the various wire and antenna runs are determined.

Pat Flaherty and crew coordinate the timing and order of removing interior panels for running wires and tubing through the interior. TV wires, stabilizer control wires and hoses, stereo and speaker wires, navigation electronics wires and cables, thruster control wires, telephone wires, transducer wires, and all antenna cables are run at the same time—as much as possible. This represents a difficult coordination problem, and everything is a mess while this is going on—but Pat Flaherty insists the results are worth it.

The various wire, tubing, and cable runs are all loosely held together by slack wire ties.

None of these runs are considered finished until all work is done, the final checks are made, and the panels are put back in place.

“It looks like complete chaos while we are doing all this at once, but it all comes together in the last 3 days,” Pat told us. “When we finally install the control heads for the electronics, replace the interior panels, and put back the cushions and rest of the decor, the boat just comes together.”



Aft control console house engine controls, thruster control, and autopilot remote.

Sea Trials And Delivery

As the boat is nearing completion, little things start to happen, such as the final sanding and varnish of the teak trim, cleaning the teak decks, the last detailing the entire boat—and the sea trials.

Before the owners take delivery, the crew takes the boat out for several sea trials to test the equipment and make sure the boat is functioning properly. Since no two boats are outfitted the same, this is a chance to see how it all works for this particular boat. Ray tells us, “Every boat takes on its own personality. We may put on similar equipment on these boats, but there is always enough of a difference to make each boat special. And the owners' requirements are different—so it is satisfying to see how it comes together to meet the owners' expectations.”

While the boat is being sea trialed, the owners start getting introduced to their new boat. Depending on their previous experience in this kind of cruising motorboat, this can take place over a week or many weeks. As the commis-



(above, left) A well-protected foredeck. Notice high bulwarks and centerline door in Portuguese bridge. A very safe design. Large aft deck (left) offers flexibility for fishing, entertaining and living aboard.

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Looking aft in stern lazarette while autopilot equipment is installed. Notice the tall beds for steering gear—the rudder posts enter the hull above the waterline. (below)



Stainless steel tubing is used for stabilizer hydraulic lines—a very time-consuming task. Notice the loose wire ties. They will be tightened when all wiring runs through this section of the boat are completed. Very clean and professional.



sioning process winds down, the owners are shown how to use the major systems and how to run the boat.

“There is a learning curve here, as the owners learn the intimacy of their new boat. They go from knowing a little about a lot of things, to developing a lot of knowledge about each of the individual things aboard the boat.” Ray explained. “The process goes from where we’re taking care of their boat, to where they are using their boat with our support. We encourage little trips in the area so they can become acquainted with the boat, and we can fix any small problem they find. When they leave with their new boat, they know a lot more of their boat and its systems, and their confidence has increased.”

The Boat

We went for a ride on *Billie Anita*, hull number 54, and got a chance to see the end result of all

the commissioning work. This yacht was delivered to its new owners last May, and they have been living full time aboard her ever since.

As you would expect, the appointments were elegant and well-matched the luxurious nature of this high-end cruising yacht. The gracious owners let us take their boat out for the day, and we left the Annapolis City Dock to explore the surrounding waters of this favorite Chesapeake Bay area.

Billie Anita has a three stateroom layout with two heads—the standard layout. The owners stateroom is in the bow, with a queen size island berth surrounded by counter space, cabinets, and hanging lockers, and there is an ensuite head.

Aft of the master stateroom are two guest cabins, which share a second head that also houses a clothes washer and dryer unit. The starboard cabin offers upper/lower single berths, and the port-side guest stateroom has a side-by-side berth layout. There are lockers and opening ports in both guest



The engine room gets some final attention during commissioning. Notice blower intake directly over turbocharger, which is an effective method of drawing off engine heat.

console. There is a small but cozy settee and table on the port side of the pilothouse, and the settee can be extended to become a watch berth, blocking off the port pilothouse doorway.

The full-width instrument console is an example of Burr Yachts’ design expertise, as all instrumentation and controls look ergonomically balanced and designed to work together.

Among all the pilothouse boats currently in production, the Fleming has one feature that is unique—inside access to the flybridge. While there still is an aft deck ladder up to the aft end of the boat deck, the Fleming allows the crew to step up to the flybridge directly from the rear of the pilothouse. This is much safer than having the crew climb steps up the side of the main cabin, and is much more convenient. It is an outstanding way to travel between the different levels of the boat.

The tradeoff of this convenience and safety is that the flybridge is located more aft than you’ll see on other boats, where the flybridge is directly over the pilothouse. This reduces the overall profile and center of gravity of the boat, but also

At the dinghy dock in Annapolis. A beautiful boat in a beautiful location. Life is grand!



Aquadrive thrust bearing, CV joint, and soft engine mounts provide a quiet, vibration-free ride at all running speeds.

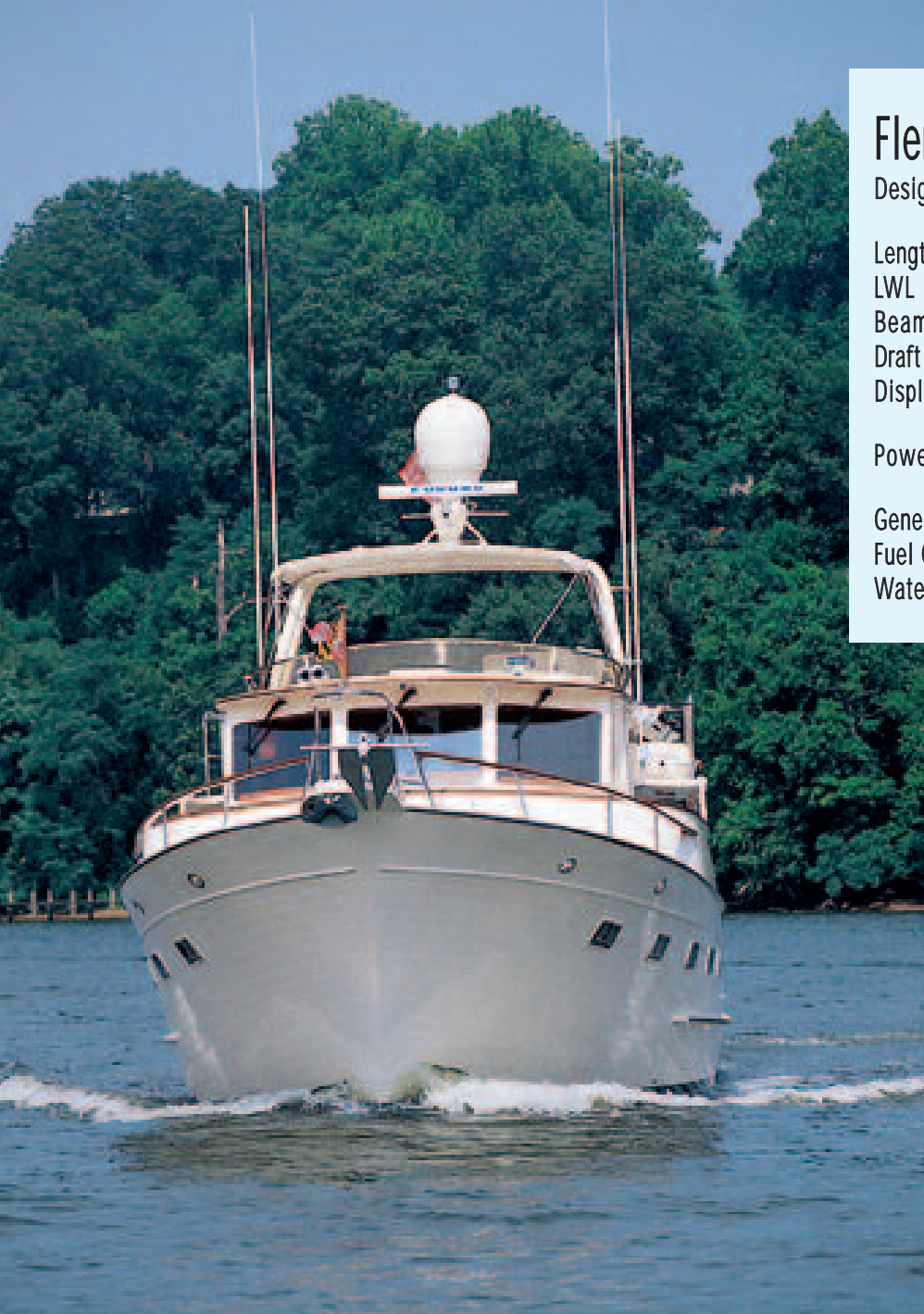
staterooms.

Up a few steps going aft, the main salon and galley area are the central living area of the boat, with plenty of opening windows for ventilation and atmosphere. The galley is large and has plenty of counter space, with a full-sized refrigerator/freezer opposite the U-shaped galley.

The salon has a starboard-side L-shaped settee with an adjustable coffee table, and there is room for two chairs opposite this settee—which faces a built-in entertainment center. Double doors open out onto the aft deck. *Billie Anita* has customized Berber rugs covering the salon and all other floor surfaces and steps, adding protection to the teak and holly finish and comfort for the crew’s feet.

Forward of the galley area are a few steps which lead into the raised pilothouse—which has a helm chair mounted centerline in front of a full-width





Fleming 55 Specifications

Designer	Fleming Yachts/Larry Drake & Associates
Length Overall	55'9"
LWL	50'10"
Beam	16'
Draft	5'
Displacement	66,000 lb.
Power	Twin Caterpillar 3208 (210–425 hp)
Generator	12 kW
Fuel Capacity	1,000 gallons
Water Capacity	300 gallons

there are high bulwarks and railings to protect the crew. In fact, along with the Portuguese bridge and wide side decks, there is superior protection for the crew and it is clear that safety was a parameter of Tony Fleming's original design. It is hard to imagine better protection for running the boat in heavy weather.

All the way aft is a wide and roomy aft deck large enough to set up chairs and tables for comfortable lounging and living aboard. With some overhead protection offered by the boat deck, the layout offers flexibility—you can fish from this location because it is open, or you can add a bimini or awning for total protection from the sun. A third control station is located here along the aft end of the main cabin, with thruster, autopilot, and engine controls.

To repeat an earlier observation—one thing that is rather striking aboard the Fleming is the absence of noise and vibration while under way. The combination of Aquadrive thrust bearing, CV joints, and soft engine mounts virtually eliminates noticeable vibration. Along with an oversized exhaust muffler system, the Fleming is super quiet. Standing in the pilothouse while the engines are idling, you have to look at the gauges to really know whether or not the engines are running.

The Fleming 55 has a number of other interesting details that make the boat more comfortable and safer. Her rudder posts, for example, are mounted so that they pass through structural stringers above the waterline—eliminating the possibility of packing gland failure and water getting into the boat.

A separate lazarette aft of the engine room houses the electrical inverter/charger, the compressors for the refrigeration and air conditioning, and pro-

vides a cooler environment than placing such equipment in the engine room space.

Another good idea are the pickups for the exhaust blowers—they are located directly over the engines' turbochargers, so they draw engine heat directly from the engines—rather than from a corner of the engine room. This makes a great deal of sense.

Little details in the living spaces also point to the attention to detail in this boat, such as the use of recessed halogen lighting whenever possible. There are screens on all windows and ports, and miniblinds are installed as standard equipment. Domestic equipment also includes a washer/dryer, dishwasher, and trash compactor. Beyond the nice luxury appointments this is still a cruising boat—and handholds and teak posts are there for use in rougher weather. The overall package as a cruising boat is very nice indeed.

We ran the Fleming at various speeds, and it was comfortable at both displacement speeds and higher. The boat is capable of 16+ knots, and can be run comfortably at that or the slower 8–12 knot speeds so often enjoyed while cruising.

It was fun spending the day on *Billie Anita*, and we reluctantly left her when we returned to Annapolis. It had been a great day on the water, and the Fleming 55 validated once more just how

comfortable a cruising motorboat can be. Nothing beats cruising under power in a quality boat!

Summary

Following a professional crew through the commissioning of a high-quality cruising boat gave us an informed look into the real world of the broker-owner-builder relationship. While we certainly can't assume that all

boat companies and dealers are the same as we experienced with the Fleming, it was interesting to see just how much really goes on before a boat is delivered to its new owners. A good dealer and a good boat builder can make for a wonderfully satisfying experience.

Having a boat built to your specifications in your own area is a good way to make sure things go your way—with no problems. However, as most of us don't have a yacht builder in our own backyard, we depend on our dealer to help us with the details of successful new yacht ownership. Given the tremendous investment we make on this purchase, it's important to find and use a knowledgeable and professional dealer. It really does make a difference.

While we'll still give them lots of our money—when things go right, we'll know it was money well spent—and money well earned!

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the crew of Burr Yacht Sales, in Edgewater, Maryland, for allowing us to disrupt their frenetic activities long enough to watch them at work behind the scenes. We saw lots of sawdust, bare wires, tools and scraped knuckles—and witnessed how much crawling and bending around tight quarters is done to get the job right.

We want to thank Ray Currey, Mick Shove, and Pat Flaherty—for taking the time to discuss the realities of their profession, and for giving us a better appreciation of the lives of the many yacht brokers and dealers around the country.

We salute them all! ●



A professional makes it all happen right—Ray Currey of Burr Yachts.



Owner stateroom is very comfortably arranged. There is storage and hanging locker capacity for real living aboard.

A very smart view of the Fleming 55—this boat is comfortable at slower cruising speeds while capable of 16+ knots when desired.

limits the carrying ability of the boat deck. It is still big enough for the dinghy, but a large rigid floor inflatable will have to be stored sideways behind a roomy seating area. This is a practical arrangement for people who would rather spread out with friends than carry around a lot of toys.

And to top off easy living on the top deck, there is dumbwaiter service between the galley and the flybridge! A stainless steel basket sits inside an overhead cabinet in the galley, which can be accessed from a panel on the flybridge. The chef can load sandwiches, hors d'oeuvres, drinks, dishes and silverware in this basket to be received by the host up top. How civilized! And safe for a short-handed crew when it is lunch time under way.

Back on deck, the foredeck is accessed through centerline doors in the Portuguese bridge, and