



Out of This World

Sci-Fi shenanigans were the hit of the 21st Annual Marlow Spring Rendezvous.

By Liz Pasch



Many boat and yachtbuilders plan group cruising trips for their customers, but few host events that compare with the Marlow Marine Cruising Club (MMCC) Spring Rendezvous. The 21st annual gathering was held for the second consecutive year at the Faro Blanco Resort & Yacht Club (faroblancoresort.com) in the Florida Keys from May 4-7. Word must have gotten out about the 2016 affair, as even more people attended this year—27 sets of Marlow owners were on 25 Marlow yachts in the marina and 8 additional yacht owners stayed in the hotel—for a total attendance of 147, including club members, sponsors, seminar presenters, and Marlow staff.

The long weekend started off with a welcome cocktail party on the yacht club lawn overlooking the marina—and the iconic Faro Blanco lighthouse that's been a visitor landmark since the 1950s—which provided a lovely sunset backdrop for owners to reconnect and make new friends. Participants fueled up each morning for the day's activities with a hearty buffet breakfast of made-to-order omelets, assorted pastries and all

the standard fare served in the Veranda Room of the Lighthouse Grill, the resort's signature restaurant.

Inclement weather on Friday afternoon forced the

Top left: Barbara and David Marlow and their grandson Aidan got into the Sci-Fi spirit. Marlow Marine Cruising Club owners and guests dressed in their most creative costume ideas borrowed from TV shows, feature film franchises, cartoons, and a few that were even more inventive!



Clockwise from left: Kristen Ward deftly christened the ME 58E *Tide The Knot* with the very first swing of the champagne bottle on the anchor. The “Marlow Marvels” won the Best Costume award. *Faro Blanco* has been a visitor landmark in the Florida Keys for more than six decades. Mark and Patricia Lucas celebrated the christening of their ME 53E *JIA*.

water-based activities to be canceled, but the behind-the-scenes look at the nearby Turtle Rehab Hospital was a hit for both first-time and repeat visitors. Clouds, wind and rain did little to dampen everyone’s enthusiasm at the Sci-Fi-themed party on the yacht club lawn that evening, demonstrated by the creative costumes—and “alien-green” cocktails. Longtime and new MMCC members gave it their all with costumes themed from *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Avatar*, *The Jetsons*, “the Coneheads” from *Saturday Night Live*, and even an inventive “illegal alien” theme donned by two couples: Mike and Renee Curreri (ME 70E *Bravo Zulu*), and Jeff and Anna Saplis of St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. The Saplis’ new ME 53E *In Lieu Of* is expected to be delivered later this summer and will be docked on St. Thomas for cruising the Virgin Islands, both U.S. and British, and further points more than likely.

Clearly, the Sci-Fi theme was a hit that garnered stiff competition for the prize of “Best Costume,” awarded to the Marlow Marvels: Clyde and Ramona Vickers, owners of *Incorrigible*, and Bob and Kristen Ward, owners of *Tide The Knot*.

Attendees had their choice of informational seminars offered by marine industry professionals—including a well-attended round-table discussion led by David Marlow—but the learning opportunities weren’t confined to the forums. Marlow owners are known as experienced cruisers who generously share the wisdom they’ve gained as a result of their travels. Bob Bush, for example, described his 2016 two-week Cuba cruising adventure to other Marlow owners at the table during Friday’s barbecue lunch. Bush plans to cruise even more extensively when he takes delivery of the new Marlow 75E he’ll christen *Turangalila*. (His

current boat is available for sale and listed in this issue as the “Brokerage Boat of the Month” on page 80.)

New boat christenings have become a tradition and rite of passage at the Marlow Spring Rendezvous. Seasoned owners welcome new ones to the fold, who publicly proclaim their yacht’s name and break a champagne bottle over the bow. Meanwhile, well-wishers witness the event from the dock, cheer on the new owners with a hearty “Hear, hear!” and sip the bubbly beverage from elegant flutes. Bernie and Alison Bateman were among those whose ME 49E *Running Tide* was christened at the 2016 Spring Rendezvous, and they returned this year to congratulate the new yacht owners. Of the 25 Marlow yachts in attendance, five were christened—*Prop 23*, *Tide The Knot*, *Full Moon*, *Dutch*, and *JIA*—four of which offered tours of their newly christened yachts for a total of seven yachts available for the Open Boat viewing.

A pre-dinner cocktail hour viewing of the Kentucky Derby prompted lively betting along with the requisite shouting in favor of those selected to win, place and show. Afterward, the finale of the weekend, the sumptuous surf ‘n turf Awards Dinner, prefaced the much-anticipated presentation of awards in a number of categories to enthusiastic applause. Dancing followed to wear off some of the weekend’s high caloric intake, to celebrate the culmination of yet another enjoyable rendezvous and to party with new friends, though it’s doubtful this will be the last time these revelers see each other. There’s a strong chance they’ll reacquire again next year or even at some exotic port as Marlow owners are known to frequent. 🍹