“She’s pretty from every angle,” says Doug Metchick, CEO of Morris Yachts, about the company’s M52, above. Is she ever.
These yachts sparkle with made-in-Maine alchemy. Nobody can afford not to dream about them.

BY CLAIRE Z. CRAMER
Imagine launching your brand-new 70-foot sloop *Sonny* at Brooklin Boat Yard’s impossibly picturesque Center Harbor headquarters on Eggemoggin Reach. Imagine doing this when you’re 90 years old. Albert Phelps has just done this.

“And that’s not the most amazing part,” says Steve White, the boatyard’s owner and CEO. “I built him the exact same boat in the year 2000—same color, same name, everything. Then, in 2010, he calls me up and says, ‘Steve, I’m getting too old for this. I’m donating the boat to Maine Maritime Academy.’ So he did.”

Then he got young again. “About a year later, he calls me up. ‘Steve, I miss my boat!”
Build me another one.’ So we did.”

The Dieter Empacher-designed cruiser/racer is fast—she’ll be cooking at 12 to 15 knots when she passes you on the race course—and carries more than 2,000 square feet of sail. That’s a bigger footprint than your average West End condo.

“The gusto Albert has for life is pretty amazing,” says White. “He and his wife just celebrated their collective 160th birthday. After the launch they flew down and met Sonny in the Caribbean. He says they’ll probably sail back up here later this summer or fall.”

MMA has since sold the first Sonny, which is now privately owned, renamed, and recently refitted, again at Brooklin Boat Yard. If a fast sloop named Northern Cross leaves you in her wake, you’ll know you’ve just seen the first Sonny.

THEY GET AROUND

The Hinckley Company of Southwest Harbor began as a service yacht yard in 1928. In 1958, naval architect Bill Tripp Jr. designed the Bermuda 40, a keel/centerboard yawl that became a legend, the gentleman’s cruising/racing yacht. Hinckley built 203 B-40s between 1959 and 1991. The extremely high-quality production fiberglass sailboat and Hinckley’s reputation became...
the industry standard. Today, Hinckley’s most spectacular sailboat is the Bruce King designed Sou’wester 70, five of which have been built in the past nine years. “Hull number one, Midnight Rambler, is in Newport, Rhode Island, at the moment,” says Hinckley broker Robert Pooler. “Number two’s in Tahiti. Number four is in Europe.” The other two live among us. “A finished SW70 is about $7.5 million.”

“In 1972, Tom Morris began the yachting firm his son Cuyler runs today. Morris Yachts began with updates on traditional classics like the Friendship sloop. Today, their “M” series, designed in collaboration with Sparkman & Stephens, is a luxury “modern classic” line of sleek sailboats in sizes from

“She sails like a dream—I’ve hit up to 14 knots.”
–Doug Metchik, CEO, Morris Yachts

MORRIS DANCERS

At Morris Yachts they call the M52 a “pocket superyacht.”

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29 to 80 feet. The first M52 hit the water in 2009. *Cruising World* named it their 2010 “Boat of the Year,” calling it “52 feet of drop-dead gorgeous.”

“The M52 is pretty from any angle,” says Morris CEO Doug Metchick. “She sails like a dream—I’ve hit up to 14 knots in the right conditions. She’s just a great boat.” If you’d like one, the base price is $1.579 million.

The third M52 is in production now. “The buyer’s a West Coast guy building this boat instead of buying a summer house.” The first 52 was just resold to an M42 owner who is upgrading. “Probably one in three or four buyers of Morris yachts is a repeat customer,” says Metchick. “Six in 10 of our boats remain in the U.S.—half of those in New England. The rest go to Europe, Asia, and South and Central America now that we’re well known.”

The boats take shape in Trenton. “But we actually have five properties on the island, including service yards in Southwest Harbor and Bass Harbor. I like to kid Cuyler that the Morrices are real-estate tycoons trapped in the boatbuilding trade.”

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