

Feadship sets sail on Diamond Jubilee Celebration

75 years of innovation, anchored in a legacy of 404 years

The year 2024 is the beginning of Feadship's Diamond Jubilee, a year-long celebration. While it may be 75 years for Feadship, the combined experience of De Vries (1906), De Voogt (1913) and Van Lent (celebrating its 175th anniversary this year) amounts to a maritime legacy of an astonishing 404 years, a number unmatched in the industry.

Since the modest origins in 1949, today Feadship has an astounding 1,700-metres of yachts under construction, including ground-braking projects like hydrogen fuel cell propulsion: the majestic 118.80-metre *Project 821*. Now Feadship has four shipyards in the Netherlands: Aalsmeer, Amsterdam, Kaag and Makkum and operates in eight other locations: Hoofddorp, Leiden, Papendrecht, Moordrecht, Heiloo, Waddinxveen and in Fort Lauderdale, USA. Feadship employs over 2,000 people and is seen as a beacon of excellence in superyacht craftsmanship.

The start of an ambitious venture

It's been a staggering growth curve since the first Feadships appeared at the New York National Boat Show, two years after a group of marine business owners gathered for an organizational meeting at De Roode Leeuw café in Amsterdam in 1949 to devise a plan to sell Dutch-built boats abroad. Far from the glamour that now surrounds the superyacht industry, Feadship sprung from a pragmatic – perhaps even desperate – post-World War II plan to rescue Dutch industries by kick-starting exports to generate much-needed hard currency. With most of Europe digging out literally and financially, boat builders wishing to prosper in needed to look further afield. The United States represented by far the most attractive potential market. Assured of some government support, six boat builders launched Feadship, the **First Export Association of Dutch SHIPbuilders** with one purpose: “to promote the export of luxury craft to the United States of America”. Each of the members pledged the sum of 500 Dutch Guilders (purchasing power of € 2.400 today) to the cause – a significant amount at this impoverished time for a clearly ambitious venture.

The well-known naval architect and former boat builder Henri de Voogt joined Feadship soon after. His role was to be the designer of the future Feadships and often the chief salesman. It was a simple plan; each yard would contribute a boat designed for export and all would share in the cost of marketing Feadships abroad. All hopes and many jobs shipped along with three small boats – 8-metre and 10-metre motor cruisers and a 6.50-metre daysailer – sent to the January 1951 New York Boat Show. Crowds packed the Feadship stand eager to see the sturdy steel hulls and all yachts were quickly snapped up. With news of custom yachts of 23 and 30-metre ordered by prominent Americans in 1952, and 17-metre *Capri* and 19-metre *Coronet* crowned Queens of the 1953 and 1954 New York Boats shows respectively, Feadship was off to the races.

Determination

The early years were not without teething pains and troubles with agents, cash flow, and the withdrawal of several original members, but with glowing reviews and ninety yachts already sold in America in the first eight years, the potential rewards for persevering in the market were clear. The builders of two of those very first Feadships shown in the US, Royal Van Lent and Koninklijke De Vries, now are juggernauts of the superyacht world and the Feadship brand has delivered over five hundred yachts to date, with another four slated to deliver in 2024.

Just as adding furniture maker Van der Loo to their team in the 1950s and De Klerk later gave unprecedented quality to their yachts' interiors, the yards determination to innovate in technical areas with corrosion control, mechanical and electrical systems, aluminium and carbon fibre construction and the use of glass made Feadship the brand that sets industry standards. Feadships such as *Sussuro*, *Ecstasea* and *Predator* sent luxury into the fast lane, while yachts like *Savannah* and *Obsidian* showed how luxury could have less impact and launched Feadship on its campaign to net zero by 2030.

Throughout the coming months, we'll be hosting special events and sharing memories and moments that define our legacy as well as discussing the next wave of innovations leading the future of superyachting.

Celebrate with us by sharing your favourite Feadship memories using #Feadship75

Cheers to the past, present, and future of Feadship!