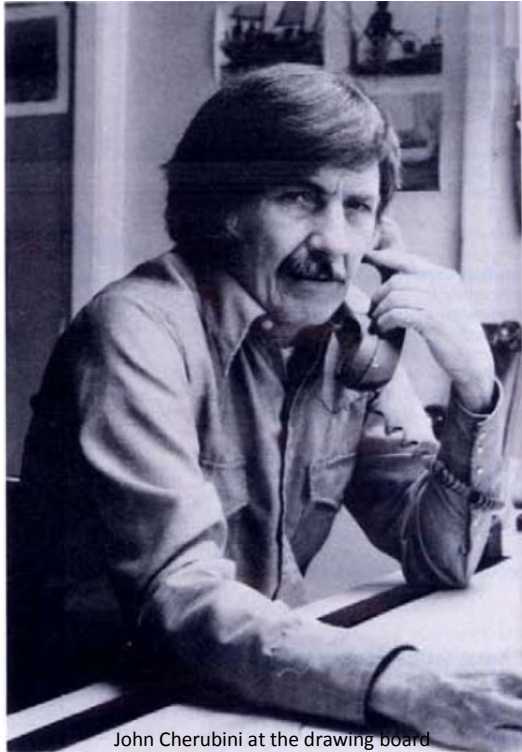


## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HUNTER 37 CUTTER

The history of the Hunter 37 Cutter begins with a tale of two men. Warren Luhrs (1944 - ) was a member of a boat building family in New Jersey. John Cherubini (1921-1983) was also from a family with roots in shipbuilding from the Delaware River area. John studied naval architecture with Westlawn prior to the Second World War and worked as an aviation engineer during the war. Both men raced small sailboats in the same waters and had made each other's acquaintance by the early 1970s. In 1972, Warren contracted John – initially through Bill Seidelmann - to design sailboats for a new Luhrs venture known as Hunter Marine. The first fruit of this venture was the Hunter 25, introduced for the 1973 model year.



John Cherubini at the drawing board

Those early years at Hunter Marine were busy ones for John Cherubini, as he was retained by Luhrs as their head designer. "There followed, in this order, the 30 in '73, the 27, in '74, the 33, the 37, then the 35 and 36 (essentially both stretched 33s), the 54 in '78-79."<sup>1</sup> With so many designs on the drawing board simultaneously, it is hard to pinpoint the birth of the 37 cutter, but it is likely that John started work on the drawings sometime in 1977. The date often given is 1978, which was the first model year for the 37.

Hull # 1 was likely built in June or July 1978. Although the history of the first 37 has been obscured by the fog of years, it is known that Bill Young corresponded on the HunterOwners.com forums and indicated that his boat "SHADOW JACK" was hull # 1. He gives his Hull Identification Number (HIN) as HUN37001M78; unfortunately there is no final letter to indicate the build month. Bill sailed his boat in the vicinity of Lake Ponchartraine, Saint Tammany Parish, Louisiana. Bill says of his boat: "The boat is so solid that I think I could pull it down the Interstate with no

trailer and not hurt a thing. It sails so damn well that I don't think I will ever get rid of it."<sup>2</sup> However, his last reference to "SHADOW JACK" was in 2001 and by August 2006, he is listed on HunterOwners.com as the owner of a 2003 Hunter 356. Was SHADOW JACK lost or written off during Hurricane Katrina in 2005? HunterOwners.com installed new site management software in 2008 and some Hunter owners chose not to re-establish their accounts, while others changed their account names; in any case, Bill Young and the story of hull #1 is lost.

Hull #7 (HUN37007M78L), produced in July was likely one of the last of the 1978 model year's production. Like most boat manufacturers, Hunter Marine rolled over its model year in August. The 1979 models were in build and, in late 1978, hull # 42 rolled off the line.

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<sup>1</sup> John Cherubini II: thread post 09-05-2007, John Cherubini Designs, HunterOwners.com

<sup>2</sup> William F. (Bill) Young: thread post 12-19-2000 09:07 am, Comments on the 37C, HunterOwners.com



MIDNIGHT SUN with her big Genoa Jib

Blaise Pierson of Bradenton, Florida is the owner of hull #42, which is called MIDNIGHT SUN. Blaise may well be the longest continuous Hunter 37 Cutter owner, having bought his boat new in 1979. Interestingly, MIDNIGHT SUN no longer sails under the cutter rig. Blaise is a keen racer (he placed First in Division and Third Overall in the 2009 Regatta del Sol al Sol) and has fitted his boat with rod rigging, a large genoa and other racing modifications. His sings the praises of the boat and its ability to go fast to weather.

Production of the 37 romped along with only minor changes for the next three and a half years. The 1980 model featured a three cylinder, 30 horsepower, Yanmar 3QM30 diesel, replacing the slightly underpowered 2QM20. Minor changes were made in the plumbing. Curiously, the head discharge hoses and pumpout moved from the starboard side, adjacent the holding tank, to the port side. The

aluminum holding tank under the shower seat never moved, until owners were forced to replace them as the boats aged – an aluminum tank for sewage was one of the boat's few flaws. The electric pressure water pump seemed to move from inside the galley sink cabinet to under the starboard settee sporadically during this build period. At least one 1980 model was equipped with a Yacht Specialties pedestal and steering system in lieu of the more common Edson equipment – this may have been a supply issue. Roller furling on the jib was Hyde Stream Stay until sometime in 1981, when it was replaced by a simpler, less expensive CDI unit. By and large the 300+ boats made before mid-1982 were very similar, with only small refinements made from time to time.

The changes in the Hunter 37 Cutters of the early 1980s may have been minor, but big changes were going on at Hunter Marine. Hunter was looking in new directions, inspired in part by John's design for the 54 racing sled TUESDAY'S CHILD that he penned for Warren Luhrs. Cherubini prophetically said of the one-off boat: "Even if it proves to do half what we intend, it will influence our future designs of



MATHURIN II -1981 Hunter 37 Cutter # 225

production boats".<sup>3</sup> TUESDAY's CHILD raced in the 1980 OSTAR transatlantic race, was the first to break the clipper ship record for the New York to San Francisco passage, and was the basis for the last of the Cherubini-designed Hunters, the 54. Sadly, in 1981, John Cherubini was undergoing chemotherapy for cancer. His prolific output at Hunter dwindled (although he was still involved with other projects at his family's Cherubini Yachts yard). In 1981 Hunter Marine began planning a new line of boats and started an in-house design team under Cort Steck. 1983 saw Hunter Marine production move from Marlboro, New Jersey to Alachua, Florida. John Cherubini died the same year; it was a great loss to the sailing world. One can only hope that he had an inkling of how much his designs would be appreciated in years to come, from the popular and plebeian Hunters to the magnificent Cherubini 44 and 48 yachts.

Somewhere around mid-1982, the deck mold for the Hunter 37 Cutter was extensively retooled. It may have been directed by Cort Steck around the time of the move to Florida. In any case, starting with hull # 308 (or possibly at # 307) in August 1982, the changes that were evident at a glance. The mainsheet traveller moved from the bridge deck in the cockpit



to the cabin top, forward of the companion way. The cockpit combings were lengthened, swept up and integrated into a splash guard that formed the base of the dodger. This new combing necessitated a change in the cabin ports: the aft-most port had to be relocated almost a foot forward and one of three large (7"x14") ports in main cabin shrunk to 5"x12" size to accommodate the squeeze. A small 5"x12" port was added to starboard side of the rear cabin bulkhead, to restore natural light and ventilation to the galley area. There were

other changes that were more positive. A small deck box for winch handles, sail ties, etc. was added between the dorade vents forward of the mast, as well as a stainless steel 'crash bar' to protect the dorades from the staysail boom. In the cockpit, the teak trim under the primary winches disappeared, but a new hinged, teak step on the stern cleverly hid the emergency tiller connection. The winches themselves had changed from Lewmar 42s to Bariant 23s. Down below, the only change of real significance was the addition of a much-needed access hatch between the quarterberth cabin and the machinery space aft of the engine. Late in 1982, the Edson steering pedestal was replaced by a Merriman pedestal.

Summer 1983 brought another facelift to the 37 cutter for the 1984 models. The large opening ports in the main cabin were replaced by two long trapezoidal fixed ports, leaving three small 5"x12" opening ports on each side of the cabin. The louvered locker doors in the cabin gave way to tinted plastic sliders. Engine horsepower was up again, with the four cylinder Yanmar 4JHE being phased in.

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<sup>3</sup> "John Cherubini Is a Designer in Motion – a profile by Deborah T. Luhrs" Cruising World magazine, October 1979



The 1984 models were being sold to an increasingly sophisticated buyers' market that had many choices of boat and manufacturer. As a result, the Hunter 37 could be ordered with many 'factory' optional extras such as roller furling on the staysail, halyards led aft to rope clutches, extra winches, Adler Barbour refrigeration, etc.<sup>4</sup>

1984 was the final year that Hunter Marine produced the Cherubini-designed 37. The 1985 models were the first to bear the modified HIN coding that had been mandated in the USA – the last four characters in the hull identification number now signified the build month, the build year and the model year. When the 1985 models were introduced in August of that year, slightly over 400 hulls had been launched. At least three, and probably more, hulls were produced as 1985 models. All had the Yanmar 4JHE as standard equipment. I have been unable to discover the number of the final hull but # 403, LONESOME DOVE, has recently undergone an extensive refit; she and her siblings will be sailed for many years to come by owners who appreciate the beauty and function of the John Chreubini designed 37 cutter built by Warren Luhrs and Hunter Marine .



GUTSY GETAWAY -1984 Hunter 37 Cutter # 377

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<sup>4</sup> Ed Allen: thread post 09-16-2010 07:48 pm, Evolution of the Cutter, HunterOwners.com

## APPENDICES

### HULL CHRONOLOGY

HIN	Hull Number	Model Year	Month Built	Vessel Name	HOW Owner Name	Home Port
HUN37001M78	1	1978		Shadow Jack?	Bill Young	??? LA
HUN37007M78L	7	1978	L - July 1978	Aeolus	Mark 14893	Hampton VA
HUN37019M79B	19	1979	B - Sep 1978	Good News	Sanders	San Francisco CA
HUN37028M79C	28	1979	C - Oct 1978	Selkie	Cat	Ruskin FL
HUN37035M79D	35	1979	D - Nov 1978	Spindrift	Hal9188	St. Johns NF
HUN37036M79D	36	1979	D - Nov 1978	Fantasy II	Bill1565	Punta Gorda FL
HUN37037M79D	37	1979	D - Nov 1978	Autumn Breeze	Tony23676	Alemeda CA
HUN37042M79	42	1979		Midnight Sun	Blaise	Bradenton FL
HUN37055M79F	55	1979	F - Jan 1979	Felicity	James20023	Santa Rosa Beach FL
HUN37057M79F	57	1979	F - Jan 1979	Southern Cross	Southern Cross21572	Port Clinton OH
HUN37063M79G	63	1979	G - Feb 1979	Irresponsible	William 24338	Grosse Pointe MI
HUN37064M79G	64	1979	G - Feb 1979	Dreamer	Morrie	Hilo HI
HUN37065M79G	65	1979	G - Feb 1979	Orion	Johann Han	Newport News VA
HUN37066M79G	66	1979	G - Feb 1979	Enchantée	Jeff LeSage	Baton Rouge LA
HUN37070M79H	70	1979	H - Mar 1979	Dionysus	Bob 4076	Sacramento CA
HUN 37073M79H	73	1979	H - Mar 1979	Rhapsodie	Richard McDonald	Milwaukee WI
HUN 37074M79H	74	1979	H - Mar 1979	Ladylove	Ed Schenck	Davis Island FL
HUN37107M79K	107	1979	K - Jun 1979	Bonheur	Guidera48	Myrtle Beach SC
HUN37119M80A	119	1980	A - Aug 1979	Cats Cradle	Kirk3467	Tacoma WA
HUN37123M80B	123	1980	B - Sep 1979	Free Spirit	Jeff Pierson	Jacksonville FL
HUN37138M80C	138	1980	C - Oct 1979	Chutzpah	Chutzpah	Huntington NY
HUN37141M80C	141	1980	C - Oct 1979	Kokomo	Alan3764	Pensacola FL
HUN37154M80D	154	1980	D - Nov 1979	Superneat II	Alan6707	Groton CT
HUN37162M80E	162	1980	E - Dec 1979	Seazure	Thomas11403	La Paz MEXICO
HUN37165M80F	165	1980	F - Jan 1980	Adventure	Mobjack	Jackson Creek VA
HUN37167M80F	167	1980	F - Jan 1980	Razzle Dazzle	Foursprings (CC Fitzgerald)	Mattapoisett, MA
HUN37173M80	173	1980		Lady's Liesure	Richard 4744	Long Beach MS
HUN37177M80G	177	1980	G - Feb 1980	Harrison	Geneballou	Key West FL
HUN37178M80G	178	1980	G - Feb 1980	Kaleidoscope	Steve22138	San Carlos MEXICO
HUN37185M80	185	1980		Bad Boy	OBX Sailor	Colington Island NC
HUN37194M80I	194	1980	I - Apr 1980	Illusion	Mike4075	Newburyport MA
HUN37209M81C	209	1981	C - Oct 1980	Impulse	Richard19086	Port Clinton OH
HUN37215M81D	215	1981	D - Nov 1980	Leeward III	Fred15576	Tolchester MD
HUN37217M81E	217	1981	E - Dec 1980	Sea Breeze	Walt24094	Yorktown VA
HUN37221M81	221	1981		Grace	Jack19767	Raleigh NC
HUN37224M81F	224	1981	F - Jan 1981	Little Wing	Sandpiper10471	Blind River ON
HUN37225M81	225	1981		Mathurin II	MathurinII	Montreal QC
HUN37243M81J	243	1981	J - May 1981	Persistence	Merrill7842	Bristol VT
HUN37244M81J	244	1981	J - May 1981	Odyssee	Joe23335	New Bern NC
HUN37262M81L	262	1981	L - July 1981	St. Somewhere	Terry22622	Virginia Beach VA
HUN37263M81L	263	1981	L - July 1981	Retreat	Capt Jerry	Slidell LA
HUN37305M82I	305	1982	I - Apr 1982	Clair de Lune	Gary16332	Sturgeon Bay WI
HUN37306M82I	306	1982	I - Apr 1982	Trinity	Randal18452	St. Petersburg FL
HUN37308M83A	308	1983	A - Aug 1982	Calypso	Jim Legere	Halifax NS
HUN37326M83D	326	1983	D - Nov 1982	Mermaid Hunter	Dave Wilson	Sacramento CA
HUN37330M83E	330	1983	E - Dec 1982	Bright Star	Sail_4_me	Bayfield ON
HUN37339M84L	339	1984	L - July 1983	Island Girl	Harold9264	New Bedford MA
HUN37345M84F	345	1984	F - Jan 1984	Miss Kitty Kay II	Floyd (Hoss)	Centerport NY
HUN37349M84F	349	1984	F - Jan 1984	Renasci	SailH37	South Pasadena FL
HUN37357M84G	357	1984	G - Feb 1984	Fjellmo	Alberto17969	Woods Hole MA
HUN37360M84G	360	1984	G - Feb 1984	<i>Not Named</i>	D. Prior	
HUN37368M84	368	1984		Jonah	Keith3323	Point Roberts WA
HUN37370M84H	370	1984	H - Mar 1984	Tamara	Joe23359	Northeast MD
HUN37377M84I	377	1984	I - Apr 1984	Gutsy Getaway	Bob16761 (Miller)	Anacortes WA
HUN37380M84I	380	1984	I - Apr 1984	<i>Not Named</i>	Gary 16184	Alemeda CA
HUN37381M84I	381	1984	I - Apr 1984	<i>Not Named</i>	Carl 12606	Atlantic Highlands NJ
HUN37386M84	386	1984			Ed Allen	Tampa FL
HUN37392M84K	392	1984	K - Jun 1984	Sea Dreamer 2	Tom23540	Lunenburg NS
HUN37397M84	397	1984		Reliant	Larry7104 (RELIANT37)	Poquoson VA
HUN37401H485	401	1985	H - Aug 1984	BerBot	Mike8148	Alemeda CA
HUN37402H485	402	1985	H - Aug 1984	Celebration	Seattle Scott	Seattle WA
HUN37403I485	403	1985	I - Sep 1984	Lonesome Dove	lonesomedove	Forked River NJ

**HUNTER 37 Cutter Changing Features by Model Year**

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
11 opening ports	X	X	X	X	X			
12 opening ports						X		
8 opening ports							X	X
short cockpit combings	X	X	X	X	X			
long cockpit combings						X	X	X
main traveller on bridge deck	X	X	X	X	X			
main traveller on cabin top						X	X	X
engine panel on bridge dk	X	X	X	X	X			
engine panel on port side						X	X	X
manual bilge pump port side	X	X	X	X	X			
manual bilge pump stbd side						X	X	X
Lewmar 42 winches	X	X	?					
Barient 23 winches				X	X	X		
Maxwell 26 winches							X	X
Hyde Stream Stay	X	X	?					
CDI Furler				X	?	X	X	X
Edson Pedestal	?	X		X	?	X		

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Yacht Special pedestal			X					
Merriman pedestal						X	X	?
teak under cockpit winches	X	X	X	X	X			
teak step over top of rudder post						X	X	X
deck box between dorades						X	X	X
ss rail over dorades						X	X	X
opening port in galley bulkhead						X	X	X
engine access from q-berth						X	X	X
Yanmar 2QM20	X	X						
Yanmar 3QM30			X	X	X	X	X	
Yanmar 4JHE							X	X
louvered locker doors	X	X	X	X	X	X		
plexiglas locker doors							X	X
head plumbed to stbd	X	X	?					
head plumbed to port				X	X	X	X	X

GENERAL NOTES:

All years were available with either shoal draft (4'0") or full draft (5'1") keels

New model years commenced in August - i.e. August 1978 saw the introduction of the 1979 model

Deck mold was retooled mid-1982, resulting in different cockpit coamings, location of mainsheet traveller, ports & other minor changes

Engine options overlapped in some years

1984 saw the introduction of two long fixed ports per side and minor trim changes below