

ISSUE TEN  
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# The Superyacht

TRUTH • OPINION KNOWLEDGE • IDEAS & SUPERYACHT OWNER INSIGHT



# OWNER

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# A TWIST OF FATE

— WORDS BY ELLIE BRADE AND IMAGES COURTESY OF THE  
HAGADONE CORPORATION AND QUICKSILVER STUDIOS

When Duane Hagadone sold his custom-built 62.6m *Lady Lola* in 2004, he thought it marked the end of his time as a yacht owner. A twist of fate and a chance encounter with the yacht again at the 2011 Monaco Yacht Show saw him buy her back and now he and his wife Lola are enjoying life at sea more than ever.









Born in Coeur d'Alene in Idaho, where he still lives and works today, publisher Duane Hagadone grew up by the waters of the city's freshwater lake, dreaming of someday owning a large yacht of his own. After dropping out of university to work alongside his father in publishing, his career advanced abruptly at age 26 when he lost his father to cancer and the publishing company directors asked him to step in and take his father's place as publisher of the Coeur d'Alene Press. "It was a real challenge, my father was my best friend," says Hagadone. "When the owners of the paper asked if I would be publisher I said, 'Darn right I will. I'm pretty young but you'll get no complaints that I won't give it all I've got.'" There were certainly no complaints.

After building the paper to become the most successful one in its group, Hagadone was given equity and ownership options, and later established the Hagadone Corporation having bought the Press and five other titles in 1976.

Today the corporation's newspaper division, which has nearly 20 titles in its portfolio, operates alongside media, hospitality and real estate holdings. "I've been very fortunate to start in a business that I really enjoy and love. I can't wait to get up and go to work in the morning. I joke that I'm 80 and I've never worked a day in my life," laughs Hagadone. "If you have a passion, take care of people and are creative then you have the potential to have success."

His success meant that he had achieved the affluence to allow him to buy a yacht and in 1996 he purchased a 44.7m second-hand



Benetti, naming her *Lady Lola*, after his wife Lola. "I wanted to make sure the dream was as good as the real thing," he explains. The ownership experience lived up to all they had imagined, so much so that the Hagadones decided to build their own custom yacht.

"I visited nearly every yard in Europe and eventually selected Oceanco for the build," he tells us. "It had an excellent programme and the timing was perfect as it had a hull ready and an opening to deliver within two years." A key part of the contract for Hagadone was that the yard agreed to design the boat from Idaho. As a result the Hagadones spent many happy hours planning the build with the Oceanco team, particularly Richard Hein, then the general manager of Oceanco, and François Zuretti, interior designer of the Benetti *Lady Lola*. "We designed her from the ground up,

**"IT'S AN ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL LIFESTYLE, IT'S GOT TO BE THE ULTIMATE LUXURY. WE PINCH OURSELVES WHENEVER WE ARE ON BOARD."**

**Opening page:** The magnificent 62.4m *Lady Lola*.

**This page:** (Above left) Duane Hagadone has spent his whole life working in the publishing sector; (Main) Mr Hagadone enjoyed building *Lady Lola* at Oceanco immensely; (Right) Duane and Lola Hagadone on board *Lady Lola*.





exactly how we wanted her," he says. "The team we brought together worked really well."

Hagadone was very hands-on throughout the build process and the yacht's design incorporated lots of firsts, including opting to put the owner's stateroom above the main wheelhouse, which back then was practically unheard of. One exceptionally unique aspect of the yacht was that she was the first and only yacht to have its own golf course. "Richard Hein was in Idaho when we were designing the boat and we were playing golf," remembers Hagadone. "I'd always kidded with Richard that the boat needed sizzle, and I said, 'Why can't we have a golf course on board?' One thing led to another and we did it." A retractable tee, a system of buoys and crew monitoring scores by tender allows guests to play golf from aboard the yacht with the ocean their green. As well as




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**This page:** (Main) *Lady Lola* is well-equipped with toys and tenders; (Left) Duane and Lola Hagadone are enjoying life on board *Lady Lola* more than ever.

eschewing the norm with his yacht, Hagadone was also one of the first owners, if not the first, to build a shadow boat, 56.9m *Lola Shadow*, to accompany the main yacht. “I’ve always had a helicopter, but it took up too much of the top deck of the yacht, which we enjoyed using,” Hagadone explains. “I found an offshore vessel and decided to buy it and rebuild her.” Once completed, *Lola Shadow* carried a host of water toys, boats, a submarine and a helicopter. “It meant *Lady Lola* wasn’t cluttered and it really worked well.”

After *Lady Lola* launched in 2002, the Hagadones embarked on an extensive world tour. “The plan was that if we were going to get into boating, we would really use our yacht and we did use her a lot,” says Hagadone. “We travelled up the East Coast, the West Coast, to the Caribbean, the Med and through Europe.” They were getting ready to embark on the final leg of their world tour – down the Red Sea into the Asia Pacific – when their insurance company refused to insure the yacht owing to

piracy issues in the area at the time, putting a temporary barrier in the way of their plans. “We’d seen just about everywhere else by that point and the Asia Pacific was last on our list,” he tells us. “We were thinking of selling once we were done and my broker [Merle Wood] had told me it would take about a year to sell the boat. I figured we would still have time to see the Asia Pacific while she was on the market.”

Typically a year would have been a more than realistic time estimate to sell a yacht like *Lady Lola* but things went a bit faster than expected. Merle Wood put the boat on the market on 8 December 2004, and promoted her to a list of select brokers overnight. The very next day there was a call from an Italian who had seen the yacht at a Monaco Yacht Show and wanted the first chance to buy her. “Our family was leaving the boat on the Sunday morning and so we said he could come to see it any time after that,” recalls Hagadone. “He had his own plane and he was in St Maarten by 1pm ... by the 





time I got home I had a call saying it was sold on the condition that the new owner could have her for Christmas. I was in deep trouble then as I had lots of plans for the New Year and Christmas with friends and family on the boat! But we agreed to sell and we packed up our belongings and said goodbye to *Lady Lola*."

With the yacht sold, and the subsequent sale of *Lola Shadow*, Hagadone thought that his time as a superyacht owner was at an end. But fate intervened. In September 2011, seven years after he had sold *Lady Lola*, he was in Monaco for business. Realising that the Monaco Yacht Show was on, he rang his former broker, Merle Wood, to see if he could visit the show for an afternoon to see what was on offer from the industry. "Two days later, Merle called and said, 'Do you want to go on board *Lady Lola*?'" says Hagadone. The owner of the yacht had died, the estate had put her on the market and she was at the show. "We went on board and it was amazing, he had not changed anything, it was as though we had never left. It turned out that we didn't realise how much we'd enjoyed yachting until we left it and within a few weeks of seeing her again I had bought back *Lady Lola*. I've never heard of that being done – an owner buying back the yacht they had originally built."

The Hagadones have taken to life on board – again – with enthusiasm, particularly as their grandchildren are now old enough to enjoy spending time on the yacht with them. Having just fully refurbished the yacht from top to bottom, Hagadone says *Lady Lola* is in even better condition than the day he took delivery of her thanks to advances in technology. The yacht has already travelled to Costa Rica and Mexico, and was in San

Francisco for the duration of the America's Cup. The Asia Pacific, which they missed out on in their big world tour, is still on the list of places to see. "We've spent so much time in the Med, we want to explore some new territory," Hagadone says. "We enjoy the water and cruising. It's a great way to see the world."

*Lady Lola* is back where she belongs and Hagadone is a happy owner once more. "It's funny how fate handles things. It all worked out extremely well and we are enjoying the boat more than we did the first time," he says. "It's an absolutely wonderful lifestyle, it's got to be the ultimate luxury. We pinch ourselves whenever we are on board." □

**"IT'S FUNNY HOW FATE HANDLES THINGS. IT ALL WORKED OUT EXTREMELY WELL AND WE ARE ENJOYING THE BOAT MORE THAN WE DID THE FIRST TIME."**

**This page:** (Above left) *Lady Lola*'s beautiful interior, by François Zuretti; (Above right) *Lady Lola* is the world's only yacht with it's own floating golf green; (Below) exterior aft deck.



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