

THE HELM

Fall/Winter 2011 Vol. 28, No. 3



Elf, past and future



President's Message

Thank You for Preserving an American Maritime Treasure

... by Rick Carrion

Over the past few years I have had several visitors come aboard ELF and thank the Guild and me for preserving one of America's maritime treasures. I must admit that it has taken me somewhat by surprise and has been a real ego boost. I told the visitors about the Guild and how we all worked so hard to restore ELF to her 1888 configuration, something that I could not have done alone. Granted it took over seventeen years. Using original photographs of ELF from 1888 through the late 1890's as guides, I am thrilled to say that we finished the restoration and were ready to share her with the world.

When I purchased ELF in 1971, at age nineteen, she was a derelict and no one had any idea of her real pedigree. She was scheduled to be scuttled that fall if no one purchased her. It was a few years later that I found her documentation numbers while scraping paint on the interior. The numbers were carved into the aft side of the main beam, which is directly behind the mast. With such a large rig she worked the beam and needed a sister beam for additional strength. But when the additional beam was installed the shipwrights sandwiched the numbers, hiding them for years, and filling the bottom of the numbers with layers of paint.

After I found the numbers, I carefully used dental tools to remove the layers of paint. Then I painted them with white paint and used a darker color to highlight the background. I then read the numbers by shining a flashlight into the gap between the beams. Once I had the numbers I sent them to the US Office of Documentation. Several months later, I received a copy of the original documentation from the National Archives.

That validated the numbers, and gave me a name to research: ELF. What a stroke of luck!

Where to start the research was the next issue. I sent letters to sixteen Maritime museums along the East Coast and received a mix of stories and associated information. It felt as though I had really hit the jackpot when we received images of ELF on the ways and sailing in the 1880's and 1890's. I was amazed to see ELF in her real glory with her big rig, and it brought tears to my eyes. I knew then that I had to make every effort to restore her properly. The question was, HOW? I knew that it would be impossible on a teacher's salary. My motto was that anything is possible, as long as you want to do it badly enough.

I began by having ELF listed on the National Register of Historic Places, March 26, 1980. In 1982 the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc. (a 501 C 3 nonprofit membership organization) was formed. The primary goal was to facilitate the restoration of ELF and other classic vessels. A second goal was to educate members with the skills necessary for keeping the vessels alive. We were attending shows, holding fundraisers, and taking members sailing aboard ELF. As the Guild was gaining momentum, I officially donated ELF in 1988 for the restoration effort.

On July 7, 1991 we hauled ELF out of the water and trucked her to my back yard to start the Restoration. Our Boatwright, Graham Ero, and I started taking her apart and getting the restoration under way. At first, we thought it would take only a couple of years. However, after we started to realize her actual needs and the toll a hundred years of maritime conditions had inflicted we knew we had to replace everything but the keel. Therefore, the two-year project turned into over seventeen years of effort. Launch dates were set and missed, but ELF eventually splashed on April 11, 2008, although there was still much work to do.

We have had the opportunity to sail and display ELF at a number of special events over the past four years. Through your generous contributions of time, money, materials, and compliments, we have surpassed our goals. I want to thank you for helping to save and preserve a real American Maritime Artifact. We achieved this success only through your generous help and support! WE THANK YOU!

Reflections on 2011 – A Year of Milestones

. . . by Carly Sargent

As this season comes to a close and ELF prepares to go to her winter resting place at Georgetown Yacht Basin, I think we can all feel a great sense of pride and satisfaction for all we accomplished this year! Reflecting on the 2011 season I have realized this year marks many important milestones for ELF, the CYRG and Captain Rick.

1. 60 years ago Captain Rick was born! Happy Birthday Captain Rick! 60 years young and still going strong (let's keep it that way)!

2. 40 years ago Rick bought a derelict wooden yawl named "FLYING HIGH" – year and builder unknown. He renamed her "PAZ" and found out several years later he purchased our very own "ELF" and later entered her in the National Register of Historic Places.

3. 30 years ago CYRG was created and ELF's lengthy restoration project began.

4. 4 years ago, ELF was re-launched to everyone's amazement and delight and Rick started his tireless campaign to share her with the world. The journey has not been an easy one, but with many supporters and remarkable perseverance on Captain Rick's part we are moving forward with steady success.

Happily, this year was chock full of events and new milestones as you will read about in detail in the pages of this issue of The Helm. Here are some of the highlights.

1. Despite the bad weather that plagued us for much of this season ELF was able to attend every event all the events scheduled! Thanks to all who participated and helped make that happen.

2. We started the season early in May with ELF flying her new dress ship flags (thanks to Pete Mullalhy of Eastern Shore Flags) and star cut spinnaker (thanks to Jenkins Sails) in the Inaugural ELF CLASSIC Yacht Race which was a wonderful success on many levels. Plans for the second annual are already underway.

3. ELF's reliable Westerbeke 44 (thank you Peter Kellogg) logged many a mile and made our many passages both safe and possible.

4. After a grueling haul out and paint job in 100 plus degree heat (thank you members, friends and troopers!) we headed out in intermittent rain and thunderstorms for Bay Head, NJ for the Squan Tri Sail Regatta in July to participate in the Classic Wooden Boat Division. The weather cleared, the sun shone, the seas calmed, the engine purred and I swear ELF shivered with pleasure when we left the Delaware Bay and headed out into the open ocean waters round Cape May. I know I did! We celebrated Capt Rick's 60th birthday in beautiful Barnegat Inlet, put a final coat of oil on her lovely decks and headed up to be welcomed with open arms by the generous and delightful folks at Bay Head Yacht Club.

5. Back home again ELF survived her first earthquake and a few days later rode out Hurricane Irene at the National Sailing Hall of Fame (NSHOF) docks!

6. A few weeks later we participated in the Annapolis Yacht Club Keels and Wheels Show, taking Best Yacht Award and the next day placed 2nd in the 2nd Annual NSHOF Classic Wooden Boat Race. What a weekend! What a crew!

7. Next we held our Annual Crab Feast and Silent Auction fundraiser. We were entertained by "Schooner Time" (thanks to our fine bluegrass friends and fellow sailors, Bob and Cherri from the Bluenose Schooner MARTHA WHITE) and our reliable and appreciated guitar picking friend, Dan McGrath,

8. ELF made her way to Philadelphia to participate in the Independent Seaport Museum's Classic Wooden Boat Show.

9. ELF participated in the start of the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race in Baltimore and attended in full dress ship flags at the final celebration of the Cambridge Schooner Rendezvous.

10. We wrapped the year up with the Sultana Project's Downrigging event despite the rain, cold temps and sleet! So, if Mother Nature prevented you from getting out and sailing with us this year, 2012 is just around the corner and it's only going to get better! For example, ELF will participate in the Tall Ship festivities on the Chesapeake Bay commemorating the War of 1812. Please plan to join .

Two Great Races: Squan Tri Sail & Classic Wooden Sailboat Race

... by Dan McGrath

The 32nd Squan Tri Sail Race was hosted by the Bay Head Yacht Club, Manasquan River Yacht Club and Metedeconk River Yacht Clubs. This event is a series of races held the last weekend in July off Mansquan Inlet New Jersey, followed by receptions at each of the hosting yacht clubs. We dodged summer thunderstorms at the Bay Head Yacht Club, but CYRG members Rick Carrion, Carly Sargent, Kevin Garber, Pete Mullaly, and Mike Cabler were already there. Elf was beautifully moored in front of the Club, the hors d'oeuvres and sandwiches were delicious, thunder and lightning could not stop the captains and crews from getting to know each other.

Rick Carrion presented an excellent slide show of Elf's history and restoration. Following that Gary Jobson gave an entertaining show of the sport of sailing. Rick's and Gary's talks stimulated everyone's anticipation of the two days of



Photo by Dan McGrath

racing to come. After dinner I headed over to the motor yacht Barnegat, my home for the weekend, to claim a berth.

My job for the weekend was to ride around with Kyle Donnelly, skipper of the jumbo sized rigid inflatable White Whale and take pictures of the race. We also provided other services; towing one or the other of the A-Cats through the Point Pleasant Canal, delivering water and lunches to the various race crews, and picking up overboard spinnaker bags. Mostly, though, we had fun. We were joined by a few other passengers enjoying the races on a bright clear summer day.

The original plan was to have four races, two each day of the weekend. Ultimately the last race on Sunday was cancelled so the regatta consisted of three races. This was the first year of the Classic Division, the one that involved Elf. There were five classic yachts entered: Elf, 1888 top sail gaff cutter, Rick Carrion skipper; Silent Maid (a replica of the original Silent Maid, a 1923 Barnegat Bay Cat Boat), skipper-Gary Jobson; Torch, A Class Cat Boat, skipper-Peter Chance; Vapor, A Class Cat Boat, skipper-George Schuld; Windago, ketch, skipper-John Cunningham. In addition to the CYRG members mentioned above Elf's crew for the day were, from the Independence Seaport, John Brady and Wen Byer, and from the Bay Head Yacht Club, Mary Beth King, Elizabeth King and Jan Davis.

Silent Maid, Vapor and Torch started the first race in company.

Elf was well behind at the start, never-the-less she caught up to Windago although the race was called before they crossed the line and a tie for 5th declared. Torch, Vapor and Silent Maid placed first, second and third respectively.

Elf was in much better position at the start of the second race but still started behind the cat boats and couldn't catch up. Silent Maid closed on Vapor in the final legs and passed her to place second. Torch was just too fast and kept her lead to the finish. Elf finished fourth.

Manasquan River Yacht Club hosted a big bash on the second evening, attended by just about everyone who had any involve-

ment with the Squan Tri-Sail. The Bay Head yacht club contingent was ferried to the party by White Whale. Everyone had a great time reliving the events of the day and telling other yachting tales, making new friends and renewing old friendships. The

food, corn on the cob and filet mignon, served cafeteria style, was just delicious.

Elf got a great start to the Sunday morning race. She forced Vapor and Silent Maid to fall off just before the start and got the jump across the line. Unfortunately Elf could not hold her own to windward with the light displacement Silent Maid and Vapor, both rounded the windward mark ahead of her. Even though she was fast downwind it wasn't enough to catch up to Vapor and Silent Maid. Silent Maid came in first followed by Vapor. Elf placed third in her best performance of the weekend.

We hooked up Vapor and headed back to the yacht club to get ready for the awards ceremony at the Metedeconk River Yacht Club. The regatta prizes are determined by adding up the finishing places for each race and the yacht with the lowest score wins. In the Classic Division this put Elf in fourth place. Windago was fifth. Torch and Vapor were third and second respectively and Silent Maid came in first. Peter Kellogg was also awarded the Squan Tri-Sail Trophy-non spinnaker division.

The 2nd Annual Classic Wooden Sailboat Race was sponsored by the National Sailing Hall of Fame (NSHOF) in Annapolis. This event took place on September 18 of this year. This year's race drew twenty-one entries. Of these sixteen start-

ed and thirteen finished. We hoped to significantly improve our performance over last year.

The course was a bit different this year having the base leg marked with racing buoys instead of the existing navigation aids used last year. With the wind coming out of the east north-east at 5-13 knots this made for a very fast course. The course was a run down the base leg, a long port tack to buoy #6, and a reach back to the base leg. Without the need for beating to windward this course was very favorable to Elf. ELF made good time on the reaches and the run.

Our now seasoned racers aboard Elf also worked in our favor. Myself, Mike Cabler, Pete Mullaly, Kevin Garber, Carly Sargent, Rich Savini and, of course Captain Rick Carrion all had crewed on Elf in previous races. The other members of were all experienced sailors and many had sailed on Elf before:

Neal Carter, Russell Levi, Carl Pergler, Kathy Higdon, Dan Brest, and Steve Valihura.

The race is a pursuit style where each yacht has a different starting time based on their handicap. The yachts ranged in size from the 10' Acorn Morgain to the 60' Blue Nose Schooner Martha White. They were divided into two groups, Dayboats and Cruising Class.

We were almost out to the Bay as we made ourselves ready for the start, hoisting sails and making sure each crewmember was in position. This wind was light when we left the dock at The Annapolis Yacht Club but was picking up as we headed down to the start. Somehow we had lost our sailing directions. Fortunately we found out we were in just about the right position for a very good start and we crossed the starting line within seconds of our gun.

In general we were passing or gaining on most of the other yachts when on the downwind leg and on the reach but were definitely slower to windward. Despite our boat speed on the reach, we always well sailed. Windalier caught us on the reach on the second time around the course. The wind conditions were perfect for her and the captain Thad Bench had a big grin on his face as they passed by. This all made for some exciting racing as most of the big yachts were taking turns passing each other as they sailed around the course.

Elf placed second in the Cruising Class. We found this out on the dock after the race. Despite the fact that Captain Rick always says "It's all good. It doesn't matter which place you come in. It's all about having fun." he was beaming with joy and pride in the

accomplishment of his crew and Elf.

A new entry this year was the yacht Witchcraft, a sort of sister ship to Elf as result of the fact that she too was built by Lawley Boat Works. I remember representing the Guild at the annual meetings of the Lawley Boat Owners Association in the late '80s and early '90s. One of the items on each year's agenda was a presentation of the progress being made by those in the process of restoring a Lawley boat. Paul Itzel was always there with a scrap book of photos documenting his work on Witchcraft going back

to the '70s. The idea of a restored Witchcraft creeping up to a restored Elf, just feet from each other on port tacks as they raced to the next mark, was little more than a gleam in the eyes of Paul and Rick at the time. Yet, just like in a dream, there was Paul, sitting in the fore deck, as the gleaming Witchcraft came along side. A couple of elegant ladies were sitting just forward of the mast. We were close enough to have a conversation without shouting. Carly called over "Pardon me. Do you have any Gray Poupon?"

So now the restored Elf has a racing record. She has entered four regattas and competed in six races with a steady improvement in her result. A core crew of experienced Elf racers is forming and I'm sure we can look forward to further glories next year. We may even come in first sometime soon but even if we don't "It's all good. It doesn't matter which place you come in. It's all about having fun."

You can read the full version of Dan's McGrath's article at www.cyr.org/news.htm.



Photo by
Dan McGrath



Mercy Students Sailing on the ELF

... by Marcello Sansone

On a beautiful Friday afternoon in October 2011, we had the privilege to sail down the Delaware River on the restored 1888 ELF. The five students from Mercy Vocational High School are so grateful to our Principal Sister Susan and Vice Principal Glatts who selected us to have the chance to experience such a “once in a lifetime opportunity”. The 1888 ELF, which is the oldest known small yacht in

America, was restored by the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild. The sailing trip was absolutely mesmerizing. It felt like we were taken back in time. For some of us, it was the first time on a boat of any kind, but it was equally spectacular and amazing for all of us. We are all very thankful that we were able to spend the day relaxing and sailing on the

Delaware River. “We were surrounded by wonderful and positive people,” Brianna Clay said. Even though we leisurely sailed, the Elf was originally a racing yacht. “I would recommend people going on a boat ride because it’s a peaceful time and I enjoyed myself,” said Teharah Worrell. We also learned so much about the hard work that

goes into restoration and the dream of Richard Carrion, who founded the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild. In addition, we learned about how important it is to keep history alive and to also keep our waterways clean. We all agree with Dan Bagnell who said, “I would go back in a heartbeat. Life is short, so live it to the fullest! No dream is too big!” We thank all involved for such a wonderful time.



Photo by
Dan McGrath

Seniors Brianna Clay, Dan Bagnell, Teharah Worrell, Brian Ayala, and Marcello Sansone were part of the Elf crew on October 7, 2011. This was a unique opportunity for our students. Mercy Vocational High School is the only catholic, co-edu - cational, vocational high school in the USA. Located in North Philadelphia, we provide opportunities for an under-served population. When Rick offered a day of sailing to some of our students, I jumped at the

opportunity. Rick was an excellent teacher on this sail for our students as were his crew members. The students got the message “follow your dream”. We are very grateful to Rick for giving this opportunity to our students and hope this becomes a tradition for ELF and Mercy Vocational High School. - Catherine Glatts



Another Important Ship – Stewardship

In 1888 bread costs 5 cents a loaf. We can only wonder what the Elf originally cost to build. One thing for certain, costs of operation and maintenance are much greater now.

That is why we need your new and/or continued membership dues. The benefits of membership go far beyond the positive feelings generated by knowing you are contributing to the preservation of maritime history.

We need you and we need your contribution. Our website makes it as easy to make payments by credit card or Paypal. Go to www.cyrg.org and open MEMBERSHIP and please be generous. Checks mailed to the CYRG international headquarters are always welcomed!

The Guild welcomes members of all interests and backgrounds to participate in the mission of traditional American wooden boat restoration and sailing techniques. Membership renewal is required every year. Annual membership in the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild is highly encouraged to support the restoration projects and campaigning Elf! Please pick a membership level that fits your interests and degree of support:

Basic	Receive “The Helm” newsletter, a sticker and announcements of all CYRG events.	\$25.00
Crew	In addition to the benefits of Basic membership, you will receive a CYRG t-shirt.	\$65.00
Bosun/Family	Receive the above, plus family/spouse benefits for sailing on ELF.	\$125.00
Navigator	In addition to all family member benefits, you will receive an 11 x 14 sepia-toned print of ELF.	\$250.00
Voyager	Receive all of the above and a crew member polo shirt.	\$500.00

And even better, any donations made to the Guild are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. The Classic Yacht Restoration Guild is registered federally and in the state of Maryland as a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization. Our tax ID number is 23-2240518.

Your membership is active for one year from the date of application or renewal.

2nd Annual ELF Classic Yacht Race Saturday, May 19, 2012

Please consider joining or sponsoring the 2nd annual event, which will raise funds for the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.

If you plan to participate, contact Rick Carrion:

elf1888@earthlink.net

Check www.cyrg.org for details.





Photos by Dan McGrath



Visit us at:
www.cyrg.org

Down at the Pier

Morning tide floods the shore
Like dark velvet its swellings
Rimmed in gold its crests
Breaking
As they reach the strand
In endless rhythm

They come
Again and again
Burying their gold in the sand

Sibylle Sampson
June 2011

Circling the world they buffet the lands
Telling stories of faraway cities and ports
Of thunderstorms lashing the waters
Of sunken treasures held in their depths
Of islands resting in their embrace

"Lawley Built"



SILENT MAID



1924

THE HELM



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