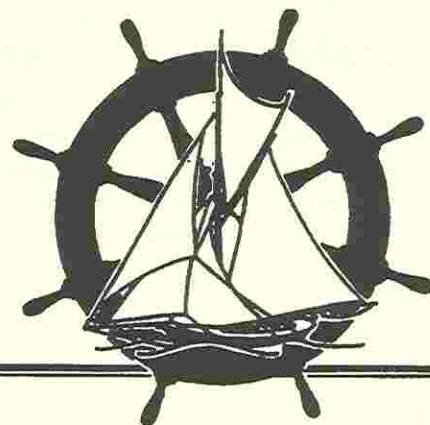


THE HELM



Summer, 2002 - Volume 20, No. 3

A PUBLICATION OF THE CLASSIC YACHT RESTORATION GUILD, INC.

Elf, past and future



President's Message

Assembly Instructions:

Who Needs Them?

... by Rick Carrion

Recently I put out an A.P.B. (All Points Bulletin) for any Lawley cabin interior details for ELF, or boats of the 1880's! (ELF was built by Lawley and Sons MFG in 1888.) One response that I will never forget was from a Lawley boat owner. The gentleman invited me to bring my plans and lines drawings to the annual Lawley Symposium and lay them out for various noted authorities to review and comment about what to do, change or restore. Well... that was not quite the response I needed to hear, though I appreciated the offer. The real problem is that ELF'S cabin over the past 114 years has been changed several times, in fact totally gutted at some time, thus losing for us all of the pre-existing joinery details. So if you have or know someone with an old original Lawley or other 1880's period boat, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE let me know.

Well back to my reality..... we have no blueprints, lines drawings or how-to instructions of ELF's original interior. I do though have a wealth of information from a number of sources — previous owners, books or magazine articles written about Elf and old photos. The exterior details of deck fittings, hatches and cockpit are authentically renewed by the use of photos taken by Nathaniel L. Stebbins from 1888 through 1899. With the help of modern technology, we have scanned the photos into a computer, enlarged specific details and worked with the contrast and resolution to better identify the images.

Without cabin interior shots, we are facing another challenge. Let's face it — we are lucky to have all of the photos that we do have. Of the 144,000 images Stebbins took, most were sold

for about a penny and a half each for greenhouse glass after he passed away. The Stebbins photos were taken with a large bulky camera that recorded the images on same size glass negatives. And indoor photos used a somewhat explosive flash to illuminate the area. So the potential danger most likely prohibited interior shots in cramped yacht interiors.

So... Graham and I are using traditional yacht construction techniques, other old vessel plans, details from magazines articles on ELF, previous owners' recollections and details yielded up when we took her apart. Using all this in combination, we feel that our restoration will reflect accurately the racing yachts of the Golden Age of Sail of the 1880's.

So in closing... the next time you get that special gift and it says "some assembly required," just think of attempting the job without that step by step instruction sheet. I would love to have a detailed set of instructions for ELF, even if translated from Japanese!

Encouragement

Please consider writing an article for our news interest features. When you see your article published I will give you a gift of an official *Elf* T-shirt or *Elf* mouse Pad. We may, at times, need to edit your contribution for space considerations. Thank you!

Topics to consider:

- Historical or unique moments on *Elf*
- Tools or gear and their uses on traditional boats
- How-to articles
- Kid's Corner
- Special Environmental moments that you enjoyed
- You and your boat adventures
- Other... your choice

*"Lawley
Built"*

Graham's Letter

I suppose when talking about a 114-year-old restoration, one wouldn't expect to be talking about a diesel engine, however when we lowered it down into Elf last week it was a big moment. Of course, Elf had no engine when she was built in 1888. As a racing boat, she wouldn't have had one even if one had been invented. On this point we deviate from authenticity for practical reasons, and to be able to satisfy the U.S. Coast Guard's requirements. The waterways are much more crowded and dangerous than they were at the turn of the last century. Boats travel at *BREAKNECK* speeds and are often piloted by untrained and inexperienced weekenders. Commercial traffic is also a real threat. So it is for safety reasons that the donation of this strong and reliable Westerbeke diesel engine was so important. Maneuverability is crucial to the seaworthiness of Elf and the security of her crew. Thanks to Jay Aigeltinger for this important contribution.

As for the summer progress report: It's been great!!! (THOUGH A LITTLE HOT.) Deck beams fastened permanently in place along with the mast step, mast partners. Samson post and partners, skylight, companionway and cockpit carlins, chain locker, forward bulk head, forward V birth, engine beds And we're still hard at work in the heat. Once the decks are on, the end will be clearly in sight.

But the saying, "The Devil is in the details," was never more true than when talking about a wooden boat. Wooden boats are made up of thousands of pieces of material that when put in motion by the forces of wind and water become a nearly living thing. The level of quality of materials and workmanship will determine the caliber and character of the finished vessel. What else could explain the fervor with which Rick and the Guild members have persisted with this project over so many years?



Elf's Shipwright

**Mark Your Calendar Now for the Annual Crab
Feast and Barbecue Fund Raiser
September 21, 2002
Rain Date: September 28**



**20th Annual Crab Feast & BBQ
September 21, 2002
(Rain Date: September 28, 2002)
Cherry Grove Farm Beach Front
Veaseys Cove On the Bohemia River**

I am very pleased to announce your invitation to our **20th annual crab feast - BBQ and day on the Bay**. For all who have attended one or more in the past, you know what a wonderful treat to expect. And to all the first-timers, prepare yourselves for a most memorable day on the Bay with many wonderful new friends.

We will host this year's event again at **Cherry Grove Farm's waterfront at Veaseys Cove**. We are very happy that the Ward family has graciously extended an invitation to enjoy their wonderful Bohemia River beach front.

Please bring your favorite dish to share, and please, please, please bring a copy of the recipe for our boater's cookbook. Be proud of your creation! We want to develop a cookbook of tasty, easy-to do recipes that everyone will crave. So give it your best shot and you will help with the success of the crab feast and the *Elf* restoration.

Also bring your favorite beach toy to share in between bites of crab and BBQ. **Musical instruments are also welcome**. Come by boat, by horse, by car, scooter, bicycle, or whatever, but please just come.

We plan to hold a silent auction. Please consider donating that unused treasure to **help raise funds for the restoration of Elf**.

For planning purposes, please let me know by **Monday, September 16**, that you and your family or friends plan to attend.

Cost this year will be \$30 (members) or \$45 (non-members).
Children Free.

This is a fund raising event for the Elf restoration project.

Please RSVP by September 16:

Phone: 410-275-2819
E-Mail: elf1888@earthlink.net

Please mail your check ASAP to:

Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc.
PO Box 237
Earleville, MD 21919

Long Leaf Yellow Pine Order

We are in the process of ordering one of the best boat building woods available. This wood is extremely rare; an estimated 1,000 acres exists on earth. **If you are in need of some for your project, let me know ASAP so that we can share shipping costs.** Cost is currently at \$3 a board foot.

Approximate shipping charges are \$1 per mile from Georgia.

Call or e-mail if you would like more details.

CHANNEL 9

THE TALK OF THE BAY

First Love

How a youthful romance turned into a life-long rescue mission.

When Rick Carrion laid eyes on her in 1971, it was love at first sight. He was only 19; she was over 80. He had no idea then that *Elf* was one of the oldest small yachts in existence. All he knew was that he had fallen for her classic lines and that she was in desperate need of rescue. Still in college and low on funds, Carrion used his wristwatch as a deposit to buy her, then moved aboard. That's when he discovered how truly down-at-the-heels she was.

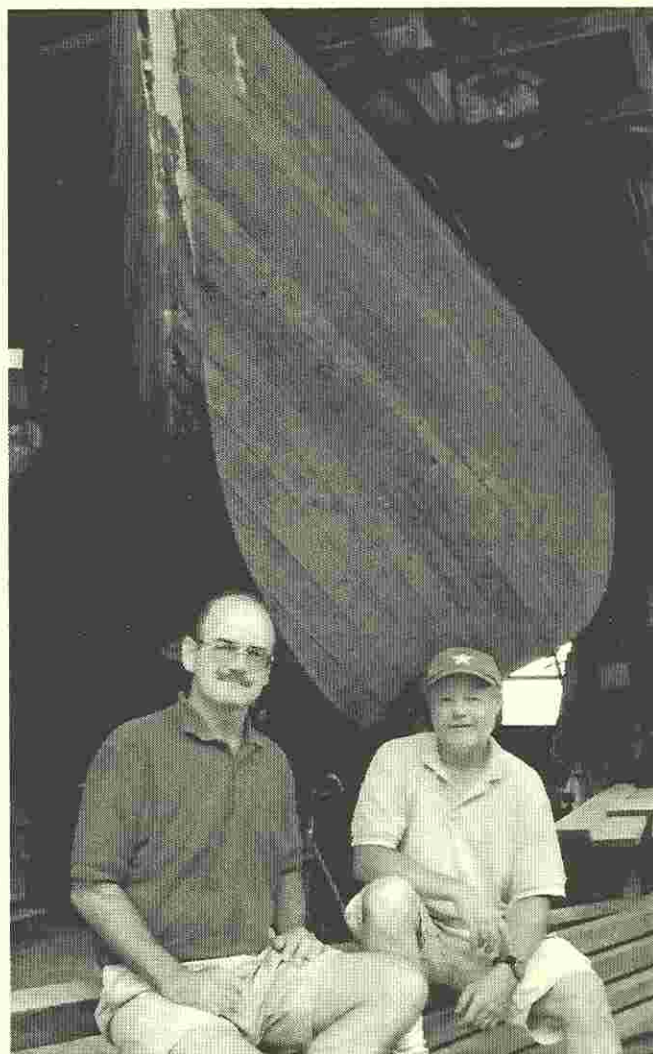
"She was a sinker," he laughs. "I had to come back every weekend to be sure the pumps were working." It wasn't until he began to work on her that he learned she was an 1888 racing sloop designed by George Frederick Lawley. "I found her original documentation numbers when I uncovered a beam," he says.

At the National Archives he unearthed the 1890 registry application, which listed her original name, *Elf*. Armed with that information, he prowled museums and found 100-year-old photos of her, both under construction and under sail. Once he saw the pictures, he knew he had to keep her alive. But her hull and decking were rotten, and the rig needed to be replaced. Restoration meant megabucks. He feared he'd have to give her up to save her, yet he couldn't bear to part with her.

So rather than donate her to a museum, he formed the non-profit Classic Yacht Restoration Guild Inc., whose sole mission is to restore *Elf*—and donated her to the organization in 1982. Over the years, the guild has won grants from the National Historical Trust and others and has gained members, but despite the help the restoration has always been done on a shoestring. Carrion built the shed that now houses *Elf*, beside his Earleville, Md. home, from wood felled on his family farm. More farm felled wood replaced the rotten planks and ribs of her hull.

"It's a skin-of-our-teeth project," says boat restorer Graham Ero, who joined the guild in 1991. "We work when we get some money, and we stop when we run out." Authenticity is key, says Carrion. "We all have the same goal in mind, to historically, accurately restore the boat to a condition of equal or better structural integrity as when she was launched."

Elf has been through a lot of changes since launch, but luckily the late Gus Van Lennep, who owned *Elf* from 1932 to 1943 and co-founded the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, remembered her well. He was able to draw details of her construction to help with the restoration.



MICHAEL C. WOOTTON

Rick Carrion and Graham Ero (right) relax in the shed that houses *Elf*'s hull and restoration materials.

Though Carrion, now 51, sometimes speaks in clinical grant-writer-ese, his passion for *Elf* is undimmed after 30-odd years, and sometimes he can even wax lyrical. "She's a timeless beauty," he says. "I can't wait to see her under sail again."

Decking should begin in the fall after a fundraising crab feast and auction at Cherry Grove Farm on Veasey Cove on the south shore of the Bohemia River. Volunteers and new members are always welcome. Contact the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild at P. O. Box 237, Earleville, MD 21919; 410-275-2819; or elf1888@earthlink.net. The crab feast is scheduled for September 21 (\$45 non-members; kids under 15 free; rain date September 28).

—Nancy Taylor Robson

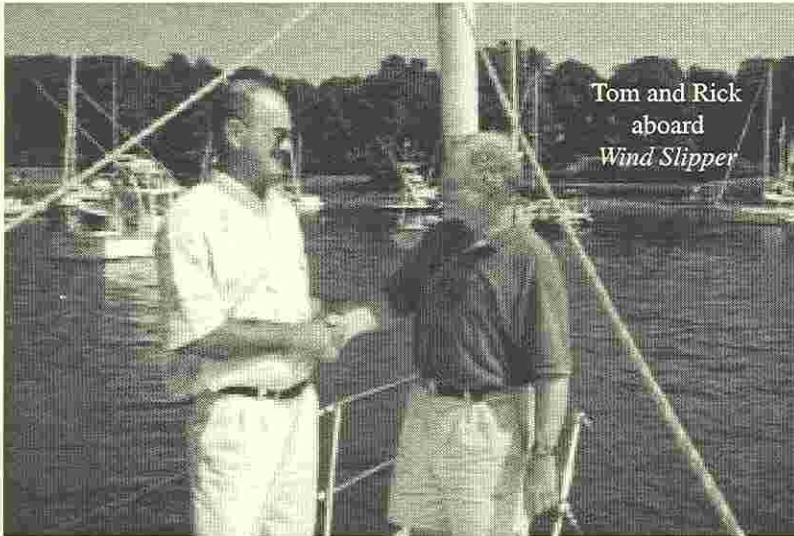
Marblehead Revisited --- July 19-22, 2002

2002 Lawley Symposium --- Boston Yacht Club

Historic Connections

... by Cyndi McNicholas

If you read last year's article about our participation in the 2001 Lawley Symposium, you may have caught my drift, i.e., that the town of Marblehead, Massachusetts has a certain wonderful ambiance, that is to say, a real historical presence. Shunning any hint of the shoddy, MTV - chain store - prefab underside of our present-day American culture, the town and its residents exhibit nothing but the dignified character of an 18th century New England fishing community and center of cul-



Tom and Rick
aboard
Wind Slipper

tural development. We learned during this year's visit that the other communities along the coast north of Boston display the same quiet sophistication and keen awareness of their glorious past.

So it was in such a historic setting that the following meeting took place, providing a thrilling connection across generations.

Henry Howard was the illustrious second owner of *Elf*. Purchasing *Elf* at her tender age of two years, Henry, who was then a twenty-one year old businessman, raced her to a distinguished record at Marblehead in the 1890's, the glory days of sailboat racing. He was also credited with the development of offshore cruising in small yachts. In his 1935 autobiographical novel, "Charting My Life," he recounted his first offshore trip, in 1893, from Marblehead to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and back. He and his crew completed the trip, on *Elf*, in 12 days and nine hours - with no auxiliary engine! Obviously, he was a very capable sailor with a broad streak of courage.

Henry Howard was one of the more prolific and renowned captains of the Yacht *Elf*. (You might mull over, in a spare moment, whether Henry Howard or Capt'n Rick is the more "colorful" character!)

As it happens, Henry Howard's grandson,

Thomas Townsend, resides in the Boston area and maintains a membership with the Eastern Yacht Club, site of last year's Lawley Symposium. We had heard last year that he was interested in the *Elf* restoration but, on the weekend of the '01 Lawley Symposium, he was actually recreating his grandfather's cruise from Marblehead to Halifax!

This year, we arrived at the Friday evening welcoming cocktail party at the Boston Yacht Club at 6:30 P.M., reportedly just a few minutes after Thomas Townsend had departed. We were told that Mr. Townsend had come armed with photographs from his grandfather's archives, looking forward to meeting *Elf*'s present captain! Our late arrival had been the result of one of the ever-present traffic jams on the Boston beltway. In any event, the apparently-missed opportunity to meet Thomas Townsend was a real disappointment for Capt'n Rick. Fortunately, Alfred Hickey (president of the Lawley Boat Owners' Association, Symposium organizer and Gentleman-To-The-Rescue) provided Thomas Townsend's phone number at his summer retreat in Ipswich. We called him the next day and arranged to meet on Sunday afternoon at his boat, which was moored at the Manchester Yacht Club.

So, on Sunday, we packed up our photographs, newsletters, sunscreen, camera and Rick's copy of "Charting My Life," and set out for Manchester-By-The-Sea, a picturesque 30-minute drive from our "home" at the Compass Rose in Marblehead. It was a warm, sunny, breezy, perfect New England summer day. We found the Yacht Club without incident and took the club's launch out to Thomas Townsend's boat, the *Wind Slipper*. As we climbed aboard, we noticed a precious little dinghy with classic lines tied to the stern - Henry Howard's dinghy from his Yacht *Alice*, his second Lawley-built yacht, which was also featured in his book.

Thomas Townsend is an engaging and down-to-earth gentle-

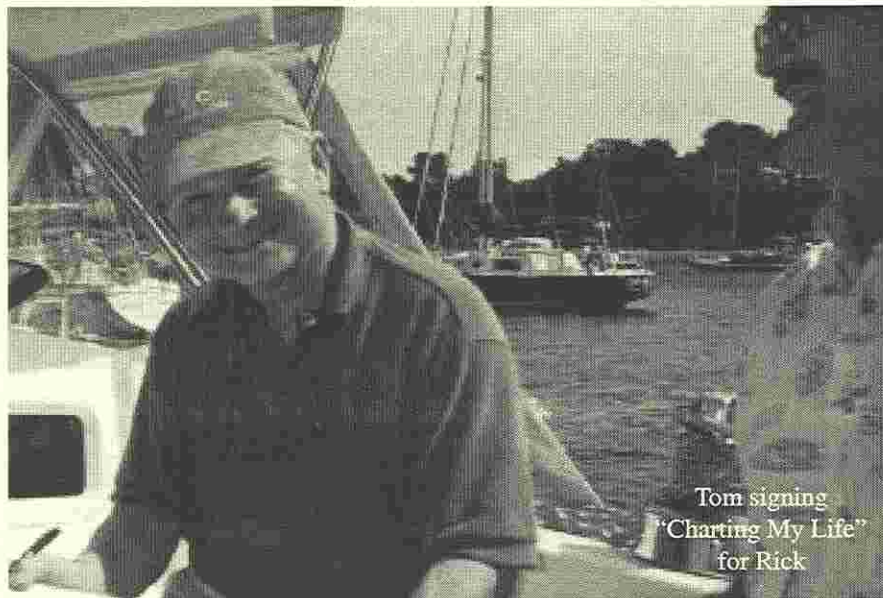


Albert Hickey and
Connie
at the
Boston Yacht Club

man, absorbed in sailing and quite knowledgeable about his grandfather's life and times on the water. He had brought along his own copy of "Charting My Life" and he showed us the photograph inside of himself as a four-year-old child, pictured sitting on the mainsail boom of his grandfather's Yacht Alice. He identified the handwriting on the inside cover of Rick's copy (purchased through an antique book search in 1975) as his aunt's. He was interested in hearing about the considerable progress made

my eyes misted up a bit as well.

So a highlight for 2002. Next year, if fate allows, Thomas Townsend will be participating in the 2003 Marblehead to Halifax race on his grandfather's Yacht, *Elf*! The racing committee created a special historic class for *Elf* to race and recreate the voyage Henry Howard made in 1893. Henry Howard was credited with initiating off shore cruising in small yachts as a result his adventure .



Tom signing
"Charting My Life"
for Rick

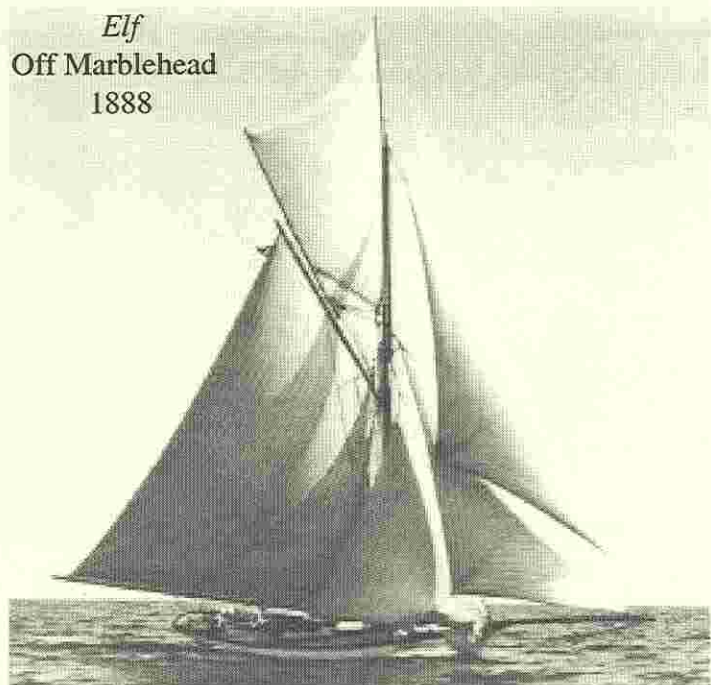
with *Elf*'s restoration, and he clearly appreciated the great care, attention to detail and commitment to quality that constitute Rick and Graham's polestar, guiding each and every facet of the reconstruction. He inspected the nineteenth century photographs of *Elf* with great interest. He presented Rick with copies of photographs from Henry Howard's archives, along with Henry's typewritten descriptions. He was impressed with the concept behind the Guild, the preservation of wooden boatbuilding skills, and the fact that the yacht now belongs to the membership, to be shared with all who support the effort to restore her, and with the whole community. Rick and Thomas remained engrossed in their conversation for some time. It was fascinating to observe the exchange of information and, even more, the awareness of the connection of the two beneficiaries of Henry Howard's legacy, linked by nothing more than a beautiful old wooden boat with sails.

..... What can I add to this report about the Lawley Symposium? Actually, I was absent for much of the actual Symposium program, there being several attractive stores in Marblehead that I had missed last year, as well as a yard sale just down the block from the Compass Rose. I did arrive at the Boston Yacht Club by 4:00 P.M., in time for Rick's very fortuitously-timed presentation, which was followed by a cocktail party. It was nice to renew acquaintance with Albert Hickey and Connie, Jonathan Rice, Kristen Johnson, Jim and his very nice friend from New Jersey, Bill Skinner and Viking Gustafson, and many others. Skinner and Gustafson are the owners and restorers of Old Glory. They had on board their recently-adopted pet squirrel, saved after falling from a tree near their home. It was great to meet Kurt Hasselbalch curator of the Hart Nautical Collection (which contains the Lawley documents) at MIT Museum (we missed him last year). Rick will tell you that the Symposium program was as interesting as it was last year, that he was able to put out a call for any interior photos which might aid in the restoration, and that he learned a few things about interior cabin joinery. Thanks once again to Albert Hickey, mastermind of the Lawley Symposia and the force behind the Lawley Boat Owners Association, which provides the setting for many of these fortunate connections.

With regard to his decision to sail offshore to Halifax on *Elf* in 1893, Henry Howard wrote that "for the first time I owned a boat that was really tight and seaworthy and in which it was safe to go almost anywhere." Clearly, he knew how well-designed and well-built *Elf* was and he relied upon those features in deciding to make the leap into off-shore cruising. According to Thomas Townsend, his grandfather cared for *Elf* attentively during his years of ownership. At the same time, Henry owned an original Ford "Woodie" station wagon, which he maintained and polished faithfully. His grandson inherited the vehicle in an immaculate and perfectly operable condition. Thomas still owns and enjoys the "Woodie," obviously having inherited his grandfather's sense of care for items of lasting value.

Before our visit was concluded, it was decided that Thomas would add his own inscription to Rick's copy of "Charting My Life." He wrote, among other things, that his grandfather would doubtless be pleased with the proper restoration of his vessel. As you can imagine, Rick was deeply touched, and I must admit that

Elf
Off Marblehead
1888



Stebbins, *ELF* photo courtesy of:
Hart Nautical Collections, MIT Museum

20th ANNUAL CYRG CRAB FEAST DIRECTIONS

From the North:

Take I 95 or US 40 to Elkton. Then take 213 South. Cross the second major bridge (Bohemia River). Take immediate right on Glebe Road, then see below*.

From the South:

Cross the Bay Bridge at US 50 & 301 split. Take 301 North for about 25 miles. Take left on Maryland 313 toward Galena (at yellow flasher). 313 becomes Maryland 213 North in Galena. Follow until just before Bohemia River Bridge (second major bridge). Take a left before bridge on Glebe Road.

* Follow Glebe Road for about 1.5 miles to Cherry Grove Road. Turn Right. Follow for about 1.7 miles and turn right again onto a dirt road. This will be marked for the Crab Feast. Follow straight for about 1.2 miles to the beach.

**Please drive slowly;
we will be guests on private property.**

Guild Vision

The Classic Yacht Restoration Guild is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to the preservation of traditional watercraft, both power and sail. Yacht restorations are accomplished through a combination of member donated skills and resources. A cooperative educational setting is provided by the Guild for all members who wish to acquire or sharpen boat maintenance and restoration skills. Our membership is diverse. Each member can participate either as an instructor, a student of restoration techniques, a participant in Guild sailing events and cruises or as a supporter through dues and donations. The Guild also offers a variety of resources and skilled professionals who are qualified and interested in helping you connect with the right people to assist with your project.

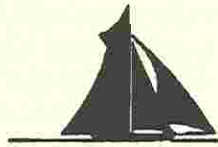
Work on our flagship *Elf* currently involves restoration of the original rig, deck, and cabin configurations. In addition, the Guild has received donations of many small craft which are used as demonstration and education projects. Ships carpentry, rigging, mechanics, and fine wood finishing are all topics covered by periodic workshops held while restoration projects are underway.

Once a Guild vessel is made seaworthy, the true pleasure of operating historic or significant small craft begins. Members are encouraged to sail Guild vessels with emphasis on instruction of boating safety, piloting, navigation, and the maritime history of the Chesapeake Bay. The Guild plans several cruises to maritime and waterfront festivals every season. Members serve as crew and staff displays at these events.

As a non-profit organization, the Guild always welcomes tax-deductible contributions. For example, the Guild received a 1963 vintage Lightning class racing sailboat and a large library of titles on boat building, maintenance, and maritime history. Also, donation of items used for restoration or fund raising are also tax deductible.

With a growing membership, the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild looks forward to increasing activity and good times. Please ask a member for further information and details.

THE HELM



The Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc.
P.O. Box 237
683 Pond Neck Road
Earleville, MD 21919-0237