

THE HELM

Summer, 2009 - Vol. 26, No. 2



Elf, past and future



President's Message

ELF Shakedown

... by Rick Carrion

Over the past several years I have worked hard to pace myself, and to accept the good with the bad, while keeping a balance. Sometimes it was a juggle, but somehow I was always able to find ways to make everything work. Having ELF in the workshop for so many years gave me the opportunity to work at a good pace.

This year started out with a number of maintenance projects. April & May were the wettest and coldest

months on record in Maryland. The challenge was trying to build up varnish on the rig and re-rig and step the mast in time to be the featured vessel for the Maryland Maritime Heritage Festival on May 1 in Annapolis. We made it in fine fashion, and some said

that we stole the show.

Some folk's loathe deadlines but I, being a goal setter, actually like a realistic deadline, something to target, and make work. Deadlines actually help me to stay focused, though some people say that I may get wound a bit tight. This spring I found myself thinking through several scenarios and doing the preparations necessary to have a safe several months underway. Getting offshore life boats, E-Perb, harnesses, jack lines, satellite navigation, AIS, paper charts, and the list seemed to always continue to just keep on growing. I had to try to think of everything that we may need for a long cruise while having system redundancy, back ups, and replacements as necessary. WOW, not an easy job, but I do feel that we were well prepared when we

departed Philadelphia, bound for the Wooden Boat Show at Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut. As many of us knew it was my ultimate plan to take ELF back to her origin: the Lawley Yard in Boston.

Getting underway early (4:00 AM) from Independence Seaport Museum in Philly moved us out

on the ebbing tide which gave us a big push enabling us to arrive in Cape May, New Jersey, after dusk making it a 17-hour day. This proved to just be the start of many long days, usually motoring against the wind or light breezes. We made it to Mystic through



pea soup fog by mid morning, June 26.

From June 26 to 30, ELF was the featured boat at the Wooden Boat Show at Mystic Seaport Museum. An article by John Brady had just just been published in *Wooden Boat Magazine* and we were the featured article in *Classic Boat Magazine* from the United Kingdom. Many visitors to the show had seen one or both articles so were very interested in seeing and boarding ELF. We were complimented on the restoration by many of the visitors. We were thrilled to entertain the visitors, answer their msny questions, and invite them to membership in the Guild.

After examining the engine with one of the local diesel mechanics and finding some major problems, I made the decision to head back to the Chesapeake Bay shortly after the show. I must say that if I had realized how bad the condition the engine was before we left, we would have stayed in the Chesapeake Bay. Hindsight is 20/20, but I did learn a multitude of very valuable lessons throughout the trip that will help on future off shore trips. The most important feature that I realized was that ELF could stand up to some really tough ocean winds and waves. We did have the decks awash and the foot well half full of salt water, but ELF performed outstandingly. I also need to commend my crew: Carol, Don, Dan, and Ted. They were steadfastly committed to successfully moving ELF without incident. Their help caused me

to realize the need to start developing immediately a serious off shore crew base that will sail ELF many times before our next departure. So if you may be interested in seriously crewing please let me know so we can start the training.

ELF is back on the Chesapeake Bay awaiting a new diesel engine. It is my hope that we will be able to increase the horsepower and efficiency, and reduce the overall weight. Quite honestly, at this point I am trying to seek a corporate sponsor who will donate an engine for exclusive advertising associated with ELF as long as their engine is aboard. I know this is a long shot because of the economic climate, but I have to try. In terms of our future, one of my main missions is to work toward development of a serious corporate sponsorship base, perhaps leading toward an endowment to ensure ELF's long-term success and upkeep. Please let me know of any possibilities and I will follow up on your leads. After 17 years of museum-quality restoration, we need to continue our commitment to guarantee her future.

It is my hope to resolve the engine issue soon and be back underway. We have a number of great sailing days still ahead for this year, and hope that you will be able to join us.

Photo credit: Andy Slavinskas



Continuing Sponsorship and Ideas To Keep ELF Moving

Such as:

Magazine advertising photo shoots
Corporate team building programs
Fees for attending shows and special events
Model photo shoots

Television and movie production
Television commercials
Cooking show challenges
Elf logo used on product labels

If you have any thought and ideas about other ways we might raise funds, please let us know. Of course, the ideal would be corporate sponsorship possible leading toward an endowment fund to ensure Elf's future.

If you know of any foundations that we might look into, please let us know. Even better, if you know any specific people we might contact, we would be happy to introduce ourselves and search out the possibilities.

In any case, it is essential that we find sources of funding in order to sustain the momentum,

Respond to Rick at: elf1888@earthlink.net

Or: 443-566-2212

Elf Makes Triumphant Return to New England!

. . . by *Don Shaffer*

We left the Independent Seaport Museum in Philadelphia early Monday morning on June 22nd bound for New England.

Capt. Rick, Dan McGrath, and I wind our way through the 4 AM darkness past the myriad lights of barges, buoys, tugs and anchored ships. After several hours the sky begins to lighten. We pass many familiar sites on the Delaware River including Pea Patch Island and the looming Salem nuclear plant. The lower Delaware is almost glassy, dolphins lazily breaking the surface around Elf.

As we near Cape May, the ferry crosses our bow and it's time to don our foul weather gear as the skies turn. We chart a long conservative course around the Cape May Shoals. One was named "Prissy Wick's Shoals" (I need to look up the story behind that name!)

A sea turtle with a head as big as a cantaloupe pops its head up and seems to wonder, after viewing Elf, what century it is. A red sun somehow finds a break in the clouds, making a last minute appearance before setting. It's dark before we drop anchor near the Cape May Coast Guard Station at the end of a long 17-hour day.

The next morning Capt. Rick deftly maneuvers Elf around a very tight dead end channel so we can fuel up. We pass a fleet of very seaworthy looking commercial fishing vessels – good to see them surviving. The leg to Atlantic City is a much shorter run. We have the anchor set by happy hour, right next to our friend Alan on his schooner Green Dragon, which is also bound for Mystic Seaport, Connecticut. After much good conversation, night falls; the casinos put on their spectacular display of lights.

In the early morning, there is a very odd low gray cloud encircling the casinos, as if the cigarette smoke oozed out and lingered to remind us of a long night of sinning and gambling. Wednesday is a long run up the Jersey coast, but since we started early there's still some light left when we set anchor in Grave's End Bay, near the foot of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge. Dan gets some great nighttime photos of the bridge and lights.

We plan the next day carefully, timing the tides and currents just right to pass through the infamous Hell Gate and to get a push out Long Island Sound. We motor through busy New York harbor past a long line of oil tankers at anchor, the Statue of Liberty, and Ellis Island. I've sailed through here before on the tall ship Californian for Opsail 2000 and it is no less spectacular this time, but the skyline has changed. We cruise up the East River under renowned bridges in sight of the Empire State Building, the United Nations, and other famous landmarks. We time Hell Gate just right, passing easily through its jaws, and glide out toward the Sound past Riker's Island, LaGuardia Airport, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy on King's Point. We make good progress on the Sound and anchor just inside the channel at Clinton, Connecticut.

On Friday, we have only a half-day's run to Mystic Seaport. Soon a thick fog sets in and we're running blind. The long deep foghorn of a large ship looms in the distance, getting closer and closer. Nerves are a bit frayed. Do they see us (radar)? We sure as hell can't see them. Soon after that ship's horn finally begins to fade in the distance, we hear another large ship's horn approaching. We have been passing in front of two shipping channels, one coming out of the Connecticut River and the other out of New London. Finally we get to more shallow water behind Fisher's Island, but still must keep a vigilant watch, as smaller boats appear abruptly out of the fog.

We are nearing the narrow Mystic channel when suddenly a lighthouse on a rocky outcrop appears very close by. We are exactly where we should be, but for a moment it seems alarmingly close. We wind our way through the narrow channel past the quaint village of Noank and under the drawbridge at Mystic. This definitely looks like New England!

We take our place at the Mystic Wooden Boat Show among dozens of gorgeous vessels, but Elf stands out even among these beauties. We are kept very busy the next few days telling Elf's story and answering the sometimes very detailed questions from hundreds of admirers. Thankfully, Tira and Rob Mitchell arrive



from back home so we get a break and have time to see all the fascinating boats and exhibits. Also, Bill Sontag and Debbie try to troubleshoot the electronics (AIS). We networked like mad; making connections that I'm sure will prove very valuable for future Elf journeys in New England. The enthusiasm from Elf's admirers is inspiring. I am disappointed we are not venturing to Narragansett Bay and beyond on this trip, but Elf's engine is not well and we soon need to begin winding our way home. But, there were to be more adventures in store for us.

Dan got off at Mystic and Carol Niemand shipped on as crew. There's not much privacy on Elf below decks, but we worked things out rather well. Our next stop was across the Sound to Sag Harbor, nestled in the outer forks of Long Island. Nearing the breakwater numerous megayachts announced that we were in the Hamptons, playground of celebrities and the rich and famous. We were invited aboard a beautifully restored Alden schooner for cocktails. The owner recognized immediately that Elf was something special. Aside from being an obviously very successful contractor and looking kind of like Richard Gere, he was very knowledgeable about classic yacht restoration. Wintertime, he charters the yacht in the islands and makes it available for photo shoots. He related how his skipper called him once to complain, "There are seven nearly naked Victoria Secrets models running amuck on board." Everyone laughed incredulously, and I sensed Rick's imagination running wild, pondering Elf's eminent glamorous future.

Next is a short hop to Greenport with a visit to an old boatyard full of classic yachts in various stages of restoration. We get an early start next morning to shoot with the current through Plum Gut on the way to Port Jefferson. The wind and waves being on our nose (again), and taking on some green water over the bow, we alter plans and steer course back across the Sound to the Connecticut side, allowing us to set some sail and make better time. We alight in the small port of Branford. The folks at the Branford Yacht Club extend us wonderful hospitality, running Carol to the store for supplies, offering us food and a place to tie up for the night. Numerous members visit Elf, reminding us again that New Englanders seem to have a much greater appreciation for classic yachts than elsewhere.

The following day we cut back across the Sound to Oyster Bay, Long Island. The Seawanhaka Yacht Club (SYC) extends us privileges, offering us a mooring. We have cocktails on the expansive portico with a long sweeping view of Oyster Bay Harbor. Inside I'm transfixed by the large paintings of sail races, the trophy case, and half-hull model room. On the tennis courts, at tables with white tablecloths, we feast like royalty at their "Salty Dog" buffet. Greatly enhancing this memorable experience, I found myself considering the role SYC played in the early development of yacht racing in America, and the significant connections to Elf's genealogy.

Founded in 1871, SYC (in contrast to the New York Yacht club) espoused Corinthian yachting. They played a large part in developing racing rules and in promoting more seaworthy racing yachts. Key members of SYC championed the advantages of the

British cutters over American "skimming dishes." The cutter craze of the 1880's climaxed in "compromise sloops," including three Burgess-designed, Lawley-built America's Cup winners and yachts like Elf.

We next run down the Sound under beautiful fair weather toward the distant Manhattan skyline. Cruising alongside Manhattan's skyscrapers and on through New York harbor under bright blue skies is no less exhilarating than previous sails. We anchor in the Atlantic Highlands, behind Sandy Hook. We set out the next day for a long run to Atlantic City. Our course points directly into fresh winds and 6-8 foot seas so our progress is very poor. We set sail, tacking far off the coast, but on the return tack find we made little progress. We head into it again, but find that although Elf can obviously take this abuse, our speed is reduced to between 0.7 and 1.2 knots. The GPS tells us at this rate we will arrive at our destination at 5 AM! Carol is pale and chilled and we're all pretty wet. Rick makes the difficult decision to turn

back and run with it. It is 15 nm ahead to Barnegat and 17 nm back to the Highlands. But it soon becomes obvious that this is the right decision as we are running comfortably with the weather, surfing down waves at over 7 knots. We make it back behind Sandy Hook shortly after dark.

Tuesday's weather is much improved. We glide through Absecon inlet under the

glamorous lights of Atlantic City in the dark.

Wednesday morning we find the engine won't start. We spend several days trying to fix it. Finally, on the third day a mechanic officially pronounces the Westerbeake dead. There are far worse places than Atlantic City to be stranded. The nice folks at Kamerman's marina are very empathetic.

We head out for Cape May on Saturday with the dinghy acting as yawl boat pushing us alongside. We make surprisingly good progress, with dolphins accompanying us, and anchor in front of the Coast Guard station in time for happy hour. We hang out at Cape May for a couple of days waiting for a relief crew. We have a nice long walk around town and back. Rick cooks up a great meal of fresh scallops. Did I mention that you eat really well on Elf? Of course, those who know Capt. Rick won't be the least surprised at that. Falling behind schedule four days means Carol and I need to return home. The relief crew, Dan and his friend Ted help Elf on the last leg home, up the Delaware River, through the C&D canal to the Sassafras.

This return journey to New England waters for Elf ends a hiatus of many decades. Fundraising for a new engine is now of paramount importance for Elf's continuing mission. A reliable engine is essential for making an ambitious, distant schedule of events. Thanks for the adventure, Elf

New England photos by Dan McGrath.

All photos he took on the trip may be seen at:

www.flickr.com/photos/pieball/collections/72157621885895714/



Cooking Full Tilt, with Captain Rick!

Over the past several years, I have wanted to develop a sailors' cooking show filmed in the tight quarters of a small galley to encourage creativity in how to prepare fine meals, onboard, in all conditions. As the idea evolved, it occurred to me that people who were boating, camping, or traveling by any other mode of transportation could embrace this kind of information. The idea came about since I like to eat good food and my tastes are constantly changing. To me it is important to create meals that are loaded with flavor, made safely, and with relative ease. It is about planning ahead, but also being able to shift gears, make substitutions (in that not all the ingredients called for may be aboard), or you may want to dress up last night's leftovers.

I do not use measuring devices. Using them on board while rocking around in the galley on the high seas is extremely difficult.

While at the beach, I would take several cookbooks to read instead of a best selling novel. I looked at the array of ingredi-

ents, flavors, food preparation, and cooking techniques. It is important to know the flavor of herbs and spices and how to blend them to maximize the meal. If you are not sure that a flavor might be appropriate, sprinkle some in the palm of your hand and taste it. Think about its appropriateness for whatever you are making and how much to use without overwhelming other ingredients. Remember to add slowly; do not overdo it! Start with a pinch or two first, you can always add another pinch, but you cannot take it out!

The show will feature a variety of meals prepared and consumed aboard ELF while underway and at anchor. As the show progresses we will feature cooking aboard a number of other vessels showing different galley layouts. We will also feature guest cooks. This year, filming will be primarily in the Chesapeake Bay area. If you are interested in being a part of the show, aboard ELF or your own vessel, or if you have special recipes to share and test on the crew, please let me know. The show has started, and you can see episodes on Youtube.

Upcoming Events for 2009

September 26	30th ANNUAL CRAB FEAST BBQ & SILENT AUCTION Rain date September 27
September 19	Keels & Wheels Show at Annapolis Yacht Club
October 9-11	US Sailboat Show in Annapolis
October 14-17	Chesapeake Bay Great Schooner Race
October 23-2	Schooner Rendezvous in Cambridge, MD
October 28-November	Down-rigging in Chestertown, MD

Between now and down rigging of ELF we are looking for crew to start our crew training. Please let me know your availability, especially on good weather days, since I really want to sail!

Guild Wish List

FUNDING FOR A NEW ENGINE ABOARD ELF

If you have not updated your membership, please renew as soon as possible. We are, once again, issuing membership cards which will be helpful at gated events identifying you as an ELF crew member.

Members who are serious about learning to sail ELF as a racing yacht

Please put elf1888@earthlink.net in your contact list so that your computer does not place Guild emails in your junk folder.



New Membership Cards

2009 membership cards are printed and waiting to be sent as soon as we receive your membership contribution. Your membership card will identify you as a Member of the Guild and as a crew member for ELF at gated events. The membership year extends from January 1 to December 31. If you want to help put wind in our sails, additional tax-deductible contributions are welcome at any time. In order to sail on ELF, membership in CYRG is required and since we are scheduling crew for upcoming events, please consider renewing your membership as soon as possible. Rick will send a card immediately. In that Yacht ELF could not have been restored to her original beauty without your support, we cannot continue proper maintenance and the development of educational programs without your contributions.

THE HELM



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

 **Interlux**[®]
yachtpaint.com

**30th 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.

**Crab Feast, BBQ, and Silent Auction
Guest Registration Form**

Name: _____

Number adults: _____

Members: _____ @ \$40

Number Children: _____

Non-Members _____ @ \$50

Children under 16 admitted free.

Total amount enclosed: _____

Please send before September 5

Membership Renewal/Wish List Contributions



Please Print:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Make your tax-deductible check payable to the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc.

___ Basic membership (\$20) ___ Sponsor (\$100) ___ Contributor (\$50) ___ Donor (\$500)

___ Other \$ _____

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Wish List Contributions

New Engine for ELF: Amount: _____

Donations for Silent Auction: Please Attach List

Annual Operating Costs Amount: _____

