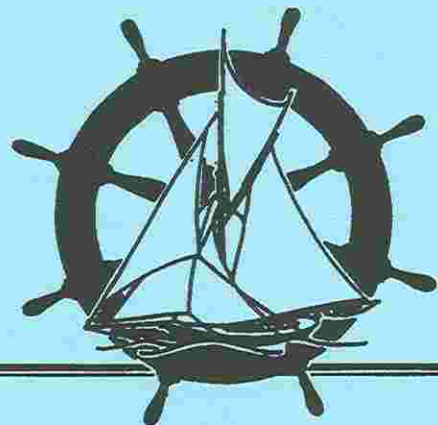


# THE HELM

Spring, 2002 - Volume 20, No. 2



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## A PUBLICATION OF THE CLASSIC YACHT RESTORATION GUILD, INC.

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*Elf, past and future*

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### President's Message

#### Celebrating Twenty Years

... by Rick Carrion

**I**t seems hard to believe, but we are celebrating twenty years of successful activities and boating fun with friends. Now, I feel we need to take a moment to reflect. I must be honest - I formed the Guild with a focused purpose to restore 1888 Yacht Elf and other unique vessels by utilizing and therefore preserving the time-honored skills of the shipwrights. I also realized the importance of networking for hard-to-find materials and hardware which are rare and nearly impossible to acquire.

It all goes back to the day I opened photos of Elf in her original sailing glory (see photo at end of article). It was then that I knew I had to see her properly restored and be part of the process.

But how? What should I do, I asked myself. I knew I could always donate her to a maritime museum (even the Smithsonian Institution expressed an interest), but I also knew that I would thereby lose touch with the project. That is when I decided to give it my best shot and to form a non-profit, tax-exempt, membership organization. The final approval came early in the summer of 1982, and thus the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc. was born. Several years later I officially donated and transferred ownership of Elf to the Guild by titling her to the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc.

Over the years, we have facilitated numerous "How To" workshops associated with restoration and maintenance techniques. It has always been my belief that in order to keep the fleet afloat, you must teach people the necessary skills and encourage the youth to sustain interest. We are excited to begin a new feature with this issue called "The Kids' Corner," to share stories through the eyes of our children.

It is also important to attend unique events to share ideas, and

to have fun, since restoration and maintenance of any old vessel is a lot of work. And yes, Elf has led many parades and highlighted many shows, such as tall ships festivals and harbor shows.

As time progressed, we were able to raise funding to start the restoration of Elf. We had a grant of \$25,000 from the Maryland Historical Trust, \$8,500 from the Cecil County Historical Trust, and about \$25,000 that we were able to raise through a variety of sales and very kind individual contributions. During the summer of 1991, shipwright Graham Ero and I started the process of Elf's Restoration. Even though I knew we needed a lot more money to finish the project, we started. Also, we had to start or lose our grants.

Shipwright Graham Ero and I worked well together all summer. After I went back to teaching school in September, Graham continued working while out in the open. As winter came, Graham plugged on, creating a makeshift tent. As funds were used up, we temporarily closed down the project. When spring arrived, I started to build the workshop around Elf to protect her. Since I was personally paying for all materials and costs and building it myself, I had to be frugal, but I built it to last.

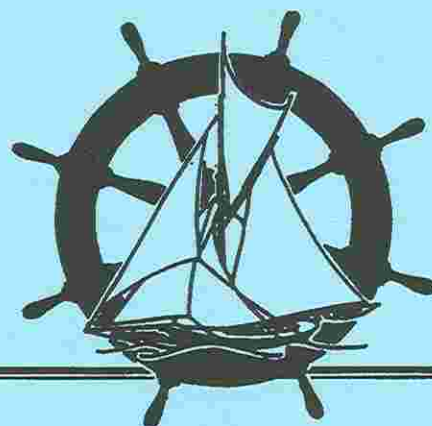
Then, there came an interruption due to a major upheaval in my life (i.e. divorce), and I had to concentrate on other matters for a time. Fortunately, Elf was safely tucked away in her own workshop which kept everything stabilized. As time went on, I was again able to do some fundraising and get the Elf restoration moving again.

Over the years, some have wondered about the progress and my timeline. Yes, it has been a long time since we started. But I must say - I feel that I have accomplished a great deal, starting with very little. The only expenses are for materials used directly on Elf and payments for our shipwright's labor. I personally have paid all other associated costs and I continue to maintain the workshop and its electrical systems just for the restoration.

Now summer is here and we are again very busy working on the interior layout construction. We will work all summer with the funds currently in hand, which hopefully will finish the interior. Graham will then move to the decks and hatches. At about that time, we will need to raise additional monies for decks, hatches, spars, rigging, and launching. Unfortunately, at this time in our country, the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> and a slumping stock market have made raising funds more challenging than ever. In addition, it is sometimes difficult raising money in Maryland for a

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# KID'S CORNER

We want to encourage children of all ages to explore and become involved with all facets of boating, restoration, and safety. Hence, we are incorporating a new feature in *The Helm*, a section devoted to the experiences of children expressed in their own words. We encourage you to think back to your childhood and share a significant or unique boating experience and encourage your child or a friend's child to write about their own exciting experiences. What memorable events in our lives compel us to have a life-long interest in boating? Please submit an article and, if possible, a picture. All pictures will be returned.

Mail to CYRG, PO Box 237, Earleville, MD, 21919. Or E-Mail to [elf1888@earthlink.net](mailto:elf1888@earthlink.net).

## The First Day Out

by: Rosaleen Gilmore

**I**t was ten o'clock at night. On a usual night I would have been in bed by now., but this was no usual night. Dad and I had to stay up until 4 A.M. To catch the tide. See Dad, Henry (our crewmember), and I were going to go to Maine on the 45 foot sailboat that my dad build. Since we live on a tiny New Jersey creek (called Oldmans Creek) that flows into the Delaware River, we have to catch the tide just right to get out of the creek, or else we will get stuck in the mud of the sand bar at the mouth of the creek.

We started to pack up all of our stuff (such as coffee cups, clothes, coffee cups, food, coffee cups, equipment and, of course, more coffee cups) and put it away on the boat. We ate dinner at 2:30 A.M., then went down to the boat to start the engine and finish getting the boat ship shape. At 4:00 we cast off the dock lines and started down Oldmans Creek. I fell asleep after we passed the Delaware Memorial Bridge and by the time I got up it was already daylight. I sat up and felt the soft sea breeze against my face and the smell of the ocean, and I knew that I was going home.



## Summer of '76

by Pam Carrion Vogel

**I** was 14 in the summer of 1976 when my older brother Rick needed a crew to take the *Elf* to Baltimore's Inner Harbor for Operation Sail. I knew that he was desperate for crew since he invited his youngest sister with absolutely no sailing experience. Since I was very young and not very sensible, I figured why not? I would love to say I remember the trip like it was yesterday but for various reasons my memories are quite hazy (but that is another story). However, I do have some fond memories of the trip as it was quite an adventure. I remember sailing away from the marina on the *Sassafras*, so peaceful and rural. We amazingly had a smooth trip under the command of Captain Rick. I don't think we ran aground more than once during that trip (hee-hee). Rick taught me the fine art of food preparation on an old boat — *a la Dinty Moore Beef Stew*. [Editor's note: Captain Rick's culinary skills have improved considerably since then!] I remember entering the Inner Harbor, which wasn't nearly as built up then as it is now. And being that we were under only wind power and were at the mercy of Mother Nature, Rick had to quickly persuade the dock master to let us dock at the harbor. It was a scramble but we made it. As a country girl, I was quite amazed by being in the city — very cool.

I am not sure how long we stayed — several days I am sure. There were a bunch of Tall Ships around, and many other lowly sailor types too. For a 14 year old girl with raging hormones, it was a trip of a lifetime (again, that's another story). One particularly strange memory involved a trip out of the Harbor to sail to the Key Bridge. Our trip was cut short because we ran aground out by Fort McHenry. I have a vague memory of Bill Sonntag diving into the murky water of the Harbor (remember that's when PCB and DDT flowed freely) — somehow, he helped us off. How exactly he freed *Elf* from that mucky bottom is still a mystery. And then almost being hit by the freighter... definitely a bad dream. Could that have really happened?

Seems like we ended the trip by sailing to Annapolis. As we came close to the Bay Bridge, Rick informed me that I would have to take the helm for awhile since he wasn't feeling too well. Ugh, what to do, me a novice sailor, at night, sailing under a bridge, but I boldly took the helm — I had no choice! I was petrified. I know the concrete spans of the bridge are far

apart, but I knew with my sailing expertise that I would hit one, and we would perish in the Bay. Believe it or not, we survived, and got to Annapolis safe and sound.

I never caught the sailing fever like Rick did, but I do have a few good memories of sailing as a teenager on Elf. It is nice to see that Elf is coming alive again. I am awed by the skill and craftsmanship Rick (and others) have applied as they restore her. It will be a fine day when she floats again, one which will bring tears to Rick's eyes. I know Elf is a part of Rick — after all, she is his first true love.



Pam is on the right, Rick is at the helm with other guests. Sailing out of Baltimore - Tall Ships - 1976

## Sailing from Georgetown to Branford in Four Days

by: Peter Carrion

**I**t was Thursday, March 28, 2002, the last day of school before spring break. As soon as school let out, I came home, finished packing and showered. Our group consisted of my Dad (commissioned as Captain), Bob (the owner of the boat), Greg (a friend of my Dad's) and myself. We ate dinner and set off from the Georgetown docks in the upper Sassafra at 1900 hours on a 30 foot SABRE sloop named "Westerly." That night there was a beautiful full moon. We went through the Chesapeake Bay, to the C&D Canal, to the Delaware Bay. It started out nice and calm with little to no wind, but it was the coldest night of the whole trip. While we were in the C&D Canal, Bob and I were at the helm. We had a tiny alcohol heater but it had burned out. As Bob was lighting the heater, I was forced to take the helm. I was holding a flashlight for Bob, not paying attention to traffic, when a big barge came up close to us and started honking and shining its lights at us — they must have seen us on the radar. When we met up with this barge we were in a narrow part of the canal. I quickly moved to the right of the canal so that we could pass port to port — a tricky maneuver due to the presence of an overhead structure that was taking up part of the canal — and I had to get over

very quickly. Bob told me that we were okay because of my quick thinking and actions.

We motored around the clock that night. When I woke up Friday morning, we were in the Delaware Bay, and it was no longer calm; the winds had piped up and the waves had grown from the south. By the time we reached Cape May, the winds was gusting into the thirty's and only got worse from there. We went into Cape May harbor, which was very poorly marked — actually it wasn't really marked and maintained at all. We saw signs telling us not to anchor or dredge because of lines running underneath the channel, and I figured that may have been their excuse to not maintain their harbor. We stopped in Cape May to get diesel fuel. The man that was docked ahead of us had come off of the ocean because it was too rough. So after hearing this, we decided to stay in Cape May for the night. We realized that this was the right decision when we heard the wind gusting well into the 40-50 knot range during the night.

On Saturday morning, we woke up at about 800 hours and set off for the great Atlantic shortly afterwards. The ocean was really rough that day, and the wind was right off our stern; but it died quickly and therefore we were able to sail for only an hour or so. We motored into Atlantic City just before dark.

That night in Atlantic City, the wind was calm, and the temperature was very warm, the warmest of the whole trip. We stayed in a very nice Marina that night — it had showers that were open even in March! It's amazing everything that you really never appreciated before, or the little things, like showers. You really enjoy them a lot more when you are forced to go without.

On Easter Sunday morning, we woke up and set off for New York City at 500 hours. The ocean was very calm, and the breeze was dead ahead on the bow. We went that whole day without tending to the helm because of the auto pilot system. We arrived in New York around 2230 hours. It was foggy for awhile, then rainy, then overcast, then rainy, and so on. We were able to see the beautiful New York skyline develop from nothing to a spectacular and magnificent sight. At one point, the Statue of Liberty was off the port bow while the September 11th monument was off the starboard bow. This was probably my favorite time of the whole trip. It was really a sight to see! You would have had to be there to see it because words could not describe this awesome image. We decided to tie up to a dock in the Lower East Side of Manhattan because the tides were just beginning to change and we would have had trouble making it through the entire New York Harbor until the tide changed. We ate dinner at 2300 hours and went to bed at midnight. We woke up at 6:00 A.M. to find that the tide had dropped about 5 feet — this caused the boat to hang from three cleats, because the dock was not floating. Fortunately, everything was fine and nothing ended up breaking.

On Monday morning, after lowering the boat from its hanging position, we left Lower East Side at 600 hours. The tide was in our favor in Hells Gate and we were moving along just fine. We did have to dodge all kinds of trash in the harbor including a wooden police barricade that said "NY Police Line — Do Not Cross." We got to Long Island Sound and shortly thereafter, we hit a free-floating lobster pot marker with 10 feet of line and got it caught around our rudder. We were fearful of getting it caught around the prop and really messing things up, so we decided that it was time to sail. Luckily, the wind had finally switched

## The Classic Yacht Restoration Guild Vision

to off our port stern and grew to be very strong. It was pretty calm for awhile, but the winds grew to 40 knot gusts, and the waves were all white caps. The waves were going in our direction so we were able to surf, as you may put it. The normal hull speed for this boat was only 6.9 knots. We were watching the GPS (Global Positioning System) — the fastest speed that we saw was 9.9 knots, on only a double-reefed main. My Dad later admitted that he was concerned about whether or not the rigging would hold at those speeds, but was fairly confident based upon his thorough preparation of the boat the week before the trip.

With an average speed for our day of sailing at 6.6 knots, we became spoiled — up until that point, our average speed had been only 4 to 5 knots with the engine. That day, we were considering ourselves slow when we were only going 5 to 6 knots.

We arrived at Branford, Connecticut on Monday at 1745 hours, just before dark. We were fortunate to have some light remaining, as there were a lot of rocks sticking up out of the water during our approach to land. Even though we were still under sail, we were able to avoid all obstacles and we arrived safely at Bob's slip. The slips were very small. At that time of the year, most boats were still out of the water for the winter; this will be one crowded marina in the middle of summer.

One final challenge remained — maneuvering the boat into the small slip. We carefully started the engine and eased it into forward, holding our breath. To our relief, the propeller was not jammed with the lobster pot line we had picked up earlier, and we were able to motor into the slip. My Dad told us that he was prepared to actually sail into the slip but was very relieved to be able to maneuver the boat in, unscathed, by motor power.

So ended our passage from Georgetown, Maryland to Branford, Connecticut. It was filled with unforgettable experiences — the awesome sight of New York harbor, the action-packed day of fast sailing, and the times that we avoided disaster. Considering just the weather conditions, the journey felt to me like four completely different trips because of all of the events impacted by the changing weather. I learned two things about meteorology — one was that the weather can differ from moment to moment when you are out at sea, and the other is that the weather service always seems to be wrong!



Peter preparing for Trip with Night Vision Goggles

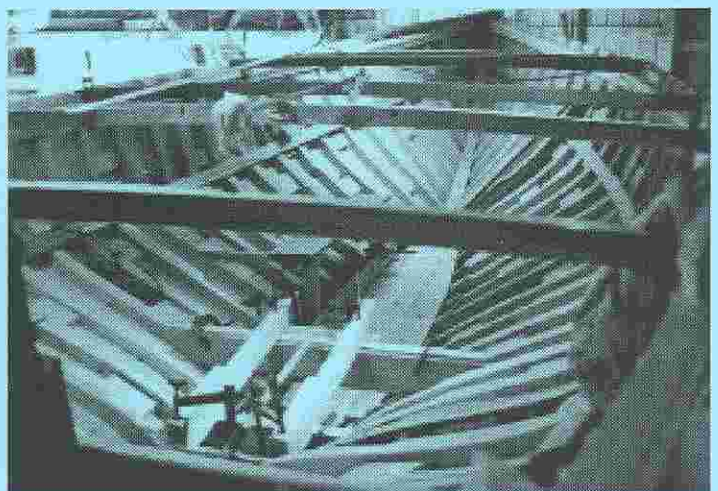
The Classic Yacht Restoration Guild is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to the preservation of traditional watercraft, both power and sail. Yacht restorations are accomplished through a combination of member donated skills and resources. A cooperative educational setting is provided by 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.



*Elf* Interior Starting to Take Shape

## Elf Open Workshops

Plan to Join Us  
410-275-2819

E-Mail: [elf1888@earthlink.net](mailto:elf1888@earthlink.net)

There will be a workshop almost every weekend.  
Call ahead or E-Mail to check agenda.

Plan to drop in to help, watch, or advise.  
Look forward to seeing you.  
Plan to stay for dinner.

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## Membership Update

We are still looking forward to the day when *Elf* is launched and want you to be a part of her life. With your continued support, that day will come soon. The *Elf* project is truly unique, and I thank you for being part of making it a reality.

All contributions are tax-deductible.  
Members are invited to all activities.  
Share the newsletter with a friend.

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



Lawley Symposium  
At the Boston Yacht Club  
at Marblehead  
July 20, 2002

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## THE HELM



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