

THE HELM

Spring/Summer 2011 Vol. 28, No. 2



Elf, past and future



President's Message

What a Difference a Day Makes

What a difference a day makes, I'm sure you have all heard that one. This spring seemed to have one rain after another, making it difficult to varnish and rig the mast. Time kept moving forward and we were trying to get ready for the Inaugural Elf Classic Yacht Race. Carly and I worked to get varnish on the spars and ready for rigging. The real challenge was to get over a half-mile of rigging back on the mast where it belongs. Nonetheless, we were able to find a few good weather days to get it all done well.

After the mast was stepped we had to make sure the lines were correctly run. There is over a half-mile of line in the rigging alone and just one line out of place could be a big problem. We did notice one line out of place and sent Carly aloft to correct the problem. Everything was then correctly attached. We then did a shakedown sail to ensure that Elf was ready to race. Several members were delighted with the late-day return to St. Michaels Harbor while sailing into a setting sun.

Now all we had to do was to get the paint and varnish refinished, easier said than done, since the rain kept coming down. We were varnishing the day before we left for the Elf Classic and had to stretch a tarp over the companionway and skylight for protection.

We arrived at Eastport Yacht Club mid-afternoon, May 20, and anchored with the race fleet. Soon we were raising our new dress ship flags that were purchased from Eastern Shore Flagpoles. What a sight to see: Fifteen beautiful yachts all decked out in dressed ship fashion. The vessels attending the Elf Classic added a beautiful splash of color to Annapolis Harbor. For more information, be sure to read William Sonntag's article on page 2.

We will be heading up the Bay soon to the Sassafras River to be on display July 16th and 17th at the Georgetown Yacht Basin. Mark your calendars now and plan to visit and inspect Elf from top to bottom. The following week, weather permitting, we will haul Elf for painting and maintenance. Plans are to be out of the water from July 18th to the 25th. Plan to join the activity to learn various traditional vessel maintenance techniques and to help.

Once re-launched and all systems go, we will be heading North to Manasquan, New Jersey for the Squan Tri-Sail Race weekend, July 30th and 31st. This year's event organizers have added a classic race series to the series of races. We plan to have Elf on display at the Bay Head Yacht Club that coincidentally was built in 1888, the same year Elf was launched.

We will return to the Chesapeake Bay in early August and then want to take members out for sail training and other learning activities such as basic seamanship, navigation, and rules of the road. All of this is to help participants acquire skills to sail Elf well and to build a crew base. Please plan to join us in making this year another wonderful success.

Watch for events listed on our website (CYRG.org) and plan to participate in as many as possible. Also, please friend "Classic Yacht Restoration Guild" on Facebook.

We look forward to seeing you!

Vessel in Distress: Skipjack Rosie Parks

The entry fees from the Elf Classic and generous contributions from sponsors enabled CYRG to contribute \$1,000 to the CBMM general fund and \$500 to the Rosie Parks restoration fund.

Rosie Parks is a skipjack owned by the CBMM and is in the process of a total historic restoration. The skipjack is design developed for oyster harvesting in the Chesapeake Bay. In the late 1800's, there were thousands. Approximately nineteen are still in existence. Because it is Maryland's official State Boat, it is important to restore and preserve the remaining fleet. We encourage strongly that you support these efforts.

Please check on the restoration progress while visiting the museum to enjoy the other exhibits and events that the CBMM has to offer. Plan to make a day of your visit and also enjoy the picturesque town of St. Michaels and the surrounding area.



Photos by
Tracey Munson

Inaugural Elf Classic Yacht Race 2011

... by William Sonntag

The starting gun sounds, the captains sprint from the yacht club to their dingys intent on being the first to row to their vessels and make sail. First underway honors go to the Hinckley B-40 “Thistle” anchored closest to the course out of Annapolis harbor and adroitly handled by her crew. So began the Inaugural Elf Classic Yacht race recreating the starts used in club racing in 1880’s.

CYRG’s first Elf Classic Yacht Race brought together the captains and crew of 15 yachts for a race from the Eastport Yacht Club Annapolis, Maryland, to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) in St. Michaels, Maryland. The race was a fundraiser for the CBMM, Elf’s homeport.

All week the weather locked into a pattern of rainy days with the end of week forecast shifting every day. In fact, the first event of the regatta, a “best-dressed ship” competition was held under grey skies. Won by the yacht “Shalamar”, this Philip Rhodes designed yawl sported an Admiral Nelson quote spelled out in signal flags. The neighboring Naval Academy did not acknowledge, offering no signals in return.

The crews repaired to the yacht club grounds for a dinner and drinks and were entertained by the traditional acoustic music of “Schooner Time” from the participating schooner “Martha White”. Attendees had time to examine the contents of the CBMM donated “swag bags” while the skies cleared dramatically for what we hoped would be a grand sailing day for the inaugural Elf Classic Yacht Race.

Race day dawned dry, clear, and still as any dawn can be. At the yacht club the only things stirring were the crews. The Captains called to an early meeting for a race briefing that was interrupted by the starting gun. Dingys of all types surged toward the waiting yachts for the graceful start with sails unfurled in light air and all yachts slowly reaching for the Bay.

That first morning reach nearly established the order of the finish that afternoon. Those that crossed the Bay together on the lightest of breeze with a favorable tide were nearly in the same order when the race was called at 3 pm. The New Jersey Sandbagger “Bull” finished in first place. The Sparkman Stephens yawl “Windalier” came in a close second with the B-40 “Thistle” third. They were followed by the eponymous “Elf”, then “Esperanza”, “Anytime”, and “Audra” completed the order of the finish. Those yachts behind took the sane option of firing up the iron gennys, saluting the drifting contenders in appropriate fashion as they passed enroute to St. Michaels.

On the decks of “Elf” the bright day lit up the yarns and speculations of the crew. A Grateful Dead sound track seemed right for the laid back course through the zephyrs and catpaws that made up the light afternoon breeze.

As always, of course, no race is complete without a finish party. We were honored by the participation of Judge John North who dispensed the finest trophy awards that could be offered. They were made of hand selected American Cherry (made of wood remaining from Elf’s restoration) with a scrimshaw image of Elf and the embossed award text. The CYRG also presented a permanent trophy to CBMM President Langley Shook with a custom made glass plate containing an image of Elf on a base that will carry the names of future Elf Classic Race winners.

Our greatest thanks go to all the participants, CYRG volunteers, CBMM Staff, and our sponsors of this Inaugural race. Please go to the CYRG webpage, click on photographs, and find Dan McGrath’s fine collection of photos on “flickr.com” The next Elf Classic Yacht Race is in the planning stages now. Watch the “Helm” for further news and start your calls for more wind now. The tentative date is May 19, 2012.



Photo by
Dan McGrath



Photo by
Deborah Albers

About the Meaning of “ELF”

... by Rick Carrion

Elf is not named for little green leprechaun-like little men. Instead, Elf is named for an imaginary howling woods animal similar to a wolf. “Elf” can take on many meanings depending on the folklore of the point of origin. Years ago a friend of mine loaned me a book from a Wilmington, Delaware, library about American elf legends of the late 1800’s. It contained a number of litho prints depicting creatures from many imaginations.

Before I started to carve the ELF figurehead, I took a number of photos of a border collie growling and snarling to help me with proportions. I also had one poor quality photograph of the original figurehead to start the carving. The work progressed over several months. I would carve for a few hours at a time and would return a few days later to continue. I started with a 4” x 20” x 30” piece of North American black cherry, a very hard wood. Progress was further complicated with all of the birds-eye figures in the grain causing the wood to chip.

After releasing Elf from the surrounding wood, I embedded real fox teeth. Then after brushing 20 coats of varnish on the Elf figurehead, it was ready to take home on the stem under the bowsprit. The finished figurehead took approximately 100 hours of work, a job I knew I had to do.

Kevin Titter from Elkton, Maryland, painted the artwork starting on the figurehead flowing aft.



Photo credit:
Terry Peterson

Thank You, Sponsors of the Inaugural Classic Yacht Race!



SILENT MAID



1924

**Iron Sponsors: Paul W. Dale, Bill & Deb Sonntag, Rick Carrion,
Greg Decowsky, and Carly Sargent**

The NAUTICA Connection Lights, Camera, Action

You may have seen recently a Nautica commercial on television with ELF that was filmed aboard ELF. Last fall, we completed a photo shoot for the Nautica spring/summer line. ELF sailed faster than the chase and photo vessels so we did a lot of tacking back to the cameras. We also had what seemed to be a ton of equipment aboard. I liked particularly when the camera folks told all non-Nautica crew to go below. My response was, "Who the hell is going to sail the boat?" They told me just to stay low. Here is a link to the commercial:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltAOxjH2uel>



"Lawley Built"

ELF Presentations

We are in the process of getting all the necessary equipment to carry aboard to be able to give presentations at clubs, shows, and dockside. We are preparing narrated PowerPoint presentations of different lengths from 20 minutes to as long as an hour-and-a-half complete with sailing clips. Please inquire to schedule a presentation for your favorite club or other type of meeting. I may be contacted at 410-275-2819 (home) or 443-566-2212 (cell). I may also be reached at elf1888@earthlink.net.

Membership Update

We are very pleased with all of the support from our membership in contributions of time, money, and materials. As with all non-profit organizations it is very important to keep your membership up to date so that you can support and participate as a member in Guild activities. Our operating budget is derived from your contributions and I do appreciate your continued generous support. Although it may seem a little late in the year, I ask that you check the enclosed membership form for a note telling you that your membership is not current. You may send your contribution along with your crab feast reservation. If you are not available for our wonderful crab feast, please send your membership donation anyway!

Also, start to think about items you wish to donate to our silent auction held during the crab feast. For members who receive the HELM on line, please just download, print, and mail your contribution ASAP. We need and appreciate your support. Thank you!



 **Interlux**[®]
yachtpaint.com

Schedule of Events

ELF on the Sassafras	July 16 & 17
Haul Out	July 18 - 24
Manasquan Tri-Sail	July 25 - 31
AYC Keels and Wheels	September 17
NSHOF Classic Wooden Boat Sailboat Race	September 18
Crab Feast and Silent Auction	September 24 (Rain date 9/25)
Independence Seaport Museum Festival Small Boat Festival	October 8-9
Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race	October 13-16
Cambridge Schooner Rendezvous	October 21-23
SULTANA Downrigging in Chestertown	October 27-30

We will need crew to attend and sail to and from these events. In between the dates listed above, we will be sailing out of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum as much as possible.

THE HELM



**31st ANNUAL CYRG CRAB FEAST - September 24 (Rain Date: September 25)
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 & 301split. 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 10

Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc.

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 \$ _____

**Classic Yacht Restoration Guild, Inc.
P.O. Box 237
Earleville, MD 21919-0237
410-275-2819**

Feel welcome to donate all non-cash items (boats, boat gear). Let me know and I will make arrangements to pick up any donations:

