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WING & WING

The Official Newsletter of the American Schooner Association

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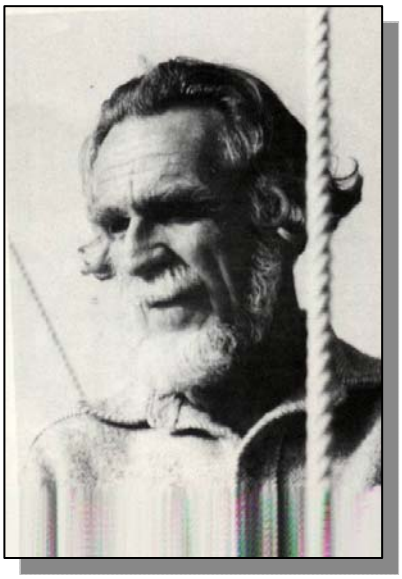
A True Schoonerman and Gentleman
John Ely Marsland, 1907 - 2011

By Stan Carlstadt



I would like to sadly report to the ASA membership that my very close friend and mentor, John Ely Marsland, passed away this past February at the ripe old age of 104 years.

John was an ASA member and ardent lover of schooners. During his long lifetime, John owned 9 boats - all sailboats and all wood, of course. His last two boats were schooners. His first schooner was **Active**, a 42' Murray Peterson coasting schooner built for him in 1963 at Robinhood Marine in Maine. Over the years, John very ably sailed **Active** while visiting ports from Nova Scotia to the Caribbean. He also sailed her across the Atlantic to England and then to Spain. After spending about a year in Europe, he sailed the southern route from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean. John then decided to design and build his second schooner, **Anitra's Dance**, when he was in his 70's! She is much like the 1st of the Murray Peterson Coasters. John built **Anitra's Dance**, mostly by himself, right on his property on Chesapeake Bay and it took him about 7 years to complete. He built everything on her except for the engine and sails. He built the masts and spars and even designed and made wood patterns for casting all of the bronze hardware.

John lived on a wonderful waterfront property on the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay outside of St. Michaels. He and his wife spent summers at their second home in East Boothbay, just up the hill from Nat Wilson's sail loft and that lovely harbor on the Damariscotta River. He kept **Anitra's Dance** in Maine most of the time. When he was 93 years old he sold her to me. I've kept the boat at his dock in Maryland for the past 11 years with John happily advising and helping me with my various maintenance and repair projects. He was a true gentleman, extremely intelligent and had "boat fever" all his life.

I sorely miss his camaraderie, mentoring and schooner discussions. I know he's watching down on me, so I' m going to make certain that I take good care of the schooner!

Story continued on page 6

Dogwatch

By Sam Hoyt

Just the threat of a 'zard this year, but it did dampen the turnout at the Annual Meeting. Nonetheless, about 55 brave souls made the trip to Mystic for ASA's 39th annual get-together.

We were a tad late arriving due to traffic on the Merritt – we found out later we should have stuck to I-95 – but did have a delightful trip conversing with Tom Dunlop, author of *Schooner: Building a Wooden Boat on Martha's Vineyard*, who was to be our guest speaker the next day. And what a surprise when we walked into the conference room at the Hampden Suites. Having become accustomed over the years to the plain fare (other than the oysters), we were literally amazed at the spread the members had provided. Two kinds of smoked fish, shrimp, *foie gras,* dips, *crudités* and, of course, oysters. Several bottles of rather good wine, home made beer and home made cookies with schooners iced on top. And rum of course. Then Walter Sodon produced a home made black walnut liqueur from a tree in his front yard. I'm not sure we're going to be able to continue in this vein but it does give us something to strive for.

The meeting itself produced no big surprises and the highlight was Tom Dunlop's presentation on how he came to write *Schooner* and his experiences while hanging around the Gannon & Benjamin yard and interacting with Ross and Nat. Unfortunately, Alison Shaw, whose excellent photos highlighted the story, could not be present as we would then have had a slide show to go with Tom's talk.

Earlier during the meeting, Tom had accepted the American Schooner Association Award on behalf of Gannon & Benjamin. I had talked with Nat earlier in the week and he was very appreciative of the fact that they had been designated the winner and were sorry that they couldn't be present. Perhaps we can make a formal presentation at the WoodenBoat Show in June, where I'm sure G&B will have one of their vessels. We welcome the formation of a committee to come up with some ideas to celebrate next year's 40th anniversary of the founding of ASA. And we welcome Susan Petraco (nee Pulsch) as our new secretary to replace Pat Brabazon who had to bow out.

During the customary introduction of all members at the beginning of the meeting, another (rather more significant) anniversary became apparent. 2012, in addition to being the end of the world, according to some, is also the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812. And it turns out that Barnacle Bill Hamilton of south joisy is the possessor of the only currently existing Letter of Marque, which, of course, gives him the right to attack and destroy any British shipping he might come across. We weren't exactly clear on how this came in to his possession, but we heartily endorse the idea of petitioning some powers that be to issue more Letters of Marque to schooners so that we can celebrate this important anniversary by some innovative acts of privateering (maybe sinking powerboats?). Bill works on the **A. J. Meerwald** with the Bayshore Discovery Project in Bivalve, NJ.

Unfortunately, more sad news to report. We were told during the meeting that Don Glassie had died just that weekend. Don was one of the early members of ASA and his Crowinshield schooner **Fortune** was a fixture and often a winner at the early races at Mystic and Newport. He was also a big part of putting together the Classic Yacht Regatta in Newport on Labor Day weekend.

Kudos to the Hampden Suites Inn for their hospitality and the great room for our Friday night get together, to Mystic

Seaport for providing the premises for the meeting and for the caterers at the Seaport who did a great job providing a continental breakfast and excellent lunch.

Maine Boatbuilders' Show... Imagine my surprise when, waiting at JFK to fly to Portland, this young man approaches and greets me by name and asks if I'm going to the boatbuilders' show. Actually, it was no surprise as Peter Thompson had informed me that his nephew, James, was flying up on the same flight we were on. But what a nice way to start a weekend. And, while we had beautiful, warm days on Friday and Saturday, the 'zard from the Annual Meeting showed up on Saturday. Not to worry. This year's show broke attendance records and the Portland Yacht Services facilities were jammed.

While not a whole lot of schooner-significant action took place, we did sign up some new members, including Fred Bowers of Wiscasset, Maine, who is building a schooner and who also joined the Gulf of Maine chapter. Another fellow, whose name I never did get, is rebuilding a Jack Wilbur designed Noank 32 schooner which is nearing completion and will sail out of Onset, MA. Another new member is Bernt Ruediger of Eastern Yacht Sales in Marblehead, MA, so anyone looking for a boat should get in touch with him. But a number of present and former members put in an appearance, among them the Pulsch clan. Bobbie was there to buy 10 foot oars and some other stuff for the catboat he's building for Roberta. And, all the way from Halifax, the Rhinelander family came south and what a pleasure to see them. Also Dave Clarke, Dave Stickney, Peter Neill, former director off South Street Seaport Museum, Amanda Madeira who skippered **Ernestina** for a while and, long time no see, George Moffett, long-time skipper of Mystic Seaport's **Brilliant**. George is now in to motorcycles and said he'd come to the show to see if he'd really gotten boats out of his system. Since he rejoined ASA and pledged to come to next year's annual meeting, my guess is he hasn't.

One of the people we hadn't seen in a while, Eric Van Dormolen of Maritime Restoration, informed us that the city of Port Jefferson on Long Island's north shore was looking for a schooner certified to carry at least 25 passengers, maximum length 90' with a maximum draft of nine feet. Anyone with any ideas should contact Eric at captericvandy@aol.com. He also informed us that **Mary E**, Teddy Charles old schooner, is successfully day chartering out of Essex, CT.

Many thanks to Sandy and Peter Thompson for putting us all up and hosting another tremendous party on Saturday night. Also helping out at the booth were Mary Anne McQuillan and Fred Sterner, Al Bezanson, Barnacle Bill Hamilton and Peter's nephew James, who, I believe, became a new member. If he hasn't, he should as he seemed to enjoy talking to boat people.

*Schooner news from various places....*The fleet for the Captain Reynaud International Schooner Race (CRISR) will rendezvous in Port Townsend, WA, on Sunday, July 10. The race will begin Monday morning and head across the straits with a probable first night's anchorage in

More Dogwatch on page 4

Prevost Harbor on Stuart Island in the San Juans. Other possible anchorages for the race legs include Spencer Spit, American Camp, Deer Harbor and Reed or Prevost Harbor. While Sound Experience's big Crowninshield schooner **Adventuress** does not race with the fleet, they plan to rendezvous somewhere along the way and tag along with the racing schooners. She also had extensive work done over the winter.

Other left coast news: Zodiac has a new mainmast, turned at Gray's Harbor. The Smith family's **Grail** has ordered a new mainsail from NW Sails which teaches a sailmaking and rigging class at the NW School of Wooden Boat building in Port Townsend and **Adventuress** is considering doing the same.

In Maine, the **Lewis R. French** and the **Stephen Taber**, the two oldest active sailing vessels in the country, both having been built in 1871, will hold a schooner match race showdown in mid-June, racing from Camden harbor to the Rockland breakwater lighthouse. The Maine Windjammers are going strong...Closer to home, **Mystic Whaler** is back up the Hudson River and did environmental education cruises in Albany and Catskill. They're now in Kingston.

There have been a flurry of email messages concerning a schooner wreck at the end of March on Fire Island Shoals. Seems a midsized steel schooner named **Le Papillon**, reputedly out of Baltimore en route to Maine, went ashore when the three young men aboard fell asleep while she was running on autopilot. Also reputedly, the vessel had run aground a few days earlier while trying to enter Egg Harbor Inlet on the Jersey coast. Further messages disclosed that the owner supposedly had built the boat in Baltimore, had sailed her to several foreign ports, was keeping her on the Sassafras River and planned on retiring on her. To make matters much worse, the three young men, at least one the owner's son, had taken the boat without his permission. The Coast Guard apparently decided the schooner was too heavy to tow off the beach and that it had to be cut up. The owner washed his hands of the whole thing. But who would name a schooner Butterfly? Really!

While walking home on the Hudson River walkway recently, I came upon a sight I'd never seen there. Tied up at Chelsea Piers at the end of 17th Street, was a full-rigged ship. It turned out to be the **Stad Amsterdam**, a 180' Dutch vessel owned by the Ranstad organization, an international staffing firm. She was in New York to host the company's employees, then was to go to Boston and then Portugal. I was told that it was built in the 1990s and that it did do some sail training in the Netherlands. But imagine this, a relatively new full-rigged ship that could be seen from the end of my street in Manhattan.

Finally, it's becoming quite likely that the South Street Seaport Museum might not make it. Apparently, it is deeply in debt, has laid off most of its staff and is highly unlikely to commission either of its two schooners, **Lettie G. Howard** and **Pioneer**, this summer. The New York Times reported on April 16 that the museum was trying to farm out the vessels to either Gloucester, Kingston or Schooner, Inc. in New Haven and was trying to sell the four-masted barque **Peking**. Several groups, including one of the museum's founders, Peter Stanford, are trying to get involved and to come up with some way to save it. There is a plan afoot to make part of South Street a pedestrian esplanade from Fulton Street to the Battery, which could draw more people to the area which might help. But the future doesn't look too good.

Keep those cards and letters coming, folks.

ASA Annual Meeting Minutes February 5, 2011, 10:00am

Respectfully submitted, Bill Carton, ASA Rear Commodore

Call to Order

- Al Roper called the meting to order at 10:00am, the membership observed a moment of silence for the loved ones lost over the past year and for our troops lost.
- Al thanked everyone who attended the cocktail party the evening before and said it was a great way to start the weekend off.

Introductions

- All members participated in introducing themselves and their vessels.

Treasurers' Report: Joanne Souza

- Net assets as of February 2010 were $5100.00
- Major Expenses for the year were brochures, publishing W&W and its mailing, leaving net assets for January 2011 at $3558.00
- The SOS Fund has assets of $65.00
- Treasurers' report was voted on and accepted.
- Minutes to the 2010 meeting were voted on and accepted.

Old Business

- Sam Hoyt presented the 2011 ASA Schooner Award to Gannon & Benjamin. They have been in business for 31 years building and restoring wooden boats. Tom Dunlop accepted the award for Nat Benjamin and Ross Gannon.
- Sue Sodon, publisher of W&W, will try to have 4 issues in 2011.
- Al Roper questioned what to do about the SOS Fund as it has only $65.00 in it. No one had any good suggestions.
- 2011 ASA Exhibits, Rendezvous' and Events
  - Portland MBBS
  - Wooden Boat Show
  - Gloucester Schooner Festival
  - Provincetown Schooner Regatta
  - Wooden Boat Festival
  - Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race
  - Cambridge Rendezvous

New Business

- Joanne Souza - Schooner **Adventure** will have a new web site
- Mary Anne McQuillan & Fred Sterner – Schooner **Ernestina** requires funding for a Haul out in March, working w/ Coast Guard for approvals, please visit web site
- Greg DeCowsky – Yacht **Elf**, Stated that there will be a Classic Yacht Race with a Classic start and finish, May 21, 2011. please see Yacht ELF website
- Peter Thompson spoke about the Maine Boatbuilders' Show March 18-19, 2011
- Al Roper – Schooner **Virginia**, the state of Virginia dropped funding for 2011, many volunteers working to keep her in good condition, Virginia needs new masts.
- Roger Worthington - Mid-Atlantic Chapter ASA - All boats had transponders for the GCBSR. The new theme for Cambridge is the war of 1812. Cambridge has the second deepest port on the Chesapeake. The Maritime Museum is now on board with the Cambridge Rendezvous. The Governor of Maryland declared, "October is Schooner Month in Maryland." This year will be the Sixth Cambridge Rendezvous.
- Peter Thompson – Acknowledged that in 2012, ASA will be celebrating its 40th Anniversary and put out a challenge to have a schooner rendezvous in Martha's Vineyard. This opened the floor up to many ideas on what to do. It was suggested to start a Volunteer Committee to organize the 40th Anniversary. Many volunteers raised their hands. This led to contact info being available on the website for easy communication.

40th Anniversary 2012 Volunteer Committee

- Sandy and Peter Thompson
- Susan Petraco
- John Eginton
- Greg DeCowsky
- Brent Ruediger
- Bill Carton
- Mark Faulstick

- Mary Anne McQuillan made a motion on the floor to place names and contact info on the ASA's members only section, Open discussion on information on website ensued. Seconded by Mark Faulstick, Approved.
- Barnacle Bill Hamilton provided info on becoming a Privateer and receiving a Letter of Marque from the Maryland Government for the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812.
- Mark Faulstick – **Adventurer**, spoke about the Provincetown Schooner Regatta and the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race.
- Chris Petraco spoke about U.S. Sailing offshore seminars and

spoke about Health Insurance through U.S. sailing if your organization meets certain requirements.
- Sam Hoyt requested that the 2011 Calendar of Events be placed in the next W&W.
- Nan Nawrocki – GCBSR stated that the GCBSR will be part of OPSAIL 2012 in Maryland. Many events under Star-Spangled 200 will take place in Baltimore starting in April 2012, going to December 2012, in commemoration of the War of 1812.

Elections
- There was a motion from the floor that the current Slate of Officers remain in office and that Susan Petraco be added as Secretary, Seconded, Approved.

2011 Slate
- Commodore: Al Roper
- Vice Commodore: Sam Hoyt
- Rear Commodore: Bill Carton
- Secretary: Susan Petraco
- Treasurer: Joanne Souza
- W&W Editor: Susan Sodon

Motion to Adjourn:
- A motion by Al Roper to adjourn the meeting, Seconded, Approved
- The meeting was adjourned at 11:25am.
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Continued from page 1, "A True Schoonerman and Gentleman..."

PS: You can read some very interesting articles written by John published in Wooden Boat Magazine:
Issue # 7, page 20 "Active Goes to England"
Issue #14, page 70 "Making a Ship's Wheel"
Issue #15, page 60 "Mast Making"

Stan Carlstadt is a past Secretary of the ASA and a founding member and Secretary of the ASA Mid-Atlantic Chapter. He lives in Princeton, NJ and keeps Anitra's Dance near St. Michaels, MD on Chesapeake Bay. Stan can be reached at stan@carlstadt.biz

Schooner Renegade
Rio Guadiana, Portugal

By Capt. Lee Werth

Renegade's most recent travels' east on the Algarve coast of Portugal and up the Guadiana River between Spain and Portugal to Mertola (last part was by dinghy) where there is a most impressive castle at the top of Mertola (pictured below).

You are never too old to relearn. **Renegade** has been traveling east on the Algarve coast of Portugal. The total hip replacement is a great success ...if only a memory chip were available for more cerebral parts of my physiology. As I traveled northward, up the Guadiana River between Spain and Portugal, I saw my friend Pedro's ketch anchored. The day had been long with seemingly endless rain and bamboo "rafts" and debris running down the river and assaulting the bobstay. I pulled alongside Pedro's boat forgetting to shorten the dinghy painter which promptly wrapped around the prop shaft when I engaged reverse. (I have done this

before but in clear warm water.) I anchored and attempted to clear the shaft. However...there was no visibility in the muddy water; a strong current; debris all around; and the water was COLD! I got dizzy and reboarded. Yes, I was in a state of hypothermia, but Pedro took me aboard his boat and after a hot meal I recovered.

The picture of **Renegade** below makes her appear to be sinking as I am down in a trough between swells: I caption it: "No, I am not sinking."

The next day the bamboo "rafts" and debris accumulating on the bow caused the anchor to drag in the strong current. When things settled down on a flood tide which almost cancelled the ebb, I used my scuba tank and after about 25 minutes and much cutting, cleared the prop shaft. This time I was giddy, clumsy, too stupid to remember how I tie the boarding ladder...that is, I was seriously hypothermic. I was also delighted that no damage was done to Renegade and proceeded up river, eventually to actually enjoy myself.

Cheers!!!

Capt. Lee Werth, Schooner **Renegade**
Rio Guadiana, Portugal

2011 – 2012 Calendar of Events

- March 18-20: Maine Boatbuilders Show, Portland, ME
- April 2: America's Schooner Cup, San Diego, CA
- May 21: ELF Classic Inaugural, Annapolis to St. Michaels, MD
- June 24-26: WoodenBoat Show, Mystic, CT
- July 4: Great Schooner Race, Penobscot Bay, ME
- July 10:*Captain Raynaud Int'l Schooner Race, Pt. Townsend, WA to San Juan Islands
- August 7: Eggemoggin Reach Regatta, Brooklin, ME
- July 25-31: Sail North Husavik 2011, Husavik, Iceland
- July 30-August 6: Nova Scotia Schooner Assn. Race Week, Hubbards, NS
- August 21: Annual **Opera House Cup, Nantucket, MA
- August 26-28: **Herreshoff Classic Yacht Regatta, Newport, RI
- Sept. 3-4: **Classic Yacht Regatta, Newport, RI
- Sept. 3-6: *Gloucester Schooner Festival, Gloucester, MA
- Sept. 8: Fisherman's Cup, Gloucester to Provincetown, MA
- Sept. 9-11: Wooden Boat Festival, Port Townsend, WA
- Sept. 10-13: *Provincetown Schooner Regatta, Provincetown, MA
- Sept. 17-18: **Indian Harbor Classic Yacht Regatta, Greenwich, CT
- Sept. 24-25: **Greenport Classic Yacht Regatta, Greenport, NY
- Oct. 10-16:*Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race Week, Baltimore-Norfolk
- Oct. 22-24: *Cambridge Schooner Rendezvous, Cambridge, MD
- Feb. 4, 2012: American Schooner Assn. Annual Meeting, Mystic, CT

**American Schooner Association Rendezvous Event*

*** WoodenBoat Regatta Series*

eSchooner - RFIs

I' m trying to track down the schooner **Shirley Blanche** my father, Rutherford Ross, sold in Virginia in 1981. Gary Kessal was trying to form the Virgina Maritime Foundation to save her after she was abandoned and sank at the dock. I've included info he put together in 1984. USCG doesn't have any record of her. Can look at the PDF and point me in a direction? Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Josh
joshuachesler@yahoo.com

Island Rover
Unconventional Construction of a Schooner

By Capt. Harold Arndt

There is nothing conventional about the construction of the 113 ft. Topsail Schooner **Island Rover** on Flying Point in Freeport, Maine. It is a story about which books are written and not surprisingly there is a book being written. The book, in progress since 1992, being written by the family Genealogist, is documenting this 19 year epic undertaking by an aging man with a dream.

When one visualizes the construction of a two masted schooner, there is little of that vision that is personified by the construction location of the **Island Rover**. It is being built in a former family 4-H sheep pasture in a pine forest, outside in the weather, (the way our ancestors built large ships), eighteen years so far in the making, located miles from deep water for launch. And the materials used in the construction are surplus, recycled, re-used and re-manufactured.

What is conventional is the design by a third generation marine architect, welding by certified welders and construction to the ABS ship building standards for "less than 65 meter vessels" - basically a very sound foundation from which to launch a not so conventional ship construction project.

By choice and ease of availability, four raw materials have been used in the construction of the hull. First and foremost there is the 5/16" thick steel plate to DH-36 specifications with the mill stamping certifications plainly visible. Next, there is the structural flat bar in sizes ½" by 2" and 5/16" by 2" and last the ¼" by 2" by 2" angle bar, all produced to the A-36 specification by an electric rolling mill using recycled steel scrap as feed stock. These raw materials constitute the significant volumes of raw materials used for an entire ship. The two sizes of flat bar and angle bar are "new" rollings in standard 20ft. lengths, using recycled steel scrap feed stock for the rollings. The main construction raw material, the 5/16" DH-36 plate (over 50 tons of plates) was considered scrap or surplus waste by a large government contractor shipyard because the sheets were small pieces (measuring 4' 9"by 10' and 9' 4"

Nov 2008 photo by: Tim Tanner

by 10') left over from the original mill plate size rollings at 50' by 10'.

All frames were cut to shape from plate and welded to a 5/16" by 2" flat bar backing to produce a "Tee" frame. When the hull plate was installed and welded, the shape effectively became an "I" or "H" beam. The ½" by 2" flat bar installed longitudinally, fore and aft, connecting the frames at less than 15" spacing on the frames (the spacing of the longitudinal was actually established during frame cutting by using the design diagonals), produced a structurally, very strong ship skeleton atop a massive 39 foot in length steel box keel filled with fitted chucks of cast iron and surrounded with poured lead to secure everything into one piece ultimately weighing 38 tons.

While the ship's hull is fabricated from the raw materials previously discussed, the keel is a variation in raw materials and an engineering/welding challenge in and of itself. The keel shoe consists of 2 ½" thick steel plate as the foundation for the 1 3/8" thick solid frames spaced 30" apart and the single plate of ¾" thick HSLA 100 (purchased as scrap!) originally 39 feet long, became the two side plates of the keel box. The keel box was then filled with cast iron chucks and scrap steel and molten lead was poured around. Then the top of the keel being 1 1/8" steel plate was welded to the side plate and bolted to the threaded keel frames.

When one sees this huge schooner taking shape in a Maine pine forest, the general reaction by visitors after the initial "HOW Did He Do That? Exclamations", is the question of "WHY?" Thus the project needs an explanation. The explanation starts with a young boy in Connecticut in the 1950's, with an obsession for water and things that float and dreams of making rafts that have sails. His grandmother teaches him to sew sails from old sheets on an old peddle sewing machine. He grows up dreaming of bigger boats that sail and ultimately boats that are big enough with huge billowy sails to take him anywhere in the world. A life-time of dreaming and making dreams come true prepares that boy to take on bigger and bigger projects because as the old saying goes: "you can tell the age of a boy by the size of his dreams and toys." Dreams have no size limit and toys are only limited in size by the ability of the boy to make them come true. Who says that a boy can't build a 113 ft. sail boat in his back yard supported by a life-time of collecting tools and "stuff," most of which has been discarded by a throw-away society, yet can still be used to build a ship. When one visits the **Island Rover** construction site, that is exactly what they find. A ship built from what others would have thrown away and tons of "stuff", not necessarily originally used as boat-building material, but now awaiting its place aboard in the final construction process. Talk about dreaming big. The **Island Rover** has become bigger than one boy's dream, bigger than one man's dream; it has attracted the enthusiasm of a group of dreamers. It has become a project which

many can participate in as a demonstration of how large and how beautiful an object can be built from what others would have thrown away. It has become a symbol of human ingenuity and a demonstration icon of the need for current society to change the paradigms of a wasteful, disposable, throwaway life-style and create a new American Dream where the human species lives in harmony and in sync with Mother Nature. It has been officially organized as a Non-Profit Foundation with Federal IRS 501(c)3 status under the name: Island Rover Foundation.

Building a ship from scrap is a long term endeavor where the search is always on for opportunities to obtain "stuff" that can be used in the project. One must first be a "dreamer" of what alternative uses things might have, other than the originally intended use. One must have a creative mind and be able to see how things can be repaired or rebuilt into something else or combined together and used in a way totally different from the original intention or to be re-arranged to solve a present task or resolve a particular situation.

The ability of an individual to comprehend the value of something beyond the originally intended use is a phenomena many times referred to as Yankee frugality and the ability to make something out of it is Yankee ingenuity, two attributes engrained into a young boy of the 1950's by a grandfather who exemplified the Yankee persona. A life-time of building on and expanding on that early Yankee mentality training prepared that matured boy to take on a project of a life-time. A commitment that has become a life-style. A life-style that might be a model for the sustainable living of a young generation today. Could we have come full circle in a social experiment? That young boy of the 1950's teaching the generations of the 2010's what the generations of the 1980's and 90's lost sight of or were not taught.

The very first task that was accomplished was learning how to read and interpret a basic set of ship's drawings and how to mentally project that information onto a full size lofting floor, which happened to be the home basement rumpus room floor. The old fashioned technique of full size lofting first needed to be learned by this old boy. Moving the full size lofting lines to the specially constructed steel fabricating table at the workshop was accomplished using wooden frames constructed to hold scrap Mylar fastened to the wood and cut to shape from the lofting. The wooden frame and Mylar pattern was then transported to the steel cutting table and spray painted to the steel plate previously prepared.

The designer of the ship was of the old school and had provided four drawings: profile, table of off-sets, longitudinal and transverse lines, and the scantlings. An acquisition opportunity would prevail for the welding and cutting machines for the project. Attending a large machine shop auction was to provide very suitable welding equipment and a small, portable "state of the art" plasma cutting torch unit. While acetylene / oxygen torches existed at the construction site shop and provided the cutting necessary for the thick steel in the keel construction, the portable plasma torch was "god sent" for the steel cutting that comprised the "yards and yards" of steel cuts necessary for the 37 frames fabricated for the ship's "skeleton."

Once the lofting was well underway, which continued over several years, the huge box keel was fabricated with 30" long compartments formed by the keel frames. When fully welded, those compartments were filled with chunks of cast iron elevator weights, cast iron window weights, chucks of scrap steel and then molten lead was poured around everything to make it into one solid mass. The result, thirtyeight tons of steel, cast iron and lead in a structure 39 feet long and over 30 inches in beam amidships, tapering fore and aft to about 6 inches where the transition to the bow stem takes place, and about 8 inches where the hour-glass section transitions to accommodate the propeller. The keel construction was accomplished with mostly just hours and hours of cutting, grinding, welding and more grinding, followed by the placing of the cast iron with the crane, pouring the lead as the spaces dictated and finally cutting, placing and welding the cover for the keel into place. Three years of man hours (including the hours of melting lead 600 pounds at a time in a 20 pound propane tank converted into a crucible that was handled by the crane), with molten lead pouring out a gate valve fitted to the bottom, were required to build the keel.

The cover of the keel, (a steel plate that is 1 1/8 inches thick), was securely welded to the keel sides and bolted to the keel frames. That joining is significant as that is the foundation to which all the amidships frames are secured and the bow stem is fastened and the stern structure transitions from.

By the spring of 1997, excitement was at a high because the construction of the first frames was underway. Lofting of the amidships frames was complete, such that the wood and Mylar patterns could be lifted from the full size transverse lofting and brought to the steel cutting table to be spray painted to size and shape on the 5/16" thick steel plates welded into huge over sized shapes from which each frame shape would be cut.

For straight lines, the plasma torch had been equipped with a drag tip which was fantastic. The first couple of frames were accomplished by tack welding a flexible 1/8" by 2" steel flat bar on edge just the right distance from the desired cut line. The flat bar acted as a guide for the drag tip. It worked "OK", but was a two person set-up. One person to hold the flat bar exactly 9/32" (a special measuring tool was made) from the lofting pencil line and a second person to spot weld the flat bar guide to the steel to be cut into the frame shape. As said, it was "OK" but inefficient. The cutting process required only one person to proceed, plus the guide flat bar became distorted by the heat of tack welding along with the heat of removal and the grinding off old tack metal.

The wheels of creativity had not stopped in the old boy's head during the creation of those first three frames. The setting on and tack welding of the cutting process flat bar guide and its removal was inefficient, and the installation of the 5/16"by 2" flat bar backer to the frame to make the "TEE" structure shape had installation clamping problems using standard "C" Clamps. The standard "C" Clamps constantly slipped or popped off at just the last minute of final adjustment and thus adjustment and alignment started over.

It was going to be a very long process building 37 frames that way.

The experiences on the first three frames lead to the creation of several special tools. You see at that time in history, not only did the project have the initiative of the now ageing "Boy" turned "Cap'n", the Cap'n still had his father Christopher, an equally creative individual with extensive experience in machinist work and other Yankee creativity talents. Chris played a significant role in the building of the keel as he had been the sole operator of the crane all during the setting of steel and the melting and pouring of lead. Chris spent hours feeding very dry pine into the lead smelter unit. It was discovered early on that dry pine worked better than coal as a fuel, since the need for the smelter required lots of fast continuous immediate heat to get the lead to its melt temperature. Coal represented lots of slower, but continuous long term heat and did not produce the desired smelter results. The key attribute to the smelter was the huge amount of compressed air that was delivered by a steel pipe manifold inside the smelter fire box that instantly reduced dry pine to huge amounts of available BTU's to melt the lead. Even coal under that much compressed air did not work as well as pine wood scrap, but coal was used at times to hold a fire or a melt.

Anyway, Chris and the Cap'n brainstormed the frame construction situation and created a number of special tools to make the ship's frames construction easier and more efficient. Chris provided the appropriate machinist work, while the Cap'n designed, welded and put the special tools together. The plan was always to find a machinist's milling machine for Chris to use in the workshop, however; after a short illness in 2001, Chris passed away.

...Look for the next installment of ***Island Rover*** *— Unconventional Construction of a Schooner* in the next issue of W&W.

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