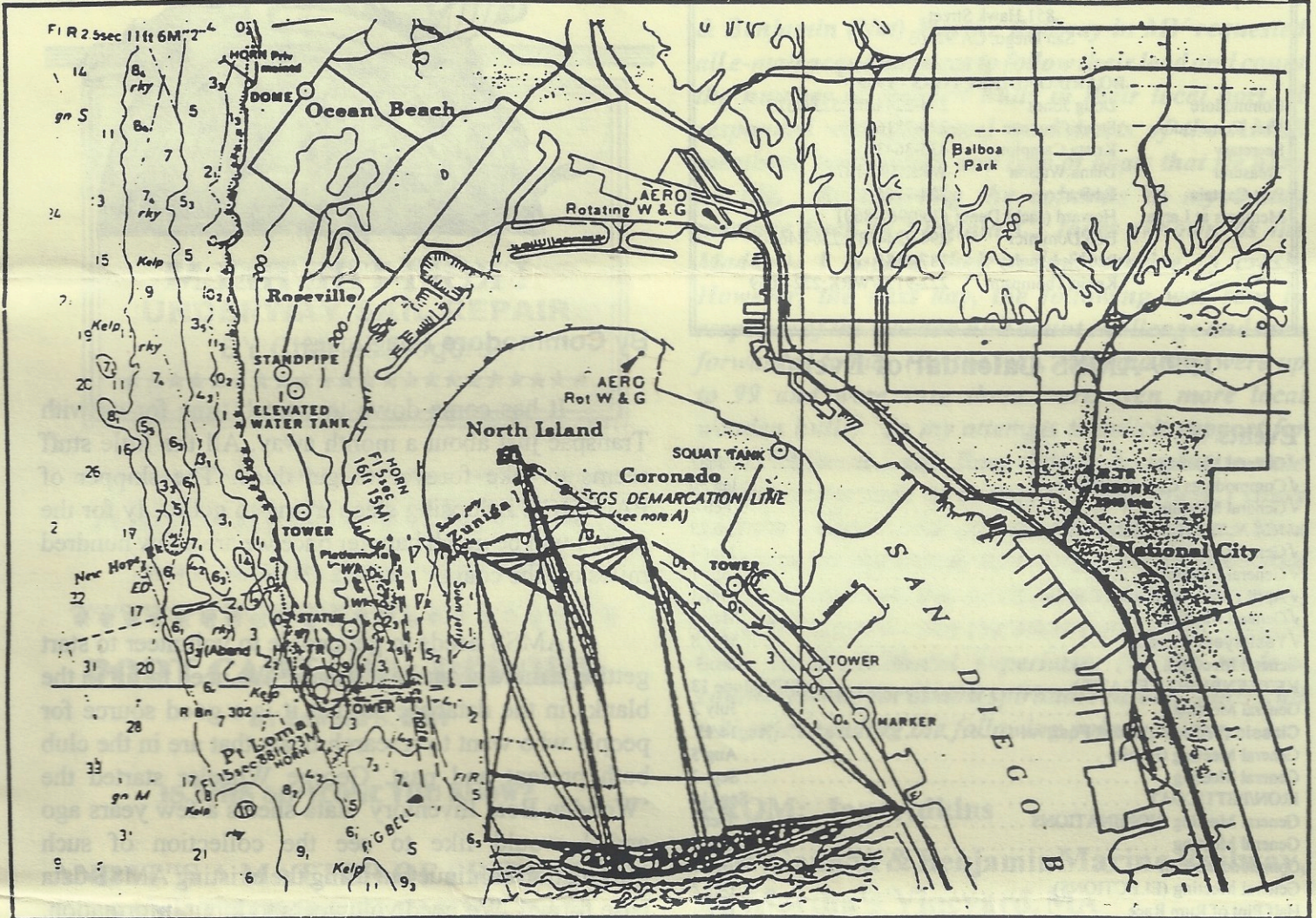


ALBATROSS

ANCIENT MARINERS SAILING SOCIETY

Volume 25, Number 6

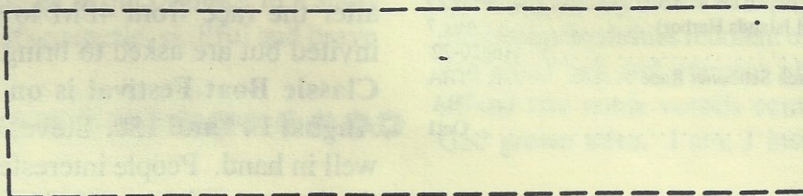
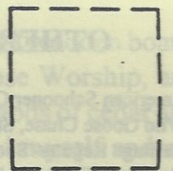
JUNE 1999



ANCIENT MARINERS SAILING SOCIETY

P.O. Box 6484

San Diego, California 92166



The Albatross is the official publication of
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AMSS Ship-to-Ship VHF Common - Channel 68
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Southwestern Yacht Club, 2702 Qualtrough St., San Diego.

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FROM THE HELM

By Commodore Doug Jones

1999 AMSS Calendar of Events

Events

✓General Meeting	Jan 7
✓Commodores Cup and Raft-up	Jan 30
✓General Meeting	Feb 4
JACK N JILL (CANCELED)	XXXXFeb 13
✓General Meeting	Mar 4
✓General Meeting	Apr 1
✓April Fools Regatta and Raft Up	Apr 3
✓General Meeting	May 6
✓Yesteryear Regatta	May 8
General Meeting	June 3
KETTENBURG REGATTA	(SUN) June 13
General Meeting	July 2
Classic (Wooden) Boat Festival	Aug14/15
General Meeting (Picnic)	Aug 5
General Meeting	Sept 2
IRON/PETTICOAT	Sept 18
General Meeting NOMINATIONS	Oct 7
General Meeting	Nov 4
Commodore's Ball	Nov 13
General Meeting (ELECTIONS)	Dec 2
Half Pint of Rum Race	Dec 4
New Years' Eve Raft Up - La Playa	Dec 31

OTHER ORGANIZATION'S EVENTS

American Schooner Cup	March 20/21
Wild Goose Chase, San Pedro to Newport (W.H.Y.C.)	TBA
Heritage Regatta- Show (Newport Hb. Nautical Museum)	Apr 18
Newport - Ensenada Race	Apr 23
LUDERS INVITATIONAL	May 15
Master Mariner's Race	May 22
Eric Erickson Oil Island Race, Long Beach (W.H.Y.C.)	May 29
McNish Classic Yacht Race (Channel Islands Harbor)	Aug 7
Bishop Rock Race (SDYC)	Aug20-22
Nautical Heritage Society - Long Beach Schooner Race	TBA
W.H.Y.C. vs AMSS	TBA
S.W.Y.C. Ensenada Race	Oct1

1999 TRANSPAC

Cruising Class leaves Long Beach June 29

It has come down to crunch time for us with Transpac just about a month away. All the little stuff seems to take forever to get done. The skipper of PACIFICA is losing sleep trying to get ready for the race. I will be much happier once we are a few hundred miles off the coast.

AMSS needs to get people to volunteer to start getting a more accurate database. We need to fill in the blanks in the database so that it is a good source for people who want to research boats that are in the club both present and past. George Wheeler started the 'Wooden Boat Inventory' data sheets a few years ago and I would like to see the collection of such information continue but using the existing AMSS data base format. We need volunteers to input information.

Our next events are the **Kettenburg Regatta** and the **Classic Boat Festival**. The **Kettenburg Regatta is on Sunday June 13th**. Debbie has some new and interesting approaches to racing, a combination of a treasure hunt with racing around buoys. The Kettenburg party is on the BERKELEY this year right after the race from 4PM to 6PM. All members are invited but are asked to bring a munchie to share. The **Classic Boat Festival is on Saturday and Sunday, August 14th and 15th**. Steve, Kevin and Ed have things well in hand. People interested in having their boats in the show need to get their Applications in ASAP, or talk Kevin, Ed or Steve.

The Zen of Cellulose

-From The Editor-

I have reprinted the following e-mail response to Virginia C. Jones in Martha's Vineyard which was forwarded to me last week. The response will appear as an article in the Chesapeake Bay Magazine. I do have the author's permission to print his response in the ALBATROSS. BACKGROUND: Gannon (Ross) & Benjamin (Nat) Marine Railway in MV requested all e-mail acquaintances to follow their lead and count the number of wooden hulls in their local port. I responded with the excel worksheets of the AMSS members' boat names and type of boats that we have on file. By inserting the columns in my e-mail message back to Virginia C. Jones (known as the Madam), I caused their e-mail service to crash. However, the next day, the following was sent in response of the wooden hull count challenge and then forwarded to me. (By the way, MV said they were up to 99 and were sure there were even more local wooden hulls). In my attempts to solicit support for the Traditional Small Boat Center, by trying to state explicitly why such an endeavor is important, I stress that the wooden boat construction techniques have been around thousands and thousands of years and that it is a trade/art that needs preservation. However, the response addresses the other notion that wooden hulls have additional superiority (to the modern counterpoints) for almost spiritual reasons. I think all will enjoy reading the following point of view.

FROM: Jan Adkins

**TO: Gannon & Benjamin Marine Railway,
on Martha's Vineyard, MA**

Madam:

You know that I was once a fancier of wooden boats, wrote for the Brooklin Institute of Cellulose Worship, and tithed (way more than 10% of gross) to the gods of cedar and oak. A real marine anchorite, I flagellated myself and my bank account in order to purify my 20/21 century soul. Yes, "the world is too much with us / Late and soon / Getting and spending we lay waste our powers." I have made mighty pilgrimage to shrines redolent of recently shaved sweet cedar and bitter oak and pungent pitch pine. Yes, I have even owned five noble vessels constructed miraculously out of God grown trees. I am, I insist, eligible for the Wooden

I will miss you all at the next meeting; I have to go to the East Coast June 2nd to the 7th. I will also miss the July and August meetings; I will be sailing in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. I should be back down from Port Townsend by September. PACIFICA will not be back until next summer. We will try to do the Master Mariners Race in San Francisco next May (2000).

Good luck to all.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

NEXT MEETING
 June 3, 1999
 SWYC AT 7:30 P.M.
UNDERWAY SAIL REPAIR
 BY Charles Rogers

★ ★

AMSS IS ON THE WEB

www.sdsailing.com/amss.htm

PORT CAPTAIN'S REPORT:

BY Edward S. Barr

IS THIS SOMEONE YOU KNOW?

AND IT'S A MATTER OF PRIDE, TOO, SAYS THOMAS FLEMING DAY

It is certainly a sorry spectacle to see a man sailing a yacht who cannot tie a proper knot, splice a rope, or bend a sail, and who does not know the terms used to designate parts of the structure which he essays to manage. If he is ashamed to learn, or if he is too lazy to gather such knowledge, he is out of place in a sport which is the life and joy of energetic, skillful and brave men.



Elect, Madam. But I decline.

My very first boat, a vintage Beetlecat to which I foolishly gave the name Sir Patrick Spens (and you remember what happened to him and the proud Scots lords, oh yes), should have given me a clue. It sank. Every night. It sank with such predictability that Warr's Marine Railway of Wareham, Massachusetts, renamed it Bismark. All my other wooden boats sank. Some faster, some slower. Wood, you see, is not a homogenous material; it is, to a shocking degree, porous. And when you construct a vessel out of bits and pieces of wood, you are adapting a linear cylindrical form (the tree) to complex curves (the vessel) and a hostile environment to which it is hardly compatible (the sea).

Here, let's build a wooden boat. Let's cut the tree and saw out planks, nice and flat. But wait! They don't stay flat! As they cure, they bow and twist and check and complain. No matter, we'll plane them flat again. We must point out here that no tree is like another any more than my fingerprints are like yours in more than a superficial way (whorly and confused, just like woodgrain, come to think of it). Every individual puff of wind, soil component, weather pattern and rainfall statistic is registered in a tree as firmly as a wedding registry at Shreve, Crump & Lowe. How pleasant, some wood-head in the back row comments. Yes, my son, pleasant and picturesque for, say, a grain-figured bombé chest of drawers meant to stand stately and sheltered from the elements in a Brahmin lawyer's bedroom. But look at all those scars and beetle homes and storm strains and think about incorporating them in the frail shell of safety carrying jolly mariners. Will a bit of history in the wood, reacting to a stress for which the original tree wasn't prepared, give up? Will the long leaf pine or white cedar cry "This isn't the life for which I was raised from a seedling! To hell with this!" and split down the middle? It could happen.

But we will trust the sawyer's wise eye, and the lumberperson's patient care in aging and curing the wood, in allowing the cell walls to harden and give up a percentage of its moisture not too much, mind you, but just enough. How much is enough? Ask a Greek cook how much oregano to add. The answer: "Enough." Science marches on.

Now we select likely (but suspect) timbers, shape them to a tree-foreign pattern, and connect them using scarfs and drifts and fastenings (basic engineering rule: never depend on your fastenings) to make the framework of the vessel, the ribs. Onto this sensual, cetacean shape we bevel, dub and graft flat planks after we steam them or use big damn screw jacks to bend them to our will fastening them with semi-precious metals. The cellulose addicts who are rocking like disturbed children at the back of the room are nodding their heads in unison, now and murmuring "Silicon

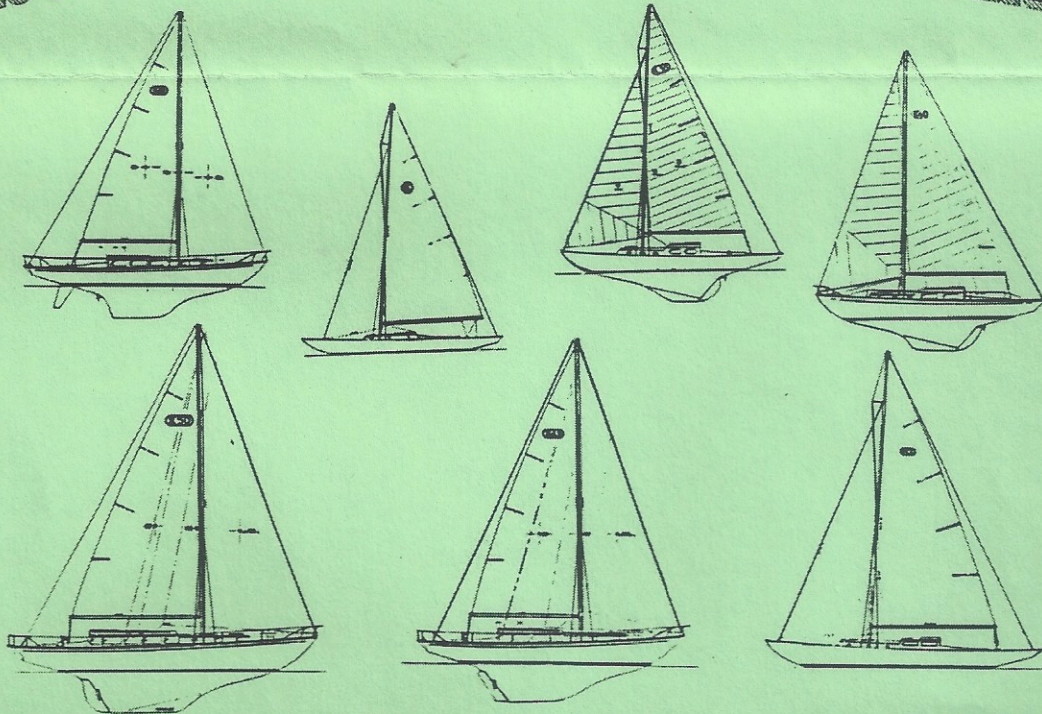
bronze, monel." But while they sway and chant cabalistic mantras, let us pause and ask ourselves a question we might encounter in real life. If, approaching a mate of surpassing beauty and promise, the patriarch of the family sits you down in the parlor and tells you that his child may only be courted from a Rolls Royce, fed at the toniest restaurants, and courted with dozens of long-stemmed roses each day, will you not consider very soberly if the object of your desire is that good-looking? Will you not ask, "Is this in the cards? Am I supposed to be flogging myself for a pig in a poke?" It's up to you, of course. Let a thousand flowers bloom, I say, but if I'm obliged to court from a Rolls or fasten with monel, alarm bells go off in my Bureau of Appropriate Return. I'm not a fussy man. Let us assume that you have secured impeccable planks to stout ribs and rafters and keel and carlins with fasteners impervious to time or the elements, screws that scoff at the pyramids, themselves uppity screws. Now you're done, yes? Not quite. Now a troupe of fudgers arrive, the caulkers. No, the fit between planks is not sufficiently tight nor can it ever be. The caulkers use their strange hammers and tempered force-feeders to stuff goo and oakum into the breaches in the hull, an opportunity for failure at every plank seam. Asked why a caulking mallet has a longitudinal cut in the head on either side of the handle, an old shellback once explained to me that it was "to make them louder." Why louder? "Caulkers need to make themselves feel important," the shellback answered. And I maintain that they need to make themselves feel appropriate, too. All the most skillful joinery means nothing without the fudge factor of expanding goo between every single plank in hull and deck.

There she floats, this wooden boat we've built. It is temporarily at the surface but even as she sits unladen in calm waters, water is creeping into her bilges. You know it is. It sits in a silence that belies the fury of all her straining parts. The sun warms her topsides, the water cools and suffuses her hull, the wood even after death maintaining a ghostly breathing in and out of moisture changes shape and size. Every plank, every fitting, every fastening is swelling or shrinking against its neighbor, initiating and enduring some strain tension, compression or shear. The whole assembly would, if a passing puckish angel waved its hand to release all the forces of friction and fastenings, fly to flinders in one awful moment. Joints and fittings that might not have admitted the edge of a samurai's sword gape and welcome more water. Often this is fresh water, collecting in the careful joints, pooling along hull blocks and in the shoulders of floors, and inexorably rotting the integrity of the wood, reducing its laminate strength to punky deceit. Oils and varnishes and paints laid on to protect the wood are destroyed by its respiration and change, by the sun's radiation, by cold and patient weather.

ANCIENT MARINERS SAILING SOCIETY

is proud to announce the

1999 KETTENBURG REGATTA



All KETTENBURG Yacht owners, collectors, historians, former employees, admirers and sailors are cordially invited to attend this glorious regatta.

SUNDAY - JUNE 13, 1999 Noon-6PM

TO SIGN UP: CONTACT Deb Dominici

(619) 294-2244/(619) 688-6961

E-Mail: amss.info@juno.com

☆ RACES ☆ TROPHIES ☆ RECEPTION ☆ PLAQUES ☆

ALL AMSS MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO THE RECEPTION ON THE 2ND DECK OF THE BERKELEY, 4 to 6 PM - Bring Hors D'oeuvres to Share

PC

PCC

K-38

K-40

K-41

K-43

K-50

And are we done with adding insult to the frail integrity of the vessel? No, ma'am. We place in it a long lever, a mast, and fasten to it broad, high-tech sail shapes subject to the limitless power of the wind. Like a massive crowbar, the (wooden) pries at the structure and deforms the boat with brutal force. We note that wood purists are not too damn pure about their standing rigging; for that significant item they go as high-tech as possible with 17-strand stainless rigging with swaged fittings. How about a wooden backstay, Gannon and Benjamin? No? How about manilla or hemp? That's traditional. Inappropriate, you say? Not any less appropriate than using a porous, unpredictable material for boats.

The art of wooden boat building is performance art evanescent, the flourish of a moment. Wooden boat builders and ice sculptors have much in common; they are skilled specialists in pursuit of fleeting honor, crankily insisting that their transitory forms have a reality and purpose that somehow support the commonweal. They revel in the fragrance and traditions of their work, as morticians may tarry over their bourbon remembering the black death or the Johnstown Flood. They write epic poems on a busy sidewalk, in a cloudy day, with chalk.

I have owned five wooden boats and had moments of joy with each. I loved their forms and their intricacies but hated their vices; love the sinner, hate the sin. Among their vices were a tendency to sink, a self-destructive bent, a constant need for attention and maintenance, and a whopping yearly expenditure.

Mind you, I am not one who objects to wealthy folks raising and keeping polo ponies, even though polo has not done a great deal for me, personally. But at least the idle rich have the good grace to be snobbish about it and not to encourage the homeless and the destitute to invest in polo ponies. Wood-heads have no such scruples. They preach to the struggling middle class and to young families indiscriminately. There is something brittle and pious in their claims of wooden superiority. They are as glib and conspiratorial as Amway salesmen in their advocacy of the True Cross (wood) and True Boats (wood) and the true stake in your bank account's heart (wood). The wood officialdos are the true aluminum siding salesmen of the marine world, not the fiberglass sailors. And what the True Wood Believers seem to be saying is not that wood is a better material for boats than vinyl or polyester or concrete or steel or Play-Dough, but that it is a more spiritual choice.

Most of us bought Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance and a few even read it. I, myself, could never penetrate farther than page 32 but I'm not an adequate critic; when any author beckons me to share his spiritual journey to enlightenment I get nervous and thirsty and usually head for

the kitchen, tossing the book over my right shoulder. This aside, the book (up to page 32) made a sound point: If the spirit of God can rest in a tree or a perfect chrysanthemum, it can be just at home in the pistons of a Harley Davidson. It stands to reason that God is sturdier and more understanding than wood-heads or the characters on The Bold and the Beautiful. In this light, the spirit of Captain Nat rests as easily in a fiberglass Alerion as in a cedar on oak Alerion. As for that, I suspect that if Captain Nathaniel Herreshoff was building boats today, they would be of fiberglass and carbon fiber. He was, we know, always on the cutting edge of technology, an innovative engineer who designed steam engines, boilers and dynamos, as well as wood and steel boats.

After five wooden relics I now own a fiberglass Rozinante, a wholly traditional boat with a few bits of wood trim. At a distance of more than five feet, Groucho is indistinguishable from one of the wooden vessels supervised by Old Fussbudget, Himself. Moreover, it has never threatened to sink, smells properly of wood and fish gurry rather than curing fiberglass, and sails better than any boat I've ever had.

Perhaps I'm reacting more to the piety of wooden boat appreciation than to the admiration of the skills. By all means, count the honorable wooden boats in Vineyard Harbor. The traditionalists (a list remarkably consistent in these latitudes with high consumption of alcohol and laxatives) in Annapolis can count the wooden boats here. Then we'll compare the number for a quick index of just how traditionally oriented and holy we all are. Then we'll be having fun, and we can ignore the yard bills and the pumping, varnishing, yearly hauling, tropical teredoes, dry rot and well, reality in general. But I insist that if God had wanted us to make boats out of wood, He'd have made boat-shaped trees.



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	Jerry Newton	222-1281
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T-Shirt Sales	TBA	
Directory	Diana Watson	592-1678

Board meetings will be held on the first Tuesday after the Thursday Regular Meeting of each month at the Southwestern Yacht Club at 7:00 PM. Members are welcome to attend.

Classifieds

Tired of doing the brightwork?

Want your boat to look good for the
Boat Show?

Let me help you- I did "Mahogany Manor" for Steve.
Rates are reasonable-

\$ 12.50/hr. Exterior/ \$ 15.00/hr. Interior. Call Jenifer
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Seven years experience!

1952 42' Chris Craft For Sale

"DINARDO"

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**SAN DIEGO MARITIME
MUSEUM'S EVENTS**

The Spanish Main

June 18-19

Shown on the *STAR OF INDIA* -

\$10 for adults and \$8 for kids, MM members, & Seniors

**Scottish Fiddler Alasdair Fraser
playing on the *STAR OF INDIA***

June 23

MORE INFORMATION at (619) 234-9153

1999 YESTERYEAR REGATTA RESULTS - May 8, 1999

BOAT NAME	RATING	START TIME	FINISH TIME	CLASS	ELAPSED TIME	CORRECTED TIME
Pacifica	115	13:20	15:34:14	Classic A - First	2:14:14	3:32:51
Andale	120	13:20	15:36:21	Classic A - Second	2:16:21	3:33:56
Sprig	135	13:15	15:35:56	Classic A - Third	2:20:56	3:35:28
Sally	75	13:30	15:40:44	Classic A - Fourth	2:10:44	3:37:31
Minx	144	13:15	15:41:48	Classic A - Fifth	2:26:48	3:39:29
Freedom	150	13:10	15:45:22	Classic B - First	2:35:22	3:46:49
Happy Talk	165	13:10	15:53:59	Classic B - Second	2:43:59	3:52:23
Allure	325	12:35	15:52:49	Schooner - First	3:17:49	3:53:32
Flirt	150	13:15	15:59:25	Classic A - Sixth	2:44:25	3:55:53
El Aire Brisa	195	13:00	15:56:27	Sloops - First	2:56:27	3:58:43
Zephyr	195	13:00	16:00:23	Sloops - Second	3:00:23	4:02:39
Linda Marie	195	13:00	16:10:15	Sloops - Third	3:10:15	4:12:31
Jalapeno	195	13:00	16:11:49	Sloops - Fourth	3:11:49	4:14:05
Marvida	150	13:10	16:14:36	Classic B - Third	3:04:36	4:16:03
Bout	235	12:55	16:18:30	Sloops - Fifth	3:23:30	4:17:37
Ina B	190	13:00	16:20:13	Classic B - Fourth	3:20:13	4:23:30
Toko	235	12:55	16:36:11	Sloops - Sixth	3:41:11	4:35:18
Maid of Kent	425	12:15	16:44:33	Schooner - Second	4:29:33	4:44:51
Big Woody	180	13:00	16:40:29	Classic B - Fifth	3:40:29	4:45:49
Revelee	550	12:00	16:53:20	Gaffer - First	4:53:20	4:48:13
M a g h o g a n y Manor	500	12:00	16:51:51	Ketches/Yawls - First	4:51:51	4:51:51
Precious	520	12:15		DNS		
Sea Drift	360	12:35		DNF		
Coquette	160	13:10		DNS		
Magic	212	12:55		DNS		
Neptunes Orbiter	200	13:00	15:15 (?)	Short Course - First		