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Courtesy RSBS - UK

Ancient Mariners  Sailing Society

Est. 1975

"To preserve and promote interest in sail and power vessels of vintage or classic design"

SCHOONER EDITION 2021



BAYSHOTS - Darrall Slater

DAUNTLESS

Paul Plotts Burial at Sea
March 26, 2021 Buoy 3 12:00 noon

America's Schooner Cup 2021
March 27, 2021 Silver Gate Yacht Club

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AMERICA'S SCHOONER CUP 2021



March 27, 2021

Silver Gate Yacht Club

To Benefit the **Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society**

On Saturday, March 27, 2021, **Silver Gate Yacht Club** will host the **32nd America's Schooner Cup Charity Regatta**. This year's Schooner Cup is particularly important for the continuity of the event and a commitment to fundraising for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society during these difficult times and during upcoming years.

The event will be sailed regardless of the number of participating schooners. This Regatta is traditionally the premier West Coast gathering of historic schooners and is a celebration of sailing heritage, with the schooners representing some of yachting's most famous designers and centuries of maritime history. The event is a tribute to the dedication of the owners who keep them sailing on the sea. Rare today, schooners were first used by the Dutch in the 16th or 17th Century, but are largely associated with early North American commerce; they were popular on both sides of the Atlantic by the late 19th Century. Schooners were favored in trades, fishing and privateering – ventures that valued speed, agility, windward ability and shallow water advantage. Schooners long dominated early yacht races such as the Americas Cup.

The event benefits the **Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society**, which provides financial, educational, and post-combat support – as well as other programs and services - to members of the United States Navy and Marine Corp, eligible family members, widows and survivors. The Society was incorporated on January 23, 1904, with initial funding coming from the proceeds of the 1903 Army-Navy Football Game held at Franklin Field.

EVENT INFORMATION: Visiting schooners are invited to dock at **Silver Gate Yacht Club** and enjoy the facilities, subject to social distancing rules, from Thursday, March 25, 2021 to Sunday, March 28, 2021. Shore side events will be curtailed: the Thursday night program and Friday night dinner dance fundraising events are cancelled. An outdoor awards ceremony may be possible subject to health guidelines at that time. The Saturday Skippers' Meeting will be replaced with sailing instructions delivered by US mail, email, or text. The Regatta will commence with the participating classes starting in San Diego Bay off of **Silver Gate Yacht Club** between **11:30 am and 12:00 noon.**



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Curlew, Maid of Kent, Amazing Grace Bayshots - Darrall Slater



Amazing Grace



Janie Allan

Rose of Sharon

Janie Allan



Skookum III

Janie Allan



Skookum III

Janie Allan

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PAUL PLOTTS - Burial at Sea
Friday, March 26, 2021 12 noon SD Buoy 3

*In recognition of the commitment of Paul Plotts and the schooner **DAUNTLESS** to the America's Schooner Cup Race, the Plotts family has invited the schooners, friends, and any Ancient Mariner vessels to attend the burial at sea for our friend Paul Plotts. The family has requested that vessels gather with the schooner **AMERICA** at SD Buoy #3 at noon on Friday, March 26, 2021.*



Master Mariners Regatta

photos Mark Albertazzi

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© Ryan Pennell

DAUNTLESS

“Dauntless was built for a New York banker, Horace Merwin, who was a personal friend of John Alden, the designer. The boat was built at the Dauntless Shipyard in Essex, Connecticut. She was launched on June 16, 1930, and was immediately entered in the 650-mile race to Bermuda, along with Teragram, Curlew, and Rose of Sharon, all of which we still race against today.”

Paul Plotts, TheLog, 2015

Dauntless is a 71' LOA Staysail Schooner, Beam 13' 3", Draft 9'3". Her inner plank is cedar, and mahogany defines her outer plank; her decks are teak.



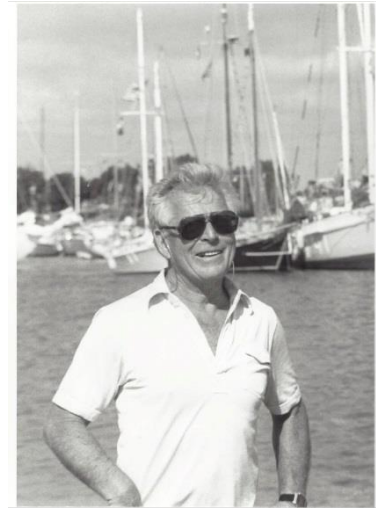
“From the very start, Dauntless was vigorously campaigned. She participated not only in races in San Diego but did a dozen or more in Newport to Ensenada races. In 1985 she raced in the Ancient Mariners race to Maui and again in 1991 where we cruised the islands for three months. The classic McNish races out of Channel Island Harbor were an event not to be missed. Immediately after the race we would spend a week cruising in the Channel Islands with a new anchorage every night.”

Paul Plotts, TheLog, 2015

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Dauntless



Darrall Slater

EIGHT BELLS for Schoonerman Paul Plotts

“The iconic patriarch of the San Diego schooner fleet has slipped beneath the waves. Paul Plotts passed on April 10, 2020, a few days before his 93rd birthday.

*Paul has been involved in San Diego traditional sailing since at least the early 1980’s when he sailed a 30’ gaff cutter **Artemis** crewed by his young son Tom in races with the Ancient Mariners Sailing Society. Paul’s obsession with schooners would begin with his purchase of the 1930 Alden schooner **Dauntless** in 1984. Paul challenged **Bagheera**, a local Alden schooner owned by Todd Schwede, to a match race on San Diego Bay in 1986 and again in 1987. The America’s Schooner Cup officially commenced in 1988 with fleet schooner racing as a charity regatta hosted by the Kona Kai Yacht club. Paul and **Dauntless** would win the inaugural 1988 Schooner Cup and then also the 30th Schooner Cup in 2018 when he was 90.*

*Paul also started the Billy Bones Schooner Race in 1986 in honor of his late friend Bob Sloan of the schooner **Spike Africa**. The Billy Bones Schooner Race would draw up to 20 schooners from Southern California to race from Mission Bay to San Diego Bay. The Billy Bones Race featured a beach BBQ and memorable schooner raft-ups in Mariners Cove (Mission Bay) and La Playa Cove in San Diego Bay.*



Photos courtesy of Ariane Paul

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***Dauntless** did not only sail San Diego Bay but she was one of the few local boats to regularly sail in the Master Mariners Regatta in San Francisco Bay and the McNish Classic Yacht Race in Oxnard. Paul and **Dauntless** were most comfortable in offshore races and sailed twice in the Ancient Mariners Transpac races to Lahaina, Maui in 1985 and 1991. His sights were always set on the race elapsed time record held by Byron Chamberlin's Burgess schooner **Rose of Sharon** in 1981. Unfortunately the 1985 and 1991 Ancient Mariners Transpacs were slower races sailed in light winds.*



*Paul and **Dauntless** were featured in all of the local sailing publications including Sailing and Nautical Quarterly. The publicity was largely driven by the prolific nautical writer Joe Ditler and accompanied by photographs from Dale Frost, Bob Covarrubias and the late Bob Greiser.*

Paul is survived by his wife Peggy, son Tom and his wife Deby, and grandsons Paul and Adam.

Fair winds and following seas old friend."

Jerry Newton, Maid of Kent

Our Maid of Kent skipper sailed two AMSS Transpac races on **Dauntless** as navigator and tactician, and with coastal sailing he logged over 6,000 nautical miles on **Dauntless**. He remembers his first race with Paul Plotts as the 1981 **Half Pint of Rum** race on December 5, 1981, with south wind and rain. The course was La Playa to buoy 11 and back to La Playa, a perfect windward-leeward schooner race. He was at the helm of **Maid of Kent**, and Paul sailed his graceful gaff-cutter **Artemis**.



Darrall Slater



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Dauntless and Kelpie, San Diego Bay, 1987

Birth of a Tradition

The concept of a San Diego based Schooner Cup started with a 1986 'Schooner Shoot-out' on San Diego Bay - a match race between Paul Plotts' 1930 **Dauntless** and Todd Schwede's 1924 **Bagheera**, two vessels of similar heritage and racing history, as a benefit for the American Cancer Society. **Dauntless** had just won the Master Mariners Regatta and had returned impressive results in other West Coast events. **Bagheera**, at 63' LOA and also an Alden designed schooner, was built in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, and was successful in Atlantic Ocean races in the 1920's, races in the Mediterranean in the 1930's, as well as competing in the Great Lakes regattas. The sleek black schooner, named after the panther in Rudyard Kiplings 'Jungle Story', eventually came to California. She was relaunched by Schwede on Oct.16, 1986 after extensive hull, mast and other restorative work. The match race was repeated in 1987, and the America's Schooner Cup was on its way to becoming a tradition. On December 15, 1987, the fledgling **Kona Kai International Yacht Club** issued their notice of event. On March 26, 1988 the Maritime Museum Association's historic 1904 Steam Yacht **Medea** would lead a schooner parade in the Bay, followed by class races. Sunday would feature match races between class winners, with the fastest schooner from Saturday's challenger trials racing against the defending champion, **Dauntless**.



Bagheera 1986 - 1990

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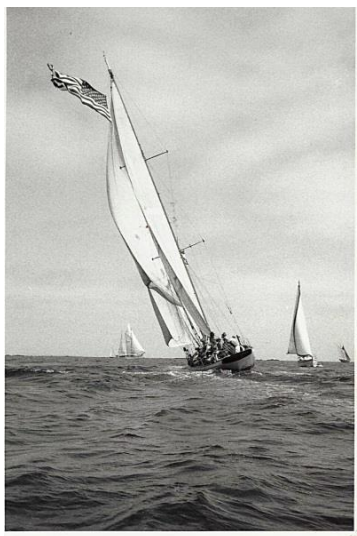
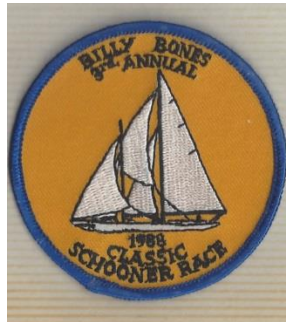
The trophy cup awarded to Paul Plotts after his 1987 win was a 4ft brass urn with a lot of soul (dents) that had formerly held flowers and occasional cigarette butts on the grounds of the Kona Kai Club. The urn was incorrectly. It somehow was allowed to

Kona Kai, but soon thereafter "cupnapping terrorists" who later consisting of a series of demands for The Club agreed to the demands, and surprisingly – aboard **Dauntless**, just weeks before the running of the



resume its former duties at disappeared at the hands of delivered a ransom note the future treatment of the cup. the cup was returned – filled with ice and champagne, 1988 America's Schooner Cup.

Also in 1986, Paul was the initiator of the Billy Bones Classic Schooner Race – named after his popular Pacific Beach eatery – in honor of his late friend Bob Sloan of the schooner **Spike Africa**. The race commenced in Mission Bay and ended at La Playa with a raft-up and beach BBQ. These two events would bring over a dozen of the premier west coast classic schooners to sail in San Diego for many years.



Dauntless



Kelpie



Bagheera and Dauntless

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Bagheera and Attu, ~1989



Dauntless



Bagheera and Astor



Dauntless, Skookum III, America



Dauntless and Californian Darrall Slater

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A MAN WHO LOVED SAILING Crew As Family

Paul surrounded himself with good people. They were more than crew to him; they became, and still are, a family. He could be exacting and demanding on the sea, but he loved his crew family with all his heart and freely shared his love of sailing.

These group and family photos were especially dear to Paul. Memories of Master Mariners in San Francisco; the annual trip to the Channel Islands after the 'not to be missed' McNish; Father and Son.

Photos courtesy of Mark & Shelly Albertazzi.



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Ensenada Race - Dale Frost

Ancient Mariners Sailing Society Commodore Christ Frost remembers:

The Passing of Paul Plotts

"It saddened me to hear that Paul had recently slipped his mooring and sailed off to Paradise. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends and shipmates. He and "Dauntless" were a legend up and down the West Coast. He will long be remembered by the captains and crews of current and past Master Mariner, Ancient Mariner and Schooner Cup fleets.

My earliest memories of Paul were in the early years of the AMSS. He was racing his beautiful little gaff-rigged cutter "Artemis". Back then, he was often seen day-sailing with his octogenarian father, who usually had a wide grin.

In 1982, I was the AMSS Commodore and working at "Pacific Marine Supply" where "Sailing Supply/Downwind Marine" is now. It was a Monday morning after an AMSS Saturday race around North Coronado Island. The smaller boats had a shorter course. While sailing "Pacifica", about halfway to the island, we dropped an anchored mark. The smaller boats were to round that mark and return to the finish. The last boat around the mark was to pull up the mark and would have 10 minutes taken off their elapsed time. Around mid-morning, Paul walks in with around 150 feet of line tangled around his body and the buoy hanging from one shoulder with the anchor from the other. He told me it took him close to a half hour to pull it all up and stopped the boat "dead in the water". I told him that it probably took him longer than that to wrap it around himself after he got out of the car. I also told him "OK, you win class B". This may have been his first win.

In 1984 I was still working at Pacific Marine Supply and Paul came in and asked if I would be interested in going with him up to "sea trial" a schooner for sale. I had been race crewing on schooners since 1976. My dad and I went up with him to sail her along with some of the seller's crew."

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“It was awesome! This was the first of many adventures that Paul would have, sailing "Dauntless" in San Francisco Bay. The three of us sailed her down to San Diego over the next few days, at times going over 8 knots with just the two staysails up.

In 1987, when Dennis Connor won the America's Cup and it was going to come to San Diego, a new club, "Kona Kai Yacht Club", decided to organize a match race between "Dauntless" and "Bagheera", owned by Todd Swede. It would be called "America's Schooner Cup". I crewed on "Dauntless" which won both match races the first two years and in fleet races for next few years that the club existed, as well some Ensenada Races. A few years later, ex members of the "KKYC" joined "SGYC" and helped resurrect the race as the "Schooner Cup" Paul sailed "Dauntless" to a number of victories over the years in that series, including the last one he raced in (1st overall) and the previous one (1st in Class A). “



Inaugural 1988 Cup Race

photo Dale Frost



2018 America's Schooner Cup

Darrall Slater



Shelly Albertazzi

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Ancient Mariners Sailing Society requests your presence to honor this remarkable schoonerman and celebrate his contributions to West Coast classic schooner sailing on Friday, March 26 with schooner America at SD Buoy #3, 12:00 noon.



This special Schooner Edition 2021 would not have been possible without the many individuals who contributed photographs, items from the Plotts family scrapbook, remembrances, and personal knowledge. The editor wishes to thank Jerry Newton, Chris & Dale Frost, the Plotts family, Mark & Shelly Albertazzi, Darrall Slater, Cynthia Sinclair, Ryan Pennell, Ariane Paul and Roger Taylor for their contributions ; several other photos were taken by Joe Ditley, Bob Covarrubias, and the late Bob Greiser. The editor also contributed her photos.

AMSS Commodore Chris Frost would like to remind our members that until it is safe for us to gather again in person, all our member meetings will be held by Zoom. Meeting and event dates, including race dates, can be found on our AMSS website.

Jane Allan Noon

Editor



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