

the Shellback

2023 SUMMER
VOL 02

*Catching Wind
and Waves*
MMBA ANNUAL
REGATTA

JUNE 18

WOODEN BOAT SHOW

Grand Dames on Display
Father's Day Weekend

Member Meeting and Dinner

Corinthian Venue to Host Yearly
Business and Fellowship

SINCE 1867
MASTER MARINERS
BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

WWW.SFMASTERMARINERS.ORG

The Master Mariners Benevolent Association (MMBA) is a San Francisco club dating back to 1867. Its purpose is to foster participation in yachting and the preservation of well designed, properly constructed, and well maintained classic and traditional sailing craft.

Members include owners and aficionados of traditional sail and classic boats.



The Shellback is published each quarter. We welcome clever articles, photos and graphics, suggestions and more. Email contributions to the editor for consideration.

Newsletter editor is Martha Blanchfield.
martha@renegadesailing.com



The MMBA is a 501(c)(7) California Corporation governed by an elected Board of Directors whose members each serve a three-year term.

In 1988, the Board established the MMBA Historical Small Craft Preservation Foundation (HSCPF), a separate 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to support charitable activities; the name was later changed to Master Mariners Benevolent Foundation (MMBF).

Polly (1929 sloop, hull 19) was one of four Bird boats built by W.F. Stone & Son Boat Yard in Oakland. MMBF contributed to her restoration in 1988.

Freda, one of the West Coast's oldest sailboats (1885), was built in Belyedere. She was completely restored by the Arques School of Traditional Boatbuilding in Sausalito. On May 31, 2014, Freda was re-launched at the Spaulding Marine Center.



In maritime tradition, a seaman who has crossed the Equator is initiated as a "trustworthy shellback" into the court of Neptune. He or she may also be called a son or daughter of Neptune. Bestowal of this title acknowledges the prowess of a mariner who is able to brave the uncertainties and dangers of the sea.

SAILING SEASON KICKS OFF

SHARING SEA STORIES, PLAYING OLD-TIME MUSIC,
SINGING SHANTIES

Every year, like clockwork, the month of May seems to come and go faster than all the rest. It's crunch time to get the boat ready for the annual regatta; this year, however, seemed to run at an even faster pace. I didn't fully appreciate all that it takes to put on the Sponsors Luncheon, the regatta, and after-party until this year. I also came to appreciate what a pleasure it is to work with a competent and helpful board of directors in getting all tasks done as a team.

The regatta was a great success with 49 boats signed up. Conditions were overcast and cool with a decent breeze which piped up in the afternoon. The new Hank Easom mark at Yellow Bluff seemed to be the wildcard mark (at least for the gaffers)--the spot where competition was either lost or won due to shifty winds and big holes. I raced with my wife Sophie and three daughters Maggie, Penny and Greta--a win for me right from the start.

A favorite moment is sailing up to the club with sounds of the dixie band playing on the deck, while seeing boats rafted up in the basin with flags flying. We had a total of 26 boats at EYC, which included a few new participants. The Encinal Yacht Club did a great job hosting us again.

Dining, with meals from Super Mario's food truck, took place upstairs and on the lawn. Painted Waves band offered fantastic dance music, and the party continued into late evening. Sea stories were debated, old-time music was played (banjo, fiddles, guitars, bass) and singing ensued.

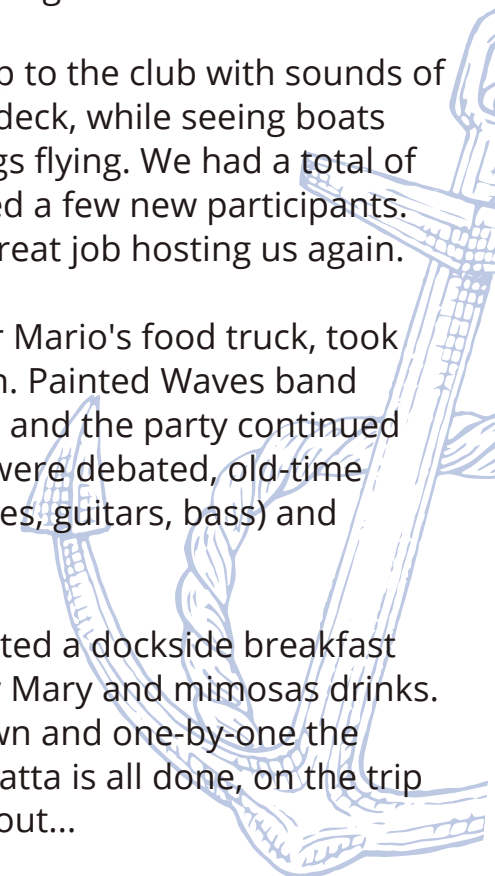
The morning after, MMBA hosted a dockside breakfast bar with much-needed bloody Mary and mimosas drinks. After clean-up, flags came down and one-by-one the boats departed. When the regatta is all done, on the trip back home, I start thinking about...

Looking forward to seeing you all at the Annual Meeting and Wooden Boat Show in just a few days.



Hans List
Commodore 2022 - 25
s/v Sequestor

hans.list@sfmastermariners.org





ARUA

H28 Ketch L. F. Herreschoff designed in 1941, built by Far East Yachts 1962
Owned by Winston Bumpus

AURORAL

Sloop designed by Myron Spaulding 1941, built by Ivan Davies 1962
Owned by Don Ketman

FLOTSOM

Yankee One Design sloop designed by Starling Burgess 1937, built by John Linderman/Stone Boat Yard 1962
Owned by Roger and Westley Nuñez

OCEAN QUEEN V

Yawl designed by Philip Rhodes, built by Abeking and Rasmussen 1951
Owned by the Pacific Seafaring Foundation

HOLGANZA

Yawl designed by Fred Popoff 1941, built by H. H. Foote 1941
Owned by Mattia Cosmi

AIDA

Gaff schooner designed by Thomas E. Colvin 1955, built by Gordon S. Bloomer 1962
Owned by Melissa and Andrew Flick

OLIVE

Cheoy Lee Pacific Clipper 1957 original teak
Owned by Kathryn Kreyling

Membership

We are pleased to welcome the above vessels back to the Association; each one under new ownership. At end of May, membership stood at 100: 81 active dues-paying members, 19 lifetime members.

Lifetime membership is given to individuals who volunteer to serve as club commodore. This perk is just one more reason to consider serving as a board member, then working your way up the leadership ladder.

Friend of the MMBA

We are pleased to welcome 12 new Friends. A Friend designation is available to individuals who are currently without a craft of their own and who wish to support preservation of traditional sailing boats.

Members: please consider asking your crew to become a Friend of the MMBA. Visit "Friend Membership" button at <https://www.sfmastermariners.org/mmba-store>.

Know a potential MMBA vessel? A great way to introduce someone to MMBA is to invite him/her to one of our events, or guide the person to the website. You may also share your copy of *The Shellback*.

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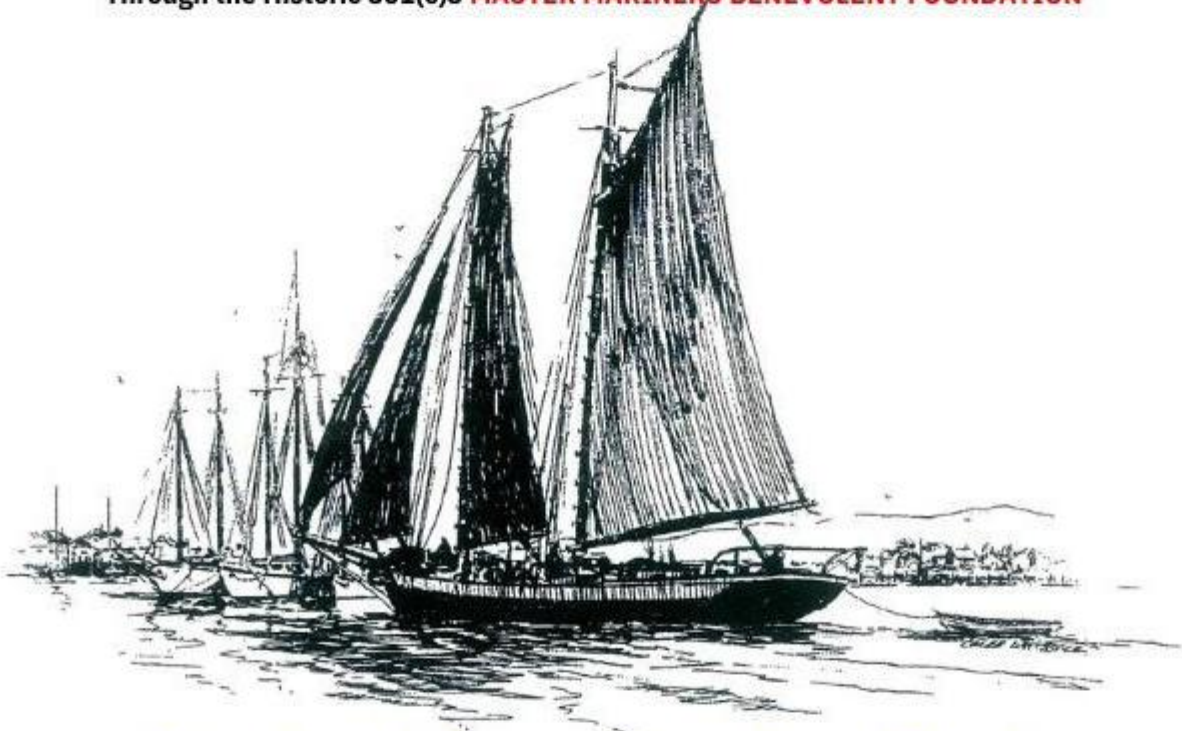
Ted Hall of Long Meadow Ranch and Terry Klaus of *Brigadoon* at the annual Sponsor's Luncheon, May 19, St. Francis Yacht Club.

MASTER MARINERS

WOODEN BOAT SHOW

Sunday, June 18th 2023

Supports the Preservation of Classic Sailing Vessels, Seamanship and Nautical Education
Through the Historic 501(c)3 **MASTER MARINERS BENEVOLENT FOUNDATION**



Corinthian Yacht Club
Main Street, Tiburon
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission \$20 • Children under 12 free & must be supervised.
A rare opportunity to view San Francisco Bay Area's classic sailing yachts, meet their skippers and learn their history.

Corinthian Yacht Club Outdoor Bar & Grill Open for Lunch.

Sponsored by historic (1867) Master Mariners Benevolent Association • www.mastermariners.org
Illustration by MMBA member Caleb Whitbeck

ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER

Members, this is the time to
share suggestions, offer ideas,
enjoy fellowship.

**Annual meeting starts
at 4:30pm**

Sail or drive over
Buffet dinner at 5:30pm
NY strip steak, salmon,
pasta bar, rice pilaf, vegetables,
bread, coffee, tea, dessert
\$50
No-host bar

Entertainment 5pm to 8pm
The Hot Clams dance band



RHS: Crew of *Kaze* motoring as far as possible to the starting area in 3 knots of flood tide. L to R: sponsor John Argo of Cal Marine Electronics, crew Katie Cherbini, sponsor Nik Reed, attorney, Captain Liz Diaz, North Beach Marine Canvas. LHS: First-timer Jack Sloane on *Briar Rose*.



Annual Regatta

This page lower LHS working clockwise: *Freda B* guests Alice Watts, Billy Martinelli and Rick Whiting set the flags; *Aida* crew with Flick family and guests; smiles on *Water Witch* with one of the day's youngest racers.





LHS: Skipper Tim Murison at the helm of Hurricane *RANDOM*. First in class M4 and Best Elapsed Time. Above: Kurt Schmidt and Shelly Willard on *RANDOM*. Photos by Randall von Wedel.



Above: June covergirl Sophie List makes the most of sail time, family time and start of sailing season during 2023 Master Mariners Annual Regatta, perched on *Sequestor*. Photo by Hans List.



Above: looking for smiles on Neil Gibbs' *Kay of Göteborg*. RHS: *Freda* and *Briar Rose* in early day fog. Photos by Martha Blanchfield.



2023 REGATTA RESULTS

A celebration of sportsmanship, steeped by great tradition.

- * 11 division starts
- * *Tour de San Francisco Bay* course
- * Perpetual trophy honors

The MMBA San Francisco yacht club dates back to 1867.
We proudly present recognition and prized trophies and plaques
to preserve historical records of championship wins. Proceeds
benefit the Master Mariners Benevolent Foundation.

2023 MMBA Regatta Record Sheet

	Division	Sail #	Vessel Name	Assigned Start time	Finish Time (00:00:00) 24HR	Elapsed Time	Note (DNS, DNF, Penalty)	Place	Perpetual Trophy Winner
1	Bear	65	Magic	12:00:00	14:24:18	2:24:18		1	Gerry O'Grady
2	Bear	9	Panda	12:00:00	14:27:28	2:27:28		2	
3	Bear	35	Renegade	12:00:00	12:00:00	0:00:00	DNF		
4	Bear	69	Velerosa	12:00:00	14:31:20	2:31:20		3	
5	M4	6	Kaze	12:00:00	14:25:04	2:25:04		1	
6	M4	681	Olive	12:20:00	14:44:06	2:24:06		2	Lyle Galloway
7	M4	3	Cybelle	12:20:00	14:46:32	2:26:32		3	
8	Bird	16	Cuckoo	12:05:00	14:42:49	2:37:49		1	J. Everett Hanson
9	Bird	2	Curlew	12:05:00	14:45:48	2:40:48		3	
10	Bird	10	Grey Goose	12:05:00	14:52:28	2:47:28		5	
11	Bird	3	Kookabura	12:05:00	14:46:36	2:41:36		4	
12	Bird	11	Oriole	12:05:00	14:43:22	2:38:22		2	
13	M1	28170	Bounty	12:35:00	15:08:57	2:33:57		2	
14	M1	2001	Gold Star	12:10:00	15:14:55	3:04:55		4	
15	M1	2190	Kay of Göteborg	12:45:00	15:02:18	2:17:18		1	Dead Eye
16	M1	1947	Mayan	12:50:00	12:50:00	0:00:00	DNS		
17	M1	100	Pegasus	12:35:00	15:20:39	2:45:39		5	
18	M1	P3	Water Witch	12:50:00	15:09:46	2:19:46		3	
19	M2	31	Eventide	12:35:00	15:15:00	2:40:00		2	Aloha
20	M2	166	Farida	12:15:00	15:11:03	2:56:03		1	
21	M2	47033	Lydia	12:20:00	15:44:32	3:24:32		3	
22	M3	849	Asolare	12:20:00	12:20:00	0:00:00	DNF		
23	M3	7	Random	12:20:00	15:09:23	2:49:23		1	
24	M3	M16	Folly	12:25:00	15:27:29	3:02:29	OCS, 2 min penalty added	3	
25	M3	100	Viking	12:35:00	15:14:15	2:39:15		2	Homeward Bound
26	M3	715	Vectis	12:10:00	15:15:05	3:05:05		4	
27	M3	38	Verity A	12:45:00	12:45:00	0:00:00	DNS		
28	Gaff 1	G90	Aida	12:15:00	14:50:20	2:35:20	OCS, 2 min penalty added	1	
29	Gaff 1	888	Brigadoon	12:40:00	14:55:29	2:15:29		2	William Ritter
30	Big Sch	67	Freda B.	12:40:00	14:57:04	2:17:04		1	Lynx
31	Gaff 2	G52	Black Witch	12:50:00	15:26:06	2:36:06		2	
32	Gaff 2	G3	Briar Rose	12:55:00	15:48:39	2:53:39		5	
33	Gaff 2	G14	Freda	12:45:00	12:45:00	0:00:00	DNF		
34	Gaff 2	G77	Makani Kai	12:55:00	15:25:14	2:30:14		1	Kermit Parker / Longest Dist.
35	Gaff 2	G	Sea Quest	12:45:00	15:33:43	2:48:43		3	
36	Gaff 2	G31	Sequestor	12:55:00	15:35:08	2:40:08		4	
37	Ocean 2	8708	Credit	12:30:00	12:30:00	0:00:00	DNS		
38	Ocean 2	FC15	Hana	12:30:00	15:34:14	3:04:14		3	
39	Ocean 2	8801	Lively Lady	12:30:00	15:54:25	3:24:25		5	
40	Ocean 2	8711	Mistress II	12:30:00	15:22:23	2:52:23		1	Farallone Clipper
41	Ocean 2	7325	Neja	12:25:00	15:29:11	3:04:11		2	
42	Ocean 2	8214	Ouessant	12:30:00	15:34:21	3:04:21		4	
43	Parade	none	Matthew Turner	13:00:00					
44	Parade	8526	Yucca	13:00:00					
45	Parade	47	Chance	13:00:00					
46	Parade	T33	Judy J.	13:00:00					
47	Parade	9	Auroral	13:00:00					
48	Parade	253	Gloriana	13:00:00					
49	Parade	75	Aurora Boralis	13:00:00					

WINNING PHOTOS

Do you know your MMBA mates?

Correctly name all sailors in photos A, B, C and D. Tell Commodore Hans. He may award you a prize at the Annual Members Meeting.



A



B



C



D



Heading home on *Freda B* with Reno Cambridge and Paul Dines, earning the **Lynx**.



The ladies of *Olive* celebrate with win in M4 division and **Lyle Galloway**.



M1 winner is *Kay of Göteborg*, earning the **Dead Eye**.



Competitive G2 division winner is *Makani Kai*. Crew also takes home **Kermit Parker** and **Longest Distance Traveled** recognition.

I WAS TOLD THAT THE MASTER MARINERS REGATTA WAS A

"CASUAL, MORE OR LESS, FAST PARADE"

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS
CONTRIBUTED BY KEN INOUE

I still remember our first race in 1985. I had put together a motley crew of sailing buddies who had never stepped on board prior to that day. When we arrived at the startline, with the other boats heeled over in stiff San Francisco breeze, my heart sank.

I saw those clean slick bottoms and gleaming topsides--most had just come out of the boatyard. Their well-trained crews worked those boats hard during that race. At the end of the day, I think we came in 6th or 7th out of eight to 10 boats in our division; *Freda*, *Black Witch* and *Orn* were the top finishers. It was humbling to sail against some of the best-sailed wooden boats. From that point on, I decided I needed to up my game.

In following years, I started doing practice sails with my crew, re-rigged the boat, and began investing in new sails. I also made sure we had a clean bottom before each race. Over many years we got better and better.

2023 Action

In a pursuit race, slower boats start earlier than faster boats. Boats are handicapped in 5-minute increments with the theory that all finish roughly the same time. In our highly competitive Gaff 2 division (gaffs 40' or less LOD), we had the final division start at 12:55. The division included:

- *Briar Rose* had a challenge making a timely start, but sailed the complete course
- *Sea Lover* withdrew pre-race
- *Freda* started, but later retired
- *Sequestor*, *Black Witch* and *Makani Kai*



As the race progressed, *Makani Kai* and *Sequestor* were soon on the tails of *Sea Quest* and *Black Witch* (these vessels had started in the two prior divisions; 10 and 5 minutes earlier, respectively).

We approached our second mark at Hank Easom Buoy (Yellow Bluff) and caught *Sea Quest*. We were able to round the mark a couple boat lengths ahead of her. Try as we might, we could not catch *Black Witch* until the final mark at Southampton Shoal, where my crew did a nice sail change and gybe, then off we went in front of *Black Witch* to the finish line.

Black Witch finished within a minute behind us; Sandee Swanson and Stan did an excellent job. Stephen Carlson sailed *Sea Quest* singlehanded and earned a third place.

43

YEARS WITH
MAKANI KAI

33

TIMES TO RACE
MMBA REGATTA

20

MILES TO
THE STARTLINE

Thanks to my crew, *Makani Kai* took 1st place with the Fighting Cock Champion Flag and a fantastic bottle of Long Meadow Cabernet. We also won the **Kermit Parker Perpetual Trophy** for the fastest elapsed time.

The 2023 Master Mariners Regatta is now history. We have owned *Makani Kai* 43 years and this was our 33rd race.

Since 1980, we have berthed at Coyote Point Marina in San Mateo, but moved to Westpoint Harbor in Redwood City after the March storms limited our access to the boat. Due to this new home port location, our distance to travel to reach the regatta startline is now approximately 20 nautical miles (one-way). The MMBA awarded us with the **Longest Distance Traveled** award to participate in this year's regatta.



Prior page: Suzanne and Ken enjoying the ride.
LHS: New sailor Ethan getting a low-side view.
Below: The required happy crew selfie shot.





putting the ships in sponsorship

Our sponsorship program is what allows us to continue operating. This year, MMBA raised more than \$15,000. These monies help us pay for events--such as the Sponsor Luncheon and party at Encinal YC--as well as cover our operating costs. The Association also contributes to youth sailing programs at Sausalito YC (which graciously serves as our race committee) and Encinal YC.

At the end of the year, a portion of funds raised by the Association is transferred to the Master Mariners Benevolent Foundation 501(c)(3). The Foundation makes distributions to various individuals who are pursuing education and experience in the maritime field and/or historically significant sailing vessel restoration programs.

A sincere thank you to all who contributed.



In 2023, Liz Diaz of *Kaze* rounded up numerous sponsors. L to R: Aldred Chipman (former owner of Starbuck Canvas), representing sponsor North Beach Marine Canvas; attorney Nik Reed (Hans List); Susan White of Thor's Hope; Jimmy Turdici of Keyston Bros, Susan Baldwin flying the flag of Westwind Yacht Maintenance; Stan Teng Architect; skipper/sponsor Liz Diaz of North Beach Marine Canvas. Not shown: John Argo of Cal Marine Electronics, Dr. Patricia Howson and Paul Disario

MMBA REGATTA SPONSORS

MASTER (\$1000+)

S.F. BAR PILOTS
PATRICIA HOWSON
STEVE AND LINDA KIBLER
RELIABLE MARINE ELECTRONICS
LIST MARINE ENTERPRISES, INC.
THOR'S HOPE

MATE (\$500+)

LAW OFFICE OF NIKOLAUS REED
HUTCHINSON MARINE SERVICES
SF BAY ADVENTURES
SCHOONMAKER PT. MARINA
PASHA GROUP
BERKELEY MARINE CENTER
THE EGELSTON FAMILY

DECK (\$350+)

DEISINGER MARITIME & LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT
STARBOARD MARINE
S.F. MARITIME NATIONAL PARK
WOODCRAFT MARINE
WOODEN BOATS FOR VETERANS

BOSUN (\$200+)

RUTHERFORD'S BOAT SHOP / PAUL DISARIO
NORTH BEACH CANVAS / AMERICAN ROPE AND TAR
SPINNAKER SAILING / LATITUDE 38
ALL POWER LABS / CALL OF THE SEA / DOLPHIN CLUB
EPIFANES / HOOD SAILS / KEYSTON BROS.
NEIL & ELLY GIBBS / CAL MARINE ELECTRONICS
WESTWIND YACHT MANAGEMENT / STAN TENG ARCHITECT
KKMI

IN-KIND DONATIONS (BOSUN TO MASTER LEVEL)

MODERN SAILING ACADEMY
MARTHA BLANCHFIELD
LONG MEADOW RANCH
LOUIS NICKLES
WEST SYSTEMS
KIWI PLUMBING

MASTER LEVEL SPONSORS

\$1,000 and more



SF BAR PILOTS
Matthew Turner
Call of the Sea



RELIABLE MARINE ELECTRONICS
Water Witch
John and Gena Egelston



LIST MARINE ENTERPRISES, INC.
Sequestor
Hans and Sophie List



THOR'S HOPE
Kaze
Liz Diaz
(past year photo shown)



STEVE AND LINDA KIBLER
Freda B
Paul Dines, Marina O'Neil

DR. PATRICIA HOWSON
Kaze
Liz Diaz

Sea Scouts Founded by Boy Scouts of America, 1912

Contributed by Michael O'Callaghan
Vice Commodore GGAC

Post WWII

After the war, the US Army departed the location; in 1947, the City of San Francisco assigned it to the Sea Scouts. The current buildings and wharf were all added by Sea Scout volunteers in ensuing years. With the creation of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in the early 1970s, ownership of the land, pier and building switched from SF Recreation and Parks Department to the US Department of Interior National Park Service. Our base is now owned by the NPS, making a partnership with the NPS National Historic Maritime Park.

1940 to 1960s

From the mid-1940s to the mid-1980s there were between eight and 10 Scout units, or "ships," operating from the Aquatic Park base; roughly half were powerboat units ranging from 40' to 65' and the balance were sailing whaleboats. The summer season saw eight to 12 sailing whaleboats on the startline for races that were held several times a month.

San Francisco program started 1920 with fleet of 26' sailing whaleboats donated by Navy

First group operated from west municipal yacht harbor, and later Gas House Cove

In 1938, fleet moved to newly constructed Aquatic Park

During WPA development of Aquatic Park, plan was to build Sea Scout base

WWII interrupted plan, US Army instead built landing craft facility in the location



Competing in 2023 Master Mariners Annual Regatta, forward to aft: Denis Mulligan, Chris Davison, Junette Kushner, Richard Davison, Ba-Duong Nguyen, Andrew Saah, Rex Cameron, Ernie Befflel, Cam Tuttle, Randy Smith, Skipper Mike O'Callaghan

Youth whaleboats crews would explore the Delta during June and two-week summer cruises in July/August. Unit powerboat crews would explore the Bay and Pacific coast. Summer cruise destinations included the Channel Islands and weekend trips to Santa Cruz. On any weekend, or in the summer, the number of boats would swell as visiting Sea Scout programs from around the Bay Area and Delta would come and go, using the SF base as a stop-over en route to their own adventures. One of the current ships, *Corsair* Ship 22, still sports school colors of its original high school partner. In 1930s through 1950s, SF public high schools had rowing teams at Aquatic Park; these, too, were Sea Scout programs.



Scouts learn how to sail and maintain vessels. Today, a set of Indianapolis Class cruiser lifeboat davits is still used to help with haul-outs and boat maintenance minus boatyard costs. These davits are spaced and located to specifically haul 26' and 30' whaleboats. Our base was configured to accommodate maintenance berthing of whaleboats. When in use by Navy, whaleboats would be placed in cradles on a capital ship's deck with a 30', 26' then 24' whaleboat nesting together. The Navy used whaleboats as lifeboats, plus for seamanship training and recreation.

Above: 30' sailing whaleboat *Corsair*. Built by Puget Sound Naval Shipyard 1937. Rebuilt by Al Blair and North Bay Boat Works 2010. Shown with original USN sail plan (less spinnaker).

Pearl Harbor and Later

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Secretary of the Navy ordered all naval craft without engines to be removed from service. This benefited the Sea Scouts with gifting of vessels; groups replaced donated whaleboats' centerboards with fixed keels, then modified the sail plans.

Sea Scouting has built a great community in the last 100 years. When the *Balclutha* was brought into San Francisco's waterfront, the delivery tow from Sausalito mud flats was manned by Sea Scouts. Many from the vessel's original rigging crew were former Sea Scouts. In 2022, one service project was to teach scouts to maintain *Balclutha's* rigging. Scouts have an upcoming project in June to again work on *Balclutha's* rigging, as well as an assignment for the *CA Thayer*.

Sea Scouts and the MMBA

A very popular activity in the 1960's and into the early 1970s was racing in the Master Mariners Regatta (MMR). This event offered a first time for many to race against other older boats that are not Sea Scout whaleboats. In years past, finishing boats would moor in Aquatic Park, and the party continued inside the rowing clubs. The author's second MMR was raced aboard the 1891 scow schooner *Alma*—a year when she made her MMR debut. In the early days, *Alma* competed without an engine (a tugboat stood by). In the 1970s, the regatta was moved to Memorial Day weekend. This ended youth participation in the MMR, as the Sea Scouts normally competed against other scouts during Memorial Day Weekend in the storied Ancient Mariner Regatta. In the 1990's, Sea Scout volunteer adult leaders (who were not assisting at the Ancient Mariner event) started racing the whaleboats again in the MMR.

Over the years, many Scouts have become St. Francis YC club members. Merv Nichols was in Ship *Dolphin* in the 1950s when his crew brought the two current whaleboats to the city from Stockton Naval Supply Base. Another scouter is Terry Klaus, who was not only a youth member, but also skipper (adult program leader) of a Sea Scout ship and commodore of all units in San Francisco and Alameda counties. Today, many former scouts are members of MMBA. Glen Birch, who brought the *Alma* back to life, is yet one more.

Highest Number of Quartermasters in the Country

San Francisco Sea Scouting follows traditional advancement requirements set by the national organization. Annually, our program has a proud tradition of producing a noteworthy number of Quartermaster (Sea Scout equivalent of Eagle Scout) recipients; in fact, it is the highest Quartermaster production of any area in the country. Youth meet one weeknight and on Saturdays in fall and winter. Weeknight meetings focus on advancement. Saturdays, we do boat maintenance and sail our 30' whaleboats. In spring, we train for regattas.

Sea Scout regattas differ from traditional sailing races; these are various nautical event competitions against other regional and West Coast Scout groups. Each year, youth compete in four to five regattas in Northern California and one in Southern California. Events include pulling boat races: members start row practice at 6:00am several days a week, training in the 26' vessels.

All regatta events require youth to develop the basics of seamanship, leadership and teamwork. We are very proud that our girl's program, Ship 100, Viking, was awarded the honor of National Flag Ship 2023 for all of Sea Scouting. This is not the first time that Ship 100 has received this honor, and we expect it will not be the last.

A Future of Fundraising and Continued Fun Raising

Our youth membership has swelled to the point that the current condition of the local Sea Scout base limits our ability to provide programming. Challenges include wooden pilings that have been neglected now require repair and replacement (leaving a significant portion of docks no longer accessible). The Sea Scouts are in the process of negotiating a new long term lease with our Park Service partner. We are hopeful to soon be in a position to enable long overdue work to happen. A new lease also allows us to more effectively fundraise for the substantial sum capital improvements will require.



Whaleboats don't have bars or bartenders. We eat wet Marina Safeway sandwiches carefully prepared by their international deli staff.

We were soaked to the bone following delivery trip to put away the boat.

After several rounds of Advil, I am able to walk normally again, two days later.

Skipper Michael O'Callaghan

MORE THAN ONE SAILOR PUN

HOW LONG DID THE SAILOR WAIT?

UNTIL THE BITTER END

WHEN DOES A DOG BECOME A SAILOR?

WHEN HE EMBARKS

**WHY DID THE SAILOR KEEP HIS MONEY
ON AN ELEVATED SEA FLOOR?**

IT WAS A BANK

WHY DON'T SAILORS LIKE BUYING NEW HATS?

THEY'RE AFRAID OF CAP SIZING

**WHERE DO SAILORS MAKE CHANGE
FOR A DOLLAR?**

ON THE QUARTERDECK





Wind in Their Sails: Preserving History on San Francisco Bay

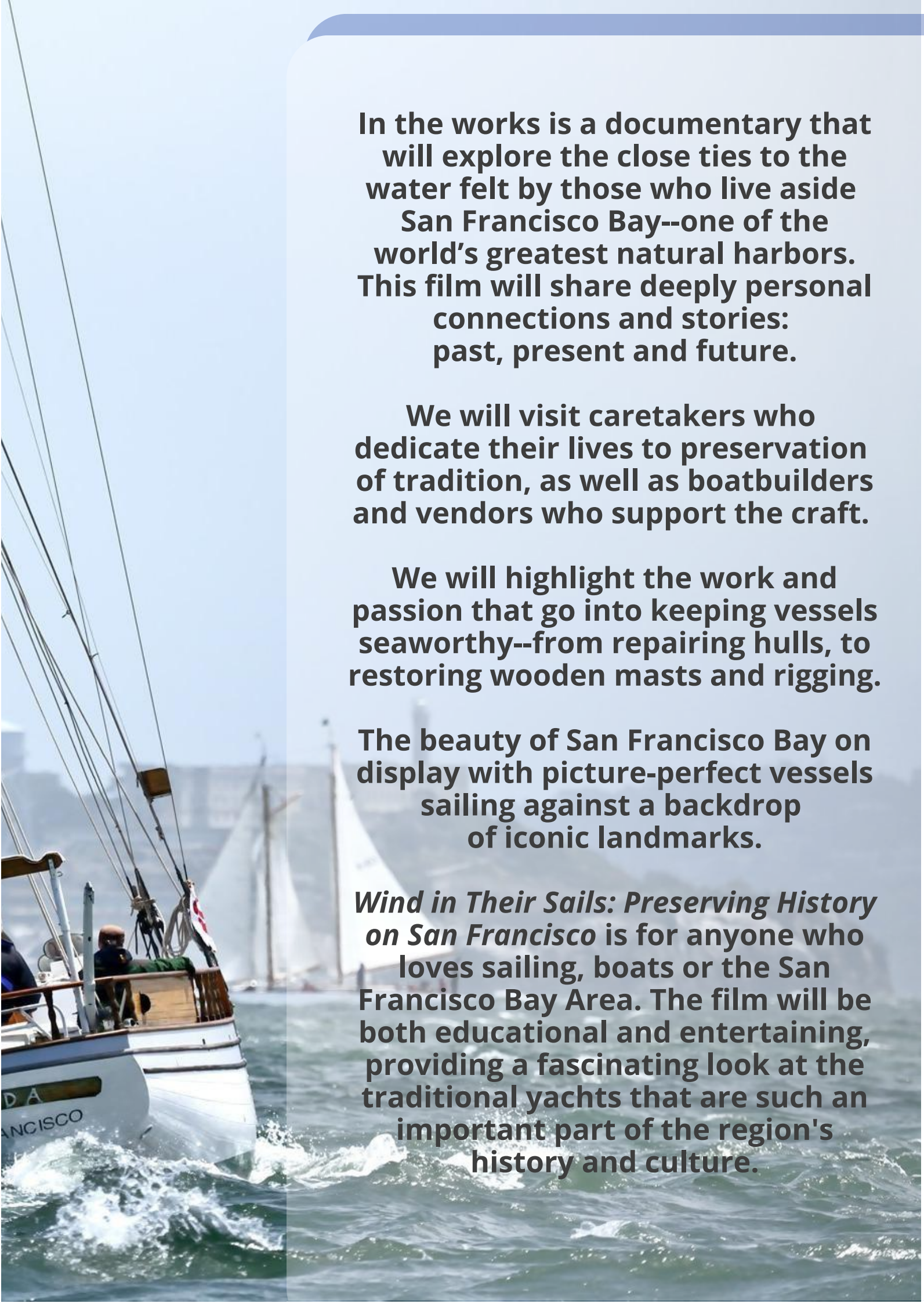
*profiling the beautiful historic
classic boats that still sail here*

View example
of his work:

A Sailor's Dream
[https://youtu.be
/ tHY0hme8T_U](https://youtu.be/tHY0hme8T_U)

Vincent wishes to
interview sailors,
vincesail@aol.com

Project director and cinematographer is Vincent Casalaina. Vincent started sailing in high school in the water off Newport Beach California. His first boat was a Sabot. He moved to Berkeley to go to college, where he crewed on various one-design boats, starting with J24s, then Islander 28s and Express 37s. He has raced aboard IOR division and offshore vessels. He found his passion in the Snipe, a two-person, two-sail dinghy, which he often sails with his children. Vince has served as a fleet captain off and on for 30 years. He actively races Snipes and crews on larger boats.

A photograph of a sailboat on the water, with other boats visible in the background. The sailboat in the foreground has "DA" and "ANCISCO" visible on its side. The water is choppy, and the sky is clear.

In the works is a documentary that will explore the close ties to the water felt by those who live aside San Francisco Bay--one of the world's greatest natural harbors. This film will share deeply personal connections and stories: past, present and future.

We will visit caretakers who dedicate their lives to preservation of tradition, as well as boatbuilders and vendors who support the craft.

We will highlight the work and passion that go into keeping vessels seaworthy--from repairing hulls, to restoring wooden masts and rigging.

The beauty of San Francisco Bay on display with picture-perfect vessels sailing against a backdrop of iconic landmarks.

***Wind in Their Sails: Preserving History on San Francisco* is for anyone who loves sailing, boats or the San Francisco Bay Area. The film will be both educational and entertaining, providing a fascinating look at the traditional yachts that are such an important part of the region's history and culture.**

Master Mariners Racing An Ageless Tradition



San Francisco has a long and deep heritage rooted in the depths of the bay and beyond. In March 1848, roughly 157,000 people lived in the California territory: 150,000 Native Americans--6,500 of Spanish or Mexican descent and fewer than 800 non-native Americans. San Francisco was a small settlement of population 1,000. Once residents learned about the discovery of gold in 1848, they rushed to the Sierra Foothills, initially turning the region into a ghost town. By 1850, the census had swelled to 25,000 from an influx of merchants and fortune seekers. Thousands came to strike it rich; first to arrive via ship came from the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) and Latin America. Of approximately 300,000 to migrate between 1848 and 1855, roughly half came by sea from points around America, Latin America, Europe, Australia and China.

A journey which started on the East Coast meant a 15,000-mile passage around Cape Horn. The alternate route passed along the Atlantic Coast south to Panama, across the 60-mile Panama Isthmus, and finally again by ship north along the Pacific Coast. Companies providing ocean transportation included the U.S. Mail Steamship Company, which carried U. S. mail from New York City to New Orleans and Havana, then on to the Isthmus of Panama. In 1850, the company extended its route to San Francisco by adding a Pacific line of steamers. Federally subsidized Pacific Mail Steamship Company and Accessory Transit Company also brought passengers to San Francisco. Still more were transported by steamship from New York City through overland portages in Nicaragua and Panama, then north. Supply ships arrived. Hundreds of private vessels, many with a one-way destination, arrived then hastily abandoned leaving vessels to rot as crews deserted and raced to the goldfields. One estimate states 500 to a thousand ships once moored in the San Francisco harbor.

Hans List, commodore of the Master Mariners Benevolent Association (MMBA), says that San Francisco had become a significant seaport. It was also a rough and tumble town, unsafe for many--including sailors who were sometimes taken in by local saloon girls famed for putting drugs into drinks. By the 1860s, San Francisco, AKA the Barbary Coast, locals had coined the verb to "shanghai," a commonplace practice where many a sailor awoke the next morning to find himself aboard a vessel headed to a faraway port. The maritime profession was dangerous with onboard accidents common, ship conditions poor, and ambitious skippers pushing hard to meet delivery dates. Time on land or back in-port was minimal. The sweetheart who did marry and start a family with a sailor faced loneliness and uncertainty.

Master Mariners Racing, continued

Sailing continued to grow and evolve within the region, eventually calming down somewhat. The region had grown to become home for workboats such as scow schooner, lumber schooner, brigantine, barkentine, and oyster sloop. By 1867, a San Francisco club was founded with the purpose of fostering participation in yachting and the preservation of classic and traditional sailing craft. On the fourth of July 1867, the organization which called itself the Boatman's Protective Association staged a race on San Francisco Bay. Competition was established amongst the coastal sailing ships and San Francisco Bay and Delta workboats to help celebrate Independence Day. Records state that, "Thousands of spectators crowded Telegraph Hill to view the hotly contested battle of two bluewater sailing ships around a tight, 18-mile, inside the Bay course. More than 40 vessels raced for prizes that ranged from opera glasses to a cord of wood, or a ton of potatoes--all donated by local merchants. But the most coveted prize of all was, and still is, a silken swallow-tailed banner emblazoned with a strutting gamecock and the words CHAMPION embroidered across in large letters."

This contest marked a new tradition for the bay. The host organization went on to rename itself the Master Mariners Benevolent Association, setting an ongoing objective to raise funds from local maritime businesses for distribution to widows and orphans of seamen lost at sea. That mission is reflected in the MMBA burgee--a Herreshoff anchor with an "H" across its shank, which stands for hope. Throughout the years, many have worked to keep traditional sailing trades and participation alive; for, in an ever-changing and fast-paced world, it is these traditions that ground and remind us of simpler times, says Commodore List. "MMBA members help preserve our rich maritime history, notably the men and women who helped make it what it is today. Every old wooden boat skipper has a story, every crew can share memorable tales, and every old boat, itself, comes with a story. We are charged with providing a window to that past. We keep alive and vital this history, so that its vessels and stories do not become forgotten."

Neil Gibbs, owner of Sparkman and Stephens Kay of Göteborg, serves as membership chair. His role is to help further awareness and build the ranks. "The maritime heritage of San Francisco is extremely rich, yet we face a major challenge in that our community of wooden boats is shrinking. Some simply get moved out of the area, some fall into a state of neglect or are abandoned. It is sad to hear when a vessel has sunk or will be removed from the water for dismantling." Gibbs and List assert that wooden boat owners participate in a culture that practices craftsmanship.

"We've all heard the comments about old boats being hard to maintain, costly to upkeep, or that every weekend is varnish weekend," smiles List, who adds such things depend on the boat. He also asserts that boat work time can be both therapeutic and rewarding. "During COVID, we learned about renewed interest in all things DIY and growth for hands-on hobbies amongst 30 to 40 year olds. There was also a significant increase in recent boat purchases. Our membership is optimistic some new owners have invested, or will invest, in an older wooden boat. We want to welcome those folks to the MMBA, a community ready to share its deep regard for the importance of old vessels." Ask any MMBA member how many times a stranger has sailed just a bit closer to admire, then inquire the age or make of an old boat at sail.

Master Mariners Racing, continued

Members of the tribe are keen to share knowledge and resources. It's a tightly-knit set with a vast range of knowledge and know-how, plus plenty experience. Expertise covers everything A to Z for old boats--from purchase and maintenance, to racing and cruising. Members know the best mechanics, varnishers and sailmakers. They know the ins and outs of marinas, and can offer suggestions for riggers and finding/replacing parts. New old boat owner Wesley Nunez, who purchased Yankee One Flotsam, tapped the group. Nurtured by the owners of 1928 P Class Lester Stone Cutter, Water Witch, he says, "I started sailing four years ago. John and Gena Egelston got me into it, and I was hooked. First came purchase of a Santana 22 in 2019, then a Ranger 33 in 2021, and now I own hull number 42, Flotsam." Smiling, he reveals that the Egelstons reminded him of the mariners group while sailing the 2020 New Year's Day Race. "It was a lot of fun and I really dug the vibe. I'm into classic things, cars, antiquities, so there was a natural draw. Joining MMBA was part of the reason we got Flotsam."

Nunez will race his own boat in the Master Mariner events and possibly inter-club racing. Andy and Melissa Flick eased their pathway to ownership with the help of Commodore List. "This friend of mine started joining us for sails on my boat Sequestor; he kept coming out to sail. Then, during the past year, he started looking around for his own boat. Found one, had her hauled out, spiffed her up a bit, and I'm happy to say the family now owns and enjoys the 42-foot gaff schooner Aida." List feels that Andy's continuous exposure to sailing, invitation to master mariner social events, plus his own ability to offer personal assistance during selection and purchase yielded one more happy old wooden boat owner on the bay.

Coming in May is the organization's largest event, the traditional Memorial Day weekend San Francisco Bay regatta and after-party at Encinal Yacht Club (Alameda). Owners have been prepping for months. Fleet starts happen in front of the St. Francis Yacht Club and pit similarly rated vessels aside one another. Staged pursuit style (slowest boats start first), vessels sail a wide course to several points on the bay, which yields ample vantage for spectators who watch from onshore along the SF cityfront--notably to catch the downwind run front of Alcatraz early in the day. This is a gentleman's race with wide and easy roundings, but when blustery conditions occur, action can get tense. Most boats have family and friends onboard; some being barefooted. Crews bring deep talent and knowledge able to handle heavy boats that can power through SF's strong currents.

The club's second biggest event/fundraiser is the annual wooden boat show. In 1994, to not only further promote a mission of benevolence but also share pageantry of members' boats, the first annual MMBA Wooden Boat Show at the Corinthian Yacht Club in Tiburon was staged. Master mariners see this a time to gather and socialize, plus compare restoration stories. For the public, this gives opportunity for non yacht club members to visit one of California's oldest and grandest maritime clubs and step aboard historic wooden sailboats at an in-water display. Over the years, vessels such as Freda (restored by Arques School of Traditional Boatbuilding in Sausalito in the mid-2010s) have been present. Listed as one of the West Coast's oldest sailboats, Freda was built in 1885 in Belvedere. Other native designs and builds including those from Bear and Bird boat fleets sail over. To round out things, skippers of vessels from various pedigrees also participate--creating a showcase to mark a varied San Francisco maritime heritage.

Master Mariners Racing, continued

Amongst the larger boats to tie-up at the annual boat show is the Alma, an 1891 scow schooner crafted by Fred Siemer at his boatyard near Shipwright's Cottage, Hunters Point, San Francisco. Her 80-foot flat-bottomed hull was designed to navigate shallow creeks and sloughs of the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta. That attribute enabled her to rest on a river bottom at low tide, thereby easing cargo load and offload. During the heyday of maritime transport in the 1900s--an era of few bridges and connecting roads--scow schooners delivered hay and lumber to regions around the the Bay and Delta.

The Alma was added to the National Register of Historic Places in October 1975; in 1988, she was designated a National Historic Landmark. Today, she is a favorite exhibit at the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, Hyde Street Pier. A newer large MMBA member vessel is Call of the Sea's Matthew Turner, recently completed in Sausalito. Named to honor the eponymous American shipbuilder and designer who constructed a total of 228 vessels during his lifetime, 154 of which were built in his Benicia shipyard, this former sea captain is regarded as the granddaddy of big wooden shipbuilding on the Pacific Coast. At 132-feet long, the Matthew Turner is San Francisco Bay Area's largest working schooner.

This year's event is Sunday, June 18, from 10am to 4pm. A gate fee of \$20 is requested from adult visitors, children under 12 are free. Guests will meet skippers and learn more about the region's history as captured in their stories. An outdoor bar and grill will be open, live music featured, and boatbuilding activities for kids are promised.

Proceeds from both the annual May regatta and boat show are directed to the Master Mariners Benevolent Foundation (501(c)(3)), for distribution as scholarships to support youth sail-training, maritime-related vocational training and events which raise appreciation for nautical heritage and preservation of classic sailboats. The association offers three membership levels; two for boat owners and one for classic boat enthusiasts. Membership chair Gibbs has initiated a high-touch campaign to personally reach wooden boat owners, asking that they anchor aside. All MMBA members are encouraging non-boat-owning enthusiasts to consider supporting at the Friends level, which is only \$35/year. Holders of a Friends membership may attend social events, benefit from MMBA members' expertise, and gain a leg up for possible invitation to sail a lovely wooden boat. More importantly, the money goes to support the continuance of an essential organization with a mission to preserve and promote a rich legacy. Over the decades, MMBA prominence and member ranks have wavered, coming close to extinction in the mid-60s, but were revived thanks to a dedicated few.

In 1978, the MMBA Articles of Incorporation were filed with the State of California, re-establishing the MMBA as a not for profit social organization (California 501(c)(7)). In 1988, the Board of Directors established the MMBA Historical Small-Craft Preservation Foundation, a tax deductible California public benefit corporation, which helped fund restoration of the 1929 Bird boat Polly, hull 19, and one of four Bird boats built by W.F. Stone & Son Boat Yard in Oakland. Today, the MMBA is one of the oldest and largest associations of traditional wooden sailboats.



Events

Annual Member Meeting June 17

4:30pm
Corinthian Yacht Club
Info: Diane Walton and [Hans List](#)

Labor Day Weekend Cruise Sept 2 - 4

12pm
TBD
Info: [Hans List](#)

Wooden Boat Show June 18

10am - 4pm
Corinthian Yacht Club
Info: [Bob Rogers](#)

ROLEX Big Boat Series September 13 - 17

See [NOR](#)
St. Francis Yacht Club
Info: St. Francis Yacht Club

Great SF Schooner Race & Belvedere Classic July 15

See [NOR](#)
San Francisco Yacht Club
Info: San Francisco Yacht Club

Jessica Cup Regatta Oct 14

See [NOR](#)
St. Francis Yacht Club
Info: St. Francis Yacht Club



MMBA AT GVR

Above: Member boat *Water Witch* takes the route north. Also on the course were *Mistress II* and *Neja*. Competitors sailed the Great Vallejo Race, an event which was first mentioned in 1925 when Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association (PICYA) organized a cruise from Berkeley to Vallejo on a Saturday, which was followed by a race back on Sunday.

***Mistress II* helmsman Richard vonEhrenkrook contributed this recap:**

The 2023 GVR was a plan to kick out the jams in anticipation of the Master Mariners race. We had most of our core: Chris Cassell, stalwart through our first win in 2019 and more than a few of our near sinkings, and his brother Aaron make up pointy-end. Able newbie Charley Edwards was mast crew and my trim, both on M2 and my Cal 20 *Can O'Whoopass*, Rachel Porter, with Carliane Johnson in the afterguard.

Not much to laugh about, really. I blew a layline call at the weather mark, and the lead we had turned into a division last place. We were smart, gybing first after Pt. San Pablo, and grinding down the five boats in our division--a closely rated set well-sailed by veterans. We worked ourselves into what might have been first place turning into Mare Island Straits, but bad communication led to a flapping spinnaker, rather than gas residue on opponents. Fun and games continued for a mile up the strait, with all six division boats correcting out within 90-seconds of each other.

Master Mariners is up next. Our crew is Chris and Aaron Cassell, Dr. Michael Simon, plus Stephen Buckingham up front. Shannon Elms is on main and Rachel Porter plus Kris Andersen will pull strings aft. In the spirit of Resilience Racing, I will host Vince McPeek on the transom.





**"LAST TWO YEARS WE
HAVE BEEN ABLE TO WIN
OUR CLASS GOING BOTH
WAYS; SOMETHING WE HAD
NOT BEEN ABLE TO DO
SINCE 1982"**

CONTRIBUTED BY SKIPPER JIM BORGER

DAY 1: TREASURE ISLAND TO VALLEJO

We start at pin-end which, was disadvantaged by about a three-boat length. We thought the left side of the course was best. Lucked out, left was best and we rounded the weather mark with a 2-minute lead. The course to Red Rock was about 80-degrees apparent wind.

We had to make choice: sailing high of layline to get a boost from flood tide in the main channel then fall off to set the chute early, or sail low of layline with genoa, hoping for stronger winds further from Angel Island and Marin mountains, then head up for a better sailing angle as the wind lightened at Red Rock, then wait to set the chute past Red Rock. We chose the later; it seemed to work as we were still leading at the Brothers.

In San Pablo Bay over the next hour and a half, the Farallone Clipper, Cal 34 and Newport 30 all passed us. The Islander 30 got close enough to save her time. We had gone from first to last by the time we had reached out spinnaker takedown at Mare Island inlet. The Farallone Clipper did a nice job of carrying the chute past the turning buoy, gaining some positions.

Downwind is not our best point of sail. The whole class was within 1-minute of each other as we charged up the inlet, playing the shifting wind, puffs and holes every second. We chose the lee shore, hoping to stay out of the holes, while most of the fleet stayed in the middle. There were probably lots of lead changes; we did not notice since we were focused on boat speed. We finished last, less than 1-minute behind the Cal 34 winner following nearly three hours of racing.

Our class took five of the top 10 spots in the overall 96 boat fleet. Nothing like a favorable tide to help the little guys. Closest Vallejo race I have ever raced. The good news--rain was forecast and it didn't happen.

OVERALL

1ST GYPSY LADY, CAL 34	1+1=2
2ND ZEEHOND, NEWPORT 30	2+3=5
3RD NEJA, DASHER	5+2=7
4TH MISTRESS II, FARALLONE CLIPPER	4+4=8
5TH ANTARES, ISLANDER 30	3+6=9

PHRF
DIVISION
RATINGS ARE
ABOUT
THE SAME
AT
174 SEC/NM
-3 TO +12

DAY 2: VALLEJO TO RICHMOND

At the start, wind in the Mare Island inlet was light and variable with lots of holes. Apparent from 60 to 100-degrees. Hoping for fewer holes, we were the only boat in our class to start on lee shore; all others set spinnakers right away and beared-off in headers. Being on the lee shore, bearing-off was not an option, so we stuck with the genoa. This is half the reason why, as we exited Marie Island Channel, we were in first.

Once apparent wind remained greater than 90-degrees for five minutes, we set the chute. By this time, most of our class had passed, when the wind head and we went back to the genoa fighting to stay out of last. We could not fetch the refinery dock at Davis Point to get to the shallow water where the flood tide was weaker on the south shore of San Pablo Bay.

We took short tacks up the north shore, then skipper made a huge error. During this time, depth was quickly reducing and we got stuck in the mud. It took two to three minutes to get off, putting us in last place. We played the oscillation, tacking on headers along south shore keeping at least two feet under the keel til Red Rook.

We passed the Farallone Clipper, Newport 30, then Islander 30. When the Cal 34 overstood Red Rock by 20-boat lengths, we were able get by her lee side to lead by 3-boat lengths at Red Rock. We maintained that interval under genoa reach for the next two miles. Unfortunately, skipper failed to have the spinnaker repack, so when our course bore off, the Cal 34 set their chute and passed us in the last mile. Not being ready the chute cost us the lead, putting the crew in 2nd, just 30-seconds out of a first.

Jim Borger, skipper
George Thomas, foredeck
Mike Borger, Saturday mast
Jingwen Chi, Sunday mast
Karen Mendiola, Sean Munjal, trimmers

On the Fourth of July of 1867.

the Boatman's Protective Association staged a race among working sailboats in San Francisco Bay. After repeating the event in 1868 and 1869, the Association was recognized under a new name: the Master Mariners Benevolent Association.

Knowledge of the histories of the Master Mariner's Benevolent Association (MMBA) and the Master Mariner's Benevolent Foundation (MMBF) are essential to understand the respective roles of each organization and their relationship to one another.

While entity is independent, they complement one another, and collectively serve the interests of all MMBA members and our community.

The Master Mariners Regatta raised funds from local maritime businesses to benefit the widows and orphans of seamen lost at sea—the spirit of which is reflected in the MMBA Burgee, a Herreshoff anchor with an “H” across its shank, standing for Hope.

By 1891, steam engines were replacing sails and the era of the regatta ended. In 1965, the Association was revived in honor of National Maritime Day, and the regatta resumed among traditional sailing vessels.

In 1978, the MMBA Articles of Incorporation were filed with the State of California, which re-established the MMBA as a not for profit social organization (California 501(c)(7) corporation) to promote the fraternity of wooden sailboat owners, the maintenance of their vessels, and traditional seamanship through the Annual Master Mariners Regatta and subsequently other events (its “Specific Purpose”). The MMBA remains one of the oldest and largest associations of traditional wooden sailboats.

Historical Small Craft Preservation Fund

In 1988, the MMBA Board of Directors established the MMBA Historical Small Craft Preservation Foundation (the “HSCPF”), a tax deductible public benefit corporation (California 501(c)(3) corporation) to help fund the restoration of the Bird Boat *Polly* (commonly known as the “Polly Project”). Since the materials, labor and capital donated to the project were tax deductible, sufficient materials, labor and capital were contributed to successfully complete *Polly's* restoration.

Annual Wooden Boat Show

In 1994, to further promote core MMBA values (benevolence), and to create a permanent venue for its Annual Meeting of Members, the MMBA Board of Directors initiated the Annual MMBA Wooden Boat Show to be held at the Corinthian Yacht Club to raise funds to promote and fund the preservation of classic sailboats, the associated skills, and traditional seamanship through education.

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Sail San Francisco (SSF)

In 1999, the state of California budgeted a significant sum of money to celebrate the state sesquicentennial. A portion of the state's funds had been allocated to Sail San Francisco (SSF) for the reception of thirteen Class A Tall Ships and their crews that would sail from many countries into San Francisco Bay. The state employed Alison Healey to design and organize the event.

With the vessels underway, California elected a new governor who reversed the allocation of funds for the event, and Healy was suddenly unemployed, but she remained committed and took on the additional challenge to secure funding for the four-day event and the re-provisioning of the vessels.

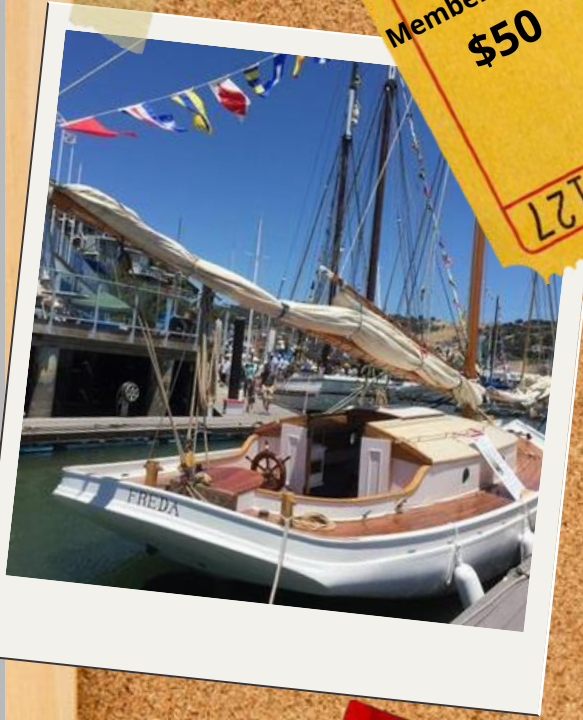
To attract the scope of donations to pull off the event, she needed a 501(c)(3) entity to provide donors tax deductions for their contributions. She approached the MMBA Board of Directors for assistance, and in May 1999 the MMBA Board modified and amended the HSCPF Articles of Incorporation to change the corporation's name to the Master Mariners Benevolent Foundation (MMBF), establish a separate Board of Directors, and expand the corporation's "Specific Purpose" to include funding the SSF event.

Accordingly, tax deductible donations were channeled through the MMBF to fund SSF. Alison Healy managed to secure sufficient capital, services and provisions to make Sail San Francisco a success. The event drew tens of thousands to the waterfront.



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BULLETIN BOARD



MMBA Board
 We seek an additional board member
 be part of the leadership team

Email Commodore Hans list

Can you help at events?
 let Hans know



set-up
 clean-up
 organizing stuff
 and more!

Shellback seeks contributions!

send photos, tips & tricks,
 short articles to Martha
martha@renegadesailing.com



we have 2 accounts
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HISTORY OF THE MMBA

In contrast to the East Coast, San Francisco was a crude and raw place in 1867. Its vessels were not those of the rich, used just as play toys, but vessels that were used in everyday business of commerce. They were the scow schooners, the lumber schooners, the brigantines, the barkentines, and the oyster sloops. As a result, their captains were first and foremost men of the water, and they had a courage and charter all their own.

During the late 1800's, there was a great deal of money flowing into San Francisco from the Comstock Lode and other mines. The demand for materials was great, and the load fell on the fraternity of the waterfront since those were the days before the ferry service and bridges of the San Francisco Bay. Up and down the waterways of the Delta and along the rugged coast of California from the north to the south, vessels of all description carried the necessities of everyday life.

Thus, it was in 1867, that a contest was established among those coastal sailing ships and San Francisco Bay and Delta workboats to help celebrate Independence Day. That first contest was the start of San Francisco's Master Mariners Regatta.

Thousands of spectators crowded Telegraph Hill to view the hotly contested battle of two bluewater sailing ships around a tight, 18-mile, inside the Bay course. More than 40 vessels raced for prizes that ranged from opera glasses to a cord of wood, or a ton of potatoes--all donated by local merchants. But the most coveted prize of all was, and still is, a silken swallow-tailed banner emblazoned with a strutting gamecock with the words CHAMPION embroidered across in large letters.

A great story is told of those times: during the 1880's, in a waterfront bar known as the Exchange, two skippers placed a bet between themselves. Both had commercial vessels, and both thought they could beat the other in an all-out confrontation of sail. The date was set, and the course was set.

Riding on the outcome, not only the original bets, but side bets amounting to over three-thousand dollars! The course was run as a match race, and the heavy bettor won, saying, "I don't know of any easier way to get the money, other than knocking him over the head and stealing it!"

Unfortunately, the winning vessel, a scow-sloop named *P.M. Randell*, caught fire in Suisun Bay while hauling a load of hay the next year and a rematch was never run.

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Interested in serving as a member of
the Board of Directors team?

Email Commodore Hans List

MMBA
PO Box 70640
Richmond, CA 94807

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