Foreword

What gives things their real value, what makes things special?

The new S&S designed Morris 36, which already has sold ten boats since the launching at our meeting?

You will have to wait until next summer to get one! Is it the overall balance Sparkman & Stephens puts into their design, or is it the deliberate choice of builder they want to work with? Quality seems to be an important factor!

I also learned while sailing the 12 meter, Columbia, what enormous added value Olin’s brother Rod had; going fast has four contributors: the design, the sails, the gear and of course a good crew. To trim the sails properly and at the right moment you need well designed gear. It’s good to see the name Sparkman & Stephens on the pre war grinders on Vim. They do not look particularly different from those today, it’s still a slave’s work!

I have also noticed that almost every “classic” is vanquished with Epifanes. My visit to the paint factory this summer indeed confirmed my impression that we are dealing with something “special”.

This relatively small factory, housed in a hyper modern building seems to have a soul and is still proud of it’s often personal contact with the Worldwide customer.

The same impression I had from Willem v. Beers from Meissner Winches. By coincidence I had to go to his outfit in the Netherlands. If you want to distinguish yourself you are at the right address. He designs and makes beautiful pieces of machinery. If you buy a winch you can get the privilege of the design to hang in your office!

It seems that every time there is an “association” with something “special” it gives me some extra energy to be a little bit more “special” myself! It’s their “spark” with which the people behind those names ignite you with.

Bob

75th Anniversary & AGM 2004

The meeting started with a visit to the Sparkman & Stephens offices on 5th Avenue. Enthusiastic discussions were started over drawings as people wandered through this Mecca of yacht design. Afterwards we walked over to the New York Yacht Club for a cocktail reception. Members of the Association and guests from Sparkman & Stephens toasted Olin and the Vice and Rear Commodore of the New York Yacht Club for 75 years of excellence in Yacht design.

Speeches by Mitchell C. Gibbons-Neff, President of S&S, Bruce R. Johnson, Chief Designer, Gregory M. Matsu, Chief Architect, Rob Snoeks, Chairman of the Association, Charles H. Townend, Rear Commodore of the NYCC and of course from our most honoured guest, the co-founder himself of S&S Olin J. Stephens.

To be continued on page 3 >>>

AGM 2006 Brittany?
AGM 2004 photos on www.s-and-s-association.org
PRESS RELEASE

Chairman visits Revid

Revid, a 31' S&S has been the home for our former secretary, Clive Egginton and his wife Margo for five years already. They travelled safely in their little but very competent boat over many stretches of water. They sailed in the Caribbean for the last few months and were safely harboured on the coast of Venezuela when “Ivan” came along.

I visited them on the island of Bonaire and took them to see this “Dutch” island on a trike. It was their first time on such a three wheeler and we enjoyed the ride. In the evening I was served a great meal on board Revid, where Clive showed me proudly the last upgrade of the boat: a watermaker. It turned out to be an enormous improvement, not only could they shower with fresh water, but the daily run of the watermaker replenished the water supply and made them less dependent on going in to port.

They are now on their way to the Columbian coast and than onwards to Nicaragua and so on.

S&S MEETING HELSINKI

As traditionally, the Annual Regional Regatta 2005 was arranged in Helsinki during the last weekend in August.

The weather forecast was poor (as usual this Summer!) but the Mighty God must have had his sympathy with our Association at this occasion, because we just got a little rain, but lots of sunshine and fair winds.

This year, we have got many new members here in Finland, much due to two member S&S-yachts exposed at the Helsinki International Boat Show in February. Thus 16! member yachts showed up at the Rendez-Vous, and 12 took part in the Race. Additionally 2 S&S crews from the West-Coast came by car and sailed as crews on different local boats.

It was a pleasure to see all these pretty boats, from the first S&S built in Finland, a wooden yawl “Kuohuneiti”, to smaller more recent fibreglass designs, at the starting line. Onboard Carly III we had the special privilege to see them all in front of us, as we were busy fixing our cutter stay, that had come loose just some minutes before the start, instead of aiming at the line. After having fixed that, we trained M.O.B. manuvers, by chasing a sailor’s cap that went over board at that same occasion...Well, we got underway at last! Tarantella II was first over the finishing line in the “Big Boat Class” and Felicia” took the honours in the class for the smaller boats.

Obviously competing to win was eager. Before the start, some crews were spotted lifting heavier gear on shore, and one boat was even helmed by a former “Whitbread Around the World Race”-skipper. Other boths were crewed merely by couples or young family crews, and as aimed, everybody seemed to enjoy good sailing.

After the Race, there was a sauna, followed by dinner, the traditional quizz and socialising until the early morning hours.

The contribution of our President Olin Stephens for designing our highly appreciated yachts and the 75th birthday of Sparkman & Stephens Inc. were recognized and celebrated.

We have upon some occasions at this event had the joy to have “our Commodore” visiting us (and crewing!), and also for the future, members from other countries are most welcome to take part!

Fredrik
The S&S Anniversary Gala Dinner Dance started at 1830 hrs under a tent on the Seaport's scenic North Lawn. A New England lobster dinner was served, there was music and dancing and many speeches. Our most special guest Olin Stephens, our secretary for the States, opened the meeting by drinking a toast from the silver Founders Cup. A very good start of weeks of enjoyment of Sparkman & Stephens 75th Anniversary celebrations!!

Saturday, July 10th
Over 75 of the finest yachts, reflecting current and past S&S designs were moored at the quays of the Museum grounds. And of course the “Duck” was on display as well as the Lightning and several other very familiar designs. The new S&S designed Morris 36 was there, doing it’s first elegant tack’s in front of the crowd. Olin was busy, between all the calls for his attention, to photograph all this gathered beauty.

Throughout the day, the Mystic Seaport staff gave private tours of the Sparkman & Stephens collection in the Ships Plans Building.

In the afternoon there were Guest Speakers: lectures and seminars by industry experts and enthusiasts. R.C. Keefe showed the crowd that he still knows every detail of the past sailing era: unbelievable!

And of course the Concours d’Elegance’ yachts were judged according to their own unique qualifications by a very professional jury, including people like Elizabeth Meyer. Points awarded based on the condition of each participating yacht, including authenticity to original form. Two categories: one for best professionally maintained yacht and one for best privately maintained yacht, with winners in three divisions: Classic (vessels older than 25 years), Modern (vessels younger than 25 years) and Motor Yachts (regardless of age). A special trophy awarded by Nautor Swan for the best Swan attending.

Sunday, July 11th
The S&S Association Annual General Meeting was held at the Mystic Seaport Chapel at 1000 hrs on Sunday morning. We had a fruitfull meeting and Patrick Matthiesen thanked Steve Kloeblen for his tremendous achievement to pull this organisation off. The minutes of the meeting were sent to all the members of the Association.

After the bridge over the Mystic river was finally fixed, we could start the S&S Day Sail to Fishers Island Sound. It must have been a sight to see this parade of S&S yachts leave port. After a nice sail we “rendezvoused” with the IYRS International Yacht Restoration School Classic Yacht Cruise in West Harbor, Fishers Island. The champagne was awaiting us on the rear deck of the beautifull motor launch “Entrier”, moored between two other “classics”.

And as it turned out the champane flowed generously for the next five days! The S&S yawl Cresta III earned “line honours” in the first race, but we had to bribe the race committee to get any recognition at all! That’s how it works: not too much competitive edge and lots of fun! One of the best experiences during the cruise was the parade on the mid of the ocean: some ten or more beautifull yaws, sloops and even a big Herreshoff schooner, sailing, parading around the mother ship in beautifull weather conditions, trying to catch a bottle of champagne hanging from a rod. The festivities had a grand finale in the “Beetles” party held on the premises of the IYRS.

July 17-18th
Annual Sparkman & Stephens 12-Meter Regatta
At New Port the 12 Meter races formed part of the New York Yacht Club Race Week with five days of racing old, beautifull, 70 foot long 12 Meter yachts. Your Chairman sailed on the Columbia as foredecker. There were two classes: the “oldies”: Vim, Northern Light and Clolumbia and the newer ones like Courageous, Intrepid and Freedom. Columbia, owned and sailed by Alain Hanover, won the Classic Cup.

Olin himself presented the prices at the Museum of Yachting in New Port. On Saturday there was a big dinner for all the crewmembers of the America Cup teams from those exciting days of the summer 1974, thirty years ago, when Courageous, skippered by Ted Hood and Dennis Conner, won the Cup Defence trials against Intrepid, skippered by Gerry Driscoll.

I met the foredecker” of Columbia there: a grandson of Herreshoff, who sailed in the team when she competed in 1958. It was a wonderfull evening and again Olin had the whole crowd laughing: with 96 he is still a quit a personality!

At www.s-and-s-association.org you’ll find a full account with photos.
Sweating he was, his forehead dripping with sweat, not from the heat but from sheer fear! Fear from getting his fingers cut off, not less than four grinders are supplying the energy for the big ‘very big’ winch in front of him. Yards of sheet need to come in quickly and like a cowboy you need to throw another two laps of sheet around it before the pressure in the sail wins it from the trimmer. Port trimmer he is today and he has just been flown in to catch part of the fun and the time difference and lack of sleep doesn’t help either! But Michael gets the feel quickly and starts to enjoy the enormous speed the boat develops, even now under reduced sail. Tomorrow we get the race sails but then the wind leaves us.

Herve, a Frenchman, having reconstructed his boatbuilding yard into a restaurant looks like he is going to have a heart attack. Because of his modesty and “language” problem he ended up at the grinders: a place for young bodybuilders thirty years younger in age! Alain, our skipper is quickly convinced of his dubious decision and Herwe gets an important but unclear task somewhere in the cockpit. “I say unclear”, because all the tasks in the back are unclear if you’re positioned as foredecker. The only thing they can do good back behind the mast, is not messing up your task. A racing machine like the 12 Meter, is actually like a machine, an engine: if the camshaft is not properly timed to the crankshaft, the valves are lifted on the wrong moment and if unlucky, crash into the piston. And that’s what our spinnaker did: tearing up completely at the leech, but nobody could help it this time: something got caught by sheer coincidence!

We won though, the competition being not very fearsome: Columbia, built for the races in 1968 is just faster than its predecessors and the only real challenge is catching the newer twelve’s. We manage that a few times, but only for a short period! Why is he positioning himself there, I wondered? But the next time I looked, I barely recognized the move before I heard the grinders shout: grind! grind!, and they do that very loud, I can tell you! it’s like a boatswain on board of his Majesties Victory, yelling orders to the mostly ex convicts’ crew. But it was too late, Courages with it’s modern asymmetrical spinnaker can point higher and passed us in a jiffy! Nice to look at though.

Today we are rolling over the Atlantic waves, waiting already for hours for the signal flags on the start ship to get up. It’s not very healthy for part of the crew and the fishes are feasted on their breakfast. But then to our complete surprise the flags go up and it’s a completely new experience for me to go over the starting line in a thick fog. Sheer luck and some good listening brings us right at the upwind mark and not long thereafter clear skies again: it’s typical New Port weather!

“Heat ‘r up, Jamie”, our crew does well and by the end of the day we are all very proud to get with Olin. Alain Hannover, his crew and the trophy, in the picture! Rob
AGM 2005

We have made some preliminary plans for the AGM. The date will be 20 - 22.5.2005.

On Friday 20.5. people will fly in, and after some welcome drinks there will be an informal dinner in a restaurant.

On Saturday 21.5. we will try to arrange a visit onboard an ice-breaker before noon. In the afternoon we will visit the fortress of Suomenlinna on some smaller islands outside Helsinki. There we will visit a museum and have some other related program. In the evening there will be the AGM Dinner, the location is not decided upon yet. Perhaps there will be some drinks onboard local yachts, either in Suomenlinna, or close to the hotel district.

On Sunday morning there will be the AGM, and perhaps a short presentation about yachting in Finland before that. We plan to arrange this on one of the waterfront yacht clubs. In the afternoon there could perhaps be possibilities to go out for a short sail, but the water is still quite chilly, around 10 degrees C, or perhaps even below.

For those interested, there are cruises to St. Petersburg from Helsinki by passenger ships. You leave Helsinki in the evening, arrive is the next morning, excursions in St.P. during the day, and back to Helsinki in the same evening, arriving to Helsinki the next morning. A most interesting historical metropolis, in size comparable to Paris, and with spectacular views over mile long rows of 18th and 19th century palaces along the wide river Neva. And for those interested in art, the Hermitage Museum is world wide top ranking.

The first “Classic Channel Challenge” is born!

In a year when Sparkman and Stephens celebrates their 75th anniversary (2004), their famous “benchmark” will celebrate her 70th. This June, as Orion turns 70, it is appropriate to note she is as fast and beautiful as when she was launched in 1804. Edlu was commissioned in 1934 by businessman & philanthropist Rudolf Schaefer at the then extravagant cost of $25,000. She was named Edlu for his daughters Edmee and Lucy, and received international acclaim for her speed and grace. Olin Stephens who, along with Nathaniel Herreshoff, is considered this country’s greatest designer of sail. Olin Stephens retired in 1980, but in his long life has overseen the design of more than 2,000 yachts, including eight America’s Cup defenders. His boats scored victories in the Fastnet Race (7), the Whitbread Round the World (2), and Bermuda Race (11) - the Grand Slam of yacht racing. He is now 96 and still going strong. Edlu won the Bermuda Race in her first year, 1934, and, in Stephens’ own words, may be his most beautiful and successful design. Today she represents the higher end of yacht chartering in a San Diego market rife with plastic boats with little or no history at all. She is quite simply, “elegance afloat,” and has become a visual icon on San Diego Bay.

Joseph Ditler

News

12M North American Championships September 15 2004
In the North American Twelve Metre Class held 15-19 September in Newport RI; Courageous won the modern class and the Classic Traditional class was won by American Eagle, second came Columbia (US 16).
We had a fine summer en even a few migrating “Swans” in Whangarei. They were “Nedlila”, a 47 S&S and “Tikki”, a 47 from 1970 in very good condition: Fins on a World tour. I also had “Faja Lobbi”, a Koopmans 45 by Hutting, from Theo En Michelle de loo from Middelharnis, also on a World round trip. They are already in Fiji now. Nice coincidence: Theo sailed a lot as crew with Mr. Baarsma on “Morning Town”, a sister ship from “Morning Cloud”. I saw the boat in Middelharnis last summer. They won many races in England in the seventies. The coincidence is, that I also sailed with a Baarsma in my younger years, also on a S&S design: “Gijzie” a Finisterre, built by Frans Maas in Brekenbos. But that turned out to be his father, both were doctors.

I sent the “young” Willem a 8 mm film I shot in the Harich Hook Race with “Gijzie”. She just left the yard and she was not yet trimmed very well; she was very cruel on the rudder, which could be clearly seen in the film, when the helmsman “Jantje de Kerk” from Terneuzen had to lean hard on the rudder. Also on board were “Frans Henderson” (the old one), “Kees Wetsema” (also the old one) en “Willem Hummelman”. In those years –back in the fifties- I gave a lot of lectures on “blue water sailing”, which was not very common in those days.

This summer, Diane and I made some nice trips: especially the trip to “Gt. Barrier Island”, which was the most beautiful island in the World. (And I have seen a lot!)

Roh, I hope you found the article on your boat I wrote back in the sixties, the half model of your boat is hanging nicely in our “salon”. If you ever have a chance to visit NZ, your most welcome and of course we are going to sail my Swan 36 and go to meet “Simon Willis” who sailed on the “Flyer” with “Connie van Rietschoten”.

Hi Rob, a message from New Zeeland.

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