

# RESTORATION OF THE YEAR



It's Award time again here at *Classic Boat* and once more we are faced with agonising choices. Here we present the cream of this year's restorations and select a shortlist of six boats.

## LUCKY GIRL

Built at the Finnish Abo Batvarf yard in 1910 to a 1909 design by Wm Fife III, *Lucky Girl* was the prize in a raffle held by the Nyland's Yacht Club. She obtained her name as the winning ticket was held by the three-year-old Lucy Tallberg, whose father went on to win the bronze medal in the 1912 Olympics. The rebuild of the first rule 8-Metre was begun by Fairlie Restorations in August 2007 and completed in time for the Fife regatta in June this year. Fairlies retained her composite steel and ash frame construction as well as installing a new cedar laminated coachroof with careful attention to the Fife details.

### **Lucky Girl**

Length 41ft 7in (12.7m)

Beam 7ft 10in (2.4m)

Draught 5ft 1in (1.6m)



NIGEL PERT

“Everybody has won, and all must have prizes,” said the Dodo in *Alice in Wonderland*. In the world of restoration, which is in any case not a race or a competition, everybody does end up with a prize, in the shape of a beautifully restored boat, together perhaps with the satisfaction of having done the

work, made the difference and brought something beautiful, elegant and possibly historic back to life.

So why, in that case, have an award scheme which of necessity picks out, and presents a prize to, one among many deserving and impressive projects? You might ask that, and we certainly do, quite

frequently, when faced with the task of considering and attempting to evaluate so many disparate, but seemingly equally impressive, restorations. In the end, we suppose, the award is more about the process than the result: the process of focusing attention on the boats, their histories, the work that has gone into them



## IERNE

'Purity' is the watchword for owner Huw Jones's restoration of the 1914 Wm Fife III 8-Metre *Ierne*: wooden spars, low-tension rig and no sheet winches. *Ierne* was unearthed, in a barn in Portugal, by Huw's boatbuilder, Joe Irving. Replacement of her frames, 80 per cent of which were broken, enabled her lines to be trued-up; the deck, teak-planked, is traditional, and a work of art. *Ierne* retains her spartan, racing-machine feel – and Huw is not afraid to break spars in pursuit of his sport.

MERVYN MAGGS



### *Ierne*

Length 41ft 7in (12.7m)  
LWL 27ft (8.2m)  
Beam 7ft 7in (2.3m)  
Draught 5ft 9in (1.7m)



## AYRSHIRE LASS

A little (24ft) half-deck gaff cutter, built by Wm Fife II in 1887, *Ayrshire Lass* was restored by Michael Kennedy (*Dunbrody, Peggy Bawn*) in Dunmore East, Waterford. The client was Paul Goss, skipper of *Adix*, who had been observing the *Lass*, on and off, over the years, eventually shocked into action by her decline. The full story, involving historian Iain McAllister and naval architect Theo Rye, was told in CB244 (October) but suffice to say it was a major restoration, and a thoroughly authentic one.



### *Ayrshire Lass*

Length 24ft 7in (7.5m)  
LWL 22ft 4in (6.8m)  
Beam 7ft (2.1m)  
Draught 3ft 4in (1m)



NIGEL PERT

and not least the remarkable and dedicated people and teams that can take credit for these achievements.

A successful restoration is usually a matter of bringing together the inspiration to do it and the skills to get it done. The former is normally supplied by the owner, who usually, let's face it, also brings the necessary

cash; the latter will certainly involve at least one craftsman, in the shape of a boatbuilder or shipwright, but may also encompass a whole team including perhaps a naval architect, historian, surveyor, tradespeople with specialist skills, fabricators of this, that and the other, and ultimately riggers and sailmakers. Sometimes the 'owner' will be

a group determined to rescue a significant vessel, and the cash will be provided, in part at least, by the likes of the Heritage Lottery Fund. Sometimes, too, the owner and boatbuilder will be one and the same person. Our contribution, in running the Award, and in compiling this review, is to salute all these people, celebrate their

**La Spina**

Length 70ft 6in (21.5m)

Beam 12ft 9in (3.9m)

Draught 9ft 2in (2.8m)



# LA SPINA

Italy's first ever 12-Metre, *La Spina* was built in 1929 for Italian aristocrat, the Marquis Francesco Spinola. She was relaunched in April after a two-year restoration at the Aprea Peninsula Navis boatyard in Sorrento. She now belongs to a syndicate of Italian owners who showcased her at this year's Argentario Sailing Week (CB246). While the hull is a rebuild, the interior is, according to Stefano Faggioni, 85 per cent original, including the antique cookers in the galley and the Marquis's writing bureau. Where original material has been lost to time, Faggioni has spent days trawling through antique shops for items like wall lamps, and has designed new ceiling lamps himself.



## MERRYMAID

The 98ft gaff cutter, designed by Charles Nicholson and built by Camper & Nicholson's in 1904, was discovered as a houseboat in an Essex mudberth in 2001. The initial restoration was halted with the death of a co-owner in 2004, and *Merrymaid* moved into Southampton Yacht Services in 2006. Extensive remedial work on the centreline structure, keelson, stem and stern required a special cradle to be built to support the frames while separated from the keelson. Once this work was completed, a full interior fit-out followed. *Merrymaid* is now on a three-year circumnavigation.

**Merrymaid**

Length 98ft 3in (30m)

Beam 18ft 6in (5.5m)

Draught 12ft 3in (3.7m)



## ELF

Seventeen years in the restoration, *Elf*, 1888, was designed for racing by George F Lawley of Boston, Mass, USA. Rick Carrion discovered and bought the 35ft (10.6m) yawl in 1971 as a student, and was dissuaded from selling it in 1973 by Don Street, who told him he had the oldest small yacht in the USA. Instead, Carrion created the Classic Yacht Restoration Guild to co-ordinate largely volunteer effort on Chesapeake Bay. They have produced a 'museum-quality' restoration, launched this summer and now making the rounds of eastern seaboard heritage ports. More of *Elf's* story can be found at [www.cyr.org](http://www.cyr.org).

**Elf**

Length 35ft (10.6m)

Beam 11ft 10in (3.6m)

Draught 6ft (1.8m)

ANDY SLAVINSKAS



achievements and inspire and encourage others to have a go – or, if already started, to carry on.

This year's crop of candidates does not actually include any HLF-funded restorations, though there are a number going on. Every awards programme has to have rules, and one of ours is that a boat becomes

eligible only once the project is complete, the vessel is launched and able to sail, or where appropriate, motor, under its own power. This would explain, perhaps, the absence of some craft that attentive readers might have expected to see. Kim Holman's *Phialle*, profiled in CB235, exactly a year ago, but whose interior fit-out is still to be

completed. *Concordia*, ex-*Penelee*, featured in July's Yard News (CB241) and expected in September, has simply overrun, a common enough occurrence in boatbuilding. In the case of *Lydia Eva*, the restored steam drifter, we would have liked to include her this year, partly as a tribute to Laurence Monkhouse, one of the driving



## ISLAY

*Islay*, a 38ft by 6ft Camper & Nicholson's day launch, dating from 1922 and a precursor of the 'J-class tender', was rescued from an Italian museum by river-boat enthusiast Adam Toop (CB246). Work on the hull, chiefly stabilising it and refinishing it in the present cream livery, was carried out by Alastair Garland of Salisbury. Deck fittings were repolished, and upholstery recovered. Immaculate *Islay* won Boat of the Year, and all other appropriate awards at this year's Thames Traditional Boat Rally.



### **Islay**

RAY LITTLE  
Length 38ft (11.6m)  
Beam 6ft 6in (2m)  
Draught 2ft 4in (0.7m)



## MISTRAL

Dieter Krügel discovered the 1936 L Francis Herreshoff schooner *Mistral* in California in 1995. In worse condition than he thought when he bought her, she was patched up and moved to Lunenburg, Canada for extensive remedial treatment under Dennis Greenwood, from 1996 to 1999. On relaunch, racing quickly showed up further inherent faults in the light construction, and in 2006 *Mistral* was taken to Matthias Paulsen at Arnis on the German Baltic, where new ring frames were fitted (right), the hull reskinned and the deck renewed. *Mistral* was relaunched in May and took part in the Transat Classique.



### **Mistral**

NICHOLA AIGNER  
Length 63ft 6in (19.4m)  
Beam 15ft (4.6m)  
Draught 8ft 3in (2.5m)



forces behind saving her for the community, who died in June. He lived to see her relaunched in April (Yard News, CB240) but problems with her boiler have put back the prospect of her proceeding under her own steam until (hopefully) 2009. As for the 106ft (32.3m) 1896 Summers & Payne *Cariad I* (Yard News, last month) we were

faced with a date-related dilemma. She was in the water just within our cut-off date of the end of November; however, the restoration was done in Thailand, and we have not had the chance to view her yet. She is clearly a major restoration, and due to visit the UK this summer, when we hope to see her and do her full justice.

For the boats that have been relaunched in 2007, our criteria are as they were last year: the intrinsic interest of the boat itself; the work involved, including the depth of the restoration and the quality of the workmanship; authenticity of techniques and materials, and the purpose of the restoration.

### **Sphinx**

Length 70ft 6in (21.5m)

Beam 11ft 10in (3.6m)

Draught 8ft 11in (2.7m)



## SPHINX

A12-Metre, *Sphinx* was built by Abeking & Rasmussen in 1939, for the people of Hamburg and the Norddeutscher Regattaverein (NRV). Following the war, when there were limits on the size of yachts Germans could own, *Sphinx* was sold to two club members with Chilean passports and a well-stocked woodyard, from which A&R built many boats for the club. In 1958, the naval college Mürwik acquired *Sphinx* and renamed her *Ostwind*. She was put up for auction by the college in 2005. Flensburg sailors Oliver Berking, Jochen Frank and Gorm Gondesen successfully bid for her; following restoration she was relaunched in May.

## HAKAHALA

A Knud Reimers-designed 6-Metre, D48 *Hakahala* had the distinction of being featured in Uffa Fox's 'Second Book'. She was built in Denmark in 1935 to represent Denmark in the Gold Cup. About four years ago she was described as "in a desperate state, lying partly uncovered" in a yard at Roskilde. Luckily Jan Mateboer of the Netherlands stepped in and after drying her out, started to get her back into correct shape. She went back into the water, with borrowed sails, this summer.

### **Hakahala**

Length 37ft 7in (11.5m)

LWL 23ft 4in (7.1m)

Beam 5ft 10in (1.8m)

Draught 5ft 3in (1.6m)



## KARENESA MOR

Of the various restoration projects completed this year at Butler & Co's Old Mill Boatyard, Dartmouth – they include the 60ft (18.3m) Boston smack *Spirit of Britannia* for the Trinity Sailing Trust and *Iris*, a 44ft (13.4m) Looe lugger built in 1921 – Ashley Butler has chosen *Karenasa Mor* to represent the yard's work. An unpretentious Padstow mackerel boat, 32ft and double-ended, she is now in private ownership and used mainly for recreation. Some 30 per cent of her hull – both frames and planks – needed replacing as well as her small deck. A new cuddy was also fitted.

### **Karenasa Mor**

Length 32ft (9.8m)

Beam 9ft (2.7m)

Draught 3ft (0.9m)



This year, the Fife regatta played a part in the timing of completions. No fewer than three Fifes appear in the review, all very different as projects. *Lucky Girl*, an 8-Metre was restored at the famous Fife specialist Fairlies, while another 8-Metre, *Ierne* was the product of a partnership between an enthusiastic owner, Huw

Jones, and his craftsman boatbuilder Joe Irving. The third Fife, and the smallest, *Ayrshire Lass*, brought together a team of all the talents, including owner Paul Goss, shipwright Michael Kennedy and advisors Theo Rye and Iain McAllister. We also have a Herreshoff (*Mistral*), an Olin Stephens (*Opposition*), two contrasting

Charles Nicholsons (*Merrymaid* and *Islay*), a Reimers (*Hakahala*), an Abeking & Rasmussen (*Sphinx*), a Harrison Butler (*Mayfly*) and a Dallimore (*Roach*). Special mention must be made of *Elf*, designed and built by a less familiar name, at least in the UK, George F Lawley, and subject of a 17-year restoration by Rick Carrion.

**Opposition**

Length 40ft 8in (12.4m)  
 LWL 31ft 8in (9.7m)  
 Beam 12ft 9in (3.9m)  
 Draught 6ft 11in (2.1m)



# OPPOSITION

Formerly *Morning Cloud II*, designed by Sparkman & Stephens for then prime minister Edward Heath, the amusingly-renamed *Opposition* returned in August 2007 to Clare Lallow's Cowes yard, where she was built in 1971, for a major restoration following some years in the Mediterranean. Planks, deck substrates and ribs all needed replacing. A single log of African mahogany, seasoned for four years, was used to replace all the topside planking and the transom, providing an immaculate varnished finish. Lallows' apprentices were given the chance to work on the boat and she was launched in time to take part in the Round the Island Race which, as *Morning Cloud*, she won in 1971.



**Mayfly**

Length 22ft (6.7m)  
 Beam 7ft 2in (2.2m)  
 Draught 3ft 9in (1.1m)

# MAYFLY

Believed to be the only double-ender designed by T Harrison Butler, the pretty bermudan cutter was built in 1936 by Walton Yacht and Launch Works on the Thames to his 1933 Pepin design. Based in the River Exe for over 30 years she was bought by retired local GP Dr Andrew Scott as a restoration project in 2007. The 106-year-old Topsham boatyard of W C Trout and Sons took on the job, the last before retirement for Mike Trout. Much of her teak deck structure had survived remarkably well, but the copper-fastened larch on oak hull had suffered badly from years of overcaulking. Complete refastening, glued splines and epoxy coating inside and out was the solution. The interior received a major rebuild and a new 9hp Yanmar engine; but above decks the original rig needed little work, except a lick of varnish and a new suit of sails.

# ROACH

"An attractive little yacht from the board of Mr Dallimore [with] a very nicely designed raised deck," according to *Cruising Hints* of 1948, the year *Roach*, a Burnham class sloop, designed for builder RJ Prior, was launched. Tudor Rose, her owner since 1996, has been gradually bringing her up to scratch by himself, with occasional help from 'the yard' (in this case Robertsons of Woodbridge), finally completing her interior this year. A stalwart of the *Classic Boat Forum*, Tudor has maintained a modest and very readable blog ([roach1948.blogspot.com](http://roach1948.blogspot.com)) about his progress.

**Roach**

Length 21ft (6.4m)  
 LWL 18ft (5.5m)  
 Beam 6ft 8in (2m)  
 Draught 3ft 9in (1.1m)



Sizes range from 21ft (6.4m) to 98ft (30m) and ages from 37 years (*Opposition*, 1971) to 121 years, (*Ayrshire Lass*, 1887). As for budgets, well, who knows? Most owners are decently coy, and their builders sensibly discreet, about revealing figures. Clearly, though, it's a lot and the impact of this work on coastal communities should

not be underestimated. Nor should the value in terms of skills and training, the benefit to tourism or the sheer exhilaration in seeing a beautiful creation fulfilling her destiny and performing as she was designed to do.

Restoration is almost always more costly and complex than new-build; in that sense it is the nobler course. All of the vessels

mentioned here, and the people involved with them, deserve our admiration. The winner will be announced at the London Boat Show. However 2009 is already upon us and we are keen to discover restorations that are due to be completed this year – so let us know and you could be shortlisted for our prestigious prize.

