

MARLIN SPIKE

Fall 2022

Number 36

MATTHEW
TURNER

\$7.95 (about the cost of a Ti Punch)





The Chimes

At the Gloucester Schooner Festival on Labor Day weekend, the principal topic of conversation was the recent announcement from the current owner and captain of *Victory Chimes*, Sam Sikkema.

"After long and careful consideration we have come to the difficult decision that 2022 will be *Victory Chimes*' last sailing season. Upcoming Coast Guard compliance, cost and availability of materials for upcoming maintenance, the lack of ability to haul the ship in Maine, and the losses of the 2020 season have all become a hill too big to climb.

"We are working diligently to find a new home for the vessel. I am optimistic that there will be a way for the ship to exist and continue to tell its story in a meaningful way for generations to come."

The schooner is currently listed by Artisan Boatworks, but without a price. Any purchase price, of course, would just be the first step on a long journey to secure the future of this iconic schooner.



Josh Rowan of *Hindu*, *Bloodhound*, and *Argo Navis* is banging the drum for the Rose Dorothea Cup, the race from Gloucester to Provincetown immediately following the Schooner Festival, and says he plans to bury a bottle of rum — good rum — in the sand at Long Point as a prize.

"If Gloucester happens on Sunday, it'll always be Monday. Any schooners going south have no excuse not to get up in the morning and do that part of the race. They don't even have to stay for the party! They can just keep on going through the Canal!

"For all the people that are going back to Maine, it's just a nine-hour, outta-your-way dogleg. Why not do that if you can?"

Fair Winds,

Michael Rutstein, Publisher



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Matthew Turner

How it's going

Call of the Sea's new brigantine Matthew Turner received her Coast Guard Certificate of Inspection during the first summer of the pandemic. Clearly, the timing could have been better, but Captain Adrian McCullough and his crew have persevered with a schedule of day sails while building a structure and culture that they're very happy with.

Marlinspike: Tell us a little bit about how Call of the Sea has weathered COVID, and how the *Matthew Turner* been used since she was launched.

Adrian McCullough: We got our COI during the pandemic, in July of 2020, and then just started doing socially distanced, just very careful three-hour day sails, just to try to generate some revenue. Obviously, it was a new build, and we were behind on funds and we had to survive somehow. I crewed the vessel up with some of my local Sausalito crew and just a couple friends from the Tall Ship industry and we made a go of it. We ended up having a pretty successful year! We had no COVID exposures and we made it through the season. So, there's that.

MS: How did your day-sail schedule match up with what you had anticipated doing in your first year of operation?

AM: The ship was built for coastal and blue water voyaging, but without being able to do overnight programming, we had to shift our focus to what we could do, based on the market conditions, which weren't very good. The schools weren't coming. Nobody was confident doing overnight programming out here in California. So we just had to make it up as we went along, basically doing mission-driven charters. We called them community sails, with some educational components to them, but essentially it was us selling tickets to get the ship moving, gain exposure and generate interest by having this beautiful ship sailing during the shutdown, and to at least pay the insurance and the staff, and just get the ship visible on the Bay.

MS: What were the educational components like?

AM: We do local history of California and the Bay

through telling the story of Matthew Turner. Turner came out for the gold rush, and he was a successful prospector. So it ties in really well with the story of early San Francisco, through this shipbuilder named Matthew Turner.

MS: The *Turner* is a fairly large, fairly complex vessel for running day sails. How did you find that worked out for you? Were you doing more than one a day?

AM: Mostly one a day, although in 2022 we are doing multi-sail days and overnights. And, you know, when we put the manning plan together, we built flexibility into it so that we could safely run with fewer crew, with reduced sail plans. I just got the manning down as much as I safely could, based on other vessel COIs. I looked at some vessels on the East Coast and here on the West Coast, mostly square riggers of comparable size. And then, you know, my Coast Guard inspector, who I'm good friends with, we took the ship out a number of times to see how it went with the numbers we were proposing, and they signed off on it.

MS: What does that COI look like?

AM: One captain and seven deckhands for a three-hour sail under full sail. We also have an oceans route with overnight accommodations.

MS: The Coast Guard must be comfortable with that diesel-hybrid system; they didn't try and drag an engineer into it.

AM: We don't have an official requirement for an engineer. I take care of the engineering. And I have other experienced people on board. Right now we have a crew of 12 and we always have a few licenses around with a lot of experience, so we can handle the engineering and the rigging and do a decent job of maintaining the vessel and operating safely and also voyage.

But we do have that flexibility, when there is a crew issue or when it's early in the season or late in the season, when people start falling off, and going off to their other gigs, we can still operate with a lower crew number.

MS: Is there a tradeoff? Do you need to not set your squares, or...?

AM: No tradeoff. It's just whatever we're comfortable with. I can set every sail on the ship with six deckhands. The tradeoff is that it's just a lot to handle and you have to have some experience. Having a good mate, and a couple of really solid, overqualified deckhands that can just get in there and do it for us.

MS: When you have a sexy boat and you're in a sexy place, sometimes sexy people just come out of the woodwork and do things for you.

AM: Yeah! We definitely do not have a crew issue. I've been lucky, Call of the Sea's been lucky. I've been in the industry for 25 years. And I do have a small list of friends that have not retired and gotten land-based jobs. And it's been really nice to work with people that I've known from the past, and they've referred some really great people my way. And we are fortunate to be the new sexy boat.

That's been helpful, but at some point, reality will kick in. So it's up to us, to maintain a good reputation for safety and for good maintenance practices and a good work culture in order to retain crew and to keep people wanting to come and work for us.

MS: How did you find the COI process with the Coast Guard? Did that go pretty smoothly?

AM: It was great. I loved it. But it was also tricky in the sense that there were so many unknowns. They don't have many other inspected passenger hybrid vessels. They only have one other inspected hybrid passenger ship in the area, and it is not a sailing ship. There are a couple hybrid ferries in the United States that they were able to look at, when it came to lithium battery safety and best practices and that sort of thing, but really we're on the frontier, we're pioneers. They were definitely relying on us to help find the best way forward.

MS: Did you find that the unfamiliarity was mostly about the systems, or was it about the vessel and the rig?

AM: Andy Davis from Tri-Coastal Marine designed the ship along with Peter Boudreau. They did *Pride of Baltimore II*, the schooner *Virginia*, a whole bunch of other vessels. They knew what they were doing when they designed *Matthew Turner*. I don't think the Coast Guard had much of an issue with the physicalities of the ship's design. What was tricky was the safety management systems and batteries and complex electrical systems that were unheard of on most of the

vessels in our fleet.

MS: Tell me about those systems and how do you feel, now you're a couple years in — how do you feel about the diesel-hybrid system?

AM: It's great. We don't burn fossil fuel. We burn renewable fuel, it's called R 99. It's a plant-based fuel that burns 80% cleaner than fossil fuel. So we've been able to reduce our carbon footprint. But those are just our generators. They're not connected to our propulsion. Our propulsion is designed by BAE [British Aerospace Engineering] through these electric traction motors that are connected directly to our lithium batteries. They're diesel generators, but we put a different kind of a fuel in them.

The specialty around the engineering component is mostly around battery management and how to address things like internal battery temperatures, external battery box temperatures, and charging and discharging rates. I'm learning a lot about how to manage the lithium-ion battery system, which was designed by Corvus. It's very interesting, way outside of the traditional skill set for an engineer or, you know, the tall ship world. That's exciting and it's given me a new skill set, one I've been able to share it with a few other people in the industry. So that's great. We're starting to share it with other people in the industry, that work on other vessels. They come in, they do two, three months with us, and they learn all about it.

MS: You would recommend it for new builds, for repowers, in our industry? You think this is the way to go?

AM: Well, it's definitely cleaner. And under sail, our propellers are specifically pitched so that they help us regenerate. Our propellers, they drag — they're inefficient in that sense — but they're designed to spin and to cause a certain amount of drag in order to turn our AC motors into essen-



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tially little turbines, but they don't drag and slow us down, which is really nice. They're designed to drag, but that drag does not really impede our speed or our performance greatly.

MS: What do they look like?

AM: They're three feet in diameter. They are three-bladed, so they actually don't look much different than any other propeller, but there are some nuances to the way that they've been shaped and I can't really speak to that, but I know it works! When we're under full sail at nine knots of boat speed, we can regenerate nine kilowatts of power per hour. So theoretically, when we're underway off-shore or running down the coast, we're pretty self-sufficient if we're managing our energy consumption adequately.

MS: You've got good breezes in the Bay, right? So I would think that even during a day sail, you probably see it kick it in some serious juice.

AM: Oh yeah. There are improvements that could and will be made, and there are some nuances to the design, and we're learning some of the shortcomings of the system. You know: if we were to do it again, what would we do differently? But for the most part, it's been a really interesting and successful experience.

MS: Tell me about your crew.

AM: I am the full-time port captain — senior captain, I suppose you would call me — and I have hired three other people over the last 3 years to help me: Cassie Sleeper, Rebecca Johnson, and Emma Hathaway, all people I've known for years and have a ton of respect for. They each bring professionalism and individual unique approaches to organizing and running the vessel and setting the tone. Because of the complexities of the vessel, relief captains first sail as mates to learn the system. Obviously, they have driven other vessels, so they come and learn the engineering and sea-handling perspective first. And with that under their belts, they are able to successfully run the ship and give me time to work on project planning and other support roles, as

well as some time off.

MS: That's quite a collection of talent. We've interviewed both Cassie and Emma for the magazine, when they were working elsewhere in the fleet.

AM: And they all have good reputations. The most important thing to me is having a culture of safety and an inclusive work environment, from a cultural perspective. Last year our crew were 90% female identifying and non-binary. This year we have a few more male-identifying but we have a really diverse culture onboard and that has been a rewarding and learning experience for me. It's also been good at bringing in some awesome talent from other organizations who recognize that this is a place that we can be who we are and thrive.

MS: I would think that for some of your crew, one of the reasons they've gathered around is because they're hoping that the *Turner* will begin running the kind of longer-term programs that she was designed for. What kind of progress are you making towards that?

AM: Sure — she was built to go to Tahiti!

Seaward, our other vessel, has been running down the coast. She did all the Monterey and mid-coast stuff this year. *Matthew Turner*, we've been doing more Farallon Islands, Drakes Bay, Half Moon Bay trips. So we go out the Gate, but mostly we're serving the local community in San Francisco Bay.

We have a lot of supporters that helped finance and otherwise promote the building of the vessel over the last 10 years. So it's important for us to serve that local community with *Matthew Turner*, as much as we can, before we disappear to other places, you know? *Matthew Turner's* not going to go to Mexico this winter, we're going to haul out and then we're going to finish building out the interior spaces of the ship, which have not been completed yet, to prepare for voyaging next year. We'll send *Seaward* down to Mexico this winter instead.



"It's a mid- to late-1800s style rig, based on Matthew Turner's vessel Galilee, which was built in 1891 and set the sailing record from San Francisco to Papeete in 19 days, a record that still holds. It is rigged in a late square-rigger style, very loyal to Matthew Turner's style of rigging and the other vessels of its era."

— Adrian McCullough

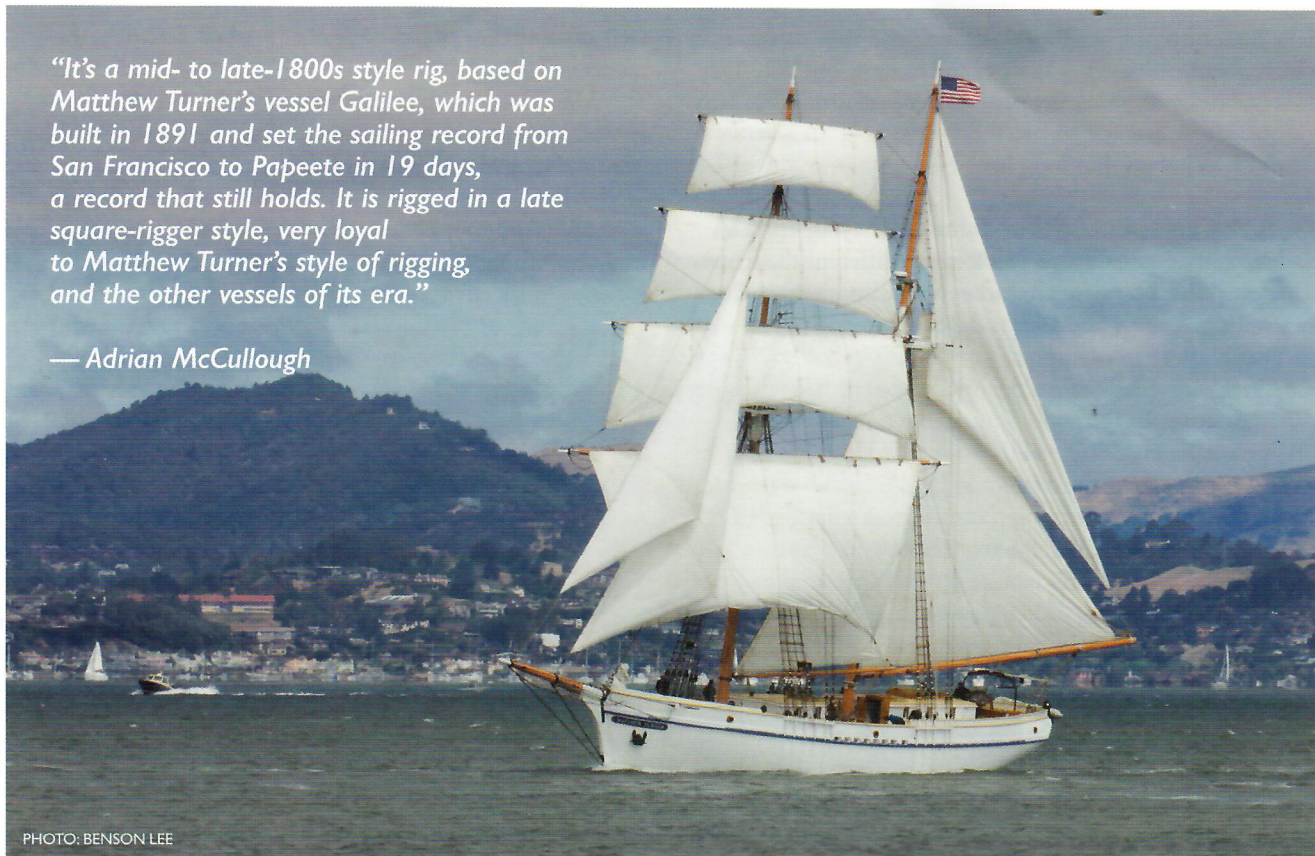


PHOTO: BENSON LEE

MS: Educational Tall Ship and Call of the Sea raised a lot of money for the build, and were very successful in that aspect. But I've noticed that with many organizations, once the boat gets launched, fundraising has a tendency to slow down. I wonder, is it financially viable for the Turner to stay home and run programming? Or is it financially important for you to get out on the high seas at some point?

AM: Well, this is only my perspective, as someone who is mainly on the quarter deck. I'm sure there are colleagues and board members who would have opinions on that! But I do work closely with everybody above me. And I think that most would agree there is a big market in the Bay Area of underserved communities and people that don't have access to the water. Schools, community groups, that aren't going anywhere. We could sail them around in San Francisco Bay, and I think it would be financially viable, and it is very important to our mission.

I understand that voyaging equals success in the minds of many sailing people. But if you think about it, in the North American tall ship fleet, there's really only a handful of vessels that actually voyage internationally, that are going thousands of miles or even hundreds of miles. Only a few organizations that I know of are set up to successfully manage that. Being able to run up and down the coast and service our local community here in the Bay Area, I think that's really going to be our bread and butter. I think that we would be able to change some lives and serve our mission by bringing a select group of people on longer voyages. However, I

don't necessarily think it would benefit under-represented people, because it costs money to do voyages like that. Small-scale, high-impact voyaging — seven-day, five-day voyages — I think that's really where the impact is.

MS: Tell us about sailing the boat. How do you find her sailing qualities? Such an interesting rig. I imagine with the wind that you have in that area, you're probably not setting the topsails or the ringtail all the time, but maybe you are!

AM: I do have a reputation for setting a lot of sail. I'm really comfortable sailing the ship. I know what she's capable of. In 20 to 25 knots, our standard summer breezes, I'll set the upper and lower topsails, all the fore-and-afts... we do have some weather helm. I have a reef in the main right now, which is not conducive to setting the ringtail.

The ship heels over — it sails like a much smaller vessel. We get 16 or 18 degrees of heel. When we get new sailors on board, they're kind of shocked. They're not used to ships heeling over like that. It feels like I'm sailing my folkboat or something. It goes over to that sweet spot and it just stays there and charges along. We very frequently sail over 10 knots, 10, 11, 11.5 knots is pretty common for us. It's a joy!

MS: Tell me you have some pictures of her heeled over.

AM: Yeah. I can send you a couple photos. But I'm not laying it on thick when I say that — the ship heels over and it sails fast and it's exciting! That's the other thing that helps

us retain crew, especially in the summer when there's so many options for people to go sailing on other vessels. We're doing these three-hour day sails most of the time with a short voyage sprinkled in, but they are just packed full of sail-handling, we're short-tacking, we're wearing, all across the Bay at pretty high speeds. And the crew loves it. They get a lot of experience.

While it's not always bluewater sailing right now, as we

navigate the pandemic and learn the personality of a newly-constructed vessel, I think the crew is building confidence because they can see the capability and strength of *Matthew Turner* and what the ship can do, and the crew can see the potential. And yeah, it's pretty exciting. And it's new.

Obviously I am prudent and I maintain that high standard for safety and make good decisions when it comes to managing weather and sail plans. That is never compromised, ever.

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MS: Those squares do set you apart from the other sailing options that are available in the Bay.

AM: That is true. Yeah. It's rigged traditionally, all Vintage, New England Ropes. All rigged out of Underhill's book. It's a mid- to late-1800s style rig, based of course on Matthew Turner's vessel *Galilee*, which was built in 1891 and set the sailing record from San Francisco to Papeete in 19 days, a record that still holds. It is rigged in a late square-rigger style, very loyal to Matthew Turner's style of rigging, and the other vessels, brigantines, of its era.

MS: What would those shrouds have looked like when she was built in the 1890s? Would they have been galvanized wire?

AM: Yeah, absolutely. It's all galvi wire, it's traditional. That's the other thing, we've had a couple of great folks that we really enjoyed working with. I've had Jamie White work with me quite a lot. Courtney Anderson's done some work with us and yeah, it's a great rig. It's quite authentic. We've had to make a few little modifications as we sail the vessel: we're chasing some chafe, you know, we've had to tighten some things up. I know there's a lot of opinions about the *Matthew Turner* rig. But I think it's beautiful.

Definitely a West Coast style. *Matthew Turner* eliminated the gaff main, got that weight out of the rig, because they were just doing these big broad reaches, downwind runs. And so he just eliminated it, with what would later become a Marconi. It was actually a really smart decision. It's a great design, but I know it goes against what some people deem aesthetically pleasing, because they're used to something different.

MS: Sterling Hayden says the same thing in *Wanderer*, about sailing in the light trades and the swell of the South Pacific and not wanting to have those gaffs banging around.

AM: Exactly. Yeah. We wear ship. We gybe all the time out there and we don't have to worry about the gaffs. It's great. We can do these nice

fast, tight tacks and wears, it's really handy.

MS: The first time she heeled over, the heeling that you're describing — did any part of your anatomy retract or pucker?

AM: Oh no. We did all these sea trials, where we incrementally added sails.

I remember vividly, adding to our sail plan as we went, slowly adding complexity, until one day we had 11 sails up and an all-volunteer crew. We're looking up and seeing like how it's going and getting people up in the rig, looking for chafe, and it's funny — I can't identify at what point where we were just like, "Okay, it's finished."

The rig was done, we put a stamp of approval on it, but I don't remember a day when that was the official thing.

MS: There was no moment where you were like, "Whoa, that's not what I expected."

AM: There was a time out in the middle of the Bay on a Friday night, and the boat rounded up and heeled over and really dug in for the first time. I probably had a little too much sail up for that kind of a gust. And it was amazing.

There were a few little moments like that, but they weren't sustained. They were just these moments, you know, where we're like, "OK, now we know what *that* feels like!"

MS: Apart from the sailing of the boat, what have been some of the challenges you've faced in breaking this boat out of the yard during a pandemic?

AM: I think one of the biggest challenges was that we had no documentation. We had to create that.

It was the middle of the pandemic, and there was really no crew living on board. We had no daily, weekly, or monthly checklists. We had no daily duties for crew. We didn't have any engineering logs. We didn't have anything! Like, zero! It was just this big piece of sailing furniture, just a clean slate.

That's when I used some of my resources and hired a few of my friends from the East Coast to come out and help me implement some good documentation so that we could start running. We just needed some guiding principles on deck on a day-to-day basis. All the things that we take for granted on the boats we've worked with over the years. We had none of that, and we had to create it with the best practices from other places that we've worked.

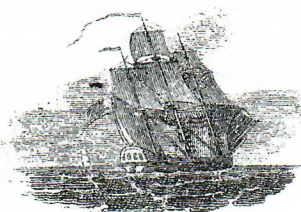
And now we're pretty set. There's a lot of people that want in, I would say. I guess as things come back to life, people could get other opportunities, but in the last year, the number of inquiries and requests and things has been quite high. So it's all good, it's all going great, and we just really want to protect and extend the culture we've managed to establish here. ☼

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