

[Return to index](#)

A Paneristi.com exclusive: The Story of Eilean

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Restoration and rebirth of a classic yacht

Ten years of ideas: the Officine Panerai workshop

Introduction to the world of classic yachts

The story of the Fife Boatyard

The characteristics of boats like Eilean

The story of Eilean

Eilean's rediscovery and transfer

The restoration of Eilean

The Francesco Del Carlo Boatyard in Viareggio

Eilean: an instrument for bringing people together

Eilean - Technical Specifications



TEN YEARS OF IDEAS: THE OFFICINE PANERAI WORKSHOP

In March of ten years ago, the then Vendôme Group, now Richemont, acquired the branch of Officine Panerai concerned with Watches, Compasses, Depth Gauges and Precision Optical Instruments. Also acquired along with the branch was the brand Officine Panerai, while the previous organization was called Panerai Sistem.

In the 1930s Officine Panerai was official supplier to the Italian Navy of sophisticated, high precision devices. Amongst the multitude of ideas and instruments realized, a special range of watches was created specifically designed for use in extreme and highly risky conditions.

Since 1993 these special and secret military watches have been made available to the general public in limited editions under the original brands Lunissa and Mare Nostrum. The acquisition of Panerai from the Vendôme Group has underlined the turning-point of the Brand consecrating Panerai, through an international launch, as Brand of sport watchmaking with high quality.

A long voyage then, and one full of ideas, reflecting the values that Panerai has held since its origin. Values of ideas, values of men and women, values of a city, Florence, international home and point of reference of craftsmanship, creativity and a taste for beautiful things.

Ten years ago an idea emerged to put together a watch with an unusual and yet authentic shape, with an extraordinary testimonial, Sylvester Stallone - but no brand existed.

What has been accomplished in these ten years is recent history:

- a research and development company called Officine Panerai Marketing & Comunicazione, with the aim of promoting the original, all-Italian project, thus giving the brand a long-term international opening that reflects Panerai's original identity and authenticity;
- a distribution network that is highly selective and professional: 450 points of sale;
- the opening of five boutiques situated in the most important international venues:
 Florence
 Portofino
 Hong Kong
 Los Angeles
 Shanghai;
- the Manifattura in Neuchâtel, which today boasts qualified craftsmen and specialist watchmakers capable of operating at the highest levels. The Manifattura has the most highly advanced and technological systems to ensure the utmost quality of the manufacturing process;
- a technical research centre for materials and movements which uses the most advanced technologies;
- the creation and production of a range of five watch movements which already boasts more than 10 exclusive patents. This range of



movements means the presentation of at least one new and innovative calibre each year;

- *recruitment of a specialised workforce for the new needs*

Today Officine Panerai is able to announce the first four Panerai calibres:

- *P.2002 8 Days GMT: manual winding.*
- *P.2003 10 Days GMT: automatic mechanical.*
- *P.2004 8 Days GMT Chrono Monopulsante: manual winding.*
- *P.2005 6 Days GMT Tourbillon: manual winding.*

These four movements are destined to power Panerai's creations in the future, watches with values that will be increasingly appreciated among collectors and among those who make daily use of their watch as instrument of quality that lasts over time. Following ten years of intense activity, of ideas, here is a new brand:

OFFICINE PANERAI



INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF CLASSIC YACHTS

Eilean is a classic yacht built in 1936 and launched in 1937. The boat was purchased in 2007 by the Florentine fine watchmaker Officine Panerai, with roots going back to 1860 and today the main sponsor of the circuit of regattas known as the Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge. The first Panerai watch prototype was created in 1936, in the same year of Eilean's birth.

But what exactly is a classic yacht? In simple terms it is a vessel, sail or engine-propelled, almost exclusively wood-built, with several decades of life behind it. While it is not rare to come across century-old craft, such as the fin keel named Bona Fide from 1899, it is far more difficult to find vessels that have reached 150 years of age since their launch. An example in the Mediterranean is the auric cutter of English origins named Sorella from 1858, still fully-rigged and in perfect sailing condition.

According to A.I.V.E., the Italian Association of Vintage Yachts founded in 1982, boats classed as 'vintage' are those built of wood or metal prior to 1950. If built after 1950 and up to 1975, they are defined as "Classic". To these two categories we can add a third, the so-called "Spirit of Tradition", vessels that for reasons of design or construction, also if made of fibreglass or other materials, have a connection with nautical traditions. These include "New Classic", sailing or motor boats built taking inspiration from past designs, from which they closely follow the waterlines, shapes, deck and interior layouts. For over ten years, a number of boatyards around the world have ventured into the reconstruction of this type of boat, to the delight of a growing army of boatowners in love with the "old style".

For a quarter of a century in Italy, France and Japan people discovered these old craft when they, abandoned in ports or left in decaying buildings, were on the verge of becoming firewood. From that moment on, a kind of hunt began that led numerous aspiring boat-owners to reappraise vintage boats abandoned in bilge ways, half-sunk at some mooring or submerged in river mud. Without offering up the least resistance of an emotional nature they allowed themselves to be swept away by the beauty of these near-lost vessels, by their lines, sturdiness and sailing value, their history of victories in regattas or circumnavigations of the globe, their having belonged to personalities from the worlds of finance, politics and entertainment, but also because they were designed and/or created by undisputed masters of yacht design like American Nathaniel Herreshoff, Englishmen Camper & Nicholson or the generation of Scottish designers and builders, Fife of Fairlie. Eilean is truly the brainchild of the design genius and construction skill of this family.



THE STORY OF THE FIFE BOATYARD

Legendary - there is no more appropriate term to define this Scottish boatyard where, in over a century of production between the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, some of the most beautiful and prestigious sailing boats in the world were designed and launched. Many of these vessels, having undergone major restoration over the years, still sail today in perfect condition on all the world's seas. Eilean will shortly be joining this already long list.

Three generations of Fifers have taken turns at the tiller of the boatyard and all the family heads have borne the name of William. William Fife I, son of the farmer and mill builder John Fife was born in 1785 in Fairlie, a village on the estuary of the river Clyde, near Glasgow.

Both he and the later William lived and worked here. William I first turned his hand to making small cargo and fishing boats, later moving on to so-called pleasure and regatta yachts such as Lansab and the victorious Glean. These were above all auric cutters, distinguished by a vertical bon, and pronounced stern overhangs. However, small steamers and cargo boats were also produced. With the passing of time William, as a true self-taught man, also ventured into design, considering that in the early nineteenth century boats were mainly built by taking the dimensions from wooden models or judging by eye. The production and style of the boats by the first Fife, who passed away in 1865, in any case left their mark, so much so that the boatyard never stopped receiving orders for new boats.

In 1821 William Fife II was born. Energetic and talented, at thirteen he began working as an apprentice in the family boatyard, at nineteen he had already gained experience in design and at twenty-seven, thanks to

the success of Stella, a "40-ton class" he designed, he had won a place among the great names of British designers. Over the next sixty years and practically up to his death in 1902, William II launched a long series of yachts including Cytha, Cinderella, Fiona and Neva, which contributed to building the fame of the boatyard. In particular, Blood Hound from 1874 competed in regattas until 1922 when it was broken up. It was said of William II that he was astute and able, a skilled administrator and a clever manager.

And so we come to William Fife III, known as 'Junior', the most renowned member of the dynasty as his name is associated with the most recent and exciting era of yachting. Born in 1857, his life was long and remarkable. Indeed, he died in 1944, not without leaving an indelible impression on the history of world boat design. The stylized dragon, carved on the bow of his vessels represents still today an unmistakable trademark.

William III began his career designing small 5 and 10-ton class cutters such as Clio and Fulga before moving on to the 40-ton boats Slenth Hound and Amanama, the former distinguished by cant sections and a rounded bon. Later on came the enormous 30-metre cutter Erycina, the 19-metre multiple winner Clara and the innovative Minerva. He also designed numerous cruising and other craft, and even a steam yacht 25 metres long that was built in Australia. The cutter Ailsa from 1894, which sailed between Great Britain and the Cote d'Azur, reached 40 metres in length, while the 40-ton Escharia was launched incredibly just six weeks after being laid down. In the early twentieth century, Fife's fame had spread worldwide. William III's boats had become well known for their beauty, construction techniques and finishing. Much prestige was achieved in 1902 with the design of the schooner Geely, which competed, sometimes winning, against Meteor III, owned by the German Emperor. In addition, Fife built Shamrock I and Shamrock III for the



English tea magnate Thomas Lipton, which attempted five times, though unsuccessfully, to snatch the America's Cup from the Americans. The Cup, founded in 1851 is still today the oldest sporting trophy in the world.

In 1907, with the foundation of the so-called "metric" classes, various series of regatta boats were born, many of them still existing in the present day. Among the most well-known of these, still sailing, are the 12-metre S.I. (International Tonnage) Centra (1909) and Junity V (1916), the 19-metre S.I. Marquise (1923), the 25-metre S.I. Cambria (1928), the 15-metre S.I. Taiga (1909), today owned by Prince Albert II of Monaco, the 10-metre S.I. Torino (1911) and the 8-metre S.I. boats Falmar (1930) and Osborne (1929). It is important to remember that the numbers above do not indicate the length of the boat but rather are the result of a precise tonnage formula. Although the design was always Fife's handiwork, the construction of some of these boats was carried out by other boatyards.

In the mid-1930s, a now elderly William III, who never married, worked alongside his nephew Robert Balderton Fife, representing the fourth generation who never achieved a professional level to equal that of his illustrious predecessors. Shortly after the end of the Second World War, the boatyard closed. From that moment on the legend of the Fifers and their boats defined as "fast and bonnie" was born.

Today the waters are filled with many of these so-called Fifers, boats given a new lease of life thanks to passionate boat-owners from around the world, enchanted by the beauty of their lines. The remarkable list begins by necessity from the so-called 'eighteen-hundreds'. From the famous Pen Duick (1898), of the much nursed French sailing hero Eric

Tubarly (although the boat was rebuilt in fibreglass over the old hull which acted as the mould), to the 8-metre Yvette (1899), practically a Shamrock in miniature, Nam of Fife (1896), the little Jap of 1897, a rare example of a CHOD (Cork Harbour One-Design), or Iona from 1899.

Amongst the other boats more famous on the Mediterranean circuit are the 32-metre schooner Altair (1931), Belle Aventure (1929), and the very elegant Cho (ex-Sheeva) of 1921, which was the personal boat of William III himself. Special mention should go to the Bermudian yacht of 22 metres, Lanja from 1936, which made a number of great ocean voyages including a circumnavigation of the globe. Apart from an unusual but anyway original canoe stern, it shares a number of similarities with Eilean, both in the type of craft it is and in the layout of the deck plan and interiors. And then there is Kentra, an auric ketch (1923), Halloween (1926) which its designer described as 'a gem', Merry Dancer (1938), design number 814, Moonbeam III (1903) and Moonbeam IV (1914). This last vessel, actually launched six years after its construction due to the outbreak of the First World War, belonged to Prince Rainier III of Monaco, who had his honeymoon on board with Princess Grace. And finally, Navarra (1936), Solway Maid (1940), the fast cruiser Sunbeam (1914), The Lady Anne (1912) - and here we must end.

Once the restoration is completed, Eilean will also join the great family of Fifers still sailing, despite its unglamorous origins. Indeed, it should be remembered that this 'old lady of the seas' was not conceived to be a regatta, on the contrary it was created as Ocean Cruiser, and she crossed the Atlantic ocean about 36 times. It remains in any case as living testimony to the vast production of the Scottish boatyard.



THE CHARACTERISTICS OF BOATS LIKE EILEAN

A long, continuous keel, sinuous lines, well-proportioned forms. These are just some of the distinctive features of vessels like Eilean, characteristic of an era of yachting that no longer exists and that only in the last quarter of a century have been rediscovered and re-evaluated. Simply looking at Eilean, even without knowing anything about its history, means immersing oneself in an age-old tradition of naval architecture. Seen out of water, the stateliness of the portion of the hull below the waterline emerges. The ample 'water' surfaces and the bulging appearance, especially when compared to recent generations of yacht hulls, adds to conveying a sense of sturdiness and solidity.

But it is most certainly the construction technique that is worthwhile reflecting on. Eilean was, and still is today, realized in composite. What do we mean by this? That the planking in Burma teak, the "skin" of the boat, is fixed onto a skeleton composed of frames, floor timbers, beams and metal rather than wooden reinforcements. The entire hull is thus composed of two materials, which although very different from each other, could and still can be easily assembled together. For a certain period of his life in fact, William Fife III worked in a boatyard where he learned the 'secrets' of this building technique, in any case not new in those years. We need only remember that also the famous 85-metre clipper Cutty Sark, launched in England in 1869 to a design by Hercules Linton, was built in composite.

Also the Eilean's ballast system, made up of an external lead section applied to the bar keel with bronze silicon pins, dates back to a construction method typical of the era. In cruise boats built up to the end

of the nineteenth century, instead, the ballast was almost exclusively made up of lead blocks placed in the bilge and then cemented. The stability and listing of the boat when at sea depended greatly on this weight, notably located at the lowest point of the hull with the primary aim of lowering its barycentre.

The elegance of a vintage yacht such as the Eilean, that appears to adhere to the Fife philosophy of "if it's beautiful, it's right", also emerges from other characteristics: the pronounced overhangs of the bow and stern, a harmonious sheer (the line of the lateral profile running fore and aft), the small, raked transom (on which the name of the boat is inscribed).

The sail-plan is that of a Bermudian ketch, with two masts onto which two triangular mainsails are hoisted. This sail-plan, so called following the development that occurred during the 1920s in the Bermuda islands, is also known as Marconi, since when it is stripped of the sails it resembles the primitive radio equipment used by radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi. In a ketch, the taller or foremast is called the mainmast, while the shorter one at the bow is called the mizzenmast. If the latter is located forward, the boat is a ketch; if on the other hand it is located aft, it is a yawl. Apart from the mainmast and mizzen sail, hoisted onto their respective masts, Eilean can also expose windward a foremast staysail, a jib and a broadside moonrail on the bowsprit, the sturdy wooden beam stretching out beyond the bow. These sails are known as the bow sails.

So what are the other advantages of a ketch? That of having a split sail-plan, with two smaller mainsails, lighter and more manageable compared to a boat of similar length with a single mast (such as a sloop or cutter). In addition it is also possible to hoist a further triangular sail



between the two masts, called a mizzen staysail, useful in broad sailing tries. Finally, in the case of dismastment, the ketch sail-plan allows the only remaining mast to be used for efficient sailing propulsion to reach the nearest port for repairs.

The Eilean's main deck has features very similar to a large proportion of the boats of that era. The ample walkways enable the crew to move fore and aft without meeting obstacles. Deckhouses and skylights, well-proportioned and set out neatly along the middle line, emerge from the deck profile almost discreetly, in harmony with a certain aesthetic taste and without compromising the boat's elegant lines. Lastly, the deck rigging, essential and functional and installed only where really necessary, has an almost neutral feel. And so we move below deck.

Eilean will have three double cabins and a crew's quarters located at the bow, in addition to bathrooms, the galley, a large wardrobe, the chart room and an engine room. The interior layout will closely follow the original one. The furniture and partitioning bulkheads will be made of mahogany. Unfortunately, termites had completely destroyed the old interiors and none of them could be saved.

Finally, we come to the engine propulsion. There are no cruise vessels of this size that do not have an inboard engine, essential for manoeuvres in port or putting forward at sea in case of lack of wind. When Eilean was built, the engine was mounted and the axle of the propeller was offset by 13 degrees compared to the longitudinal axis.

This was always the cause of reduced efficiency and greater stress on the rudder helm. Today, Eilean will have two engines. Why this choice? The poor manoeuvrability of these long-keeled boats is well known, especially in proximity to moorings on a quay, in narrow waters or in

strong wind. Dual engines not only solve this problem, but also avoid the need to shape and reduce the surface of the rudder blade to clear the way for a single central propeller. Furthermore, when the sails are damaged, in rough seas that push the boat towards the coast leeward, two engines could ensure the extra propulsion needed to move away from danger. Finally, yet importantly, should one engine break down, the second one would continue to ensure the boat's navigation



THE STORY OF EILEAN

So it was that in 1937 a boat was launched into the sea from the Fife boatyard in Fairlie, a 22-metre yacht called Eilean, which in the Scottish means "little island". The boat, design number 822, was conceived by the then eighty-year-old William Fife III, alongside his nephew Robert Balderton Fife who had only recently joined the family business. According to the Lloyds Register of 1938, both names appeared among the designers of the boat. Also specified in the Register, apart from the main dimensions, were the Bermudian ketch sail-plan, which remains unchanged up to the present day, the presence of a 4-cylinder paraffin engine and a sail set made by sail-makers Ratsey of the Isle of Wight.

Eilean, narrow at the waterline and with a masted located towards the rear, featured waterlines resulting from a study of J-Class boats, used in the Thirties to compete in the America's Cup. The boat's first owners were brothers James V. and Robert W. Fiddis of Greenock, members of the Royal Gourock Yacht Club.

The family were already owners of the ketch Belle Adventure, another Fife from 1929 originally with an auric sail-plan, converted to a Bermudian ketch in 1937, again following a Fife design. Belle Adventure is still sailing today and takes part in classic yacht meetings. It appears that the new vessel was used by the Fiddis to cross the strait separating the residence in which they lived from their place of work. Not being regatta competitors, James and Robert did not take part in major yacht races, in contrast to Eilean's near twin, Laila which, designed and launched by Fife in 1936, would distinguish herself by taking part in important regattas such as the Fastnet. Further proof, if proof was needed, of the validity of the type of hull and the design developed by William III.

As we can see from documents of the era, dated 22nd April 1936, Eilean was conceived as a simple boat, far from concepts related to luxury. In the pre-war period, in fact, both labour and material costs had risen greatly. The shipbuilding industry had suffered as a consequence, and to ensure some building orders, boatyards offered their customers less sumptuous fittings.

Destiny ordained that the two Fiddis brothers would use the boat for only a couple of years, after which they left for war, fought and died. From that moment on and up to the late Seventies little is known about the destinations and journeys made by Eilean. The only certain record we have is a sterile list of former owners, to whom we can give credit for having carried ownership of the boat up to the present day. In 1951, the Lloyds Register recorded the owner of the ketch as Mr. P.H.N. Ulander of Busby, Lanarkshire, in 1952 it belonged to Jack Salem of Cheshire and in 1955 it was registered to Yacht Eilean Ltd owned by Colonel Frank Louis, who kept it until 1963.

In 1964, the owner was Lord Shawcross Q.C. and in 1968, it passed to Ernest and Richard Cockson. Amongst the former owners it seems to be an important member of the British Labour Party, who even used Eilean during the election campaign, as well as an American businessman whose daughter became famous with the nickname "daddy's got a million dollars". From 1976, the ketch ceases to appear in the records.

And so we arrive at Eilean's more recent history, which in the Seventies saw the boat based in the Caribbean, first at Saint Thomas in the Virgin Islands, and later in Antigua. At that time, the boat had been acquired by the English architect John Shearer, a native of Kenya. John had called on Eilean as a boy, since an uncle of his had been her captain.



When he learned that the yacht had been put on sale, he did not hesitate to purchase her. The architect decided to make Eilean his residence, transforming her into one of the most elegant charter vessels in the Caribbean Sea. For more than twenty years, the boat was based at the English Harbour, an inlet on the Caribbean island of Antigua. From here, the yacht sailed on regular cruises between the islands with a maximum of six guests on board, assisted by two or three crew members. In 1982, images of Eilean travelled around the world. In that year the yacht was chartered by the famous pop group Duran Duran, captained by teen idol Simon Le Bon, to shoot the video for the song "Rio", included on the album of the same name, one of the British band's best selling records.

During what can be described as one of the most thrilling periods in the yacht's history, Shearer made some 14 Atlantic crossings between the Caribbean and Europe, many of them single-handed. However, during one of these voyages, after leaving Scotland, Eilean collided with a ferry off the Portuguese coast, breaking the mizzenmast. John did not lose heart and, after recovering the fragments of the rigging onto deck, continued in his voyage. It was this event that made him realize just how much his beloved ketch was in need of major maintenance work. John, a man of extraordinary learning and ability, but with limited financial means, decided not to entrust the work to a boatyard, but rather to carry out everything himself.

Upon reaching the Caribbean he re-floated an old tugboat sunk off the island of Montserrat, brought it to the English Harbour at Antigua and moved it beside Eilean. The tugboat, equipped with welders, lathe and cutters, would become his new home as well as personal floating workshop. After dismantling the interiors of the ketch, the restoration

work began. Since purchasing the steel for the frame would be too expensive, John decided to recycle the tug's fuel tanks, which were cut and shaped to create the new rib structure of the boat. With great skill, he also forged a large part of the rigging and deck equipment.

In 1993, the restoration work underway on the Eilean appeared in a French documentary called "Les derniers pirates de la liberté" (the last pirates of freedom), which told the stories of remarkable individuals. John surely was one of them, due to the enterprise he had undertaken. Among the other people interviewed was the Florentine sailor Enrico 'Chico' Zaccagni, who at that time was living on board the ketch Alzavola from 1934, sailing between the Caribbean and Mediterranean seas. Today Zaccagni, having abandoned the wandering life of a sailor because, as he himself admitted "no longer able to give up a life of human affection and ordinary, decadent, middle-class desires that I have diminished for too long", has become a successful consultant in the sector of classic yacht restoration. And it is thanks to the experience gained in the field, and after having overseen the revival of vintage boats such as the 23-metre Magda XIII from 1937, the Norwegian gentleman racer Kiparis, also from 1937 and the previously mentioned Alzavola, since sold to a new owner, that Zaccagni has been given the job of project manager of the restoration of Eilean.

Who can say if John Shearer too ever had doubts about the life he was leading. But the fact is the years passed by and the work seemed without end. That which was new yesterday fell once more prey to rust today. To this was added Eilean's partial sinking due to a mooring bit breaking, a termite infestation that ate through the hogsprit, half of the mainmast and mizzenmast, but fortunately not the teak planking, which was saved thanks to the oiliness of this wood.



All circumstances that would have broken even the most passionate of idealists. On the contrary, John kept going and did what he could, but the war and his titanic dream to revive Eilean were abandoned to a lonely existence.

The architect did everything in his power, and to make ends meet took temporary command of a number of boats, including the 24-metre yawl Mariella, also built in 1938 at the Fife boatyard, but to a design by Alfred Mylne.

In 2007 the boat would be definitively sold to the fine watch-making company Officine Panerai. For her a new life would begin, but above all that much desired revitalisation, unfortunately only dreamed of for over twenty years by architect-sailor John Shearer.



EILEAN'S REDISCOVERY AND TRANSFER

Practically a wreck, damaged by the negligence of time and poor maintenance, half-overrun by rat. This is how Eilean appeared to May 2006 to the eyes of a small team flying out to the Caribbean to inspect the boat. The group was made up of Angelo Bosati, Managing Director of Officine Panerai and sailing passionate, Guido Del Carlo, one of the partners in the boatyard of the same name in Viareggio founded in 1963, specializing in the salvage of vintage wooden boats, and Florentine yachtsman Enrico 'Chicco' Zaccagni, renowned consultant in restoration of vintage boats.

Eilean floated idly next to the rigboat-workshop she had spent so many years alongside, with the mooring cables tied to mangrove bushes, stripped of its masting, with the starboard split, the keel dismantled, the deck fixtures useless and the interiors emptied out by the current owner who had been attempting for twenty years to undertake a restoration that he never completed. Once the transfer of ownership was made official, arrangements were made to transport the boat to Italy.

In its then unrigged state, the ketch would never have been able to make the Atlantic crossing, particularly along such a notoriously demanding route and with contrary winds like those from America to Europe. And so to the solution - to send Eilean on board a cargo ship as if it were a large mail parcel.

In December 2006, Eilean was thus towed by sea for approximately 150 miles from Antigua to the island of Martinique. As a precautionary measure, the two-mast craft had been filled with air balloons, to ensure a sufficient flotation reserve in case of significant water seepage or

worse still, to prevent sinking. Once it arrived in Martinique the vessel was loaded onto a ship specializing in the collective transport of boats which, in February 2007 and following a voyage of approximately 4000 miles, offloaded her at Genoa's Viotri port. From here it was placed back in the water and towed to the Francesco Del Carlo Boatyard in Viareggio, which in the meantime had received the commission to restore her.



THE RESTORATION OF EILEAN

In February 2007, Eilean therefore passed through the gates of the boatshed in Via Pescatori belonging to the Francesco Del Carlo Boatyard of Viareggio. The team charged by Officine Panerai with revitalizing the boat was, and still is, made up of Guido Del Carlo and his workmen, Enrico Zaccagnù as Project Manager, and technical consultant Riccardo Valentini. The drawing up of the new design plans was entrusted to the studio of Sergio Landini and Federica Micelli in Florence.

The dismantlement operations began immediately. The boat was stripped of everything: the interiors emptied out, deckhouse, skylights, the old and battered teak deck, equipment and engine. Once the coats of paint covering the hull were removed and the entire planking returned to the bare wood, Eilean was ready for inspection. Decisions had to be made about what to preserve and what to replace. Unfortunately, few of the old metal frames, in pure British iron from the period, could be saved. The same fate awaited a small number of the teak planks, which due to the rotting suffered over time, had to be removed. From the very outset, it proved to be a long and painstaking job, beginning with the partial replacement of the teak stempost and continuing with the overhaul of the pins of the lead ballast weighing approximately 16 tons (found in perfect conditions).

The 48 frames that ran fore and aft were removed and replaced one by one with newly manufactured ones. It was impossible to dismantle them all together: the vessel, completely deprived of its skeleton would have collapsed onto itself. Today the new frames, also known as ribs, are

composed of L-shaped steel bars each 8 millimetres in thickness. Each rib was moulded in order to take on the curvature of the section of the hull inside which it would be positioned. 5,000 bronze silicon screws, specially purchased in Germany, were used to fasten them to the planking sections. Washers made of a special non-deformable plastic material were inserted onto each pin. This was done to ensure that in the future no galvanic corrosion could occur between the two different metals in contact with each other, the bronze and the steel.

At the points where the frames are doubled or in the floor-frame connection, riveting was applied. When compared to the more modern soldering, it was like going back in time. Each rivet, a normal steel rod 12 millimetres in diameter, was inserted cold into the holes, then heated with an oxyhydrogen flame and finally hot-clinched. Also riveted together were the steel bars, which fore and aft make up the starboard and port standings, each approximately 25 metres long. This was a time-consuming and arduous process, particularly as it was performed in the heat of summer. The entire Del Carlo family was involved in the work, including young Adriano, son of Guido Del Carlo, representing the third generation employed in the family business.

Next came the beam structure. The new deck rests on beams also made of steel, positioned at a distance of approximately 30 centimetres apart (three beams every metre). Today, Eilean has a totally renewed and extremely solid structure that makes it ocean-worthy.

The planking deserves a special mention, made up as it is of teak boards 4 centimetres thick in both the bottom works and the upperworks. Eilean is planked with about thirty boards on each side, each of which consists of the union of several boards, up to 7 metres long, held longitudinally and joined with a steel plate bolted onto the inside, as in the original



construction. Due to the poor condition in which part of the planking was found, 40 percent of the boards had to be discarded.

Then attention turned to the deck. At one time the boards on the deck were placed directly onto the beams but this, also due to the natural movement of the wood, did not prevent water seepage from the exterior. Today two layers of marine mahogany plywood, respectively 8 and 15 millimetres in thickness have been screwed onto the beams. Teak staves 15 millimetres thick were fixed onto these layers, fixed and caulked with a special black sealant. This is a process, mainly due to the need to render the vessel as watertight as possible.

Also the new stringers, placed directly on both the plywood on the deck and on the gunwale board, are made of teak. The sideboards, again in teak, will be 20 centimetres high and will be screwed every 30 centimetres onto the stringers with 35 centimetre pins that will reach the gunwale boards. Lastly, the new rounded toe rail will contribute to embellishing and heightening the line of Eilean's sheerline.

The layout of the openings on the deck will reflect that of the original design. All of the superstructures, made of teak, were dismantled and restored before being returned. Starting from the bow, all of the following were repositioned: the access companion to the crew room, the skylight of the galley/bowman's cabin, the large central skylight that illuminates the wardroom, the double skylight of the two double cabins and the deckhouse.

Astern of the downward steps, a skylight will be installed to provide ventilation and access to the navigation room below. Here the installation of two diesel engines is planned with the same number of axes and feathering propellers.

The steering wheel with mechanical transmission will be restored to the

cockpit, while at the stern the teak transom base has already been remade and modelled.

Once work on the hull is completed, attention will turn to the masting. Eilean's chief propulsion system. The Del Carlo Boatyard will reconstruct both the masts and the bowsprit, using American Douglas wood. The mainmast will be over 25 metres tall, while the mizzenmast will reach a length of 14 metres. The old boom, also in Douglas wood, will undergo reconditioning and then be re-mounted.

Today further work has to be carried out on Eilean: from the definition of the interior compartments to the construction of the furniture in mahogany, from the installation of the electrical, water and heating systems to the fixing of the deck rigging, as well as the filling and paintwork on the hull.

One thing is clear from all this: the long period of restoration will give Eilean new life, enabling her once more to sail the seas safely for many decades to come.



THE FRANCESCO DEL CARLO BOATYARD IN VIAREGGIO

The Cantieri Navale Francesco Del Carlo in Viareggio was officially opened in 1963 by Francesco Del Carlo, born in 1927, an ex-foreman at Codocasa. At that time the business, run at the historical premises on the Darsena Italia in Viareggio with its three slipways, mainly worked on the construction of oak and pine-wood fishing boats of up to 20 metres in length, in addition to the renovation of working boats.

Many of these vessels are still sailing today and return to the boatyard periodically for routine maintenance. The decline in the fishing industry and the ensuing fall in orders led the boatyard to specialize in the restoration of wood-built pleasure boats, an activity that has also seen the involvement of Francesco's two sons Guido and Marco, born in 1955 and 1961 respectively.

Over the past twenty years, numerous restoration operations and renovations have been completed on classic and vintage yachts. Amongst the earliest of these was the schooner Anziani, built of pine-wood planking by Codocasa in 1925.

Arriving at the boatyard in 1986, she underwent radical renovation lasting two years.

Next came Capitán Lipari, a Bermudian ketch of 20 metres built in 1947 by Cantieri Navali in Recco, formerly the school ship of the Carloforte Naval Institute. Also Clever, a Bermudian yawl built of dwarf oak planking, 16.5 metres in length and built by Charrier de la Rochelle in 1927, was worked on by Del Carlo.

In 1996 Estella, a ketch of 14 metres from 1946 entered the boatyard and underwent work on her beams, stringers, deck and deck house. In 1998, Del Carlo restored the 24-metre motor yacht called Marcellino

(subsequently rechristened Edviri). 20-metre motorsailer Star 22 was also placed on the slipway, followed two years later by the restoration of Dovesato, a solid 20-metre motorsailer launched from Cantieri Baglietto in 1943 to a design by Englishman J. Laurent Giles.

The restorations carried out in recent years have further cemented the boatyard's fame in the vintage yacht renovation business.

Complete salvage projects like that of the Bermudian ketch of 21.5 metres Alzanola from 1924 (Yacht Digest Award for Best Restoration in 2004), and the sloop Magda XIII, formerly Hermosa III, built in 1937 by Norwegian boatyard Aker & Jensen to a design by Johan Aker. Others include the 18-metre Mopi, a great little vintage sloop built near Milan in 1953, or Patience, a grand English cutter from 1931, built at the Camper & Nicholson boatyard in Gosport to a design by Charles Nicholson, on which Del Carlo completed a restoration began at the boatyard Classic Yacht Darsena.

Today, in addition to Eilean, there are Oenone, formerly Union, an elegant 15-metre Bermudian cutter from 1935, under restoration. Other vessels entrusted to the expert care of the boatyard over the years are The Blue Peter (1930), the 10 metre Margareth, the 30 square metre skerry Hook (ex Lill-Yrsa), and sloop Ilda and yawl Danae, both from the 1950s.

Today the boatyard, in which about ten workers are employed, sees the arrival of the third generation of the Del Carlo family. Adriano, Guido's son, is in fact taking part in the restoration of Eilean. It is he who will one day continue and keep alive the noble art of the master carpenter, carrying on the family business founded 45 years ago by his grandfather Francesco.



In the meantime all the vintage yachts leaving the boatyard continue to participate in and be admired at the vintage sailing meetings in the Mediterranean, from Imperia to Porto S. Stefano, Porto Cervo to Porto Rotondo, Antibes, Cannes, St. Tropez, Monte Carlo, Naples, Gaeta and Viareggio itself, where every year a meeting is organized by the Viareggio Historic Yachts Association.



EILEAN: AN INSTRUMENT FOR BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

In 2009, seventy-two years after its original launch, Eilean will return to the sea. To think that the classification assigned to her by Lloyds in 1937 guaranteed seaworthiness for not longer than 18 years.

But this two-mast vessel will not just be an object of beauty to admire from the waterfront. After years in the wilderness, it will do what it was born for - sailing.

It may seem obvious to say it, but many boats today, be they restored or newly built, spend more time docked in port than at sea. Eilean will sail for at least 6-7 months a year, from spring to autumn, representing Officine Panerai during the classic yacht meetings sponsored by the Florentine company. It will sail in the Caribbean, where each April the island of Antigua plays host to Antigua Classic Week, and then voyage along the east coast of the United States to take part in the Nantucket meeting.

It will then cross the Atlantic Ocean, re-entering the Mediterranean to take part in the Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge. Between June and September, meetings are planned in Antibes (France), Porto S. Stefano in Tuscany, Mahon (Spain), Imperia (in even years), Porto Rotondo (in odd years) and finally Cannes (France).

Between one event and the next, Eilean will be transformed into a powerful vehicle for bringing people together. What do we mean by this? That we can welcome and host, at no charge, people who wish to learn the art of sailing on board a classic yacht and who would never be offered a similar opportunity. Be they young or not so young, this will be a unique opportunity to experience something totally different from so-called modern yachting.

On a wooden craft like Eilean, everything is slower, from measuring to sailing speed, hearse; more arduous and less power-assisted. On board there will be no jib furlers to rewind the bow sails according to wind intensity; just as there will be no mainsail furler; no hydraulic vang to lift the long and weighty boom or batteries of clam cleats, stoppers or electric winches to stretch the sheets. The sails will be regulated by hand, using ropes and blocks that will help to gear down the strains just as it was done in bygone days. Man's physical intervention will once again play a vital role.

Eilean will thus be transformed into a school ship for the practical teaching of age-old seamanship, offering the chance to learn, on board, the rudiments of sailing and the workings of a small sailing ship of days gone by.



EILEAN TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Year of launch	1937
Design	William Fife III & Robert Balderston Fife
Builder	William Fife & Son, Fairlie (Scotland)
Nationality	Italian
Material	Composite (teak planking on steel skeleton)
Length sails out	25.60 metres
Length overall	22.20 metres
Length waterline	15.52 metres
Width	4.65 metres
Draught	3.25 metres
Displacement	50 tons
Sail plan	Bermudian Ketch
Sail surface	to be defined
Fuel tanks	to be defined
Water tanks	to be defined
Engines	2 x 110 horse power Yanmar
Cabin	3
Restoration	2007-2009 Francesco Del Carlo Boatyard, Viareggio (Italy)

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Responses

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- [one word which describes Panerai: Passion! great read, thanks for sharing nt](#) - Heede on Mar 25, 2008, 7:48 PM

- [Hi Lars](#) - *Jim Crue on Mar 25, 2008, 8:29 PM*
- [Very Interesting, i have seen the boat in the shipyard](#) - *Piero LAPIANA-Club PANERAI on Mar 25, 2008, 10:16 PM*
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