

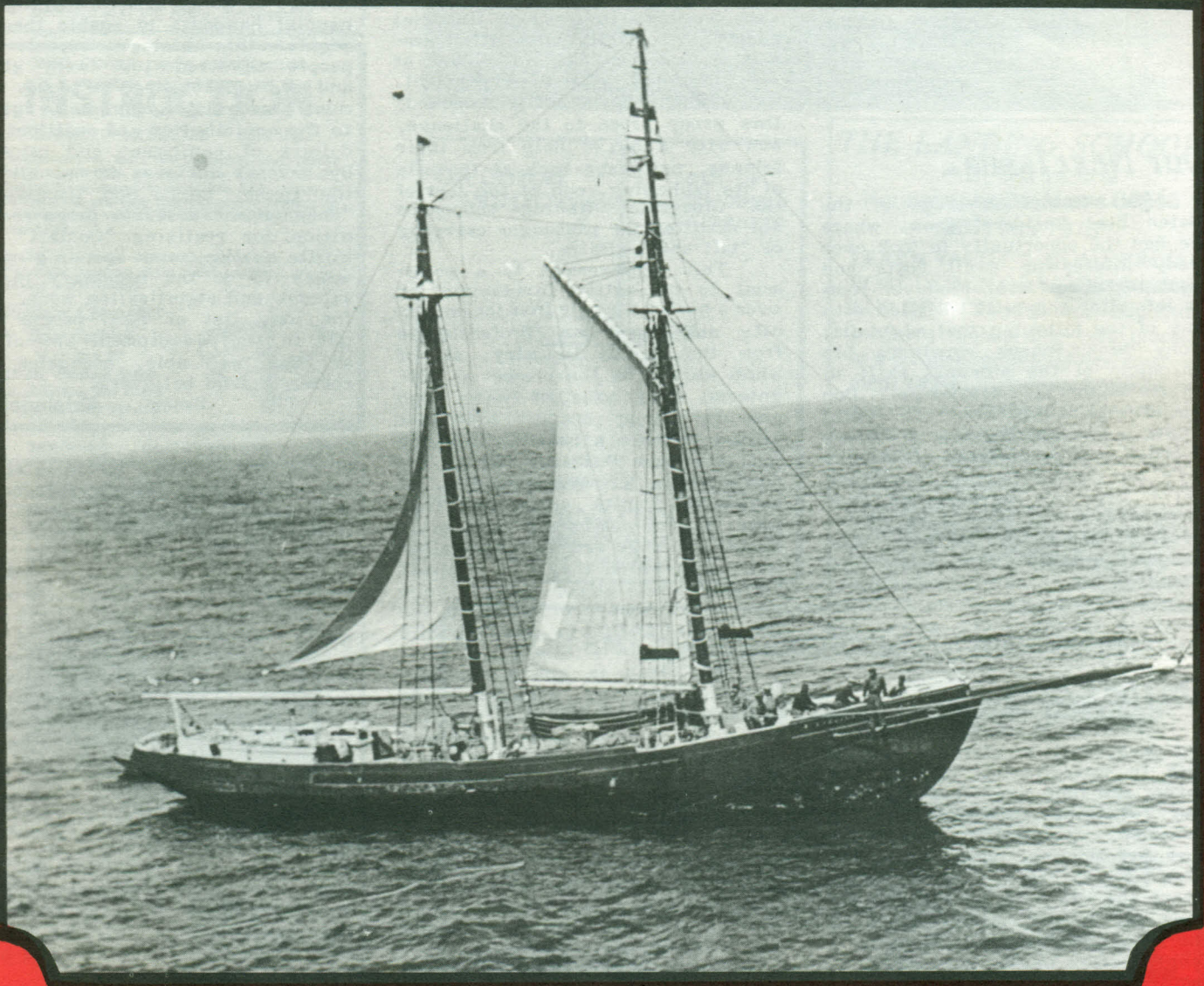
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Saving the Evelina M. Goulart

"Evelina M. Goulart" was almost home on November 3rd last fall and there was quite a crowd on hand to welcome her back to the site of the former Story Shipyard on the Essex River in Essex, Massachusetts, where she had been launched 63 years ago. The 83' fishing schooner was somewhat the worse for wear after 63 years, in fact she was now just a hull, patched with plywood and plastic for her trip home to Essex from Fairhaven, Massachusetts under tow by the tug "Thuban".

As the assembled multitude awaited the final move up the temporary marine railway constructed beside the town boat ramp, divers checked the cradle and railcars beneath her 160 tons and the rigging crew from Metropolitan Building Movers checked the cables and blocks hooked up to their massive winch truck. All appeared set, but then, suddenly, anyone watching the hull saw a slight shift of some 6 inches sideways. Then stillness. Something had gone awry under the ship. We didn't know what it was in the crowd, but after consultations, the Metropolitan crew revved up the huge winch mounted on a massive ten wheeler truck, which

was in turn cabled to three other huge Metropolitan trucks and then to buried deadmen. The engine roared, smoke arose, cables strained and then "CRACK", a lurch of the ensemble of trucks, and then silence. "Evelina" had not budged.

"Well, that's all we've got," announced the Metropolitan crew boss. It was over for the day, and "Evelina" would have to sit on her cradle as the tides came and went while repairs to the marine railway were made. It would be a month before she'd finally rest onshore.

What was this all about, you might ask? Well it was another act in the ongoing saga of marine preservation, this one being played by a host of volunteer people and firms from the tiny historic community of Essex, from where over 4,000 fishing vessels had been launched since the 1600's. The "Evelina M. Goulart" is one of but a half-dozen of the final permutations of the famed "Gloucestermen" fishing schooners still in existence. And she is the only one left virtually unchanged in construction, having always fished and never been converted into a "dude schooner". But she was close to

derelict. Despite this, here she now was back home where she came from, and now creating a whole new set of challenges for those who believe in the rightness of trying to save this relic.

"Evelina" is the property of the Essex Shipbuilding Museum, and is by far its largest artifact. In fact she is far larger than the tiny Museum itself, fitted into an old schoolhouse in the village of Essex. Small though it is, this is one really fascinating collection of history, with the artifacts that went into the shipbuilding industry that made the town famous assembled in an amazingly effective arrangement by Curator Jim Witham, and presided over now by its first "professional" director, Diana Stockton. With still pressing decisions to be made as to where "Evelina" will ultimately settle down, and how she will be preserved and presented for public viewing, this effort at maritime preservation is a long, long way from success. But she has come so far, so far, on mostly hope and a whole lot of help from her friends.

None of this was the Museum's idea, originally. They wanted to display a section of schooner fram-

ing in one corner. In 1989, Captain Bob Douglas, owner and skipper of the schooner "Shenandoah" was at the Essex Museum on a visit to that town when this subject came up as he viewed the exhibits. Well, he happened to know of a derelict schooner sunk at a wharf in Fairhaven that would soon be hauled away in a harbor cleanup. Perhaps some frames from that could be salvaged.

Soon his inspection revealed to him that the derelict was in far too good shape to be cut up for pieces, and he undertook at his own expense to have her raised, brought ashore and patched up to make her float again. It was "Evelina", and her final working format was as a motor dragger. She'd still been fishing when a 1985 hurricane damaged her stern, and she was tied up to the wharf in retirement. Her engine was removed, and later electric bilge pumps somehow failed and she sank. It was the end of 55 years of active fishing under just three skippers. Now Captain Douglas had her fate in his hands. He had offered her to the Essex Museum and they had readily accepted, but practical obstacles to getting her back to Essex held things up for a year, during which Douglas paid all the bills for repairs, storage and dockage.

You must realize that this is a tiny museum without "endowments" and with little cash. As one townie put it, "It'll take a whole lot of bake sales to raise the kind of money this will end up costing." The town was hardly 100% behind the idea, the dominant objections coming back to the money, and the town's position in it all if they leased the land at the town ramp to the Museum for "Evelina" to occupy. An outspoken opponent was the son of the builder. Dana Story, son of the prolific builder, Arthur D. Story, who had built "Evelina" amongst some 400 or so other ships during his tenure at running the Story Shipyard, was torn between the significance of this ship and the potential for financial disaster to the tiny Museum. So he opposed the idea as being unaffordable, trying to rein in the romanticists he saw amongst the Museum supporters. Dana is the leading histo-

Opposite page: The tug "Thuban" brings the "Goulart" up the Essex River. Right from the top: Getting aligned with the railway while still afloat. Hooking up Metropolitan's huge winch truck. Brad Story, grandson of Arthur D. Story, builder of the "Goulart", contemplates his grandfather's work. Brian Duffy set up the whole railway, not an easy job working with inexperienced volunteers. "That's all we got!", conference after the "Goulart" slipped off the railway.





rian of the schooner building era, with thousands of old photos and several books on the subject to his credit. But he's a classic Yankee too, careful about the money.

But the decision was taken to bring "Evelina" home, and get Captain Douglas off the hook. People who could help began turning up. Brian Duffy, a marine railway specialist from New Bedford who knew Douglas, came up to look over what would be required to build a temporary railway alongside the town ramp that would hold the 160 ton vessel. Duffy tackled it with mostly local volunteer help, people he could not "order" around, complicating his work. But he was in for the duration. John Coughlin, owner of the local Metropolitan Building Movers, a major firm in that field, volunteered his firm's services to do the actual hauling. Don Frykland, a construction man from Gloucester, brought over his huge Japanese built backhoe for digging and prodding, and set up a shed for the work crew on site. Steel I beams for rails, huge roller sets for the cradle to ride on, all the stone needed to fill in for the railway bed, this stuff began to arrive. All free. Despite some local concerns over the environmental impact of this waterfront "construction", the state did not interfere, as it was to be only "temporary".

The spring trip planned was then scrubbed as boating season loomed near and town officials feared that the huge hull might run aground in the narrow, tortuous Essex River, blocking it off for hundreds of power boats kept at the marinas lining the waterfront. So Douglas had to hang on until fall. At last the time arrived, and on November 1st the "Evelina" left Fairhaven under tow by the tug "Thuban", owned by another Douglas friend, R.W. Packer, and skippered by Capt. Jeff Kauffmann, in another generous contribution to the cause. "Thuban" was chosen especially to navigate the shoal and sandbarred Essex River, having twin screws and only a 7' draft. "Thuban" had originally been built for Mississippi River work.

It was a golden day, a flat calm across Massachusetts Bay, and Captain Kauffmann reported that

Left from the top: The "Goulart" as Capt. Bob Douglas found her at a pier in Fairhaven, Massachusetts. Evelina M. Goulart stands between her parents in this formal photo from the '20's. Dana Story, son of Arthur D. Story, is the leading historian of Essex shipbuilding, but was concerned at the financial impact the "Goulart" might have on the tiny museum. Don Frykland at work with his giant backhoe, "he can tie his shoelaces with that thing," one volunteer who worked with him commented.

"Evelina" "came like a leaf". On the 3rd she came upriver on the top of the tide, led by a "pilot" boat, Billy Lee's "Ocean Reporter" out of Gloucester, with William and Betty Ann Crossen aboard as local knowledge "pilots" on the river. And so "Evelina" arrived, and by the time the crowd did, was set for that final lift ashore. She had been floated onto cradles that would carry her up the railway.

After the dust settled following that "CRACK", and the gathered onlookers had drifted away, the Museum folks now faced a daunting task. "Evelina" would have to be jacked up and the rail-bed rebuilt beneath her, with winter looming up. The ballast stone had been skimpy under one end of the railway bed in deference to environmental concerns about changing the nature of the river bottom and it had shifted, dropping one set of rollers off the track. Now as days shortened, volunteers labored on between tides, often under lights, following Duffy's instructions. Finally on December 7th before a smallish crowd who had had advanced notice, "Evelina" came up almost all the way, the Metropolitan winch truck barely idling as the cables pulled the huge hull ashore. The last 15 feet of the haul belonged to Don Fryklund and his backhoe. One local who knew the ship remarked, "she only comes for those who love her".

There had been others who loved her at the November 3rd arrival. Evelyn Roderick of Gloucester, daughter of one of "Evelina's" co-owners, had christened her back in 1927, and was present at her return. Her original major owner, Manuel Goulart, had named her after his only daughter. But, Evelina had died in 1929 in her teens, sadly. A granddaughter of Manuel's was present on the 3rd, however. And Leo Riberio of Gloucester was there and pronounced that "she is beautiful." Looking at the scarred hull, Diana Stockton, who had been at the focal point of all the issues that "Evelina's" return had aroused, acknowledged that she was glad to have her back, but "beautiful"? "She's beautiful," Leo replied, "on her I felt safe." Leo had ridden out the hurricane of 1938 aboard "Evelina" at sea.

So, now what? The rush of nostalgia surrounding her return is over and "Evelina" sits on the side of the ramp with a one year lease from the town. She's got to be stabilized, protected from the ravages of the weather, and eventually tidied up and outfitted for her new role. "Evelina" will not be restored. Her port side, which is in very good shape, will be painted up, and her deckhouses rebuilt. The starboard side will be stripped of its planking so the structural



Above from the top: Final lineup for the successful haulout in December, Don Fryklund's backhoe backing up John Coughlin's winch truck. Museum Director Diana Stockton talks with Curator Jim Witham about what Jim will have to do with this huge artifact. Final hookup for the haulout, at left Bob Reed of Marblehead Marine, who acted as clerk of the works, at right John Coughlin of Metropolitan Building Movers, and back to camera, Brian Duffy, who engineered the railway construction. Coming ashore at last, "Evelina M. Goulart" is home.

details of how the famous Gloucester fishing schooners were built will be revealed for all interested to see. An appropriate setting must yet be finalized, along with necessary public access construction. A daunting task for this tiny community museum.

"Evelina" now sits on land that had been leased from Essex in 1927 by the Story Shipyard when she was launched. She is truly back home, and what more appropriate place could there be for her to stay? And right beside her is the former Story Shipyard, no longer in the family, but still de-

voted to boatyard activities. If somehow, sometime, it were to become not only the home for "Evelina M. Goulart", but also for the Essex Shipbuilding Museum, a historic circle will have been closed.

Want to know more? Inquire of the Essex Shipbuilding Museum, Main St., Essex, MA 01929. The Museum is open to the public May through October, 11 to 4, Thursday through Sunday, but "Evelina" will be there to be viewed nearby at any time this summer.

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

EVELINA M. GOULART.

Saving
A Piece of History

The Essex Shipbuilding Museum wishes to express its appreciation to the following persons and firms that assisted in bringing the "Evelina M. Goulart" home to Essex.

A & J Fishing Gear	Bruce Figurido	Paul O'Connor
Albanese Brothers Contracting	John & Arthur Filias (Deckscales)	Larry & Sally O'Maley
Alice's Originals - Signs	First Universalist Church	Daniel L. Oberer MD
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