

HOLLYWOOD *Classic*



FACING PAGE: CORY SILKEN

Famously she won the heart of Humphrey Bogart and, following an extensive restoration, the S&S schooner *Santana* is still a scene-stealer

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Above left to right: leather-clad blocks by Ording; original binnacle; new bronze winches by Harken

Humphrey Bogart's weakness for beauty was well-known beyond Hollywood. His suitors, oft-specified upon and perhaps embellished in terms of reliable reporting, were said to be blush-worthy, boasting no shortage of silver screen sirens. But conceivably the most unremitting love of his life, the one which turned heads decade after decade among a sea of beauties and the one that remained 'till death did they part', was *Santana*. Bringing the then-80-year-old boat back to her most glamorous days, however, was nothing short of a modern day marvel.

"I was trying to think to myself, 'What boat has had a better or more authentic restoration, and barring a couple of possible boats worldwide, this ... this is the one,'" reflects Joe Loughborough. Long before launching his refit and restoration company, Loughborough Marine Interests (LMI) in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, Loughborough can recall when he first laid eyes on *Santana*. "Puntarenas, Costa Rica; 1973 I think. *Santana* was unknown to me, but I remember thinking 'Wow, what a beautiful boat!' and guessed at the time she was a Sparkman & Stephens. She gave the impression of excellent design and function, and beautiful to boot!" Loughborough could hardly imagine that four decades later, he'd be tasked with resurrecting what would be casually dubbed, "Bogie's boat," to her former glory. But like all good stories, it's important to know her past to better understand her future.

Sparkman & Stephens was commissioned by oil heir William Lyman Stewart, Jr, to build a grand schooner; one that would merge luxury appointments with racing intention. It was 1934; and to date, *Dorade* was considered the finest jewel in the Sparkman & Stephens crown. Defiantly rigged with a narrow beam and sharp ends, *Dorade* made headlines as she won the 1931 Transatlantic and Fastnet races on corrected time, victories that won her so much acclaim, the crew was showered with a ticker-tape parade in NYC.

Stewart, no doubt, took notice after *Dorade's* triumph, though instead of borrowing from the yawl's sleek, competitive design, he insisted on a schooner that would embody both business and pleasure. "Olin

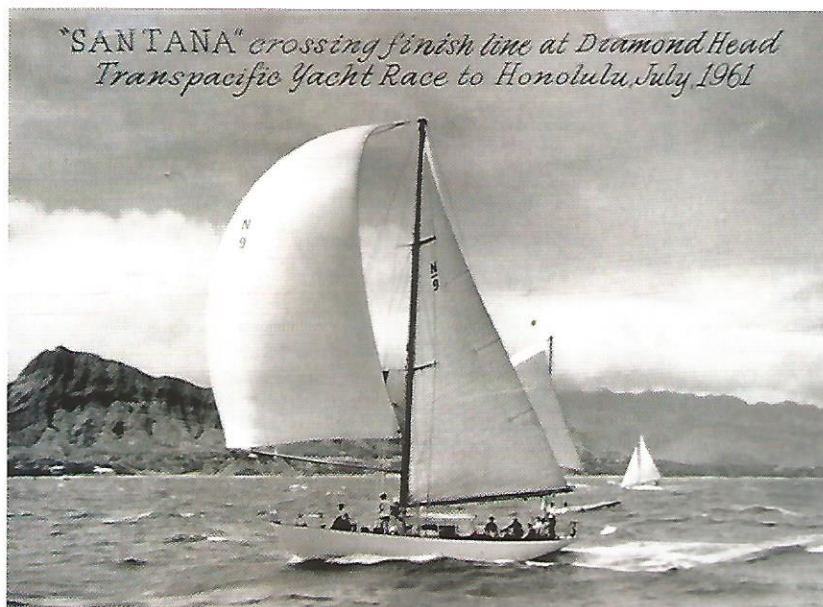
design the fastest staysail schooner," explains Jason Black, the current chief operating officer at Sparkman & Stephens. Wilmington Boat Works built the vessel in California, where the boat would remain most of its life when docked, and *Santana* would go down in history as just one of the limited number of schooners Stephens would ever design. But she wouldn't forever stay that way.

RE-RIGGED AS A YAWL

Black says Stewart determined he should have heeded Olin's recommendation when *Santana* failed to meet line honours in any of the major ocean races. The millionaire needed to make way for a new Sparkman & Stephens boat (*Chubasco*); a yawl that would eventually earn the victories his ego coveted. *Santana* meanwhile landed in the hands of wealthy developer Charles Isaacs, a sale which prompted *Santana's* baptism into Tinseltown circles. Isaacs's wife was starlet Eva Gabor.

A few years later, actor George Brent took the helm of *Santana*. In the five short years he owned the boat, he opened an entire new chapter by seeking the advice of Sparkman & Stephens on how to transform her from a schooner to a yawl rig. "They consulted in S&S but not in an official capacity, from the notes that I have, so no official drawing work," says Black. Olin's recommendation, he says, was to increase the height of the mainmast. Whether it was a cost issue or disagreement in philosophies, Black says Brent returned *Santana* to Wilmington Boat Works and in lieu of following Olin's advice, had the company re-rig the boat as a yawl using the existing schooner mainmast, hence sailing for decades as "a rather stunted yawl". Though decidedly less impactful than fitting her with a taller mainmast, the design was effective enough to make *Santana* easily manageable at moderate and high wind speeds – perfect for navigating both California's idyllic weather conditions and the infamous Santa Ana winds (which reportedly earned the boat its name).

Academy Award winner Ray Milland would assume ownership next, followed by *Santana's* first Hollywood power couple: actor, director and Sunday sailor Dick



many rendezvous with fellow A-listers have been well documented. Then actor and future president Ronald Reagan and wife Jane Wyman, Edgar and Frances Bergen and most famously, Bogie and Bacall; all were regulars on *Santana*. Their outings were as much about pleasure as publicity. It was 1944, Hollywood's Golden Age, and sailing on *Santana* or any of the striking yachts helmed by the glitterati epitomized the wealth and glamour of the flourishing motion picture industry.

A LOVE AFFAIR

Bogie, a tenured sailor since childhood, was smitten with her. He purchased *Santana* for a reported \$50,000 and forged a bond with her that was palpable to all who witnessed it. Bogie and Bacall's only son, Stephen, born four years after the couple took ownership of the boat, would write in a revealing memoir of his father: "While most people know that Bogie and Bacall had a great love affair, probably fewer know about my father's other great love affair. It was with sailing. Specifically, it was with the *Santana*, a 55ft sailing yacht, which he had bought from Dick Powell and June Allyson. My father was not simply some movie star throwing money into a hole in the water. He was serious about the boat and he was an excellent helm who earned the respect of the sailing fraternity, despite some well-entrenched prejudices they had about actors with boats. The sea was my father's sanity. He once answered a question about his devotion to sailing this way: 'An actor needs something to stabilize his personality, something to nail down what he really is, not what he is currently pretending to be.'"

When Bogart launched one of Hollywood's first independent film companies, he named it *Santana* Productions. He would race her or enjoy a casual sail whenever filming allowed. As his health declined, Bogie spent many of his days on the boat. The saltwater breeze against his face, *Santana* gently gliding across the Pacific. One could say, it was his tragic but bittersweet Hollywood ending. In a final homage, Bogart was eulogized with a model of *Santana*, the one that was reverently enshrined in a glass case in his

Facing page, top:

New frames complete, double planking with mahogany in process.

Middle l-r: Every

other plank removed for the reframing project; teak deck and cap rails close to completion; new planking, original rudder being re-hung onto original stern post and keel.

Bottom l-r:

Hardware, cockpit and bits; striking the waterline and boot stripe; new deck beams in

TAKE TWO

After Bogie's death in 1957, *Santana* changed hands a half-dozen times, had been sailed around the world by Charlie Peet and, devastatingly, sank to San Francisco's harbour floor while docked at St Francis Yacht Club due to a failed bilge pump. In 1999, Paul and Chrissy Kaplan (of Keefe Kaplan Maritime) restored the boat back to a schooner rig configuration, plus a good amount of hull work and cosmetics, albeit with a fairly modern interior look. Yet by 2014, *Santana* was in need of more significant work. Though she was still a head-turner, she was rather tired and bruised underneath the surface.

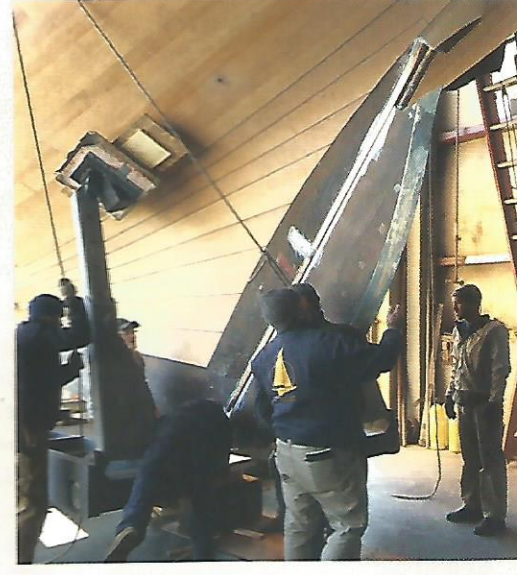
"The buyers were somewhat taken with the great apparent condition of the boat, and the many touches of 'lipstick'," Loughborough says. "Upon her arrival in Portsmouth, the shipwrights and I could study her in detail to reveal, though cosmetically looking amazingly good, she had some quite serious rot and structural issues, very similar to her sister ships, *Skylark*, *Dorada*, and *Sonny*, of which we had intimate refit knowledge."

Loughborough and crew determined an extensive multi-phase refit was in order requiring 95 per cent reframing, full planking, decks, interior and systems, atop an all-original backbone and keel (thankfully in sound condition), not to mention new spars, deck furniture, rigging and sails.

At East Passage Boatwrights in Bristol, Rhode Island, Seth Hagen ably led six shipwrights on site. They were alerted by previous problems on S&S's *Skylark*, and Sonny did a fastener survey which revealed severe corrosion issues below the waterline. "The boat had been 'bonded' at some point in its life, which degraded the bronze strapping in the areas of the original schooner rig as well as the planking in contact with it," explains Terry Bach, lead shipwright at East Passage Boatwrights. "The bronze was very brittle and in some places reduced to powder, and the planking and frames had suffered from significant delignification, meaning that on a cellular level, the structural integrity of the wood had been compromised."

Most prevalent was several generations of frame sisters (brothers and cousins). Some of *Santana*'s frame bays had so many, the planking couldn't even be seen between them! "She was designed brilliantly and built exceptionally well, but rigging components and sail technology continue to evolve and are now capable of carrying far greater loads than was possible in 1935. If we had restored *Santana* exactly to the original construction plans, it would be reasonable to expect the same result, broken frames and all," says Bach. "To address this, Greg Stewart of Nelson Merek Design CA guided a structural re-design – successful in many previous restorations – and specified laminated oak frames and bronze ring frames in way of the main mast, and a sturdy bronze maststep, and double planking, all tied in together effectively distributing the rigging loads into compression of the mast instead of pulling up on the sides of the hull at the chainplates, which places undue stress on the upper hull/topsides."

With a reverence for *Santana*'s rare pedigree,





Above left to right: racing again over the summer of 2016 in New England; the galley and saloon towards the end of the project

reflection. For example, when LMI received her, the deck was original, but in some places only ½in of the original 1¼in thickness remained, so a full replacement was required. “When restoring a boat to this extent, the builders are essentially giving it a new life. We go over each component. A well-built, maintained boat can be expected to last around 80 years before it needs an extensive restoration. If we can expect that an individual component will last another 80 years, it stays. If it is questionable, it must be replaced,” explains Bach. The team was able to preserve a few pairs of frames in the ends of the boat, the bilge stringers, the beam shelf and clamp, many floors and hanging knees, as well as the entire centreline. (The top of the stem, however, needed to be replaced due to the fact that she would no longer require a bowsprit.)

Jim Titus and Dan De Lieris did all the new deck furniture, hatches and cabin house. Greg Stewart designed the new rigs and Jim Thompson’s crew built the new spars. Stewart, who did *Dorade*’s refit, calls LMI owner Joe Loughborough “the conductor”. Loughborough felt strongly that this restoration should engage the best of local talent. At the peak of the project maybe 25 people were involved, from a large amount of custom bronzework, to painters and varnishers, systems experts, electricians and others.

One advantage of *Santana*’s celebrity was the many photos of Bogie and friends sailing, which proved an invaluable tool during the 22-month process. “They capture many of the early details present on the boat which may have otherwise been lost,” said Bach. Carter Richardson, East Passage Boatwright’s owner, adds that the firm’s experience with Sparkman & Stephens designs of the era, in addition to Joe Loughborough’s proficient background with the same, proved a good blend. The two teams had already worked on the S&S *Skylark*, built in 1937 and considered a sister ship to *Santana*. Meanwhile S&S design *Dorade* had two big refits at LMI. And Sonny, another famous S&S built in 1935, was also worked

LMI, which has become her winter home. The two firms can demonstrate thousands of man hours worked on these prime S&S examples over recent years. “We feel confident we know the pedigree of an Olin Stevens boat,” says Carter.

As *Santana*’s completion raced toward the finish line, it was clear something special was taking shape, with hundreds of fine details being attended to, while the team kept a wary eye on the clock, to get her out the shed and onto the water for the 2016 season.

“We were all hands on deck, it is one of the coolest parts of the job, when you start to see it take shape, and finally see her as she is supposed to be,” Richardson said.

“From the start, it was obvious that we had a lot to do to deliver a strong and handsome yacht. Thankfully the owners had the faith and wherewithal to give us the go-ahead to make it happen,” Loughborough reflects. “This was a rare opportunity; refits of this magnitude don’t come around every year. The owners’ team was strong and supportive and I engaged a team of ‘magicians’, talent and top craftsmen to implement *Santana*’s restoration. I think we came through with a stunning boat on schedule and about four per cent over budget. We are very proud of this project.”

In May 2016, *Santana* emerged from the confines of the Portsmouth workshop and took to the water as naturally as a fish impatient to return to the sea.

Just six weeks later, *Santana* assumed familiar territory. She took the classic division in the 2016 Vineyard Cup Regatta, earning the inaugural Dana Family Perpetual Trophy. Soon after, *Santana* took first in the Vintage Corinthian class at the Sail Nantucket Regatta, making her mark on the Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge series. But the most nail-biting competition since her return was against none other than *Dorade* in the 2016 Newport Classic Yacht Regatta in September, where the two went to a tiebreaker for the Corinthian Classic Division. *Dorade* eked out the win, but *Santana* made it clear: she is

SANTANA

DESIGNER
Olin
Stephens,
1935

LOA
55ft 2in
(16.85m)

LWL
40ft 6in
(12.34m)

BEAM
12ft 6in
(3.8m)

DRAUGHT
7ft 11in
(2.4m)