

SHORELINE

Edited by Elaine Lembo



Aboard *Quetzal*, a Kaufman 47, crewmember Thaddeus B. Kubis documents the passage from Spain's Balearic Islands to Rome for his independently published book, *A Sailor's Eye*.

ALISON SHAW

A Pair of Wooden-Boat Celebrations

ON THE ISLAND OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD, three miles off the coast of Massachusetts, it was the most festive launch in more than a generation: the christening of *Rebecca of Vineyard Haven*, a 60-foot, 76,000-pound schooner designed and built, plank on frame, at the Gannon & Benjamin Marine Railway, one of the leading traditional boatbuilding yards on the U.S. continent.

On May 8, 2001, cannons fired around the waterfront village of Vineyard Haven, a Korean War-era Ryan Navion L-17 warbird laced the sky with white smoke, the ferry *Nantucket* fired jets of water from her stern doors, and hundreds of Vineyarders cheered as the largest sailing vessel to be built on the island since Abraham Lincoln's election 141 years before rolled down the ways into the harbor at Vineyard Haven.

Indeed, the fuss over *Rebecca* was justified. As her hull slid gracefully into the water, admirers could only marvel—and breathe sighs of relief—at the project's completion after the bankruptcy of her original owner and a long but finally successful search for a new owner threatened to leave a partially finished hull bone dry in the yard.

In 2010, Gannon & Benjamin mark 30 years of distinctive boatbuilding, and *Rebecca* begins her 10th year of stylishly carrying crew throughout the world's illustrious cruising grounds. *Schooner: Building a Wooden Boat on Martha's Vineyard*, chronicles the dramatic tale of how the fate of boat and yard became irrevocably intertwined. For more about *Rebecca* and Gannon & Benjamin, please turn to page 31.

Tom Dunlop