

CHRIS ELLIOTT, NAVIGATING A LEGACY

"These two boats that I own and care for fulfill all the pleasure, excitement and satisfaction in sailing that I need",

Chris Elliott



On a beautiful sunny day on Edenton Bay, you may see a solo sailor on a broad reach or close tack sailing into the harbor under full sail. For visitors, it's an eye opening experience, depending on the breeze.

That's Chris Elliott in one of his classic wooden Celebrity Sloops – he owns two – breezing by with a wave as he brings the tiller over, tacks and heads back to open water. The Edenton native has spent a large portion of his life under sail. His older brother was a sailor and taught Chris to sail. Chris and his brother learned the ropes on Sunfish where the mishap of capsizing became a lesson on how to right a boat.



Building sail boats with his dad has left an indelible mark on Elliott. The first boat, the Celebrity Class sloop, Legacy, is a continual tribute to Elliott's craftsmanship. The father and son boat-building team finished 'Legacy' in 1990. "Years later in 2018, on a whim I took her to a wooden boat show in Manteo. I enjoyed telling people about the boat and folks enjoy hearing about her," said Chris. "I won my class and started looking for other shows to attend in Edenton, Oriental, Southport, Georgetown, St. Michaels, MD and Mystic, CT." Chris was hooked on both building classic

wooden boats and sailing. He had an opportunity to save another Celebrity sloop that hadn't floated in years. It was about to be cut up. He restored 'Pansy' to pristine condition and started taking her to shows, getting the same results. Winning.

"Between the two boats, twenty seven shows, they have always won their class and many times we would win Best of Show or Peoples Choice awards", said Chris. "It's just another way of enjoying my sailboats. It's very good for the perpetuation of the boats." His father was very proud of his son's ability. Building Legacy with his father was a wonderful experience. He speaks often about the special relationship they formed around boats.

"My greatest regret is that I didn't think to attend a show when Dad was alive," continues Chris. "He would have loved it."

In Chris's sixty years of sailing, as a licensed captain and blue water racer, he has a full log book of long distance passages. "I have crewed for seven different America's Cup skipper," said Chris. "I sailed with the best sailors on the planet, winning two world championships along the way." While his long distance racing days are over the stern, the two sloops feed his passion for the pleasure, excitement and satisfaction that any of the big boats ever did.

Over the years, Elliot has gone through stages of casual cruising, beer can racing, and major race series, mostly on the east coast. He has been a sailing charter boat captain, and was in the sailmaking industry for forty plus years training and coaching his client's crews.

"I've campaigned my own J24 at the local and international level with great success", said Chris, "I currently volunteer as a crew member on the 15th Century Elizabeth II in Manteo. I'm now in the Wooden Boat Show stage of my sailing career. At this stage in my life, I am OK with that", said Chris. "I think my boats need to be seen, so I often sail in and out of the harbor. I love to share my boats. I like to be part of the 'show' here in Edenton." So when your eye's widen when Elliott



tacks into the harbor, it's a special site. He's navigating a Legacy, knowing his father's along for the sail.