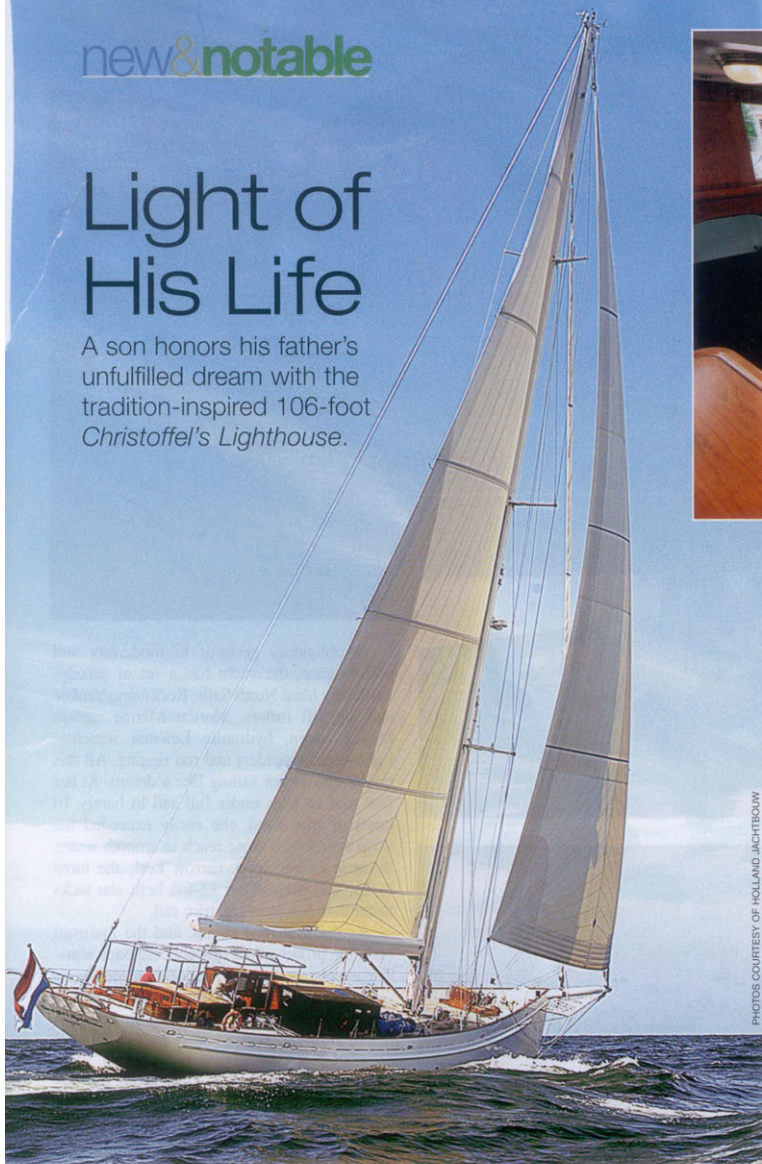


new&notable

## Light of His Life

A son honors his father's unfulfilled dream with the tradition-inspired 106-foot *Christoffel's Lighthouse*.



Gerard Dijkstra's design blends the best of 19th century channel cutter sturdiness and 20th century J-class elegance. The well-equipped deck house is strictly 21st century.

high-performance, global cruiser around 100 feet overall.

Dijkstra – who delights in this sort of challenge – obliged by drawing a plumb bow leading to flat round-bilge underwater sections, creating a voluminous, stable hull form with low wetted surface and – sans forward overhang – a long waterline. He kept the canoe body draft to eight feet, six inches, so his client would never be forced to anchor outside a sweet bay for want of depth, but gave it a 14-foot, five-inch deep, 20-ton retracting fin keel, with bulb ballast, for upwind power in all weather. The keel, when fully lowered, is locked solidly in place by an ingenious three-dimensional hydraulic wedging system – no rattling in a seaway is possible. Dijkstra prescribed aluminum construction to lighten the 92-foot LOD hull for speed, high ballast ratio and sea kindliness. But as Antarctica is prime on the owner's expedition agenda, he thickened the bow's shell plating and tapered the through-hulls against ice accumulation. A modern Bermudan sail plan is bent onto carbon fiber spars and a high-tensile steel bowsprit (making her 106 feet, four inches overall).

All this metalwork and engineering, and the rest of the handsome cutter's construction and cosmetics, were entrusted to Holland Jachtbouw – a Dutch shipyard that, in a baker's dozen years, has built more than 20 yachts of traditional character. The fit and finish of this new yacht are flawless. While

An EXPERIENCED SAILOR, THE PAST owner of a Cambria 44 and a Little Harbor 54, recently sold his businesses to devote time and energy to building a larger custom yacht. Not idly obsessed with circumnavigation, he planned to use her for select "expeditions to wonderful places." Inspired by the J-class yacht *Endeavour* and L. Francis Herreshoff's masterpiece *Ticonderoga*, he also dreamed of arriving at

those places aboard a yacht of traditional essence. So, evading the usual client-architect jousting, he showed Gerard Dijkstra an antique drawing of a circa-1900 Bristol Channel pilot cutter – a wooden gaff-rigger of the type normally run by a man and a boy to deliver pilots to ships approaching that blustery English roadstead. He asked Dijkstra – a leading light in revivifying the classic style – to transform the cutter into a

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOLLAND JACHTBOUW

moored at the Zaandam yard the perfectly fair hull was even attacked by swans that believed their mirror images to be other birds threatening their young. The yard's superb construction and machinery installations conform to Lloyd's Rules and the vessel is fully MCA-compliant, with water- and fire-proof doors. But in keeping with her traditional soul, the yard's skilled carpenters lovingly fabricated the deck house in traditional tongue-and-groove joinery of solid teak.

The cutter is laid out for secure passage-making and living aboard. The cockpit combines social and sailing spaces – the owner enjoys relating to friends and family while underway. But he ordered a second small cockpit aft, with entry to his cabin, for more private moments. The windowed wheelhouse provides a convenient navigation station, dining nook and wide views of the sea. Below, the spacious master suite is separated from the midships salon-dining-galley area by the engine room, outfitted with a workhorse Lugger diesel. Forward are double and twin guest cabins and a cabin for two crew. Hull portlights, hatches and "juice squeezer" deck prisms set the perfectly crafted cherry joinery aglow in natural light.



Tongue-and-groove overhead and simple raised paneling create a classic ambience. The master stateroom, above, has access to a private cockpit.

In obligatory gestures to modernity and performance, the yacht has a set of aerodynamically ideal North Sails, Reckmann Yankee and staysail furlers, Marten Marine carbon furling boom, hydraulic Lewmar winches, lightweight spreaders and rod rigging. All this contributes to her sailing like a dream. At her first trial in July, under full sail in barely 10 knots of true wind, she easily exceeded the wind speed on a close reach in smooth water. Because of her deep, narrow keel, she turns easily, and despite her 85-ton left, she tacks faster than her crew can trim sail.

As the first trial began, and the mainsail rose, the proud owner quietly held back tears. The event released deep emotional memories for him. In 1940, his father – Christoffel – escaped to England as the Nazis invaded his native Holland. For the early part of the war he ferried secret agents back home, then became an RAF Spitfire pilot. After the war – despite his winning the highest military honors – the Dutch government was unable to fulfill his request to become a lighthouse keeper on the Caribbean island of Sint Maarten. He became, instead, a KLM executive ... but always regretted not holding out for his original dream of finding peace and quiet while tending a beacon for sailors seeking haven from the storm. Thus, *Christoffel's Lighthouse* is a tribute to a father's unfulfilled dream and a son's quest for that lost peace and quiet. – Jack A. Somer

For more information, contact Holland Jachtbouw at 31 (0)75 614 9133.