

Miss Ann has new job

October 5, 2008 12:16 am

BY FRANK DELANO

A band on the fantail played "The Star-Spangled Banner." A priest on the dock prayed and sprinkled holy water on the steel sides of the big boat.

After six attempts, the new owner of the Miss Ann finally burst a bottle of champagne against the 1-ton anchor on the bow.

It was official. After more than 50 years of taking guests of the Tides Inn at Irvington on cruises in the lower Rappahannock, the hailing port on the transom of the venerable 127-foot-long yacht is now Colonial Beach.

"It's going to be quite an adventure," said Guy Schroff, one of two brothers who bought the boat in June for \$1,250,000.

"It's a little overwhelming," said his brother Frank Schroff III. "We really look forward to fixing her up in coming years," he told a crowd of 50 people on hand for the re-christening at Colonial Beach Yacht Center.

The Miss Ann sails today for the next phase of her long career, said Schroff. She heads up the Potomac, where she'll be based at the Gangplank Marina on the Washington Channel.

There, for \$3,000 an hour, parties of up to 100 people can charter the stately vessel to celebrate special occasions. Over time, Frank Schroff said, he hopes to restore the boat to her 1926 elegance.

The Schroff family has old ties to Colonial Beach. In 1950, Frank's and Guy's grandfather, who owned a trucking and concrete company in Georgetown, bought a two-story log hunting lodge on an island in Monroe Bay where the family still relaxes.

The brothers, now in their early 50s, spent their boyhood summers in Colonial Beach, swimming, boating, crabbing and shooting rats at an old town dump, Guy Schroff said.

But the Schroffs owe their new enterprise to the Washington Nationals. The family owned a warehouse complex at what is now the home-plate gate of the new \$611 million Nationals Park.



The Miss Ann, which was re-christened yesterday in Colonial Beach, features this formal sitting room.



An original compass is part of the navigational systems of the Miss Ann, which was re-christened at Colonial Beach Yacht Center yesterday.



The property was assessed at \$1.9 million. The city offered \$7.3 million, but the Schroffs received more than that, Guy said. He said he and his brother used their share of the family windfall to buy the Miss Ann.

The Miss Ann came with a three-man crew that will tend the boat in Washington. Purser William H. Smith, 69, first sailed on the Miss Ann as an 18-year-old steward in 1957. Back then, the owner of the Tides Inn took the boat to Florida and the Caribbean in the winter.

"We were headed down to Montego Bay when some Cuban gunboats came out and fired guns across our bow. We stopped. They said we were in Cuban waters, but we weren't. They took Mr. Stephens [the owner of the Tides Inn] ashore for the night. He paid a \$600 fine and we headed on down to Jamaica," Smith said.

Smith worked for the Tides Inn for 56 years. His last and saddest day came three weeks ago when the Miss Ann left the resort for good.

"There was a flotilla of 30 boats that escorted us out of the Rappahannock," he said. "They were blaring their horns, and the captain was blowing ours."

Frank Schroff said the Miss Ann will return occasionally to Colonial Beach, and at least once a year to the Tides Inn. The boat will also spend much of this winter nearby at a boatyard at Weems.

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MISS ANN'S SPECS

Length: 127 feet	Engine batteries: Two 32-volt banks, each containing Four Eight-Volt batteries
Draft: 7.5 feet	Two propeller shafts: 5 inches in diameter by 36 feet long
Cruising speed: 9 knots at 1,000 rpm	Two propellers: 4 feet in diameter
Top speed: 14.5 knots	Fresh-water tank: 450 gallons
Power: Twin V-12, Series 71 Detroit diesel engines	Fuel tank: 2,800 gallons
Fuel consumption: 35 to 40 gallons per hour	
Two diesel generators: 35 KW and 50 KW	

-Frank Delano

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