

WILLIAM FIFE III GAFF RIGGED 108 FT TOPSAIL SCHOONER 1931 - SOLD



Specification

ALTAIR

WILLIAM FIFE III GAFF RIGGED 108 FT TOPSAIL SCHOONER 1931

Designer	William Fife III	Length	78 ft 1 in / 23.8 m	Engine	Gardner 6LxDT 275 BHP
Builder	William Fife & Sons, Fairlie	waterline		Location	France
Date	1931	Beam	20 ft 6 in / 6.25 m	Price	Sold
Length overall	133 ft 10 in / 40.78 m	Draft	13 ft 9 in / 4.2 m		
Length deck	107 ft 7 in / 32.8 m	Displacement	155 Tonnes		
		Construction	Teak on oak frames/steel floors with teak deck		

These details are provisional and may be amended

Specification

BROKER'S COMMENTS

Named after one of the brightest of stars ALTAIR's near mythical status in the classic yacht world is all for very good reason - this yacht has become the standard bearer for the cause of authenticity since her landmark restoration in 1987. William Fife III may have saved his best until last. Commissioned as an ocean going cruising boat for the southern seas and her designer's last big boat, Fife could not help but create a blend of breathtaking beauty; fast safe and totally capable. Always the darling of the classic regatta fleet and often winning her class; ALTAIR is the ultimate vintage yacht. While important as the yacht to have started what has become the classic yacht revival, that role is as nothing to her own status at the top of this hierarchy. It is instructive nevertheless to focus on the true meaning of "Restoration" - this word oft over used if not misconstrued. Volume III of "Conserving Historic Vessels", published by National Historical Ships of Greenwich; in covering how, why and which ships may be chosen for preservation also defines the meanings of replication, reconstruction and restoration - noting the differences between them. Thus on page 130 "...Restoration means returning the existing fabric or part of the fabric of a vessel to a known earlier state by removing additions or re-assembling existing components with the minimum introduction of new material" Over the years there are vintage yachts, having languished in varying states of disregard and neglect, that have been "recovered" and given a variety of treatments to bring them back to some kind of life. ALTAIR meanwhile enjoying a careful 30 year ownership during the 1960s, 70s and 80s was very much still alive, before becoming one of the first such yachts actually to be restored. In this respect ALTAIR absolutely complies with the definition. The restoration team could not have been better provided for - with the important, nay unique quality that she is not a pastiche or interpretation of what an owner or boat yard might have decided she could have been like.....She was all there and is therefore the same boat from door handle to light fitting; from internal layout to sail plan. Her dimensions have allowed for the modern comforts that a smaller classic will not; all discreetly concealed and allowing her to cruise anywhere. Above all she is blessed with the spirit engendered by her original designer the incomparable William Fife III. As one of the very few

classic yachts of her vintage afloat with an unbroken Lloyds 100 A1 classification – having passed again lately in 2012 with flying colours, ALTAIR is in her element - as ready to cruise the World as she is for racing.



• SANDEMAN YACHT COMPANY •
• Brokerage Of Classic & Vintage
Yachts •

www.sandemanyachtcompany.co.uk

© Sandeman Yacht Company Limited 2026. A member of the ABYA.

WILLIAM FIFE III GAFF RIGGED 108 FT TOPSAIL SCHOONER 1931

Specification
HISTORY

ALTAIR built by William Fife & Sons at Fairlie as yard number 789, was launched in May 1931. She was effectively a descendent of the famous fleet of big yachts that had revitalized schooner racing around the turn of the 19th century - William Fife's own CICELY and SUZANNE having been notable members of that fleet. More specifically, ALTAIR's origins lie in her first owner Captain H. MacCaw's desire for "a sound, safe cruiser; safe to go to the South Sea Islands with no difficulty" thus expressed in his brief to William Fife in 1929.

In the event the elderly MacCaw never undertook the world voyage he had planned, and after two years of ownership, sold her to Walter Runciman (later Viscount Runciman) Liberal MP for St. Ives. Having sailed her on the south coast of England and west coast of Scotland, he in turn sold her in 1938 to Sir William Verdon-Smith who enjoyed her for two seasons until she was bought by the Admiralty to play her part in the war effort. Post war, ALTAIR was extensively refitted and was to leave British waters under Portuguese ownership passing then to Miguel Sans Mora to be based in Barcelona until acquired by her next owners in 1985. It is largely thanks to Sans Mora's great love for ALTAIR that during his 34 years of ownership, she was maintained in the tradition of her original build through that difficult period of "old but not yet classic".

It was new owner Albert Obrist who, with project manager Paul Goss and Duncan Walker committed ALTAIR with almost obsessive attention to detail to the now famous restoration at Southampton Yacht Services on her owner's insistence on absolute faithfulness to the original design - some of this dedicated and hand picked team would in due course go on to create Fairlie Restorations.

With extensive shipwrighting work complete, her walnut interior was refinished and all fittings including her original heads were restored to working order. Her rig which had been slightly shortened was restored to the full length by scarphing into the original spars. The dyed cream Dacron was developed by sail makers Ratsey & Laphorn to resemble Egyptian cotton reflecting Obrist's desire even for the sails to appear original. This was soon copied by other classic yachts.

ALTAIR then acquired by a well known Spanish family, was sold again in 2005 to her current American owner, who has cherished the yacht, doing everything to maintain her exactly as she should be; enjoying Mediterranean and Caribbean seasons with countless regatta successes.

Specification
CONSTRUCTION

Carvel - teak planking on oak frames, bronze fastened. Teak backbone,

webbed steel floors and 3/4 inch teak deck laid over 1/2 inch ply

Specification
ACCOMMODATION AND DOMESTIC EQUIPMENT

With its original French polished walnut accommodation, the interior of ALTAIR is considered one of the most beautiful and authentic interiors in any yacht. The panelling, door furniture and bathroom fittings are all from 1931. In 2007 all nickel and chrome interior fittings were removed and replaced with her interior freshly French polished and hand painted.

In summary the accommodation below has an owner's suite, guest VIP suite; small double cabin, two guest single cabins, skipper's cabin and crew quarters for 8. There are two head compartments, a separate shower, a day head and head with bath and shower. The original Blake WC has been beautifully preserved, but while appearing to be manual, it is actually electrically operated.

From the spacious deck house - over the engine room, companionway steps descend to a corridor from which the principal accommodation is accessed.

Immediately to each side are single berth guest cabins, both attractively laid out. Next forward to port is the owner's bathroom with WC, large bath and drop down wash basin. Opposite across the corridor is a shower room, easily reached from the guest cabins.

Again to port is a day head compartment and then the navigation and chart

Forward of the shower to starboard are two guest staterooms, one of which is a double and each fully furnished, also with washbasins.

The doorway forward opens to the main saloon; panelled and magnificently furnished with seating both sides, generous cabinets and to starboard the dining table.

A further doorway accesses the galley forward to port and the skipper's cabin to starboard with en suite head and shower compartment, also accessible to the crew main quarters in the fore cabin with drop down pipe cot berths forward. All the crew quarters are effectively separated from the guest accommodation by separate access via the foredeck .

Domestic Equipment

- 2 stainless steel sinks (new 2007)
- Gaggenau electric oven (new 2009)
- Miele 4 burner gas hob
- Miele 2 ring electric hob
- Panasonic microwave (new 2010)
- Fridge / deep freeze major overhaul 2007 new compressors, plates,
- Miele washing m/c and dryer (located below saloon sole, new 2007)

space with a guest stateroom with generous long single berth, washbasin and furniture. - U-Line Ice maker (new 2009)

Specification

DECK EQUIPMENT AND GROUND TACKLE

- Original Thomas Reid anchor windlass and warping drum
 - 2 x Original galvanized fisherman anchors;
 - 2 x 100 m Anchor chains; galvanized
 - 4 x Barient 27 winches, manual for runners
 - 4 x Lewmar 803 24 V electric winches for main sheet and hoist
 - 4 x Barient 28 winches, manual
 - 1 x Mediterranean style boarding ladder
 - 1 x Standard boarding ladder
 - Varnished teak deck table can seat up to 10 for a formal meal
 - 2 x teak sun loungers
 - 3 x Full deck awning by Antigua Sails
 - 8 x Fenders with covers; easy to inflate and store flat
-

Specification

RIG, SPARS, SAILS AND COVERS

Spars

- Spruce spars throughout (fully serviced in 2007 refit, new Ash spreaders 2007)
- 1 x spinnaker pole
- 1 x jackyard

Rigging

- Standing rigging 95% galvanised
- Running rigging / halyards are Marlow braid polyester
- Jiggers and Runners are hard lay English braid three strand
- Standing & running rigging fully overhauled and serviced by Peter Martin Rigging (2007)

Sails

- Full wardrobe of cruising / ocean going sails all by Ratsey & Lapthorn
- Additional wardrobe of sails principally for racing by Incidence Sailmakers
- Detailed lists of all are available for scrutiny on enquiry

Covers

- Full set of sail covers (new 2008) by Antigua Sails
-

Specification

MECHANICAL ELECTRICAL AND TANKAGE

- 275 BHP Gardner 6 L x DT main engine rebuilt 2007
 - Max speed under power: 9 Knots
 - 2 x 25 KVA Onan MDL 6 cylinder generators rebuilt 2007,
 - 32 inch Variprop feathering propeller
 - Twin Racor fuel separators
 - Fuel transfer: 220v pump and rotary pump
 - 2 x 240 V water heaters new 2007
 - Twin Aqua Major water pressure system; new pumps 2007
 - Hamann WC effluent treatment plant new 2007
 - Condaria air con throughout, reverse cycle, individual controls to all cabins, new 2007
 - Batteries: 3 x 100 Amp battery chargers
 - Service batteries 1,600 AH
 - Engine start batteries 200 AH
 - 2.5 KW, 24 V to 220 V Inverter new 2007
 - HEM watermaker overhauled and new membranes 2007
 - All lighting systems are 24 V
 - All sockets 220 V 13 A
 - Isolating transformer for shore power (110 V or 220 V to 24 V)
 - 704 gal / 3,200 l fuel (2 x 1,000 litre tanks in Bilge & 2 x 600 litre tank in engine room)
 - 660 gal / 3,000 l fresh water (2 x 1,500 litre tanks)
 - 100 gal / 450 l grey water (1 x 250 litre & 1 x 200 litre stainless steel tanks, new 2007)
-

Specification

NAVIGATION COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS

- Furuno 48 mile radar
 - Simrad GPS Sat Nav
 - 6 x Hand held Icom VHF
 - Mini M Satcom
 - Navigation computer with chart plotter and AIS receiver new 2007
 - Communication computer new 2007
 - B&G Anemometer (360 degree wind direction)
 - B&G Beat indicator
 - B&G Analogue & LCD repeaters
 - B&G Rudder indicator
 - B&G Barograph Barometer
 - B&G Digital Depth sounder
 - B&G Steering compasses
 - B&G Flux Gate compass
 - CD / radio unit with iPod dock in saloon
 - Flat screen TV & DVD player in saloon
-

Specification

SAFETY

- 2 x manual bilge pumps
- 1 x Engine driven bilge / fire pump
- 2 x 12 man life rafts
- EPIRB

- 1 x 220 V bilge pump doubles as fire pump
- 1 x 24 V bilge pump doubles as fire pump
- 17 x Fire extinguishers
- Emergency tiller
- 25 x Life jackets
- 2 x Life rings with strobes

- Lloyds approved alarm panel new in 2007
- Alarm systems for bilges, grey water, black water, fire, smoke & gas
- 1 x MOM man overboard module new 2010
- 1 x Light and smoke beacon new 2010
- Signal flags

Specification

TENDERS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 ft / 6.40 m original clinker built 1931 teak launch, inboard Albin 12 HP engine; stored 14 ft / 4.25 m clinker built wooden sailing gig by J Perry 1987 (Copy of original) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 ft 5 in / 4.70 m Arimar tender with Yamaha 70 HP outboard engine - new 2010 |
|--|--|

Specification

RESTORATION AND REFIT

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1987 Complete restoration by Southampton Yacht Services Ltd 2007 Fairlie Restorations supervised by Lloyds completed works including - New stem made and fitted - New forefoot made and fitted - Floor bolts removed and replaced (160 in total) - All frames closely inspected and attended to as required - Full rig removed, spars & blocks stripped, serviced, varnished and replaced | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All bright work stripped - Deck hatches removed and re-bedded - Full interior French polished - Installation of a black water treatment system, - New air conditioning plant and - Modernised refrigeration system - Apr 2010 Full hull and paint work - December 2012 last ashore, freshly painted topsides and anti fouled |
|---|---|

Disclaimer

These particulars have been prepared from information provided by the vendors and are intended as a general guide. The purchaser should confirm details of concern to them by survey or engineers inspection. The purchaser should also ensure that the purchase contract properly reflects their concerns and specifies details on which they wish to rely.

WILLIAM FIFE III GAFF RIGGED 108 FT TOPSAIL SCHOONER 1931

Specification
GALLERY









SANDEMAN
ESTABLISHED IN 1850
YACHT COMPANY















SANDEMAN
BORGARNEFJÖRÐUR 10 VÍÐI
YACHT COMPANY







SANDEMAN
ESTABLISHED IN 1871
YACHT COMPANY




SANDEMAN
Heritage of Classic Yachting
YACHT COMPANY






SANDEMAN
BOUTIQUE OF CLASSIC YACHTS
YACHT COMPANY




SANDEMAN
PIONEERS IN THE WORLD OF PORTWINE
YACHT COMPANY



SANDEMAN
REPRESENTATIVE OF CLASSIC YACHTS
YACHT COMPANY



SANDEMAN
Specialists of Classic & Vintage Yachts
YACHT COMPANY






SANDEMAN
YACHT COMPANY




SANDEMAN
REPAIRERS OF CLASSIC & FINEST YACHTS
YACHT COMPANY

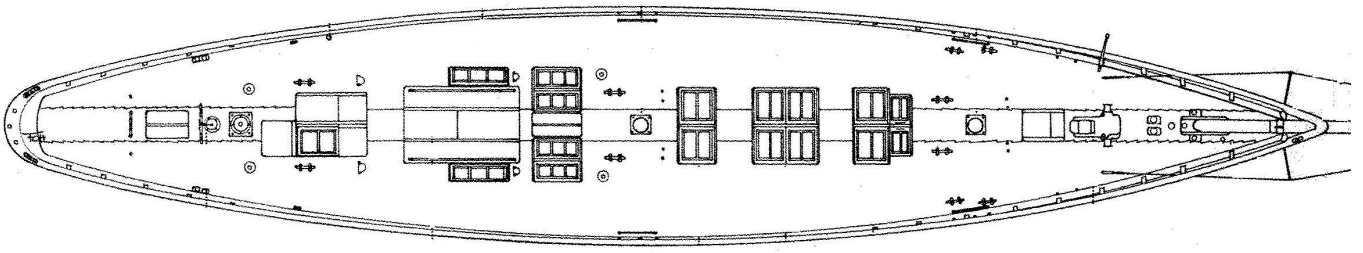



SANDEMAN
REPAIRERS OF CLASSIC & FINEST YACHTS
YACHT COMPANY





ALTAIR DECK PLAN






SANDEMAN
EXPERIENCE OF CLASSIC & MODERN YACHTS
YACHT COMPANY

