

# Newcomer takes up residence at the old Takilma Forge

By  
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The first anniversary of the sudden passing of Takilma elder and founder Jim Rich is June 25, so it is with great curiosity that people are seeing someone new living at Jim's place, the old Takilma Forge.

The first thing folks see is an antique boat parked in the driveway, which really makes them wonder who this new person might be. So with intrepid bravado, I left a note on his door, hoping to unlock the secrets of this new, mysterious inhabitant. Is he a blacksmith, too, or perhaps a musician? My questions remained unanswered until this new person called me a few days ago and allowed me a short interview.

His name is Shakka Teh. In his own words he tells me, "I've had the honor of knowing Jim for some fifteen years, and we knew each other in a couple of ways. One was that we had a serendipitous meeting years ago and like the magic of those moments, we knew that we had known each other for a long time. We had an instant heart connection, and as you know he was quite an incredible man, and it was wonderful to have had that opportunity to know him."

"I've been known internationally as a miraculous healer. I was fortunate enough to have been graced by that gift from God. I've travelled a lot internationally on that basis and Jim and I

knew each other some from that. However, we also knew each other because I am a wooden sailboat designer and builder. The boat you see outside of the Forge is one of the smaller boats I've built. It's a Chinese Junk."

"Jim and I met several times in the context of sailing. I've been aboard the Lady Washington and there was some discussion a while back if I might skipper that boat. Jim asked me if I might be interested in helping him on the Royaliste. I've had a lot of experience sailing antique style ships."

"There were a lot of really 'meant-to-be' type moments in my relationship with Jim. One is our mutual friendship with Dennis Debay of the Ashland Forge. Dennis and I hit it off some years ago in the context of building this vessel. Dennis made critical parts of my sailboat that you see here now that are very special, and also he has pieces of many old sailing ships."

Teh, who shares with Jim some skills as a horseman and a musician, seems to fit right in to Jim's rustic cabin. He concludes by telling me he'd like to stay:

"What else can I say? Takilma is an absolutely wonderful place. There's a lot of love here and I can't think of a better place to be. I'd like to make it my home. The community has been incredibly supportive to me. I think it's really important that this community pulls together and seems to support each other."

"I am enjoying my anonymity here in Takilma. I'm kind of a private guy and my inter-

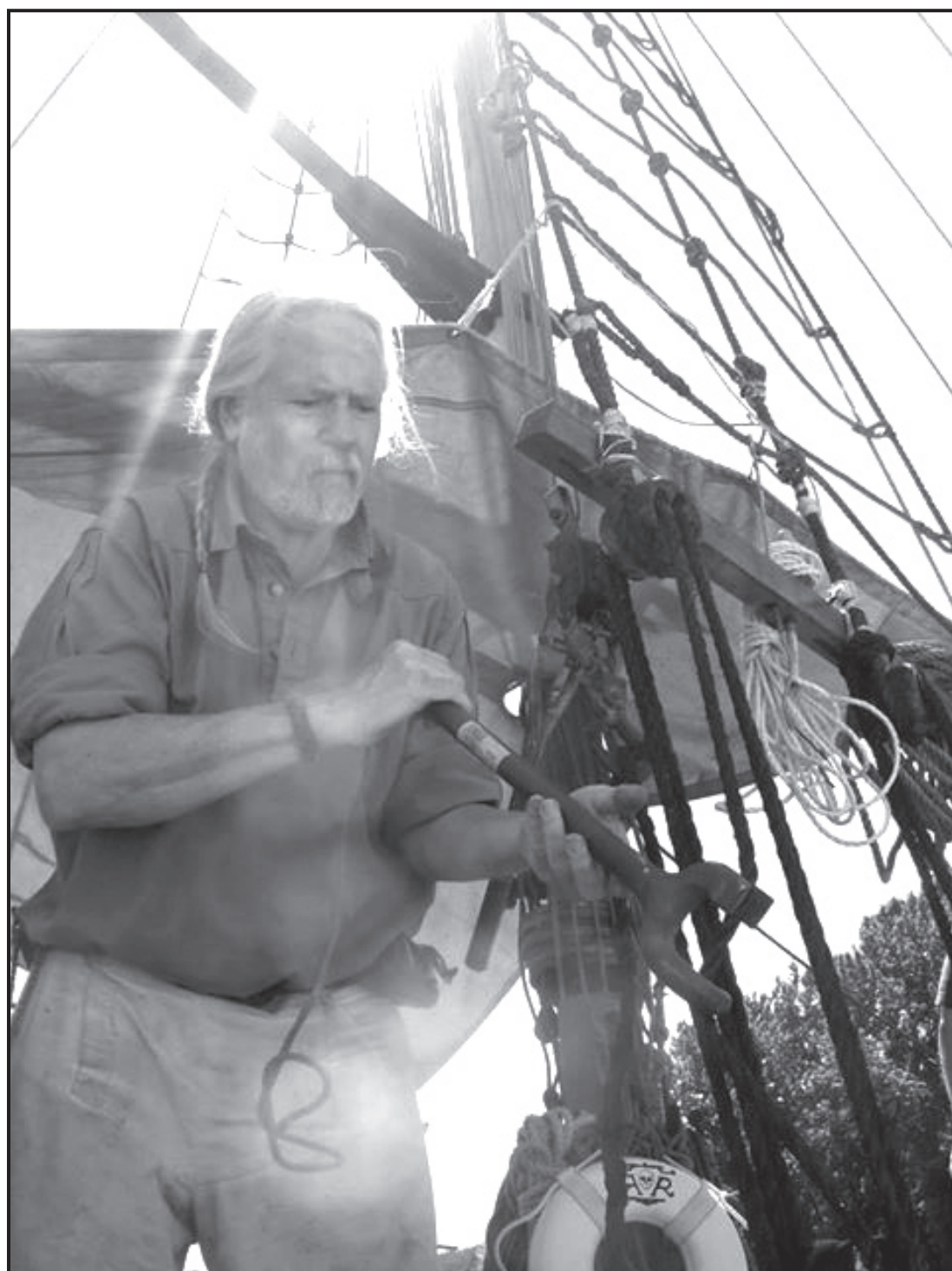
est in being in Takilma is in great part because it's a place away from the world. I've had an interesting life of my own, but I'd like to keep the focus on Jim. Jim was a good friend of mine and he's due the honor now."

Much honor does go out to Jim Rich, our beloved friend, musician, blacksmith and sailor of the seven seas. We, the people of Takilma, do miss him so much, yet we know he is with his maker and all we have are our memories. Perhaps, with Jim's old friend Teh, living at his

beloved Forge, we can see a new chapter of life beginning and someone of the same ilk as Captain Jim to bring warmth and joy to his hearth and home. I for one am enjoying the sight of a Chinese Junk in Jim's yard. It seems that Jim's spirit would like this outcome and is hoping that Teh's presence can help heal the hole in our hearts. Thanks to Jim and his daughter Sara for making this happen. Thanks to Teh for letting me tell his story. Welcome to Takilma!



Photo courtesy of Shakka Teh, of his Chinese Junk, the "Kandu", which he built.



Jim Rich working on the Lady Washington.

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