

PassageMaker[®]

THE POWER CRUISING AUTHORITY

[Home](#) > [Cruising Lifestyle](#) > [Costs of Cruising](#) > [All Decked Out](#)

All Decked Out

Story by Robert Breiling on July 20th, 2012

THE TEAK DECKS ON OUR 1980 GRAND BANKS 42 were starting to look a bit shabby, as well as beginning to leak in the aft hatch area.

The marina where we kept the boat, Rappahannock Yachts of Irvington, Virginia, had just finished removing the teak decking and installing fiberglass nonskid on a 46-foot sailboat, and the finished product was better than new. Interestingly, the square footage of the deck area on our GB was similar to that of the sailboat, and it got me thinking.

Based on the owner's satisfaction of the completed job, we decided to proceed down a similar course on Sea Wings. We figured our project would take about as long and cost about as much as the sailboat's had.

How wrong we were! The removal of our teak decks turned into a task of epic proportions. First the yard workers tried hand chisels, then electric chisels, then grinders—all with little success, as the teak was firmly cemented to fiberglass underneath. I knew that Grand Banks were solidly built, but this took it to a new dimension.

After a number of frustrating attempts by the yard, the men finally rented a commercial floor tile remover machine, a monster of a device that vibrates horizontally like a deranged animal. The machine's cutting blade was bent up slightly to prevent damage to the underlying fiberglass while still allowing slow removal of the teak decking.

But we were not in the clear just yet. After each foot or so, the men had to stop their efforts, unplug teak bungs and remove a row of stainless steel screws. And so it went, one foot at a time.

During the teak removal process, we found that water had worked its way into the wood underlay aft of the cabin trunk over the lazarette hatch. The fiberglass under the teak deck literally lifted off in 1-foot squares. As a result, we learned early on that the entire aft section, as well as the aft hatches, needed to be rebuilt.

Once the teak was detached, scraping and the careful use of gasoline removed the original adhesive. Gasoline was the only solvent that seemed able to cut through the "gunk."

The deck under the teak was then inspected and examined for voids, which were repaired when identified. All screw holes were also cleaned out and filled with epoxy.

The yard chose to lay down a minimum of two layers of fiberglass mat and at least two additional layers of fiberglass cloth. The fiberglass completely sealed the GB's deck surfaces and was laboriously sanded smooth. The final step involved Awlgripping the boat, which, besides the new decks, was required for the 21-year-old trawler.

This project took several months to complete, but the yard did an outstanding job, and we are quite proud of our new boat.

To give anyone with a similar interest an idea of the effort involved, here is a breakdown of the man-hours in each major work phase:

Deck removal (approximately 200 square feet), 103 hours

Fiberglass repair and reconstruction of aft area, 122 hours

Rebuilding aft lazarette hatches, 40 hours

Laying new fiberglass decks, 130 hours

Preparing and painting decks, cabin top and sides, 220 hours

Removing and reinstalling all deck hardware, 42 hours

The project far exceeded our original estimate, but *Sea Wings* is now like a new boat. While we were at the yard, we also had the engines checked. After 21 years and 4,000-plus hours, one head bolt was tightened and one valve needed a slight adjustment on the Lehman diesels. All hoses were changed, as were oil and transmission intercoolers, impellers and the usual filters.

Sea Wings purred all the way to Florida without a glitch, and at a knot faster cruise speed to boot!

PassageMaker

105 Eastern Avenue
Suite 203
Annapolis, MD 21403

Advertising

Customer Service

Call Us - (410) 990-9086

Fax Us - (410) 990-9095

Copyright © 2014 Cruz Bay Publishing, Inc. an Active Interest Media company. All Rights Reserved.