

OLMAHA

Bridge deck Cruiser - Owners: Garth and Doreen McBride

Moored: Coal Harbour Marina, Vancouver BC

Port of Registry: Victoria, BC, Canada - CDN registry # 815271

Builder: JM Martinac Shipyard, Tacoma WA

Year Built: 1926

Designer: unknown

Dimensions: LOA - 61 feet, LWL - 60 feet, Beam - 13 feet, Draft - 4 feet 8 inches

Displacement: 27.87 gross tons

Construction: Frames - steam-bent oak, Carvel Planking and Main Timbers – Douglas fir and yellow cedar, Stem - Purpleheart, Topsides/Decks - teak, Fastenings - galvanized iron and bronze

Power: Detroit Diesel 6-71 since 1950 (originally Hall-Scott gasoline engine)

Built for the Neikirks of Tacoma, the name **Olmaha** was inspired by first names of the family: **OLin**, **MAude** and their daughter **HAzel**. Launched in June 1926 and christened by Hazel, the August 1926 edition of **Pacific Motor Boat** reported that **Olmaha** “was placed in the water ready to cruise and within a few days left on a ten day’s sail to British Columbia waters. Ten Tacoma men made up the party.”

After Olin’s death in 1932, **Olmaha** changed ownership and was renamed: **Shoreleave** (1932); **Continental II** (1944); **Kodiak Bear** (1949) - cruised to Glacier Bay, Alaska; **Litho** (1951). From 1956 to 1992, she was presumed lost until being rediscovered on Lake Union. She was then moved to Vancouver Island, registered as a Canadian vessel under her original name, and underwent extensive planking as well as replacement of the transom, teak aft deck, and aft deck enclosure.

The McBrides assumed responsibility for **Olmaha** in 2004, undertaking further restoration including updates of all electrical systems and replacement of the mast and boom. Since 2006, annual visits to Chris Earl at Gronlund Boatworks have produced further structural and mechanical restoration, including: crafting the new Purpleheart stem and guardrails; replacing the horn timber, keel bolts, and reduction gear; performing extensive planking, frame repairs, refastening and re-caulking.

In 2005, **Olmaha** visited Tacoma for the first time in over 50 years, welcoming aboard Joe Martinac, Jr., current president of the JM Martinac Shipbuilding Corporation, and Barb Jorgenson, Hazel Neikirk’s daughter. They recounted an anecdote: One sunny summer day in 1927, cruising on Puget Sound, **Olmaha** and the 221-foot passenger steamer **Tacoma** collided “producing fair sized holes in both vessels.” A passenger aboard the **Tacoma** shouted at the crew of **Olmaha** accusing them of being drunk, but passengers on **Olmaha** retorted that the accident was caused by “the blinding glare of the afternoon sun on the water and by poor navigation by both skippers.” Barb questioned the sun-in-the-eyes plea, as while her grandfather Olin did not drink alcohol, the family friend at the helm was known to enjoy a libation. Both vessels had to retire to shipyards for repairs, in the case of **Olmaha** bow, flank and stern damage.

Olmaha cruises extensively, making annual pilgrimages to Princes Louise Inlet and ventures to the Broughtons. She has also served as a wonderful venue for family weddings and other celebrations.