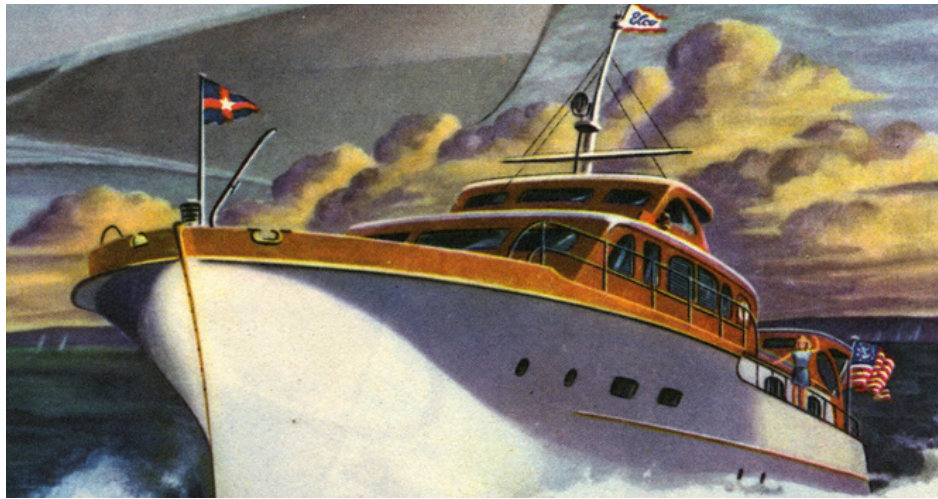


• VERA LEE II •



HISTORY & RENOVATION

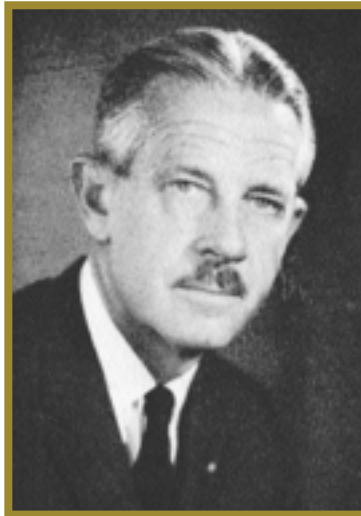
THE ELCO STORY



John Jacob Astor owned four of them. Grand Duke Alexander of Russia, attending a naval review in New York in 1893, saw one of Astor's launches and wanted one so badly he insisted on buying the one already ordered by the captain of the newly launched cruiser USS New York, who then had to wait for a new one. When the Grand Duke's cousin, Czar Nicholas II, saw Alexander's launch, he liked it so much he bought one too. Admiral Dewey owned one, and so did Baron Nathaniel de Rothschild. Charles Lindbergh had one customized for his honeymoon. Actors Wallace Beery and Reginald Denny each had one, as did comedian Ed Wynn. Henry Ford and Thomas Edison kept theirs at their adjoining Florida estates. John F. Kennedy got his "used" and it nearly cost him his life. Lt. John Bulkeley saved the hide of General Douglas MacArthur in one, and later won the Congressional Medal of Honor with it.

When Charles Lindbergh flew solo across the Atlantic in May of 1927, he became overnight "the most famous man in the world." The Lone Eagle spent much of his time flying over water, about which he was ignorant, and he decided to learn something about seamanship. He chartered a 38' cruiser from Elco in 1928, and spent the summer learning how to maneuver a powerboat, with Elco executives as instructors. The following winter, Lindbergh met his bride-to-be, Anne Morrow, and set a secret wedding date for May 29, 1929. He approached his friends at Elco, advised them of his secret plans, and bought a 38' cruiser on the condition that his purchase be kept confidential. Elco's chief designer, Glenville S. Tremaine, drew up a modified aft-cabin arrangement with a double berth in lieu of the standard pair of single berths. The alterations were made secretly, and Elco General Manager Irwin Chase delivered the completed boat, named "Mouette" (Seagull), to a deserted stretch of beach on Long Island on the evening of the wedding. That night, the Lindberghs came aboard and then "disappeared" for their honeymoon. Only a few Elco executives knew how they had made their escape from the press and the public.

THE VERA LEE II'S FIRST OWNER



Lawrence W. McDowell

Amazingly, Vera Lee II is only a TWO-owner boat and remained the same family for over 75 years. Her first owner was Larry McDowell Sr., WHO literally bought the Vera Lee II off the show floor in Los Angeles on 30 May 1940.

Larry was a radio celebrity, former Director of the Long Beach Marine Department and one of the early founders and Commodore of the Long Beach Yacht Club. Larry McDowell Sr. and Vera Lee II (named after his wife Vera) were also charter members of the Classic Yacht Association.

When Larry passed away in 1997, he was buried at sea from the VERALEE II.

Larry's daughter, Helen Windham, was raised on the boat and has watched over it since her father passed away. She and her husband Bob Windham faithfully restored the boat and continued to preserve this family heirloom until 2014.



Helen Windham (Larry's daughter) grew up on the Vera Lee II and expertly took care of the Vera Lee II herself.



Helen constantly kept up the Vera Lee II with the help of her husband Bob.

VERA LEE II THROUGH THE YEARS

Larry McDowell picked out his favorite mooring spot at Cherry Cove that they still have today.



Cherry Cove, Catalina - 1940



Cherry Cove, Catalina - 1960

VERA LEE II'S NEW OWNERS: THE WILLIAMS FAMILY

In 2014, Carol Williams purchased Vera Lee II. Carol is a member of the Classic Yacht Association (CYA) and Vera Lee II is the only one of the original 13 charter yachts that is still a member of the CYA.

Carol, Woody and Bill Williams fully restored the Vera Lee II in over a year long restoration project.

The restoration was truly a labor of love, worked on, researched, supervised, organized and watched over carefully by Woody (a life-time boat enthusiast) along with Bill, Carol and their friends.

Vera Lee II is moored at the Long Beach Yacht Club, Basin 4, in the Alamitos Bay, Long Beach, CA, directly across from the William's homes.



Bill, Carol, Woody and Tony, the shipyard manager

EXTERIOR STAINING AND VARNISHING

In the beginning, it started out rough - We were not happy with this initial job.

So our first staining job was a lesson learned (one of many more to come).



None of the wood grain was showing through like it had originally

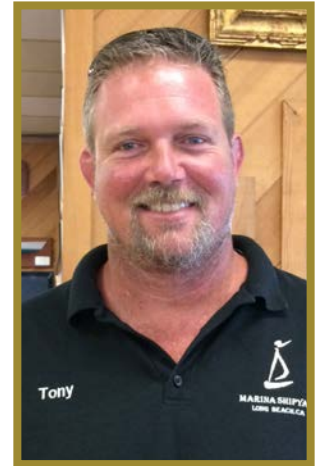


The paint looked opaque and muddy.

WE MOVED THE VERA LEE II TO THE LONG BEACH MARINA SHIPYARD



Jerry Tretter, Owner



Tony Wasson, Manager

After our early problems with the restoration, we moved the Vera Lee II over to the Long Beach Marina Shipyard, hiring many individuals and experts to help.

The owner of the shipyard, Jerry Tretter's grandfather and father were close friends of Vera Lee's original owner Larry McDowell and of Helen Windham, Larry's daughter.

Jerry Tretter knew the Vera Lee II's history well and proved to be a great resource in our quest for the very best restoration possible. The Shipyard manager, Tony Wasson worked with Carol, Woody and Bill Williams on the journey ahead.

What a wonderful place - our Long Beach Marina Shipyard!



EXTERIOR STAINING AND VARNISHING

Joaquin and Raymond from the Long Beach Shipyard took over the staining and varnishing, under Woody's watchful eye.



Joaquin Plancarte



Raymond "Mr. Perfect" Cervantes



Stripped down to bare mahogany wood.



The mahogany was bleached to look uniform.



Along the way, we made many needed wood repairs on the Vera Lee's exterior.



Rotted wood was cut out and inlaid with new mahogany



We took on the job of completely refinishing Vera Lee II with a beautiful custom mix of Z-Spar stain and over 12 coats of Crystal by Detco varnish.



A few more coats of varnish to go!



Bill kept everyone jumping with his daily visits and excitement to get it done!

INTERIOR STAINING AND PAINTING

We carried out the beautiful wood restoration into the Vera Lee II's interior with the same stain and varnish combination used on the exterior. While the salon received 12 coats of varnish, the v-birth was in better shape and only required 3.





A mix of 2/3 Hatteras off-white paint and 1/3 flattening was used throughout the Vera Lee's interior to give it a smooth satin finish.



FIRST HAUL OUT

Vera Lee II was hauled out for repairs and painting.

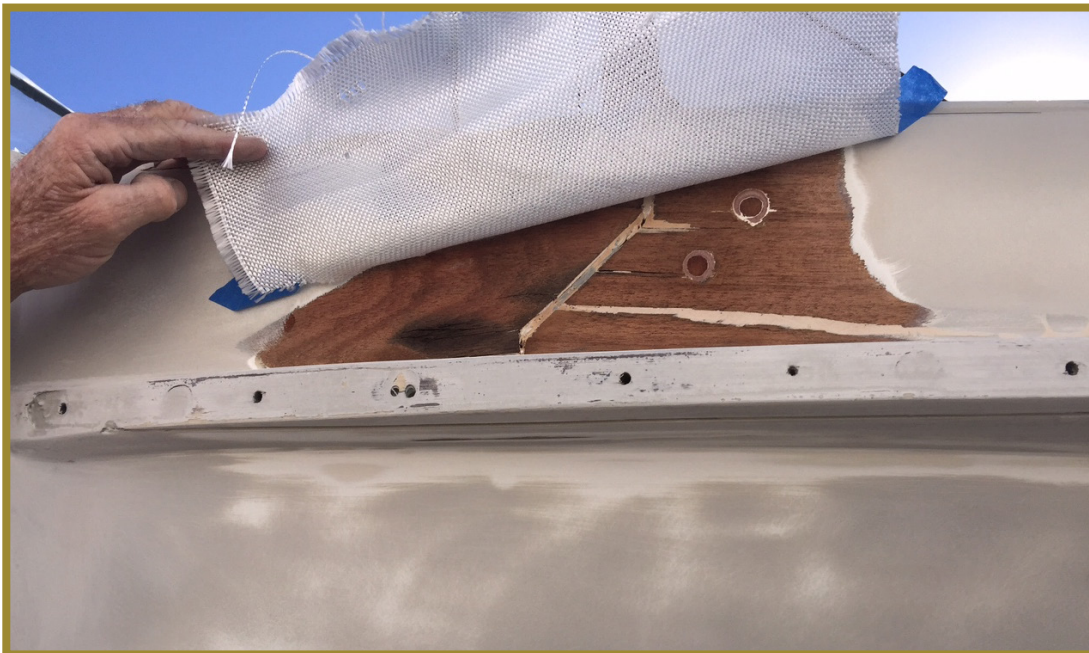


HULL PAINT PART 1

Joe Connors took on the restoration of the top sides, cabin top and fly bridge of the Vera Lee II. With over 30 years of experience, Joe is one of the most respected yacht restorer at the Long Beach Shipyard. He was great!



Joe Connors, yacht restorer



The toe rail on the starboard side was blown apart around the chocks and we had to repair it with fiberglass.



Minor repairs around the waterline, aft and deck areas were done using West epoxy systems.



3 coats were applied to Vera Lee II's sides. A coat of high built epoxy primer, one coat of finish primer and a coat of Alexseal cloud white coating.

DECK PAINT

We carried out the exterior renovation of the Vera Lee II to the cabin top and fly bridge using the same Alexseal white cloud coating.



Sanded down cabin top



Freshly painted



A beautiful moondust non-skid pattern was laid out on both cabin top and fly bridge.



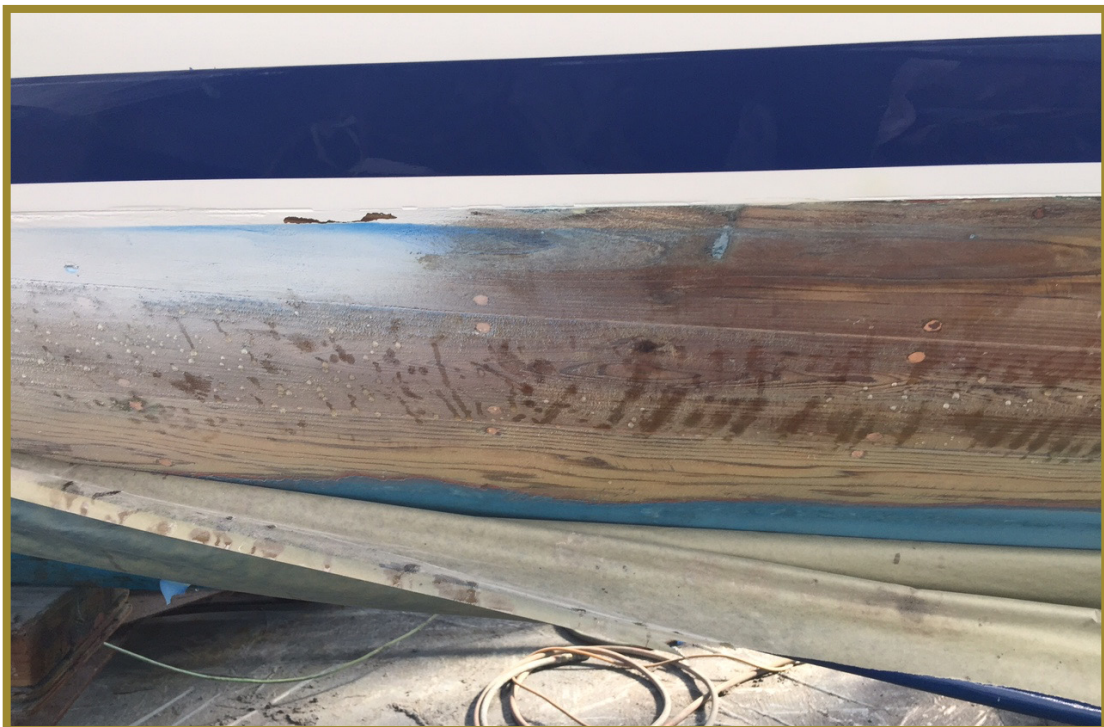
HULL PAINT PART 2

We took on the painting of the hull starting with the gunwale.



Gunwale freshly painted

The hull was then sanded down to bare wood. We payed the seams with a seam compound to anticipate the wood movements once inside the water. Fortunately, Vera Lee II was well built and its structure barely moved throughout the years.



Sanded down



Woody watched the restoration every step of the way - Here with Tony



3 coats of Z-Spar pro blue paint were applied to the hull.
The first one was mixed with 50% thinner to allow the paint the penetrate the wood easily.



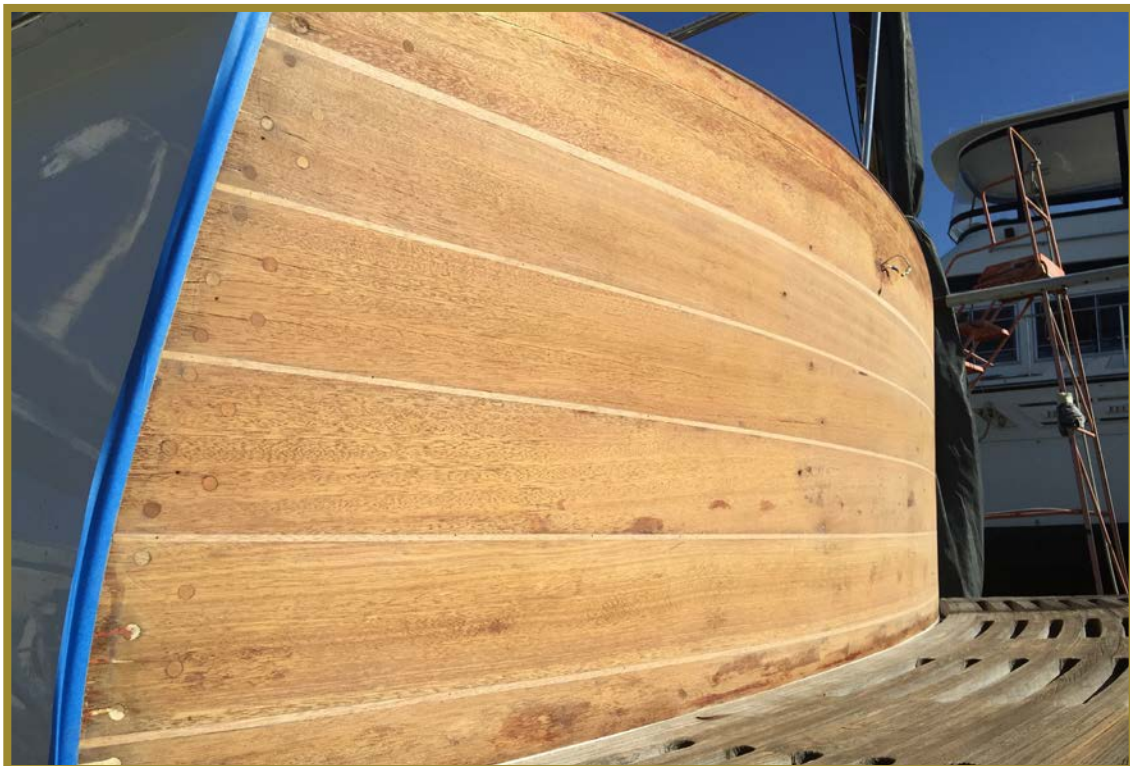
During this process in which the boat was out of the water, a transducer and underwater lights were installed on the hull.



The exterior paint job is complete!

TRANSOM

The transom was splined and new mahogany wood was inlaid.



NAME BOARD

Jim Kuhn hand carved and painted the name and hailing port boards with 22,5 carat gold.
The board was stream bent to match contour of the transom.



CUSTOM CARPENTRY

Many elements on the interior of the Vera Lee II were redesigned and fabricated.



The interior table was redesigned with a sea rail to prevent items from rolling off and a custom glass top.



We rebuilt the shore power inlet housing with mahogany.

NEW TEAK DECK

We had a beautiful new teak deck built. We started out by filling the voids in the existing deck with epoxy to create a solid platform. Thanks to Helen's hard work maintaining the Vera Lee II, the deck was sound.



Previous deck

Our new custom fabricated teak-deck was applied on top of the existing mahogany deck.



New teak deck, classic design with natural finish

NEW COPPER ELECTRICAL COVER

We also re-designed the wiring going from the cabin to the fly bridge which was previously showing. The many wires are now encased between the deck beams and directed to the port bow corner of the salo, running inside this timeless copper pipe.



Before



After

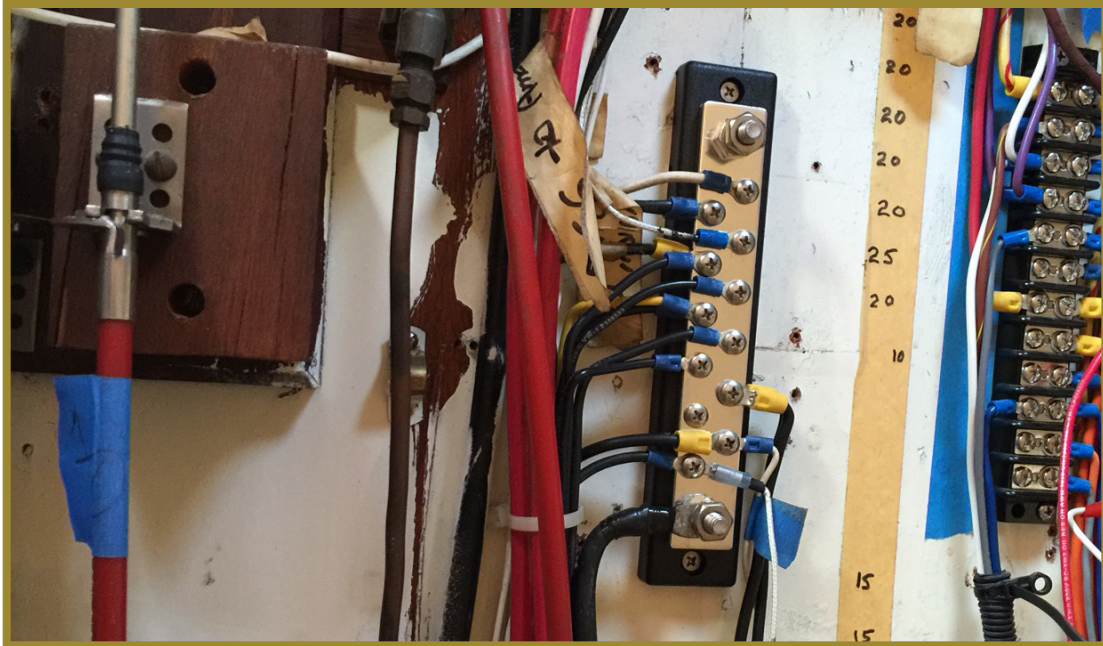
CHROMING

Hardware on the Vera Lee II was chromed. Original parts like the window covers, vents, Elco gauge panels now look like new!

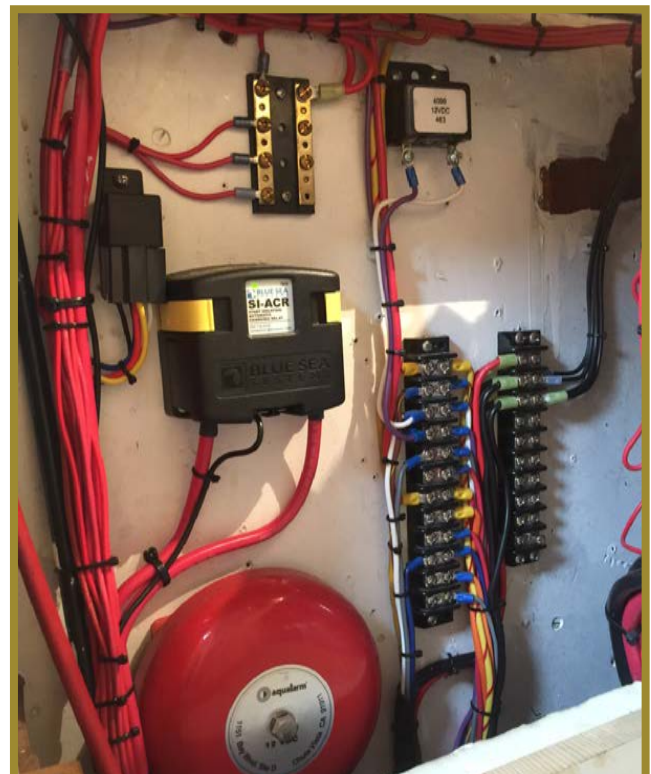


ALL NEW ELECTRICAL

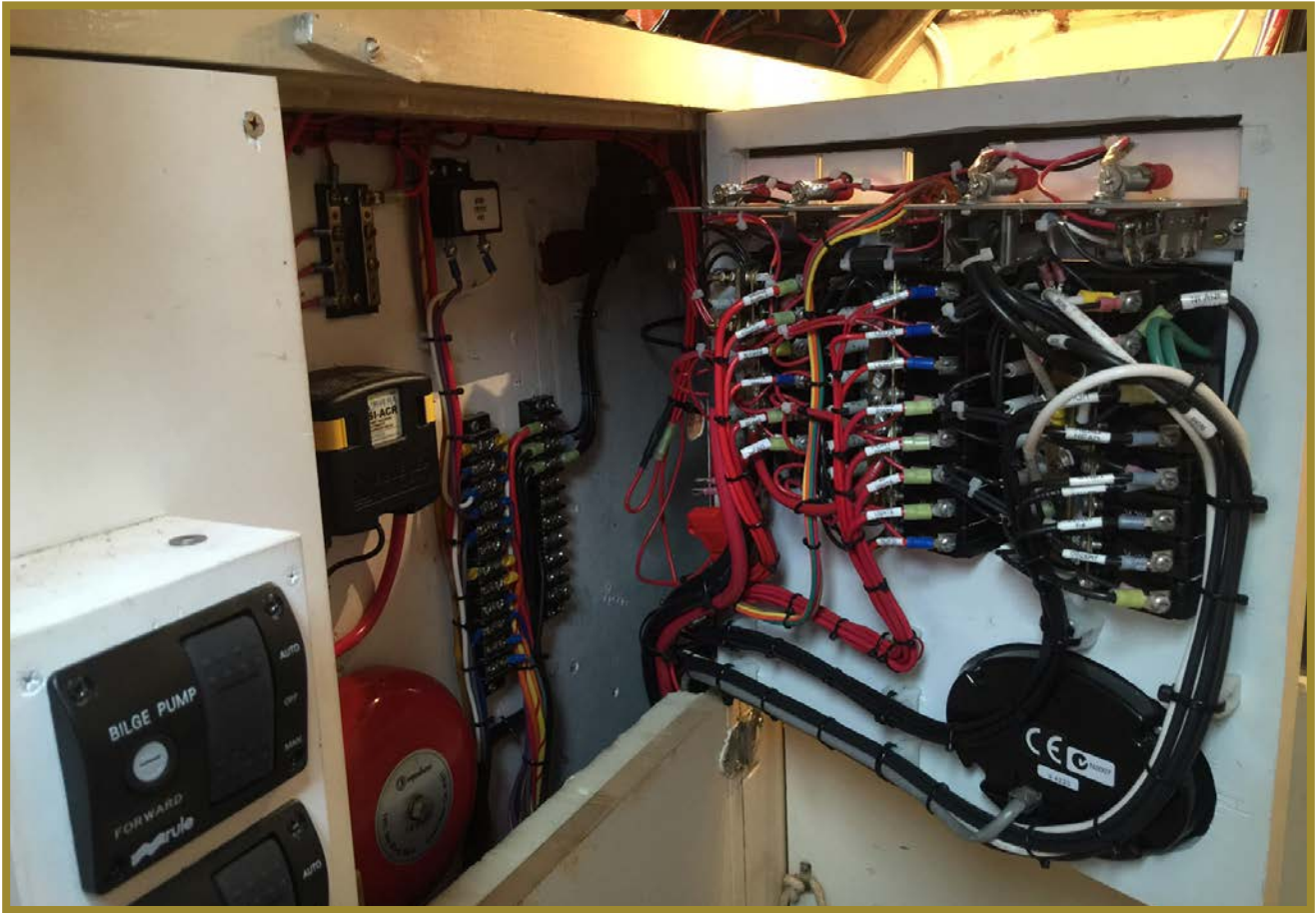
We replaced the entire electrical system of the Vera Lee II. From the bilge pumps to the cabin lights, nothing was spared.



First, this panel was installed.



We later upgraded to a new electrical panel



See schematics for a listing of all the upgrades made to the electrical system.

ANCHOR MARINE CANVAS

Ken Fogg, Owner of Anchor Marine Canvas, designed many shades, covers and curtains, for both the exterior and interior of the Vera Lee II using the highest quality materials.



Ken can do everything!



Brand new seating in the salon.



Custom seating for the aft deck.



New mattresses in the v-birth.

Bill said we needed a taller aft deck, so we did a re-design of the aft deck cover that would be comfortable for the tall men of the family.



Finally - We can stand up now!



New bimini top

ENGINE



Gary Prestigard, Boat mechanic extraordinaire discussing engine progress with Woody

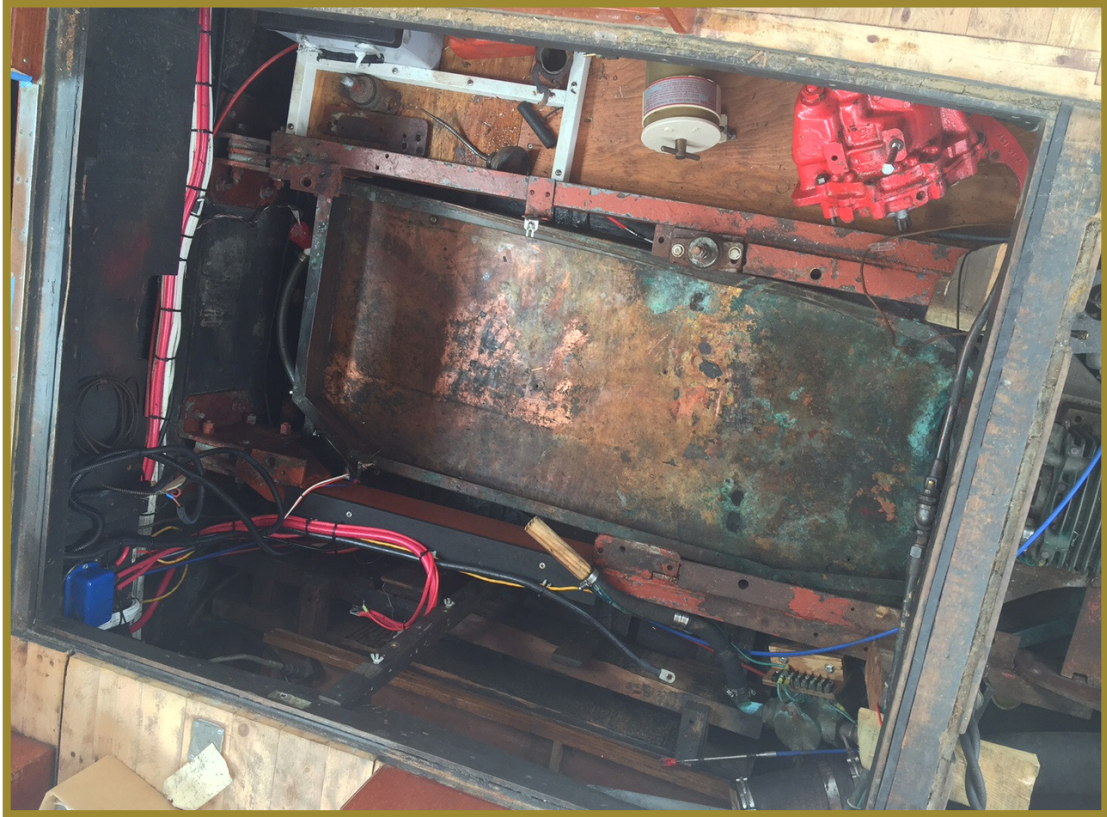
Prior to Gary's renovation, the Vera Lee's engine would not start. The fuel injection pump was contaminated with rust and dirt causing the plungers and barrels to seize up. The injection pump and the injectors were sent to the fuel shop for cleaning repairs.

There was also no oil on the dipstick even though oil was present in the bilge. The decision was made to take the engine out of the boat. The oil pan was badly corroded and needed to be taken off to be replaced.

During the cleaning of the head, Gary found out that the seal of the valve stem needed to be replaced. The heads were taken to the machine shop for a valve job.

The exhaust elbow was corroded and replaced along with the salt water and fresh water pumps. A new thermostat and muffler were also installed.

While the engine was out of the boat in Gary's shop, the engine compartment was stripped down of unnecessary parts, like the external fuel pump that were unused and new fuel lines were installed.



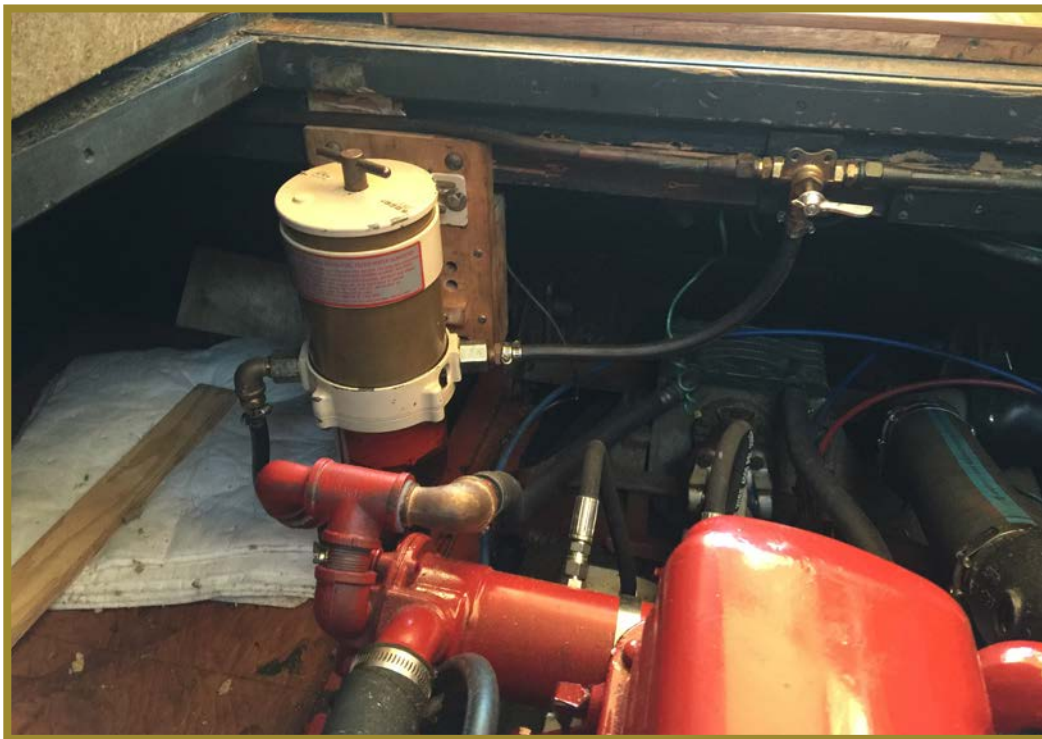
The engine was removed to replace the oil pan, which was corroded.



At the shop



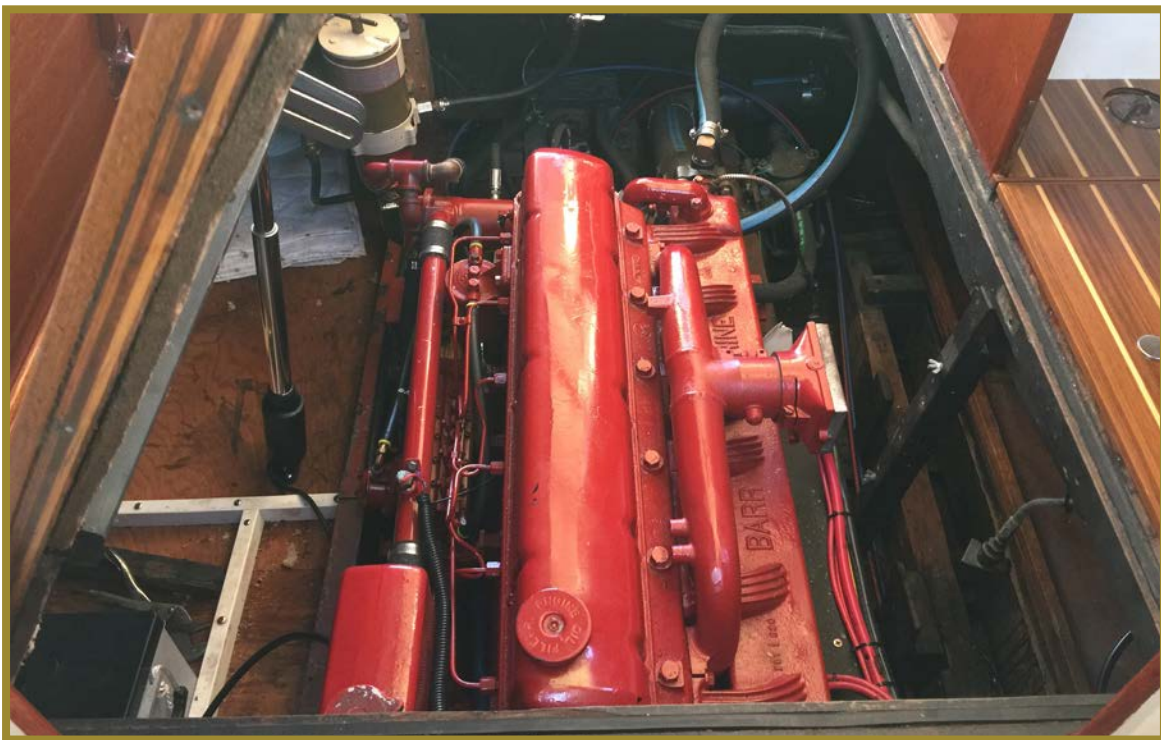
The engine has been thoroughly cleaned and put back together



New fuel lines were installed.



This lift was installed to help with opening and closing the heavy hatch



It has been tuned up and is now READY TO GO!

NEW INTERIOR FLOORING

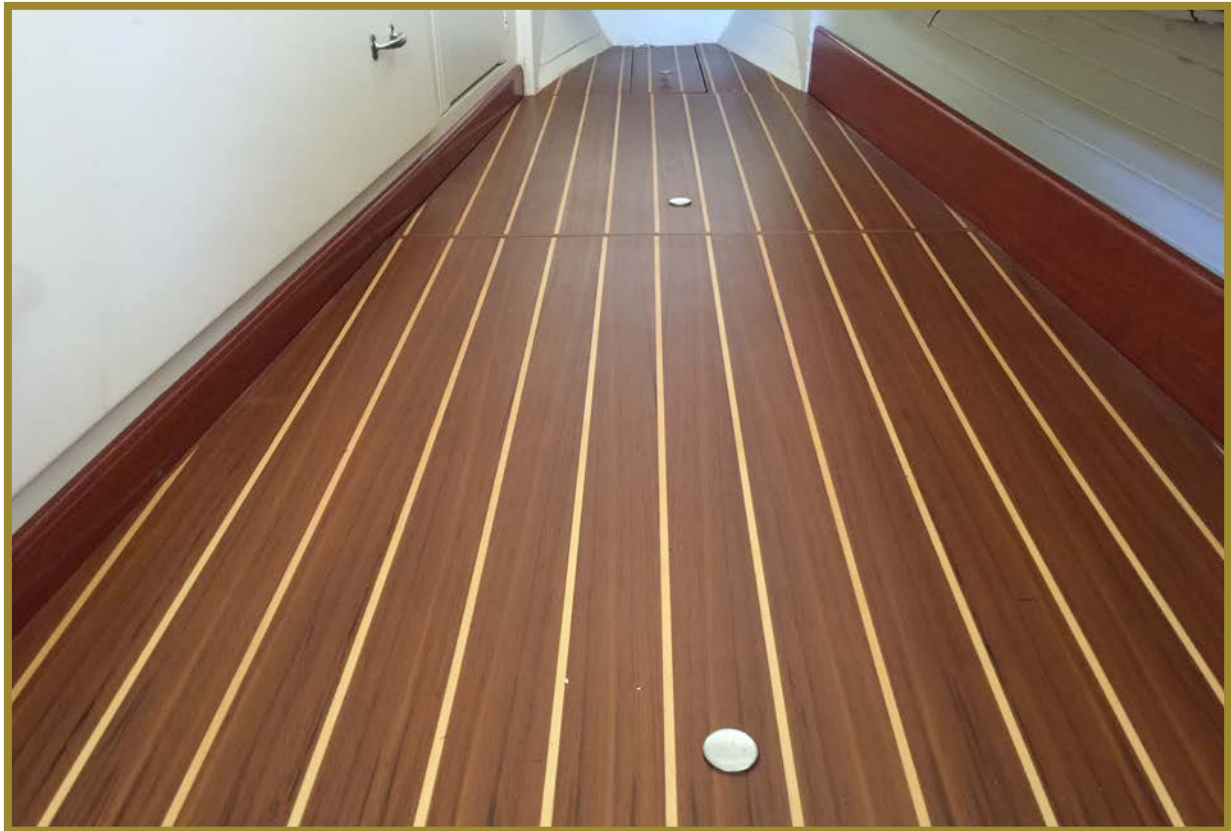
Before the restoration, the wood planks in the cabin had no integrity. The floor would bend and creak. New floor boards were fabricated. Tony redesigned the entire space with solid teak wood for durability which was glued with epoxy on the new floor boards.



Old carpet in the v-birth



New teak floor in the salon.



New teak flooring by Tony Wasson, Long Beach Marina Shipyard wood craftsman.



GALLEY

We fabricated a new stainless steel counter top and splash rails for the galley.



Counter top in previous galley



New stainless steel counter top

SECOND HAUL OUT “AGAIN ?”

A second haul out was needed to repair the underwater lights



Repairing the underwater lights

THIRD HAUL OUT “HERE WE GO AGAIN !”

Vera Lee II was hauled out a third time to fix two frozen engine valves and to reset the zinc bolt.



The zinc bolt is waterproof again

FOURTH HAUL OUT “LAST BUT NOT LEAST”

Finally, Vera Lee II was hauled out a fourth time to be entirely surveyed. At the same time, the zinc bolt was replaced and relocated.



Jim Wallace, marine surveyor gave the Vera Lee II a throughout inspection.



Tony and Pepe, reinforcing the Vera Lee II's hull with over 500 screws to make it perfect.



Woody talking with Jim about possible future work to be done.



Jerry and François, part of our renovation team became knowledgeable yachtsmen over the year long renovation.

TRIAL RUN

Carol, Woody and Bill took a first trial run with Tony. Woody watched over a rundown of the newly rebuilt engine and electrical system and made sure everything ran smoothly during the ride.



Carol and Tony, Captain for the day.

PUTTING ON THE FINAL TOUCHES

Helen Windham stopped by to help put the final touches to the renovation with her expert eye.



Jerry, the Shipyard's owner and Helen, reviewing of all the work that has been done.

TIME TO SET SAIL!

After a year long renovation, the Vera Lee II is back to its original beauty.



Long Beach Marina - 2015



Helen and Carol.



Helen and Bob Windham on the newly renovated Vera Lee II.



Bill Williams at Vera Lee II's first showing at the Long Beach Yacht Club.