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AUGUST 2012 \$6.50 US/CANADA



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Publications mail agreement no. 40790554



ABERNETHY & GAUDIN BOATBUILDERS

As the schooner *PASSING CLOUD* embarks on a new chapter in her life, a thorough refurbishing of the rig was in order. Her builder, Brian Walker (see sidebar *Brian's Boat* on page 15), took both sticks out of a 70 ft-plus Sitka spruce log. The square section mainmast was halved to rout out a central wire conduit then glued back together while the foremast was fabricated with a box section with four 2 1/2-in thick sides, making it near solid around the wire conduit. However, the years had taken their toll (*PASSING CLOUD* was launched in 1974) and the masts had significant checking, cracks and glue failure. Given the masts' lengths A&G rented space in an Ogden Point warehouse for the refurb. The glue joints on the main mast were routed out and splined with long scarfed lengths of Sitka spruce from Westwind Hardwood (Sidney BC). Three sides of the foremast were routed down one inch then 20-ft lengths of one-inch spruce were used to build the surfaces back up, scarfed and epoxied in place. Checks and cracks in both masts were routed out and filled with tapered splines. A&G shaped new spruce spreaders plus a second set for each mast. Mainstay Yachttech of Sidney had designed a double spreader rig to distribute the load on the masts more efficiently and installed new stainless steel chain plates and running/standing rigging. In the photo (left) *PASSING CLOUD* receives the new double-spreader rig at Ogden Point. This past winter Abernethy & Gaudin completed a large project on another Victoria-based classic sailing vessel. A new Burmese teak 1 3/4-in deck was laid on the Canadian Navy's sail-training ketch, *HMCS ORIOLE*. In the photo (see next page) Jean Gaudin, Erin Philps, Rob



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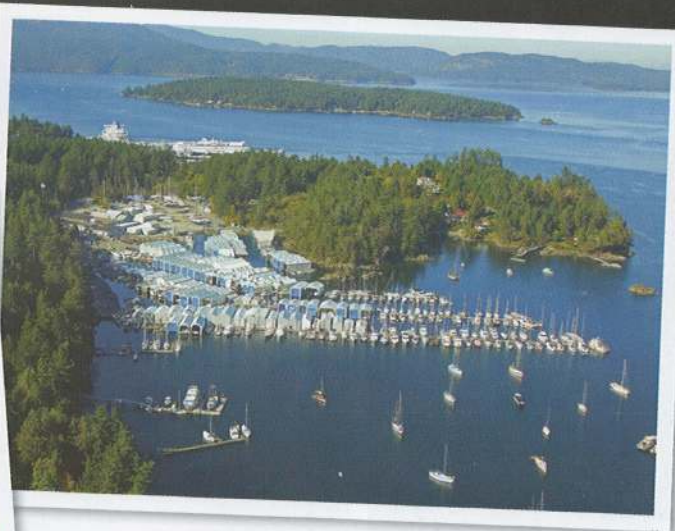
Brian's Boat

As this was being written in mid-July Russ Markel's OuterShores Expeditions had the *PASSING CLOUD* pointed north towards Central Coast and Haida Gwaii waters, 38 years almost to the day after shipwright Brian Walker launched the schooner from his Gorge Waterway boat shop in Victoria BC. OuterShores is commencing its first season of marine ecotour expeditions and marine ecosystem research with *PASSING CLOUD* which is Transport Canada-certified for 14 berthed passengers. After three decades of building commercial fish boats in the 35 to 40-ft range, in about 1969 Walker turned his skilled hands to William Roué's (Halifax NS) design #165 for a 65'0" x 18'0" x 8'0" work/fishing schooner. Roué was the designer of the legendary schooner *BLUENOSE*. Walker planned ocean cruising but he altered the design for more hold volume for coastal freighting and fish packing with the foremast boom for working cargo. He also changed the sail plan from gaff to marconi rig, testing this

with a two-foot scale model in the boat pond on Victoria's Dallas Road. He took off the bowsprit, opting for a large, single head-sail, and moved the foremast aft to maintain the rig's balance. A resourceful and innovative West Coast boatbuilder and also an inveterate salvager who could make something of bits and pieces (a Model A Ford engine, axle and driveshaft turned a series of drive-belts for his shop tools) he assembled or made foundry patterns for *PASSING CLOUD*'s deck gear and fittings – anchor windlass, fairleads, halyard winches, a warping head. A special cutter was forged to sever the bolts holding the Burmese teak deck down on the *SS CARDENA* which was being scrapped at Capital Iron on Victoria Harbour and *PASSING CLOUD* had a deck. After five years the schooner was launched and Walker and his family embarked on the first of two South Seas voyages. In 1984 Walker and shipwright Ted Knowles, a long-time friend who helped with the build, took the schooner to San Francisco where they won the Clipper Perpetual Trophy race, taking the trophy out of the USA for the first time in 117 years. With her tremendous power to windward *PASSING CLOUD* dominated the Pacific Northwest schooner racing circuit in the early '80s. Brian Walker passed on in 1998. He and his wife Dora had sold *PASSING CLOUD* to Greg Sager of Victoria in 1989 and the schooner was in the SEA Programs fleet with *DUEN* and *A FINE MADNESS* providing sail-training programs, mainly to high-school students from Calgary. *PASSING CLOUD* was sold to a Calgary philanthropist in early 2007 who leased the vessel back to SEA Programs for five years. Russ Markel entered a lease-to-own arrangement with the gentleman in early 2012. Maintaining his long connection with *PASSING CLOUD*, Ted Knowles has been guiding the new owner on her upkeep, most recently taking him through the fine art of caulking deck seams.



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