

Project started with purchase of hull



Greg Kerkof installs light fixtures above the roll-top desk in the main salon. Kerkof served on USS Tunny when he was in the Navy.

JENNIFER JACKSON/FOR PENINSULA DAILY NEWS

bathbub, refrigerator and freezer.

They made fiberglass hatch spigots, the "well" in the ceiling created by the opening.

Other touches include making a tongue-and-groove countertop for the galley from "Ralph's maple," a tree a neighbor had cut down, by cutting and routing the pieces after the tree was slabbed out by a mill.

Wanting a impervious surface behind the stove, they took a panel of stainless steel and etched a seascape onto it by covering it with contact paper, cutting the designs out with an X-ACTO knife and sand-blasting it.

"We made everything but the boat rails, bow pulpit and the davits on the stern," Greg said.

"Nobody 'came in' and did it."

They also installed the engine and the hydraulic system, the shaft and propeller, and did all the wiring and plumbing, including

installing Pullman bath fixtures in the guest stateroom.

On Oct. 30, 2009 — a Friday — the boat came out of the boat shed and was trailered to Port Townsend, where **Carol Hasse** of Port Townsend Sails and **Liza Vizzini** and **Dan Kulin** of Port Townsend Rigging took over.

'Gave us wings'

"We built the boat, but they are the people who gave us wings," Greg said.

They christened the cutter *Toccata*, a musical term defined as a free-wheeling composition that displays the technique of the performer.

From the Italian for "touch," a toccata is characterized by virtuoso passages.

"It's an appropriate name for a hand-built boat," Sheryl said.

The couple said they still love the boat, which they have lived on for more than

two years, first "on the hard" — a boating expression meaning out of the water — in Port Townsend and then at the Port Hadlock Marina.

They have made a couple of shake-down cruises to the San Juan Islands, Sheryl said, but returned to the boatyard in November to have the propeller and shaft replaced.

"WE replaced the propeller and shaft," Greg corrected her.

They are now putting the finishing touches on the boat, with Greg using the roll-top desk he built as a work area.

The drawers holds navigational charts.

"When we started, they didn't have GPS," Sheryl said, referring to the Global Positioning System.

"Now we have GPS AND charts."

The building project also outlasted six family pets — three cats and three dogs — including Skookum, who was a puppy when they

bought the hull from Arthur.

Jake, an 8-year-old golden retriever, took over the watch from Ruby and serves as canine first mate.

This spring, the couple plan to go up the Inside Passage and stay in Alaska if they find a place they like better than Port Townsend.

They dubbed the lifeboat *Fugue*, meaning a flight from reality, but the reality is that the couple put their lives into building the boat.

"We never gave up," Greg said.

Sheryl and Greg said they didn't keep the napkin on which they sketched a dream 30 years ago, but it was very similar, they noted, to the way their *Toccata* turned out.

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