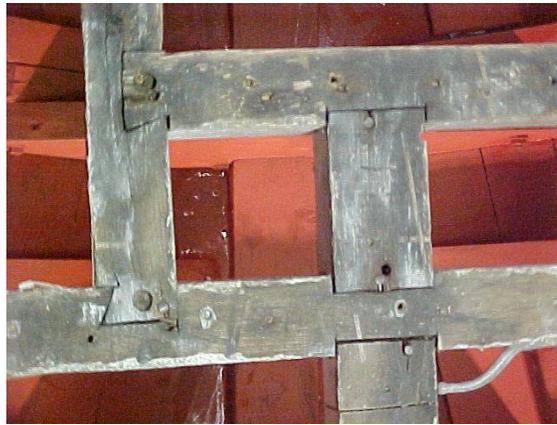


MEMORY MONDAYS 10 THRU 19



One reason for removing the 3/4" plywood deck was it was heavy and not very strong. The other reason Skip did this was to gain access to the seventy years of paint, which he scraped away. I never did take a picture of Skip lying full out with a scrapper attached to a stick used to clean the paint away from her stem. It was a precarious position to say the least. In all, there were three, five-gallon buckets of paint removed from these deck beams and the interior of the hull, at the forward end. After stripping all the paint, two coats of red lead was laid on the interior of the hull and the deck beams were sanded and varnished. Her deck beams were made from oak and these are still with MISTRESS. The hull framing in this area is also original. Since the day MISTRESS was first launched, she has had a giant dorade ventilator right up on the bow. Skip is certain this is the reason this area of the boat never rotted out.



This is the original joiner work, which is around the forward hatchway. They are half dovetails and still strong and tight after seventy years. When Skip discovered this joiner work in such fine condition after so many years, he did not have the heart to remove them, wanting to preserve that part of her history. On occasion, that is to say, when one of us hits our head while maneuvering in the V-berth, Skip wonders if he should not have also removed these and cold molded a new deck without the beams allowing us a little more headroom. Then again, sometimes history is more important than comfort.



This picture I just received from the previous owner. It was taken in September of 1969. Thank you, Patty. What a great thing for you to share with us.

Since the onset of this project, Skip and I have been most interested in learning all we could about MISTRESS's history. Seventy years is a long time and we knew she spent most of her time in Chicago and Milwaukee. We found information from the Lloyds Registry of American Yachts and discovered she had several names in her first fifteen years. It was not until around the late 1940's that she became MISTRESS, a name I am certain she will carry for the rest of her days. There are stories about two brothers who owned her for a short time during prohibition days and there may have been some rum-running going on. Just a few months after she arrived to our home, I happened to find an article about her in a sailing magazine while waiting in the doctor's office. The man who wrote the story was telling his tale of being on board a Schooner named HAPPY HOLIDAY back in 1940 while racing in Chicago. This was MISTRESS's original name and I was dumb struck when I saw it. He ended his story saying he did not know what had become of this Schooner but considering she was a wooded boat, he imagined she was long gone. I contacted the magazine

giving them our phone number and address and asked for it to be given to the author, which they did. When he called us on the phone, Skip and I took great pleasure in telling him, HAPPY HOLIDAY, now MISTRESS, was in our back yard undergoing a major restoration and rebuild. In the early 1960's, there was an engine explosion, which blew off her aft end. This is when she was extended to 50' on deck, and why all of her sisters are only 47'. For a short time in the 60's she was also rigged as a Cutter in the hopes she would be faster, however, she returned to a Schooner and has remained so ever since. In February of 2002, we found one of her sister ships in Michigan who told us about another Eastward in Vineyard Haven. We have had the pleasure of staying aboard both these Schooners thanks to their generous owners. The Eastward plans, designed by Eldridge McInnis are in Mystic Seaport and show two interior designs, galley forward and galley aft. MISTRESS and her sisters were built galley aft. Although MISTRESS is now galley forward, her interior is the design of F. W. "Skip" Joest.

I could go on and on about all that transpired before she arrived in our backyard, but with it being seventy years, it is just too long a story to tell now and therefore I will save it for another blog. For now, I will stick to this story, MISTRESS and the Master Shipwright who transformed her from a fresh water sailboat to an ocean cruiser yacht.

MEMORY MONDAY 11

Skip: "This is the first part of the transom. I cut off the old one because it was flat with square corners at the back. I then reframed it on the inside to give it the shape I wanted, a curved, raked, reversed, transom. I then cold molded four diagonal layers of 1/8" Okume plywood that was three inner layers of Okume with two outer layers of Sapele. They were cold molded using epoxy. When I sanded it, the lighter spots you see in this picture are the Okume showing through". I asked Skip what Sapelle is, he explained it is a high-grade mahogany.



This was the first of many steps before the final transom would be finished.

MEMORY MONDAY 12



Using scrap wood Skip made these strips and fastened them to MISTRESS. The inside shape is the shape he wants the bulwarks to end up with. When I ask him how he figures these things out, he simply says, "I know what I want for the final shape and then I just work backwards". I realize this is much easier for him to see than someone like, myself. I believe it must be the artist in him who so easily sees what the end-product will look like.

Strip planking the bulwarks in & Rick's frame nail gun. Skip says, "The next time I have to strip plank a boat I'm gonna buy me a frame nail gun". When I ask him, why, he smiles, says, "Oh man". Even with a misfire or two, a framing gun saves a lot of time.



The first strip went down on the deck, clamped tight to the temporary molds, then fastened to the deck. Each layer he then built upon the one before as he fastened it all with glue and 3 & 1/2" nails, every 6 inches.



Starting with the 6" radius on the transom the temporary molds were cut to shape for the bulwarks.

MEMORY MONDAY 14



Defining moments in your life. Everyone has them. Generally discovered in hindsight but defining moments just the same. If I had only done something this way vs. that way you ask yourself, or if I had gone up instead of down how different things would have turned out or how much faster I could have completed the task. Well you are looking at one of Skip's defining moments during his life while restoring MISTRESS. You see, her chain plates had been inside the hull and through the deck and this was not something Skip wanted. He removed all her former chain plates finding many more on each side than there should have been except if you take into consideration all the trials her rig went through to discover just how fast she could sail. Instead, Skip opted for the lofty goal of setting the chain plates flush to the hull. Here, he has cut away the exact amount of hull to insure that when all is done, and the thicknesses of all future material is taken into consideration, the chain plates will end up flush to the hull. Yes, he knew when he started this would create more work for himself; he just didn't know yet how much of a

commitment this would be. I have told you all before there were many hours devoted to these 16 chain plates. Skip would end up making the chain plates from scratch and polishing all but two, to mirror image. I will save the story of the fiery death the homemade polisher had just before all the chain plates were completed. However, the flush part would have him repeatedly making up templates just the right thickness to insure his success. I would laugh when Skip would explain to me the thickness of paint and how important it was to calculate that thickness to give him his final results. I just didn't understand how perfect he really wanted them to be, and of course, I didn't understand the importance, at least at the time. If you ask Skip now if he would do it again, he will immediately reply with a resounding, "No!" Then after a pause, he is apt to say, "Then again, if someone is willing to pay me my hourly, I guess I would do it again".

The end product, is something to be very proud of for sure.

MEMORY MONDAY 15



At this juncture, a jig was made so Skip could accurately position the rudder hardware once it was time to put everything back together. The plan for MISTRESS's newly restored hull is to fiberglass her. After years of research, Skip has decided to use a method invented by Allan H. Vaitses. Alan successfully covered over 300 boats with this method and all have survived the test of time. Essentially the method consists of putting on a layer of fiberglass matt, and a layer of heavy (24 oz.) woven roving with polyester resin. Then all gets stapled, every 3", into the wooden hull. Additional matt and roving is then built up. The amount needed is in direct proportion to the size of the boat. MISTRESS received a total of 6 layers and 22,000 staples when it was all completed. To learn more check out Vaitses book, "Covering a wooden boat with fiberglass".



Once again, understanding all the thicknesses of future work Skip cut away about 4 inches of wood off the back of the boat. He then painted it with Red Lead in preparation for the fiberglass.



This shows the fiberglass on the aft end of the dead wood. This was done before the hull was glassed because it was critical that everything would line back up and the rudder would again fit properly. Also at this time, a fiberglass tube was installed for the propeller shaft to ride in. This would eliminate any chance of worms getting in. Glass was put on and Skip would grind away at it until it was fair. It took about 90 hours for all the work in Memory Monday 15 to be completed. Later, when the over 250 lb. rudder was replaced it fit perfect and swung easily with just a two finger push.

MEMORY MONDAY 16



Transom number 3 I believe. Skip has now given MISTRESS's transom a finished look with name and all. However, this is just another step towards the finished product.

From the last transom picture I showed you Skip also put another layer of Sapelle over that. Then he epoxy coated the whole thing. Once this was finished, he put her name on to trial the font and size.



Here, Skip has glassed over the transom to get MISTRESS ready for the two big weekends she will have during the glassing parties. These two weekends will bring us good friends to help us through the process.



In this photo, Skip is fairing in the keel. She was originally fitted with stone ballast, however, sometime in her past it was removed and iron was attached to compensate for the weight. You can also see the first coat of red lead has been painted on her hull.



This picture shows MISTRESS pretending to be the big giant pumpkin. With her second coat of red lead, the transom glassed over, the keel faired in, and the chain plate impressions set in, she is now a fully restored wooden boat hull and is ready for glassing.

MEMORY MONDAY 17

We are now about two years into this project and own a fully restored wooden hull. All the prep work is finished and it is time for the fiberglass. One finds out who one's friends are when they throw a glassing party. Your very best friends come back the following week to glass the other side. It is a nasty, messy, stinky job. All of our good friends came back the next weekend to glass the starboard side. The Wednesday between, Skip and two other friends glassed the keel, which received extra layers for strength. In total, she received five layers of fiberglass alternating 24 oz. Woven Roving and 1½ oz. mat with an additional three layers from above the garboard to under the ballast.

Skip and I made up special tee shirts with a drawing of MISTRESS on the front, details about her, (length, year built, designer, etc.) and on the back in big bold letters they read, MISTRESS CREW. Each of the great friends who came for this glassing party received one of these shirts, along with good food, beer, and other cold drinks. A MISTRESS CREW shirt always gets you aboard.

MEMORY MONDAY 18



Once the glassing parties were over Skip moved MISTRESS's jack stands and laid up the glass in those areas. In this picture, he has started covering her hull with a sacrificial layer of white putty he intends to sand off in about a week. You see, Skip wants to post-cure the hull, which involves building an oven around MISTRESS, then setting three bullet heaters on high, giving him 1,000,000 BTU's, while using seven fans to circulate the air, and cook her. This he did in order to shrink the resin so that the glass will never show through, that is, unless she was to get hotter than she will on this day. The white putty acts as a barrier for the hull against contaminants caused by the heaters. Once the post-cure process is over and she cools down, the putty will be ground off taking with it any residue.

It must have taken nerves of steel for him to start those heaters as he thought about the two years of work he had into her and how dry she must be considering how long she has been out of the water now. He had my meat thermometer, which he stuck in the oven at several locations throughout the day keeping a watchful eye on all this dry timber. When she hit about 190 degrees, he went in, climbed the stairs, and went below to check on things. He tentatively placed his hand on her hull but could only touch the hull for a second because of the heat it held. Returning to his post outside, Skip paced back and forth for eight hours while she cooked at 191 degrees. By the time he was ready to turn the heaters off, all seven fans had died from the intense heat. He pulled the Visqueen oven down so she could begin to cool. However, at the dead wood, (see Memory Monday 15 C) with the three to four inches of fiberglass that had been built up in this area, it took six additional hours to cool. Within a few days, all the white putty was ground off.

MEMORY MONDAY 19



The next step in the process is to make MISTRESS fair. 500 of Skip's hours were spent on long boarding to achieve the fairness we now have. Often, he would mud in the evening and long board during the day. Ladies, if you want your husbands to look buff, let them fair a 50 footer, it does wonders for a man's physique. During this time, Skip refused to take any time off insisting that his shoulders would not accept such folly. It took a week of fairing before his shoulders stop hurting and taking just one day off caused his shoulders to protest violently. Early in the process, an acquaintance was hired to do some of the long boarding. When I attempted to show this man video of the America's Cup boats wishing to point out the fairness, mirror image these hulls have, he refused to look. I was only kidding, but those hulls sure are impressive. Once she was relatively fair, Skip began spraying chaser on the low spots to help identify those areas still needing his

attention. Special care was given to her counter and Skip made that line, razor sharp. Although rarely seen, it still looks good. He carried a baton, which I believe, was eight foot to gauge his progress. He had sanded/long-boarded her hull to 220 grit. On the day he put that baton up to the hull and found her fair, he was obviously delighted. He then brought out a much larger baton; one I believe was twenty foot long. He placed that baton on her hull, surveyed the situation, then he took it back to the wood shop and hid it deep within. She was fair enough he thought.