

Mercator – Brief history and rebuild work list:

Mercator was built by Douglas Baron, a professional builder of timber fishing boats for the north Pacific salmon fishery, as his own boat, in 1974, in Sidney, Vancouver. She has cruised the US west coast and the Pacific extensively. She has been based in both Hongkong and Singapore for part of her life.

Mercator was inherited by Making Waves Foundation in 2017, in very poor condition. She formed the focus for a vocational training program run by MWF (called Wright of Passage). Two professional shipwrights, a variety of specialist contractors, six young trainees and a team of volunteers rebuilt the vessel, with the objective of sailing her to Hobart for the 2019 Wooden Boat Festival.

Over 2018, the following work was done:

- The hull was stripped of all paint, from gunwale to keel by glass blasting. All wiring and much of the interior were also removed.
- 23 frames were replaced or strengthened.
- 3 planks were replaced.
- The vessel was fully refastened with a little over 2000 silicon bronze screws, with timber plugs epoxied in place.
- The hull was spline glued below the waterline, then sheathed with two layers of 440gsm biaxial fiberglass mat in epoxy resin (layup design and materials by ATL Composites).
- The topsides were given three coats of Everdure (wet on wet).
- The whole hull was given two coats of 2 pack epoxy undercoat, followed by 2 coats of single pack polyurethane to the topsides, a two pack boot topping and antifoul.
- The deckhouse was substantially rebuilt, and a new headlining installed.
- The switchboard was rebuilt and the vessel totally rewired. All instrumentation (except the autopilot) and all batteries (cranking and house) were replaced, with a new electronic charging management system.
- The engine was given a thorough overhaul and a new starter motor.
- All spars were removed and rebuilt. Glue lines proved to be suspect, so where glue lines could not be separated, they were cut out and replaced with epoxy glued splines of the same timber. Separated glue lines were cleaned to bare timber then reglued using epoxy. Masts were recoated with three wet on wet coats of Everdure, followed by 2 coats of epoxy two pack and two finish coats of two pack polyurethane. Booms were refinished with six coats of two pack clear polyurethane.
- Every fitting was removed from the masts, overhauled and penetrant dye checked for cracking, then refastened and Sikaflex sealed.
- All winches were stripped and rebuilt
- All sails were overhauled by Hood.
- All running rigging was replaced.

There is an extensive photo library detailing this work, and all invoices are available for verification. In all, over \$180,000 was spent in 2018, along with more than 5000 hours of volunteer and trainee time.

The Hobart voyage was an outstanding success, including crossing Bass Strait in 30 knots of breeze.

In 2020, a further \$11,000 was spent to replace all standing rigging in order to meet insurer's requirements.

Mercator was hauled out in May 2021 for a clean, antifoul and anode replacement (photos available). She is maintained on a weekly basis by the current trainee team and volunteers.

Prepared by A. Davidson, November 2021.