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Right: Extensive beefing up of the mast-step and framing completed.

Below: Ngatira on her way to the convalescent home.

A silver lining to Level-4 lockdown

Words and Photos

By Stephen Horsley

Lockdown came at an opportune time for *Ngatira*, for it was 10 years since her restoration. I also needed to investigate bad leaks from around the rudder box area; she'd had two swampings that resulted in engine submersions.

The causes were identified as incorrect bilge pump installation in the first swamping and a malfunctioning pump in the second. My insurance company agreed to install a new motor, but the leak was not fixed.

I installed a secondary bilge pump that would send me a text message if triggered. There was also major water flow from around the mast step area when on the wind. This area had not been attended to in the restoration



and what I discovered, after a little digging when *Ngatira* was hauled out in early December, was years and years of band-aid fix-ups.

Cutting away the hood ends around the mast area and exposing the seams was a real eye opener. It revealed some nasty voids from over-zealous past owners who'd raked away the stem timbers. The worst voids were 50mm deep and 10mm wide; a big

ask for a bit of caulking and putty to keep water out.

It became obvious the task at hand was growing into more than another quick fix and discussions with Dave Jackson and Martin Robertson at the Sandspit Yacht Club haul-out yard confirmed that I needed to address the mast step.

It's the Achilles heel of most of our fine classic yachts. By the time I added

hardstand fees, travel, petrol and other incidentals, it was obvious the budget would blow out before I'd even bought materials.

The solution was to truck *Ngatira* home, so I could tackle the work myself. The hardest part was ripping into the interior, removing the bulkhead, mast step, floors and the floor shelf. I discovered that what I'd thought was a reasonable mast step structure was actually a later addition on top of the original step.

I imagine *Ngatira* always leaked; past owners have reported constantly pumping water when under sail.

Then came Covid-19 and things started looking bad on the work front. Secretly, I was enjoying my time working on *Ngatira*. I had fantastic advice from good friends Jacques de Kervor



In Pursuit of the Wainamu Dream

By David Cranwell

My life seems to have followed a pathway of projects that take decades rather than years.

The *Wainamu* dream, started over 40 years ago when I bought a copy of *Rudder* magazine with a 16-page bulletin on how to build a Rozinante. I decided then that I was going to build one. Although family and career took precedence, I never lost the dream.

Then in 1995 *Wooden Boat* included an article by Doug Hylan. A few years later I contacted Doug, who agreed to build a kitset. I have extremely limited woodworking skills, but thought I could build a kitset. First joke!

The kitset arrived from Maine, then reality set in. Many OMG moments later, help arrived in the form of Ian McRobie from Auckland. Being a yachtie from way back, he was keen to see her.

Ian's advice was short and to the point. 'Your planking screws are too short, you need some West System glue,

and you'd better get Robert Brooke to look at her.'

The rest is history. Robert came, saw the project, and recommended I engage Marco Scuderi to complete the build. This I did.

Marco had many mistakes to rectify, but after almost five years his beautiful masterpiece returned to the Hawkes Bay, courtesy of Boat Haulage. I named her *Wainamu* after my Great-Grandfather's 1880's tug boat of the same name; he used it to tow rafts of kauri logs down the Henderson creek to the mill at Freemans Bay.

I had some minor woodworking to complete plus puttying and varnishing. For an amateur such as myself, that has been a huge task.

Over the recent years a couple of videos have kept me going. A Rozinante 28 sailing in Finland, and an Off-Centre Harbor video with Maynard Bray and Roger Taylor sailing *Redhead*, the Rozinante built by Doug Hylan.

The journey has been long, but I'm planning to have her in the water later this year.



Above: Robert Brooke (right) lends an informed and attentive ear to details of the *Wainamu* project.

Top: *Wainamu's* sweet lines revealed.

I've been overwhelmed by the generosity of people keen to help me get *Wainamu* in the water. In addition to those already mentioned, special thanks to Peter Yealands for a boatload of timber, Robert Brooke for his patient

guidance, Doug Hylan for his advice and Basil Mawley for the loan of his shed.

The building of *Wainamu* is about following a dream and never giving up. It's an amazing journey with amazing people.

(*Ngatira* continued . . .)

and PeterBrookes. Jacques loaned me a decent band saw and Tanner edge planer, (buzzer), amongst other things, and I was in regular discussions with Peter over the best way forward.

It was decided to start from

scratch and install laminated frames and floors, glued and screwed, and a sturdy mast step spanning six floors with the aft end tying into the forward keel bolt. The stem timber, which I discovered had a scarf joint right under the mast step, had to be

strengthened with strips either side. It also needed a capping, then an apron, for the new floors to rest on.

All this was moving forward at a great pace when we went into level-4 lockdown and I couldn't be happier. Even Jo said, 'Go

work on your boat'. I had got in supplies and working on my beloved *Ngatira* through this time was a dream come true, if not a little daunting at times. There is still a long way to go and I haven't even started on the rudder box yet – but that's another story.