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# Bright Work

*Teak is lots of work, but it makes a boat a classic*

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- [Teak Decks](#)

## Refit

[Click here to see the extensive refurbishment of her teak decks.](#)

OR

Here is a documentation of the work done by Svendsen's Boat Works in Alameda from November 2005 to the present. Click on each phase to see details of the work.

[Phase I: November 2005 through March 2006. Mast rebuild, new rigging, recoring the foredeck, new lifelines and lifeline stanchion bases.](#)

[Phase IB: The work of Phase I continues. From April 2006 through June 2006. New bottom, new shaft, new prop, new cutlass bearing, and a new transom paint job.](#)

[Phase IB Cont. July 2006. The work continues. New B&G instruments, new bilge pump system, huge new holding tank system, and repair of previous grounding damage from the Caribbean.](#)

[Phase II: Electrica System Update, New Force 10 Stove, Bottom Rework Part Deux](#)

[Phase III: Repowering with a new Westerbeke 44; Cleaning and repainting of bilge; Installation of new Furuno NavNet2 radar, GPS, and other electronics; refinishing of cabin sole.](#)

Phase IV: Scheduled for Summer of 2009 just prior to going cruising. This phase will include the installation of a Monitor Windvane with emergency steering, a Spectra watermaker, and (perhaps) an electric winch.

## Brightwork!!!

*A small sailing craft is not only beautiful, it is seductive and full of strange promise and the hint of trouble."*

E.B. White

OK, I admit it. I am a sucker for TEAK on a boat! (Is there such a thing as a Teak fetish?). To me, teak makes a boat a true classic. It gives it warmth and life. (It would be hard to have the same emotions for fiberglass ). I wanted teak joinery and a REAL teak and holly cabin sole below decks (don't you hate those modern plastic fake teak and holly soles that some production boats have today?), and topside I craved teak DECKS! (A sure sign of borderline masochistic tendencies).

Astraea, being a Cheoy Lee, was loaded with this wonderous wood and the quality of the joinery both inside and

outside was stunning.

Fortunately, the original owners had taken the option of having the interior done in ALL teak. (Some models have an interior that has a combination of teak and white painted wood).

Some 23 years of use had taken some minor toll on the interior teak finishes, which was to be expected. However they were totally intact with the exception of some minor leaking around port windows (easily repaired).

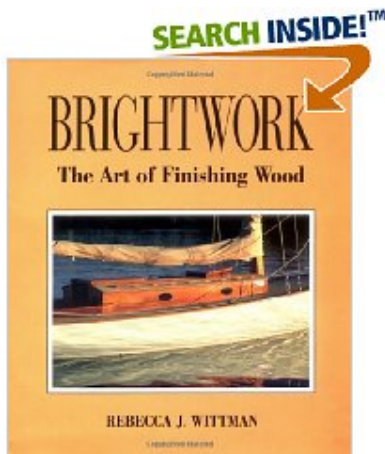
Topside, the teak decks needed CAREFUL and gentle cleaning and some recaulking.

Unfortunately ALL of the exterior teak topside had been painted with beige enamel some time in the past, so a LOT of stripping was in the picture!

I realized that this extensive brightwork refinishing project was going to have to be a "do it myself" project. It was going to take time and patience, but it would be a labor of love. (OK, truth time: I would love to pay someone to do it, but at \$98/hour yard rates there was NO WAY that I could afford to have Svendsen's do it professionally!).

I looked around. Where could I "start small" and remove something from the boat to do at home? (It was rainy season). The most obvious answer was the "helm", or wheel.

This was my first attempt at refinishing brightwork and my first time to use Epihanes, a traditional varnish. I read the definitive book on brightwork, *Brightwork, The Art of Finishing Wood* by Rebecca Wittman This is my Refinishing Bible. Give me a good book and I can do anything!



This is what the wheel looked like before I started. The round wooden outside rim was painted. Not sure if this rim was added or was original. I have researched other Cheoy Lee's through pictures on the Internet and I have seen various configurations. Note to self: check with the original owner and find out. (Also note the painted cockpit surrounds. More on that later).



Here is the wheel after being stripped. Unfortunately the only place to work was on the terrace of our 21st floor condo in San Francisco. Not an ideal place to work, but the only place I have. Man, I would love to have a garage somewhere to work in! Still have not decided what to do with the wooden surround. It is NOT teak. I think it may be ash.



Well, here she is almost finished after a LOTS of hours of stripping and varnishing. (And this is a "small" job! What will the "big" jobs be like? 🤔). Only five coats so far, half way! Needed to use the boat, so had to put the helm on with "only" five coats on.

Yes, after much internal debate I decided to remove the surround. It just did not look right on her. Well, it is gone now, and in the dumpster!





## Hosting Manager

Now, bigger projects. While Astraea is in the yards I am going to start to tackle the project of stripping of the painted brightwork.

We started with the cockpit surround. This is what the cockpit looked like when we started. Paint. Yuck. 🤢



Also decided to sand and varnish the cockpit grating. (Here shows the contrast between the grating I have sanded and varnished and that that I have not gotten to yet). The grating needed some minor repair, some glue, some screws, but most of all some protection from the weather and foot traffic. Lots of work, however I think it will look great. When I am finished the varnished grating will match the varnished teak cockpit surround

and contrast with the unfinished teak on the seats and the decks. I think it is a nice look for a traditional boat.



Here are the gratings after about five (or six?) coats of varnish. Getting there!

#### Toerail Project!

Fourth of July weekend 2006. OK, once in a while we step over the threshold from rational thinking into a bit of insanity. OK, a LOT of insanity. Now a former owner who was obviously much more practical than we are had painted the toerails with a nice glossy enamel paint. Looks neat. Easy maintenance. We, being far less practical had decided to strip the enamel and restore the wood to varnished teak. Now remember, this boat is 41 feet long. There is a toerail on each side. There is an external surface and an inboard surface. Each is about six inches wide. That is 164 feet of teak railing to strip, sand, sand, sand and varnish, varnish, varnish.

Here is what the cockpit and toerails looked like painted. Very practical, but not very attractive.





We decided that we had better do the stripping part while Astraea was on the hard in the yard. If we tried to strip the toerail and do heavy duty sanding back at our marina we were asking for trouble as it would be difficult (impossible) to keep the old paint chips from falling into the water as we stripped it; we would incur the wrath of our neighbors with the massive dust of the initial sanding; and we would probably break about 500 environmental pollution laws! We had one weekend more on the hard in the boatyards (or so we thought at the time) so this was our only chance to get this done. So, over a three day weekend each of us put in about 25 HARD solid hours of heat gunning and sanding, gruelling back breaking work, but we did it!

Here is Bob patiently heat gunning 42 feet of toerail with several coats of enamel on it.



The heat gun process worked well, but we discovered that under the enamel was teak with raised ridges like the Andes! Apparently when these rails were painted they had already eroded significantly. It was going to take a LOT of sanding. I tried 100 grit, the toughest in my already impressive armory of sandpaper. Nothing! Nada! It was hardly making a dent. Again, we are talking here about DEEP crevices with paint in those crevices. The raised grain was HARD! This was NOT a pretty picture we are talking about here. Back to the chandlery.

Here is the toerail after heat gunning. Hummm....☹️ We knew this was going to be a lot of work. Sigh.....



This was obviously going to take more than a finishing sandpaper. So, I picked out some 50 grit sandpaper. The HEAVY stuff. The lady at the register at Svendsen's chandlery looked at my pile of 50 grit and raised her eyebrows, staring at me over the top of her glasses, "So, 50 grit?" she said. I just nodded, signed the receipt, and headed back to the boat.

Fortunately it worked great. After the 50 grit I went back over it with 100 grit and then 150 grit. Looking good! 🇺🇸



Here she is with her toerails sanded three times and a coat of sealer on hem (Varathane diluted 50 percent).



## Adding Fun

Lots of work to do inside the cockpit also. EVERYTHING almost was painted! Here have just removed several layers of paint and varnish with a heat gun. Next step is to sand. Here is the cockpit surround in progress.









The companionway hatch also needed some TLC. However after stripping, bleaching, sanding, and a couple of coats of varnish, looking much better!

Before:



After:





Work in progress. Heat gun, stripper, sandpaper, repeat





Bob putting another coat of varnish on the newly stripped cabin edge and port hole surrounds.



The teak looks soooooo much better than the painted wood and it is not THAT hard to maintain!



Below is a picture as she looks at the end of March 2007 after all the port light surrounds and cabin edging were varnished.



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All Content provided by Robert Moon

