



# The First Voyage

Our new boat is done and ready for its first adventure! So many new things to learn, systems to figure out and of course the small detail of learning to dock and maneuver a 52' LOA boat.

Time to jump right in with a shake down cruise from La Conner to Roche Harbor for the Memorial Day weekend. Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> of May – Julie and I drove our trailer full of all our stuff off the old boat up to La Conner and started the process of filling up and organizing the new boat. Thursday the 26<sup>th</sup> of May we picked the kids up from school and drove up to La Conner where our boat was waiting on the dock. After an exciting first night on the boat we woke up Friday morning to Steve and Kurt from American Tugs, ready to run us through all the systems on the boat.

But first, Steve and Kurt had a special surprise! The boat needs to be christened before its first voyage, so they brought Champagne and a real life King Neptune (Thank you to Jim Freeman who played this important role). We had a great time, adults drinking at 9am, Sprite for the kids, and a christening ceremony for the toast. After a morning of information overload, it was time to shove off.

As the wise Capitan Ron once said “anything that’s going to happen is going to happen out there”

Steve was going to spend the weekend on Henry Island (right next to Roche Harbor) at a friend’s cabin so he hitched a ride with us. As we navigated our way through the islands Steve suggested we take Pole Pass (I’ve never been through) – a narrow little cut that doesn’t look big enough on the charts to transit. He said “I’ve done it hundreds of times” then promptly fell asleep on the settee. As we approached the pass – Steve still asleep – I wanted to be sure I was headed the right direction, running aground on our maiden voyage would not be good. Uhhh.. Steve, Uhhh... Steve, louder and louder until he popped up and said “Oh right, Pole Pass, Pole Pass”. We shot through the narrow cut without incident, the current pushing us faster and faster.

We arrived in Roche Harbor and of course our first slip assignment in the new boat was number 22! We spent the next 4 nights relaxing on our new boat trying to get used to all the new systems. We ran everything, trying to figure it all out and making sure everything worked properly. After getting the dinghy down using the crane we cruised through Mosquito pass to the English Camp. We hiked all the trails and explored the old buildings on the property.

We just couldn’t leave, so we decided to take the kids out of school and stay one more day. More hiking, working on the boat and organizing stuff on Memorial Day then on Tuesday morning we fired the engine up and took off headed back to La Conner.

We had a smooth run all the way back to La Conner where we had another opportunity to practice docking the boat. Everything went well as we left the boat for the factory to finish up a few details.

Our family is so thankful to be fortunate enough to create

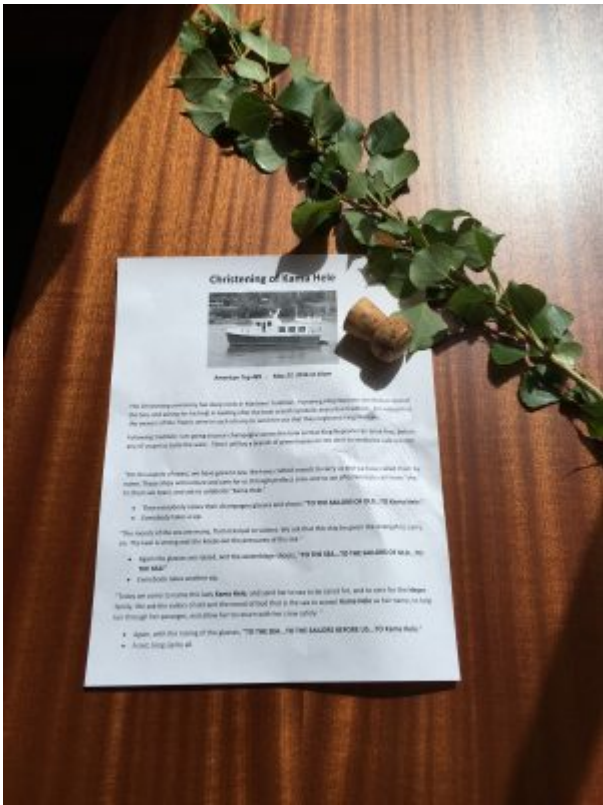
great memories on this amazing boat. Thank you to all who put so much work into the construction and design process!



Our trailer all packed up with our boating stuff off the old boat.



King Neptune christening the boat





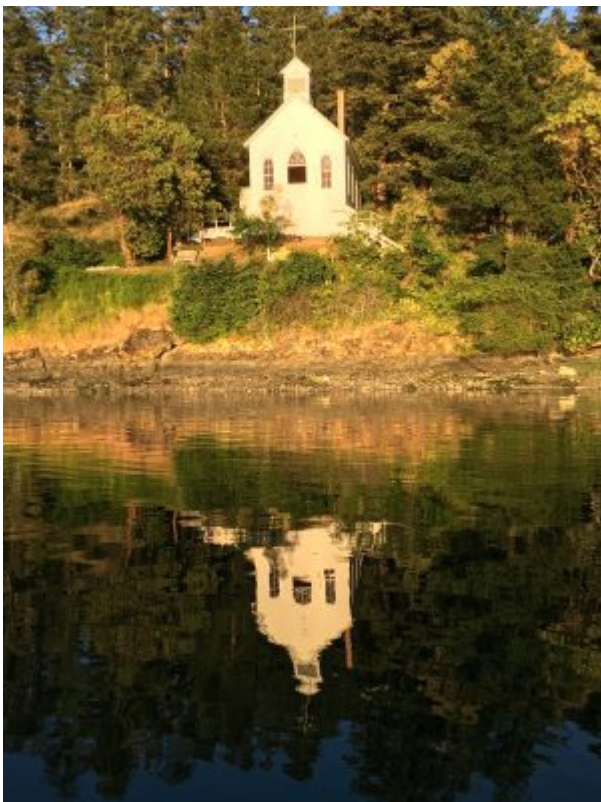


Kids are loving their bunk





Our first slip assignment  
in the new boat was 22! A  
sign of great things to  
come!









## She's Done!

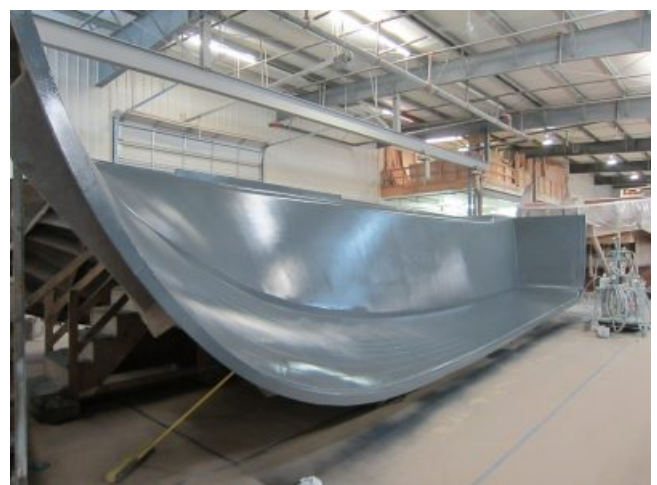
Wow, what a process! Last September we sold our 34 American Tug to a nice couple from Port Ludlow. Boatless in Sumner, we put all our efforts over the winter into building our new boat.



Our new boat will be an American Tug 485, hand built in La Conner WA. Some people hate the process of building a new house or boat but Julie and I love it. It's a lot of work, so many decisions, problems to work through and elements to design but it's a lot of fun and very rewarding in the end. It took at least 15 trips up to La Conner (4-hour drive round trip) to complete the project and countless hours making decisions and working on projects. The end result is a beautiful boat designed exactly how we wanted for our family.

All the folks at American Tug are extremely talented at their craft but we would like to give a special shout out to Kurt Dillworth the head engineer. He was fun to work with and an amazing engineer. He had the hard job of making all of our "ideas" come to life in the real world, and we had a lot of them. Thank you for all your time and energy working with us on the many special projects. Steve and Mike were also instrumental in a successful project, thank you for all your efforts.

Below is a photo timeline of the build process. Its amazing how a boat goes from raw materials to the finished project!



Moulds for hull. They are split then put together to form the entire hull.



This shows the underside of the deck mould (top of the boat). Its still in the mould here while they lay the fiberglass. When it comes out of the mould it will be set on top of the hull. Kind of like those plastic boats you played with as a kid that snap together.

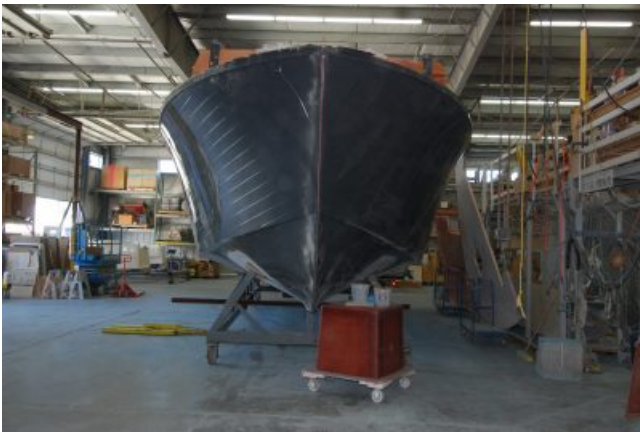


The hull is out of the mold





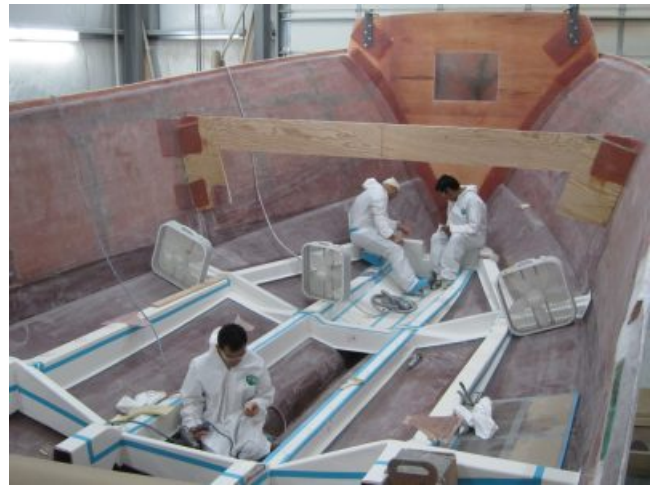
See the blue line down the hull side? That's where they are going to cut this thing in two.



The hull is now cut all the way through and stretched 5'. American Tug only has a mould for a 43' boat but they build a 48' boat. The mould is cut and stretched 5' to get the additional length. I was a little nervous about this at first but it's very common in the boat building world and produces a boat just as strong or stronger.



Here the bottom of the hull is cut. Notice how its at an angle. This makes it stronger when the two are joined back together.



The white material they are installing is the grid system. Makes the hull very strong and provides mounting points for things like the engine and fuel tanks.





Ava is ready to go out on the factory floor!





Just like the hull the deck needs to get stretched another 5'. This picture shows the deck before its cut.



Here is the deck after it has been cut and stretched. The wood you see on the sides is the temporary mould.



The finished stretched deck. All the extra length is in the salon. A 43' boat has 2 window in the salon and the 48' has 3 on each side.



The factory gets a head start by building some components in modules. This allows them to build items like the second stateroom in this picture before the boat is ready. When the boat is ready they just pick up the whole finished stateroom and set it in the boat.





Here is the start of the master stateroom. You can see the bead platform, nightstands and the aft bulkhead.



The engine is here!



Engine installed in the boat.



All the major mechanical and most of the wiring must go in before the deck goes on. In this picture you can see the fuel tanks on both sides. They are 320 gallons each for a total capacity of 640 gallons.



A stern thruster is nice, especially with a single engine boat.





With all the major mechanical installed the salon floor is now installed.





Bow thruster install



This picture shows the  
salon area looking up into  
the pilothouse







Pilothouse dash is all roughed in. We made a lot of changes in this area trying to clean up the lines and reduce the depth of the dash.



The galley is starting to take shape.



Engine room is looking really good. Its amazing how much room is down there. They make it very easy to get to all the equipment.

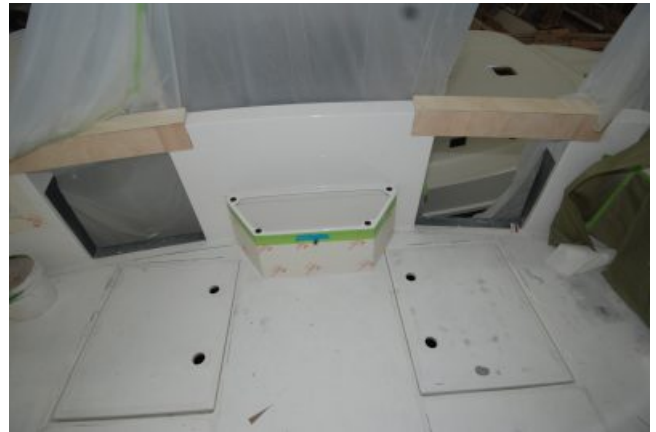


Watermaker is installed. This sucker will make just about 1 gallon per minute of fresh water and fills up two 110 gallon tanks (220g total). It pulls sea water and forces it through a membrane at 800psi. No more needing to find a dock with

fresh water to fill up the tanks, we are self sufficient!



The stock boat only has one starboard transom door. We wanted 2 doors with stainless steel gates leading out to the swim step. With the stainless gates made out of tubing and 2 wide doors, the cockpit will feel much more open and the swim step will become a livable extension of the boat.



Transom doors seen from cockpit. Notice the custom propane locker/seat between the doors.



We extended our swim step to 48" so they had to make



The custom swim step is done. This is really going



a custom mould seen here in  
the picture.



Washer/Dryer installed.  
This is a game changer. No  
more hunting for laundry on  
land.

to extend the living area  
outside the boat.



The galley is looking  
really good!



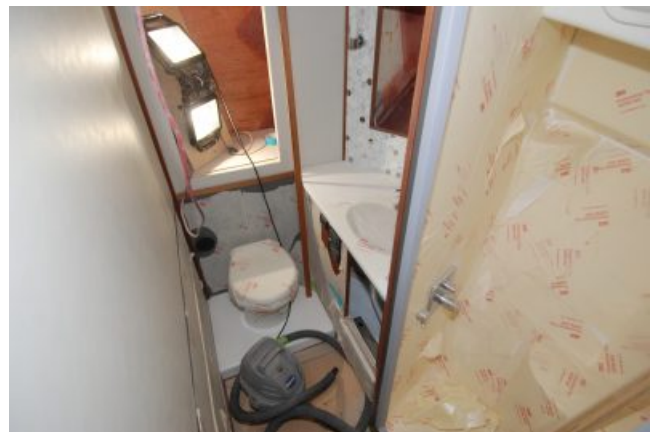
This custom settee will  
pull out to form an  
inflatable queen bead.



Pilothouse is coming together nicely.



Electronics are now installed. 2, 16" Garmin chart plotters, Garmin autopilot, Meratron monitoring system, Icom VHF with class B AIS, Cummins engine management system, Garmin GMI20



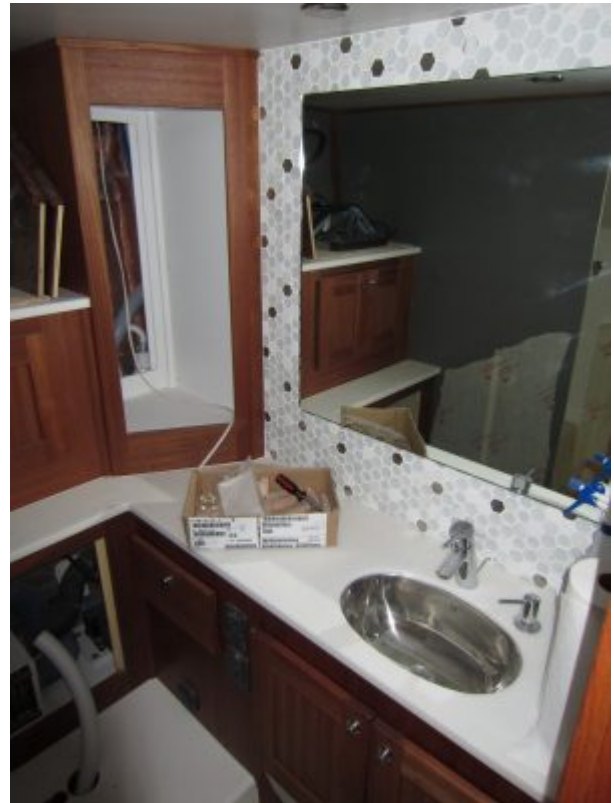
2nd stateroom head almost done.



Here is the 2nd stateroom  
bunks. Ava gets the top,  
she is so excited!



Master stateroom.



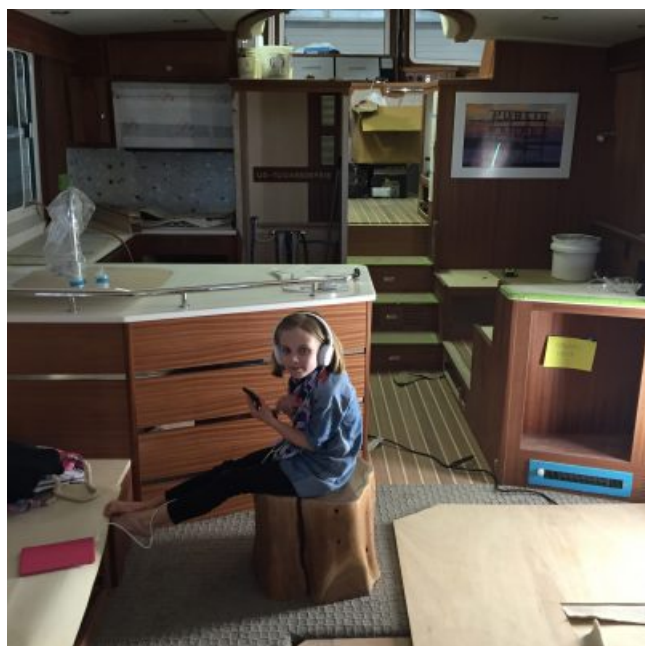
Master stateroom head.





Engine and thruster controls mounted in the cockpit starboard fwd bulkhead. Very nice for docking the boat in tight spots.

We opted for a small A/C unit that will cool the master stateroom or the pilothouse.



Ava chilling out while we meet with the folks at American Tug.





Pilothouse wood floor going in.



Notice how clean the electrical work is!



Extended swim step is on!



With an extended swim step comes larger support brackets.



Finished engine room. Clean and organized!



Fuel filtration system.



The finished product!







Galley





Pilothouse



This was a custom stainless steel anchor inly we did in the stack.





Kids bunk



Kids Head



Master stateroom bed. Sleep  
Number bed makes it very  
comfortable.



This is a custom built panel wall with stainless steel on the aft wall of the master stateroom. Turned out beautiful!



Master Head



Swim step with teak decking.







We did a double hinging  
salon door. This really  
opens the boat up to the  
outside.



Cockpit with teak decking



The finished transom doors.



Two anchors just incase you loose one.



1000lb crane to get the dinghy up and down from the upper deck.





