

Restoring mast and rigging

The mast had lost much of its varnish, and there were four splits where the lengthwise join between two halves had opened up through weathering.

All of the rigging and fittings were removed, including the sail track, then labelled and stored away. A multitude of screw holes were drilled out and filled (barbecue sticks are just the right size for smaller holes). All varnish was carefully scraped off using the sharp curved edges of broken bottle glass (wearing a good pair of gardening gloves) and then sanded down. By this time much of the 50-year old wood looked like new.

The splits were cleaned out and glued back together with WEST epoxy resin. It was necessary to use G-clamps and some large diameter circlips with softwood blocks to fully close the splits.

My friend shared his secret for obtaining the beautifully finished woodwork on his boats. After smoothing down, the wood is sealed with a good coat of surface sealer (shellac dissolved in spirit) which soaks into the grain and raises it slightly. When dry, this coat is lightly sanded down and wiped clean, and several coats of clear varnish applied. The varnish is "Surmoglaze" from [Morrells](#) [1], normally used on wooden floors, with an Ultraviolet filter added to improve protection from the sun. Another advantage of this varnish is that it can be applied "wet-on-wet", so the next coat may be applied as soon as the first becomes tacky, and four coats were applied in one fine sunny day.

All the rigging and fittings were carefully checked, and with the help of the Internet, stainless steel replacements were found for any that were worn or corroded. The sail track and other fittings were screwed back on top of a bed of "Sikaflex" (except for the mast bracing triangle which will be just screwed on).

Some research was also needed for the mast wiring since the lights were damaged. A new dual tricolour/anchor light will be fitted at the top, so we can can motor at night with the anchor light plus bow and stern lamps showing. The original lights for illuminating the deck will be retained attached to the crosstrees, and all wiring run up beside the sail track with a mastic adhesive.

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[1] <http://www.morrells.co.uk>

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