



Camp Pilfer with transport to right

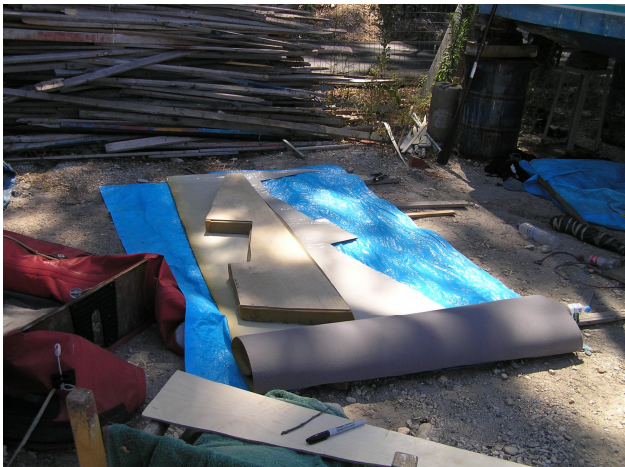
After evicting several stubborn groups of wasps we set up camp in the aromatic cockpit of the elevated boat. It reminded me of an old tree fort I had as a kid, only more moldy and with a lot more mosquitoes.

Over the next two weeks we worked from sun up to sundown. We emptied everything out of the boat, inspected and cleaned what could be salvaged. We cleaned the interior (thoroughly I

Initially we set up camp on the ground only to discover the next morning someone had gone through our luggage and strewn our clothes over the yard and half buried our shoes after chewing on them. We went through a short list of suspects: the retired WWII RAF pilot, the nice Dutch lady on the big old wooden Turkish sailboat, or perhaps the charming retired couple from Liverpool on their ferro cement boat, or the black mongrel with the bulging eyes, squatting and straining to pass my insoles. I thought the dogs were supposed to protect us.



Wasp evictions under way, note a couple flying about



Recovering the cushions at the old camp

thought, until my wife redid the job). We recovered the interior cushions using 6mm backing plywood and staples which looked pretty good. We then set about inspecting and replacing through hulls, pulling out the old engine shaft and cutlass bearing from the former diesel engine, sealing up the holes and generally making the hull seaworthy. Rigging was inspected but not tuned, hatches and windows checked and caulked, and the old engine gauge board replaced with a small storage bin. Sails

checked and the furling mechanism for the jib found inoperable. The engine (an elderly 9.9 Evinrude in bad shape) was sent off to the mechanic be looked at “right away”. I spent two days rewiring the boat so the nav lights would work, and another day getting new batteries and hooking up the solar charger. It seemed as we did one project we discovered another two we hadn’t considered doing. In the end after 2 weeks of hard work we had a sound, seaworthy boat properly set up to sail the Ionian and Adriatic. “Sail” being the operative word, since the motor was still being “fixed right away”.

During this time the yard owner gave us the use of two bikes which was great as we often had to go into town for supplies. The fact that they had no breaks was inconvenient going uphill to the stores, and hair-raising on the way back down. The appearance of our already dog-chewed shoes and flipflops did not improve as we dragged them along the pavement in mostly successful attempts to avoid collisions on the way back down to the boat. We really got the chance to see a Greek town, not as tourists, but as temporary residents. Oh the joy of knowing the best market, the location of the phone guy, or where the big tool and hardware shop was hidden.

Along with finding out about boat suppliers we also found out about food. The fresh tomatoes and peppers were fantastic (though Mick suffers from tomatophobia). But more importantly, we found a restaurant called “Jimmy’s” run by a Greek-American who returned to Greece when his parents decided to return to the motherland. He gave up a lucrative job as a district sales manager with Toyota to be a dutiful Greek son. He treated us like family and gave us a standing discount for our lunches and dinners. His dad when he came back resumed his passion for fishing and was a commercial fisherman so the restaurant was famous for its fresh fish and seafood.



Dimitri in the front end loader cab

was helping build a school for his “lady friend”. There was Irene, a Dutch-German woman living aboard her Turkish built 57 foot wooden motor sailor. Finally there was a retired electrical engineer, Alban and his wife Veronica. They were so helpful and in one case real lifesavers.

We made fast friends with the owner Dimitri and his yard guy, a young Albanian named Ari. This kid worked his heart out and always had a smile and happy greeting of “Hello Meek, how you doin’?”. I mentioned Gavin who had so many stories about the RAF and big bands (he opened for Les Brown and Jimmy Dorsey). He was 88 and



Mick on right with his buddy Ari