

When Hiran was brought ashore at the end of the 2022 season, I spent some time on the usual tasks of cleaning. The barnacles had been very active and while scraping the bottom I realised that the Deadwood was very soft where it was attached to the hull. A closer examination revealed that a former owner had replaced a one-inch piece of timber on the underside. I am ashamed to say that I had not noticed this during the last 20 years, even though the bottom had been taken back to wood, coated with 5 coats of West resin and finished with Highbuild about 12 years ago. The whole section had to come off and be replaced, a task that I was not too keen start.

Once the sun started to shine in the Spring I sharpened my chisels and hacked it all off. It was very wet, but once removed the bottom appeared quite sound and the prop-shaft was well sealed where it entered the hull. The section was 25" long and 4" square at the stern, tapering to 4"x1" where it met the keel-band. As far as I could see it had been made in two sections, with the shaft hole cut out of both sections. The two pieces of timber (Mahogany) were cut and with assistance each side was offered up, marked along the length and position of the shaft and roughly cut out with a router, making the necessary larger section at the rear to accommodate the shaft end. I decided to use three bronze screws each side, two underneath the shaft and one above, with four screws pulling the assembly up from inside the boat. (The original had been screwed up to the bottom, but I felt happier to go through the Hog.) Holes were drilled and the whole assembly was offered up. Once satisfied with the fit the shaft was greased, Sikaflex was spread into both channels and West Epoxy applied. Clamps secured the two sections together then they were screwed tightly. A piece of timber was wedged up to ensure a good marriage to the hull and the four screws were tightened up through the Hog. The oval endpiece of the prop-shaft was secured with two bronze coach screws and all screws had wooden plugs to seal them.

After a season afloat there has been no sign of leakage. The problem was not as daunting as it first appeared

