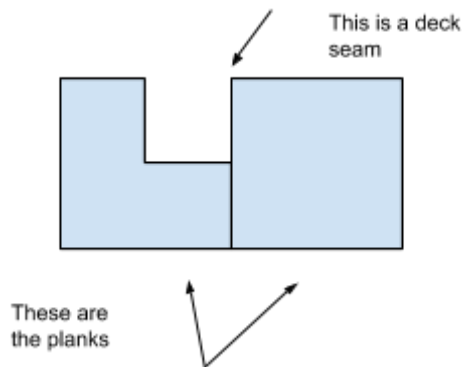


## May Blog

May begins, although the uk is still in lockdown im still working and time is going by incredibly fast. I am going down to the boat 3 times a week to get her ready for sea and making the most out of the extra time we have been given to make her look fantastic and make more and more quality of life improvements. To begin with we water tested the deck to see if there were any leaks, surprise, there was. Once we had an idea where on deck the leaks were coming from we poked around in between the seams and started to cut out old sikaflex and re seal the seams.



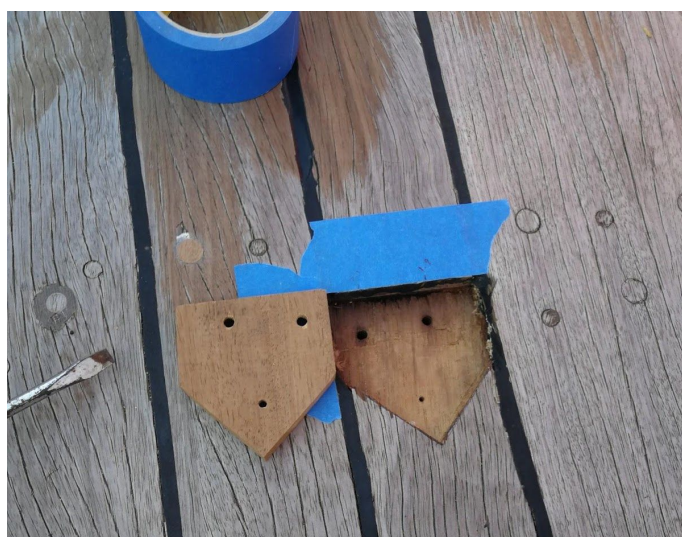
One thing I've been understanding and learning more and more about is the nature of wood, it doesn't stay the same shape and is constantly moving mostly depending on moisture.

For example at first wooden hull after being built is generally not 100% water tight, but after a while when the boat is in the water the wood expands and the hull planks push against each other making the hull less like a sieve and more like a bowl.

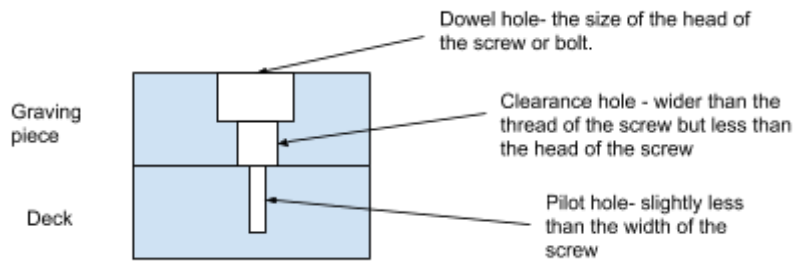
Sometimes planks get damaged or rotten and need only sections being removed, that's where graving pieces come in. some of the deck planks on Jolie brise have already got graving pieces and some planks need a few graving pieces to be made.

At first I needed to cut out the rotten/damaged wood into the shape that I would mould the new bit of wood into.

To the right you can see one of the graving pieces I made, this one was at the end of the plank. The seam at the end of the plank failed and water got into the end grain causing water to go into wood and settle making it rot. I cut out all the rot and shaped a point into it, this is because it allows for more surface area for the mastic I would use to adhere to making it hopefully last longer. The new graving pieces were all made of iroko, an african hardwood, matching the surrounding timber, so that hopefully it will all react the same way with environmental changes.



After shaping the new graving pieces and dry fitting them until I was happy with how they fit, I drilled some dowel, clearance and pilot holes. The idea of having these three types of



holes is so that the screw effectively 'clamps' the graving piece to the deck. Since the thread is gripping inside the pilot hole and the head can't fit through the clearance hole the screw pulls the wood down squeezing them together.

The reason you need a pilot hole is because without it the wood is very likely to split as you screw into the wood, you're trying to make space for something inside a solid object.



To the left you can see the dowel and clearance holes in the graving piece. Sidenote: the two big holes are lined up with old holes hence they are offset slightly.

Once the holes were all drilled and I cleaned up all the surfaces, I then used a mastic called arbacol to stick and embed the graving piece to the deck, then I screwed the graving piece into the deck clamping it down and squeezing out any excess arbacol. Once the mastic was set I mixed up some epoxy and

banged in some dowels. Using epoxy here because it seals the screws and ensures minimal moisture getting to them so that it takes a lot longer for them to rust.

Below and right - a few of the complete graving pieces.



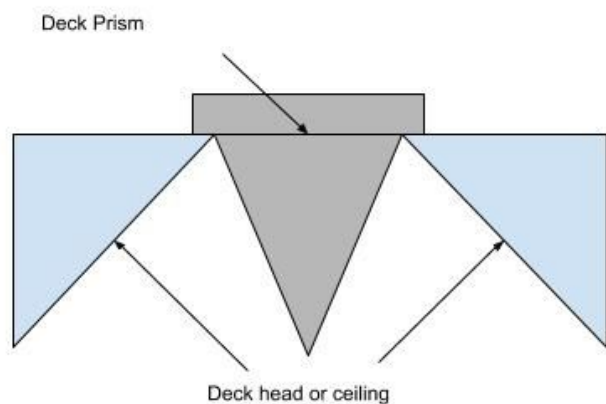


After the fun graving pieces I was tasked with installing a new skylight, the old one had a nasty crack going through it.

First step was to remove the old skylight which first has a brass plate surrounding the prism held down by screws, which was easy enough to remove. Next was the prism itself which was stuck into the deck with silicon, to remove it I first used a Stanley knife to cut all around the prism through the silicon then used my trusty marlin spike to lever the prisms out. Finally I cleaned out the hole and placed the new brass part of the deck prism over the top. because the new prism was bigger than the old one. I proceeded to mark out the area I was going to cut out (as seen on picture to the right).

To cut out the area I marked I used a router to do most of the work then finished it with some sharp chisels to give it a clean straight edge. Below you can see the deck prism hole resized.

One of the challenging bits and most time consuming was to create a 3mm recess into the deck for the brass cover plate to rest and not stick out of the deck too high. It was challenging because I needed to fair it so that it was uniformly flat the whole way around, I did this using chisels and skills I learned from ibtc joinery class. Once the on deck part was done I went down below and created bevels into the deck head or ceiling so that the skylight could project light easier. As seen in the diagram below.



Once I was finished with all the wood shaping I cleaned up the area, used silicone to stick the prism into place then screwed in the brass cover plate.

This is the deck prism in place all finished and looking slightly weathered already.

To finish off the month I did some varnishing, and finally it got very exciting because we got all the sails on board and bent on the mainsail in preparation for our sea trials in the first week of June!

For the varnishing part I did some doors in the galley and the cap rail on deck. The hard part was doing the cap rail because in order for it to have a nice finish I needed to keep a wet edge, what this means is I had to start from one end and continue all the way around in one go not letting it dry out or become lumpy. It became challenging because there was some fair wind and a lot of sunshine so by the time I was halfway the beginning was already quite dry! And the wind meant I couldn't apply too much at any one time because that was asking for runs, and we all know you are not allowed any runs in brightwork. Alas I was happy with the end result, pictures can be seen below.



Thus concluding my month of May.