



Paul Wilkes

What prompted me to start my own business in boat detailing and maintenance?

I grew up in White Rock and have been close to boats and boating practically all my life. When I was 15 I acquired a 14 ft inboard motorboat and many wonderful summers followed, with renovating, repairing, refinishing--and cruising off the White Rock pier. I made great friends in those days--notably one who is still my best friend (Fred Amor). He went on to a career in boatbuilding and yacht design; meanwhile, I began a career in sales and marketing. But in my spare time I developed my handyman skills in building and refinishing projects including kitchen cabinets, pianos, and furniture--and I enjoyed maintaining my own vehicles.

My second boat was a 10 ft Davidson fibreglass dinghy which I converted to sailing dinghy by building and installing a dagger board, retractable rudder, mast and boom with all the fittings. My family and I enjoyed this wonderful little boat, and my children got their first experience sailing. A relative purchased a 60 ft tug boat on which I spent many weekends involved in the renovation to a live aboard.

In 1979 I began an absorbing career in Career and Employment Consulting, helping the employment disadvantaged--youth, the disabled and displaced workers--develop prospects and return to work in new careers. But my passion for boats continued to grow and in 2000, I purchased a 21 ft sailboat, and sailed with my elderly parents around the Gulf Islands and San Juans. My desire to have a well-maintained and safe boat led me to upgrading in many areas and added to my skill set. I completely refinished the hull, deck and interior, and replaced a swing keel with a fin keel. I sold the boat after 5 years for \$1500 more than I had paid for it.

My love of boats and water continued and in 2004 I began volunteering with Britannia Heritage Shipyard to restore an old Fraser River fish boat. Working with the shipwrights I learned how to make, steam and bend and install oak ribs, cedar planks and bulkheads.

In 2003 I became interested in running tours around the Gulf islands, and in discussions with my boatbuilding friend, developed a 35 ft boat design suited to cruising the Strait of Georgia. The design was developed but needed to be certified to carry up to 12 passengers. I built a fully operational model and tested it for stability and speed. But at this point the project was set aside due to economic conditions and instead I began searching for another sailboat suited to offshore and heavy weather sailing. After spending 3 years looking at boats from Campbell River to Port Angeles, I was able to find the ideal boat and purchased 30 ft Pacific fibreglass sloop in 2005. During the past 5 years I have continued to complete all my own maintenance--from polishing, waxing, refinishing the teak and protecting the various finishes, to diesel engine maintenance. I know my desire to protect my investment and do the maintenance right the first time is shared by other boaters. My extensive skills, knowledge and experience are behind the launching of Premier Yacht Maintenance.

My business mission is to provide affordably priced maintenance services based on Excellence and Integrity. The name "Premier Yacht Maintenance" was chosen to reflect my commitment to provide boat and yacht detailing services that exceed customer expectations, with no billing surprises, protecting the boat owner's investment and peace of mind.