

The Superyacht

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TRUTH • OPINION KNOWLEDGE • IDEAS AND EXPERT INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

REPORT

GALACTICA SUPER NOVA

TSR is granted exclusive access on board the 70m motoryacht during her final day of sea trials.

HULL FORMS

In an exclusive with *TSR*, Van Oossanen discuss their three new hull concepts.

AV/IT

A look at what is behind some of the most innovative AV/IT installations on board recent launches.

LIGHTING

The current state of lighting technology and where it might be heading in the future.



Realising the potential

The 50m *Malahne*, one of Camper & Nicholson's original 1937 motoryachts, served in World War II and hosted many prominent figures throughout her rich history. Following years of neglect, her potential was realised by an owner who described her as a "loose association of rust held together with air". After undergoing an ambitious restoration project at Pendennis Shipyard, *Malahne* was restored to her former glory and relaunched in 2015. **Bryony McCabe** stepped on board the boat during its stay in Palma de Mallorca.



MALAHNE ARRIVES AT PENDENNIS

“When you conduct a feasibility analysis of restoration projects, you have to look at several factors: whether it can be put back into class, whether the owner’s wishes for accommodation can be achieved, and whether the required modern infrastructure can be accommodated.”
– William Collier, managing director, G.L. Watson

Having regularly chartered *Fair Lady*, a 1927 Camper & Nicholsons’ motoryacht, *Malahne*’s new owner had been looking for an equivalent that was for sale. Working closely with Edmiston as brokers and yacht managers, it soon became evident that there was no such boat on the market. There was, however, *Malahne*, sitting on the east coast of Spain and seemingly in complete disrepair.

Having followed *Malahne*’s chequered past closely for decades, it was Nicholas Edmiston who originally saw the yacht’s potential. In 2009 he had asked William Collier, managing director of G.L. Watson & Co, to inspect the yacht and make preliminary designs to establish the feasibility of a restoration project. In 2012, Collier and the Pendennis team visited *Malahne* to start turning the potential that they all recognised into a defined restoration project.

For Collier, it was a daring proposal, but one that matured. “I was struck by just how good *Malahne*’s fundamental proportions were,” he recalls. “When you conduct a feasibility analysis

of restoration projects, you have to look at several factors: whether it can be put back into class, whether the owner’s wishes for accommodation can be achieved, and whether the required modern infrastructure can be accommodated.”

While *Malahne* had a questionable 1980s design above deck, Collier saw that she had good spaces and volume below deck, and knew that the project could work based on this. “We were lucky to be working with an owner who was prepared to see the potential regardless of the changes that had been made in the 1980s, which was very hard because so many of the pre-war features had disappeared.”

The idea that a boat built in the UK in 1937 could be restored by a team of British companies was part of the decision-making process when Edmiston recommended project partners. He made sure that each company had the skill set, ambition and vision, attention to period detailing and the experience that would provide a result that would reflect the yacht’s history.

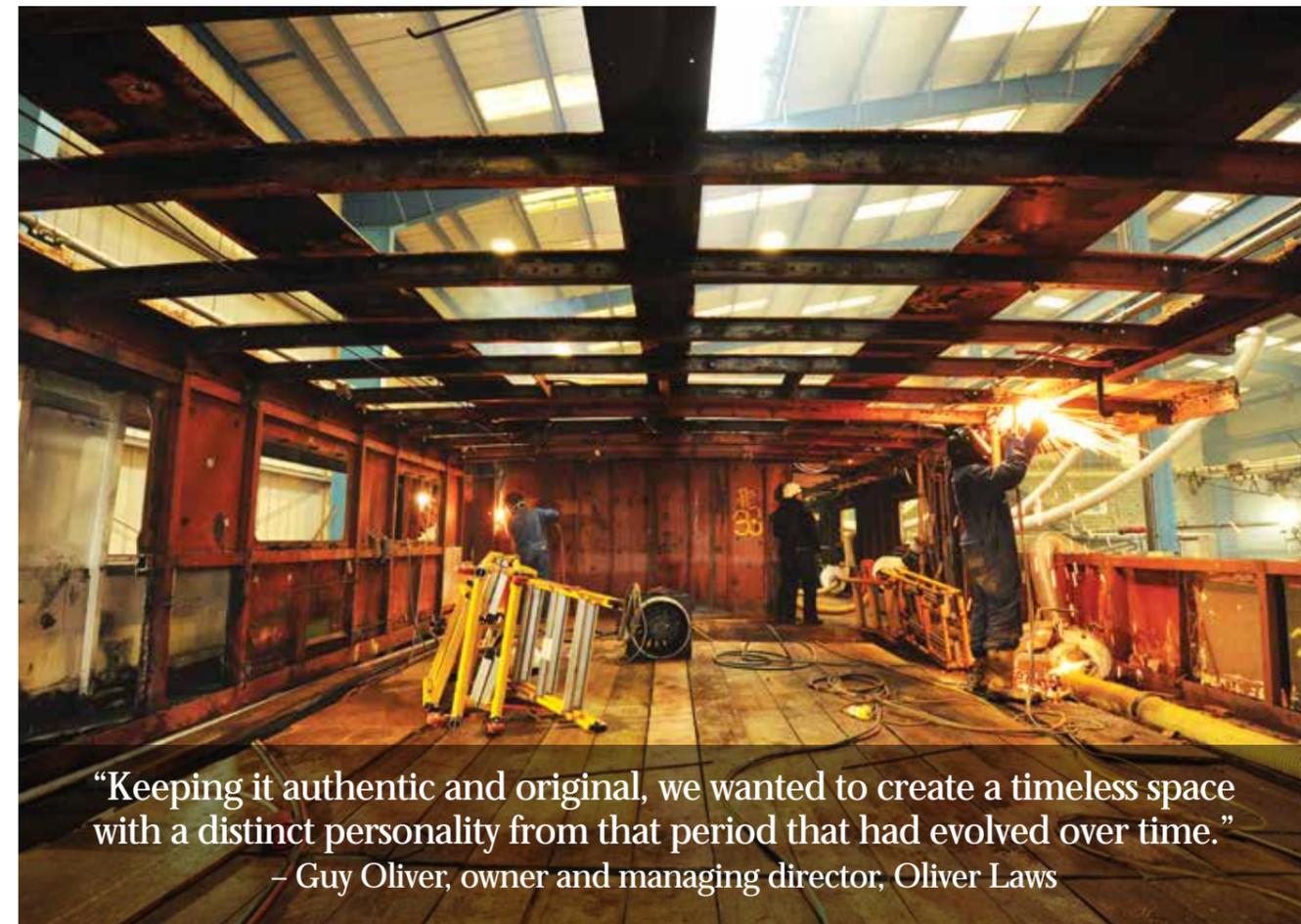
Responsible for the exterior design and interior crew areas, G.L. Watson’s knowledge of the history of the vessel was invaluable in providing the necessary details to ensure that the yacht was restored as accurately as possible to the original Camper & Nicholsons’ design.

Guy Oliver, owner and managing director of Oliver Laws, was chosen for the interior design of the guest areas. Having been responsible for the interiors of Claridge’s, where the owner had stayed many times, it was Oliver’s appreciation of sympathetic period designs that were appealing and led to the contract. While his experience with yachting projects was minimal, Pendennis’ technical team worked very closely with Oliver to advise how his designs could be best translated into a boat environment and how to meet MCA standards.

THE BRIEF

Regardless of the surface appearance of *Malahne* in 2012, the greatest asset was the boat’s rich history. Built at one of Britain’s most iconic shipyards, her most interesting owner was arguably film producer Sam Spiegel, who initially bought the yacht to host the cast of *Lawrence of Arabia*. *Malahne* later served as his personal yacht.

The brief to “make *Malahne* look as if she had been in continuous ownership since she was built” was the foundation of the project. For Pendennis, this meant using as much of the original vessel as possible. “The first phase was to take everything apart and ensure that every single piece of metal we could use was salvaged and then reinstated in the new construction,” explains joint managing director Henk Wiekens.



“Keeping it authentic and original, we wanted to create a timeless space with a distinct personality from that period that had evolved over time.”
– Guy Oliver, owner and managing director, Oliver Laws



Malahne's interior had been drastically altered through its 75-year history. Originally very spartan, it had latterly suffered years of neglect prior to its purchase in 2012. "Keeping it authentic and original, we wanted to create a timeless space with a distinct personality from that period that had evolved over time," says Oliver. "We used a lot of bespoke detailing, wood and materials appropriate to the period, as well as designing and sourcing original furniture to give continuity. The 2015 interior is a considerable upgrade in terms of both comfort and finish."

G.L. Watson's detailed knowledge of Camper & Nicholson's 1930s' work was integral to recreating *Malahne's* original design and retaining her classical elements, while ensuring compatibility with current Lloyd's and MCA requirements. "With any project it is important that you understand the goal posts and philosophy of both the project and the owner at the outset," explains Collier. He has studied Charles E. Nicholson's designs in great detail, and having spent hours interviewing people who worked for Camper & Nicholson when *Malahne* was first built, he felt he understood how they worked. Underpinning this detailed work was the restoration of the hull where, "Achieving an absolutely faithful restoration of the hull shape was a key factor in the project's overall success."

THE CHALLENGES

One of the project's unique elements was that there was to be no compromise made on the structural side or on the systems side. "Not an inch of steel has been untreated – the whole thing had to be done from top to bottom," explains Wiekens. "That was the uniqueness of it: sometimes when you do a rebuild or a restoration there is always something that you have to leave, but on *Malahne* there was no way that you could leave something on that wasn't up to standard."



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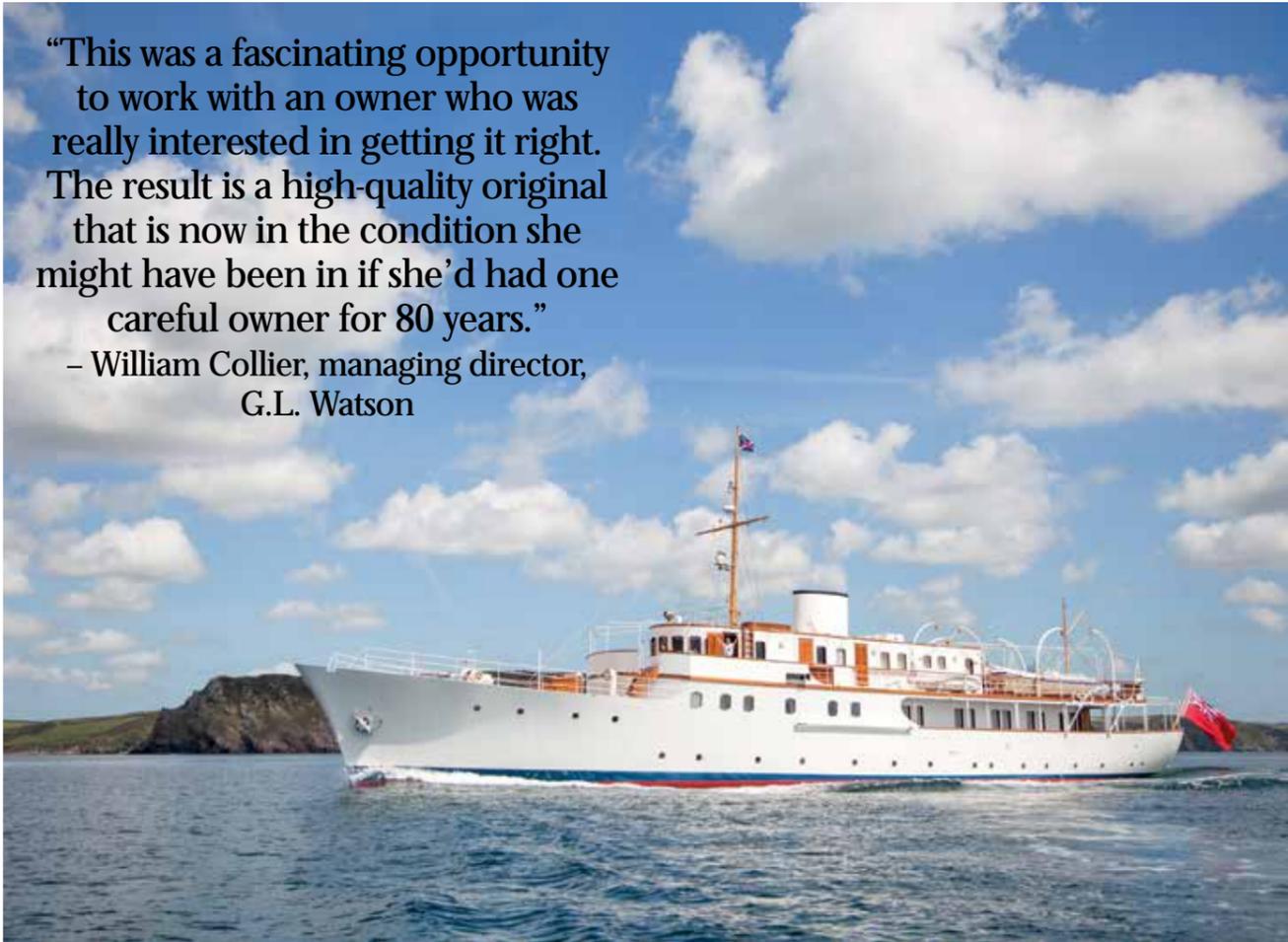
– Henk Wiekens, joint managing director, Pendennis

The biggest challenge for the project management team was ensuring *Malahne* complied with modern criteria so that she could be chartered through Edmiston. The goal was to end up with a boat that was built in 1937 but that complied with 2015 regulations. "The boat was in very poor condition; we wanted to return it to full Lloyd's class, achieve LY2 compliance and integrate modern systems," adds Collier. "Achieving all of that on a boat with low headroom and confined spaces is always a challenge compounded by MCA requirements, which stipulate some departures from the original design." As an example of this, Collier explains that the height of the bulwarks had to be altered. "That is one of the things I am most proud of: although we made these significant changes, no one notices a deviation from her classic character."



“This was a fascinating opportunity to work with an owner who was really interested in getting it right. The result is a high-quality original that is now in the condition she might have been in if she’d had one careful owner for 80 years.”

– William Collier, managing director,
G.L. Watson



Another challenge in terms of naval architecture for Pendennis was to ensure *Malahne* could operate smoothly without the problems that most yachts built in the 1930s have. “Because they were long and narrow, their stability was always an issue,” says Wiekens. “Nowadays there is a comfort level as well as a safety level. The safety level can be compromised when these boats arrive from a long journey and all their tanks are empty. Normally you could introduce water ballast tanks to rectify this, but that is an impossible solution on the size of these older boats.”

As a result, Pendennis had to work on a solution that would provide *Malahne* with an arrival stability that did not rely on outside fluids. “While some boats do this by putting a deeper keel full of lead and increasing the draught, our brief was to keep inside the original hull lines,” Wiekens continues. “We achieved this by introducing a fixed ballast element in the lower levels without going outside the hull. This was a very interesting element of the project for us.”

Other hurdles that the yard team had to overcome involved space planning and

comfort planning. Boats built in the 1930s did not have the same noise and vibration controls that modern technology allows. However, with the Pendennis team’s extensive experience with classic sailing and motor boats, they were confident in being able to adapt the much smaller technical spaces to integrate the same systems as found on board contemporary yachts. This project fitted their expertise and they proved that such a boat can match the functionality and performance efficiency of modern standards.

Being Oliver’s first major yachting project, the interior on *Malahne* was a particular test. “Yachts are difficult platforms for designers: you have to make your interior work with contemporary features that would not have been on board during that period, all within an established envelope,” Oliver advises.

“The camber and sheer were kept on the boat so that the shape of the deck reflected on the interior and this was quite noticeable in some areas. We had to change it in the dining room for practical reasons, but this element is still very visible in the master suite. It’s one of the unique things about working on an historic boat.”

THE END RESULT

Being involved with many prominent restoration projects, including *Adix*, *Fair Lady* and *Shamrock V*, Pendennis has carved a niche for itself in this sector. Now having another to add to the portfolio, *Malahne*’s history with Camper & Nicholson’s is particularly significant to the yard. “The British yachting scene was set down there,” explains Wiekens. “There were so many boats built in that era, but there are not many left. For us to be able to do a restoration project like *Malahne* is very special – it is unique, like every boat that comes out of the Pendennis yard.”

For Collier, what makes *Malahne* stand out is that the parameters of the project were very rigid, as all work was carried out in the context of the original Nicholson design. “There are many restoration projects out there but they have not been totally accurate restorations,” he concludes.

“This was a fascinating opportunity to work with an owner who was really interested in getting it right. The result is a high quality original that is now in the condition she might have been in if she’d had one careful owner for 80 years.”

Camper & Nicholson’s was the most prominent motoryacht designer and builder in the 1930s, and *Malahne* was built at the peak of their know-how. The personality of the owners, who were very present in communicating their desire to create something special, combined with the immense pride of the team who took the helm of the project, is what makes *Malahne* a success. The result has been the ability to save a piece of British history that would have otherwise been lost, and this shines through in every corner of the boat. ■



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