Deck Fittings, Anchor Winch

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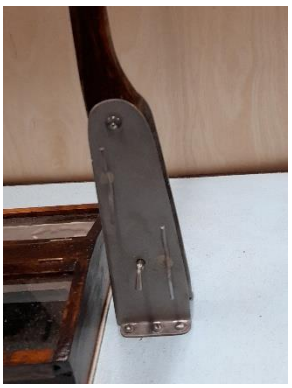
Sundowner – 19

On with the bits and pieces for the deck. Since I started the masts, I thought I had better finish them. The first bit was about the spoiled finish on my piece of stainless steel for the supports thanks to silver soldering: I 'remembered' (! I didn't relate it to this to start with) that I have an occasionally used sandblasting cabinet and a compressor and wondered whether that would restore the grey finish. Amongst other uses, I used it for the mild steel cross heads on a locomotive that I wanted 'satin' finish but polishing couldn't hide all the hard to reach and noticeable scratches, so I sandblasted them… the finish was good and the scratches vanished…and 10 years on they still look the same. The result? I don't need to paint the mast supports! You can see the silver solder 'brassy' witness, but it is not too noticeable. The snag is, of course, that all of the deck fittings (bollards, fairleads etc) have the same finish, so that means I will have to make them out of stainless steel too…

Fixing the masts in the support involved making a main pivot through the hole you can see in the photo and then shaving wood off the heel of the masts until they stood vertical (and parallel with each other) with reference to a horizontal waterline on the hull. I had to fiddle a little with the supports to get them to hold the masts parallel when viewed from the front. To fasten them down, I used small round head brass screws to fasten them into the deck (with wooden stiffener below as described earlier) and then touching up the heads with a bit of Volkswagen silver spray paint (spray it into the cap and brush it on!) left over from a job on the wife's car. This meant that they were not vertical in the support by a small amount and I then drilled a hole through the supports and the mast for a 'belaying pin' type of fastening that can be removed to allow the masts to be lowered. How long it will be before I mislay a pin remains to be seen and I may make a small chain to tie them to the support. The main hinge pins are turned up stainless steel with a head on one side and an 'E' clip on the other. 'E' clips can be bought in sets of many sizes cheaply as long as you can make a groove for them to fit in. Dyeing the wood and varnishing it completed the mounting. I will worry about the stays and their fixings, and the mast tops later as they will only get in the way at the moment… and I haven't decided how to deal with them yet beyond ordering some 0.7mm clear plastic coated stainless steel cable that will do for the stays and for the middle 'rail' in the stanchions eventually.



On to the collection of deck fittings then now. There are three types of 'bollard' or 'fairlead' to make, ideally from sand blasted stainless steel. Sizes are quite hard to find as the photos I have do not focus closely on these, so measurements and then scaling is probably inaccurate. No matter though, it is the character I am after really. The three types can be seen in the photos, there being four of the first two and two of the last (on the right). The last one is giving me most thought about how to make without having loads of silver solder visible.

En passant, I also found a picture of the teddy bear in the porthole (see earlier article). I have one photo from the inside (left) that shows a 'real' teddy bear fastened to the window, but a later photo that shows what looks like a picture of said bear. This suggests that it is seen as an important part of the history, so I will have to recreate it eventually… as a picture though!

And so, to manufacture: I started with the bollards as these can be turned up and silver soldered together from stainless steel rod that I had some bits of in stock. They were reasonably easy to make although holding the bits together (for the 'complex' type) whilst I silver soldered them was fiddly. After sandblasting and mounting on the deck, they looked reasonably authentic. The screw heads holding the simple ones down are in the right place but are a little intrusive and I may file them down a bit to reduce this. The others are glued down and pinned to represent the smaller bolts of the real thing on this fitting. I did look at commercial fittings for these bollards but decided to stick with stainless steel as it is a finer result than the mouldings that I found.

I started to make the fairleads but I decided that the time spent to make these was out of proportion to the likely result, at least from stainless steel – especially as the bits of material I had to make them from meant a lot of metal removal in odd places, and I found some on line that looked similar, probably made from cast zinc alloy, and about the right size. I think with a bit of manipulation these will be OK however I will have to try to simulate the finish I want. While I was waiting for the commercial fairleads to arrive, I turned to another deck fitting. This is the hand anchor winch, and is a bit of metal model engineering in that it is a mechanism that is prominent on the deck and is not boxed in, so it needs to have plausible 'works'. I thought that, for me, it is actually easier to set about making a winch that could work (although I do not propose that it will be used!) then it looks right. How it works is not too clear from the photos I have. It obviously contains a couple of gears so that manpower can lift the anchors, and a ratchet and pawl to stop them vanishing over board every time you stop turning, but what is not clear is whether it has a somewhat hidden mechanism that allows you to control the rate of drop rather than simply 'let the anchors go' (like a brake etc). The photos are not up to seeing this and there does not seem to be any control levers anywhere, so maybe it is just 'simple', or the complexity is hidden, like inside the windlass drums which doesn't matter for these purposes. The photo shows one of the clearer images I found.

I did not want to spend money on a gear set, so raided my stock again: I found a chunky pair of gears of about the right size that were manufactured together for the same shaft as part of some mechanism, requiring me to saw them apart and turn the saw marks away afterwards. Using scaled drawings from the photos adapted to suit the gears (it ended up quite close I think) I made side pieces from stainless steel again as a matched pair with a folded 'foot' as the real thing. In the photo, the bolts are in the eventual axle holes to hold them together for finishing the size. From this point it is a matter of making bits and pieces to build it, including a couple of frame stretchers, a top with bollard on it, a pawl device for the main gear wheel and the shafts and windlass arrangements. The hardest bit is going to be the two wheels that match the anchor chain which are really odd shapes to match the chain links: this bit might be not very functional!

Continuing work on the winch, I turned up the bulky capstans from solid stainless steel (I had some...), made the axles and spacers and what not to fit it all together, unfinished as yet and with a few more bits to go. A good job I did, as standing back and looking at it, I realised it would be easy to make an 'impossible to assemble' device when it came to fitting anchor chain, anchors and screwing it all down. The solution was to modify my arrangements for fitting the chain and anchors and the preparation for this will be the next step, albeit without anchors yet since I need to drum up the motivation to re-make them (see earlier!). The photo shows it in place with the old clock chain I am going to use temporarily draped over it. The chain drums have a groove to keep the chain aligned that works fine, but I am not going to put pins in the drum for the chain as this is possibly a needless refinement at least for my standards! Yet to make is the pawl mechanism which is quite prominent at the front of the winch, add the bollard on top (I have made it) and make the funnels below the chain drums into which the chain vanishes (into the chain locker below the deck on the real thing, but mine will be simpler and not involve piercing the deck), then sand blasting and painting the gears and some other bits red as per prototype.