Returning to the Dock

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Return to the Dock -- Going Below on *Pegasus*

Once *Pegasus* returns to the dock, the crew will take the students below deck in two orderly groups. Be sure to go down the companionway ladders safely: facing the ladder, with your back to the room you are entering, and holding on securely. To your right as you descend in the proper position, you can see the high water alarm, which is attached to hinged float switches in the bilge. There is also an engine alarm which monitors the oil pressure and temperature of the engine. You will descend into the aft cabin, first.

Aft Cabin

The galley (kitchen) is now on your right: there is a gimbaled stove which swings to counteract the heeling angle of the boat and a harness to keep you in place while cooking. The stove uses propane, a highly flammable gas. The propane tanks are stored in the two boxes on the aft deck. Below the sink; you can see a foot pump which draws clean water for rinsing from the storage tank. The vents above your head are called dorades, and they allow for ventilation in the cabin, crucial in a wooden boat which can easily rot due to excessive condensation. In the center of the cabin, the aluminum mizzen mast enters from the deck and runs through the cabin and down to the keel. The table edges are bounded by fiddle rails which prevent items from sliding off the table as the boat shifts around. Behind the door of the head, you can see a wooden pipe rack.

Aft Head

Living on a boat requires some modifications of the lifestyle we are used to on land. Practically all water has to be brought along, as salt water is only useful for washing (and even that only with special soap!) Hence, cruising boats like *Pegasus* require large water tanks: *Pegasus* carries 250 gallons of water. Similarly, there is no weekly garbage pick up and no sewers. So, waste from the head goes into a holding tank, not into the water outside. All trash gets taken along, as well. Coast Guard regulations prevent boaters from dumping anything into the water until they are 10-12 miles offshore. Although, even then, it would not be environmentally sound to do so. The holding tanks can be pumped out in most marinas, which are usually equipped with pump out stations.

Engine Room

On your right there are three tanks. The first is a holding tank for sewage pumped from the head (toilet.) The next two are a 65 gallon fuel tank and a 125 gallon water tank. There are two identical tanks to these on the far left side of the engine room. This gives *Pegasus* a total capacity of approximately 130 gallons of fuel and 250 gallons of water in two separate tanks for each. The split tanks allow for the possibility of leakage or contamination of one tank in addition to distributing the weight equally.

The four-stroke, four cylinder, diesel engine on your left provides propulsion for the boat while not under sail as well as power to generate electricity. Above the engine you will see a halon fire extinguisher which is activated automatically in case of a fire in the engine room. While *Pegasus* is using her engine, the doors on either end of the engine room are kept closed in order to contain a fire, should one occur. The small red flap on the facing wall of the engine covers a hole which permits the access of a fire extinguisher from beneath the main companionway ladder. The two twelve-volt batteries provide electricity for the entire boat (the "house bank"). There is a separate battery bank devoted solely to starting the engine (the "starting bank"). The cables above the engine are attached to a pulley system which links the steering wheel in the cockpit, to the rudder at the back of the boat.

Navigation Station

As you come out of the engine room, the navstation is on your right. Attached at the top of the navstation is a VHF radio. Each boat has its own call sign which is composed of letters and numbers. When communicating over the radio however, boaters use a special nautical alphabet to ensure that the letters are not misheard. The nautical alphabet begins: alpha, bravo, charlie and continues through the letter "z".*Pegasus*' call sign is "Whiskey, Charlie, Papa 4602." On the wall (called a bulkhead on a boat) to your right are the circuit breakers. At the back of the navstation, you will see a log (you probably know it as an odometer), the Heart Interface which monitors the battery banks, and above that, a gas vapor detector, known as "the sniffer". The box with the TV type screen attached above the left side of the station is the radar, and the barometer on the wall to your left gives information about atmospheric pressure. Inside the panel beneath the station are drawers for charts (maps) and ship's logs; plotting tools; and the United States Coast Pilot, which provides navigational information about the latitude and longitude of potential destinations, as well as special conditions that boaters might want to be aware of, such as tidal swirls and rips.

Forward Cabins

To your left is the stateroom with a bunk that pulls out into a double, a desk, shelves, a hanging locker (closet), an EPIRB mount , a fire extinguisher, battery switches, and a deviation card for the compass. Deviation (the difference between the boat's magnetic heading and the heading shown by the compass) is caused by metals (iron, steel), electrical circuits, electronic equipment containing magnets, etc. that are close enough to the compass to cause the needle to deflect slightly. This error usually changes as the vessel changes course, but it can be measured accurately and a correction applied.

To your right is another bunk with a lee cloth which can be attached to the top of the cabin and prevent the sleeper from falling out of the bunk in heavy weather. The small opening above the bunk is a deck prism, which serves the same purpose as a window, except that the prism lets in more light. To the left of this bunk is the base of the main mast, filled with wires for the navigation lights and antennas.

The forward head is behind the door on your left, following the main mast. It has a sink and a shower.

Forepeak

The forepeak is equipped with a V-berth for sleeping and to your right, just inside the door, you can see a gimbaled oil lamp. There are special fold-away metal steps to enable you to climb into the bunks. The bronze porthole at the front is hooked to another dorade. At the very front of the forepeak, you can actually see the hull planking in the "locker", along with the anchor chain. The sampson post runs down onto the keel.

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Back on the dock

Once on the dock, it is safe to remove lifejackets and harnesses. Stepping off a boat even after a short time can be quite tricky. The "sea legs" grown in reaction to the rocking and rolling of the boat make for a stilted walk on land, and people have even been known to fall over!

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