



# DRIVE Marine Services

## Preventing Rot in Wooden Boats

Most of the information on wooden boat construction, repair and restoration is in books, and not on the web. At **BoatCraftNSW.com.au** we do our best to provide you with guidelines, but we, like most others on the web, are market-driven and promote our products when appropriate. We strive to be honest and accurate and have used or tested all of the techniques we publish. When contemplating wooden boat repairs, especially if they are structural, go to the library and check out books that will help guide you. You will also find a very good publication by NSW forestries on our website titled "**Timber boatbuilding**"

Most books are deficient in the area of new chemistry and techniques that can speed up the repair/restoration/maintenance process. Most of the books were written and printed many years ago, before the newer products were developed. Some products are unique and produce outstanding results, such as **BOTE COTE with TPRDA**.

The factors that make wooden boats endure or decay are varied, but the main reasons are:

- Exposed end grain
- Seams on Deck and Cabin opening up allowing fresh water into exposed timber.
- Incorrectly fitting fasteners. E.g. Stainless Steel will corrode in timber, if moisture gets to it. Check out **Crevice Corrosion on BoatCraftNSW.com.au**.

Here, in very general terms, are some of the factors that contribute to the condition and durability of wooden boats:

- **The age of the boat:** Older boats will be more likely to have wood deterioration problems than newer boats, most of which are hidden.
- **The type of construction:** Certain types of construction, such as carvel, are more likely to experience wood deterioration and structural problems than other types of construction, such as strip-planked.
- **The type of timber:** Some Timber, such as old growth teak and Huon Pine, are almost totally resistant to deterioration, while others will rot in an instant if conditions are right and they are not sealed in **BOTE-COTE Epoxy Resin**.
- **The boat's environment:** Certain areas of the country, such as northern Australia, have warm weather, warm water, and lots of rain and humidity. These are the factors that encourage and support fungal and bacterial growth in timber. Other areas, such as Tasmania have colder water and less moisture, and so timber deterioration is not as wide spread. That is why there are so many older timber boats and the reason I love going to the wooden boat festival in Hobart. Damage to the timber and the coatings by UV light is prevalent wherever there are long periods of bright sunlight.
- **The care of the boat:** How the boat is used and stored is a significant factor in the longevity of the boat.
  - Wooden boats that are stored under cover will have significantly fewer timber deterioration problems than boats that are stored out in the open.
  - Boats that allow free air movement through the interior will have fewer problems than boats that are tightly covered with canvas tarps or locked up with no air flow.
  - Boats that are stored in salt water will tend to have less rot than boats in fresh water.
  - Boats that are inspected closely and treated with appropriate chemistry will have fewer timber problems than boats that are just used and stored.

**NOTE:** An excellent technique is to use containers of a moisture absorbent (such as Damp Rid) dispersed throughout your boat. On my 30ft Clansman, I use three containers of Damp Rid and have good through flow ventilation. I never have a problem with musty smell or mildew.

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*For a Comprehensive Range of Boat Building requirements including*

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