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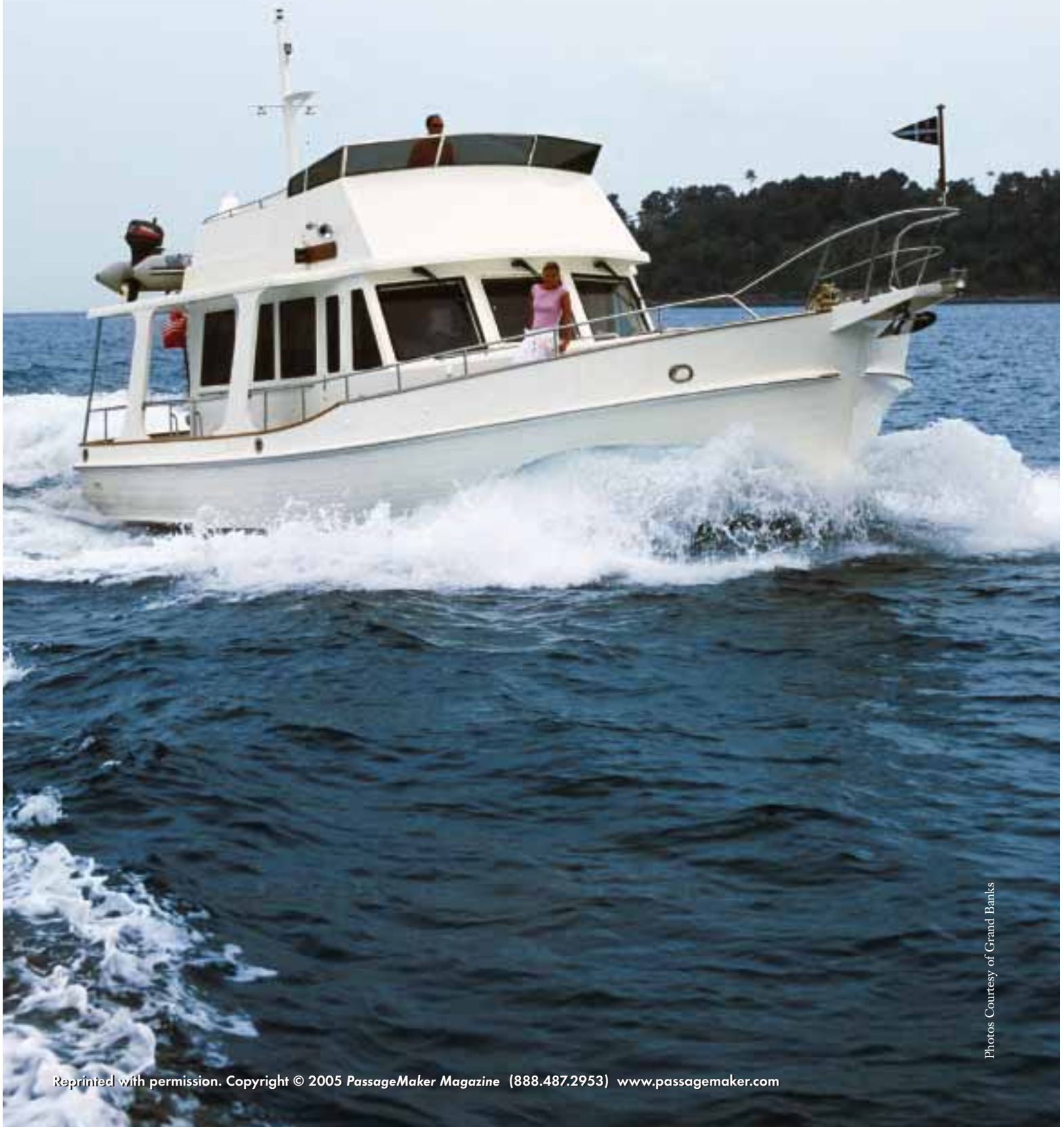
# PassageMaker

DECEMBER 2005

CELEBRATING OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY



**Extreme Makeover**  
**The *New* Grand Banks 44**



Photos Courtesy of Grand Banks



# NEXT GENERATION GRAND BANKS THE 44 Heritage EU

BY ROBERT M. LANE

**T**he opportunity was irresistible: to be one of the first to see Grand Banks' new 44-foot Heritage Europa. To do so, I'd have to go to its birthplace, in Pasir Gudang, Malaysia, on a muddy creek draining into the Straits of Johor.

For months, the yacht builder had been telling the boating world something new was on the way. "Since 1963 we've set the pace for quality cruising yachts," the company boasted in a series of advertisements. "In 2005, we're cranking it up a few knots."

For a while there, was a slight fear that the venerable builder of dependable diesel cruisers had gone off the deep end and would launch something weird and nontraditional. Those fears were eased with later teasing ads that included computer-generated graphics of a boat that did look like a Grand Banks.

None of us worried about quality or performance. But still, there were nagging questions about what was going on in that faraway place. We wondered



how the company could justify abandoning its 40-year-old line of 42-foot yachts—the most successful group of cruising boats ever built—to make way for the 44.

Why was Grand Banks doing this? Where was the company headed? The questions were titillating and the opportunities enormous. I had to go look and to ask questions.

So, after 8,000 miles of air travel and having endured the cumbersome border crossing from Singapore into Malaysia, I stood before a 44 Heritage EU in Grand Banks' huge assembly hall...and relaxed completely.

This yacht looked almost exactly like every other GB Europa ever built. Grand Banks had not sacrificed its enduring style for a new boat.

Before boarding the first 44EU at its creekside mooring, I joined others in a factory tour. With us was Bill Fink, a retired businessman who cruises a 42 Europa on the Great Lakes and along the East



Coast. Fink is the company's volunteer ambassador to GB owners' groups in the east.

"You walk up to this boat on the dock and you say it is a Grand Banks. There is no question about it," Fink said.

But there are differences, from the bottom of the boat to its top. Some are subtle and others—such as the new modified deep-V planing hull and the more comfortable, better-functioning flybridge—are in-your-eye dramatic.

Two 44EUs were in the water at Pasir Gudang, undergoing sea trials. Nine more were moving along the production line. The first will reach the United States in time for late fall and winter boat shows.

Because 42-foot Europas had been outselling the Classic models, Grand Banks decided to base the styling of its first 44 on that of the Europa. Classics and Europas are now grouped into the company's Heritage series. Classic 44s will begin production next year.



Grand Banks officials hope to launch four of the 44s each month. That means GB would ship one every week, beating the production rate for the 42, which, over its 40-year lifetime, averaged one launch every 10 days.

I reached Singapore (just across the Straits of Johor from Malaysia) as Grand Banks was winding down its annual dealers' meeting. Every GB dealership in the world, it seemed, was present for the first opportunity for brokers to see and ride in the new yacht. I talked to several who had moved early and quickly to place orders for one or more of the 44s to ensure prompt delivery to buyers.

The new Europa will have a retail price of about \$850,000. With commissioning and local taxes, the total cost will probably near \$1 million.

The economy is good worldwide, and studies by financial institutions indicate that a rapidly growing segment of the population has a huge amount of discretionary income. There is a healthy market for boats with seven-figure price tags.

After intensive market research, including interviews with owners and dealers, GB executives reluctantly concluded the 42 no longer was capable of providing all

Photos by Bob Lane

Top: Modular construction, with components assembled on the factory floor, speeds construction. This module contains the forward staterooms and heads for the 44 Europa.

Above: A completed component is lowered into the bow of a 44 Europa. Precisely built on the factory floor, components require less final fitting.



that buyers wanted. Boaters wanted more space than the 42 offered, and hotter but still efficient engines; the 40-year-old hull, as good as it is, couldn't meet those requests.

The company has decided to abandon the 42 after building 1,560 of them and in its place to offer something slightly larger, the 44. The new yacht has a modified deep-V hull, which works better and offers improved efficiency at high speed—and a host of other improvements.

“We wanted better performance without killing the goose,” one GB staffer told me.

With the problems of the 42 so well known, I asked why it took so long to make a change. “It is such a popular and highly regarded boat, we were reluctant to change,” he told me. “Perhaps we waited too long to get to this product.”

The company recognized that its new era of customers probably will not cruise vast distances for months, as do some earlier generations of GB

owners, and that they want fast, comfortable, luxurious yachts for weekends and shorter boating vacations.

The 44 will satisfy those desires. But the company did not strip away the attributes that always have made the Grand Banks a good cruising boat: adequate fuel and water capacity, sturdy construction, sufficient storage, a seaworthy hull, and reliable systems. The new 44 will work equally well for boaters who want to adopt a slower pace and spend an entire season aboard.

Its success seems inevitable.

### THE VENERABLE 42

American Marine, Ltd., began life in 1956 as a builder of custom yachts. Its first—a 52-foot ketch now named *Cutty Sark*—still sails the waters of Puget Sound in northwest Washington.

Soon after, the company built a line of small wood pilothouse motoryachts called Chantymans. A few



Top Left: A good fiberglass hull depends on saturating fiber with resin. A masked worker uses a roller to wet the glass fiber. Top right: The deckhouse of a 44 Europa is ready to be joined with its hull. Blue sheeting protects the surface. Above left: This is the modified deep-V hull GB designed for the 44 Europa, to improve handling and efficiency at high speeds. Above right: The joints on this nearly complete steering wheel are invisible, and that's good, says Philip Lin.



were launched, and some remain in service. Then, it commissioned Ken Smith to design another pilothouse yacht that was named *Spray*; she still cruises the Great Lakes. That design evolved into the line of boats that became Grand Banks. (Not too long ago, the company was renamed Grand Banks, Ltd.)

The first 42 GB—a woody—was launched in 1965 in Hong Kong. It was one boat in a big family. But it was an early success.

For many years, even as the company switched from wood to fiberglass construction in 1973, GBs were powered by slow-turning, low-horsepower diesel engines, such as the Ford Lehman and the

AmMarine (a John Deere converted for marine use by GB). They were 8- to 9-knot boats.

About 15 years ago, faster-revving, high-horsepower diesels that offered more hull speed became available for marine use. Customers unhappy with displacement hull speeds demanded those engines, and GB began installing them. Before abandoning the line, Grand Banks had installed engines of up to 500hp in some of its 42s.

The Smith semi-displacement hull design offered a nearly straight stem, a deep forefoot, a full keel, and a hull that flattened at the stern. With sufficient stuff in the engine room, it was fast. But it was not the most efficient hull for high-speed yachting.

## OVER THE HORIZON WITH GRAND BANKS

BY ROBERT M. LANE

**T**he folks at Grand Banks always have been skilled at keeping the wraps on information about new products. In 1973, for example, the company switched from building wood boats to fiberglass craft without telling the public or its network of dealers until a fleet of yachts was ready for showing and selling.

More recently, GB carefully built a wall around its intent to discontinue the 42-foot yacht it had been building for 40 years and replace it with an exciting new 44. It began teasing us with advertisements promising something new, but didn't introduce the 44-foot Heritage Eurpoa until much later. Dealers knew, but they kept their lips zipped.

For a while a year or so ago, Grand Banks feared the secrecy surrounding the 44 Europa had been compromised. The U.S. company that built the hull molds packed them in shipping containers labeled "GB 44." Officials were horrified when they first saw the labels as the containers landed in Malaysia, but fortunately for keepers of secrets, no one who had a clue about Grand Banks had seen the tags.



So now I'm sitting in a restaurant in Singapore, listening to Grand Banks CEO Bob Livingston tell me about something really new—but it's not a secret. And here it is: Grand Banks may begin building smaller boats—probably a re-creation of the 36-foot model that has not been built in about six years—and will likely do it in the United States.

"We haven't given up on the 32 or the 36," Livingston says. "We need a starter boat." (The 32 has been out of production for a decade.)

Livingston envisions molding fiberglass sections and crafting interior modules in its factory in Malaysia. Components would be packed in shipping containers and put

aboard freighters bound for the United States. Shipping is the key, Livingston explains. Completed GB yachts are now loaded aboard freighters bound for the States. Too large to fit in containers, they are strapped to heavy wood cradles for the voyage and loaded as deck cargo. Because of the need for special handling, transporting the yachts is costly. "Shipping kills us," he says.

However, a container holding parts for a yacht may be shipped for a fraction of the cost, Livingston adds. That savings may help make a smaller GB yacht financially feasible once again.



As a writer for *PMM*, I tracked down the first 42 built. She's a dive boat operating in the Baltic Sea, off the east coast of Sweden. I also had the opportunity to cruise aboard and write about hull number 1,500, which was on the west coast of Florida. At that time, I was assured Grand Banks never would terminate the 42 line.

(A personal note: For more than 15 years my wife, Polly, and I have owned a 1979-model 42 Europa—hull number 612. Her builder's plate also identifies her as the first fiberglass EU built. Naturally, I have a soft spot in my heart for the 42. Polly and I love our boat, but often grouse about things we believe could be better—but none related to performance or reliability.)

"What if we had an operation in the state of Washington," Livingston muses, while collecting seafood spaghetti on his fork. "We would do the cutting (in Malaysia) and put the pieces in a container and ship it."

The emphasis on Washington is important because that state has been considered for a GB assembly plant. That area intrigues Livingston because it has a number of major boatbuilders (Nordic Tugs, American Tug, Northern Marine, San Juan, and Pacific Mariner among them) and because it has a large population of skilled shipwrights. At the same time, it is worrisome because of the likelihood that competition for those talented workers would be fierce.

Livingston and others at Grand Banks say the company is undertaking expansion plans that will enable it to increase production from 88 boats this year to perhaps as many as 155 in 2010. The new American-built 36 would be part of the total.

A part of Grand Banks since 1972 and on its board since 1975, Livingston, now 65, says he is thinking about retiring in two or three years, but then adds, "As long as it's fun, I'm going to stick around."

The final decision on an American project may be made by his successor. That could be his son, Rob, executive VP, or the top job at Grand Banks could go to one of several others in high ranking positions—including Neil McCurdy, the sales VP, or Philip Lin, the Malaysian plant director.

If and when Bob Livingston retires, it may be to a home in or near Bend, Oregon, an increasingly popular community in the high plains country with Mount Bachelor as an attractive skiing destination.

"And I'd like to have a 36 and keep it in Bellingham (Washington) and cruise it for about a month every year," he says.

## THE NEW LOOK

The major physical difference between the 42 and 44 is in the beam. The new boat is 14 inches wider (15 feet 3 inches versus 14 feet 1 inch). The wider beam allows the new Europa to have 19-inch side decks (I walked those decks without turning sideways) and still allow sufficient space for a comfortable saloon. The 44 has a waterline length of 41 feet 7 inches, compared to 41 feet 1 inch for the 42-footer.

Sparkman & Stephens, the design firm selected through a competition to design the new boat, raked the stem and gave the bow more flare. As a result, the 44 has an overall length of 49 feet 11 inches, including the swim platform and the anchor pulpit. On deck, the new boat is 44 feet 6 inches, compared to 43 feet 3 inches for the 42-foot boat. Those slight differences add up to a major difference in weight: 48,670 pounds of displacement for the 44, compared to 37,400 pounds for the 42.

Our old 42 Europa has the master stateroom in the bow. There's a huge V-berth that sleeps well but is a pain to make up and get into. We have a guest stateroom with stacked berths and one head. (Later models offered an island berth in the bow but sacrificed storage space in the process.)

Sparkman & Stephens, working with a magic touch in only a little more space, created a roomy master in the bow with a walkaround double berth and decent storage in lockers and drawers, and a head with separate shower. The designers still found space for a comfortable guest stateroom and a second head. Accommodations on the new 44 flybridge are light years beyond what one finds on older GBs. Pilot seats are comfortable, guest seating is generous, and there's space for a tender, too.

To see the differences in hull design, the boat must be out of the water. On the original styling, the V shape of the hull at the bow flattens moving aft and at the stern it is nearly flat. On the 44, the V at the bow is maintained running aft, although the angle lessens moving aft, and at the stern, the hull line drops sharply from a hard chine at the water line toward the keel, maintaining a V shape. Propeller tunnels are sculpted into the bottom, for protection and efficiency.

The original design included a full, deep keel that contributed to stability and helped reduce rolling. There is no deep keel in the modified deep-V design because a boat cannot achieve higher speeds and better fuel efficiency while dragging around a big keel. The V hull is faster and more efficient at higher



speeds, but in sloppy seas, the 44's V hull may roll more. Yet another boating compromise.

The 44 turns a 31-1/2-inch propeller, while 42s usually carry a 24-inch wheel. The clearance between the propeller edge and the hull has been reduced substantially to improve performance. The first Europa carries Caterpillar C7 diesels rated at 455hp. Larger engines, including a pair of Yanmars, are available. With the standard C7 engines, the 44 will top 22 knots and cruise at 16 to 18 knots.

"Our customers opted for higher horsepower, and we've given them the hull for it," said Richard Ahl,

Several 44 Europas were lined up, with crews busy doing a dozen different jobs. My first thought was, "Hey, that's a 42 Europa." They look that much alike.

Although some of the boat was covered with blue plastic sheeting for protection, it was obvious that all of the important GB styling touches have been retained. The brow of the bridge still has three angled panels, the windshield tilts aft, the transom is faced with teak planks, and the hull is grooved to give the appearance of planking. The fashion plates (which support the upper deck) have the same position and rake.



Bob Lane

manager of research and development for Grand Banks.

### A CLOSER LOOK

The first new boat that I saw was in the immense Grand Banks' assembly building. (The building covers 100,000 square feet and has separate production areas for fiberglass molding, carpentry, metalwork, and final assembly. There's also a cafeteria for the nearly 1,000 employees and a training center for new hires.)

There is not much exterior teak. The caprail, wider than on the 42 because of the larger joint it must cover, is varnished teak. The saloon door in the cockpit is glass trimmed in teak. On hull number 1, the exterior deck is teak that is bonded to the underlying fiberglass. (There are no screws in the decking.) But all the fussy stuff, particularly half-round trim, is gone. Windows no longer are trimmed with painted-teak molding; instead, the glass is sealed into the fiberglass. This is not a loss; teak framing is notoriously difficult to paint.



Hull number 1 was in the water at Grand Banks' landing. We stepped aboard through a transom gate. The new look in the cockpit is due to the stairway to the flybridge. Loosen a catch and tug on the stairway—it is not a ladder—and gas struts lift it high, creating an entry to the engine room.

This is the kind of entry usually found only on much larger boats. To me, this is one of the highlights of the boat, because it eliminates the need to lift heavy saloon hatches and provides a safer engine room entry, too. I know several people who have fallen through open engine room hatches and

service points (filters, batteries, dipsticks) are within easy reach. A disappointment here is the loss of the enormous storage space that many 42 Europas have just aft of the engines. (Ours is known as the "basement" or the "inside lazarette" because access is through a hatch at the rear of the saloon. It is 6 feet deep, about 3 feet high and runs the full width. It has an enormous storage capacity.)

One reason for elimination of the "basement" in the 44 is the engine room entry I like so much. It obviously takes a big piece of that storage area. Just another compromise in boat design. Elimination of

the storage area creates a spacious engine room. The big Cats are far forward, but other equipment (a furnace or watermaker, for example) can be installed without crowding or blocking access. There is space, too, for spares, filters, and tools. The 44 does have a cockpit lazarette, with space for deck gear, crab pots, and the like.

Prominent on the forward bulkhead of the engine room are the battery disconnect switches. *PMM* believes these switches should be outside the engine room so they may be reached easily and safely in a fire or other emergency.

I asked GB engineers why they put the disconnect switches in the

engine room. The answer was that they consider them safe because heavy electrical supply lines are fused, and all branch circuits are protected by breakers in a panel near the helm. Placing the disconnect switches on the bulkhead permits shorter runs of heavy cable, which contributes to the safety of the electrical system, they added.

Further, they say, a small emergency hatch in the saloon, near the helm, makes it easy to reach and operate the switches if needed in an emergency. (I wouldn't want to lift that hatch and lean down toward the switches if there were a fire in the ER.) It would be possible to turn the switches around and penetrate the bulkhead, making them accessible from inside the forward stairway without increasing cable runs. (That's where they are found on many older boats.) But GB said cutting holes for the switches would raise noise levels in the boat, which would be objectionable.

Photos Courtesy of Grand Banks



Left: Molded stairs with teak tread and well-placed handrails lead up to the flybridge. Right: Cockpit engine room entries are common on large yachts; GB found a way to offer it on its new 44 by lifting the flybridge stairway. Opposite page: A pair of C7 455hp Caterpillars are head to head in the engine room. The battery-disconnect switches should be moved outside the engine room.

suffered serious injury. Of course, one must be careful not to lift the stairway while folks are on the bridge.

The new entry eliminates the need to haul potentially dirty stuff up a short ladder from the engine room, through a saloon hatch and out the door. But with a teak deck in the cockpit, one still must be fastidious in handling batteries, old oil, filters, and other engine room waste.

The engine room occupies all the space beneath the saloon. It is a bent-knees engine room, but



Another oddity was the mounting of a manual bilge pump on the engine room ceiling just above the port engine. It probably never will be used to pump the bilge, but I would wager that it will be a head knocker. Wear a hard hat in this engine room, please.

### A LOOK INSIDE

The saloon reflects traditional Grand Banks styling and quality of workmanship, and exudes

The helm seat and a cabinet containing a small freezer and controls for the Bose sound system are forward, to starboard. Also gone is the perforated fabric used for headliner on generations of Grand Banks' yachts. Following the pattern of other builders, GB now covers the ceiling with padded vinyl panels that are held in place with Velcro strips. On those rare occasions when it's necessary, removing the overhead will be a snap with the new material.



Photos by Bob Lane

Fine upholstery and woodwork lend a club-like atmosphere to the saloon of the new 44 Europa in this forward-looking view. The increase in beam translates into a roomier saloon.

club-like comfort. A convertible L-shaped settee, upholstered in blue and with excellent leg support, is to port and is fronted by a high-low folding table made in the company's wood shop. (Grand Banks' enduring beige upholstery—too enduring for many—has been gone for a long time.) On the starboard side is an entertainment center with a flat television screen that disappears into a cabinet, and a pair of occasional chairs.

The grabrail on the saloon overhead in every GB boat has new styling, combining teak and bright metal. It looks good and should be equally effective at keeping crew on their feet in rolling weather.

A new galley—forward and to port—has more space and a lean, contemporary appearance without being flashy. On 42 Europas, the sink and stove are in a counter set against the outside wall of the galley. On the 44, the sink (a large one, thankfully) faces forward, while the electric stovetop is in the counter between the galley and the settee. A microwave/convection oven hangs beneath the single overhead cabinet.



The countertop is granite. Instead of the more common finger pulls on galley drawers, Grand Banks added stainless pulls and locks. Hull number 1 has a standard under-the-counter refrigerator, with a teak paneled door (not the huge meat-locker door often found on GB boats) and several banks of drawers. Against the outside wall is a pair of shallow storage areas for dishware.

Something new: Instead of traditional teak flooring—parquet, teak and holly, or teak and maple—

The master has room to walk around. And the private head is convenient and large enough to turn around in. The shower floor is tile, and instead of a standard drain, Grand Banks cut slots in the tile to allow water to flow into a pan below. It should be much easier to clean than the traditional teak grating; I must admit, though, that I think the slots make the space look unfinished. Perhaps I would be happier if the cut edges of the slots matched the white of the tile instead of looking raw and black.



Grand Banks installed a sole of varnished teak planking in the saloon that looks much like hardwood floors found in homes. It is a handsome and innovative change, particularly in combination with dark upholstery, light window covers, and the traditional teak trim. (The teak sole is glued in place. No nails are used.)

A midship stairway leads forward and down to the staterooms. The added width really shows here. The berth in the master stateroom is rectangular; in many boats the island berth is oddly shaped—I can't help but compare the shape to a coffin—because of space limitations.

Contemporary appliances, a granite countertop, and teak cabinetry make a GB galley a special place. The large sink makes it work well.

A washer/dryer may be installed in the shower space in the guest head. A handheld shower could be installed in the remaining space but would truly make it a "wet head." Still, many will consider it a worthwhile trade.

### UP ON TOP

A prediction: The redesigned flybridge will become a major activity center on the 44 while



Photos Courtesy of Grand Banks

cruising or at anchor. The Stidd helm seats are inviting. And so are the cushioned settee to starboard and its facing grated teak table. For too many years, Grand Banks built molded bridge seats that were monsters, ergonomically speaking. No one fit comfortably. I probably have complained more about them than any other feature on our boat.

But they are gone. Hallelujah!

A sink and icemaker are to port, making socializing at day's end an easy event. Although the Stidd seats are high—to provide superb 360-degree visibility—the windscreens are designed to deflect wind overhead. That's important at 16 knots.

The instrument pod at the helm folds down and out of sight, providing security and weather protection. I first saw this feature on a Nordic Tugs months ago. I mentioned this to some GB people and we all started wondering who had the idea first. It's a good one. The bridgedeck aft has a low-rise dinghy davit and space for a tender.

### OUT TO SEA

The tide was high, finally, and there was enough water in the creek for us to escape the dock. There

are few recreational boats in the Straits of Johor, so the sea was empty except for two widely separated boats, one a working craft and the second a pleasure boat. Commercial shipyards lined the shore, with huge oil-drilling rigs under construction in one. The high-rise towers of Singapore were visible across the water.

A GB skipper at the helm, we went to sea at about 15 knots. With the Caterpillar diesels running at 1600 rpm and burning about 9gph each, the noise level at the lower helm reached 74dBA. At top cruising speed of 18 knots, GB officials said the noise level reaches 75–76dBA. This is on the verge of being a little bit too much noise.

We were on the flybridge, however, and the engine sounds barely were discernable. The underwater exhaust added some noise, as did the thrashing of the boat's wake. GB has been modifying the exhaust port design to muffle more of that noise. I was told that Grand Banks is working on the noise I recorded at the lower helm and intends to cut the decibel levels transmitted by two hard-working engines directly below the helm. It's a challenging and expensive problem.



On my 26-year-old boat with a pair of Ford Lehman diesels, the sound level at the helm is 73dBA at cruising speed. Modern boats fitted with better acoustical materials ought to do better.

My turn at the wheel. I do what I always do. Hard right! It was boring. The 44EU tracked easily, with almost no heel. I could feel enough resistance in the hydraulic steering to know that something was happening, however. The turning circle was tight, and we quickly came across our wake, with just a little bump. The sea was calm, and there was no other challenge. She was responsive to the helm and handled well.

Grand Banks officials said they were eager to take the boat to sea under rough conditions. In an interview over lunch the following day, Bob Livingston, executive chairman and CEO of Grand Banks, Ltd., said he was looking forward to a

thorough testing at sea. "I want to get it into some bad weather," he told me.

Livingston said he is particularly interested in seeing how the new boat handles in following seas. The old hull design doesn't do well, and skippers dealing with 8-foot following swells spend a lot of time working the wheel and throttles to prevent broaching. I know. Richard Ahl, the research and development manager, said the bigger, properly balanced rudders and the larger propellers mean the new hull will "handle better in following seas."

Malaysian bureaucrats were due at the company dock on the creek to inspect the boat, so we turned toward home. My first ride on the new 44 Europa was too short.

Hull number 1 will not be sold. She'll be kept as a company boat, for display at shows and brokers' docks. Already, after only a few hours of operating



Above: A pair of Stidd helm seats offer comfort and good visibility from the flybridge. There's plenty of space on the bridge for people and a tender, so invite your friends aboard! Opposite page: The walkaround double berth in the master stateroom allows for storage underneath, and there are plenty more drawers and lockers in the stateroom, plus a head with separate shower.



time, managers have begun to identify improvements and changes that will be offered in subsequent models.

### THE FUTURE

Grand Banks is coming up on 50 years of boatbuilding. GB obviously intends to be in business many more years. To do that, it needs to offer the more powerful and sophisticated boats buyers want, not the boats of a decade ago. This year, the company will build 88 boats. It hopes to increase the total to 111 next year, and then to 125—and, Livingston said—to 155 annually by 2010.

To lead the way, Grand Banks, Ltd., has been hiring bright new people in marketing, product development, operations, and management. Some, including Livingston's son, Rob, who as executive vice president is responsible for marketing, distribution, service, and strategic development, are in the GB headquarters office in Seattle. Neil McCurdy, vice president of sales, a boater and the son of a well-known Northwest boater, also is based in Seattle.

They have energized the company, improved its Internet presence, and reached out to boat owners

for opinions, comments, and criticism—all of which shaped the 44 Europa. It's a complex business to manage. GB builds three series of boats—Heritage,

### 44 HERITAGE EU

LOA	44' 5"
LWL	41' 7"
BEAM	15' 3"
DRAFT	4'
DISPLACEMENT	4,870 lbs.
WATER CAPACITY	260 U.S. gal.
FUEL CAPACITY	600 U.S. gal.
TOP SPEED	24 knots
BASE PRICE	\$850,000

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Photos Courtesy of Grand Banks



Above: The spacious swim platform makes loading into a dinghy a simple task; the crane makes launching the dinghy just as smooth. Opposite page: The familiar, classic GB lines make the 44 easy to spot on the water; you really have to go aboard to experience the differences between the retired model and this, the company's latest offering.



Eastbay, and Aleutian. I saw the company's first 59 Aleutian pilothouse under construction. It will join a 64- and 70-footer in the family. (The success of the fast and luxurious Aleutian line also encouraged officials to approve the new 44 styling.)

The new Aleutian was not a surprise; we've known about it for months. The company had a treat, however: a new 39 Eastbay SX—an outgrowth of the first Eastbay, a 38-footer introduced to the market more than a decade ago. The new boat will be light on teak and heavy on horsepower. It will be great for weekends and harbor-hopping vacations.

In Malaysia, the company has added fiberglass and systems experts to improve production and has hired management consultants. The company welcomed back Philip Lin, a popular executive who left to build boats in British Columbia a few years ago after 17 years at GB. He now is director of the Malaysia plant.

GB owns 21 acres at Pasir Gudang and has 100,000 square feet of covered manufacturing space. It will increase the size of that plant. It also has a small yard in Singapore, which finishes assembly of

large yachts that are molded in Malaysia and then towed across the strait.

Obviously, GB needs to tighten its business, make its production line more efficient, and shorten the time it takes to build a boat if it is to meet long-term goals and remain successful. One major change already in place will mean the company will do less custom work for buyers. Livingston said they looked at all available options and decided to keep one-third of them, to make another one-third standard design features, and to discard the remainder. So today the company offers, for example, only an electric galley—no propane. The boats will have generators, but the only choice will be Onan. Livingston said the company decided to do lighting right and not offer buyers several choices.

To remain a healthy business, GB must build the boats buyers want. While some may bemoan the loss of the 42—and slow boats of a day long ago—the fact is that something better was needed to meet market competition.

The new 44 looks like a winner. Hey, Grand Banks, you should have done this years ago. ■

*Desire,* meet **FULFILLMENT**



**GRAND BANKS 44 HERITAGE EU**  
Strong, spirited and stylish, the 44EU is the next generation Heritage Series yacht. With engine options that include **twin 500-hp diesels**, this newest Grand Banks can propel you **over 23 knots**, riding smooth and trim atop its **modified deep-V hull**. Inside, her **15'-3" beam** translates to a bigger and brighter salon, with **fresh new interior styling** throughout. **Stairway engine room access** and a host of new amenities enrich your cruising experience. All with the **quality, craftsmanship and rock-solid reliability** you expect from a Grand Banks.



**GRAND BANKS.**



For complete specifications, equipment information, photos and an interactive tour, visit [www.GrandBanks.com](http://www.GrandBanks.com).