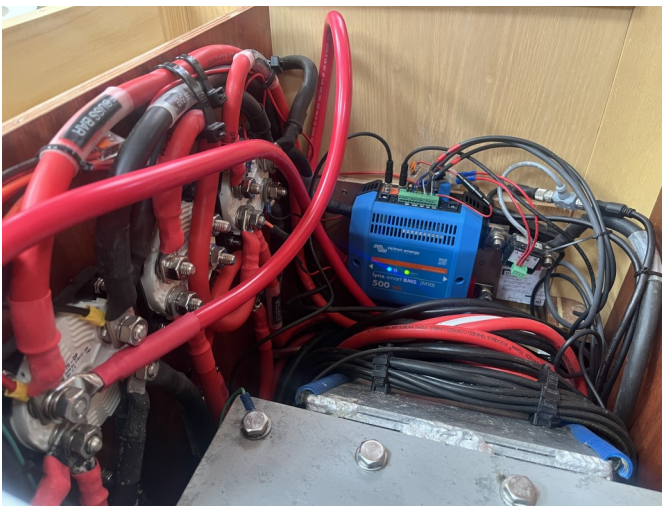


The Fourth Voyage of Lumina - May 26

Visitors !!

Post 3

We picked up Andy and Caroline in Campbell River, having already had several days in the harbour doing boat jobs and making use of the very well stocked marine store just a few paces from the harbour. Our neighbours on the dock were very chatty and we went on board to exchange stories. It was a bit sobering as they had come to the end of their cruising days, the boat was up for sale and they were off to some sheltered accommodation near to the children in Victoria. It was a largish 60ft yacht built solely by themselves over a 5 year period in the 1980s. An interesting rig with three junk rigged masts and plenty of accommodation down below. However with both of them pushing 90 you could feel the sadness as they told us of their travels round the Pacific.



With the centre of the boat dismantled, you can see the centreboard case with the food storage and seating removed. There is a window that Carol is looking through to see its position. At the end nearest the camera is the battery isolation switches and power wiring. The Blue box is the Victron BMS which monitors and controls the charge to the new lithium batteries which are under the floor on both sides of the centreboard case



So with new Bow Thruster batteries , a booster pump for the water maker and numerous other jobs complete we set off for a gentle cruise with friends for a week along to Port Hardy a hundred and something miles up the coast. On the way we traversed many interesting rapids amongst the islands requiring some careful tidal calculations but fortunately we never arrived at one with the water flowing towards us



An interesting lunchtime stop at Yorke Island where there are many interesting wartime buildings dating from when the Canadians were trying to secure the inside passage from Japanese intruders. With everything now disappearing into the forest, we had passed this last year not knowing there was anything to see.

instead of with us. Each night there was another secluded anchorage but unfortunately

after the first day the weather turned a bit on the miserable side with plenty of wind, always on the nose as one would expect, and little sun. You can tell your guests that for the last month there has been full sun all day long but they always give you that knowing look that says I don't really believe you!

Fortunately on our last night out amongst the islands we found a nice sheltered anchorage and Andy even went for a short swim. I left him to it as being a canoeist at heart I always see swimming as a bit of a failure—unless of course the water is stupidly warm which in this case it definitely wasn't. We then went to the shore to let them have a bit of a run around as there had been mutterings about not getting many steps in which is always difficult on a boat. The rocks were warm to the touch after a day of sunshine and



Old stumps like graves in new growth forest and a monument to the fellers of old in the town of Powell River

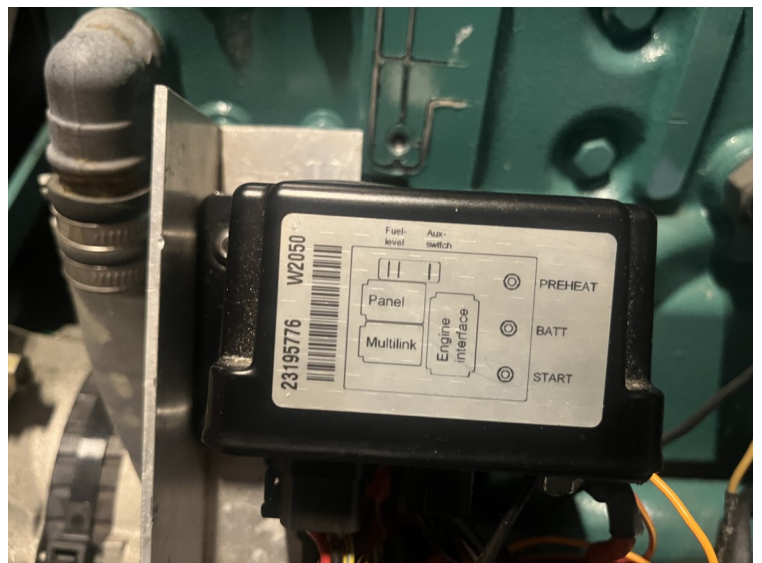
in the woods there was the usual mixture of younger maybe a hundred year old trees interspersed with the stumps of the original forest giants felled many years ago.



The boat is full of Gremlins

The idea behind doing boat jobs is that you either are repairing something that has failed or you are doing some sort of improvement. We arrived back in Canada with suitcases full of parts that are either destined to become part of the spares kit or were for improvements, then there are other things that were ordered and either delivered to the boatyard or we collected. We hit the ground running, making good use of the hire car to collect the sail that had been in a local sail loft since the autumn having a new UV strip installed. This is a special piece of fabric along the trailing edge of the sail so that when it is rolled up that is the only piece that is open to the sun and thus it protects the rest from the harm of the UV rays. In a marine store some distance away in Nanaimo was also a new Radar, purchased a month or so ago waiting to be picked up. These were relatively easy boat jobs that went well and had a good result, for instance the radar was fitted and it worked, job ticked off!

There are however another level of boat jobs that do not necessarily have such good outcomes and one can only put this down to the fact that the boat is really a living organism



The sinister black box on the engine, the perfect place for a community of gremlins to multiply



Lovely and warm water at 12C

inhabited by Gremlins. These creatures creep into a boat starting at the boatyard when it is built. The builders do their best to keep the boat sanitised during build but inevitably it seems that some manage creep on board. Usually there is some sort of guarantee designed to counteract their effects but inevitably this is always unsuccessful and gradually they multiply until the whole boat is infested.

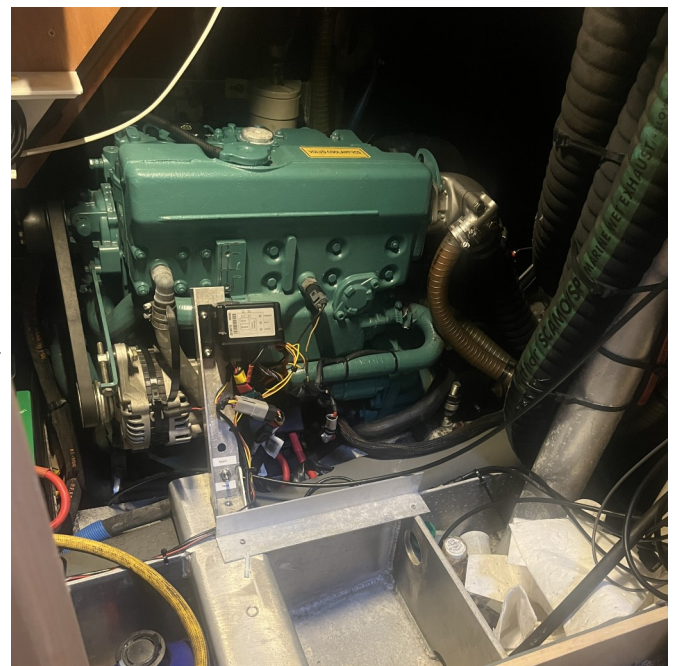
Some gremlins appear more active and destructive than others and is not clear if they are of different species or they just take it unto themselves to become more active. There also seem to be some that are sleeping or in some sort of hibernation phase of the lifecycle and you would not even know they were there until one day they show either themselves or the result of their gremlinness.

There is a water maker on board this vessel. To my knowledge it has never worked. It was my fault that I never got it demonstrated when we took over the boat, but they are very complicated machines that have an involved shut down procedure

that requires the reverse osmosis membranes to be pickled with a special chemical to preserve them if not in regular use, and I thought we didn't need to prove that at the time. Essentially a water maker uses a very high pressure pump to force water molecules through a very fine membrane that filters out the salt. Information on our particular model is very hard to find but everything I can establish points to the fact that ours needed a low pressure pump to supply water to the high pressure one. Ours had no boost pump and consequently the inside of the pressure pump destroyed itself before we could establish there was an issue. One can just imagine all the gremlins that live in the water maker jumping with joy when we tried to run it for the first time, knowing it would eventually have a catastrophic failure due to lack of water.

One might think that in this case there might be just one gremlin that lives in the pump but of course in reality there are many, there will be one in each pipe fitting just waiting for its opportunity to leak, every hose clamp trying to corrode or persuade you to over-tighten it and break it. Then there will be one on every single electrical connection just waiting for a chance to come loose and the electronic control board will be infested with sleeping gremlins in every component just waiting for an opportunity to make it fail.

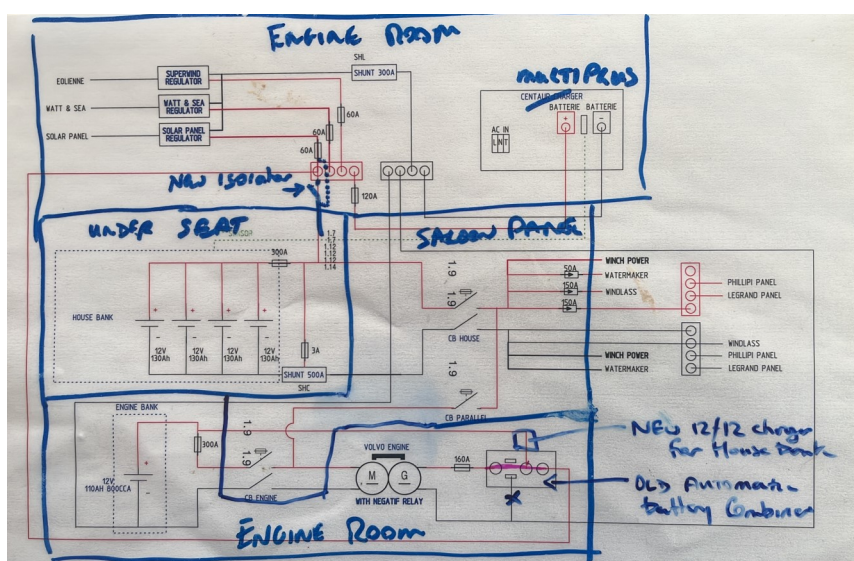
The boat has an engine, quite a good reliable Volvo Penta of 50 horsepower, although it is not clear how many of those have escaped during its life so far. An



View of the engine room with many dark corners with unlimited opportunities for gremlins to fester

engine will be completely riddled with gremlins in every component each looking for its moment to come out and cause you grief. For a diesel engine to start, essentially all you have to do is make sure the fuel is turned on and then spin the crankshaft fast enough and it will start firing up. Of course it is not so simple as that and on an aluminium boat there is an interesting added complication with many gremlin opportunities. In your car the engine is earthed to the body but on an aluminium boat it has to be isolated to prevent electrolytic corrosion. However the starter motor is earthed directly to the engine so at the moment of starting the earth or negative connection has to be made with the engine to complete the circuit. There is a solenoid that makes this connection when the engine is started but of course if the solenoid is not working then despite everything else being fine and clear of gremlin activity it will still not start and because of this, normal fault finding of engine electrical systems is void.

The best trick that the gremlins will play is to lull you into a false sense of security, let you think that



you have found the fault the gremlin has created, only to find that really is just a false dawn, like a signpost turned round, only to find that the real fault is still there but cleverly they have now made it intermittent so its even more difficult to find. These are the real clever gremlins, like the virus that does not kill its host, and so goes on to replicate. The gremlins can also work in teams, with each one not causing too much grief but collectively they

A document purporting to be a gremlin eradication map, however as it shows electrical wiring in all parts of the boat it is very hard to follow so maybe the boatbuilders are really in fact in league with the gremlins or maybe they have been quietly infiltrated as well?

make a real issue. It could be this scenario we have with the engine being reluctant to start. I have changed the battery which we knew anyway was ready for the battery care home, I

cleaned the connections to the battery which definitely had some evidence of gremlin activity but didn't really think that was the fault. However after I did this the lead gremlin must have thought of another nice trick, because now the engine started perfectly a few times. On another occasion I traced the wire from the earth solenoid down to the engine and was surprised to find that it was completely loose and had never been properly crimped into the terminal. So with this sorted of course, the following few times the engine then starts immaculately, until of course the time it does not.

Whilst not being a very new engine it is thankfully not completely electronically controlled, however there is a sinister black box that remains under suspicion as I am sure there is a complete colony of gremlins living in there conspiring to come up with the most convoluted way possible to wreak their havoc.

We have a good friend, who we will call 'Claire', a well meaning soul but with a few whacky tendencies that we put up with, who has been corrupting Carol into the properties of Sage. So when we were

recently in a settlement that remarkably had a specialist shop for those such affected with various herbs and potions, crystals etc that could cure most eventualities. I thought I did quite well, scaping from the shop with just a candle and a Sage Smudge and only a few dollars lighter we returned to the boat where said smudge was lit and the gremlins smoked out.

BUT were they?



Andy and Caroline off to a larger vessel, the BC ferry to take them up to Prince Rupert

Anyway now with our guests Andrew and Caroline on the ferry north from Port Hardy we are alone again. They say that the best days of owning a boat is the day you buy it and the day you sell it and often it is often the same with new crew on your boat, - the day they arrive and leave! However in this case they were pretty well behaved, they didn't cause us to run out of water by the third day and the fishing tackle had only limited losses, it was just a bit of a shame that the wind was always against us and the weather a lot cooler than we had become used to. With our first storm imminent we raced across the strait

from Port Hardy to a great sheltered anchorage to wait and see if the Storm (not Gale) warnings for out at sea are going to affect us .

The real stalkers around will be happy to hear I have managed to get the Predict Wind Tracker to work so not only can you see where we are, but also the weather conditions as well.

There is always someone who has had a worse day than you!

You can find it [here](#)

Complete website with all the previous blogs [here](#)

