

CASE STUDY

Gas water heater installation

The original water heater on Wild Garlic (a Birchwood 25) was fitted above the cooker onto the wall abutting the heads. This unit was not properly drained for winter storage resulting in the pipes in the unit fracturing and a cascade of water running out of it when the water pump was turned on at the beginning of the following season.

We looked to repair this but local engineers were taking too much time over it and the local boatyard did not want to attempt a repair. A like for like replacement for the original could not be sourced (the boat was approx. 20 years old at this time) The unit we decided on was a Palomo PH-5LFE which we acquired from Jones Boatyard in St Ives, Cambridgeshire.

This was too long to fit over the cooker and allow the worktop to hinge up to fix to the wall, as it did with the original unit. Our gas fitter/plumber suggested he fit it onto the wall in the heads above the existing sink. He removed the old unit and made good the surface.

First he fitted a fireproof panel where the heater was to be fixed and then fitted the Palomo to this.

A vent had to be installed from the hood to a hole in the cabin roof. A vent was fitted and sealed on the roof. Adequate incoming ventilation was also a requirement. A vent in the door and one out through the double skinned wall ensured this provided adequate ventilation.

The gas pipes ran through the heads so the fitter was able to cut the feeder line and fit an elbow joints to carry the gas to the new heater.

Similarly, the water pipes were brought into and from the heater using a mix of flexible hoses and copper piping. Direct to the heater to the hose is blue and the red feeds to the sink/shower head and to the sink in the galley.

The cold water is fed, via an electric, pressurised water pump and expansion 'tank', from the flexible - V shaped - water tank to the cold water taps and the heater unit.

(All gas and plumbing work was carried out by a qualified engineer. He charged £200 for the job.)

I can't remember the original price but a part exchange unit is being offered on e-bay for £110. (July 2019)

The heater continues to work well. The It needs a few presses of the pilot switch to gain a spark at the beginning of each season, but then works fine.

The hose connections need to be checked at the beginning of each season as they might have contracted during cold weather and may need tightening. Don't forget under the sink as well.

The picture on the right show the pipes and hoses under the sink in the toilet. You will note the reduction in the copper piping leading to the original taps.

If you have any comments on this case study or can provide further information please contact: john@birchwoodclassics.com

