

by Sallie Wahrer

Sallie's Boat Top Repairs

Hi, I can't believe that I've been working on boat canvas for over 40 years! My head is full of thoughts about what you should do and not do with your boat canvas. That includes Bimini's, cockpit covers, bow covers, curtains, and any other canvas or sewing that needs to be done on your boat.

When I ventured into boat canvas, I thought to myself, "what could be so hard about this, I have been sewing all my life". Wrong, from the material to the conditions I began working under such as a rock and rolling boat, stuck in the mud, and there I am trying to measure and fit new canvas to a boat, that is moving every time I go from side to side. If you are unaware of the materials that we use in this business, Sunbrella is number one. You can still purchase old fashion cotton canvas, however for long lasting fabric, Sunbrella is your best choice. It will hold up under the most abuse and will not color fade.

If you're buying a boat, new or used, it is very important to look carefully at the canvas that comes with the boat. Not only the material but also the bows, frames and buttons or snaps that come with it. There is a huge difference in quality from one manufacturer to another or for that matter from one independent boat canvas repair specialist. The "glass" or plastic windows that are included are as important as the canvas. Did the previous owner store them flat between soft towels for the winter months, or were they hung up vertically" or worst of all were they stored rolled up. This is the worst possible way to put your canvas away for the winter!

You can contact me at SallyjeanWahrer@yahoo.com for any questions you may have regarding repairs, doing the work yourself or for that matter where to buy the material you will need to get the job done.

In my next column I will tell you about the boat with the head up in the bow. Everyone in the marina was aware of what you were doing as we had to open the hatch above the head to use it. That usually elicited yells, catcalls and laughs while you were doing your business.

From an old, old boat top person, to you, don't give up, never, never give up, keep doing what you love, I am for sure.



Bimini tops.



Sailboats.



Bow and Cockpit covers.