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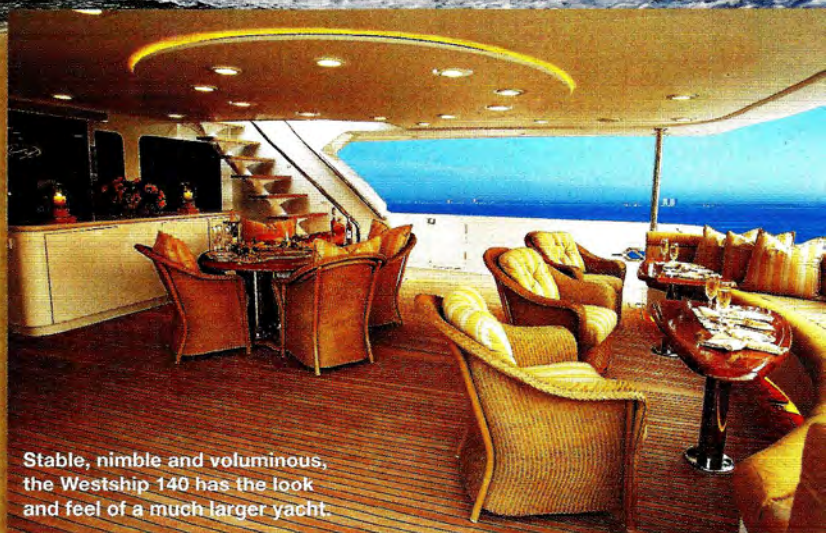


Patriarch Herb Postma Pulled No Punches When Building The Westship 140

By **JAMIE WELCH** and **ALASTAIR BUCHANAN**
Photographs By **H. SHAW McCUTCHEON**

CONSTRUCTING ANY MEGAYACHT ON SPECULATION takes a bit of courage and deep pockets. But Westship World Yachts' new 140-foot flagship owes its existence to something more: patriarch Herb Postma's keen ability, honed over a 40-year career, to listen to the luxury yacht market.

Postma began his industry career at age 13 working at his parents' Lake Michigan boat dealership. By 1983, it had become the largest Hatteras dealership in the world. Part of Postma's



Stable, nimble and voluminous, the Westship 140 has the look and feel of a much larger yacht.



success was his consummate skill as a salesman. But the most critical element of his ability to draw customers to his door was his willingness to give them what they wanted. At the time, Hatteras' production line was not geared to providing a great degree of customization. Motor yacht cockpits were coming to vogue, and when Hatteras was unable to include them as a standard option, Postma bought a facility in Ft. Lauderdale to add them to stock hulls. Likewise, when customers wanted upgraded interiors, Postma developed an in-house team to provide them.

It was inevitable by the start of the U.S. megayacht boom in the mid-eighties that Postma's Hatteras of Lauderdale customers would want larger yachts. Postma lobbied long and hard with Hatteras to convince the builder to introduce a line of larger boats.

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HEN HATTERAS BALKED, Postma once again took matters into his own hands, knowing full well that the move would bring an end to his long and profitable relationship with Hatteras.

Armed with a design for a modern, seaworthy and easily propelled 97-foot yacht from Jack Sarin, Postma began searching for a yard to produce it. In 1989 he visited Westport, a small builder in Washington State, where he found the

perfect combination: a highly competent but under-marketed shipyard capable of building high-quality production fiberglass yachts. Marketed under the name Westship, Postma's decade-long venture with Westport produced no fewer than 22 yachts between 97 and 132 feet. Not only was the first Westship venture a personal success for Postma, it fueled an entire new boom of speculative construction of turnkey luxury yachts. When the partnership dissolved in the late nineties, Postma moved his production to



The main foyer's hand-cut Venetian marble sole has an exaggerated wavy surface that is purposely designed to simulate the aged marble floors of Italian Renaissance castles. Above, a large formal dining room features a lovely custom-made table and chairs. An elaborate banister contributes to the open feeling of the space, yet assures safety.

Trident Shipyard in Tampa, Florida.

The Westship 140 was begun on speculation at Trident in 1998. The largest, most lavish yacht ever built by Postma, the 140 was conceived as his personal statement of the future of speculative yacht construction. The project continued unabated under Postma's close scrutiny even after Trident filed for bankruptcy halfway through the build. Impressed both by the Trident facility and its highly skilled workforce, an investment group headed by Postma, with EMC founder Richard Egan among the partners, purchased the entire facility. Renamed Westship World Yachts, the yard will turn out three series of yachts from 85 to 150 feet.

An example of Postma's prescience is his long-held confidence in GRP as a building material. "Fiberglass is the material of the future, and it will make metal obsolete as a construction material for yachts to 200 feet," Postma says, adding, "I said that 15 years ago about 100-foot-boats, when it sounded like heresy."

The Westship 140, Postma says, reflects not only his firmly held convictions about design, arrangement and finish, but also his constant interaction with customers. What they want now in a spec-built yacht, he says, is large interior volume, a classical interior style, generous out-



The salon features a faux baby ostrich skin headliner with lacquered soffits, antique ash columns, and honey onyx. Above, the galley nook's marble table.

140's galley. A showcase of innovative layout, modern equipment and contemporary design, it features remote-controlled stained glass doors that open to an innovative dining nook finished with a round, hand-cut Venetian marble table.

"We listened to the owners of the 106- to 112-foot line, which featured a country kitchen layout," Postma says. "We found that they really liked to interact with their crews, especially at breakfast." Along with the nook, plenty of space and equipment is ready for a gourmet chef. The galley is finished with an exotic emerald granite counter that sits solidly in front of the latest stainless steel restaurant-quality equipment.

Creating interiors of yachts built on speculation, which are beautiful yet mainstream in taste, is always a challenge. Postma says he and his wife opted for a classical interior design due to their appreciation of history. "The reason we go with traditional, classic styling is because it's

door living areas, excellent water access and a large, multi-purpose lazarette. Working with Sarin, his wife Jeanne, and Westship's in-house interior design team, Postma set out to develop the ultimate 140-foot yacht. "We set out to build the best boat possible," Postma said. "I can honestly say we did not look at the overall cost of the project until it was finished."

Much of what the market is demanding these days, Postma says, is the result of the shift of wealth to the baby boom generation. "That group wants to stay around to enjoy their wealth as long as possible," Postma explains. "Health and exercise are the way to do that." In response, Postma developed the 140's spacious lazarette, which combines the functions of exercise room, wine cellar, fishing/diving locker, and bathroom. The space even includes a medical center complete with defibrillator.

The lazarette opens onto a spacious swim platform. "An owner can exercise, then step outside and the ocean becomes his playground. Then he can shower off and go enjoy a nice breakfast." The dive equipment locker stows gear for eight people and can simultaneously re-fill all their tanks in less than an hour.

Another design concept picked up from conversations with former Westship owners is the



The skylounge, which opens onto a large, teak-covered deck, offers a relaxing, club-like atmosphere.



The full-beam master stateroom includes an office area and a lavishly finished bathroom. Below, the 140's lazarette is a showcase of versatility.

been around forever with worldwide appeal," Postma explains. "Today's contemporary styling will be dated or out of style the next decade."

The 140's owner accommodations are stunning for a custom yacht, let alone one built on speculation. Located forward on the main deck, the master suite is entered through beautiful stained glass doors. Throughout the master suite finely crafted antiqued ash with burl inlays complements the baby ostrich-style skin headliner that trims cream-lacquered soffits. The suite's full entertainment center includes a high-definition plasma television screen and DVD player, all hidden behind a beautiful burl cabinet. A remote control raises and lowers the blinds, dims the lights to create any mood, and also operates the entertainment system. The full-beam bath is finished in marble and includes both a generous glass-enclosed shower and whirlpool bath.

Below amidships, guests arrive at their accommodations via an elegant circular staircase to a lower foyer featuring a granite-topped credenza and gold-leafed French wall console. Two doubles and two twin staterooms feature rich silk upholstery, custom joinery and fine hardware. Shoji screens in the four staterooms impart a soothing modern ambiance. Two of the suites feature spa tubs and two feature large marble showers.

The skylounge features a 50-inch plasma HDTV that pops out from behind a burl ash cabinet. Huge leather sofas offer guests a comfortable and relaxing 180-degree view. A marble and silk paneled bathroom showcases a fantastic backlit crystal sink. A Jacuzzi, a full bar and vast sitting and sunbathing areas provide ample opportunity for relaxation and entertaining on the spacious flybridge. Market-style umbrellas can be deployed to provide shade when required. In addition to the flybridge, the teak-covered main and skylounge decks provide excellent venues for outdoor dining and socializing.

The wheelhouse is outfitted with the latest equipment, including Northstar GPS, Nera Sat-Com and autopilot, and Furuno's Black Box radar. Five 21-inch flat-screen monitors provide instant routing, radar, weather and systems monitoring.

Built to full ABS class, Westship prides itself on its mechanical engineering as well as on its fine interior finishes. The Westship 140 made the 400-mile cruise from Tampa to the Miami Brokerage Show at a 20-knot clip in six- to eight-foot seas. Westship Captain Paul Canavan was delighted with the yacht's performance. "After that trip, I did not have to put one wrench on the boat," Canavan said. "And she was rock-solid in the eight-foot seas. I had

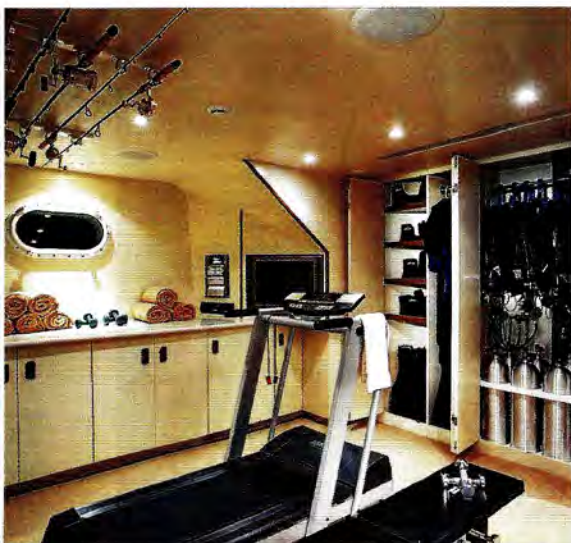
forgotten and left a glass of water on my night table, and when I came back to my cabin I was amazed it hadn't spilled or moved an inch during the passage," he said.

Displacing 450,000 pounds, the cored, semi-displacement hull hits 22.5 knots with twin 2,285-hp MTU engines. The engine room, located directly amidships, is fully engineered for sound and vibration control. Well-designed for ease of maintenance the engine room provides ample dimensions even for Postma's six-foot, four-inch frame. "If I can stand and work in here, anybody can," Postma quipped.

Without question much of Westship's success is due to the fact that Postma is a yachtsman as well as a yacht builder and marketer. Westship is a true family-run business. Postma's wife Jeanne and daughter Tiffany provide much of the company's interior décor direction. Being actively involved in yachting allows Postma the added ability to listen to his product as much as he does to his customers and family. This past Easter, Postma took the 140 to the Bahamas for a family vacation. During the cruise, Postma was at the helm nearly all the time. "I've been driving boats all my life, and I know how a boat is performing under my feet."

Thus for Postma yachting has provided him the opportunity to combine business, pleasure and family in a unique way. And it has given him a unique perspective about the value of what he does. "I know that if I always give my best and never make compromises, success will follow. Boating is the business of putting people in paradise. It's the closest a person can get to heaven in this life."

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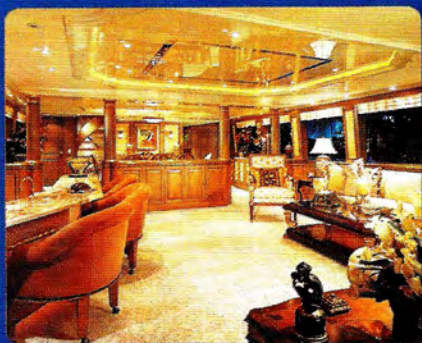


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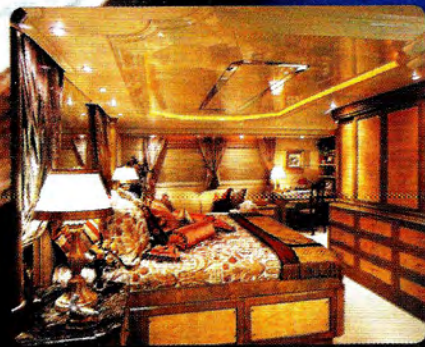
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