



Specifications

Name: *Pacific Catalyst*
Length: 74 feet, 7 inches
Material: Wood
Engine: 120 hp Washington Estep
6-cylinder diesel
Cruising Speed: 8 knots

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boat's front end was extended. The original forward pilothouse was eliminated, and a new one was built atop the new deckhouse.

During the next 40 years, *Catalyst* served as a floating dentistry office and a liveaboard cruiser, among other things, and underwent several refits at the behest of her numerous owners. Regardless of many upgrades and tweaks, none of her captains dared touch the original heavy-duty Washington diesel. It's one of 10 Washingtons still in operation, and the *only* known 6-cylinder diesel ever built with an 8-inch bore and 10-inch stroke. Since the Baileys took the helm, they've finished a complete overhaul and rebuilt the planetary reverse gear. Pyrometers constantly monitor each cylinder to ensure even loading, and 125 places must be hand-oiled every two hours when under way.

The Baileys have done their share of remodeling, extending the pilothouse, expanding from two heads to five, and moving two cabins to provide access to the newly replaced starboard bilge stringers. They also added a 15 kw genset and equipment to satisfy the Coast Guard's five-star safety rating.

Today, *Pacific Catalyst* operates as an Alaskan charter vessel, returning to her oceanographic roots, but with awestruck tourists aboard instead of inquisitive scientists. Based in Friday Harbor, the 75-footer plies the coast of southeastern Alaska, giving her passengers up-close-and-personal views of glaciers, whales, bears and untouched timberland. More information: pacificcatalyst.com. 🐾

Down to a Science

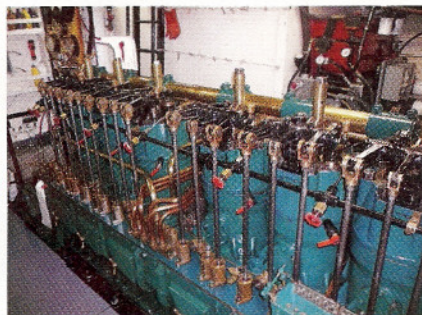
YOU COULD SAY BUYING *Pacific Catalyst* was an experiment gone right for Bill and Shannon Bailey. The couple had to sell their home — a house they'd designed themselves and spent 15 years building — and dissolve their custom home-building business in order to buy the vintage vessel and existing charter business. Although they presented a united front, the decision was a little lopsided. You see, Bill suffers from Don Quixote Syndrome; Shannon suffers from Woman Who Married Man with Don Quixote Syndrome. He dreams the impossible dreams. She supports the dreamer.

An ad offering *Catalyst* for what Bill considered a "surprisingly low" price set the venture in motion. Despite not being able to afford plane tickets for a test-drive, he didn't see their lack of funds as a deal breaker. After a couple of years of serious bud-

get cuts, the Baileys became the owners of the 70-plus-year-old wood boat in 2005.

Built in 1932, *Catalyst* was the University of Washington's first-ever oceanographic research vessel and was used to study Puget Sound's water quality. She was designed with input from scientists who'd conducted expeditions aboard ill-suited converted fishing boats, and, as a result, *Catalyst* was the most cutting-edge research watercraft of her day.

The craft was requisitioned by the Coast Guard during World War II. After the war, her decks were reworked to carry 60 tons of tungsten ore, freight, and workers up and down the Inside Passage for a mining company. To create an aft cargo hold, the deckhouse was moved forward 6 feet and the



Pacific Catalyst is still powered by her original heavy-duty Washington diesel — almost 80 years old.