

Dry-docked north of Lloydminster, the 44-foot sailboat dubbed Greensun is expected to be launched on the Pacific Ocean within the coming year.

Sailors' dream anchored on prairies

A lifelong dream goes sailing away... it is a far from discouraging outcome for two Lloydminsterites.

Brian Greenway and Robert Sunderland have shared a dream for the past five years. When it becomes reality, which is hoped will happen within a year, they will be sailing away on a 44-foot sailboat they've been building north of Lloydminster.

The Bruce Roberts' off-shore, centre cockpit design has been a weekend project of the carpenter and welder since January 1989. And more than once, Robert 'Sundy' Sunderland (the welder) has been on the receiving end of a 'Noah' joke from friends and co-workers.

However, Sunderland shrugs it off and sheepishly responds to questions about 'Why build a 44-foot sailboat on the land-locked prairies?' by stating, "I'm not sure, I want to go sailing I guess."

Originally from Lloydminster, Sunderland has always held an interest in sailing. For years he has been reading books on sailing, has windsurfed in Hawaii, Spokane and The Gorge on the Columbia River near Portland. He also used to own a 15-foot catamaran.

But a catamaran is small potatoes compared to the sailboat dubbed 'Greensun'.

The Greensun, constructed of three-sixteenths of an inch thick steel sheets, weighs in at about 13 tons and will draw six feet of water. Sunderland and Greenway expect to spend about a year learning to sail it once they get it to Vancouver Island.

The dream started to take root when a friend showed Sunderland the plans for the Bruce Roberts' sailboat. He in turn showed them to Greenway, a friend for over 20 years, and Greenway responded, "Let's do it."

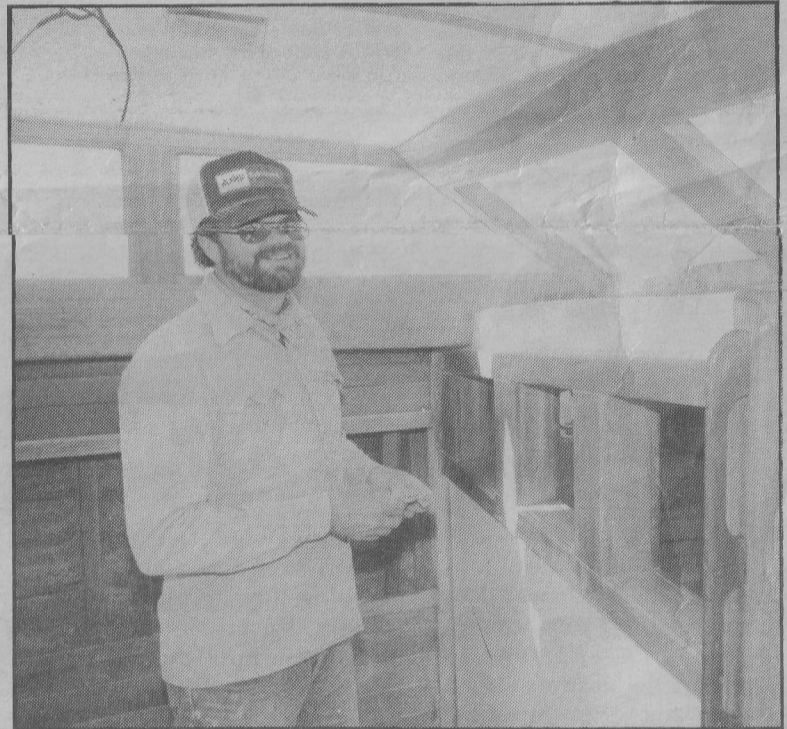
"He needed a carpenter and I needed a welder," said Greenway.

Sunderland did the welding, Greenway the cutting, fitting and grinding and once the hull was completed, sandblasted and painted, Greenway began the woodwork inside.

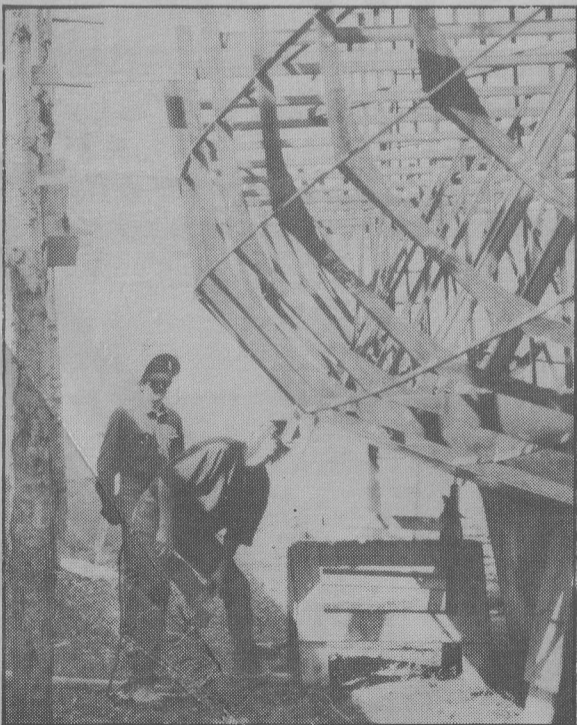
Now almost complete, the pair will show off the brunt of far too many jokes this Saturday at an open house. Sunderland asks all those interested to call 825-9003 for more information.

Next month, Greenway will travel to Vancouver to look for work. In the spring, Sunderland, Dorinda Weaver and their children Thirza, 14, and Josh, 8, hope to follow, having the boat trucked out.

The course being chartered at present is to work at the coast and take about a year learning to sail the vessel before "taking off. The South Pacific maybe — I don't know, somewhere warm," said Sunderland.

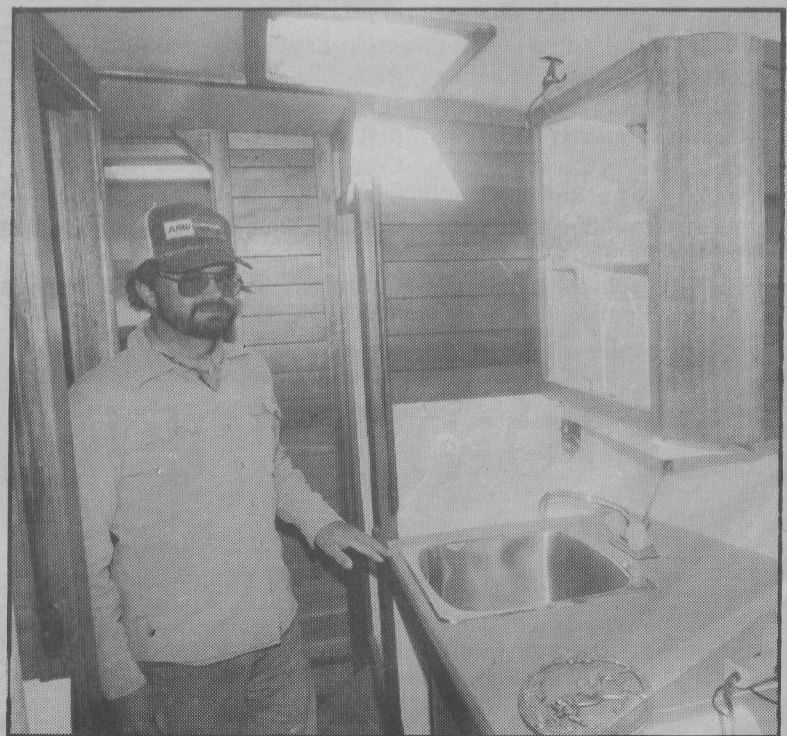


Robert Sunderland plans to pilot his dream from this cockpit.



Work on the Greensun began in 1989 with the painstaking work of building the hull. While Robert Sunderland was responsible for the welding, Brian Greenway (picture at right) handled the fitting and grinding chores.

Submitted photos



Everything is taking shape with the boat's finishing touches.

Story and photos by Lloyd Mack