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## Reincarnating a legend

Bluenose II rebuild marks milestone

By BEVERLEY WARE South Shore Bureau

LUNENBURG — THE FIRST of 10,000 spikes was driven into the hull of the Bluenose II on Monday as the first plank was attached to the outside of the sailing ambassador, which is being rebuilt in Lunenburg.

It wasn't exactly gold, as the ceremonial first spike driven into the keel of the original Bluenose II was touted to be in 1963. But then again, that one wasn't gold either — it was dipped in gold paint.

This one, like the 9,999 to come, is made of galvanized steel and weighs just 113 grams — about half a package of cream cheese.

The first plank, or garboard plank, to go on the hull of the restored Bluenose II is seven metres long, 9.5 centimetres thick and 30.5 centimetres wide. It is made of a tropical wood called angelique and is so hard it had to be steamed for two hours so it would be pliable enough to attach to the hull.

Wade Croft of Snyder's Shipyard, one of the three companies that make up the alliance rebuilding the ship, said the wood is so strong it has to be cut with a special carbide-tipped blade. Each blade costs \$800 and is expected to last no more than two weeks.

Croft said it will take about three months to complete the planking on the hull, which he described as "extremely impervious to rot."

The province has said it expects the new Bluenose II to sail at least another 20 years without the need for any extensive maintenance, given the combination of durable rot-resistant wood and modern laminating techniques that will prevent the keel from sagging toward the waterline. That was a major problem with the previous ship.

The planks coating the lower part of the hull encase 200 lead ingots that are used as ballast below the keelson. They were taken out of the Bluenose II and together weigh more than 9,000 kilograms. Croft said each ingot has been washed and coated to protect it from interacting with other metals.

Workers will pour concrete over the ballast that is already in place to fill in any gaps and have another 9,000 kilograms of ingots taken from the former ship that will be added as construction progresses.

The planking is expected to be complete by July.

Lunenburg MLA Pam Birdsall picked up a hammer early Monday morning and gave one of the first of those thousands of galvanized spikes a few taps.

"This is a rare opportunity to get a close look at a large-scale wooden boat-building project," Birdsall said in a news release. "And it is helping the companies involved with the construction compete for future work that can create economic opportunities for Nova Scotians."

The public can watch the \$14.8-million restoration unfold at [www.novascotiawebcams.com/south-shore/bluenose-ii.html](http://www.novascotiawebcams.com/south-shore/bluenose-ii.html) or get a guided tour from the on-site visitors centre.

The consortium is actively looking for another project once the Bluenose II returns to the water in the summer of 2012. Michael Noonan, spokesman for the provincial Communities, Culture and Heritage Department, said the project is on time and on budget.

Noonan said lawyers are still working out the transfer of \$1 million in funds and assets from the former Bluenose II Preservation Trust Society to a new volunteer-run group called the Schooner Bluenose Foundation.

The trust operated the ship from 1994 until 2005, when the former Tory government gave the contract to the Lunenburg Marine Museum Society. The province announced a tentative agreement late last December that it said would see an end to its dispute with the trust and the money handed over early this year.

"Lawyers for the province and the trust are continuing their work to work out the details of the transfer of its assets," Noonan said.

The province expects the discussions will reach a "positive conclusion," he said.

When she does set sail again, Bluenose II will pay homage to the winds of good fortune with at least some of the 16 coins found under her two masts when they were removed for the refit.

The coins are now on display at the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic in Lunenburg and include a Spanish doubloon from 1791 and a 1963 Bluenose II coin made to mark her launching.

The original Bluenose was built in 1921. The Oland family built Bluenose II in 1963 and transferred it to the province in 1971 for \$1.

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