

Abel's to add propeller shop & more

By Julia Bartlett

Abel's Boat Yard --Where Generations of Experience and Family Tradition Meet Today's Technology "Wow." That was my reaction when I discovered the new developments waiting to be unveiled at Abel's Boat Yard. I had been wondering about the wooden structure appearing over the water in front of the hard standing, now I was going to find out. The most exciting thing is the new machine shop which has been built to house a propeller balancing machine amongst other new services. It will be able to handle props up to 60" wide, perhaps a little more than most of us need. At present, props have to be sent to Miami to be balanced which adds to the cost. The machine shop will also offer repairs and servicing for outboard motors and carry spares for the most popular makes. Fronting the street, over a useful grocery store and, most important, an Ice Cream Shop, are three new apartments which are going to have air conditioning, full kitchen and bathroom and two bedrooms. Abel anticipates that they will be used by folks with their boats on the hard and visiting mechanics. Fronteras is a Q4 tuc-tuc ride away. The new wooden structure is going to be a hang out complete with wi-fi, open to the afternoon breeze and with a stunning view all the way to the bridge. The yard already has an 85 ton travel lift, two 150 ton railways and a 75 ton railway and can handle catamarans up to 32 feet wide. They offer a wide range of services from sand blasting to painting, fabrication in metal and fiberglass, and toe rails to radar arches and much more.

The Ramirez family live on the premises, security doesn't get any better than that. Abel's father arrived in the Rio Dulce first as a 9 year old boy looking for a better life and later built himself a boat, a skill learned in Belize. Somebody wanted to buy the boat so he built another. The final boat, "Magdalena" was 45 feet long and the Astillero, Spanish for boat yard, is named after her, Astillero Magdalena. Then there was the need for somewhere to haul a boat that size and facilities in Livingston were well backed up. The rest is history as they say. I am not going to write up the full story of the yard because that has already been done very well. It is well worth a read as fascinating local history and the story of a nine year old boy who made good, it would make a great film. Read that article [HERE](#).