

Historic Lake Arrowhead home has quite a set of 'pipes'

Suppose you owned a beautiful 75-year-old house on the shore of a lake in the mountains that, with additions over the years, had grown from an A-frame boathouse to a four-story, eight-bedroom, six-bath 5,000-square foot mansion and you knew the plumbing system needed repair.

The Historic Boat House, located near Lake Arrowhead, is undergoing repairs, complete with new piping, to improve water flow. San Diego Plumbing & Pipelining is overseeing the project.



Problem:

You were tired dealing with rusty water and low flow - but you didn't want to rip into the walls and floors of hardwood and natural stone to remove the old galvanized and copper pipes.

Neither did you want to spend upwards of \$500,000 for a four-to-six month project to locate, remove and replace the pipes.

Plus, you were sure you needed to have it done in the summer months and not wait for winter.

That was the dilemma faced by owners of The Boat House, a historic property on Hamiltair Drive in Blue Jay, an upscale community on the south shore of Lake Arrowhead in the San Bernardino Mountains.

Solution:

San Diego Plumbing and Pipelining came in with an affordable proposal to line the

aged pipes with their proprietary, high-tech, epoxy formula. San Diego Plumbing & Pipelining has been epoxy-coating pipes in Southern California homes and condominiums for more than five years.

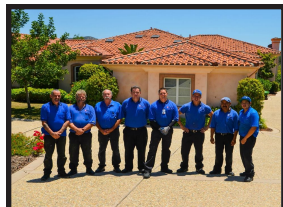
The patented process includes drying and cleaning the inside of the pipes, and then blowing the epoxy lining into the piping system in 100-foot segments, filling pinhole leaks and creating "a pipe within a pipe." San Diego Pipelining four-man, three-vehicle crew was in and out of the historic Boat House in four weeks, on time and on budget. Their restoration bid was a fraction of the repiping cost, according to the owner of the firm.

Even so, the firm's Sales and Operations Manager, Joshua Bellows, judges the Lake



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Arrowhead Boat House as one of the toughest, most complicated single-family home jobs he has experienced. Old galvanized pipes are particularly challenging, Bellows points out, requiring higher heat in the initial drying stage and needing larger gage grit to blast out rust and corrosion in the cleaning process. "Add to that," he said, "the fact that this job had a mixture of galvy and copper pipes, all different ages and installed by different people, and you end up with the potential for a disaster." "It's easier to epoxy coat a 10-story apartment complex than epoxy coat a mixed system with this many dead legs and this much corrosion," asserted Lee Tims, foreman of the San Diego Pipelining crew, a plumber with 30 years experience and a six-year veteran of epoxy lining. Bellows also indicated much of the plumbing system had to be brought up to current building codes, including forming a "dielectric union" between the galvanized and copper pipes wherever they were joined to inhibit electrolysis. The crew also cleaned and coated the hot and cold lines separately, leaving a source of water in service most of the time. Another high-tech feature the San Diego Pipelining crew employed was the use of electric current and fiber optic technology to trace and locate every joint and turn of the pipes in the walls,

under stone floors and under ground. Several "dead legs" were located as well - old pipes that had been branched off and been capped sometime in the past 75 years. Finding dead legs was not unexpected. But an additional project was to clean and coat the 120-foot, 1.5-inch main line from Hamiltair Drive down a slope paralleling the driveway and entry staircase. It turned out to have a split, with several dead legs. The better solution was to dig and install a new polybutylene pipe parallel to the old main line, according to the owner of the company, who is one of only a handful of certified plumbing inspectors and diagnosticians in the San Diego and Inland Empire area. "We like to offer our customers the best options for their particular situation," he explained. "Sometimes epoxy lining is the best solution, sometimes it's not. Because our company is a full-service plumbing company, we have the flexibility to custom-engineer a plumbing solution that fits the need, so that we're not trying to fit square pegs into round holes." Bellows made a few more "green" points favoring lining the pipes rather than replacing them. "Since there was no demolition, we created no landfill waste. Since we didn't have to cut into

walls or ceilings that contain asbestos or lead paint, we had no hazardous materials issues. And of course, doing this work before there was damage from actual major leaks, we did not have to treat any mold or dry rot."

The original boathouse, a replica of a boathouse on the Thames River in London, was built in 1933 by the Thomas Hamilton family.

Considered the first structure to be constructed on the lake shore, it stands on the north side of a 36-acre peninsula now called Hamiltair Point.

Hamilton was an inventor, and is credited with developing the variable pitch propeller for aircraft.

The current owners chose not to be identified for this article.

Among past residents of The Boat House is actor Tom Selleck. Scenes in the classic "Frankenstein" motion picture starring Boris Karloff are said to have been filmed there.



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