



Tug Tales #16

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Richard Kneubel: Captain of the Beresford Lady

Dan Friend

Richard Kneubel has been working on a chunk of land on Lake Beresford for over 40 years; it's the southern-most tip of the old American Manufactory Corporation/Olson Corporation building site. Zoned light industrial, it has recently served as a home and landing for a real side-wheel riverboat, *The Beresford Lady*, as well as another stern-wheeler, *The River Queen*, owned by Robert Costa.

Richard invested more than a decade in building the Beresford Lady, and for a few years after it was completed he took groups on tours of the Lake and the St. Johns River. It's a good sized true side-wheeler with modern components. Sadly, fate dealt a cruel hand to him when a tornado came through the Lake and DeLand about five years ago which sank his life's work. The boat literally was picked up and dropped on dock pilings, puncturing the concrete hull and causing it to sink. The sump pumps did not start as power was off to the site because of the storm. His boat was not insured as he did not expect any trouble on an interior lake!



Richard quickly raised the boat, but the refurbishment after even a short period under water is significant. He now spends his spare time slowly bringing it back. But he also has found the time to relate stories of the old site and to support the efforts of DATPG Inc. And you thought this was not about tugboats!

" I found a set of old Army tugboat engineering plans from the early 1950's just scattered around a room as if they just walked away," he said, "so I just scooped them all up and kept 'em."

Richard has given that set of plans to us: they were for **ST 1978**, the first production Design 3004 tug built at DeLand in 1953.

Richard continued, " A little later on, the new owner, Mr. Raulerson, decided to scrap all of the old metal stuff laying around. With his consent I saved the old steam whistle, which in this case was operated on the compressed air system used to power certain tools. Everyone knew when work started, when lunch began and ended, just like in an old-time factory. " That whistle as well will eventually end up with DATPG Inc., courtesy Capt Kneubel.



Kneubel's landing and the riverboats are a wonder to visit; and we certainly wish him the best in his efforts. Like many of our members, Richard Kneubel has a love of the river and all things maritime; and he has certainly earned our gratitude for the wonderful gifts he has made for our future tugboat history.