

*DeLand Army Tugboat
Preservation Group*



dfriend001@cfl.rr.com

Tug Tales #6 OCTOBER 15 2013

DeLand's Warboat ST 1978 Goes To Vietnam

In the past when I've used the term *Warboat* I was referring to the earlier American Manufactory Corp US Army "ST" tugboats made from 1942 – 1945 at Beresford, Florida. However, **ST 1978** was made much later in 1953; it is the one US Army ST undoubtedly made here in DeLand out of a US Army contract for ten that the Olson Corp worked on. The contract was not finished; Rawls Brothers of Jacksonville completed the boats. Here's what Beresford historian Ed Carson had to say about the matter: *"The boats were constructed to the design furnished by contract; however, the design was flawed. I.e. all of the piping was relegated to the starboard side in the original design; therefore, leading to an imbalance once the vessel was floated. The Government's position was that Olson Corp should have recognized this, and redesigned to equalize the balance. Olson Corp. responded that they did not have Marine Architects to redesign and that they had fulfilled their contractual obligations. This resulted in mediation wherein the Pentagon cancelled the contract and removed all hulls and material to another contractor for redesign and completion."* - September 2013 letter Ed Carson.



At this point **only ST 1978** is known to have been 100% completed in DeLand on March 4, 1953, by the Olson Corp. This has recently been proven by a unique set of dated photos owned by the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum which they have graciously allowed me to copy for posterity. And now I've been amazed to find evidence that **ST 1978** provided service in Vietnam!

Here's an excerpt from a history of the US Army 97th Transportation Company: **"In June 1970, the company received the mission to Vietnamize the first US Army tug ST-1978. This was**

accomplished in Saigon in September." I have found other evidence that the boat was in Vietnam by 1968. A complete set of detailed builder's plans from Olson for ST 1978 recently were donated by DATPG supporter Richard Knuebel.....thanks so much, Richard! All photos Courtesy DeLand Naval Air Station Museum.

