



Donald Richardson restored this 1941 classic cruiser and named it Louise. Photo by Vic Richardon

The restoration of 'Louise'

By Sam Bari

When a friend invited Don Richardson to look at a boat sitting in storage nearby Mystic Seaport, in 2003, he was mildly interested. "It's an old Richardson," the friend said. "When I heard about it, I thought of you. It's a 31-foot deckhouse cruiser built in 1941," the friend continued. "It needs some work and a new engine, but I thought you might find it interesting."

Richardson brought his son-in-law, Don Salisbury, along and the three men drove to Mystic to look at the old boat. Richardson did indeed find the boat interesting. He thought restoring the vessel would be a good project since he was 75 years old, retired and had time on his hands. Although he wasn't related to the Richardson boat manufacturers, he thought working on a boat bearing his name could be fun. When he asked, "How much?" the friend told him it was his for the taking.

The price was right, so Richardson transported the boat to Jamestown by tractor-trailer and set it in a cradle on his property across the street from his house. He then constructed a boathouse around the vessel so he could work through the winter. Salisbury helped him, and for three years, the two men worked on the restoration of Louise, and brought her back to her original condition. He named the boat Louise in honor of his wife of 53 years. No name was on the boat when he took ownership.

"The engine was a Chrysler straight eight," Richardson said. "But it was frozen, so we pulled it out and replaced it with a Yanmar turbo-diesel. I don't think the Chrysler was the original engine,"

he continued. "It was probably a Gray Marine, but I'm not sure."

Before installing the engine, the men completely stripped the boat down to bare wood. Surprisingly, only one 12-foot mahogany plank needed replacing. They did, however, refasten the hull below the waterline with bronze screws. Richardson also replaced the keel bolts with bronze bolts that he threaded by hand.

Three years later, Louise was restored to her original condition and her maiden voyage was a celebrated success.

On Aug. 4, Richardson and Salisbury made the five-day voyage up the Hudson River to Baldwinsville, New York for the "Richardson Association 2007 Rendezvous," an annual area event for Richardson boat owners. On Aug. 10, Don Richardson's skills as a carpenter and boat builder paid off. Louise won "the People's Choice Award" for the finest boat at the annual event, a fitting reward for three years of year-round hard work and dedication to the project.

The trip to Baldwinsville however, was not without incident. After leaving Narragansett Bay, the seas were so rough in Long Island Sound that Richardson and Salisbury had to turn Louise around and duck into a marina at Montauk, Long Island for the night. The next day the weather subsided and they made the trip around Battery Park and up the Hudson to Tarrytown, where they spent the next night. Then they stopped in Troy and Utica before arriving in Baldwinsville.

They took a leisurely journey home and visited Kingston, New York, which is across from the

Franklin Delano Roosevelt estate on the Hudson River. Then they wound their way back to New York City and took the Harlem River to Glen Cove, and on home to Narragansett Bay where Louise rocks quietly at her mooring at East Ferry.

Don Richardson represents four generations of Jamestown heritage. "My grandfather arrived in Jamestown in 1880 from Sweden and lived where the Watson farm is now," Richardson said. He went on to say that his father was born here, and Don has lived in Jamestown all his life, except for a few years in the Army from 1946 to 1948. He raised his daughters here, and one of them moved off the island.

Richardson built his house on Davis Street in 1951-52 and has lived there ever since. He worked as a carpenter for ten years and one of his many projects was building his brother Victor's house before going to work for the Newport-Jamestown Ferry Company for 13 years. When the ferry closed down, he was the first person employed to build the Newport Bridge, and he worked for the Newport Bridge and Highway Authority for 26 years. Richardson has two daughters, Debbie, who lives in Wickford, and Donna, who lives in Jamestown.

He said he can look out his living room window and see Louise on her mooring, and that makes him happy.



Where in the world is the Press?
Brian Grednuk, Jr., grandson of Bill Hamel of Jamestown, took the Press to the Bahamas, where he visited the Atlantis.

Appeal

Continued from page 1

moved to approve the application. Vice Chairman Don Wineberg seconded the motion and the board approved the request with a 5-0 vote.

In another matter, the board voted unanimously to deny an application by Paul J. McDermott for a variance for a 4-foot setback where 30 is required so he could construct an addition to his house at 57 Carr Lane. McDermott brought his designer, Kevin Baker, to help with the presentation to the board.

Wineberg did not feel that the application met the criteria required for approval and moved to deny the request. Chairman Thomas Ginnerty seconded the motion and the board agreed to deny the application with a 5-0 unanimous vote.

Jamestown attorney Quentin Anthony represented owner

Frank Anderson in the Fernwood Building Company request for a variance to construct a mixed-use residential and business building on a property located at 27 Luther Street. The request was strongly opposed by abutters and neighbors. Some could not be present at the meeting.

Chairman Ginnerty said that the opposing parties had a right to present their concerns and the board members agreed. The panel voted to grant a continuance on the matter to the Sept. 25 meeting by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

The two remaining agenda items were granted continuances to the Sept. 25 meeting of the board. The applications included a request for a special use permit by Allan and Nancy Randall, and a request for a special use permit by Beth Smith, who was represented by Jamestown attorney John Murphy and architect Chris Tucker, who assisted in the presentation.

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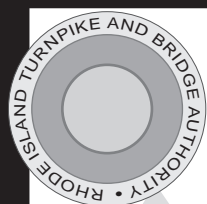


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