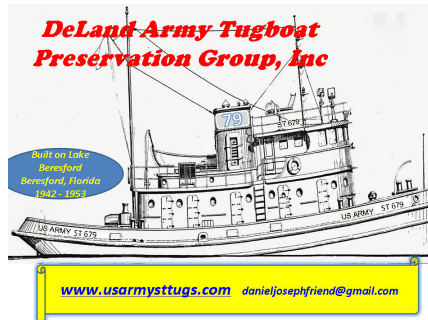


Tug Tales #20:

Senator Bill Nelson Lends a Hand News article June 30, 2014

Dan Friend DATPG, INC.

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SUMMER MUSIC

Stetson offers 2 free guitar
concerts this week,
PAGE 3C

LOCAL

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SECTION

NEWS-JOURNAL

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WWII-era 20-ton 'Tiger' still sailing

Historian wants to bring WWII-era tugboat parts home



Provided photo/JOHN HIGGINS

A DeLand-built tugboat, ST-479, likely saw action during the D-Day invasion in World War II and is shown recently docked in Stockholm, Sweden.

By ANTHONY DeFEO
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DELAND — A local historian has turned to the U.S. Navy and U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson for help in bringing 20 tons of history back to DeLand.

Dan Friend, president of the DeLand Army Tugboat Preservation Group, said he contacted the senator's office to ask for help in bringing home the guts of a World War II-era U.S. Army tugboat built on the shore of

Lake Beresford.

Known as ST-479 — or "Tiger" — the 86-foot-long workhorse likely saw action during the invasion of Normandy, according to Friend's research.

More than 300 people worked at the Beresford Boatworks between 1943 and 1945. The factory was operated by the American Machinery Corp., one of a handful of companies that built tugboats for the U.S. Army during the war. More

than 30 boats were produced there during the war, out of some 700 in total built around the country.

The boats were widely assumed to have been used only in internal U.S. waters, but over the past couple of years, Friend has uncovered evidence that many saw action in Europe during the war.

Friend's records show ST-479

SEE TUGBOAT, PAGE 2C



Provided Photos/DELAND ARMY TUGBOAT PRESERVATION GROUP

This post-WWII tugboat was destined for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency.

TUGBOAT FROM PAGE 1C

was damaged by a German grenade at one point, but remained intact.

The boats met various fates after the war. "Tiger" was put into commercial service in Sweden, where it remains today. Friend said the current owner is working on converting it into a houseboat but has offered to donate the boat's original engine and other innards to the preservation group.

Only one issue: The parts weigh some 20 tons, he said.

Friend, a former DeLand High School history teacher, said he started his nonprofit group only a few months ago and doesn't have the financial resources to pay to move the tugboat's parts. The group filed for incorporation on Feb. 4, according to the state Division of Corporations.

Several weeks ago, Friend contacted Nelson's office to ask for assistance in bringing home what he considers to be an important piece of American military history.

Nelson's office has passed on the request to the U.S. Navy.

"When folks are trying to do something to preserve history or better their community, it makes sense for their senator to try to help," Nelson said in a prepared statement. "If they're successful, then I'm glad if I was of some assistance."

Friend went before the DeLand City Commission in October to give a presentation about the tugboats. He requested help from the city in finding a spot for a static display should he be successful in bringing a tugboat or parts of one back. The board agreed to have city staff speak with Friend about the project.



Ivey Nettles Strickland, mother of former Orange City Mayor Harley Strickland, worked as a secretary in the main office at the Beresford Boatworks during World War II.