

## DORIS



*Figure 1 - DORIS at Crocker's, 2009*

The most important Herreshoff restoration of the last several years is SPARTAN, the New York 50 re-launched in 2010 after a three year effort by a team of boat builders led by MPG of Mystic, CT. Potentially even more significant would be the restoration of DORIS, a 1905 78-foot cutter in derelict condition in New London, CT.

DORIS has been occupying a large chunk of space at Crocker's Boatyard since the mid-1980s, waiting all of that time for a restoration that has never come. Time and weather

have not been kind to her, and if she isn't rescued from the elements soon, it will be too late. Even more compelling is that she is ever-so-close to a fatal encounter with a large chainsaw. Crocker's assumed ownership of DORIS in about 2007, after a prior owner abandoned her in the yard. Management has been very generous in not cutting her up for all of this time, but she is wearing out her welcome as the yard space is needed for paying customers. It is only a matter of time before DORIS is destroyed.

DORIS was built in 1905 as hull number 625 for S. Reed Anthony at a cost of \$18,000. She was the largest all-wood boat ever built by the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company (HMC), and the first boat the company built to the Universal Rule. Although Anthony had her built for cruising, she also proved to be quite fast, and defeated the renowned GLORIANA in match racing in Marblehead in 1909.

Nat Herreshoff designed DORIS using the same model as the earlier boat, PETREL. DORIS was given a little more beam by scaling up the width and was given a single main mast, rather than PETREL's yawl rig. DORIS measures 77' 6" overall on deck, 56' on the waterline, and has a beam of 15' 2" and a draft of 9' 2". Her hull was built with 2 7/8" x 3" steam-bent white oak frames spaced 15" apart, 1 3/4" longleaf yellow pine planking below the waterline and 1 5/8" double planked topsides, 3/4" cypress on the interior and 7/8" yellow pine on the exterior, fastened with bronze screws. Outside ballast consisted of 22 tons of cast lead. The deck was constructed of 1 5/8" white pine and a waterway of 1 7/8" x 6" white oak. The deck rail was 1 1/2" x 1 1/8" yellow pine with a rail cap of 2 1/2" x 1 3/8" teak. DORIS had three main deck hatches: a poop hatch, a companionway hatch and a navigator's hatch, all constructed of teak. The open cockpit has a coaming constructed of 7/8" x 8" mahogany.



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Several interesting construction features are incorporated in her hull. One is the use of bronze hanging knees rather than the usual sheer clamp through the midship portion of the hull. Herreshoff used this technique on large, flush-decked wooden yachts with high topsides, believing it provided sufficient longitudinal strength while saving the weight of the sheer clamp, as well as providing improved vertical support for the flush-deck construction. Another unique construction detail is the use of “belt” or “web” frames. Oak frames are bent over the ceiling, opposite the regular frames, and go right up and under the deck beams. The bronze hanging knees are omitted where the belt frames are used. We believe that DORIS is the only existing Herreshoff yacht employing this construction feature.

DORIS has gone through a number of name, rigging, and ownership changes through the years. Her original gaff cutter rig was replaced with a jib-headed setup for the 1932 Bermuda Race. In 1934, Lawrence Reeve bought her, brought her to Maine, renamed her ASTARTE, and converted her to a Marconi ketch. She was purchased in 1937 by Parkman Howe, who re-named her HUNTRESS and had her first engine installed. She became VAYU in 1940 when she was purchased by Richard Harte. Harte bought her to replace his prior VAYU (ex-PETREL), which was a nearly identical boat built from the same model as VAYU (ex-DORIS). It was under Harte’s ownership that the lead ballast keel was removed to serve the war effort. It was replaced with a substitute of steel and concrete, which is still in place. Jim Mercanti owned her, still as VAYU, between 1957 and 1974. He kept her in New London, CT and used her as his floating home. The raised paneling and custom carved cabinet doors, each with a different America’s Cup defender, were still intact at that time. David Revenaugh bought her in 1983 and kept her in Deep River, CT. It had been Revenaugh’s intention to restore her, and he had the boat listed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1984. Similarly, Brian Amble bought the boat in 2001 with the intention of restoring her. It appears that he under-estimated the size of the effort required, and the boat was eventually abandoned. It was taken over by Crocker’s, where it sits today.

The boat’s provenance is summarized in the below table:

Owner	Years	Location	Boat Name
S. Reed Anthony	1905 - 1913	Boston, MA	DORIS
Charles Hellier	1914 - 1920	Boston, MA	DORIS
Louise N. Grace	1921 - 1933	Islesboro, ME	DORIS
Lawrence Lowell Reeve	1934 - 1936	Northeast Harbor, ME	ASTARTE
Parkman D. Howe	1937 - 1939	Boston, MA	HUNTRESS
Richard Harte	1940 - 1951	Boston, MA	VAYU
Frederick B. Smith	1952 - 1956	Boston, MA	VAYU
Jim Mercanti	1957 - 1974	New London, CT	VAYU
David Kellams	1975 - 1978	Stonington, CT	VAYU
Jacques Thiry	1979 - 1982	New London, CT	VAYU
David S. Revenaugh	1983 - 2003	Deep River, CT	VAYU
Brian Amble	2003 – c.2007	New London, CT	DORIS
Crocker’s Boat Yard	c.2007 - present	New London, CT	DORIS



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Her condition today is derelict, to say the least. Maynard Bray featured the boat (then named VAYU) in his "Save A Classic" column in the Sep/Oct 2001 issue of Wooden Boat magazine. A new owner came forward to save her, but was unfortunately not able to make the restoration happen. So, the boat continues to deteriorate. Much of the rigging, spars, and interior cabinetry had been removed when restoration was first contemplated by owners in the late 1970s. Whether these components still remain in storage is unknown at this time. She has been out of the water for about the last 25 years. Her deck has collapsed, and she needs a complete new backbone and frame system. Some of the planking may be usable, but much of it will need to be replaced as well.

It took a well-funded partnership to complete the SPARTAN project. Restoration of DORIS would be a significant multi-year project, probably larger in scale than SPARTAN, and would require a substantial financial investment. But, certainly there can be no restoration project as worthy of the attention as DORIS. Imagine the excitement of seeing these two thoroughbreds duke it out! The table below compares the two vessels:

	<b>SPARTAN</b>	<b>DORIS</b>
Documentation Number	211177	201963
Year Built	1913	1905
Initial Cost	\$14,520	\$18,000
Construction Material	Wood	Wood
Rig	Cutter	Cutter
LOA	71' 11"	77' 6"
LWL	49' 9"	56' 7"
Beam	14' 6"	15' 2"
Draft	9' 9"	9' 2"
Displacement (lbs.)	73,000	97,650
Ballast (lbs.)	36,000	44,000
Sail Area (sq. ft.)	3,558	3,790
Theoretical Hull Speed (knots)	9.5	10.1
Sail Area / Displacement Ratio	32.6	28.6
Displacement / Length Ratio	264.7	240.7
Ballast / Displacement Ratio	49.3	45.1
Motion Comfort	56.4	63.7
Capsize Screening	1.4	1.3



Figure 2 – DORIS, 1905



Figure 3 – ASTARTE, 1935



Figure 4 – HUNTRESS, 1938



Figure 5 – VAYU, 1983



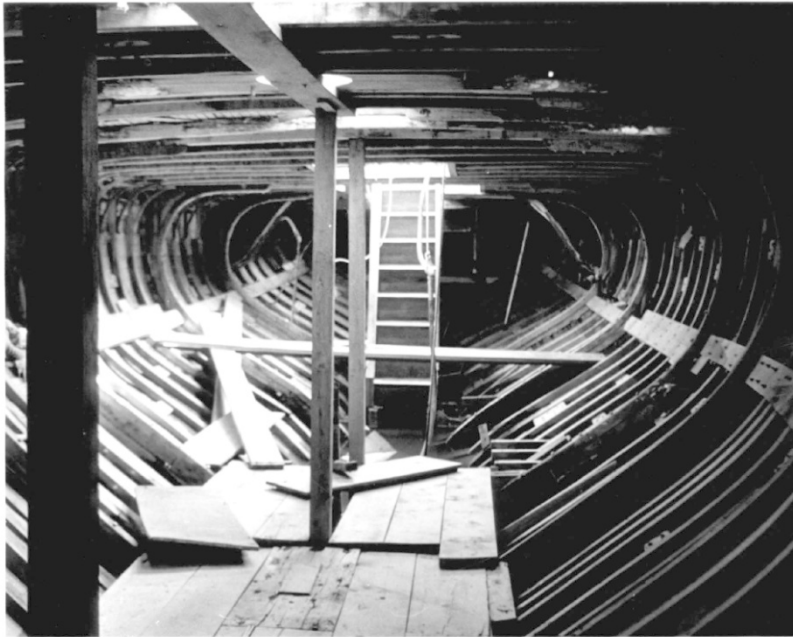


Figure 6 - Interior with Belt Frames Visible, 1983

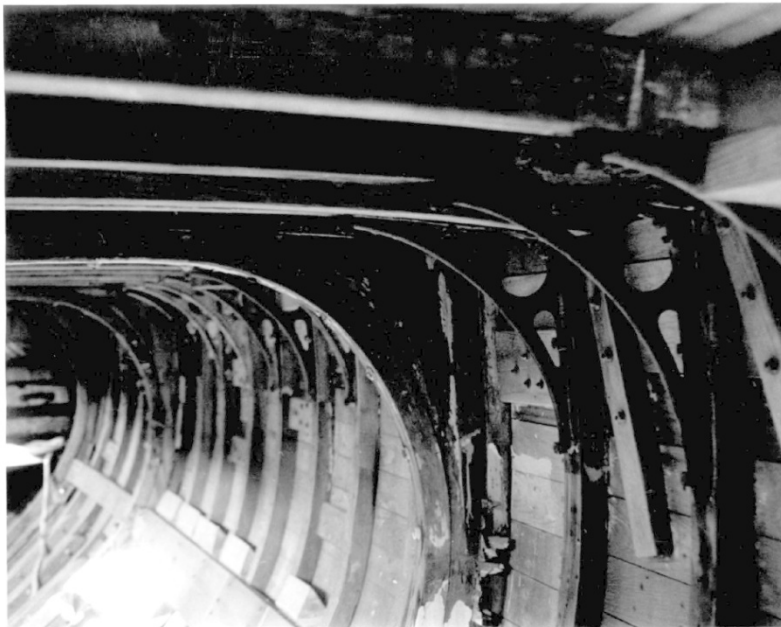


Figure 7 - Bronze Hanging Knees, 1983



*Figure 8 - Starboard Side, 2009*



*Figure 9 - Interior With Close-Up of Belt Frame, 2009*



## **Bibliography**

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Revenaugh, David & Scofield, William; National Register of Historic Places Nomination; U.S. Dept. Of the Interior, National Park Service; May, 1983

[http://johan\\_roodt.tripod.com/doris1905herreshoffcopy/](http://johan_roodt.tripod.com/doris1905herreshoffcopy/)

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*Figure 1 – DORIS at Crocker's, 2009*  
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*Figure 2 – DORIS, 1905*  
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*Figure 3 – ASTARTE, 1935*  
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*Figure 4 – HUNTRESS, 1938*  
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*Figure 5 – VAYU, 1983*  
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