

Liberty

Owner: Jerry Gonsoulin

Home Port: Houma, LA, Bayou Terrebonne

Hull Type: Model Bow

Hull Material: Steel

Length: 75'

Width: 18'

Draft: 2'

Wheel Diameter: 10'

Wheel Width: 8'

of Buckets: 14 White Oak

Engine Type/Size: 371 GM diesel, 80 HP

Drive Train Type: Twin disc transmission; gear reduction, chain drive

Built By: Ruble Sternwheelers

Built at: Belpre, OH

Date: 1973

Past Names (oldest to newest): Valley Gem, Junior Ruble, C.P. Huntington, Kathryn Helen Hook, Spirit of South Charleston, The Spirit of West Virginia, Liberty

Description and History: Currently the **Liberty** is running on the Mississippi, just south of Bay St. Louis, MS. She was used as an excursion boat and will be upgraded, repowered and modified to a private pleasure cruising sternwheeler for local use in South Louisiana Bayou Country. The owner plans to keep the authentic lines and look of an old fashioned riverboat.



Liberty continued on next page

Liberty (continued)

Updates as of 10/1/2014:



To get it there we built a levee around the boat and pumped water into the pond and floated it over onto the blocks. Then broke the levee letting the water go out. Total cost \$100 bucks for fuel. I own the dozer, excavator, and water pump only took 3 hours.

We are beginning the rebuild starting by making her 3 foot wider and all new cabins. We will make engine room larger. Also repower with a hydraulic system, twin generators and bow and stern thrusters. Then we will do bath and galley and guest room on main deck. The key here is that the engine room is the most important room. I'm tired of crawling around on my knees to work on things. Lastly rebuild the pilothouse and added the owners cabin and bath to the 2nd deck.

Fortunately I have people already working for me that are talented in all forms of marine work. I own M & M Bumper Co. We manufacture marine bumpers for all sorts of marine applications. Next time you see a towboat on the river pay attention to its fenders. We probably made them. Oh, the **Liberty** will be protected by bumpers all around when completed.