



Debbie Davis Enhances Wood's Natural Beauty

By Jill L. Ferguson

Many people in the neighborhood probably know Debbie Davis, an energetic blond who serves as the Bluff Heights Neighborhood Association Board Treasurer. She's been a resident on Vista Street for more than 15 years. And some of you may know she has a history in sailing, in delivering and racing boats around the world for more than 30 years. But what many people don't realize is that since 1987, Davis has owned and operated Pro Yacht Antique, a company that restores furniture and woodwork for commercial businesses and for what she calls "backyard" clients, or those with teak furniture who need someone to repair and restore it to its original (or better than original) glory.

Davis explains, "I'm mechanically inclined so I ran the boats. It was a management job but woodworking is part of working on boats." People in the boating community knew of Davis' skill and work ethic so they knew who to call when they needed help, not only with their boats but also with their furniture and the wood on their buildings. For example, John Kilroy and his portfolio of high end commercial properties (like Columbia Square) became her clients. "I fell into this (wood restoration and care) business," Davis says, "and it has really worked out. I learn a lot for every project we do."

At any given time, she has 15 to 20 people who work with her, as some of their projects are very large and time consuming. They refinished 7,500 square feet of deck and 12,500 square feet of slatted walls over twelve consecutive weekends for Tribeca West, which is next to Fox Studios, in Los Angeles. They've also cared for the same teak furniture at a commercial space in Santa Monica for the past 21 years. For commercial spaces such as office buildings, restaurants, and shopping centers, Pro Yacht Antique usually provides refurbishing services every six months, as wood that sees more traffic needs more frequent upkeep.

"Manufacturers of wood furniture tell you to use oil on wood," Davis says, "but oil is the worst thing for it," especially with all of the black grime in the air in this area. That grime gets into the oil, into the crevices of the hardware. "It's better to clean the wood with a biodegradable



non-acid cleaner and then apply a sealer," she says. Pro Yacht Antique uses a particular cleaner from West Marine and Dawn dish soap when they have had particularly stubborn oil they were trying to remove.

TOP: Various pieces of wood furniture that have been restored by Davis. ABOVE: The front doors of the historic Bembridge House after being restored.

She calls the work "instant gratification because you get to take an ugly piece and make it beautiful." She would love to help her neighbors care for their wood furniture or to refinish their decks. Davis says she is always available for advice or to answer how to fix things. (Call or text her at 310.346.1446.) "The best part of our neighborhood is knowing the neighbors and the camaraderie we have. It's remarkable that we have this kind of thing here," she says.

Jill Ferguson is an artist, best-selling author, coach, consultant, entrepreneur, and founder of Women's Wellness Weekends. She lives in Bluff Heights with her husband, Rick Heckt, and their dog Coconut.