

## ANNIE (Anne L. Stevens) DITACCHIO – Curriculum Vitae



### ANNE LOUISE STEVENS

"Anne"

"You're kidding" . . . and there's always those summers at the Cape . . .

"Chung" . . . cheerful and charming.

Basketball 4; Tennis 1, 2, 3, 4; Intramurals 3, 4; Mixed Chorus 1, 2, 3, 4; Stagecraft 1; School Play 2, 3, 4; "Voice" 2, 3, 4; "Bridge" 4.

After graduating from Concord-Carlisle Regional High School in 1963, I went to Boston to attend Northeastern University for 5 years on the Co-op plan. That meant that I attended classes for 2

semesters, alternating with three month periods of work, hopefully related to one's major.

On one of those co-op sessions at WGBH-TV, I met my first husband, Russell Fortier. We were married in September of 1968 after my graduation from college. We lived in the Beacon Hill neighborhood in Boston where I could walk to my job as Regional Education Manager for the National Alliance of Businessmen, an association which attempted to find jobs or training programs for disadvantaged youth. While I enjoyed the work, in 1972 an opportunity for a complete change of pace came up which brought me back to Concord.

A new restaurant called Café Papillon in the recently renovated Concord Depot was looking for a brunch chef. While I had never really cooked until I was married, I had found that I really enjoyed it and as this job would provide some training in French cooking, I decided to take a chance and make the change. Sadly, like many new restaurants, the Café went out of business by the second year, but I had learned a lot and made some new friends while on the job. At about that time, my husband Russ decided to take a sabbatical from his job at WGBH for a year. We left Boston and moved to my grandparents old summer cottage in North Truro, on the Cape. The following spring, a woman who I had worked with at the Concord restaurant and her boyfriend came to visit for a weekend and we talked about opening our own restaurant there on the Cape. With an initial investment of about \$5000.00 we

bargain hunted and managed to open our Sweet Seasons Restaurant in the old depot building (an interesting coincidence) in Wellfleet by June. For me it was very satisfying and fun, but the restaurant life was not for Russ and he was missing the stimulation of his job at WGBH. After a couple of years of trying to live in both places, we amicably went our separate ways.

After three years of good business in the depot building, we were thrilled to have the opportunity to move to a much larger space with a liquor license (something we had not been able to attain from the local Selectmen) at the Inn at Duck Creek for the next three years. At that point the owners of the entire property filed for bankruptcy and for almost a year, we were in limbo, trying to buy the restaurant portion to continue our operation. After prolonged negotiations, the bankruptcy court was unable to produce enough money through selling the property off piecemeal so the bank foreclosed and we were locked out of our business. But it turned out to be for the best as in the end we finally purchased the entire operation which included a 26 room inn in three separate old buildings and a bar with nightly entertainment all for the price we had hoped to pay for just the restaurant.

The next few years were a lot of work, rehabbing and decorating the guest rooms, designing new menus, hiring and training staff, all the while working on the line each night in Sweet Seasons. During that time I met my second husband, David. He was a commercial

lobster diver and we would get lobsters from him for the restaurant. Even with all the work, because we were a seasonal business, we always had 3-4 months free in the winter, to do some travelling or just wind down from the hectic summer.

David and I married in Provincetown in 1986 at about the time that we were able to put an addition onto our house and finally winterize it properly. David is also a Licensed Captain and one fall he had the opportunity to deliver a sailboat from Wellfleet to Oxford, MD on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay and I went with him. We had always had small daysailers for fun on our days off, but this was a whole new experience being able to visit new places in your floating home. I LOVED it and before too long David and I were looking for a boat of our own to travel in. At about the same time I was becoming burned out from 18 years in the restaurant business and decided to sell my one third interest in the operation to my two partners who wished to continue with it. With some of the profits we purchased a 42' Pearson Ketch and began our adventures at sea.

We made three trips (every other year) from the Cape down through the Inland Waterway to Florida and on to the Bahamas. We saw some amazing sights and met a lot of interesting folks in the boating community, many of whom were doing the same things we were. Our boat "Harbor Home II" (named after our Truro house on the beach) survived Hurricane Bob on the Cape and

Hurricane Andrew in Florida where we had left it one year to return to the Cape to work for the summer. It was a lucky boat!

After the high stress years with the restaurant and Inn, I found a wonderful job at our local Garden Center in Truro and worked April to November most years. It was fun learning about the plants and dealing with the many gardeners, both local and summer folks from all over the country and the world. Truro and the outer Cape are very popular summer vacation destinations.

In 1994, David was offered another job captaining a large trawler to Cuba and I went along as Navigator and Cook. The Cuban people were wonderful and welcoming and we made friends with many while we explored the northwest coast for about 6 weeks. The next winter, the couple for whom we had delivered that boat to Maryland those many years before, heard that we had been to Cuba by boat and wanted us to help them take their boat over as well so we were able to reconnect again with many of the Cubans we had met on the first trip.

After that trip David was appointed Marine Superintendent for the town of Provincetown so our chance for off season boating ended for a few years.

In 2000 we started looking for our next boat. After years in the shallow waters of the Bahamas, we wanted a Catamaran and took

a trip to Annapolis, MD to look at a used 34' Gemini Cat for sale. As Geminis are built there we went to the factory to see what the repairs to that boat would cost and before you know it we were contracting to have a new one built for us. David brought it back to the Cape in June and we started planning for a much longer trip. In 2003 we set out with the motto "South America or Bust" and by summer of the following year we had made it to Grenada, just about at the end of the Caribbean chain and decided to stop there. Since retiring as Marine Superintendent, David had been working as Summer Police Officer during the busy season, and returned home to work that summer while I stayed on the boat in a slip with our two kitties. Grenada was supposed to be below the hurricane zone and a safe place to wait out the storm season. Although they hadn't experienced a hurricane since Janet in 1953, that year Hurricane Ivan made a direct hit on Grenada and we were incredibly lucky to survive the storm with only minor damage. David had just one week left in Provincetown when the storm struck and he returned to the island as quickly as possible. We helped there with relief efforts for a couple of weeks. As a boat is completely self-sufficient, we were far better off than most of the islanders who had lost their homes, means to communicate, ability to get food and gas and many other problems.

We slowly retraced our path through the islands and returned to Truro in the spring of 2005 to resume our summer jobs. And now we are heading off again which is why I won't be able to attend the reunion. Just yesterday (August 11) we left our home port for

another adventure, hopefully to return to Cuba in our own boat and continue perhaps to Jamaica and Mexico. I'll be posting our stories on a web-site called TripSailor and would be happy to add anyone's e-mail to the group I will be writing to regularly so contact me at [harborhome3@gmail.com](mailto:harborhome3@gmail.com) if you would like to be included in a vicarious sailing trip, sometimes much more comfortable than the real thing!

I can't finish this without making mention of the wonderful additional family I have in my life with my marriage to David. We never had children but he had two daughters from his first marriage. They were 12 and 13 when we first got together so I have been like a second mom to them while they were growing up and am now a grandma to two teenaged grandchildren in Arizona and an almost two year old in Brooklyn. We are looking forward to helping baby Luna get her sea legs when she and her Mom join us in New York for a side trip up the Hudson River before we go further south.

Wishing you all a wonderful reunion and hope to hear from any of you who would like to follow our travels.

And now the pictures:





**Annie and David at daughter Dawn's Wedding**



**Annie and Step-daughter Dawn**





**Annie at Granddaughter Luna's birth**



**Annie and David with one of his many painted "Art Cars"**





**View toward Provincetown from our wonderful "Harbor Home" our house on the beach in Truro, MA on Old Cape Cod**



**Daughter Jen and Luna on the beach at the house in Truro**