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MARINE TRAVELIFT INC. AND COLONNA'S SHIPYARD LAUNCH A NEW ERA WITH THE 1000C MOBILE BOAT HOIST

STURGEON BAY, WI (July 28, 2010) – When Marine Travelift Inc. delivered the world's largest mobile boat hoist to Colonna's Shipyard in December 2009, the two companies effectively launched a new era in the handling of large vessels. The new 1000C, capable of lifting 1,000 tons (2,200,000 pounds), is already revolutionizing the way this Norfolk, Virginia-based shipyard approaches its business.

Founded in 1875, Colonna's Shipyard is the oldest family-owned, full-service shipyard in the United States. Located on the deep-water, mid-Atlantic Port of Norfolk, it features a 17,200-ton floating drydock, a 2,800-ton floating drydock and two marine railways. Such railways and drydocks have been the standard technology for handling large vessels that need repair, overhaul or conversion work out of the water.

But engineering and manufacturing capabilities continue to advance, and in 2008, the full-service ship repair facility was ready to look at new, more efficient options.

"We had a mature drydock system with the two floating drydocks and two marine railways, but we needed more capacity," said Tom Godfrey, Colonna's Shipyard president and CEO. "We did an in-depth analysis and concluded that a Marine Travelift system would give us greater capacity and greater flexibility than the alternatives."

Indeed, the benefits of using such specialized equipment are impressive. To start, the yard can eliminate scheduling conflicts due to the increased number of slots available; in other words, the yard isn't tying up the 17,200- or 2,800-ton drydock for a 900-ton vessel, which Godfrey called "a mismatch of capacity."

Next, the yard will be better able to accommodate emergency lifts. This ensures quick-turnaround for customers and improved through-put for the yard.

"With drydocks and railways, you have to schedule vessels in sequential order," Godfrey explained. "With the Marine Travelift 1000C, we have complete flexibility, and our land can accommodate 12 parallel vessels in any sequence. We can schedule vessels according to exact repair needs and return them to service rapidly."

A Marine Travelift mobile boat hoist's unbeatable maneuverability is what allows the yard to fully utilize every square inch of its property. Operators are able to move vessels across the yard, in tight spaces and around sharp corners whenever necessary.

In addition to such vastly improved efficiency, the shipyard will have lower maintenance costs, because it will have slings in the water rather than steel. And the yard can do its part to protect the environment, since a mobile boat hoist removes vessels from the waterfront.

This was all of critical importance to Colonna's Shipyard.

“We’re modernizing our entire operation over time,” Godfrey explained. He noted that the shipyard ordered the 1000C on May 29, 2008 as part of a major expansion project, christened the West Yard Marine Travelift Facility, which was “designed to be modern, efficient and environmentally compliant.”

Situated on approximately 10 acres, this facility accommodates the simultaneous repair of up to 12 vessels, including tugs, barges, ferries, workboats and yachts. Thanks to the new Marine Travelift 1000C, which was delivered in December 2009 and is currently in the midst of a busy summer season, Colonna can guarantee immediate repair and a timely return to service while longer-term projects remain drydocked.

The Marine Travelift system is capable of lifting many vessel types, including U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard patrol craft and specialty vessels such as casino and dinner boats.

“Our customer base is very diversified,” Godfrey said. “Over a multi-year time frame, it may be evenly split between government and commercial work.”

Colonna’s services include propulsion conversion and repairs, state-of-the-art surface prep and coating, hull extensions and superstructure modifications, piping and electrical system renewals, heavy fabrication and large lathe capacity machine shop. At press time, the Marine Travelift 1000C had been in full operation for more than 90 days, and according to Godfrey, its performance has hit the mark.

“We’re very pleased,” he said. “Everything’s going fantastic, which means it’s going according to plan. That’s very important, because with a system like this, you make a lot of detailed decisions from a design and engineering standpoint. When the machine performs as expected, that’s great from a business point of view.”

Throughout its 135-year history, Colonna has been an industry pioneer. From its 19th century, 50-ton, horse-powered marine railway to its 21st century, 1,000-ton Marine Travelift mobile boat hoist, the shipyard continues to adapt to the needs of a changing marketplace.

“We take a very long-term view,” Godfrey said, acknowledging the venerable shipyard’s impressive history and reputation. With a laugh, he added, “The investment we’ve made is a large one. It requires a high level of confidence and a look at what will work best over, say, a 30-year time period. That’s the long view.”

Marine Travelift also has been a pioneer in its industry. Its founder conceptualized and manufactured the world’s first mobile boat hoist in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, in 1945 — and the world’s largest mobile boat hoist, the 1000C, took shape in that same Great Lakes hometown more than half a century later.

“Together with valued partners like Colonna’s Shipyard, we’re looking forward to handling the next generation of fleet maintenance and repair,” said Erich Pfeifer, Marine Travelift’s vice president of business development and marketing. “Manufacturing and ship handling continue to evolve, and we want to be at the forefront of each revolution.”

For more information about Colonna’s Shipyard, please visit www.colonnaship.com.

For more information about Marine Travelift and its full range of mobile boat hoists, call (920) 743-6202, e-mail the sales team at sales@marinettravelift.com or visit www.marinetravelift.com.

The world's first mobile boat hoist was conceptualized and manufactured in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, in 1945. Officially established in 1954, Marine Travelift Inc. has a long-standing reputation as a marine industry leader and is recognized for its tradition of excellence on a global scale. The company manufactures mobile boat hoists, marine forklifts, self-propelled transporters and other related marine lifting products. It also has an extensive U.S. and international dealer network, with more than 3,500 units in service worldwide.

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