

Marine

News

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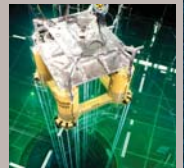
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Workboat Annual



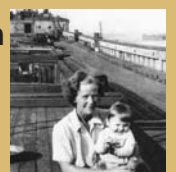
Tech File **DEEPWATER**

Innovation continues to make deepwater drilling ops safer, more efficient



The Forgotten Mariners

Tug & Barge workers seek their due for service during World War Two



At the Crossroads of Water, Air, Road & Rail Hubs, Steelways offers

Location, Location, Location

By Greg Trauthwein

The story of Newburgh, NY-based Steelways is not unlike that of the myriad of vessel construction and repair businesses dotting the U.S. coastal landscape: a business which has diversified to keep its bottom-line shipshape over the years. The Steelways story becomes unique when you peel back the cover to discover the breadth and depth of offerings from the company – both in and outside of the marine industry – and examine the long list of strategic advantages offered, starting with its location.

Steelways was started in 1960 in Westchester County, NY, and it was founded – and today is still owned and run by – David Plotkin. Focused on power plant projects for nearly its first decade in business, the company switched market direction, and physical location in 1969, a strategic move which led the company to the waterfront of

Newburgh, NY, a location in close proximity to West Point.

“I credit out company’s success and longevity primarily to diversification,” said Plotkin. This diversification is self-evident, as the company has a traditional stronghold in the supply of steel rooftop swimming pools for hotels and high-rise buildings, delivering more than 600 in New York City alone, according to Plotkin. Overall, Plotkin classifies Steelway’s expertise into three broad categories: Pools, Tanks and Marine Construction, but a five minute conversation with the owner clearly illustrates there are many more roots.

“We have manufactured huge LNG storage tanks for Staten Island; Caisson Gates for U.S. Navy drydocks as far away as Pearl Harbor, barges, bridge decks and even a

Set on the scenic Hudson River in Newburgh, NY, Steelways positions itself as **the gateway to New England.**



Pontoon Launcher for the USN Trident Submarine Launch facility,” said Plotkin.

In the mid-1980s, a project to help re-deck the 12 miles of approaches to the Throgs Neck Bridge was awarded to Steelways, and the company produced and delivered – more than 60 miles to the south on the Hudson River via barge – a series of asphalt-covered one-inch thick steel plates,

plates measuring 42 ft. x 40 ft.

It is this project, and in fact most of the company’s large scale projects, that highlight what Plotkin and CFO Steven Laker believe to be the company’s primary benefit: location, location, location.

“Where we are located is virtually the crossroads of New England and the Northeast U.S.,” said Laker, “as we are located minutes from several

major interstates, Stewart International Airport, three rail spurs, and of course the waterway.”

In addition to its central location to every major mode of transport, Plotkin notes that the company offers a massive concrete launchway, capable of launching structures up to 300 x 125 ft. “When it comes down to it, a key to our success is our location, as delivery cost in many of these projects is a determining factor, and we have many advantages (in regards to transport).”

Third, but certainly not least, the shipyard is able to draw from a deep and capable labor pool. “We are in a labor surplus area,” Laker said. “We’re a union shop, and we have about 35 to 40 employees at a given time (and



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Steelways in Brief

Major Transport Hubs:

CSX Railroad; Interstate I-84; Stewart International Airport

Land:

60 waterfront acres

Facilities:

- 54,800 sq. ft. fabrication shop
- Three 10-ton overhead cranes
- Concrete launchway (capable of 300 x 125 ft.)
- Marine railway able to haul 500 ton vessel (140 x 65 ft.)

Tank Construction:

- Above ground welded stainless and carbon steel storage tanks, 1,000 to 100,000 gal.

Marine Construction:

Barge, Drydock Casisson, Shipbuilding, Steel Deck Re-plating, Bridge Rehab

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can ramp up to 200 if needed). If we need more, it's just a phone call."

Laker noted that the company is focused more today on garnering traditional marine work, and the company recently saw that strategy come to fruition when it was awarded an \$8.9m contract to build a 200 x 50 ft. crane barge for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis area, a contract the company worked hard to secure. "We priced this one very carefully," Plotkin said. This contract is currently in the final design phase, and once it begins construction, will be delivered within 365 days.

"We're currently bidding on a number of interesting marine projects, the details of which I can't share with you

at this time," Plotkin said.

Steelways, like many other similarly sized marine construction firms, faces its fair share of challenges in running an efficient, profitable operation. Laker, however, contends that the biggest challenge is simply getting the 'Steelways' name out and recognized

in the marine market. "We are a highly skilled, 40 plus year old company and sometime I find the biggest challenge is simply letting people know that we are here. Once they see our history and logistical advantages of our location, though, they are usually hooked," said Laker. **MN**



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