

Associated Terminals—T. May

By Richard Eberhardt

There's something about Associated Terminals christening the two largest floating cranes in its fleet. While most of its midstream loading cranes are christened under blue skies, its previous massive Gottwald 8400B crane, the Talley-Perez, was christened under threatening skies last May.

The christening of the T. May on October 4, 2013, was interrupted by a driving rainstorm. It was drizzling as the ceremony was about to begin, but soon the rain blocked out the view of the Crescent City Connection bridge less than a mile upriver from Woldenberg Park and the Moonwalk along the Mississippi River where the T. May was moored.

Some of the presentations were made under the large tent erected for the christening, but the remainder had to be moved to the nearby Westin Hotel where the not-to-be-missed reception was held.

"The T. May will allow us to continue to provide our customers with industry-leading service," said Associated Terminals President Todd Fuller. "We have been so pleased with the performance of the Talley-Perez that we decided to choose the 8400B model again. The new addition will further increase our capacity to safely and efficiently handle large volumes."

The adverse weather had no effect on the massive Dusseldorf, Germany-built crane, of which there are more on the Lower Mississippi River for mid-stream loading and unloading of ships moored by buoys than anywhere else in the world.

The T. May is the eighth Gottwald crane in the Associated Terminals fleet, and along with the almost identical Talley-Perez, the largest. The Gottwald 8400B crane is mounted on a heavy load deck barge built by Conrad Industries of Morgan City, La. The barge measures 250 x 72 x 12 feet.

The weather did not dampen the spirits of Terry May as he spoke of the honor of having such a large crane named in his honor. May has 35 years in the maritime industry with the last 12 years—his best years—with Associated Terminals, where he is Senior Vice President responsible for sales, marketing and logistics.

So Many Good Days

"When friends are doing business together, there are so many good days and so very few bad ones," May said. He thanked a list of people who influenced his career, from colleagues and

bosses/mentors of the different companies to his Associated Terminals family. Not to be forgotten he thanked his parents, wife and two daughters for their support and love.

May worked for some of the heavyweights of the inland river system, including Ingram Barge Lines, Consolidated Grain and Barge, and The Valley Line Company; inland terminals such as CGB North Bend (OH) and East/West Marine Terminal, Owensboro, KY; and deep water terminals of International Marine Terminals and the Port of Mobile.

On the barge are two deck generators, each generating 135 kw to operate the floating crane. It can lift 1,150 tons with its largest bucket having a capacity of 63.5 cubic yards, only slightly smaller than the 66 cubic yards of the Talley-Perez. Associated Terminals switched to domestically-produced Anvil attachments for the T. May. The attachments are built in Slaughter, La.

On deck are Hyundai front end loaders supplied by State Machinery. Six Wintech winches can reposition the massive crane alongside a ship as holds are filled or emptied.

The Gottwald 8400B crane has a hydraulic ram supporting the massive boom needed to reach across the deck of Post Panamax ships which are now entering the Mississippi River and use economies of scale to transfer loads of coal, grain and fertilizer to barge tows that connect the Midwest to markets around the world.

Smaller cranes are mostly fitted with wires to support the boom and weight hanging from the steel cables. The hydraulic ram is considered an additional safety feature, particularly on the massive loads the Gottwald 8400B can lift.

Captain Bob Mueller USCG (Retired), Vice President of Compliance and Risk Management of Turn Services, presented the United States flag to the T. May crew. Kevin Tarleton, Associated Terminals CFO, presented the company colors.

Invocation was by Deacon Richard Henderson of the St. James Catholic Church and the blessing was performed by Fr. Matthew R. Clark, Order of St. Benedict.

“We are pleased that the T. May will be in service for the fourth quarter of 2013, in which we are expecting strong cargo volumes to close out the year,” Fuller told those who braved the inclement weather. This fall’s harvest is anticipated to be a “bin buster” so the T. May christening could be considered a just-in-time delivery.