

Boat Hoist In Lockhaven Salvaged And Moved To New Location In Portage Des Sioux

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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GRAFTON - The large piece of machinery, what can best be described as a large boat hoist, has been sitting idle in a parking lot in Lockhaven since the 1960s according to some reports.

The hoist is still believed to be fully operational and is being moved to a new location where it can continue to be used. It was towed over to Grafton where it was then loaded onto a ferry to its final resting place at the Longshot Marina in Portage De Sioux.



Ambition Towing based out of St. Louis was in charge of the towing operation. Below are pictures of the tow truck and hitch setup.





Scott Mandrell, the man who was spearheading this operation Thursday morning (July 21) said that "it's a really unusual load." The machine easily takes up both lanes as it went down Route 100 into Grafton, which required a little assistance from the authorities. A State Police Officer gave the tow truck and other men an escort into Grafton to ensure everyone's safety.

The hoist was going to be scrapped after the Piasa Harbor closed down for good. But a group of individuals took matters into their own hands and helped make the effort to buy the hoist from the Great Rivers Land Trust. They gave the scrap price for the hoist which was an estimated \$5,000.

Mandrell said that if you wanted to go buy a brand new hoist like this one it would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. He believes the hoist is an integral part of the boating community and would have hated to see it just sitting in a scrap yard.

The hoist was believed to be built on-site at the marina and was used to get larger boats in and out of the water. Mandrell called it a "very important piece of boating machinery."

"From a boating standpoint, it's still in the same place," Mandrell said.

The hoist will still be able to be used, just a few more miles down the river in Missouri.

"If this were to go away, there would probably never be another purchased for this area," Mandrell said because of the high cost. He mentioned that the boating community in and around Alton and Grafton has been declining for years and there wouldn't be nearly enough funding to go out and buy another one.

The hoist can move boats as heavy as 10-plus tons. Mandrell said that there are plenty of people nearby that have boats large enough to use the machine. Mandrell has used it for his own boats he said.

Mandrell mentioned that the river leads all the way down into the Gulf of Mexico. So, if there are boats heading down the river that might need repair or things of that nature, the hoist is a great tool to have nearby.

Mandrell said it was a winning situation for everyone involved.

"Great Rivers has their money for the object, and we have the object where it will be put to good use."



The most important thing though is that it got to its new home safely.



