

# W.O. Grubb Crane Rental

**F**riends and family are as much a part of the W.O. Grubb Crane Rental business as the customers are. It has always been about the people, ever since the Grubb patriarch started the business back in the 1960s.

Bill Grubb, the current owner and president of W.O. Grubb, comes from a long tradition of hard workers. His grandfather, Emmett Grubb, provided for his 13 children by operating cranes and other equipment. Most of his sons took up the same trade as their father, and they earned the reputation of being honest, hard-working and skilled team players. Willie Grubb, one of Emmett's 13 children and also Bill's father, used this foundation to start W.O. Grubb Steel Erection in the 1960s.

The story of how Willie Grubb started seems spot-on to those who know the Grubb family. While doing underground work with a cable backhoe, Willie was asked by the customer if he had a boom that would fit the machine. Of course the answer was yes. But the truth was, he did not. He said yes, knowing that he planned to go back to his garage and build one out of scrap metal because that is what it would take to get the job done. It is that sort of hard-working

spirit that flows through the Grubb veins.

"Our greatest resource is our people," Bill Grubb said. "Their dedication is what has made W.O. Grubb what it is today."

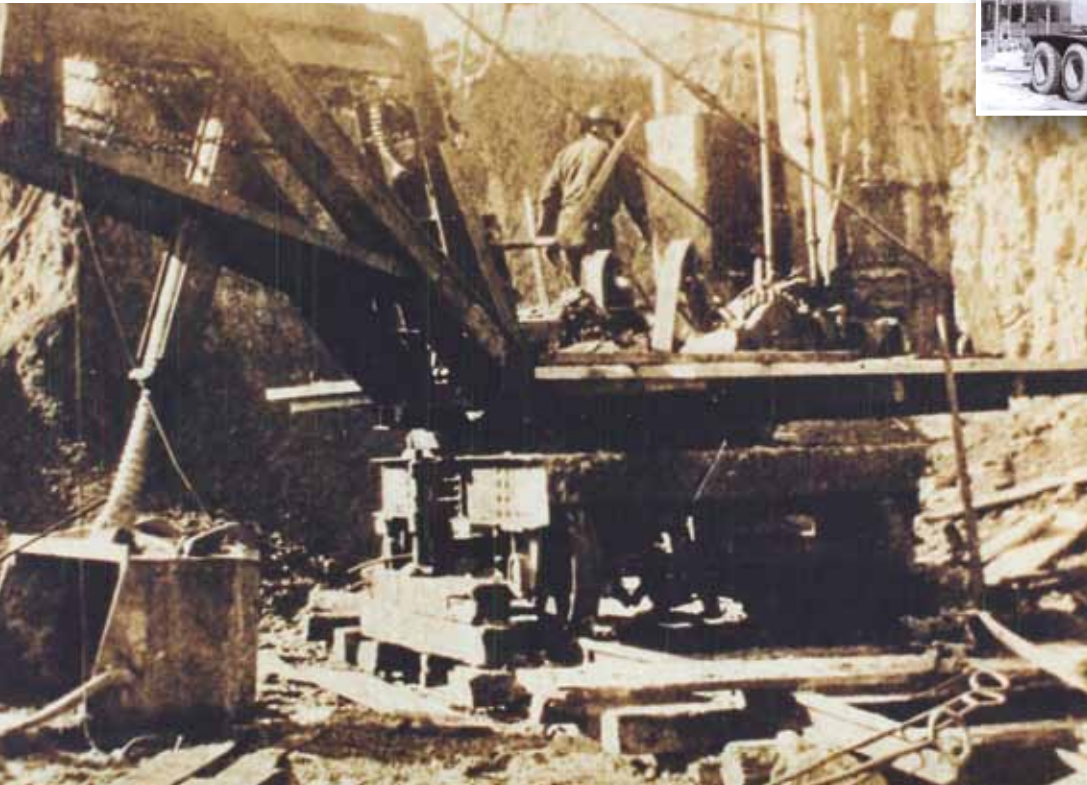
## DEMANDING REPUTATION

The company celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September 2007, and it was a time for the family to reflect on how they reached this milestone. After Willie Grubb founded the Virginia-based company in the 1960s on the simple concept of providing high-

**MILESTONES**

- 1960s** W.O. Grubb established
- 1983** Grubb lands its first nationally recognized steel erection projects
- 1990** Opens five additional branch locations
- 2004** Member of 

Grove TMS800E's picking 1 of 20 vessels for a new plant for Coors Brewing Company.



quality steel erection services, equipment, manpower and superior responsiveness to their customers, they hit the 1970s and started to grow. More and more demanding steel-erection jobs earned them a reputation of being second to none. W.O. Grubb continued to grow with the addition of the crane rental division; the company started renting cranes in the 1970s and this division continued to grow until it dominated the W.O. Grubb business.

The downturn of the economy in the 1980s brought some challenges. Because there were not that many jobs to choose from, W.O. Grubb had to take some gambles, and one of them certainly paid off. In 1983, the company landed one of the largest, most demanding projects in the





country: the RJ Reynolds plant in Winston-Salem, N.C. The company had to dedicate 70 percent of their resources to the job for more than a year.

As W.O. Grubb made its way into the late 1980s, they were able to expand the crane rental portion of the business by making some smart investments with the capital from the steel erection side.

It was also during the late 1980s that founder Willie Grubb had to back off from the day-to-day affairs of the business due to health reasons, and this change brought the company to a near standstill.

“That was a hard time for us to be sure, but throwing in the towel was never an option,” Bill Grubb said. “That’s the one thing about the Grubbs: We have never been quitters.”

It was at times like this when the Grubb emphasis on friends and family really counted. With the help of some new people and some veterans of the organization, Bill Grubb was able to jumpstart the company



“Grubb took delivery of the first two Manitowoc 12000’s produced” Pictured working at first jobsite for a glass contractor.

into the 1990s, which is when W.O. Grubb started to really expand.

“My philosophy is to always be welcomed back wherever you go,” Bill Grubb said. “Our people are so important in everything we do, and everyone is such an integral part of the team effort.”

In 1993, W.O. Grubb had grown enough to branch off of the original Richmond, Virginia headquarters and opened a facility in Portsmouth, Virginia. The Alexandria, Virginia, branch was established a year later, and Bill Grubb said his staff there became the leading and most-respected team in the Washington D.C./Northern Virginia market. In 1997 and 1998, the Fredericksburg, Virginia and Baltimore, Maryland branches were opened.

### MORE COMPETITIVE

Just as it did for everyone across the nation, September 11<sup>th</sup> brought more changes to W.O. Grubb. Work was harder to come by, so the market was more competitive. “Our people rose to the challenge by being safer, performing more professionally and becoming even bigger team players,” Bill Grubb said. “We were able to take this challenge head-on, and since the turn of the century, W.O. Grubb has doubled in size and become one of the most respected crane

Liebherr LR1400/2 and Grove GMK7550 working at Yorktown Oil Refinery.

rental, steel-erection and rigging companies in the country.”

W.O. Grubb started with a handful of employees and a couple of cranes. By 2008, the company had grown to more than 350 employees and owned about 210 cranes consisting of some of the most technologically advanced cranes the market had to offer. Some of the flagship cranes in W.O. Grubb’s fleet include several Liebherr LR1400s and a Grove GMK 7550. In 2007, W. O. Grubb was also ranked the eleventh largest crane-owning company in North America.

Bill Grubb believes that he cannot go wrong as long as his company is centered on the people – friends, family and valued customers.

“We focus on quality, pride, safety and added value to our customers, and that will bring us success,” Bill Grubb said. “I’m proud of our W.O. team.”

