

The 28' x 72' Concordia, MS Hunting Club building was moved a distance of 10 miles in 2005 in two sections along the Mississippi River and elevated 12 feet on steel girders. The pull was made using a 1999 Peterbilt.



Hays Brothers House Moving Company

James (Jimmy) Hays was only 10 years old when he helped his father move a “shotgun” house. Today, he is owner and president of the company begun almost 80 years ago.

Hays Brothers House Moving Company began operation at Seminole, Oklahoma in 1928 by James Luster Hays using a team of mules. The business moved to Lake Village, Arkansas in 1947 and was known as Hays & Sons House Moving. The owners were J.L. Hays, Fair L. Hayes and Bob M. Hays, the grandfather, uncle and father respectively of Jimmy Hays. After his grandfather died in 1956, the business was relocated to its current location in Clarksdale, Mississippi.

After the retirement and death of his uncle Fair and with his father at age 76 (but still helping supervise the crew), Jimmy assumed ownership and presidency of the company. His wife, Mary Joyce, is secretary and treasurer of the company and ihelps with the office stuff,” said Jimmy.



President Jimmy, left, with father Bob Hays



This ferry was moved from the Mississippi River near Helena, AR in 1960 to Moon Lake, MS when a bridge was constructed at Helena. Country singer Conway Twitty purchased the ferry to establish a Night Club. When modifications to the ferry structure proved cost prohibitive the structure was sold to Nashville Bridge & Iron of Nashville, TN. Hays, again, moved the ferry back to the Mississippi River for transfer to the Cumberland River in Tennessee.

"I've been in the business all my life," he said recently, recalling the use of a 1942 International K model military surplus truck to move the shot gun house at age 10.

Operating with one crew of three full-time employees and two extras, Hays had limited his work to within a 100-mile radius of Clarksdale until Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast. Currently he has about half his equipment located in Gulfport, MS where he shares a holding lot with Fellow IASM member John Williams of Kosciusko House Movers. In the meantime, Hays continues the major focus of his work from the home base, which is moving a few tenant houses, and houses from city to countryside.

Due to the nature of the soil in the Delta, Hays does not move houses on slabs, but does move heavy equipment, tanks, levels and moves houses. Currently, he is moving a 50-foot by 120-foot metal shop that had to be cut into three pieces.

A big chunk of his work is moving and elevating houses behind levees, especially during deer and fishing seasons. "I can't count the number of double-wides (mobile homes) I've moved behind the levees," he said.

Hays cited a couple of recent moves that were quite a challenge from which he earned a great deal of satisfaction. One was a Civil War-era house in nearby Okolona, MS. "It was big, heavy and the soil muddy," he recalled. "We picked it up, moved it forward and built a new foundation."

A second job was raising a two-story house L-shaped house on a six-foot first floor level two additional feet



The Hay Clan: (L-R) Bob, James, Fair & J.L. Hays.



A 28' x 70' barn was moved on Leatherman Plantation in Tunica County, MS



This 28' x 62' structure located near the Biloxi River was elevated from six to 11 feet. Before (left), After (right)

in Oxford, MS. The first floor had a ceiling of six feet. An individual who is 6'-3" tall purchased the house. Raising the part of the structure above the first level allowed two and a half feet to be added to increase the ceiling height. Thus the new owner no longer had to stoop when entering the lower level area.

On the Gulf Coast, Hays has raised, leveled and held for new foundations five houses damaged by Hurricane Katrina for the Mississippi Heritage Trust and has several bids pending on other similar type jobs.

According to Hays, the number of...

To read the rest of this story and other articles in this issue of Structural Mover, contact IASM for information on Membership. Structural Mover is published by IASM for members. As a member you receive all issues of Structural Mover.



Moving a 32'x'90'two-story house in mid 1980's in Shelby, MS for Dr. Ming.

Story continues on page 68



This house in Oxford, MS, home of the Ole Miss Rebels, dates to the late 1800's. In 2005 Hays Brothers elevated the structure 2.5 feet in place to accommodate a 6'-3" new owner who tired of bending over every time he entered the lower level.

