



CAPT. JIM MCALLISTER & EILEEN MCALLISTER | McAllister Towing and Transportation Co., New York

McAllister Towing solidifies Charleston, Port Everglades fleets

Story and photos by Casey Conley

For most tugboat companies, building one new azimuthing stern drive (ASD) tugboat would make for a pretty good year. McAllister Transportation and Towing added two within just eight months.

The 6,772-hp Capt. Jim

McAllister left Eastern Shipbuilding in late August 2019, arriving soon afterward in Charleston, S.C. The 100-foot vessel routinely escorts and assists post-Panamax containerships calling on the sprawling Wando Welch Terminal across the Cooper River in Mt. Pleasant, S.C.

Capt. Jim McAllister, pictured above near the Arthur J. Ravenel Bridge in Charleston, is named for a second-generation McAllister captain. Eileen McAllister, left, launched earlier this year from Washburn & Doughty Shipyard, was christened by Eileen Buch, Eileen Duane Donovan and Eileen Fitzsimons, three direct descendants of company founder James McAllister.

Eileen McAllister, a 93-foot, 6,772-hp, ship docking and escort tugboat built at Washburn & Doughty, provides similar services in Port Everglades, Fla. McAllister patrolled Eileen with Tate McAllister, built six years ago with the same hull but different propulsion and winch packages.

Both new tugs are powered by brawny Caterpillar 3516 Tier 4 engines paired with Schoel z-drives. Capt. Jim delivers 82.5 metric tons of bollard pull, which is roughly equal to the 93 short tons Eileen generates. Both are the most powerful ship-assist tugboats working in their respective ports.

"In the past, we have seen up to 1,000-foot containerships," said Capt. Chuck Runnion, McAllister's general manager and



★ Most powerful ship-assist tugs in respective ports ★ Built to handle post-Panamax containerships ★ Bollard pull exceeds 90 tons on both vessels



Capt. Jim engineer Michael Cobb stands alongside one of two Cat 3516E units delivering 3,386 hp each.

vice president in Port Everglades. "And with the Eileen we are handling these 1,000-footers with the greatest of ease."

McAllister's tugboat crews in Charleston are similarly upbeat about Capt. Jim. It is the final tugboat in a four-vessel order, and the only one of the bunch to leave the shipyard with a Coast Guard certificate of inspection under Subchapter M.

"It's hard to impress me at this point, but that boat floored me," said Capt. Steve Kicklighter, a McAllister vice president and Charleston general manager. "It has the most environmentally friendly diesel engines, and the accommodations spaces for the crew are unsurpassed."

"Without a doubt," he added, "this is the best of all four."

McAllister announced the four-tug series of ship assist and escort tugs in early 2016, becoming one of the first operators with a multiboat Tier 4 order. Horton Shipbuilding won the contract and built the lead boat, Capt. Brian A. McAllister, before running into financial trouble and ultimately declaring bankruptcy in late 2017.

Eastern Shipbuilding of Panama City, Fla., finished construction on Rosemary McAllister and Atua McAllister, the second and third vessels in the series, which arrived at the shipyard in varying stages of



McAllister's North Charleston dock during the late afternoon sun.

completion. Eastern built Capt. Jim McAllister from the keel up, a point that Kicklighter said makes the tug stand out. Capt. Brian and Atua work in New York, McAllister's headquarters, while Rosemary is based in Norfolk, Va.

The four boats are designed for escorting and docking ultra-large container vessels now calling on major East Coast ports. Jensen Maritime Consultants of Seattle, a longtime McAllister partner, designed the 100-by-40-foot hull. It features a modest skeg, but relies heavily on its wide beam for effective high-speed escorts.

Propulsion also is the same across the 100-foot series. All four are powered by twin Cat 3516 engines each delivering 3,386 hp

at 1,800 rpm. Straight carbon-fiber shafts connect the mains to Schouel z-drives turning 110-inch nitral props encased in nozzles. Three Cat C7.1 generators provide ship service power.

The tugs have tankage for 2,500 gallons of diesel exhaust fluid needed to meet EPA Tier 4 emissions rules. The urea and water mixture injected into the exhaust stream is kept in climate-controlled spaces to prevent degradation. The engineering control panels also are segregated from the main engine space, providing a quieter and more comfortable working environment for the engineer.

Capt. Jim, like Atua McAllister before it, is outfitted with a 75-hp Markey hawser winch and a single-drum towing winch on the

CAPT. JIM MCALLISTER SPECIFICATIONS

OWNER/OPERATOR: McAllister Towing and Transportation Co.
BUILDER: Eastern Shipbuilding Group
DESIGNER: Jensen Maritime Consultants
DIMENSIONS: 100' x 40' x 16'4"
MISSION: Ship assist, escort and rescue towing
CREW SIZE: 4-6

PROPULSION:

- Engines: (2) Tier 4 Caterpillar 3516E, 3,386 hp
- Bollard pull: 82.5 metric tons dead
- Vessel speed: 12 knots cruising, 14 maximum
- Z-drives: (2) Schouel SRP 4000 RP turning 2,800-mm nitral 4-blade props
- Auxiliary generators: (3) Tier 3 Cat C7.1 engines driving 110-kW generators

- Props: Vitche Globemaster magnetic compass
- ACS: Furuno FR310 sales
- Engine software: Rose
- Port Navigation Systems
- Autopilot: Anschutz MerStar II
- GPS: (2) Furuno GP32

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Radar: (3) Standard Horizon GC2200
- Load holler: Standard Horizon VU-3000

CAPACITIES:

- Fuel: 58,710 gallons
- Lube oil: 545 gallons
- Urea: 2,500 gallons
- Portable water: 3,075 gallons

FIREFIGHTING:

- Manholes: (2) FF5 300M manually operated manholes, 1,500 gpm each
- Pumps: (1) FF5 SFP150C2000D pump rated at 3,000 gpm, powered by (1) Cat C9.3 engine
- Manhole space the suppression system: FW-300 fixed system

NAVIGATION GEAR:

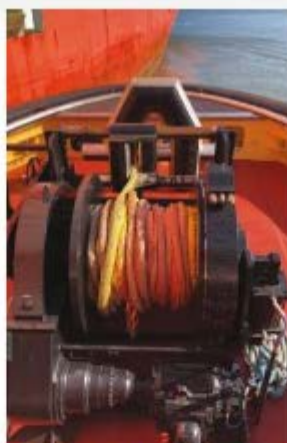
- Radar: (2) Furuno FR-B122 with ARX and 4' antenna
- Chartplotter: Furuno NavNet 12touch2
- Compass: (2) Anschutz Standard 22 gyrocom-

stem. Firefighting consists of two 1,500-gpm FFS monitors fed by a 3,000-gpm fire pump driven by a Cat C9.3 engine.

Josh Kicklighter, the mate on Capt. Jim McAllister alongside his brother, Capt. Matt Kicklighter, considers the Markey hawser winch a good match for the tug. He likened good winches on powerful tugs to top-quality tires on a sports car: They complete the package to deliver superior performance.

"The winches they put on here, they are light-years above some of the stuff I have used in the past," he said, adding that he has come to

Right, Markey Machinery supplied the DEPC-42 stern winch and single-drum DEPCF-52 hawser winch shown on Capt. Jim's bow. The tug is outfitted with Schottel SRP 4000 FP z-drives, below.



Everglades is undergoing extensive upgrades to facilitate calls from larger containerships. Post-Panamax cranes should arrive around Christmastime, and the main container port is adding 3,900 feet of dock space. Dredging also is in the works.

Getting post-Panamax ships safely in and out of these berths will require some muscular tugboats. Capt. Todd Cooper, co-managing pilot of the Port Everglades Pilots Association, described a challenging entry into the port requiring a high-speed tethered escort preceding a 110-degree turn into the Intracoastal Waterway. The waterway shrinks to 390 feet at its narrowest point.

Eileen McAllister, Cooper said, is the right size and has plenty of power to handle large ships in tight spaces. "What it is going to do is allow us and Port Everglades to ramp up and allow bigger ships into the port, especially with the port expansion projects we have going on," he said.

Runnton, McAllister's general manager in Port Everglades, said Washburn & Doughty's 93-foot hull makes the tug a good fit for the confined harbor. The design has proven itself repeatedly over the years for Moran Towing, Marine Towing of Tampa and Harbor Docking & Towing, among others. The tugs, in short, are stable during escorts but plenty maneuverable when docking ships.

"The reason we like that brand of boat, the Washburn & Doughty boat, is because they are shorter and they can fit into the tanker slips," Runnton said. "The tug captains like the Washburn & Doughty hulls ... because they seem to maneuver well either way, going ahead or astern, and you don't have to muscle it around."

Eileen shares the same 93-by-38-foot design as *Tate McAllister* but has a host of upgraded components. Tier 4 Cat 3516s replaced EMD Tier 3 engines, adding about 772 horsepower. Bolland pull jumped from 79 to 93 short tons. Eileen's Cat engines turn Schottel SRP 490 FP z-drives, and a Cat C18 engine drives a fire pump that supplies a single 6,000-gpm FFS monitor with foam injection capability.

The tug package also changed. Eileen has the same Markey DEPCF-52 winch on the bow as Capt. Jim with 600 feet of 8.5-inch Corland Plasma LoCo rope. The Markey DEPC-42 tow winch installed on the aft deck is spooled with 450 feet of 2.25-inch Samson AmSteel-Blue. *Tate McAllister*, meanwhile, has JcnRte winches forward and aft.

"With the Eileen and *Tate McAllister*, we will be able to handle anything that comes into Port Everglades," Runnton said.

Eileen and Capt. Jim typically operate with four crew. Both have four cabins, along with a full galley and mess, giving each person their own room under typical conditions. Eileen has three heads, something Runnton said he insisted on during the design phase. "The tug is designed for comfort, which leads to crew retention," he said.

Martin Costa, McAllister's engineering manager who helps oversee new construction, suggested the company will take a break from new construction after a busy few years. "I think we'll take a breather," he said. "Five boats is a lot to get done in four years." ●



trust the winch completely.

Josh Kicklighter demonstrated Capt. Jim's abilities on a sunny, clear fall day in Charleston. Capt. Jim easily pulled the bow of the 462-foot *Bochem Singapura* off Kinder Morgan Berth 4, then spun the tanker 180 degrees for departure. An hour later, again paired with the 5,000-hp *Moirra McAllister*, Capt. Jim backed the 656-foot vehicle carrier *Toledo* off the Columbus Street Terminal. The tug used no more than half power for both jobs.

"But when you want the power, it's there," Kicklighter said. "When you put rubber to steel and start pushing stuff around, you can see it does what it is supposed to do."

McAllister crews in Fort Lauderdale feel the same way about Eileen McAllister, which arrived in early April. Port