



Englund Marine anchors the Port's industrial area

Englund Marine was founded in Astoria by Axel Englund in 1944, at the foot of 15th St. over the water in a 50-by-50-foot building. He had three employees and was up against three other marine chandlers in the city. From this modest location he outlived all his competitors and served the needs of mariners in the Columbia Pacific region for more than 60 years. In 2006, this family-owned business finally moved into a new 40,000 square foot modern retail building with ample space to display most of its huge inventory of nautical gear, tools and all-weather clothing.

The current location opposite the Port of Astoria's boat yard also gave the company a highly visible presence in the port district. Despite the modernized and sophisticated environment of the new building, the staff yet retain the "hometown" atmosphere that barely hints at Englund Marine's growth over the last 50 years. Today, Kurt Englund, the third generation of the family, is president of a company comprised of eight retail stores and three distribution centers—developed by his father (Axel's son) Jon Englund.

The branches extend up and down the west coast from Westport, WA to Eureka, CA and are supported by three wholesale operations based in Portland, Phoenix, AZ and Missoula, MT. The Portland facility became the central warehouse for all of Englund's retail stores and in addition to controlling costs, gives them control of the supply chain from manufacturer to customer. In 2002 they acquired Fisher Brothers, a 100-year-old supply house and landmark in downtown Astoria, allowing Englund to expand their inventory to include industrial tools and products.

"The crab season is still our busiest time for commercial fishing gear, and those fishermen will probably come to one of our stores to check everything out before they buy it," Kurt explained recently, "but we also need a professional web site for company branding and selling specialty items that are unique or hard to find". He re-designed the site last summer and fine-tuned it during the fall, with separate pages for boating, sports, commercial supplies, rigging and hydraulic workshops, and the life raft certification center.

Kurt now reckons that anyone can quickly and easily find what they want online. "If it isn't in stock, our warehouses can generally get it to us within a week," he added. With the recent acquisition of the former Columbia Pacific Marine Works just a few yards from the back of their Astoria building, they now have another 10,000 square feet of space to stock bulk items like fishnet and drums of rope.

Jon Englund, who is nearly 80 years old, has continued in the role of CEO and still spends several hours in the store almost every day, keeping a watchful eye over the company he built. He likes to stay informed about new developments, like software-based book-keeping, invoicing and inventory control. His eldest son Jay joined the business full time in 1986 and manages the raft shop in Warrenton. Kurt joined in 1991 and manages the Astoria location, while two cousins manage the locations in Newport and Coos Bay.

Englund Marine now employs about 125 people, many of whom have been with them for 20 years or more. "They are the foundation of our success, and we value their service and loyalty," Kurt stated. Back in the 80's, Jon organized the first weekend gathering for all the employees. Everyone involved felt it was a great success," he recalled, "so we decided to make it happen every five years."

They have to plan well in advance to book rooms for about 100 people in a local hotel; they also pool their frequent flyer miles to help bring in all the staff from Phoenix and Missoula. The rest arrive by road. "We close all 11 outlets for a day or two in January and the entire company gets together. It's great to meet in person, discuss the business, and relax together. This has become a real tradition that I'm proud to continue," Kurt concluded.

For the future, Kurt sees the commercial fishing fleet as "the backbone of our business" and hopes that a fourth generation of Englands will join the workforce in due course and learn the ropes. He feels there will always be a demand for quality goods sold by knowledgeable staff and is confident that the company will be able to steer a course to meet the challenges that might lay ahead, from new technology, changing tastes in recreation, or the politics of fishing.



PORT OF ASTORIA

2018 CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

Arrival	Vessel	ETA	ETD	Passengers
Sept. 4	Celebrity Infinity	10:30	19:00	2170
Sept. 11	Disney Wonder	10:00	18:00	2500
Sept. 12	Silver Explorer	10:00	16:00	130
Sept. 14	Coral Princess	8:00	19:00	3000
Sept. 15	Celebrity Solstice	10:00	18:00	2850
Sept. 20	Island Princess	11:00	20:00	3000
Sept. 20	SS Mariner	10:00	19:00	700
Sept. 22	Explorer of the Seas	9:00	18:00	3114
Sept. 23	Ruby Princess	10:00	18:00	3080
Sept. 24	Oceania Regatta	9:00	15:00	684
Sept. 25	Grand Princess	7:00	16:00	2600
Sept. 26	Amsterdam	12:00	20:00	1970
Sept. 29	Explorer of the Seas	9:00	18:00	3114
Oct. 3	Norwegian Pearl	8:00	17:00	700
Oct. 6	Oceania Regatta	9:00	18:00	594
Oct. 9	Grand Princess	7:00	16:00	2600
Oct. 18	Eurodam	12:00	20:00	2104
Oct. 20	Emerald Princess	11:00	20:00	3080

* Schedules are subject to changes and updated as needed.
Go to www.portofastoria.com for latest updated schedule