



MEDIA CONTACT



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MASTRY HELPS NEW YORK ISLAND OWNER LIVE OFF-GRID

Living on one's very own island is a romantic notion. Filmmaker and actor Al Sutton has been preparing to do just that on Columbia Island in New York's Long Island Sound. There was a hitch, though. The tiny island with a well-known history had no power or water. Mastry Engine Center helped make it possible for Sutton to live there completely off the grid.

Sutton is renovating the 75' x 75' concrete structure that was the base of Columbia Broadcasting's 410' radio tower from the early 1940s to the '60s. Employees once lived there, using a well that has since been breached with seawater, and electricity from a long-gone underwater power cable. Sutton's goal is to create an off-the-grid, green home in this facility.

Mastry Engine Center of St. Petersburg, Florida, was a key player in meeting this challenge, supplying two custom-built, synchronized, 45 kW MasPower generators as part of the home's power system. The packages feature electronically controlled Yanmar diesel engines, powder-coated enclosures, stainless steel exhaust systems and 100-gallon stainless steel fuel tanks. A DeepSea electronic controller is instrumental in synchronizing the generators, no easy feat on smaller power systems.

The house's 10,000W power demand is fed primarily by a 1,200 sq. ft. solar panel array linked to six large Xantrex inverter systems, with overflow sent to a bank of 48 batteries. When needed, the inverters signal the MasPower generators to start, which then simultaneously supply house

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power while recharging the battery bank. As power levels stabilize, one generator shuts down, leaving one to finish charging the batteries.

Total Electric, a Charleston, South Carolina, alternative power specialist, coordinated the electrical system. To connect the MasPower generators, "All I did was plug and play," said Total Electric's Tom Stoudenmier. "Mastry was great, they did all the synchronizing and fine tuning of the circuitry that makes the generators talk to each other."

The house itself presents its own obstacles. More a bunker than an island estate, its basement is consumed by four half-million-pound concrete pads that once secured the radio tower. To install the generators, Mastry completely disassembled them to fit through holes cut in the floor, then reassembled and installed them within the sparse basement area.

Project manager Harry Hunt of Marine-Solutions, a Glen Cove, New York-based boatyard, said the renovation work at Columbia Island "is like working on a boat that doesn't move. This is a very small, unprotected island. Everything needs to be watertight and stand up to the elements. It demands the use of the best available products."

Water is provided by a Village Marine reverse osmosis sea water desalinator. Waterproof marine bulkhead doors are used throughout the house, along with hurricane-proof windows and roll-down exterior shutters. The house sits 2' below the water table, so two 10,000 gph sump pumps stand ready in the basement. Sutton is creating a documentary of the resurrection of Columbia Island, incorporating its unique history.

Mastry Engine Center, celebrating its 50th anniversary, specializes in marine and industrial engines for OEM and repower use, MasPower diesel generators, and industrial equipment.

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