



## Welcome to HCMA's New Home

June 1 was the grand opening of the new headquarters of Hitachi Construction Machinery Loaders America Inc. (HCMA) in Newnan, Georgia, a \$4 million facility built for growth and success.

The \$4 million investment in Newnan includes nearly 21,000 square feet of corporate and administration offices and training facilities. Currently being built on site is a 21,421 square-foot parts and components storage building. HCMA anticipates tripling their market share in wheel loaders in the next three to five

years, and the new complex is scaled to support that growth. An enthusiastic crowd was on hand for the grand opening, including Mr. Kotaro Hirano, president, HCM Japan; Mr. Masaaki Hirose, president, HCMA; David Agan, vice president, corporate; and Mr. John Michalewicz, HCMA senior manager, manufacturing. Nearly 140 employees of HCM were also there, including four of the company's longest-serving workers: Ray Guerra and Sue Smith from the Kennesaw headquarters of HCMA and Claude Smith and Jami Wall from the Newnan facility. Mr. Al Smith, chairman of the Coweta County Commission, was among local representatives at the event.

The road to Newnan has been a long one. The roots of Hitachi go back more than a century to an equipment repair shop at the Kuhara Mining Company in Hitachi City, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan. Hitachi Construction Machinery (HCM) emerged as a subsidiary of Hitachi Ltd. in 1970. HCM entered the North America market in the early 1980s with a line of excavators.

The first wheel loader to bear the Hitachi name was the LX70, introduced in 1988. In the mid-



1990s, HCM acquired the TCM loader line to expand the company's offerings. In 2010 HCM entered a joint venture with Kawasaki Heavy Industries to develop a line of wheel loaders global in scope. In 2016 HCM bought all stock in KCM Corporation, the division of Kawasaki Heavy Industries that built wheel loaders, to create KCMA. Finally, in 2018, HCM transitioned KCMA Corporation to Hitachi Construction Machinery Loaders America Inc. (HCMA). The corporate facilities in Newnan are part of that transition.

The grand opening proceedings incorporated elements of the cultures of both Japan and the Southeast. A cherry tree was planted as part of a Sakura ceremony conducted by Mr. Hirano. A barrel of sake was broken open by Mr. Hirano and Mr. Michalewicz as part of a Kagami-biraki ceremony. Lunch was a traditional Southern-style bar-b-que.

## Why Newnan?

The Southeast region of the United States has attracted large amounts of manufacturing in recent decades. BMW, Honda, Hyundai, Kia, Mercedes-Benz, Nissan, Toyota, Volkswagen and Volvo all have automotive plants in the Southeast. Hino builds Class 6 and 7 medium-duty trucks at two. The state of Georgia is the second-most populous in the Southeast and home to a highly-skilled workforce. Among key employers in the state are airplane manufacturer Gulfstream Aerospace, security and aerospace firm Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, flooring producer Shaw Industries, and Georgia-Pacific, maker of paper, packaging and building materials.

The Southeast in general and Georgia in particular are popular with manufacturers. But why Newnan, specifically? Many factors entered into the decision. But, like the melding of cultures involved in the grand opening, culture is important to Hitachi and all its divisions, and culture may have been the strongest appeal of Newnan.

## Sneak peek

Before the grand opening of the headquarters on June 1, the first four HCMA models to arrive in the United States were introduced to 33 dealers from throughout the U.S. and Canada at a National Dealer Meeting on May 6-9, 2018. Those four models are the ZW120-6, ZW140-6, ZW150-6 and ZW250-6.

Dubbed the "Premiere at Lanier," the event was held at Lake Lanier Islands, Georgia, about 30 miles northeast of Atlanta. Hitachi Construction Machinery representatives Mr. Yasushi Ochiai, Mr. Kenny Fujisawa and Mr. Kazuyoshi Shukuzawa joined dealers for model introduction and socializing. A reception and dinner were followed by a video presentation and a fireworks display themed "[Hitachi — Coming to America.](#)"

Mr. Ochiai gave a presentation on the Hitachi culture and plans for the Hitachi Construction Machinery Group. Two long-term HCMA employees were presented with plaques commemorating their retirement. Gary Bell served for more than 36 years as vice president and general manager. Wayne Powell retired as senior manager, product support after over



31 years in various product support and training positions. Top Dealer awards were also presented during the event.

The final day included roundtable discussions with HCMA department teams as well as team building and social activities. For the Motor Boat Poker Run, participants had to follow Hitachi-themed clues to navigate stops around the Lake Lanier Islands, Georgia venue. The event was in support of Eagle Ranch, a nonprofit organization that assists children in the community.



Located just 15 miles from Lake Lanier Islands, Eagle Ranch is a 310-acre facility draped over the Chestnut Mountains. By helping with every aspect of a child's life — spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social and physical — Eagle Ranch seeks to help children and families dealing with crises. The community includes homes, recreational facilities and a SACS-accredited school (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). Residents include boys and girls; families are actively involved during their children's stay. Support of Eagle Ranch was a good fit for HCMA, as a core principle of Hitachi is to give back and support communities.

Speaking at the dealer meeting, Al Quinn, vice president of operations, HCMA, said dealer support for the new brand has been excellent. "Together we are ready to make a significant impact to the wheel loader market in North America in 2018. Hitachi is recognized as a leading global construction brand with a long history of success and well-designed plans for significant growth. It's a very exciting time."

Growth will include not only sales of new equipment, but expansion in the value chain of service, parts and remanufacturing plus a wide range of services and programs, including extensive customer and dealer training programs. (See "The Hitachi Spirit" on page 3 in this issue.)

Essential to that growth will be the HCMA headquarters in Newnan, Georgia, where technology and culture can combine to create superior products. ■