



July 31, 2018 -- Seaton Yachts and Nicholson Yachts have formed a strategic limited partnership, merging decades of expertise in yacht brokerage, refit and project management with years of outstanding leadership in luxury crewed charter fleet management as well as purchase and sale of yachts for charter.

The two companies will continue to operate globally from bases in Newport, Rhode Island. A branch office of Nicholson in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, will serve both Seaton and Nicholson for sales, refit, project management, and charter queries. The Nicholson Southeast U.S. satellite office will bolster both companies' ability to better serve clients in Charleston, South Carolina, as well as in Savannah, Georgia.

The alliance means the two companies can make it as seamless as possible for clients to enjoy their yachts, whether they use them privately or for charter. The partners' combined portfolio of services includes yacht brokerage, refit and project management, crewed charter fleet management, and purchase and sale of yachts for charter.

"This union of two marine industry leaders is a boon to clients who will have a trusted partner to assist with all phases of yacht ownership," said John Clayman, Seaton president.

Karen Kelly Shea, president of Nicholson Yachts — the company credited with founding the concept of yacht charter — said the partnership will bolster an already strong and loyal base. "For decades we've treated our customers like family, whether they are yacht owners, buyers, or vacation sailors, and this will allow us to serve them so much better. I'm excited about the next phase of our company's growth with John Clayman and Seaton at our side."

Kelly Shea is one of the most highly respected and reputable leaders in the charter brokerage industry. Her devotion to all things yachting is personal, originating in the 1980s when she first sailed the Caribbean. As a charter consultant, she has traveled the world to gain an intimate knowledge of what clients seek and what captains and crew need to do to keep them happy.

Today her company represents a fleet of yachts for sale and charter and a database of thousands of satisfied yacht owners, captains, crew, and charter consultants. Kelly Shea is also a member of the board of directors of the Oliver Hazard Perry Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association, the International Yacht Brokers Association, the Charter Yacht Brokers Association, the Florida Yacht Brokers Association, and the Yacht Brokers Association of America.

After graduating from Dartmouth College, where he was a member of a National Intercollegiate Sailing Championship team, Clayman studied naval architecture and marine engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. During this period, he also learned hands-on how to build and repair a variety of yachts. When a death in his family required him to jump into a family business, he set aside his ambitions for the next 16 years to manage the manufacturing firm with 300 employees and sales in 46 countries. He managed time to cruise and race extensively aboard his 1937 classic 57-foot sloop built in the United Kingdom and to acquire an interest in a full-service yacht yard, which he still owns today.

In 1996, Clayman returned to his roots in the boating industry, rejoining the legendary Ted Hood at Little Harbor first in the design office and eventually as general manager. As the East Coast distributor for Selene Ocean Trawlers, he was instrumental in introducing and refining these displacement powerboats. In 2005, Clayman teamed with marine industry veterans Stephen R. Seaton and L.E. "Nick" Nicholson to form Seaton Yachts to specialize in the design, construction and sales of new and brokerage seagoing sail and motor yachts.

Clayman is a veteran cruiser under both sail and power with countless sea miles. He is a licensed employing Florida Yacht Broker, a member of the International Yacht Brokers Association, a YBAA certified professional yacht broker, past board member of the United States Superyacht Association and is a longtime member of the New York Yacht Club. He has a nearly encyclopedic knowledge of most of the high quality seagoing sailing and power yachts worldwide and he prides himself on providing Seaton Yachts clients with unsurpassed service.

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