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Readers Letters



Dear Sir,

Although Health & Safety advises against lifting people for entertainment value, the Olympic opening ceremony clearly used some amazing aerial cable lifting systems rigged to lift both props and people, and what an amazing show was put on. Maybe a future issue of Cranes & Access could showcase the amazing technology used to lift and rig the people and props of the Olympic ceremony, focussing equally on the safety aspects as well as the technical ones - just a thought, but if anyone could do the story justice, it's your team!

Yours truly,
Graeme Davison

We thought that this was an excellent idea and contacted the press office at London 2012 and got an almost immediate and positive response, but referring us to Locog the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games. However so far we have not even had an acknowledgement of the request. We will keep trying and give them the benefit of the doubt that the games remain the main focus at the time of going to press.
Ed

Dear Leigh,

I hope you are well. I read the recent boom truck article regarding bolt failure. I think there is another issue that was not addressed. I have seen most failures such as this caused by wearing of the assembly bolts caused by failure of the owner to maintain proper tightness and monitoring of the wearing. As the truck frame flexes (not the crane) it can cause hinning or slacking of the bolts. Then, as there is too much movement the nut is ripped from the bolt or the bolt snaps. These bolts require regular inspections per OEM guidelines and

This concerns a law suit launched by the Workers Compensation Board of British Columbia against Elliott Equipment of Omaha, Nebraska for negligence following a fatal accident in 2010 in which the crane/boom truck that it had built broke free from its sub frame after the connecting bolts failed. The suit appears to ignore the fact that failures such as this are most frequently caused by poor maintenance rather than design or material failures.

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Yours Frank,
Frank G. Bardono
Vice President, Managing Director
Terex Global Cranes Sales

Tom Scott 1944 - 2012

Dear Editor,

The news came as a shock when I read your article regarding the premature death of Tom Scott - Vertikal.Net August 18th.

I came across Tom and his brother Tim in September 1981 when they acquired Greenham Plant Hire from the Taylor Woodrow Group. I was with the Greenham Fork Lift division at that time. The Scott family only wanted the cranes and access equipment so all other plant got sold off. GFL was sold off to ISIS Plant in January 1982.

Scott Greenham relocated the head office to Alfreton, Derbyshire where they had more room and facilities including a paint shop. I eventually ended up back working with Tom at Scott Greenham when they expanded the Aerial Platform business into the Shepherds Bush depot, London then managed by Rab Paterson, sharing the premises with the crane division.

Tom and Tim were good business guys and built the business buying up young, used equipment cranes & access and renting it out at good rates. Tom also predicted that sometime in the distant future the aerial platform market would get cut throat and users would want low level equipment for less rent and started to build cheap scissor lifts, these were basic, simple and did the job, production stopped when the business was sold in 1987.

Acquisitions of some alternative businesses (Deborah Services and Farmer Cabins amongst others) saw the SG Group grow rapidly until it was sold to BET. I have one or two old bits of marketing material in the loft if they are of interest.

Best regards
Roger Wickens

Dear Sir,

I was sad to hear the news of Tom Scott passing away, another great character of the crane industry like Alf Sparrow. I had the pleasure of meeting Tom when I was 21 years old and he and Tim had just introduced the Gottwald 140 tonne telescopic to the UK crane Market

It was being shown to the public on a job in Nottingham on a Sunday and I went to see it. I also witnessed the buying of the mighty Gottwald's by Sparrows, Hewden Stuart and Scott's between 1979 and 1981 when the boom in refinery capacity was at its peak.

Scott's were very knowledgeable and entrepreneurial, prior to their sale to BET they tried taking over Grayston White a BET company

I have fond memories of those days, another character has gone

My condolences to the family
Bev Bentley



Tom Scott

Bert Richardson 1923 – 2012

Dick Lloyd has alerted us to the passing of Bert Richardson a much respected crane and excavator engineer.

Dear Leigh,

I have just received the sad news that Bert Richardson, a highly acclaimed crane engineer has died in Australia aged 90.

Bert joined Priestman in 1940 at the age of 16, as an apprentice and rose rapidly through the ranks becoming chief excavator designer in 1957, following a four year sojourn in the USA where the company posted him to study American excavator design.

He was responsible for the innovative design of the famous Priestman Lion Excavator/Crane, probably the most sophisticated mechanical machine ever produced, with its totally enclosed gearing and pumped lubrication system. It is a tribute to Bert that there are so many Priestman Lion cranes still in operation today with small users.

Bert was chief engineer when I joined Priestman from Hymac to take over the running of export sales.

Hymac suborned him to join them in 1972,

and I desperately tried to stop him from leaving, knowing his value and, with hindsight, I am still convinced that I was right, as we needed his expertise as we moved

from the mechanical into the hydraulic era. I still believe that the Priestman Mustang 120, the design of which Bert was also responsible, was the most solidly constructed, and, in its final Mark III version, the most reliable fully British designed hydraulic excavator ever produced.

When IBH (the Horst Dieter Esch conglomerate) took over Hymac from Powell Duffryn, Bert decided to leave Hymac after only seven years, and joined Coles Cranes in Sunderland, working under Bob Lester as engineering services manager until Bob retired. He ended his career as engineering director in Gateshead for a long established mining equipment manufacturer for three years, and did a couple of years of independent consultancy work until he finally retired in 1988, joining his daughters in Australia.

Bert was a man of enthusiasm, knowledge and great experience, widely known and respected throughout the construction equipment industry. I visited him in 2003, and Bill Bromwich, the erst-



Dick Lloyd (L) with Bert Richardson and his wife Frances - Sydney 2003

while publicity manager of Priestman who is much involved in compiling a history of the company, kept closely in touch with him also and has been of invaluable assistance to me in writing this tribute to a warm-hearted and much loved old colleague.

Best regards,

Dick Lloyd

Paul Robeys 1948 - 2012

Dear Leigh,

Our dad, Paul Robeys passed away peacefully this Saturday, 21/07/2012, after entering a coma last week, after 2.5 years of battle against cancer following a stroke, he was 63.

He was very brave and worked until the end.

The funeral was yesterday 28/07/2012 at Enghien.

He began in the access business in 1976 when he joined Instant Vectur Loc-Echaf in Brussels, and also later in Switzerland. In 1986 he created Robeys-Huet SA, with by 2012, 20 people employed.

The family and all those at Robeys-Huet wishes to thank all the friends and colleagues in the industry for their overwhelming support and for participating in the recent funeral. He leaves behind his wife Janine and children Philippe, Olivier, Caroline and Barbara.

A letter can be sent to paul@robeys.be

Thank you for your condolences.

PS sorry for my English

Phillipe Robeys



Paul Robeys

Who trained him then?

I was amazed to see the latest Cranes & Access front cover - July 2012 - it took me quite a while to work out what was going on and how they managed to carry out such an intricate lift. On the one hand I thought it ought to be featuring in the Who Trained him then section.

But you have to take your hat off to the guys at Liebherr only they could have pulled off such a risky coup.

but I have to think that a gust of wind could have had the lot over!

Keep up the good work,

John Holman

Callington



Good Morning Gentlemen,

As I have first-hand experience of a Crane Induced Fatality and of its appalling effects on the Victims Widow, his Two sons and Three Daughters for the next Ten (10) years. Then it behoves me to Speak-up for all those Dead Men who went to work on their feet, but were carried home on their backs, killed by Cranes during a Lifting Operation of some type, as was my Father in Law David Stanford (d) on Friday Morning the 15th January 1988.

HM Parliament enrolled The Health and Safety at Work Act in 1974, yet in the intervening 38 years approximately 6,500 men and women have been killed in the UK workplace, with HSE recent figures for 2011 confirming yet another 173 killed at work. Therefore given that Parliament's motivation was that we should be protected from the risk of Fatal or Personal Injury at work, may I ask the following questions....

1. Do you think it is reasonable that Men should get killed at Work ?
2. Do you think it is reasonable that Men should suffer disabling injuries at Work ?
3. Do you think that a Man's Life is worth only £32,000? (circa \$48,000 US dollars)
4. Do you think a Dead Man's Widow should be made to wait 10 years for settlement of his claim?
5. Do you think that a full 2 cubic metre loaded Concrete Skip, should be lowered in Free Fall by a large Crawler Crane? (That is, No Power Lowering)

If your answers are No, No, No, No and No, then we are all singing from the same hymn sheet. Therefore given that we agree on the desired objective of driving-up crane Safety Standards, the only question is how do we achieve it. The answer may I suggest can be found in the English Common Law obligation to follow 'Safe Systems of Work' recorded at length in the Judgment of Lord Wright in the fatal injury Appeal case reported as:- Wilson's & Clyde Coal Co Ltd . v. English [1937] 3 All ER 628. Where the learned Judge said: "The Employers obligation is threefold, to Provide and Maintain Proper Plant, Competent Men and adequate material with a proper system (of work) with effective supervision. I think the whole course of authority consistently recognises a Duty (of Care to the Employee) which rests on (All UK) Employers and is personal to the Employer to take reasonable care for the safety of his workmen." Therefore given that this is the Common Law obligation that we are required to uphold, how can we achieve it?

The answer can be found in HSE ' Hierarchy of Controls' following the principle known as ERIC, which stands for ' Eliminate, Reduce, Isolate, Control'. However as another Contributor said earlier "But we are surrounded by Hazards 24/7". Yes we are, however not all Hazards are equal to each other, neither in the Risk arising, nor the Probability of the event occurring, nor in the Severity of its Effects. Therefore given that the original question asked was "Can I hoist a Below the Hook Device (Like a Spreader or a Lifting Frame) over the heads of persons working below". It follows that the correct answer must be...

6. No, you should Eliminate completely lifting any Load or Hook over the heads of Men working below.

7. If not, then try to Reduce the Risk arising by moving some or all of the Men below the hook to one side.

7. If not possible, then try to Isolate the Act by Slewing the Crane the other way, with a Cordoned-off area in the cranes slew circle.

8. If not possible, then try to Control the risk by reducing the frequency of lifting a Below the hook device over heads of (Less) men.

For as our Linked-In Colleague David Phillips said so eloquently recently, " We must recognise (all of) the hazards in the camouflage of complex environments" and take all necessary steps to minimise the effects of these, starting with Risk Assessment & Method Statements, continuing with on-going evaluation of all hazards arising, including but not limited to Wind speeds & Gusts, the Size, Shape and Drag-Coefficient of the Load(s) being lifted and the exponential effect of the Dynamic loading applied by the Wind on Longer and Longer Booms, extended by Fly or Luffing jibs.

Because if we don't Drive-Up Crane Safety Standards in the Construction Industry, then who will?

Kind Regards

Mike Ponsonby

This letter was sent to a number of people by Mr Ponsonby who is doing all he can to improve crane safety. Ed

Thanks!

Just a quick thank you for the hard hitting article in the latest magazine - Cranes & Access July 2012 - Worth the Risk on page 17. The timing could not have been more perfect we were in the middle of organising our usual summer refit, clean up and major maintenance work and struggling to get approval to hire extra kit for the work at height jobs – it's the same every year, well at least the past three years we usually get by with our own ladders and the occasional use of the forklifts which are unusually stood due to the shutdown. This year I have approval to organise the proper kit for the job and I put it down to having copied the powers that be with your article. Hopefully it will all work out so well that the days of manage and get by are behind us. More articles like this would be helpful to those of us at the cliff face.

WR

We naturally wrote back and asked if we might publish this letter but have not had any reply as of going to press. As a result we are withholding the readers name and location just in case.