



Forty years a rebel

Dick Lloyd joined Coles Cranes way back in 1957 when it was a major force. Arnold Hallsworth was then managing director and James Steel had recently taken over at the Steel group (Coles' parent company) following the premature death of his brother Eric.

The Coles diesel electric era was at its peak and mild-steel lattice booms were the order of the day. The hydraulic telescopic crane was still a novelty and not considered a commercial proposition.

The young Lloyd, fresh from Oxford, entered an industry that was on the verge of a golden era of growth and change as post war rebuilding really began to gather steam. After moving to export sales, Dick's career took him from Coles, to Hymac, to Priestman, to Sennebogen and finally into his own business, Grabcranex, which became the Grove, Manitou and Sennebogen dealer in Poland.

To say that Dick had a colourful career is to paint a dull picture of his business life. Always passionate, always rebellious, always highly opinionated, his memoirs are written from the heart. He has views on everything and everyone and unashamedly gives them, in this detailed account of his life as a crane and excavator salesman.

He wastes no time on sugar coating his views; if he thought a particular person

was incompetent, unpleasant or crooked he just comes out and says so. One finds oneself taking his side and warming to him, only to switch views a few pages later. At times he comes across as egotistical and rebellious. He must have been an awkward person to manage during certain periods of his working life. The expression "loose cannon" comes to mind. However, at all times it's clear that Dick cared passionately for his customers and the reputation of the company he was representing. He was a consummate professional and mastered trading in the Comecon region.

One feels for his long-suffering wife, Audrey, who in the early days was stranded at home with three young children while Dick disappeared on business trips, often for months at a time.

Anyone who has been involved in selling cranes or plant will love this book. Veterans of the industry will recognise many of the characters that Lloyd comments upon in his inimitable way. And while one or two of his facts and assumptions may not be totally accurate, it's a great read. It's also stacked full of photographs and printed on high-quality paper.

This is a book not to be missed.

40 Years a Salesman is published by Dick Lloyd and priced at £20

Telephone 01548 531068 to order.

Ladder guides

With the advent of the Work At Height Regulations earlier this year, there has been much talk about the future of ladders as a form of safe access to work at height. Employers have been so concerned about the use of ladders that many have virtually banned their use.

In the past few months a number of new guides have appeared that aim to help clarify the situation and provide clear details on the safe use of ladders, along with when and where they are an appropriate form of access. We review two of them below.

The BLMA Leaning Ladder and Stepladder users guide

The first is a booklet from the British ladder manufacturers association, The BLMA Leaning Ladder & Stepladder Users Guide. The book is an excellent guide to the safe use of ladders, with clear diagrams, charts and straightforward text on when, where and how to use various ladders. It shows very simply how to carry out a risk assessment, how to set up a ladder properly and use it safely, how to store and inspect and when not to use ladders.



The BLMA guide ladder users guide

It is a first class common sense guide to the subject and very useful handbook for anyone using ladders, no matter how experienced they might be.

The guide is available from the BMLA, box 183, Leeds, LS11 1AG for £5.

The Safe use of Ladders and Stepladders

This guide, published by the HSE, covers much of the same ground as the BLMA, but is not as comprehensive, however it does include some excellent coloured illustrations that clearly demonstrate ladder do's and don'ts. It is intended as a guide to employers

on the safe use of ladders. The guide has been published along with a "Toolbox talk" on ladder safety, complete with anecdotes, illustrations, facts and everything you need to put on a very comprehensive presentation, or talk, to employees on the safe use of ladders. It is very well done and should prove a useful tool for those employers who need to use ladders in their business.



The HSE employers guide to ladder use.

To go along with the two HSE publications is a pocket, or wallet, guide Top tips for ladder and stepladder safety.

The HSE publications can be downloaded from the HSE website, or ordered from HSE books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA.

In summary, given all the fuss about the use of ladders, anyone sitting down with the above publications for a couple of hours will come away with a very good grounding on what the new rules say and allow, how to carry out a risk assessment, and how to generally use ladders safely.

Illustrations in the HSE guide are excellent

