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– Denis Ashworth

A review by Chris Wraith, IPAF technical officer

Denis Ashworth has produced a personal and enlightening insight into the history of the powered access industry and specifically Simon Access. Engineering and design can be a dry old subject, best left to the "experts", but Denis has managed to bring the subject to life in an easy-to-read book.

Short entertaining chapters not only track his career path from his school days through his apprenticeship and development within the Simon Empire to his retirement and beyond, but also give an insight into the growth of the powered access industry. His conversational manner interspersed with personal comments and humour, along with the well-chosen selection of interesting and relevant photographs, make the technical details easy to comprehend.

From his early days of designing and costing his own model aeroplanes, it was obvious that Dennis had an inquisitive and practical mind. This did not go unnoticed by his father, who helped nurture the "engineering bug" when giving him a tour of the Henry Simon Engineering works, which

led to a student apprenticeship with the Renold and Coventry Chain Company in 1939 at the age of 16. The training and education that Denis gained in the following 11 years proved invaluable experience (something today's post-graduates do not get the benefit of) and were to serve him well when he joined Simon Engineering as a management trainee.

From the first encounter between Henry Simon's grandson and a mechanical device to help pick apples in Canada through to the development of SS600 Super Snorkel, this book highlights the trials and tribulations of powered access design and development within the Simon organisation. It is interesting to learn of the many different design variations Simon developed for numerous markets worldwide, some more financially



viable than others, many at the whim of the sales team who just wanted something they did not have. But it was reassuring to know Denis always had safety and an in-built desire to improve the powered access industry at the heart of his work.

This was something he continued after his retirement with his tireless committee work for IPAF and involvement in developing the European design standard EN 280. As the recently appointed IPAF technical officer, I can understand Denis's frustration at the speed and efficiency of European committee work and find it amazing that nearly 10 years on, the industry is still debating the same issues as we attempt to update EN280!

The whole book, which starts with

a preface by IPAF, is a fascinating read. It helped fill in some of the gaps in my 20 years of powered access experience, yet I feel it would be just as interesting to someone new to the industry seeking some background information.

It is the knowledge, experience and dedication of pioneers such as Denis that have made the powered access industry the success it is today and I trust that more will follow where he has shown the way. After all, "People have memories; businesses do not!"

Going Up in the World is published by The Vertikal Press and is available by mail order for £19.50 plus postage and packing. Use the form in this magazine or email: info@vertikal.net

Walking with Giants

While not directly related to cranes, we received a copy of Walking with Giants to review and spotting that it was more of an earthmoving book it sat in the office for a few weeks without being opened. Then on a quiet day after the last issue had just been published one of us opened it ...

just for a quick look and found it to be far more interesting than expected and felt that it would be of interest to many of our more enthusiastic readers.

The book is written by Steven Vale who writes for Earthmovers magazine and is as much of a big equipment enthusiast as you will find. This book is like a tour of big mining shovels and excavators through 14

European countries with a knowledge of specific machines, both historic and new that highlights his fascination and enthusiasm for his subject. What is likely to make this a book of interest to our readers though is the large number of excellent photographs with full captions and information and some of the interesting insights into how the machines are operated and kept running. The book includes a look at some of the oldest machines at work and goes right up to the

present with a look at what Bucyrus mining shovels might look like in Caterpillar livery. Vale has taken a great deal

of time over this book working on it for more than seven years, visiting most of the locations and gaining an unparalleled insight into each machines working life, current condition and the mine's future equipment plans. This is a book that works very much on two levels, it is both a great read and/or a coffee table book to dip in and dip out of.

As we said in our introduction this is not a crane or access related book, but it still contains many fascinating bits of information and insights into some fantastic machines, from the massive bucket wheels of Germany to the last two Marion walking draglines left in European mines.

Walking with Giants is published by Old Pond Publishing and can be purchased from good bookshops for 29.95 or online with Amazon or other book specialists from around £18.



Palfinger PK100002

An increasing number of truck models are appearing with knuckle-boom loading cranes and the largest modelled so far is the 100 tonne/metre Palfinger PK100002. Conrad has produced this version mounted on a MAN TGS four-axle chassis. It is decorated in the colours of Wiesbauer, the German crane hire company and is modelled after a real truck in the Wiesbauer transport fleet.

The chassis is very detailed with the transmission and suspension modelled in plastic, but the main structure is metal, including the fuel tank and rear bumper. The two front axles have linked steering and can achieve a moderate amount of movement, the rear axle can also steer. The wheel hubs look particularly crisp and the tyres have a good tread pattern.

The MAN cab looks great because the Wiesbauer livery is striking and the detailing is very good, with colour-coded door mirrors and very sharp looking graphics. It tilts forward for service access and a plastic engine is revealed underneath. At the rear of the model there is a removable metal ballast box which can be used to carry loads, and when the box is removed it reveals a fifth wheel to enable a trailer to be connected.

The model has a number of outriggers to maximise stability and provide 360 degree lift duties on the Palfinger. At the front of the cab there are small twin front jacks which can be lowered, while at the

rear there are two stage plastic beams which have a long reach but could do with being more rigid. Outriggers are also located on each side of the crane, in the centre of the truck, and these pull out from the transport position and jack cylinders rotate downwards.

The knuckle-boom portion of the crane looks the part and has some good graphics and equipment boxes around the base. The bottom boom sections are metal and the hydraulic lift cylinders are stiff enough to enable the boom to be posed in any position without slipping down. The eight telescopic sections are plastic and similarly they have some friction between them to hold set poses. Each telescopic section has its own cylinder and piston although there are no hydraulic hoses modelled.

A fixed hook can be positioned at two points on the boom and there is also the option to use a working winch which has enough friction to hold a load on the hook. With the boom fully extended an impressive model results and it can reach a height of 480mm.



Cab decoration is excellent



Stabilisers at the front



Outriggers out and the crane working



The MAN TGS with Palfinger



The Palfinger reaches an impressive height

However although the extended boom can support its own weight it would not support much load without the telescopic sections slipping.

The strength of this model is that it looks great with fine detailing and the large Palfinger is impressive. It is collectible and reasonable value at around £130.

To read the full review of this model visit www.cranesetc.co.uk

Cranes Etc Model Rating

Packaging (max 10)	7
Detail (max 30)	24
Features (max 20)	18
Quality (max 25)	20
Price (max 15)	11
Overall (max 100)	80%

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GOING UP IN THE WORLD

A history of Simon Engineering, the development of the powered access industry and a lifetime as an engineer, by Denis Ashworth

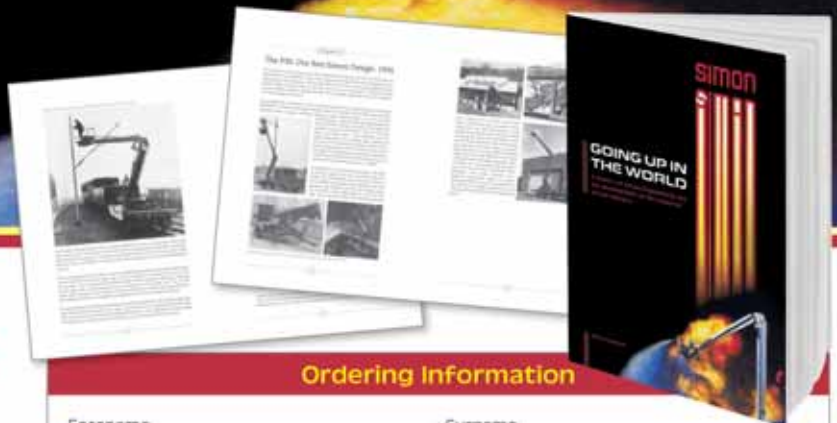
Ashworth was a keen engineer and from an early age found himself in at the very start of the modern powered access industry.

His book is an unusual combination of autobiography and history of Simon Engineering Dudley, a pioneer of the powered access industry and at one time, the world's largest manufacturer of aerial lifts.

The coffee table sized book, is highly readable and includes around 150 photographs and drawings from the very beginning of the industry. It is a 'must read' for anyone who is interested in powered access, the hydraulic equipment industry or in comparing modern day engineering challenges with those of an entirely different era.

The book is available direct from the publishers at £19.50, plus £4.50 postage and packing.

- Continental Europe €23 plus €6.50 postage & packing
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