

Readers Letters



Anti-entrapment devices

Good morning Leigh

Well done on starting a discussion that is sorely needed. I write I must stress as Austin Baker and not as IPAF or AFI-Uplift limited. Any work that is done to promote safety in our industry has to be applauded. Every injury received is one injury to many and the work being undertaken by the Manufacturers, Hirers and Contractors must be applauded.

For this concerted effort to work however the industry needs several factors to be totally aligned.

- We must all have the same aim
- We must all provide accurate information
- We must ensure that everyone is fully aware of the consequences of our actions
- We must all understand what it is we are discussing.

I am not trying to be simplistic. Mention has been made frequently of fatalities using MEWP's. Let us all be clear that a properly used MEWP by properly trained operators managed by properly trained managers under the control of properly run sites would reduce accidents without doubt.

The sad fact is however that often the industry becomes emotive over one incident, ignoring the thousands of man hours of operation that go by without a hitch. Once however the emotion starts to run we have, as in this case, ended up with emotion that is set to overrun common sense.

I have again recently seen reference to 'involuntary operation of controls' whilst the evidence of this being the cause of accidents is wrong. By its very action the effect of this action is actually a secondary act and not a primary function. The cause of these accidents is the fact that the operator has already been pushed onto the control surfaces following a crush type incident.

What we are all trying to do is protect operators from being

crushed in a MEWP. It is admirable that different engineering solutions are being sought by so many in order to protect operators. These must take their place along with better education and better and improved site conditions.

We do though need to reign in emotion and take a huge dose of common sense. I agree whole heartedly with Ray that IPAF along with the controlling government authority (HSE in the UK but others worldwide) need to grab hold and ensure that all of the facts are presented to all of the interested parties so that everyone be they contractors or hire companies, manufacturers be they large organisations or one man bands and as important health and safety officials all have the opportunity to make informed decisions and very importantly be allowed to trade in a free market whilst providing the very best that our industry can offer to their customers and suppliers alike.

So IPAF, what has been achieved in the past is commendable, but I am afraid that we have to live in the present and plan for the future. If this and challenges like this are not grasped and controlled with clear decisive leadership I fear that for some of our members, there might not be a future. We are looking to you to take this opportunity to show the membership exactly what IPAF is here for.

Austin Baker

This letter was one of many responding to an article we wrote concerning the issuing of notices by several major UK contractors insisting that as of January 1st latest all machines on this sites must be fitted with a specific electronic anti entrapment device. The ruling effectively bars a lot of machine types from site and creates a competitive issue as only one rental company has access to the stated type.

Ed

We now have approval to publish the following letter sent to ALLMI from the UKCG group of major contractors concerning recognition of the ALLMI training scheme.

ALLMI training scheme

Dear Mr Wakefield

ALLMI Lorry-Loader Scheme

Further to our recent meeting and correspondence, and the meeting of the UKCG health and safety sub-group on 20th September, I confirm recognition of the scheme as follows.

"The UKCG is pleased to include the ALLMI Lorry Loader Training Scheme as a "recognised scheme" under its "Accepted Record Schemes".

The UKCG recognise that the ALLMI scheme is used across the UK by a wide range of suppliers and contractors, providing a defined level of training for those using lorry loaders on UKCG sites."

Yours Sincerely

David Lambert

Head of Health and Safety UK Contractors Group

Tom Wakefield

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The Association of Lorry Loader Manufacturers & Importers (ALLMI)

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8th October 2012

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Sir Matthew Goodwin

Sir Matthew Goodwin CBE CA 12/6/1929 - 9/10/2012

Following our coverage of Sir Matthew Goodwin's passing in the October issue of Cranes & Access we received the following letter of appreciation from his long term partner in Hewden Stuart - Ronnie Stuart

An appreciation by Ronnie Stuart

Matthew Goodwin first came to the attention of the business community as a man to watch in 1954, just after completing his National Service with the RAF, when he took a part-time evening job delivering elective lectures to Glasgow chartered accountant apprentices. Despite knowing at the outset no more about the specialist subject than any other newly qualified CA, such was his meticulous preparation, and charismatic lecturing style, that after a year or two attendances had built up from a mere handful to over 150 students, cramming themselves into the biggest lecture theatre the Institute could hire.

Being paid 'per capita' the extra money was very useful for an impecunious young man starting a family but, more importantly, through these lectures the name Matthew Goodwin became well known and highly respected by a whole generation of Glasgow chartered accountants.

In 1956 Matthew was head-hunted back into the profession from his mundane job in shipping, and quickly earned a junior partnership with Davidson, Downie & McGown. Contemporaries speak with awe of his immense powers of concentration, and ability to grasp and analyse complex situations, talents he deployed with great success as a professional accountant.

At the same time, he displayed a huge zest for life, an ebullient sense of humour – albeit somewhat quirky at times! – and had started to build a wide circle of friends, both personal and business (not that Matthew made any real distinction) which grew throughout his life, and with whom he was constantly in touch.

The story of his early involvement in earthmoving plant hire - the formation of Hewden in 1962 with client friends, the recruitment of Frank Jamieson to manage the business and the ensuing years of successful growth – has been told and retold many times

However, by 1968 take-over predators were already hovering, and Matthew had the insight to realise that major decisions were going to be needed to secure the best long-term interests of the shareholders and employees.

At the same time, Ronnie Stuart's Crane Hire business, established in Cambuslang in 1961, was getting into a similar position. The two companies were already on friendly terms, co-operating rather than competing, and Matthew suggested a meeting. He laid the two balance sheets side-by-side on the table and instantly recognised the immense synergy which would result from putting them together.

There and then he proposed in complete detail a scenario for a merger, to be closely followed by a public flotation. Matthew's visionary plan was promptly agreed upon, and immediately put into action. By October 1968 Hewden-Stuart Plc had come into being, and Matthew had resigned his CA practice to join the new Company as Finance Director.

Over the ensuing decades, this genius for imaginative corporate architecture was deployed time and time again as take-over followed take-over, and Hewden-Stuart grew to be, by a considerable margin, the UK market leader in its field.

As the company grew, Matthew (who took over as Chairman from Frank Jamieson in 1978) never lost sight of his principles of frugality, prudence, and of the crucial need to build and foster the Company's most precious asset – people.

This is well illustrated by noting that when Matthew retired in 1995, with the group employee count around 4,000, virtually every

member of the management team from the executive Main Board downwards had come into the group originally via an acquisition, in some cases 20 or more years previously.

The Company's shareholders also enjoyed unparalleled prosperity:

£775 invested in 1000 shares at flotation would by 1995, and taking out all dividends, have grown (through scrip issues) to 20,648 shares worth £43,773, a multiple of 56. Shareholders were never asked for additional funds, and the dividend was increased in every year but one. No other London quoted shares in any sector came even remotely close to this record.

Following his retirement, Matthew entered into the final phase of his life with his customary gusto. For the first time he was able to fully enjoy his love of travel, and visited with Lady Margaret many far-flung parts of the world, much of this on safari adventures, or on small cruise ships.

He retained a few select business interests, neither personally lucrative nor prestigious, but where he thought he could do most good. His work with charities continued unabated, particularly East Park Children's Home. He followed his other leisure pursuits - a game of bridge or a day's shooting - at every opportunity: he excelled at both.

But it was in his country estate that Matthew perhaps found his greatest fulfilment outside of business. "Country Estate" is actually much too grandiose a title: there you will find no palatial mansion, no manicured lawns sweeping down to formal avenues of trees.

What you will find is a tiny cottage overlooking a magnificently wild, tree-lined lochan, nestling against a backdrop of the majestic hills of the upper Clyde Valley. This stunning vista has not arisen by chance: it has been painstakingly created and nurtured by Sir Matthew Goodwin over the last 40 years, much of it by his own hand. There is little doubt that some of his happiest times were spent there in the company of Lady Margaret, his family, and his many friends.

Perhaps he would be pleased if this were to be considered his finest monument.