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# industrial rebirth

*This Ormig 10tmE battery powered 10 tonner, working in the food industry. Is fitted with a 3 tonne hydraulic luffing jib demonstrates the replacement of a machinery part in very tight quarters.*

**In spite of all the gloom and doom about the UK losing its manufacturing base, as it becomes a service economy, the country still boasts a very significant industrial sector, ranging from steel works, currently going through "a purple patch", as one person we spoke to put it, to high tech aviation components and food production.**

**Moving across to Ireland, which in the south has not traditionally been an industrial economy, times have changed, with major inward investment in manufacturing. Particularly at the high tech end, but also into more conventional production.**

In a quick and unscientific survey we found that while a number of industries are, without doubt, suffering, a good number of companies are experiencing their best periods in years. Challenges, such as the rising price of gas, which has caused a few high volume users to cut back on production this winter, the strength of Sterling and competition from emerging markets, such as China, is making life difficult and forcing companies to continually ramp up productivity. Most would agree though that while a large number of industrial companies have changed work practices beyond all recognition, there is still plenty to go for in the never ending quest for productivity improvements.

At this stage you may well be wondering why the "state of the nation" introduction? Given the challenges that the sector faces, it is interesting to look at how they are affecting trends when it comes to lifting in and around production facilities and other industrial sites.

The aim has of course, been to try and eliminate as much manned material handling as possible, by delivering inventory directly to production lines and using methods such as air glide tables and fixtures and wire guided transport buggies.

### **The Pick and carry crane is on a comeback**

The old industrial crane, so prevalent 40 to 50 years ago...the Coles, Jones, Iron Fairy and Taylor jumbos are all long gone, although a

example we reported how Avon tyres had replaced forklifts with industrial cranes and there have been others more recently.

At least a part of the credit for the budding industrial crane resurgence must go to Hull based sales and rental company Peter Hird and sons. Having spotted the potential of the Valla pick and carry cranes, Peter Hird jnr, had the long term vision to import, stock and invest in promoting, what is in fact an old and almost forgotten concept, certainly an unfashionable one at the time. Initially looking at the industrial installation and removals market, Hird is now selling units into production applications on a regular basis.

### **95 percent are battery powered**

After several years of investment in promoting the concept of electric powered pick and carry cranes, it looks as though it is beginning to pay off for Hird with a significant increase in both sales and rental. Hird told Cranes&Access that demand for industrial cranes on a self drive rental basis has more than trebled in the past year or so. An increasing number of companies are rediscovering the benefits of having a small crane around.



*A Valla three wheeler crane is the ideal tool for installing an ejector seat at British aerospace.*

Much of the lifting within the building is now handled by the vast array of Overhead crane products, which are increasingly designed for specific tasks and automated. Meanwhile forklifts dominate the mobile in and out handling.

surprising number remain in factory back yards and in boat or scrap yards. And yet.....Just when the industrial pick and carry crane seemed destined for the scrap yard, it seems to be making something of a come back. In September for

With industrial environments ever more focussed on noise and emissions reduction, not to mention cleanliness, the electric mobile crane is an ideal solution. Hird says that 95 percent of the Valla cranes he sells are battery powered. He cites a recent delivery of a 25 tonne pick and carry model to a Johnson Matthey production plant where the operators say that the crane can run all week on a single battery charge.

While the modern pick and carry crane looks the same as it did 30 years ago, the fact is that the running gear has changed beyond all recognition, with modern electronics and smooth motor control operation, much of it transferred from the forklift industry. Price is also a factor, a small to mid

installation market, Ainscough engineering services which probably runs the largest pick and carry fleet, purchased two 10 tonne models last year for a particular application. Ormig, which is distributed in the UK by Crowland cranes, sells more diesel powered units than electric and concentrates on larger models.

Grove and Shuttlelift both produce industrial cranes in the USA, with Grove selling some Shuttlelifts under an OEM agreement. Neither has invested in promoting their pick and carry cranes in Europe, although Grove is still testing the market for its latest "Yard Boss" crane in Germany.

**Overhead technology rules**

Looking briefly at overhead cranes, the range of options has never been wider with an amazing selection of cranes that can be easily fitted into existing facilities without major structural alterations to the building. Overheads have seen even more dramatic changes in technology than the pick and carry units. With sophisticated remote controls, ultra smooth functions and more rapid speeds, aided by anti sway devices to make such speed practical.

Rapid service support is also the order of the day, with any downtime



*A 10 tonne Ormig 10tmE is used for handling part of an overhead cranes travelling equipment.*



*Grove is market testing its Yard boss models in Germany.*

sized crane can cost as little as £35,000 and replace at least one fork truck. While covering much of the in plant lifting work that in the past would have been hired in.

**Self drive hire on the rise**

In fact at a time when end users are increasingly moving to contract lift terms for crane hire, passing on a large portion of the responsibility for a lift to the crane hirer. A counter trend is emerging with industrial company's to buying their own cranes and having one or two staff trained to operate it. Hird quotes sales of larger models to a catalytic converter producer and a marble producer among his recent successes.

While Valla is certainly leading the charge in the pick and carry market, it is not alone, fellow Italian producer, Ormig has also seen its sales to the UK improve, largely to the machinery


being a disaster, for productivity. All of the major suppliers are investing in rapid intervention teams, combined with maintenance contracts and 24 hour coverage. The whole aim to ensure that plants that depend on craneage for production, suffer as near zero downtime as possible. Kone cranes reports that it is seeing an increasing demand for crane refurbishment, modernisations and overhauls. With technology having progressed so rapidly, it can pay to upgrade

even relatively modern cranes in order to help boost productivity, improve reliability and add more user friendly and efficient remote controls or automation.

As usual we always have more to say than we have space, we will therefore come back to this subject in more depth later in the year. In the meantime we have a good number of practical applications illustrating some interesting applications and developments.

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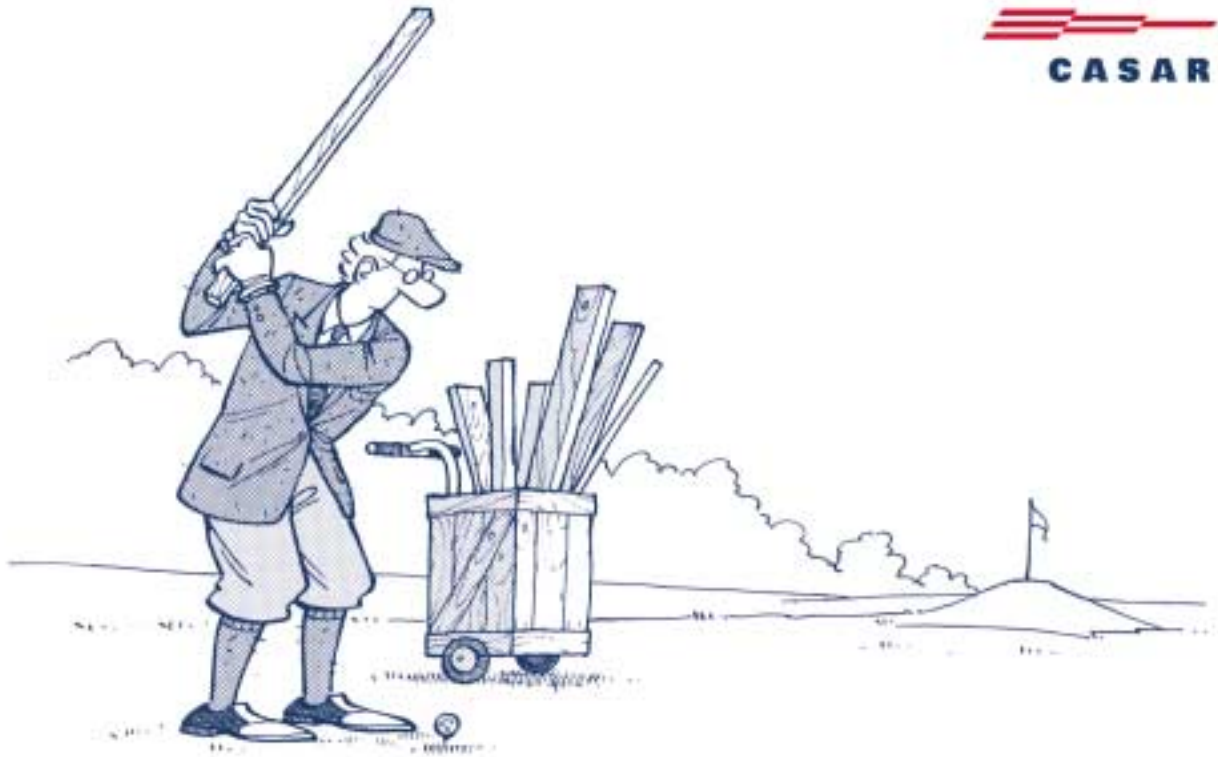
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## Kone cranes UK modernisation team upgrade older cranes



*Kone cranes modernisation workshops in East Kilbride.*

Kone cranes UK of East Kilbride says that it is finding increasing demand for its modernisation service for older overhead cranes. The company offers to add its latest technology, such as automatic operation, and anti sway devices to existing cranes, regardless of make, saving the customer the cost and disruption of a full replacement.

Kone has recently won two new contracts for its modernisation team. The first, in Ireland, worth €520,000, is for the Irish Electricity Board and involves the upgrading of two 150 tonne turbine hall cranes operating at its Great Island and Moneypoint power stations. The cranes are to be fitted with new motors along with Kone's DynAhoist and DynAC inverter variable control systems. The work is due to be carried out in March.

The second contract, worth over

£400,000, is with Onyx Waste to Energy in Hampshire, where existing Kone semi-automatic waste handling cranes from 2003 and 04 are to be converted to fully automatic operation.

Gordon Adie, managing director of Kone cranes UK said, "When we started our modernisation service some years ago, it was on the basis that we had developed a number of innovative advanced technology components which could be fitted to older cranes, thereby improving its life and performance at a fraction of the cost of a brand new crane. Since then, we have developed so many more hi-tec products, for example our recently launched DynAPilot anti-sway control, that it has become more attractive for our customers to look at modernisation of an old crane. It is a very attractive alternative to new buy."

## Chocolate removals

Peter Hird Machinery Removal Specialists has been employing a range of industrial cranes, including a Valla 180e - 18 tonne battery powered pick and carry crane to remove equipment such as this

chocolate holding tank, from Terry's Chocolate factory in York. Hird says that the crane has proved to be an ideal lifting tool, across the whole site. Particularly in the confined production areas,

thanks to its compact dimensions, manoeuvrability, non marking tyres and full pick and carry capability. Terry's is moving production of its All gold and chocolate oranges to eastern Europe. The company has been in the York premises since 1924.



## From Royal Worcester to Wedgwood

**The Royal Worcester porcelain factory in Worcester has sadly closed and its assets sold.**

**Among them a 20 tonne Kiln, measuring 8.5 metres long by 2.5 metres wide, that has been purchased by the Wedgwood pottery. Specialist machinery mover, Drayton Beaumont was contracted to relocate the kiln, which was located on the first floor of the old factory.**

Having established that moving this bulky item to a location for loading presented significant challenges, it called in LGH Megalift. The only removal route available for the kiln was an access hole created in the first floor wall of an enclosed bridge over a narrow alleyway. At only six metres wide, with low headroom access, the alley was considered too restrictive for the size of mobile crane that would be required to lift the Kiln.

LGH therefore devised a solution to lift the kiln down into the alley

using hydraulic gantries. Two tracking rails were placed either side of the alleyway, elevated on 400mm blocks, to pass over raised manholes. Four hydraulic jacking units were placed onto the rails and connected with two 5.7 metre beams, which just fitted within the confines of the alley. The hydraulic jacks were then raised until the two beams were above the access hole in the first floor wall.

At this stage Drayton Beaumont began to push one end of the kiln through the hole until the leading edge sat under the leading beam, to which it was subsequently attached. The jacking units connected to that beam were then tracked along the rails pulling the kiln further out through the access hole until the rear end could be connected to the beam of the trailing gantry units.

The weight of the Kiln was taken up fully by the gantry and travelled clear of the building so that it could be lowered to the ground from where it was moved on skates to the removal vehicle.

'Clearly a project of this size and nature needed moving specialists and LGH Megalift was the perfect partners,' said John Tiplady, project manager at Drayton Beaumont.

*The 20 tonne Kiln was attached to the leading jacking units, which then helped pull it out of the access hole, until the rear could be attached to the trailing beam.*



## Print installation

The printing industry has been changing at breakneck pace over the past 15 years with new technology forcing the regular update of equipment. Lifting these pieces of machinery, sometimes into awkward locations is an ideal task for the largest

pick and carry cranes. In this example a 60 tonne Ormig model 60tm, owned by Foltran of Milan is transporting and placing a 51 tonne machine onto a raised stand almost four metres high with limited headroom. *Note the fabricated platform used to fill the loading dock void, allowing the crane to move closer to the location.*





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*A three dimensional challenge faced the crane driver placing this 8 tonne separator.*

## High speed industrial

When an eight tonne blower separation unit measuring six metres long by three metres wide had to be installed in a new hall at a Berlin recycling plant, space presented a major problem. Local crane company, Grohmann had therefore to choose the lifting equipment and plan the lift with care. It selected a new 55 tonne Liebherr LTC 1055-3.1, three axle "city" type All Terrain crane.

Crane driver Thomas Anke had to position his crane with absolute precision in the aisle adjacent to the final location for the blower. The delivery truck reversed into the

aisle way running between racking and existing machinery. The crane lifted the load off of the trailer and very carefully raised the almost fully retracted boom and slewed it through 90 degrees towards the placement point. Vertical stanchions and a ten metre overhead beam, combined with the relatively narrow aisle, left no room for error. Once over the side, Anke telescoped the load into place with barely an inch of space between the cranes counterweight and the racking behind. The unit, with a gross load of 9.5 tonnes, was successfully placed on its precise mounting points at a radius of 12 metres.

## To Russia with glass cranes

UK Glass maker, Pilkington PLC, has constructed one of the most advanced glass plants in the world in the Ramenskoye district of Moscow. The new plant is part of a joint venture with Emerging Market Partnerships (EMP). In order to safely and efficiently handle a throughput of 240,000 tonnes of float glass a year at the new facility, Pilkington has invested over a million Euros in advanced overhead cranes from UK specialist Street Crane Company.



*One of 11 Street cranes at the advanced Ramenskoye glass plant near Moscow*

Glass must be handled with care and precision at every stage of the production process. Street has designed the cranes with speed-controlled movement for greatest load stability and precise low-speed placement. The Moscow contract included the supply, delivery and commissioning of 11 cranes, while, the installation was undertaken by Pilkington's own engineering teams. The cranes range in capacity from five to 25 tonnes safe working load and include double girder, single girder and wall travelling jib cranes. Some of the cranes span bays of 40 metres and all are equipped with radio remote controls.

All equipment was built in the UK and shipped overland to Russia. To meet Russian standards, Street had to have its company wide procedures audited and approved by GOST and each crane was evaluated from first principles



and certified as compliant with GGTN standards.

The Ramenskoye plant began operations in November 2005. Pilkington will operate the plant on behalf of the joint venture partners.

*The glass is carried in a special lifting frame.*

## Bombardier contract crane responsibility

Morris Material Handling has been contracted by Bombardier to take responsibility for ensuring that the company meets all of its commitments under the LOLER regulations 1998, along with all other statutory inspections across its 330,000 square metre site in Derby. The company already provides round-the clock service, maintenance and emergency repair for Bombardier's crane, hoists and lifting equipment at the rail manufacturing facility and refurbishment centre.

The contract will be co-ordinated from Morris's regional service centre in Loughborough, where a team of seven technicians will remain on standby to provide an immediate response should breakdown or failure occur. It involves the statutory examination of Bombardier's 72 on-site cranes, both overhead and goliath, as well as other lifting equipment, hoist chain blocks, aerial work platforms, carriage lifting jacks, swing jibs, and all associated loose lifting equipment.

Morris is also responsible for the bi-annual inspection of all below the hook equipment.

Bombardier has tasked Morris with managing the planned maintenance of its cranes and hoists an additional three times per annum, over and above the statutory requirement.



*Morris material handling has invested in a new fleet of vans for its 80-strong team of technical support engineers, which is on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week, 365 days a year.*

Bombardier's Services Engineer, Graham Moody, said; "Given the high levels of support that Morris already provides on a 24/7 basis at our Derby site, we are pleased to extend this to statutory inspections."

## Flying Low

Peter Hird & Sons was called on to offload a 21.5 metre Nimrod aircraft fuselage weighing eight tonnes, from its road transporter and into mobile trolleys at a structural test facility at BAE Systems, Brough, East Yorkshire.

The lift was restricted by low head room and the need for cleanliness. Hird selected Valla 18 tonne and Valla 25 tonne battery powered industrial pick and carry Cranes for the lift. BAE systems will be assembling the section of the Nimrod fuselage to a new wing section to form an aircraft specimen for structural testing purposes.

