

John Gillespie, MD,
Gillespies Crane & Access.



LIFEMEMBER **JOHN GILLESPIE**

We continue the series of profiles on CICA life members with an interview with industry stalwart John Gillespie from Gillespies Crane and Access.

CAL: WHAT WAS YOUR PATHWAY TO ENTER INTO THE CRANE INDUSTRY?

JG: I left school and joined the family business that my father had already started, and I knew that I would be in the business for some time to come.

CAL: WHAT WAS YOUR ROLE IN THE INDUSTRY?

JG: I did whatever was needed in the business – cleaning up around the place, dogging, crane driving and whatever else that was necessary for the family business to survive.

CAL: HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED AS A VOLUNTEER WITH EITHER CICA AND/OR A STATE CRANE ASSOCIATION?

JG: I decided to start attending a couple of state association meetings as we were a member, and I found that I had an interest in it and it started to develop from that. It seemed to me that the “old blood” needed some “new blood” and it went from there. As I had more involvement, my interest in contributing to the industry grew and many, many years later.

CAL: WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE YOU HAVE SEEN IN THE INDUSTRY?

JG: The technological developments and advances that have occurred with cranes, such as the enormous gains in



Gillespies has been supplying cranes since 1950.

lift capacities, boom lengths and the massive advancements in the carriers and their abilities with such things as multi-steered axles and hydro-pneumatic suspension, and the comfort now available for the driver.

CAL: WHAT IS / WAS THE MOST REWARDING ACHIEVEMENT MADE BY CICA AND /OR A STATE CRANE ASSOCIATION?

JG: For the state association, it was winning the “Holy Grail” 12t per axle up to 9 axles. Unfortunately, we only won half of the “Holy Grail”, as NSW has 12t per axle up to 5 axles, but not much access to the road network.

For CICA, it’s been the “One Association” project and I think it will be fantastically beneficial for our industry now that we are united and working together.

CAL: WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE SEEN THE “ONE ASSOCIATION” HAPPEN EARLIER?

JG: No, I think the timing was fine and the industry was probably more ready for it when it did happen, than it may have been previously.

CAL: HOW DID PARTICIPATING AS A VOLUNTEER WITH CICA AND/OR A STATE ASSOCIATION BENEFIT YOUR THROUGH YOUR TIME IN THE INDUSTRY?

JG: Its increased contacts/business and industry relationships and it no doubt improved our brand awareness, even though every now and then it may have some negative side effects. It also gives you a good feeling to know you have contributed.

CAL: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO NEW COMERS TO THE INDUSTRY?

JG: “Are you mad? Don’t do it!” Seriously though, get involved with the association as it gives you the opportunity to help drive change and improvements. More contributors are always needed and welcomed. The industry can’t continue to rely on a small number of volunteers, or the same few people that always seem to make the time to contribute.

It would be great to never hear “I haven’t got the time” as the industry needs more of us to somehow make the time, so I would really encourage new comers to bring that “new blood”. ●



Gillespies fleet include articulated pick and carry through to 350t Heavy Lift Crawler Crane.