

Readers

Letters



Nice job

Good piece on boom lifts in this month's mag - did I miss April? I fully agree that the hybrid is the future, maybe alongside a few more electric machines, but hybrid offers best of both worlds. Things must be good, looking at the size of the magazine a real whopper and good to see something else putting on weight!

You guys do a great job!

Barry Hickson

We did not miss the April edition, the issue was supposed to be April/May and due out the first week of May, while we met the deadline, we missed the fact that our fantastic designer, had simply entitled it May 2018! It was still issue number 20.3 but a rose by any other name..... This issue is mostly just called June.

Mystery machine

A reader based in the USA, spotted a ladder platform mounted on a Citroen HY72 chassis – for sale in the UK. The platform is one of a type delivered in volume to France's national utility EDF/EDG in the 1960s. This particular one dates from 1963 and is fully operational. It was renovated at some time to be used as an advertising vehicle for Mazda lighting products. We initially thought that the platform was built by Riffaud, which made this type of platform for the fire service but have since received a note from another reader who spotted another of these machines for sale in Belgium, it has a plate on it with the name B.D.R Roneo, 74 bd Du General Leclerc Lilas, Seine. The Roneo company, a manufacturer of filing cabinets and steel furniture and other office equipment did have a factory in Lilas, but at a different address, so we are no closer to the real history of these machines.

A scale model of this platform was built by Hachette during the 1960s, while restored examples such as this have appeared at specialist classic vehicle shows. We wonder is any of our readers might be able to firmly identify this manufacturer and the history of this platform?

Contact us at editor@vertikal.net



Vertikal Days

As you might imagine we received a good few emails regarding the recent Vertikal Days, thankfully mostly positive. Here are just a few of them.

Great show with all the latest innovative equipment on display as usual but who planned Vertikal days under a flight path? Perhaps call it Horizontal days next year if it's at the same venue!!!!

Thanks to Leigh and all of the team for your amazing efforts and for producing such a great showcase for our industry.

Just wanted to drop you a little thanks for your hospitality and the great concept of your show as always I am a little bit more knowledgeable than I was before as with every event it furthers my business a little bit further.

Firstly, thank you for all your help again this year. I think the event was fantastic and is a credit to all the work you put into it. As you know we had a great number of customers cranes on the stand again this year and I have attached some nice photos.

Thank you for accommodating us at show on short notice. I felt that it was a great new location and layout and we achieved everything that we hoped to from the show (apart from the Thursday hangover!)

Perfect location first Day was bit slow, second day was much better, a four hour spell of some really strong interest, so you gotta keep at it with shows

I just wanted to send a small note expressing my thanks to you, and all of the team, for making the Vertikal Days show such a success.

For a 'Micro business' like mine just really starting to try to grow, it was tremendously reassuring to feel that the whole team was working to support me and my efforts and making the event have a real family feel.

I must single out Clare and Pam who had to deal with my inexperience and consequent mistakes with such good humour.

We had a tremendous reception for our products and believe that we will be able to really push forward from here.

Thank you all very much indeed

PS

As a post script, although I can't announce it formally until the money is in the bank, I received a call on my way home today confirming the sale of a vehicle mounted..... to one of the visitors to our stand, so that really is the icing on the cake.

You all did a terrific job and we hold and heard only positive thoughts about the venue and the event.

Hope you all enjoy a very well earned rest with family & friends over the bank holiday weekend.

Dear Pam, Before leaving the Vertikal Days I wanted to thank personally you and Clare for a wonderful event, but unfortunately, I did not have enough time because we were in a hurry to the Gatwick airport. I asked Nicole to pass on to you my thanks and hugs. She promised to do it.

After returning to..., I travelled again and returned home yesterday. I was supposed to write an email to you on Monday, but because your letter came today, I am writing right away.

Once again thank you for all your help. You, Clare and Nicole were so kind and helpful to me. Sam and Leigh were also very nice! We couldn't have taken part in the Vertikal Days if not for your help.

Vertikal Days organizer team has done a wonderful job! I am convinced that other exhibitors share my opinion. I don't truly remember when I was at such a well-organized event. You can be proud of yourself. The Internat organizers should learn from you!

I thank once again the wonderful Vertikal Days organizer team for organizing a magnificent event, for your help, kindness, nice smiles and warm hearts. Thanks to you the time I spent in Donington will stay in my mind and heart for ever.

Have a nice weekend!

Kind regards,

Kees Zeevenhooven *February 1927 - May 2018*

Kees Zeevenhooven's family business in Rotterdam represented Priestmans of Hull from 1935. Sadly, his father (of the same name) was himself killed by a German paratrooper on the very first day of the invasion of the Netherlands by Nazi forces in 1940. His widow was herself a remarkable lady with a strong personality, and continued to manage the business after his death, and survived the war by selling the stock of their wartime principals, Consolidated Pneumatic Tool Company, which effectively saved their employees from being forced to work for the Nazis. The contract with Priestman was renewed when the War ended, and Kees joined the family firm and eventually took over the running of the business from his mother.



I first met Kees and his younger brother, Frans, who was by then sales director, in 1970, when I joined Priestman as export manager.

I immediately struck up a warm friendship with both brothers and their families which has endured to this day. The Zeevenhooven firm were a shining example of success, loyalty and organisational efficiency to all other Priestman dealers and agents. They modified Priestman machines to meet local conditions, and their success in selling the Lion crane/dragline was due to the fact that they only imported superstructures and mounted them on Dutch tracked/crawler undercarriages to meet the exigencies of the extra soft ground conditions. Large parties of Dutch contractors regularly visited Hull via the overnight ferry, and there was

a special relationship fostered between the two organisations especially by Kees. They were consistently Top Priestman dealer.

Kees was an exceptionally warm hearted and outgoing personality who commanded great respect and affection from all his employees. Many of his staff were long served, and, as an outsider, one always got a very warm welcome when visiting. He must have had a difficult upbringing during the occupation, and recounted how, in a wartime operation called 'Manna from Heaven', unarmed Lancaster bombers flew over the country and dropped hundreds of tons of food. As a young lad, Kees was employed standing in a Sports Field behind his home and catching the desperately needed food and taking it to a collection centre for distribution. The Germans living in Holland also benefitted, since they too were starving, and so these planes were allowed to come and go without being attacked - a remarkable little known story.

Changing market conditions caused the family business to cease trading in 1985 when Kees retired and Frans left to run JCB Holland, but the memory of the friendly family firm, and the exceptional man who ran it lives on with those with whom they did business. Kees will be sorely missed by his family and his many friends, both in Holland and the UK. He is survived by his brother Frans, two sons, two daughters, nine grandchildren - another tragically died in a car crash - and three great-children, with two more on the way. His beloved wife, Willy, died last year. There were about 300 people who attended the funeral in Wassenaar on May 25th, a tribute to the high esteem in which he was held.

Dick Lloyd

May 2018

Bob Floyd *1946 - 2018*

Bob Floyd, the former general manager of UK crane rental company King Lifting sadly passed away on Tuesday 22nd May, following a five year battle with cancer. He was just four days off his 72nd birthday



Bob Floyd spent his entire career in the UK crane rental industry, having joined the Taunton depot of British Crane Hire Corporation (BCHC) from the Merchant Navy. He was soon promoted to the job of manager of the company's Southampton depot and following the collapse of BCHC he joined Bath based G W. Sparrow & Sons Crane Hire - Sparrows Crane Hire - becoming its London regional

manager, a post he held for several years before moving back to company headquarters as a director.

After the company was acquired by BET and merged with Grayston-White - to create Grayston White & Sparrow - he left to set up his own crawler crane company, Capital Crane Hire, and later expanded into mobile cranes. The tough 1990 recession caused him to close the company down, and he moved to Derby to run Baldwin's crawler crane fleet. When his wife Carol became ill they decided to move back to the south west and he landed the job with King Lifting, from which he retired in May 2013.

He was a well known and widely respected businessman and will be missed by a good many in the industry. His funeral was held on Friday 8th June in Taunton.