

Readers

Letters

**Rental Rate surveys**

Dear Sir,

I have been looking through the latest copy of Cranes & Access magazine this morning, particularly - as I can imagine others will have done - the hire rate survey, which I agree is very handy, but in places eye opening or maybe even eyewatering! It's sad to have what we are only too aware of confirmed - that we as an industry are letting ourselves down by continually reducing the rates. How some can keep going I have no idea, except it's down to the soft financing that they have picked up from manufacturers who are solely intent on selling as much as they can without regard to the implications. How is it that at least one company is putting a 45ft boom out for as little as £185 week!?!? We get £295 a week which is already rubbish! My last car service cost more than that and they only had it for half a day! It is a sad day when almost half of those that did your survey said they would not recommend what is a great industry to their kids. Tragic! We need a clear out with some of the weaker companies going to the wall.

K.Green

Dear Sir,

Got your magazine with the rental rates article on the same day that I heard that Hawk Plant had gone to the wall. Only surprise there was that it had not happened sooner. I think that on a couple of the results you have had some optimist filling in the form looking at the highest on 17 metre machines, but fair dos to you on the whole it's a good survey and helpful.

Edward.....

We are always happy to receive feedback in the surveys we do and would welcome anyone else who might have something further to add to contact us.

Who can identify the crane?

A reader wrote to us and asked if any of our regular readers could identify a crane from the 1970s. In his own words: "Can anyone help identify this tower crane which was the very first tower crane that I ever saw, when it helped construct 'Pavilion House' in Scarborough when I was a child in the mid-1970s. Any ideas would be welcome..."

We posted the story on www.Vertikal.net and received the following responses:

Dear Sir,

"Regarding old Potain tower crane. It looks like our used Potain model 744, year 1979.

We bought one used and made complete reconstruction in last two years (blasting, painting, new electronics and additional remote control). We assembled this Potain on our storage yard in 1360 Vrhnika, Slovenia to loading our lifting gears and mobile cranes ballast etc..."

Janez Jeraj

DVIG in Slovenia:

"It's a Potain 643"

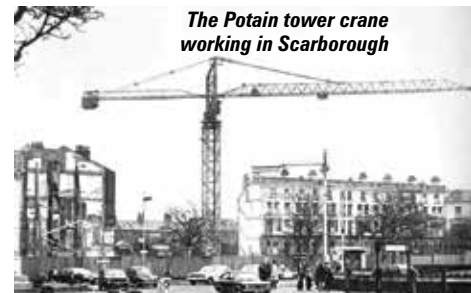
"The crane in your picture is a Potain 764. It's an early version about 1970 because of the thruppenny bit shaped cab. The driver would open the front of the cab and climb onto the seat with his feet dangling into oblivion. He would have to reach out and pull the front shut and the controls were mounted in the cab front. There was a pole in the middle of the cab for the hoist rope to pass through as the hoist winch was inside the bottom mast section."

Dear Sir

It is a Potain 646 G

RCS Hoist/winch located in the base tower below and guided through the collector in the middle of the slewing ring. It was a very popular tower crane.

Michel Deltour



The Potain tower crane working in Scarborough

Avice Amelia Hunt 1921–2018

We have received the belated news that Avice Hunt, who spent many years as a director of UK access specialist John Rusling died in December. Generally known as 'Miss Hunt' she joined contractor William Moss in the early 1950s and became personal assistant to John Rusling, following him to the company's access equipment sales and rental division - Access Equipment - which had a manufacturing licence from UpRight in California to produce its Zip-Up alloy scaffold towers. Rusling later left Access Equipment to form his own company John Rusling Ltd, selling scaffold towers and other non-powered access equipment. Hunt joined him in his new venture.

In 1970 Rusling moved the fledgling business to Newport, Shropshire and Hunt moved with him and became a director of the company, which became the distributor for UpRight's Instant Rib-Grip alloy scaffold towers and aerial work platforms. The business was soon acquired by UpRight as it stepped up its sales efforts in Europe and expanded its production facility in Ireland. Rusling and Hunt remained with the company, with

Rusling later promoted to managing director of UpRight's European sales and distribution operations. Hunt took over as managing director of the UK business which had by now opened a series of sales and rental depots, with 120 employees. She remained in charge until she retired in the 1980s.

Avice Hunt spent her early years in London and never married telling her colleagues that 'when men came back from the war there simply were not enough to go around'. She did however live her life to the full travelling extensively after retirement. She died on December 5th at the age of 97.



Alastair Hope Robertson 1949 - 2019

Alastair Robertson, owner of Universal Equipment in Glenn Ellyn, near Chicago passed away at the end of January, following several weeks of illness. He was truly one of a kind, highly adept at his craft and a true gentleman who loved people.



Alastair Robertson was born in South Africa and studied in the UK, before moving to the UK in 1980 where he took up a sales role with one of the leading aerial lift manufacturers at the time - Simon. He later moved to scissor lift market leader Economy Engineering and stayed on board when it was later acquired by Snorkel. In the mid 1980s he joined Grove Manlift in Pennsylvania, as a key member of its senior North American sales team. A few years later he left Grove, accepting a role with Skyjack, before joining S and R Equipment - the JLG dealer in Chicago - in 1991. In the mid 1990s he began working with the Dealer Alliance in Rockford, Illinois and sold products from a range of manufacturers including Niftylift and Aichi,

setting up his own aerial work platform sales business Universal Equipment in 1998.

Some 10 to 12 years ago he suffered a serious stroke and underwent a major heart operation, but amazingly bounced back and continued to work and travel more than many half his age. He would pop up at exhibitions from China to France, the UK and all over Asia, keeping an eye out for a new product or innovation. He loved the industry and most of all, the people. He knew everyone and was a huge source of knowledge and information and sometimes a little gossip. He was much loved on a truly global basis. He will be truly missed all over the world. Alastair was a man you simply could not but like. He had a great sense of humour, a smile and a laugh that would light up the room and always had time to stop and talk. He lived life to the full but was never too busy to talk or listen.

He leaves behind, wife Beth, sons Glenn, Struan and Brent and daughter Keri. Glenn and Brent not only joined him in the business but helped move it forward, something he was always very proud of. He was only 69.



The following are just some of the comments received in response to our posting the sad news on Vertical.Net:

I had the pleasure to deal with Alastair, I always found him Honest, Trustworthy and Civil. His industry knowledge will be missed for sure, along with his sense of humour. Sad news indeed, my thoughts with his family at this time, looking forward to reading about his achievements when the time is right.

Andrew Fishburn

"I am very sad for this. Alastair was a good friend and really good professional!"

JC Caula

"Always there to help with a smile. A fixture in this industry and at trade shows. Alastair will be missed. RIP"

Jeff Stachowiak

"Very sad to hear this, I met and dealt with Alastair ever since he was at Simon Aerials. He was always helpful, but more importantly willing to listen to you. A big loss for our industry!"

Jesse Rodriguez

"So sad to hear! My deepest condolences go out to the Robertson family and friends."

Jerad Epps

"Alastair was an amazing man. Friendly, funny, and caring. God bless him and his family."

Luke Powers

"One of the originals to first come out to Asia and put boots on the ground. A real gentleman and great mate. Always made time to meet up every time he came to my part of the world. The whole region here is in total shock and saddened by his parting. Will be deeply missed personally. RIP my South African brother..."

Dion Calder

"Terrible news. Alastair was a great guy. RIP"

Simon Maher

"Really sad news, what a true gentleman Alastair was, my condolences to all the family"

Frank Iszard

"My deepest condolences to all who knew him, he sounds like an amazing individual. I wish I had the chance to meet him"

Jess Tarlini

"Sad news. Great guy. Bought my first Niftylift from Alastair in the early 90's."

Matthew Bucknell

It was always great to catch up with Alastair - there will be few with a broader global knowledge of our industry, and he was always fine company. From our first meeting at Bauma in Munich in the 80's (well, specifically the Hofbrauhaus) to his arrival out of the blue one evening just last year at Barasti in the UAE, you never knew where Alastair would turn up, but there was always a chance he might - and it is both very sad, and difficult to accept, that chapter has now closed. He will be greatly missed.

Paul Richards

To know of this fine gentleman who cast a long shadow and left an indelible impression on so many is an honor to me. My regrets to his sons and colleagues and condolences to his family.

Sherm

I read all these lovely comments. I have developed a deep feeling of regret that despite seeing Alastair on many occasions at a distance at various events all over the world I never even had a single conversation with him. I now read that he was born in the same year as me and had a long career in this industry and yet I missed out in getting to know who I now see was a great man and a man who would have been welcoming and hospitable to a total stranger. Here's a lesson for me. Life is short so enrich your life by making new friends whilst there's an opportunity. Sincere condolences to his family, close friends and associates.

Malcolm Bowers

Very sad news, I will miss Alastair's smiling face and his professionalism. My sincere condolences to the family.

Karin Nars

Shocked and terribly saddened to hear of Alastair passing. A true gent who demonstrated that family was his main driver in life. I was always taken with his beaming smiling and appreciation of the company of people he'd meet on his travels. When we'd meet he'd sent me home to Scotland with his love & regards for the 'auld country'. Folk don't die who live in our hearts. Requiescat in pace.

Andrew McCusker

Sad news indeed. I worked with him in my days at Simon-USA. Another AWP industry General gone he will be missed

Craig Ihde

Just hearing this sad, sad news, we've to realise that a great person has left us.... It was a privilege knowing him. My sincere condolences to the family.

Jos van Grootveld

Alastair was special in many ways, as he was first and foremost a great family man as exemplified with his business being him and his sons. His Facebook page was always updated with news about his family, or with great pictures of him and his grandkids. For me, he was a great IPAF ambassador always building and growing relationships. He will be deeply missed both personally and professionally by so many.

Tony Groat

Alastair was an institution and legend in our industry with an unmatched network and knowledge, both nationally and internationally. If you didn't know Alastair, then you didn't know the industry. He was one of the first industry experts to engage with IPAF in North America and a strong advocate for the organization. His loyal support was not just limited to being a council member for many years, he could be found at all the national and international events and summits around the globe. And 'around the globe' would sum up Alastair's life and legacy. His friendship with industry people spanned over all continents, and he was truly a universal person that reflected his company's name! I had the great privilege of calling Alastair a friend for 20 years and, like so many others, I got started in this business on good advice and referrals from Alastair, he will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him. I will personally miss his great humor, laughter and smile. Alastair's approach to life was grand, friendly,

enthusiastic and he was always a true gentleman. RIP, my friend. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends.

Ebbe Christensen

Terribly sad news about Alastair. I remember the great times we had in Hagerstown when we became neighbours during his time at Grove. Many times - whenever I was passing through Chicago - we'd get together. He was great company and lived life to the full. He loved his family so much. It's a few years ago now after he started Universal that I met Beth and spent some time with them in his second home in Glen Ellyn. I was thinking of him over Christmas and looking forward to visiting with him. One of Alastair's great loves was collecting old meat grinders/mincers which hung all over his first home. Everyone knew and loved Alastair. So many memories. So sad.

Stuart Anderson

RIP Alastair. Knowing him since 1988, we have been working together many years, we had lots of fun together and very weird experiences all over the world. A true AWP man. Condolences to his loved ones.

Barecat

Godverdomme Alastair, a pleasant fellow and a good friend from the industry left us. Many good memories, always a laugh and a ball. Sorry to see you go my man, will definitely miss you. I wish his family strength and courage.

Jerry Kit

I have just heard the very sad news. I met Alastair many years ago and we got along very well and always had a laugh and a giggle together. A trade show would not be a trade show without bumping into Alastair wherever it was in the World. My sincerest thoughts and prayers go to all his family RIP Alastair you will be missed

Kevin Fox

I first met Alastair in the early 90's with the Aichi Corp he was supporting and working with. We became friends for many years and always spent time having a catch up at any shows we both attended around the World. Rest in peace Alastair, the Access World will be a poorer place without you. My thoughts go out to all the Robertson family.

Glyn Goodwin

I had the great pleasure to have known Alastair for 35 years. He was a true gentleman, with a wealth of knowledge about our industry. We became very good friends and shared some fantastic times together. My thoughts are with Beth and all of Alastair's family. A true legend in every sense. RIP my friend.

Alan and Caroline Russon.

So sorry to hear this very sad news. We shared many a happy moment over the years. One of a kind who will be sadly missed.

Sincerest condolences to all his family. RIP

Mike Evans