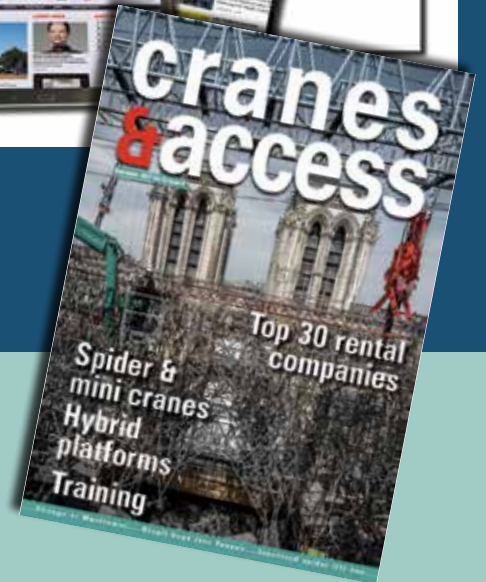


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Readers Letters



TOP
30

The Ainscough interview

Our interview with Peter Gibbs, chief executive of UK based Ainscough Crane Hire, last month generated a few letters, most of it on the cynical side but on the whole more 'the jury is still out' attitude with a clear hope that he will succeed.



Peter Gibbs of Ainscough

Dear Leigh,

Just read the latest issue. It looks good. Great to finally get someone senior at Ainscough on the record. Interesting aside too in the hybrid piece on hydrogen fuel cells; I read a news story recently on them being used on large equipment and began to wonder about their potential for mobile cranes.

William H

Dear Sir,

I enjoyed reading your piece on Ainscough Crane Hire, I didn't think I would. The new man Gibbs has obviously convinced you that he is the man to bring back the glory days, and maybe he is? He seems to spin a good line but as they say its all about walking the talk. And even if he is serious about everything he says will the new owners take any notice of him if the chips are down?

These hedge fund types don't give a toss about people's lives or company history and culture they only have one thing in mind and that is screwing as much out of the business as they can. But who knows maybe this time it's different? I am not be holding my breath but will be wishing Mr Gibbs every success.

Greg Farmer

Ainscough do as good a job as anyone in crane hire in looking after their cranes, but some of the fleet is a bit 'old in the tooth' and although they say that they have low miles on the clock, they are still old and the cost of replacing all the old ones will run into millions and I have just see the web news that the new owners are already paying a big dividend. A leopard never changes its spots!

Harry James

Training

Great piece on VR training! More of this sort of thing please!

No name

Top 30 Rental company survey

LTC fleet error

In the tower crane fleet numbers in this month's Top 30 rental fleets you either have a typo on the London Tower Crane numbers or they have added 100 extra cranes to their fleet numbers. Poetic licence?

FH

We are aware that some companies exaggerate fleet numbers a little and some do the opposite while others force us to estimate their numbers – perhaps in the hope that we will give them more cranes than they have in reality? We usually double check all fleet numbers that look suspicious with those in the industry who might know.

Speedy's 100 missing mast booms

Good morning,

I have read with interest the results of the Top 30 rental company survey this morning, which is insightful as ever and I appreciate the effort which must go into producing it each year. Not an easy task I'm sure! However, I note a slight discrepancy in the 'mast booms' section for Speedy Powered Access.

I'm not sure if I entered the number incorrectly, or if you thought I may have made the mast Boom/mast lift error, however Speedy currently run a fleet of 253 mast booms. This includes an additional 100 Haulotte Star10's which we purchased in late 2019.

With a tiny number of exceptions (e.g. we have one JLG T10E), all of the others in the fleet are Star10's or Manitou 100VJR's.

Hope this clarifies, please don't hesitate to get in touch for any further details.

With kind regards,

Andy Briggs

Mr Briggs is right we did correct some discrepancies where respondents had put mast type lifts into the mast boom category. What we were unaware of was that Speedy had taken delivery of 100 new mast booms at the end of last year and thus we made an inaccurate adjustment. We have apologised and corrected the digital versions of the magazine. Next year will look to add further clarity to the questionnaire. In the meantime if anyone spots further errors please do let us know, only by hearing of our mistakes can we improve.

GOING UP IN THE WORLD



A history of Simon Engineering, the development of the powered access industry and a lifetime as an engineer, by Denis Ashworth

Ashworth was a keen engineer and from an early age found himself in at the very start of the modern powered access industry.

His book is an unusual combination of autobiography and history of Simon Engineering Dudley, a pioneer of the powered access industry and at one time, the world's largest manufacturer of aerial lifts.

The coffee table sized book, is highly readable and includes around 150 photographs and drawings from the very beginning of the industry. It is a 'must read' for anyone who is interested in powered access, the hydraulic equipment industry or in comparing modern day engineering challenges with those of an entirely different era.

The book is available direct from the publishers at £19.50, plus £4.50 postage and packing.

- Continental Europe €23 plus €6.50 postage & packing
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René Otto Clément R.I.P

We have received the sad news that access industry veteran René Clément, founder and former owner of Swiss company Axéo, of Cugy, near Lausanne, has died in Brazil.

After studying technology, he began his career with the UpRight sales and rental subsidiary Vectur Germany, where he was a salesman for the company's Instant aluminium scaffold towers and Flying Carpet scissor lifts. In those days salesmen had to travel with a trailer full of demo gear and were measured by the number of demonstrations carried out each week and the conversion rate to quotations and orders. It was not a job for the faint hearted but was a great school for people entering the access industry.

Clément either founded or became manager of UpRight's Swiss sales and rental business - Vectur Suisse - originally based in Lausanne. In the mid to late 1980s he purchased the business from UpRight and morphed it into Axéo. He was a real character and for many years he preferred to buy his scaffold stock from Albret, the UpRight licensee in Montpellier, France. He would leave Switzerland on a Friday lunchtime with a 'special friend' and drive along the Cote D'Azur to Montpellier to load up his truck with Instant scaffold components, and then take a leisurely drive home, stopping off at a nice hotel and restaurant or two along the way.

When asked if he might return to buying his scaffold from the factory in Ireland, given that he was the official dealer, he would say with a smile and glint in his eye: "No it is OK my trips to the south of France make it all worthwhile". He knew what was really important in life and made the most of it. In later life moved to Brazil with his partner Olga Justy but remained active and interested in business till the end. He was a true character and one of the last of the old guard.

Damian Schuler of Swiss sales and rental specialist Schuler & Schuler, who knew him better than most, said: "What sad news reached us last night, the death of our dear friend René Clément - former founder and owner of Axéo SA in Cugy VD, Switzerland. We are all completely surprised and speechless. René was a unique person to all of us and a pioneer in many ways. He was always open to new things and he was anything but petty. René always had a head full of 1,000 ideas and had a solution ready for every problem. Even if some of these ideas were hardly feasible, in the end he still got everything done right. At the right time he quit the professional life and moved together with his partner Olga Justy to Brazil, where he still fulfilled many of his big dreams. Olga was his great pride and they both harmonised perfectly, despite the considerable age difference."

"René was always very dynamic and always had new plans. With his great urge for freedom and to discover the big wide world, she was always at his side. In our business sector he was one of the first on the market. After studying technology, he was soon in the service of Vectur Germany, where he marketed the revolutionary Instant Span aluminium mobile scaffolding and 'Flying Carpets' from UpRight with great passion. René Clément was the first UpRight dealer in Switzerland and brought us to the table with Leigh Sparrow, former general manager of UpRight Europe. Everyone in my age and older knew him. René was very persistent and visited them all personally. He was a salesman with the heart and soul of the old guard. He had no hesitation in knocking on doors again and again until the customer was completely convinced of his cause."

"Not everyone understood his ideas and dreams from the start. But in the end, he left a striking mark on our industry and lived a full and good life. He will always have a prominent place in our hearts, and we will always keep him a worthy memory."



René Clément and his partner Olga Justy

Crane model maker

Greetings from Texas,

After having recently attended a crane operator re-certification class, I wanted to share these pictures of these hand crafted wooden models of various cranes and a heavy haul truck/lorry and its load. These models are located at the facility which hosted the class. They were

made by the gentleman that opened the business in 1967 - Mr. Perry Henderson - but he has since passed away. The business, Domac Inc, is located in Texas City, Texas which is south of Houston. If anyone is in the vicinity and wishes to view these wonderful works, please contact the business office to enquire about possibly being able to visit. The business information is located on the blue poster on the stand with the two large machines next to each other.

Kind regards,

Mike Urbanovsky

Corpus Christi, Texas

We wrote back to Mr. Urbanovsky asking if he had any further details, and he kindly responded

Good Afternoon on your side of the 'pond'!

Mr Henderson hand crafted the wooden cranes and the truck & trailer. The business includes crane operator certification and re-certification classes and has grown from crane rentals

to forklift and telehandler rentals, crane hire service, equipment inspection, general construction, trucking & transport, machine storage, and passenger vehicle repair.

The business address is 3126 5th Avenue, Texas City, TX 77590. I hope this helps.

Kind regards,

Mike Urbanovsky

We did a little research, and it seems that Perry Henderson passed away in 2007, he was a prolific model maker from a young age and built a large number of model cranes for other people in scales of between 1/18th and 1/6th. One of his biggest being a seven metre long, model of Deep South Crane & Rigging's 2,500 tonne VersaCrane TC36000. We hope to follow up with more details in the next issue of the magazine. If you have any information on Perry Henderson and his models, please contact us on editor@vertikal.net



A model of a Manitowoc 4100 with man basket



A Grove RT65 or 75S with a P&H lattice truck crane - possibly a 125 tonne 9140 TC or a 650A TC?