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READERS LETTERS

HONEST AND OPEN

Dear Sir,

I was touched by the letter you carried in the current issue of *Cranes & Access* from Dave Barton, it is very very rare to see someone in this game be so frank and honest, as well as open. I have reread it a couple of times and salute him for being so brave. I sincerely hope that his life from here on out goes as well as he deserves it to.

Yours

Philip Tunstall

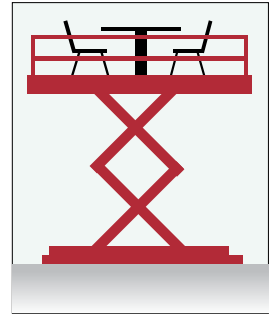
CRAZY BUT INTERESTING

To the Editor

I thought Stefan Papke's piece was interesting, totally impractical, but an interesting thought, I was thinking what would happen if we had one in our garden, I am not sure that the neighbours would appreciate us popping up above the fence line between our gardens. And not all sure we would like to be on display like that. Nice to read about new ideas and thoughts though, we need more people like Stefan, for every weird or crackpot suggestion there will be a blinder that really grabs our attention and takes off - just like Dyson, who I understand had loads of flops before having a hit with this vacuum cleaner.

Keep up the good work - always a good read.

Edward Smithey



NEIL WALDRON 1949-2025

UK access industry veteran Neil Waldron has died. He passed away on Monday, May 26th following a period of ill health, he was 76.

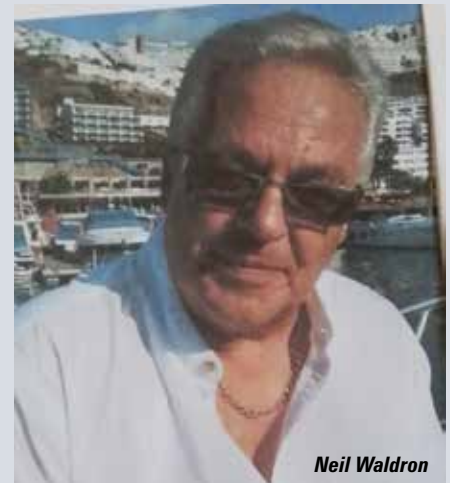
As far as we know Neil Waldron began his access career when he joined Hemel Hempstead based Access Equipment sometime in the 1970s. The company was acquired by UpRight in 1983, which also owned John Rusling. When the two companies were merged in 1987 to create Instant Zip-Up, Waldron not only remained on board but continued to do well and was appointed regional manager based at the company's Loughborough depot.

In 1998 he left the company to set up his own business which traded as Approved Access Training offering a range of courses, mostly IPAF and PASMA, and usually conducted at customer's premises.

In his personal life he loved to fly and has held a pilot's licence for at least the past 20 years. As a special treat for his 70th birthday he flew a wartime Spitfire, apparently with a massive smile on his face throughout the flight.

He leaves behind his wife Pauline and family.

Regards James O'Grady



Neil Waldron

"Very sad to hear of the passing of Neil.

Neil would turn up to our depot (Alfa Access) and we would always have a good catch up first off, it would always end up being a right laugh about something due to his great sense of humour. When it came to his work, he was so knowledgeable, he would pass this knowledge on along with his experiences to others and engage fully with the whole team.

He would never turn down fish and chips either! It really was always a pleasure seeing Neil, he was a lovely chap and will be missed greatly. My thoughts go out to his family and all his other friends."

James Skinner.

"All of us at Alfa Access Services Ltd were absolutely gutted to hear about the passing of Neil and our thoughts go out to his wife Pauline and family. I first met Neil in 2006 at Ranger Equipment Ltd. We then had Neil completing nearly all of our training at Alfa up until a few years ago when he retired. We stayed in touch and often had a chat about things. Neil was one of the most professional, funny and caring men I have ever met. He always had time for a chat about anything and would always do his best for you. His favourite job for us was at Duxford Imperial War Museum, need I say more. We also had a few nights out to remember but the next day I couldn't remember. A true gent and a good friend who will be sorely missed, RIP Neil."

Allen Freeman

Dear Editor.

"Neil was my manager at Access equipment and then Instant zip up and Frank Huish was his boss. Neil was a great mentor to me in my younger days. I was a scaffolder, and Neil would often come out with the scaffolding gang and drive the truck. He always made a point of stopping of at Ron's cafe in Leicester on the Abbey Lane and getting us all breakfast. These were good memories of a good man."

Kind Regards

Colin

"Very sad to hear of Neil's death and please pass on my condolences to Pauline, friends and family. I worked with Neil in my first sales role at Tidy Hire and remember Neil being briefly employed to develop the industrial accounts. Neil was a very nice, decent, funny person to be around but always remained focussed in his role and particularly in training combining his communication skills and strength of character to deliver successful training courses. I live in Southsea now and often watch the Spitfires flying over from Goodwood so will think of you Neil, a good man who's training excellence ensured people working at height returned each day to their loved ones."

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MICHAEL POSENER 1958-2025

Crane and access publication veteran and more recently tower crane sales & marketing professional Mike Posener has died.

He passed away on June 19th at the age of 67 after struggling with his health for many years. He was admitted to hospital just before Bauma, which he seemed to regret missing, more than his illness. He returned home a day or two before he passed away surrounded by his family as he had hoped it would be. He leaves behind his wife Silvia and son Liam.

Mike's parents emigrated from Germany to the UK just before World War II. He was born in London, but grew up in southern England, while developing a love for his parent's homeland, Germany. He trained and qualified as a carpenter and joiner and went on to set up his own contracting company in Germany where he had his first experience of working with cranes which he developed something of a passion for.

Having developed a serious and incurable lung ailment which gradually grew worse over the years, he was unable to continue working in construction, at least on site, and therefore decided to move into publishing, joining the Cranes Today team as an advertising sales manager, in or around 2001. He took to the new job 'like a duck to water' and particularly enjoyed covering the German speaking markets for the publication.

In 2003 Vertikal acquired a new owner, and with its base in Brighton close to where he lived, Mike began lobbying to join the business with considerable persistence, he eventually won his campaign in August 2005 when he joined Vertikal as customer support manager.

While he helped the business in many ways, the fact that he was not responsible for the German speaking market - which then as now, was handled by the Vertikal team in Freiburg - was always a something of an issue for him. So, when he received an offer from KHL - the publisher of International Cranes - in 2006 to cover the German speaking market he naturally jumped at it.

He remained with International Cranes until the end of 2023, and during his time with the company moved to the west of Ireland. This probably helped develop the good relationship he had with Irish American company Stafford Cranes, which had acquired the Portuguese tower crane manufacturer Soima in 2021. He joined the company as marketing and new business development manager in the spring of 2024, with his contract expiring just a few weeks ago.



Mike Posener had an incredible optimism and passion for life, even while battling with very severe bouts of illnesses, which he knew could not be cured. If he couldn't walk when undergoing a particularly challenging course of treatments, he would still turn up at show like Bauma or Conexpo and rent a mobility scooter to get around and see everyone. In February 2019 he underwent a Bi-lateral lung transplant in Dublin, which typically has a 12 month recovery time frame, combined with regular treatment for the rest of your life. That did not stop him at all, and as mentioned he was devastated having not made it to Bauma this year where he was due to man the Stafford Crane stand.

In his last email to C&A publisher Leigh Sparrow, just a few weeks ago, he said: "I bring you the latest news from Stafford Tower Cranes, where I have accepted a mutual agreement to cancel my work contract with the owners. My final day with the company will be the last day of May."

"It is a shame, as so much has been achieved in such a short time frame, developing the company into a transcending stage of the tower crane market. Also introducing the new 'brand' and livery colours, two complete crane series and all new luffing designs with the very first model on display at Bauma. The lack of crane sales due to the current tower crane market was the catalyst that forced the Staffords to make this decision. I wish the company and all of its staff much success and good health in the future."

Sparrow added: "We had agreed to hold off publishing his news until early June but had no idea at all that he was as ill as he was as his body began rejecting his lungs, you would never have guessed from his regular correspondence and seemingly positive mood."

"Mike Posener was an unusual man, soft spoken, calm and yet more determined and persistent than almost anyone I have ever met. Our relationship over the years has certainly not been as close as you would think whenever we met up, and he could be a real pain to deal with as he simply would not take No as an answer - in a nice and polite way though. Yet he was always good company, a pleasure to be with, measured, often very kind, generous and always good to see. I will miss seeing him, as will many others across the crane world."

While the news has not been online long, some of the comments include:

"The editorial staff of Solleware and staff of Mediapoint & Exhibitions reserve their deepest condolences to the family of Mike Posener, preserving his professional value and the memory of his extraordinary humanity."

"RIP Mike, was always a pleasure to meet you. Sad we won't be catching up soon."



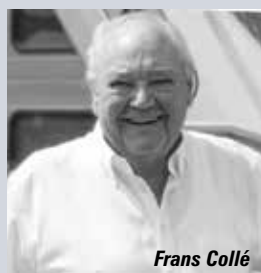
Mike Posener in 2005 when he joined Vertikal

FRANS COLLÉ 1946-2025

Dutch access and equipment rental veteran and entrepreneur Frans Collé, the face of Collé Rental & Sales for many years, has died. We understand that he passed away on the evening of Friday June 7th having suffered from ill health for some time, he was 78. He leaves behind his beloved wife Nelke, his children Frits and Esther, and several grandchildren.

Frans was the third generation to run the 125 year old family business, which has been owned and managed by his son Frits since 2005, although he remained very much involved especially during the first 10 years of the hand over. In addition to the business Frans had a passion for motorsport which he supported personally and financially. A minute's silence was observed on the local race track in his honour.

A statement on behalf of the company and its employees said: "Frans Collé was not only a successful entrepreneur but also a warm and sincere man. He had a big heart for his family, his employees, and his customers. His wisdom, humour, and determination will be deeply missed by all who knew him. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and



all who held him dear during this difficult time."

"Frans, we will always remember you as a man who worked with passion and dedication - but above all, as someone who made a meaningful difference in the lives of others. In loving memory of a remarkable man." The Management and Colleagues Collé Rental & Sales



Frans and Frits Collé during an interview with C&A in 2013

THOMAS RENWICK 1936-2025

UK crane and access pioneer and veteran Tom Renwick has died. He passed away on May 25th following a long period of ill health, he was 87 a few days short of his 88th birthday. He leaves behind son Alan and daughter Beth, having lost his wife Betty a few years ago.

In 1967 he got his first taste of the rental market with J. Bowen & Sons of Glasgow where he was appointed plant hire representative, taking up a similar role three years later with Rowan & Boden Plant Hire in Renfrew, before joining Motherwell Bridge Plant Hire as plant hire manager in 1971.

Over the next few years, he moved up through the ranks to director and then managing director. It was during this period that he played a key role in kicking off the self-propelled aerial lift market in the UK.

In February 1975, and by now a director of Motherwell Bridge Plant, he travelled to the USA to attend what was still widely known as the 'Chicago Road Show', but officially the International Construction Equipment Exposition, becoming Conexpo when it moved to Houston in 1981 and Las Vegas in 1987. The main purpose of the trip was to look at cranes following an invitation to join a trip organised by one of the US crane manufacturers. However, while at the show he wandered through the lesser visited back halls where he spotted a small stand, for a company that he had never heard of, called JLG.

What attracted his attention was a 40ft boom lift - the JLG 40F. Manning the young company's stand was chief executive John Grove. Renwick agreed to buy five units of a diesel powered model which became the 40FDR and was offered the distribution rights. When he got home he had a call from Paul Adorian of EPL who had agreed the same deal with one of Grove's colleagues. The two men recall what happened differently.

Speaking of the JLG deal a year or two ago, Renwick said "When the first machines arrived with us, John Grove arranged for an HSE inspection so that the new machines had some form of official approval. I recall collecting the two inspectors from Inverness airport and taking them to our yard in Evanton. The first thing they did not like about the booms was the fact that the gate was not self-closing, so we agreed to add a spring to it. Then when we did the overload test, the machine tipped - not an overturn, it just leaned forward as the back wheel lifted off the ground. When they asked what we were going to do about it we agreed to contact JLG and find a solution - probably more counterweight? Which we did."

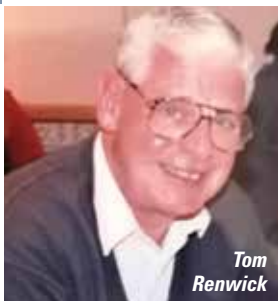
Tom Renwick spent most of his life in the construction equipment industry having started out in 1958 as a mechanical engineering draughtsman apprentice with Colvilles of Motherwell, with a focus on the erection and commissioning of a steelworks at Ravenscraig.

His entry into the construction equipment industry kicked off in 1964, when he joined Reekie Plant in Glasgow as an area sales representative selling Komatsu machines.

He said that he sold the first JLG booms to the Burrell Collection in Glasgow, an aluminium plant in North Wales, while Hewden Stuart took two and the fifth went into the Motherwell Bridge rental fleet.

That rental unit went to work at an offshore rig construction company, blasting topsides. When recalling the deal he said: "It replaced an 18 tonne Grove Rough Terrain crane with a basket, which tied up the high cost crane and its operator, while not providing the best solution for the blast crew. So, the switch to the JLG boom made sound economic sense as well as being safer. The company was delighted with the demonstration we organised, so when they asked for a rate, I quoted them £300/week which they jumped at. The list price of the machine at that time was £12,000, but we had a 25 percent dealer discount and then on top of that you could claim a 20 percent investment grant, reducing the effective cost to £7,000 - Happy Days!"

Motherwell Bridge was also a dealer for Acklift truck mounted lifts, and he claims to have sold the very first truck mounted lift



over 30 metres to arrive in Scotland - a 31.3 metre model. Adding: "There is much more to tell, but I was very fortunate to have come into the industry at a time when we seemed to be constantly trailblazing."

He left Motherwell Bridge in 1985 and for a year worked at Ingersoll Rand Sales as distribution manager for Scotland, before deciding to buy his local pub, the Craignethan in Lesmahagow, which he ran with his wife Betty, and their teenage children Alan and Beth for the next five years.

The pull of the equipment industry remained with him, and in 1991 he joined the Genie and Niftylift dealer William Laird as managing director, a role he held for the next 11 years, retiring in 2002.

However, as a member of the Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers (CMPE) association for most of his career, he agreed to become vice chairman and secretary in 2004 and chairman the following year.

He said that he had been lucky to have led a fascinating and varied life, travelling the world to exhibitions and conventions in Chicago and Seattle as well as Iceland, and Germany to name just a few.

Tom Renwick was true character and always one to speak his mind, while forthright and 'not one to suffer fools gladly' he was genuine, straight forward and like things to be correct. Even long after he retired when he would call or write to us to suggest we deal with an issue or correct an inaccuracy he had come across or heard from others. We will miss his calls and suggestions.

"Tom was my 'MD' at Motherwell Bridge Plant at Ladywell Rd, some 40 odd years ago and taught me a hell lot about the 'plant game', he was a true gent and great boss and friend so sad to hear his passing and my condolences to Alan + Beth, R.I.P"

DFB

"Many fond memories of time spent with Tom during his decade at William Laird - always enjoyable company.

RIP Tom"

Paul Richards

"Another real Character from the Genie and Niftylift dealer network sadly lost. We enjoyed many a happy time at conferences, ARA's and Conexpo's including New Orleans amongst others. We enjoyed the best of times for the industry pioneering whilst enjoying it to the full. RIP Tom (we will raise a wee dram to you!). Sincere condolences to the family."

Tony Mort

"I was lucky enough to share many happy hours with Tom over the years. Warm, funny, knowledgeable, a great guy.

Condolences to his family, RIP Tom"

Mike Evans

"RIP Tom. A great access industry character who I got to know well back in the day as part of the Genie Dealer Group. My deepest sympathy to his family."

Julie Houston

"Tom was a character and a gentleman and an all-round nice guy. RIP"

Longstaff

I first met Tom when he was with William Laird and got on really well with him, he was a great character, very sad to hear of his passing, RIP Tom,

Kevin Fox



MICHAEL KILLEEN R.I.P

We have received the sad news that Michael Killeen, the founder of Laois Hire in Ireland and chief executive of HSS Hire Ireland has died.

He passed away peacefully on Monday, surrounded by his family, following a short illness, he was - we understand - in his mid to late 60s. He leaves behind wife Maureen and son Mike, along with two grandchildren.

Killeen's father, John, was a well known hurler from Galway but moved to Portlaoise and set up an equipment rental company and land reclamation business in Laois at the start of the 1960s. Having worked alongside his father for several years, in 1989 he and his wife Maureen decided to set up their own rental business for tools and small equipment, which became Laois Hire, formally registering the company in 1992. Over the next 15 years they built it into one of the largest players in the Irish



Michael Killeen

equipment rental industry. In those early days Michael worked as delivery driver, warehouse manager and mechanic, while Maureen manned the hire desk and handled the administration.

The Laois Hire business was acquired by UK based HSS in 2005 for around €5 million, with the two remaining on board to manage the business. Then in 2021 Laois Hire was acquired by Briggs for €11.2 million. Michael then served as managing director of HSS Hire Ireland and Scotland. In April HSS Ireland was acquired by the Irish builders merchant group Chadwicks for €31.6 million.

Killeen was well known for being a hardworking and astute business man and was widely respected not only in his industry but locally, if not nationally. The couple also sponsored the Portlaoise Senior Hurlers later becoming a major sponsor of the Portlaoise GAA club for many years, having helped rescue it at one point. Michael Killeen was always passionate about machinery, the land, nature and animals and loved to keep fit, riding his bike and keeping active. Those who had dealings with him have said he was always a fair and honest businessman.

A funeral service was held at Saint Peter and Paul's Church, Portlaoise on June 19th, when HSS Ireland closed its branches as a mark of respect.

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