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READERS LETTERS

COVER OF THE YEAR 2025

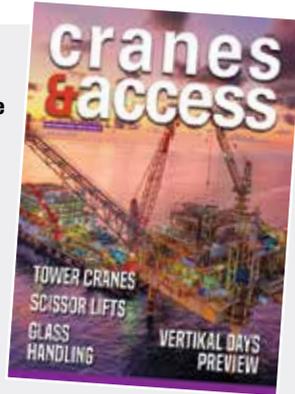
The results are in from our reader survey, which asked them to choose their favourite cover of the year. The winner with 29.5% of the votes was issue 27.4 - July/August, see below.

The runner-up was issue 27.6 with 23% of the votes cast. One cover 27.2 got no votes - Null point!

As promised, we held a draw for a winner among those who chose the winning cover, and the winner is...**Vincent Tong**, of Galmon Construction, so assume he is based in Singapore. We will be in contact with him.

The full voting record is as follows:

| | | | |
|------|--------|------|--------|
| 27.1 | 13.60% | 27.5 | 4.50% |
| 27.2 | 0% | 27.6 | 23.00% |
| 27.3 | 9% | 27.7 | 6.80% |
| 27.4 | 29.50% | 27.8 | 13.60% |



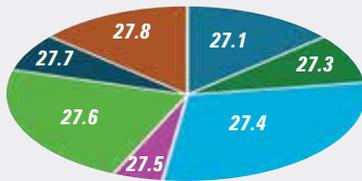
27.1



27.2



27.3



27.4



27.5



27.6



27.7



27.8

NICE ONE IPAF

It was good to read about the IPAF statement you posted on Vertikal.Net this week. I wanted to add my five eggs/experience to the debate, as we have had some direct experience of this.

We have already had a number of frustrating experiences, delivering our lifts to job sites in and around London. The worst by far was when, after some haggling, a contractor booked 20 small scissors which, thank god we were able to supply. As you might suspect, the rate per unit per week was not exactly the best, and this for machines that were new or almost new. But a deal for 20 machines for at least a couple of months' hire and probably more, is not to be sneezed at these days.

But! when our drivers started delivering to site, we ran into a problem. They were not fitted with an xxxxx overhead crushing protection system, which is a mandatory requirement on this job! They were all fitted with a perfectly decent, state of the art manufacturers system, but not the specific one they wanted!!! The cost of installing those systems on the 20 units was in the thousands, and not something you can get any sensible finance for - so it would have had to come out of our cash flow!! And would they pay for it? Hell no!!

In the end, all we could do was say 'Sorry, you take them like this or pay for the new systems, to be added, either directly or through an increase in the hire rate'. Otherwise, we can't supply you.

We thought they might say, 'OK, go ahead this time, bring them on' we knew they would not pay the extra for the systems - Ha. But No! They would not budge. And let me tell you, losing a contract like that, even with the rubbish rates, was heartbreaking.

So I was really happy to see the IPAF statement. I have at times been critical of them, and sometimes wondered what I get for my dues. But seeing this, I almost get it. I really hope that they follow up with these contractors and ram the message home. Oh, by the way, some of the hire rate charts in the last magazine were wrong.

Transcribed from a long telephone call - we thought it best to withhold the name given our correspondent's hesitancy.

As to the final comment regarding an error in the last C&A, you can find the proper charts on page 53 of this issue and in the digital versions of the magazines.

A CRANE MARRIAGE

Dear Vertikal,

In the current climate of 'doom & gloom' I thought I would share a nice story with you both, that is crane related. We are proud to announce the marriage of our son Thomas to his wife, Hannah Issitt (nee Faulkner) on Thursday afternoon 12th February at the George hotel, Stamford.

Both Thomas and Hannah work at Crowland Cranes, Thomas is a product support engineer while Hannah is a CPCS crane operator and qualified Appointed Person.

The happy couple were presented with a special gift from the team at Crowland, a 1968 Series 2a Land Rover. The vehicle was a project that was started back in 2019, between Thomas and his late Grandfather, Norman Issitt. When Norman passed away in 2021, the project was 'mothballed' and nothing happened to it.

On the announcement of the future wedding plans last year, the team at Crowland secretly completed a full 'nut & bolt' restoration for the couple and presented the special, surprise gift to them during the Wedding on Thursday.

The happy couple are now enjoying a well-deserved honeymoon, before returning to work.

Yours

Peter Issitt



MARCEL BRAUD 1932 - 2026

As February arrived, we received the news that Manitou founder and Rough Terrain forklift and telehandler pioneer Marcel Braud had died. The honorary chairman of Manitou passed away on Tuesday February 3rd, at the age of 93. He leaves behind his wife, sons Marcel-Claude and Sébastien Braud and daughter Emilie. Around 2,000 people came to pay their respects at or near the funeral in Ancenis on February 10th.

Marcel Braud was 13 when his father, Marcel Braud senior, was shot and killed on August 5th 1944, the day American troops liberated his hometown of Ancenis. Senior's widow Andrée Braud, was left with Marcel and 13 month old Jacqueline, as well as the agricultural seed and feed business that she and her husband had founded before the war. But wishing to continue her husband's secret wartime engineering work on cranes and concrete block machines, she formed a new company Braud Mécanique Générale, which became Manitou in 1958.

She had noticed that the young Marcel had enjoyed working in the workshop with his father after school and could see that he had a similar passion for engineering as his father did, so he soon became involved in the new business during the weekends and school holidays.

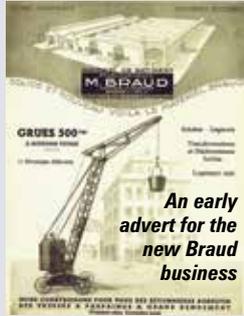
In 1953, as her son completed his studies, Andrée Braud had the foresight to bring experienced managerial backup and support into the business in the form of Henri Fauchoux, a tough manager who took a 25 percent stake in the company, which was renamed Braud et Fauchoux.

Fauchoux helped introduce the young Marcel Braud to new managerial disciplines and ensured that he got to know, experience and understand every job in the growing business, by working his way up through all the different roles in the company, from labourer to painter, welder, assembler, foreman, workshop manager and purchasing manager. It was a perfect education for when he eventually took over the running of the business.

Marcel Braud became the chief executive in 1970 and continued to transform the family business into the market leading telehandler and Rough Terrain forklift manufacturer, both in France and internationally. At the same time, he steered the company through a number of economic challenges without losing family control. In 2007, he handed over the day to day management of the business to his son Marcel Claude Braud, and took on the role of



Marcel Braud 2004



An early advert for the new Braud business



Marcel Braud and Jean Rabine on the stand at the first Paris Fair 1946



Marcel Braud purchasing manager



Marcel Braud at the controls of an early RT forklift

chairman, a position he held until 2017, after which he became honorary chairman.

In 1976, the company decided to upgrade its crane range and introduced what became its most popular model, the tractor based SP self-erecting tower crane, with a lift height up to 20 metres and a maximum radius of 18 metres. The crane sold well, at least in France and the UK. When the company exited the crane market around 1980, the designs and tooling were sold to a manufacturer in India.

A statement from the company said: "The life of Marcel Braud is a story of a destiny tied to the land and to ingenuity. Fatherless at the age of 13, he worked as a labourer, a painter, a welder, an assembler, a foreman, a workshop manager and a purchasing manager, mastering every production role within the company. In 1958, he imagined the improbable: reversing the layout of a farm tractor to add a forklift mast and power steering to create the 'Manitou'. This simple yet revolutionary idea would travel the globe, transforming construction sites, farms & industrial markets forever."

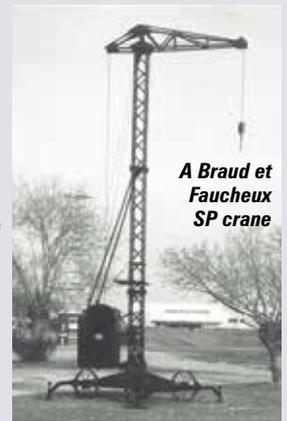
"Under his leadership, the group expanded beyond France's borders to export worldwide, went public, continued to innovate relentlessly, and built a robust dealer network that, now more than ever, represents the company's core strength. An insatiable man of the field, he continued to visit the group's factories and international trade shows regularly through early 2026 in order to remain in contact with customers and employees. Until his final breath, he embodied the passion, ingenuity, and resilience that define the soul of the group."

His sister, Manitou group chairman, Jacqueline Himsworth, said: "My brother dedicated his life to Manitou. Thanks to him, our small family business became an international leader, recognised for its products, values, and innovation. He was a passionate man who shared his energy and pride

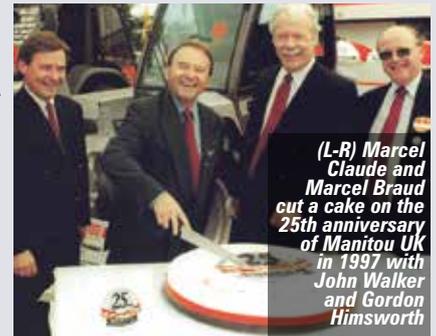
in belonging to our group with everyone. He possessed that rare genius for anticipating the needs of professionals. We are losing a visionary, but his entrepreneurial spirit continues to guide our course. Marcel-Claude, Sébastien and Emilie Braud join me in sharing our profound grief."

Manitou chief executive Michel Denis added: "Marcel Braud was an extraordinary man and entrepreneur. Throughout the decades spent at the head of the group, he created exceptional products, experiences, and solutions with pride and perseverance, and in doing so, contributed significantly to changing the daily lives of millions of professionals in construction, agriculture, and industry. It is to him that we owe the 'big family' culture that continues to inspire our teams around the world today. The management team and all 6,000 employees join in the grief of his family and loved ones."

Marcel Braud was indeed a very special person, full of energy, passion and always ready with a warm smile. He clearly enjoyed meeting people and the business and would surely have continued to remain 'involved' had he lived another decade. Thousands in the industry will mourn his passing.



A Braud et Fauchoux SP crane



(L-R) Marcel Claude and Marcel Braud cut a cake on the 25th anniversary of Manitou UK in 1997 with John Walker and Gordon Himsworth



A Braud crane



Marcel Braud

RICHARD KEITH RAWLINGS 1941 - 2026

Richard Rawlings, owner and managing director of R&M Marketing, which has looked after IPAF marketing almost since it was established and who played an important role in setting up the PAL training card programme, has died following a short illness.

He passed away peacefully on Friday, January 23rd, at a hospice with his wife Margaret and their sons John and James by his side. He was 84 and would have been 85 in April, although you would never have guessed, given his energy and enthusiasm.

Richard Rawlings was born in an air raid shelter on the Sussex coast during a Luftwaffe bombing raid in April 1941. After attending Lancing College he started work in the mail room of a PR agency, and before long was noticed as someone with potential, and his ascent began. He eventually became an account manager at a London advertising agency, a role he subsequently held at various agencies from the sixties through to the start of the 1990s, culminating with a main board appointment at a major London communications agency.

In 1992, he decided to set up his own company with his wife, Margaret, R&M Marketing. Not long after they opened, Richard was approached by Paul Adorian, the first managing director of IPAF, who was looking for help in devising a credit card-style proof of training card to be issued to those who successfully completed IPAF's operator training course, and the PAL Card was born.

Rawlings has been closely involved with IPAF for more than 30 years,



Richard Rawlings

producing supporting material for its growing range of training courses and membership recruitment drives, while also handling its advertising. He maintained a keen interest in IPAF's achievements and was proud to be associated with the organisation, attending most of its Summits and major meetings over the years to meet members and look for inspiration.

He was working until just before his health took a steep downturn after Christmas. Having recently decided to retire, he had already started to notify his clients.

Richard Rawlings was a big character, gentle yet tough, fair and totally consistent, at least at work. And always a gentleman. He will be missed by everyone who knew or worked with him.



Richard Rawlings

Richard Rawlings getting an early taste of an aerial work platform at RAF Duxford

**It was a pleasure to have known and worked with him**

It was a great pleasure to have known and worked with Richard Rawlings during my time at KHL, Vertikal and IPAF. A larger than life character who avoided the limelight, and therefore probably not known to many of your readers, but he was hugely good at what he did. He was instrumental in creating the foundation for much of today's IPAF branding and was passionate about safety. A keen eye for a great restaurant was another fine attribute, and he was always excellent company. RIP Richard, and congratulations on the success of R&M.

Tim Whiteman



Richard Rawlings

HARALD MARTIN KUNDE 1962-2026

German telehandler and aerial lift sales veteran Harald Martin Kunde passed away on January 29 at the age of 63, having suffered from a heart issue for some time.

He spent most of his career with Manitou in Germany, joining the company in 2000 as the regional manager for southern Germany. He left the company and the telehandler/aerial lift business in 2022 and moved to Switzerland, where he tried his hand in the hotel trade for a while before retiring and moving back to Germany.

One of the people who knew him well said: "Martin was the face of Manitou in the region for a very long time and was always friendly and approachable."



Harald Kunde