

READERS LETTERS

COMMENT JULY

Dear Sir,
I found myself agreeing with so much of Mark Darwin's comment this month about Artificial Intelligence and technology that I felt I needed to tell you.

I would love to see a well-worded Readers Poll on what others think of companies that only use AI chatbots for customer service.

Nice job,
Tim Smith

We appreciate feedback on all of our work and will see if we can follow up on these suggestions. I should say that we do have an online poll on the possible effects of AI on companies in our sector over the next few years. The question is: 'Do you think that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will make a major difference to rental company operations over the next three years?'

As of writing this the tally is: Yes - 52% No - 27% Not Sure -21%

If you have not already seen it, simply scroll down on the home page of www.Vertikal.net and add your opinion to the poll.

ALAN CHARLESWORTH - TAKE 3

The following letter from David Moreton adds to the tribute we posted in the June issue of Cranes & Access, and the letter and additions sent in by David Carncross and published in the July/August edition of the magazine.

Hi Leigh,

Thank you and the team for continuing to include me on your mailing list. I always pass my copy on to John Powell after I have finished reading it.

Alan worked for Mobile Lifting Services at the Rotherham Headquarters. He was also one of their travelling Hire Desk Trainers and holiday 'stand ins' at the various depots, if and when required.

Dave Carncross will be right about his post-South Africa career. I hope to visit the Vertikal Days show on 9/10 September, subject to Son and Grandson availability.

If I can help in any way with Crane Hire History, please do contact me!

Pass on my regards to Nick Johnson and any other team members who may remember me.

Kind Regards

David Moreton.



DICK SCHALEKAMP 1931 - 2026

Dutch crane and access veteran Dick Schalekamp Senior, founder of Richards & Wallington International and Riwal passed away on Monday, August 3rd, at the age of 95 after a long and active life. Sadly, his wife Maria passed away around 20 months ago, just shy of her 94th birthday.

He leaves behind his son Dick Schalekamp Junior and seven grandchildren. Tragically, he lost his two other sons, the eldest Jaap, who passed away in 2019, and his middle son, Jan-Dick, who died in 1995 while in his mid-30s, following a heart attack when playing in a football match.



Dick and Maria Schalekamp - 2007



The Schalekamp family (L-R) Jaap, Dick Sr, Maria, Dick Junior and Jan-Dick

In addition to all his work and family achievements, Dick Schalekamp was a keen supporter and sponsor of Dordrecht Football Club, which held a minute's silence in his memory before its game with Jong Ajax on Friday, August 7th, which they won. They will also wear black armbands during the season opener.



Dordrecht FC held a minute's silence for Dick before their game on Friday Aug 7th

The history

In 1968, Dick Schalekamp joined British crane rental company Richards & Wallington to set up a Dutch offshoot of its business, under the name Richards & Wallington International bv, its first overseas operation. The new business soon became a success, which encouraged the British company to open other crane rental companies in continental Europe.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

The News Highlights page in Cranes & Access is one of my favourites; you can see all the small news on a single page - just great! But it can be really crowded sometimes. I don't know what you did in this issue (July/August), but it seems a lot better laid out and readable.

Adrian Duquenois

Simples - as it came fast on the heels of the June issue, the volume of this type of news was lower than when the gap is two months. Adrian Duquenois is not the first person to make a comment such as this... The problem is we hate to leave items out and going to a second page sort of defeats the object. But we are open to further suggestions.





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The early days of R&W International with Dick Snr on the far left



The R&W Radius magazine - Dutch page



The early days of R&W International

In 1980, the Richards & Wallington group ran into financial difficulties, so Dick Schalekamp took over the Dutch business and stepped up its expansion. The business became one of the leading companies in the Dutch crane rental market, with an extensive fleet including a good few Rough Terrain cranes, some of the earliest All Terrains and truck cranes - of course.

In 1987, youngest son Dick Junior joined the company, and the family decided to enter the powered access rental market and charged Dick Junior with setting it up and developing the new venture, while eldest son Jaap managed the ongoing crane rental operations. Around this time, they also took the decision to change the company name to Rival. Two years later, Dick Senior transferred the ownership of the company to his three sons.

In 1995, JLG made the decision to change distributors from HDW, a pure sales company, to sales and rental company Rival, which had promised to place some major stock orders if they were appointed. The move was an important step in the ongoing growth of Rival's aerial lift business, and true to its word, the company more than kept its promise to JLG, typically placing orders in excess of 1,000 boom and scissor lifts at a time. (As an aside, HDW replaced the JLG account with Genie).

At the turn of the millennium, the family began working more closely with Doron Livnat of crane company Hovago and through his holding company



1982 - a rare 30t Coles Ranger 530 All Terrain in the fleet



Dordrecht carnival 1985



Pro-Delta, which took a stake in the business, acquiring a third of the equity with Jaap and Dick Jnr holding the rest. In 2008, this was extended to 50 percent when Jaap left the business, and then 100 percent in 2012 when Dick Jnr left the company.



Jaap Schalekamp, Doron Livnat and Dick Jnr

In 2007, the family sold the crane business to Sarens, in order to focus on aerial work platforms and telehandlers, adding additional countries to its JLG distribution area. Rival was acquired by Boels in 2024.

In 2007 Dick was made a Ridder in de Orde van Oranje Nassau (a Knight of the Royal Order of Orange-Nassau) for his voluntary work over more than three decades, during which time he gave of his time, expertise and financial support to a number of clubs, foundations and charities, all the while building up the business that he had founded.

Dick Schalekamp was truly a great man in every way and a key player in the Dutch crane and the European aerial lift rental market. He was also a true family man and widely respected by Rival employees, long after he handed over the business.

The world is very much a poorer place without him. He really was one of the good guys and was always ready with his fantastic laugh, a massive smile and a bright twinkle in his eye. He had a great generosity in his heart and was a warm and thoroughly decent individual as well as a character.

His passing will be mourned by many, not only in the Netherlands but across Europe and North America.



Dick receiving his Knighthood



Andrew Sutliff

ANDREW 'ANDY' SUTLIFF 1962 - 2026

We have received the tragic news that UK crane and access veteran Andy Sutliff of crane rental company NMT has died. He passed away on the 17th of July at the age of 63, just a few weeks shy of his 64th birthday. He leaves behind his wife Pam and two sons, Thomas and Toby.

After leaving school, Andy trained as a carpenter before joining his father at the contractor Lorne Stewart but then spent a few years working as a professional diver and scuba diving instructor.

He met his wife, Pam, and, as he would always tell it, "got a proper job with PTP aerial platforms". Over the next five years, he learned a great deal about the access industry and the equipment and was delighted to be offered a position at major rental company Charles Wilson (CW) in 2004.

He became an IPAF instructor and was

renowned for his problem solving abilities, as is acknowledged by CW's managing director David Gallagher. He says that he remembers Andy every time he drives through the Hatfield tunnel, since Andy had recommended the right machines for the job and put together a first rate system for taking down the large fans for servicing.

He particularly enjoyed working with Charles Wilson co-founder David Wilson, building links with the film and TV studios, and among the many films he worked on are the Harry Potter series, James Bond 007, Pirates of the Caribbean, Robin Hood and many more.

He always worked long hours and eventually decided that his daily commute to London was unsustainable as he got older. He therefore accepted a position at NMT in 2017, with the yard being only six miles from home.

Tim Ambridge of NMT said: "They say that as boys grow up their toys just get bigger and that was certainly the case at NMT as Andy developed his knowledge of cranes. He was able to maintain his links with the film studios and further expand the NMT client base as media operations manager."

"He loved meeting new people and making friends and was totally committed to his work. I am sure that many will have individual memories of hanging Christmas lights or of the contraptions he invented to hang lighting rigs and screens safely off machines."

In recent years, he had suffered from a number of

health issues but continued to be dedicated to the industry and the work he loved. He continued to work until May, when he was taken into hospital due to progressive respiratory issues. However, he remained determined to get back to work and typically downplayed the severity of his problems.

"He fought to the end and will be fondly remembered by family, friends and colleagues. A loving husband and father who doted on his family and is recognised for his commitment and inspirational problem solving within the construction industry," said Ambridge.

More input

Dear Vertikal,

I was absolutely flattened by this news, Andy was a great friend and a perfect human being. We will certainly miss you, Matey, love to all the family.

Futterhorn.

Dear Vertikal,

One of the nicest guys to work with, and always spoke fondly of his boys. The world is a worse place without him. Our thoughts are with his family.

Mega



Andrew Sutliff

PETER 'PETE' MATTHEW ELLIS 1961 - 2026

UK/Middle East access industry veteran Peter Ellis passed away suddenly and without warning on Thursday, August 13th in Dubai, where he had lived for the past 12 years.

He was apparently preparing to head out for a game of tennis, one of his favourite sports, when he died. He was 65 in January.

Peter Ellis spent almost his entire working life in the access industry, starting out with scaffold, tower, aerial lift and specialist platform and staging manufacturer Planet Platforms in the early 1990s, becoming one of the owners and remaining a director for many years.

Early on in the new Millennium, he joined CTE UK where he worked with Brian King on the launch of the Power Tower low level platform. Joining Power Towers when it was set up, he remained on board through its acquisition by JLG in 2015, having moved to the Middle East in 2014 as general manager, Power Towers Middle East. He played a critical role in Power Towers' considerable success in the region during the years when he was 'leading the charge'.

At the start of 2021, he joined Dingli as general manager of its Middle East operation, which also covers North Africa. In the years since then, he has played a major role in gaining a solid market share for the manufacturer throughout the region



Peter Ellis

and was involved in setting up its service operation in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

He also played an active role with IPAF in the region, becoming chairman of its Middle East Regional Council in 2019.

Peter Ellis was a highly consistent, professional, knowledgeable, reliable, smart and decent individual and always good company, no matter what the occasion. He will be missed and mourned by a wide swathe of the access industry.

A statement from Dingli Middle East said:

"We are deeply saddened by the passing of Peter Ellis, general manager of Dingli Middle East. Since joining Dingli in 2021, Peter led

our team across GCC and North Africa, leaving a lasting legacy for Dingli's growth in the Middle East market."

"A highly respected industry veteran, he was known for his wisdom and humility towards colleagues and partners. His passing is a tremendous loss to all of us. We will honour his legacy and continue the work he passionately built. Our sincere condolences go to Peter's family and loved ones. May he rest in peace."

Peter Ellis
chairman
of IPAF
Middle
East

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