

PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION



Pat Stone, David B Smith, Michael Finn, David Stone and Gillian Stone

MICHAEL FINN RECEIVES THE PETER STONE AWARD AT THE PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION

Lord Howie of Troon hosted the 2007 President's reception and award ceremony in the Cholmondeley Room in the House of Lords on 23 February 2007. A drinks reception preceded the formal presentations.

Presidential Address

My Lord Howie of Troon, Past Presidents, Honorary Members, Life Vice-Presidents and Members of Council of the Association, Honoured Guests, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this President's reception and awards presentation in these magnificent and historic surroundings.

The primary purpose of this function is to honour various persons for various achievements, and for some years the Association has been fortunate to be able to hold this annual function at this location for which we thank those members of the House of Lords who have arranged the facility.

The Association is currently in its 82nd year and is rightfully proud of its history and achievements. I am sure that when Sir Edwin Lutyens founded the then Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors in 1925 he did not envisage the Association developing into the organisation we have today.

From the outset the objectives of the Association have been 'to promote and advance the knowledge, study and practice of each and all of the arts and sciences concerned with building technology, planning, design, construction, maintenance and repair of the built environment and the creation and maintenance of a high standard of professional qualification, conduct and practice;' and 'to encourage and facilitate co-operation between the construction professions.' The breadth of these has, I believe, been a major contributing factor in

the development and success of the Association.

The original structure clearly created both horizontal and vertical links between the members, vertical by specialist discipline and horizontal by branch geographic area. This resulted in a wonderful mixing of expertise and, through technical meetings and functions, a broadening of the knowledge of each member. From a personal viewpoint I joined the Association in 1976 as a member of the Fire Surveying discipline and started to attend the regular meetings of the Thames Branch. Here I met with members of most of the other disciplines represented in the overall membership and we all valued the networking opportunities of meetings and technical visits because we learnt about other members' professional work and expertise. Alas, the pace of life 30 years on is such that getting people to attend technical meetings is difficult, both during the working day due to employer restrictions and during evenings due to travel difficulties, and an understandable desire to spend non-working hours doing something other than an activity connected with work.

Despite the changed circumstances, the Association has an increasing and wide-ranging membership, drawn from both within the United Kingdom and overseas. It enjoys freedom from constitutional restraints and has a unique independence and breadth of influence, with consequent national and international recognition. This is clearly shown by the representation we have here today from Government – local and national, other professional bodies, the construction industry and the codes and standards-making organisations.

In this connection, and in the hope that I do not offend anybody, I am personally very pleased to see amongst the guests, David Hughes



David B Smith and Rosemarie Everton



Edward A F Smith and David B Smith



Terence Loveless and David B Smith

– current President of the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers whom I have worked with in connection with Engineers' Registration for six years; Bill Cox – Current International President of the Institution of Fire Engineers and their Chief Executive Ellen Jessett, an Institution of which I have been a member since 1986 and was their International President in 2002/03; a number of Presidents and Chief Executives of other professional bodies – some of whom I have met in recent times; Mike Low – Director of BSI, an organisation which is close to my heart as a chairman/member of a number of Technical Committees; various current and past civil servants involved with fire safety issues (under a number of different departmental names) with whom I have worked on legislation and guidance issues over a few years; a number of past recipients of the Peter Stone Award – more about whom later; five of the Association's Honorary Fellows; and eleven past Presidents – some of whom are still very active in the Association. Whilst the Association's original base, its current headquarters and 92% of its professional membership are based in Great Britain and Ireland, we have good links with a number of international bodies and active memberships in Malaysia and Hong Kong. Malaysia has had an ABE Centre for some years, and it gave me great personal pleasure to organise the creation of our first Overseas Branch in Hong Kong whilst there in November last year. Existing links with educational institutions in Hong Kong are being strengthened and we already have a special diploma course at Guangzhou University organised through Hong Kong, aimed at providing a 'top-up' to achieve the standards needed for admission to membership of the Association.

Work is also underway to expand into mainland China which I visited on the Association's behalf last June and we have just been accepted into membership of PI-UK China – a collaborative venture between a number of related Institutions – which is a unique initiative recognising China as a key focus for built environment, construction and engineering activity internationally. Its aim is to provide access to a range of knowledge on the built environment and engineering professions, and to develop opportunities for collaboration between Chinese and UK professionals. Our Honorary Secretary, Pat Reddin, also continues to develop many valuable educational and professional links in South America and the Caribbean, and all of these activities clearly show a commitment to our aims and objectives.



David B Smith and Michael Finn



Patricia Tuck, Susan Smith, David B Smith, Michael Finn and George Tuck

Peter Stone Award

One of the most distinguished of the Association's Presidents was Peter Stone, President in 1981/1982 and his contribution to the work and advancement of the Association was incalculable. In recognition of his dedication and commitment the Association named its most prestigious award in honour of his memory. We are very pleased to welcome his wife, Pat, son David and his wife, Gillian, today.

The award was first made in 1982 and has been made in all but three years since then; one missing year does not really count as this function was moved from November to February a couple of years ago.

There have been 22 previous winners of this award and it is most pleasing to welcome six of them here today. They range from the second recipient in 1983, Bill Black, to the most recent in 2006, Dr Paul Stollard. The others are Past President Jim Cunningham, 1987; Honorary Fellow Graham Watts – Chief Executive of the Construction Industry Council, 1996; Honorary Fellow Paul Everall, currently Chief Executive of LABC Services, 1997; and Peter Jackman, 2001.

The Peter Stone Award is presented to people who have made an exceptional contribution to the promotion of the engineering and technological concepts of building, and those that have been at the forefront in the advancement, delivery and promotion of quality within the built environment. The award itself comprises an engraved silver salver, together with a commemorative certificate. The Association has a specialist panel of experts who deliberate over nominations made using a rigorous assessment process built around the principles noted a moment ago.

The Peter Stone Award for 2006 is being made to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the development and promotion of quality and standards within Building Control, Building Engineering and the Built Environment.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, a Fellow of the Association of Building Engineers, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.



Pat Stone and David B Smith



Diane Marshall, Winston Moore, Tony Auchterlounie, Rhys Taylor and Beryl Menzies



Terence and Mrs Loveless



Eddie Grace and David B Smith



Edward and Mrs Smith



Geoffrey Gower-Kerlake, Peter Jackman and Rosemarie Everton



Ken Ewing, Jim Cunningham and Dave Phythian



Lord Howie, David B Smith, Bill Black and Paul Everall

He was an equity partner in Drivers Jonas for 20 years before setting up Fox Management & Consulting, a niche consultancy in project and facility management. He is also a past President of the Building Surveyors Division of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Association of Consultant Building Surveyors. He chaired the CIC Group which piloted the first intake of Approved Inspectors and was the founder chairman of the Approved Inspectors Register. In 1992 he was appointed a member of the Government's Building Regulations Advisory Committee becoming Vice-Chairman in 2001 and Chairman in 2003, a position to which he has recently been re-appointed for a further three years. As if that was not enough, he is also Chairman of the Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group.

His biography states - 'When not heavily involved in building control, he enjoys working for nice clients, renovating an historic cottage in Dorset and sailing in warm water.' I will be intrigued to find out just how much time he has for these activities.

My Lord, Ladies and Gentlemen - it gives me great pleasure to present the Peter Stone Award to Michael Finn.

Michael Finn responded:

I am quite overwhelmed by the receipt of this award, not only as I am 23rd in a line of very distinguished people, but because I was so shocked when I was told of the honour that my mind went back over events which had not previously seemed significant; let me explain.

In about 1990 I was invited to join a group of professional elderly statesmen who met a couple of times a year (one of the occasions was over a splendid lunch) and debated who in the wide compass of the property and construction industries should be presented with the Peter Stone Award.

In early 2000, the invitations to join this group ceased, I missed the very splendid lunches and the company of those elder statesmen, but thought nothing of it, other than I had served for ten years and must have outgrown my usefulness. Imagine my surprise when, seven years later, I was invited to receive this award!

Can I tell you briefly how my pro bono publico work in the profession started? It was about 25 years ago and I was at the RICS headquarters just across the way in Parliament Square and there was an exhibition of work by building surveyors. The caption to the exhibition ran 'Work carried out by leading firms of Chartered Building Surveyors'. I was incensed as at the time I was responsible for the building surveying division at Drivers Jonas and certainly considered my firm a leading firm, yet I had not been invited to contribute to the exhibition. When I returned to the office I wrote a letter to the RICS expressing my views and received a brief reply which read: Dear Mr Finn, I apologise. The caption should have read: Work carried out by leading firms of chartered building surveyors who support their profession. Yours sincerely, Commander Michael Hewitt RN rtd. (Secretary Building Surveyors Division).

A couple of months later in a bar at an RICS conference, Commander Hewitt introduced himself and asked whether instead of complaining, I might like to get involved. That's where it started and I have thoroughly enjoyed all my pro bono activities since, but none of it would have been possible without the tremendous support of my partners in Drivers Jonas and in recent years my fiancée, Susan, who is here today together with her parents.

I remember many years ago when I had the privilege to be President of the RICS Building Surveying Division, someone was talking to one of my partners and said: I don't know how Michael finds the time for these activities, who does his work when he's not there? With not a moment of hesitation, my partner replied - the same people who do it when he is there!

Once again Mr President, I am truly overwhelmed and very grateful to have received this award; it will have a special place in our mud cottage in Dorset!

This was followed by the Fire Award presentation to Rosemarie Everton and presentation of the 50 years' continuous membership certificates.

Fire Award

I will now move on to the second of our awards today - Presentation of a special award in the form of a certificate which reads: Certificate for contribution to academic and legislative development and progression towards a fire-safe built environment.

This award is being made to a lady who has had a remarkable career and who has been a major influence in the lives of many people. She is also a remarkable person: having studied Law and obtained a Master of Laws degree she then embarked on a PhD. She was called to the Bar (Lincoln's Inn) in 1966. Her career then turned to the academic field and she has been a Lecturer in Law at University College London and Senior Lecturer in Law at Leicester University, involving postgraduate supervision, undergraduate lecturing and tutoring, examining, research and publication. In 1988, in addition to these ongoing responsibilities, she became Director of the Centre for Safety and Environmental Studies at Leicester University, specialising in professional development seminars in fire safety law and aspects of planning control. In 1998 she was appointed to the Chair in Fire Law at the University of Central Lancashire and is currently an Emeritus Visiting Professor at that University. She is also a Visiting Professorial Fellow at the Fire

Service College and, prior to that, was Visiting Lecturer at the Fire Service Staff College, Dorking.

From a family war-time based relationship with the Fire Service, she has spent very many years with the fire community, both with the public and private sectors. Her involvement has been, and continues to be, given expression in a variety of ways including research and writing, lectures and presentations and membership of Committees, including the short lived Fire Safety Advisory Board. She has published widely, papers and books singly and co-authored; and she has contributed to the creation of numerous fire-related seminars. Though having retired from her full-time academic appointment, she remains extensively engaged in 'matters fire'. I also noted from an earlier CV that her many interests include ballet, the theatre, animal welfare and countryside issues.

I have known the recipient for more years than either of us would care to remember and have listened to many of her excellent and finely crafted papers at seminars on all aspects of the law as it may affect fire safety-related matters. At the time of her appointment to the Chair in Fire Law she wrote in the commemorative publication: 'In the ever growing family of legal subjects, as in that of engineering, youthful newcomers begin to develop and to gain recognisable identities. Such, for instance, in the first half of the present century was the case with Planning Law and, more latterly, with Environment Law. And so it may be with Fire Law. In fact, we may draw a further analogue with environment law in that fire law is painted on a broad canvas, bringing together numerous traditional areas of law, and it may perhaps be considered no more than a shorthand to refer to 'fire law'. In truth what we may have, as a consequence of the very nature of fire and its myriad spheres of impact, is an array of legal arenas germane to fire situations.' and 'So, with the canvas of 'fire law' having such an expanse, and its hues being so colourful and intricate, what, in research and publication terms, is a possible way forward for the first holder of the Chair?'

And she concluded:

'With the appointment to this Chair, I believe that the fire community has bestowed upon me an implicit invitation to join in the effort which is daily made in the cause of safety. Together, it seems, we have been offered by this venture an opportunity to make further contributions to that end. Without doubt it poses a formidable challenge, and so, for all of us who are involved, I would pray for wisdom, seeking it from the true Fount of all wisdom, the Creator of the fire and the rose.'

Among the many presentations I have been privileged to hear was one given just under four years ago at a seminar in Taunton on the subject of Positive Pressure Ventilation. The paper she gave runs to 15 pages and was, as usual, filled with pros and cons, covering not only the issues concerned with the potential misuse of the equipment and the inadequacy/inefficiency in the adoption, management and deployment of PPV, but also those relating to the legal obligations for the ensuring of safety including that of the operators of the equipment.

Before moving on, I think it interesting to quote the words she used in concluding that presentation:

'From even the highlights noted it will be apparent that numerous possible legal consequences attend the introduction of PPV. Of course, this is so with any innovation which might be made regarding the provision and use of equipment, but it is felt that there is one aspect of PPV in particular which should not be ignored. This is that in the lay mind PPV would seem to run counter to what might be considered the 'instinctive' human responses to fire. It appears prima facie to be a 'fanning of the flames'. One wonders, would the judiciary immediately so picture it? If so, then there would emerge a need for their being carefully (and at an early stage) instructed in the technical realities.'

It may be argued that this last point is only a matter of perception and as such illusory, but it seems nevertheless worthy of being raised. So, I conclude, and with a quotation from Henry VI. It runs: '*A little fire is quickly trodden out, Which, being suffered, rivers cannot quench.*'

What, then, might Shakespeare have thought of PPV as a method of quenching a conflagration? I imagine he would have been intrigued by it – not only by reason of its apparent 'contrariness', but also by virtue of its inherent drama.'

And with that final example of her erudite style, I will proceed to the award itself, and it gives me great personal pleasure to ask Ann Rosemarie Everton to step forward.

Rosemarie responded, 'I am both honoured and delighted that the Association of Building Engineers should have seen fit to give me a special Award. Moreover, the occasion at the House of Lords when it was presented to me is one I shall always remember.'

As I said at that occasion, there are many weapons in the armoury with which to fight fire. Just one of them is law, of which much has been asked in recent times.

Alongside the law is, of course, engineering, and I believe that your profession will become ever more prominent in meeting the fire challenge. So it is that at the same time as tendering my sincere thanks, I offer my very best wishes for your future. Long may you succeed: it is vital you should.'

50 Years' Certificates

The Association has always held in high regard all its members and the following presentations mark remarkable achievements by a number of persons who have maintained their membership throughout their professional careers and, often, well beyond their retirement.

To achieve 50 years' continuous membership of any organisation is an achievement and particularly so with an organisation one is not likely to join until one has achieved majority.

This year we have NINE such members. Just think – they all joined in 1956 – I was still at school then. They range in age from 67 to 88 and four of them are over 75.

Each of these individuals has, through their membership, supported our Association and hopefully, in turn, the Association has assisted them in developing their own individual skills and leadership in their respective professions.

For various reasons only two of the nine can be with us today but I will mention all of them. Firstly I need to talk about two of those not present and whose contributions to the Association are worthy of special mention:

Martin Silber was President of the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors, the previous name of the ABE, until 1993. He was President for 1964-1965. That was 42 years ago!

Kenneth William Blount – Ken has given outstanding service to the Association and this was acknowledged with a special award in 2004. Ken was on the Council of the IAAS for many years and involved with the original Sector Committee for Municipal Building Surveyors. He served on the Education Committee and was its Chairman for many years. He was President of the IAAS in 1982-1983 and, interestingly, followed Peter Stone as President. In his day job he reached the heights of Chief of Building Control for Sheffield and he also served on BRAC for many years. I have known and worked with Ken since joining Council in 1991. It is amazing to think that he has crammed all that into his 71 years.

The others not here today are – Alan Rudman Drinkall, David Lawrence Newby, Thomas Allen Roberts, Brian Rolf, Geoffrey Benjamin Roper and, last but by no means least, Terence John Loveless and Edward Alfred Francis Smith. I now have pleasure in asking these last two to come forward and receive their certificates.