



IABSE NEWS

BRITISH GROUP.1986.

EDITORIAL.

Although IABSE is an international group of engineers we are always seeking ways of strengthening our UK membership and improving communication with them. Following recent discussions in the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE it has been agreed to reintroduce a regular NEWSLETTER and we hope you will find this edition of interest to you. If the venture is a success then we may progress to a more stylish format issued twice a year.

David Doran has agreed to edit IABSE NEWS and he hopes you will write to him at 17 BLAKEHALL CRESCENT LONDON E11 3RH with ideas and items which we can publish in future editions. We would be happy to include interesting views and career news from members.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

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PERSONALITIES.

BERNARD WEX. Following a wartime commission in the Royal Armoured Corps, Bernard graduated from Imperial College in London in 1950 and has been with Freeman Fox & Partners since that time. In his early career he assisted Sir Gilbert Roberts FRS and gained an interest in bridges. He has had prime responsibility for long span pipe suspension bridges across the Indus and Kabul rivers in West Pakistan, the longest clear suspension span (1410m) for the Humber Bridge (opened by the Queen in 1981); Foyle Bridge (N.Ireland) in joint venture with RDL & Graham Contracts Ltd.; 18km long precast segmental prestressed concrete viaduct in Kuwait and 2nd. Bosphorous Bridge in 1985. Bernard has been in great demand for his expertise on specialist enquiries and high level committees. He has been responsible for more than 20 publications on a wide range of topics. He became Managing Partner of Freeman Fox in 1981 and was awarded an O.B.E. in 1982 New Years Honours List. He was elected to the Fellowship of Engineering in the same year and last year was awarded the ICE Telford Medal. In addition to being the Chairman of the IABSE British Group he was Chairman of the International Technical committee from 1979-1983 and became Vice President in 1985. Photography is numbered among his hobbies and he is much in demand as an after dinner speaker.

PROFESSOR TONY CUSENS. First and second degrees at U.C.London followed military service in the R.A.F. After an early career in Bangkok Tony arrived in Leeds University as Professor of Civil Engineering and head of Dept. via Dundee University where he spent 13 years. He still maintains strong external links being a Director of Harry Stanger Ltd. a Consultant to Posford Parvy and Ptnrs. and a visiting specialist to TRRL. In addition to a number of editorial appointments he was President of The Concrete Society 1983/84. He is the author of two books concerning the analysis & design of bridge structures and has presented more than 60 papers. In his lifelong love affair with sport he has excelled at hockey and sailing and is now coming to grips with the gentler pursuit of golf.

DAVID LEE. David has compressed a great deal into a career which started by winning a Scholarship from the Brixton School of Building to his present position where inter alia he is Chairman

of Maunsell & Partners and President of the Institution of Structural Engineers. His first degree (in building) was gained at the then Manchester College of Technology and like many engineers he later took advantage of further studies leading to a DIC award. Although maintaining a very wide interest in his chosen career he has masterminded the design of many bridges in the UK, Gambia and Australia. His excellence has been recognised by many awards (ICE George Stephenson medal; ISE Two Oscar Faber awards; FIP medal) and in 1980 admission to the Fellowship of Engineering. He has written an authoritative work dealing with bridge bearings and expansion joints and has recently chaired a Committee which has drafted the best selling design manual for reinforced concrete building structures. His keen sense of humour is never far below the surface and for a little light relief he sketches (left handedly) and is a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Engineer & Transport Staff Corps.

OPINION.

It must have been an engineer whose last words, when he lay dying, were 'Don't let it end like this. Tell them I said something'.

We are not a profession which is good at attracting attention to ourselves or even our achievements. We are not even clever enough to so annoy someone like the Prince of Wales so that he reacts publicly, thus assuring everyone of our importance to society. That the leader of the Conservative Party thinks little of us is well shown by the honours she gives out. Contractors may get knighthoods, every recent president of the RIBA except Manser (who has only just retired as President) has had a CBE or a Knighthood; it is the builders and engineers who go unrecognised. The public does not think we are very important either. Innovation is something architects and designers engage in, watch any of the many television programmes on design.

Now what effect will the Court of Appeal's ruling that architects will not be held liable for the defects due to the design of structural engineers have on this? For twenty years it has been held that architects who delegated design functions to specialist sub-contractors were still liable for all the work including the design element. Now in the case of 'Investors in Industry Commercial Properties v South Bedfordshire District Council', the Council brought in as a third party to the action the architects and the

structural engineer. The latter who had designed, it transpired, thoroughly inadequate foundations, was uninsured. The case against the engineer was dropped but against the architect pursued. So the Court of Appeal ruled that the council 'had not come near' to establishing that the architect was professionally negligent. Lord Justice Slade said 'the architect will usually carry no legal responsibility for the work to be done by the expert'.

It should mean that, at last, since engineers will have sole responsibility for their structures, that they will take authority and recognition. Alas, I doubt we have the vision or the style. Then we will have lost our profession.

TED HAPPOLD.

*Can you tell us who said this ?

Footnote: The Liability Symposium held jointly with ISE on 29th May 1985 has, we believe, gone some way towards acting as a catalyst for the professional members of the construction industry to speak with one voice on the matter of the Law Reform Commission's recommendations on liability now being considered before Parliament.

OBITUARY. Lord Baker of Windrush.

In 1985 we learnt with regret of the death in his 85th year of Lord Baker of Windrush OBE; FRS; F.ENG. Leader at Cambridge of the plastic theory of structures and pioneer of the 'Morrison' air raid shelter in World War Two. In a glittering career spent mainly at Bristol and Cambridge Universities he received many awards including a Gold Medal from the Institution of Structural Engineers. He was one of a very select band who were Fellows of the Royal Society and of Engineering (where he was a founder Fellow). He was Knighted in 1961 and became a Life Peer in 1977.

Lord Baker was a prominent member of the British Group of IABSE and in later years as a Member of Honour continued to take a very close interest in the affairs of the British Group.

CAMBRIDGE COLLOQUIA.

Each year in July it is customary for the British Group to hold a Closed Colloquium at Pembroke College Cambridge. The following gives an idea of the broad spectrum of topics addressed.

- 1983 Instrumentation of Structures.
- 1984 Liability.
- 1985 Potential Developments in Structures For The Future.
- 1986 Moveable Structures.
- 1987 Rehabilitation and Renovation.
- 1988 Probability Techniques in Structural Engineering.

Between 20 and 25 authors are asked to produce papers of about 1500 words. These are circulated to all participants before the Colloquium and then discussed over a period of 2/3 days. The proceedings are recorded and usually written up. Should you be interested in these please contact Bob Milne. Because of the workshop type format, without media presence, discussions are very forthright and often far reaching conclusions are reached. Where discussions are felt to be of wider interest then it has been recent practice to arrange jointly with ISE for an open colloquium to make further progress in each topic. If you have a burning topic for a Colloquia please let us know!

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION.

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| Mr. Bernard Wex. | Vice President of IABSE. |
| Mr. David Quinion. | Chairman of Working Commission IV.
(Construction Management) |
| Prof. R. P. Johnson. | Member of Working Commission II.
(Steel Metal & Timber Structures) |
| Mr. P. Regan. | Member of Working Commission III.
(Concrete Structures) |
| Prof. E. Happold | Members of Working Commission V.
(Design Methods & Processes) |
| Mr. D. Lee. | |
| Mr. C. W. Brown. | Member of Working Commission VI.
(Informatics in Structural Engineering) |
| Mr. Ron Hughes. | Member of Working Commission VII.
(Operation, Maintenance & Repair of Structures) |

CALENDAR.

TO BE ANNOUNCED. COLLOQUIUM. (Jointly with ISE)

TOWARDS BETTER STRUCTURES FOR THE FUTURE.

5 June 86. A.G.M. ANNUAL LECTURE. - Followed by DINNER.
Institution of Structural Engineers. London.

15-16 July 86. CLOSED COLLOQUIUM ON MOVEABLE STRUCTURES.
Pembroke College Cambridge.

4- 6 Sept.86 SYMPOSIUM ON SAFETY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE.
TOKYO.

ELECTRONIC DATA PROTECTION.

The British Group does not have to register under the Electronic Data Protection Act provided that you as a member do not object to the BG holding your name and address electronically. If you object please write to the Honorary Secretary by the end of March 1986.

PLEASE PASS THIS NEWSLETTER ON TO A COLLEAGUE WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED WITH IT.

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