A Message from the Chairman

It gives me great pleasure to introduce our 40th Anniversary Newsletter which recalls just a few of the activities and achievements of the CIBSE Heritage Group since its founding in 1973. The Group is made up of like-minded professionals, many retired, who have spent a lifetime in building services and use that experience in discovering, analysing and recording the history of our industry. It is the oldest of the CIBSE Special Interest Groups and our website is a substantial resource for historians and for working architects and engineers, particularly those involved in historic projects.

I have to pay a special thank you to the Committee, past and present, for their efforts and valuable input and acknowledge also the contributions of Co-opted Members and their organisations, in particular: English Heritage, National Trust, Science Museum, BSRIA, South Bank University, Institute of Gas Engineers & Managers, Manchester Museum of Science & Industry and Historic Scotland. Also, I thank the management and staff at CIBSE HQ for their assistance over the last 40 years.

In addition, I must give my personal thanks to those long-serving colleagues pictured above: Geraldine O’Farrell (Vice-Chair & CIBSE Board Member); Mike Barber (Group Founder & Secretary since 1973, surely a record); John Barnes (Treasurer); Brian Roberts (Chairman 1984-2011, for his written books and articles and numerous contributions to our website); also Paul Yunnie (Vice-Chairman 1984-2003, for past sponsorship arrangements and many additions to our Library) and Frank Ferris (Webmaster who started our website in 2001 and which is now part of the British Library Archive).

Our readers may also be interested to see the medals and awards given to Heritage Group members over the years: Past Presidents (3), Honorary Fellow (1), Gold (1), Silver (4), Bronze (9), Carter Bronze medal (1), Napier Shaw (1), Walsh Weston (1), Society Light & Lighting Award (1), Regional Lighting Award (1), French Gold Medal Sciences of Artificial Climate (1) and OBEs (2).

The Heritage Group looks forward with confidence and enthusiasm to many more successful years.

Dr Neil Sturrock, Chairman

For more information refer to our website www.hevac-heritage.org
Early in 1972 the late Ken Dale [IHVE President 1973/74] was looking for something to mark the 75th anniversary of the Institution and his presidential year. One of his ideas was that the Institution should establish what he called an 'Historical Group'. He approached Max Fordham and Robbie Kell [President 1952/53] with a view to one or both of them getting his proposal off the ground.

About this time I had noticed that the Institution of Structural Engineers had formed an Archaeology Group for their profession, and wondered if the IHVE should follow their example. So independently, and coincidentally, not knowing of Ken Dale’s proposal I sent a letter to the IHVE journal making my suggestion, which was immediately taken up by Ken, as his two nominees had, apparently, shown little enthusiasm! He got the Institution’s Public Affairs Board to formally appoint me as ‘Group Organiser’ in December 1972. I then set about discovering who else within or outside of the Institution, shared my enthusiasm, with a view to making it more than a group of one!

To establish the level of interest, a press release telling of the proposed Archaeology of Building Services Working Party was sent to most of the magazines and journals serving our industry, inviting interested persons to contact me. By spring 1973, I had a list of some 34 people and organizations. On the strength of this an inaugural meeting was called to be held at the then IHVE HQ in Cadogan Square on 23rd September 1973, Ken Dale having agreed to chair it and Robbie Kell to give an illustrated talk.

At this meeting, it was formally agreed that a group should be established, called the ‘IHVE Archaeology of Building Services Working Party’ and that the following should serve on its committee:

- Chairman: D.G. Lewis
- Treasurer: G.E. Forster
- Secretary: J.M. Barber

Other Committee members were H.L. Egerton, J.A.E. Heard and a representative of the Student Engineering Society, Polytechnic of the South Bank. So this is how what is now the CIBSE Heritage Group started out 40 years ago!

The first committee meeting of the new Group was held at Cadogan Square on 13th December 1973. The group continued under its ‘Archaeology’ title when the IHVE became the CIBS then CIBSE, changing its name to the Heritage Group in 1984.
From HERITAGE GROUP Collections

Titus Flow Calculator 1961

Thermostats from 1910

Equipment Labels

Contractor's nameplate probably 1960s

ASHRAE Centenary DVD 1994

HVCA Centenary CD 2004

History of Plumbing CD 1990s

Postcard Collection
Some HERITAGE GROUP Publications

A History 1984

CIBSE Centenary 1997

Heritage Examples 2003

History of HWS 2001

The Story of Haden 2004

Pioneer Biographies 2000

An Engineer’s Career 2006

HVCA Centenary 2004

A Heritage Guide 2008
From the HERITAGE GROUP Library

HVCA 75th Anniversary 1979

UK Electricity Supply 1987

275 Years of Buderus 2006

Lighting Centenary 1979

Drake & Scull 1979

York Refrigeration 1997

Honeywell Centenary 1985

Lennox Centenary 1995

ASHRAE 1999
I joined the Heritage group in the autumn of 1998. After retiring, I had researched the history of the Bristol Office of G N Haden & Son Ltd, the Heating & Ventilating firm I had joined as a student apprentice and where I learnt the art of designing and installing systems for every type of building. My search in unearthing facts and figures about the firm made me realize that Haden during the 1800s was one of the first firms to establish the heating and ventilating industry. This ignited my interest in engineering and all things historical. When I was invited to become a member of the Heritage Group, it seemed a natural progression to continue my research for everything of historical interest and importance to be found in the building engineering services industry.

My first quest was to try and discover whether there existed any old H&V equipment still to be found in buildings around the country. I was looking for boilers, heaters, radiators and complete pipework systems installed during the Victorian & Edwardian periods. It became apparent that there were only three organizations that could be identified as custodians of our H&V industrial heritage: National Trust whose property portfolio includes endless numbers of Stately Homes and Mansions where the Victorian aristocracy had the funds to install all the latest technology becoming available due to the benefits of the industrial revolution; English Heritage having a large property portfolio with many buildings still retaining their original H&V engineering systems; and Ecclesiastical buildings such as Cathedrals, Churches and Chapels of all denominations, many with their original heating systems some still in use, dating back to Victorian times.

My first consideration was to wonder if any of the Haden solid fuel fired warm air stoves in churches, long since fallen out of use and left abandoned most likely in a basement, could still exist. On a visit to the Isle of Wight in 2000, I looked at most of the island’s parish churches and came upon Holy Trinity in Ventnor. An immediate indication of an old warm air heating system, were the large size cast iron floor gratings to be seen in the aisles. Whilst speaking to a Churchwarden he mentioned that I might be interested in an item to be found in their basement. So descending the stone steps my torch lit up the front of a stove with the name G N Haden inscribed across the portico top section. My amazement and delight cannot be measured. I had established that Victorian heating items were still out there waiting to be discovered.

I have continued over the past decade visiting endless numbers of churches, chapels and National Trust properties where I have been fortunate to find many items of engineering history. All equipment is recorded and photographed for the Heritage Group, and where it is of rarity value also displayed on the Group’s Website. My travels have shown me that a rare discovery would be to find any boiler that dates back to Victorian times. When heating systems are updated, the first item to be removed and replaced is the boiler, as solid fuel is no longer in fashion. Radiators, heaters and pipework don’t necessarily need to be renewed so are more likely to be left untouched. Looking at heating and ventilating systems installed in the 19th century has given me an admiration for those designers and installers who were bringing a new industry to life, alongside other old engineering industries such as civil, mechanical and marine.
HERITAGE GROUP Visits

Eltham Palace

Crossness Sewage Pumping Station

The Haden Archive at Trowbridge Museum

Portcullis House for Houses of Parliament

Brunel’s Machine Room at the Rotherhithe Thames Tunnel
HERITAGE COMMITTEE: Past & Present

Neville Billington OBE
President IHVE 1970

Ken Dale TD
President IHVE 1974

Geoff Brundrett
President CIBSE 1997

Paul Yunnine, Australia
Former Vice-Chairman

Chris Sugg
IGEM

Nigel Blades
National Trust

Edith
Blennerhassett
Ireland

Richard Forster
Lighting Consultant

Alec Pelham
SoPHE

English Heritage Members: (Left to right) David Drewe, Andrew More, Caroline Cattini, Geraldine O'Farrell

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