

Director's Corner

As we are closing out 2012, I would like to reflect on the last 15 years of the Center's growth. The Center was initially established in 1995 and I joined as Director in late 1997. Within the first year I was director, we held our first Symposium. The first symposium was held over 2 days with 225 attendees and 32 papers. At the 2012 symposium, the total registration exceeded 550 with 97 papers. Our participants come from all over the world from industry, academia and government. In 2010, we needed to expand the symposium to a 2 ½ day format to accommodate the growth in the number of tracks--4 total-- and the number of papers.

In addition to celebrating the 15th anniversary of the Symposium this year, we also honored and celebrated Trevor Kletz's 90th birthday. I am sure all of you know who Trevor Kletz is as well as remember him from our Symposium—only having missed three meetings since he stopped traveling overseas two years ago. However, for those of you who are not familiar with Trevor's career, I will briefly introduce him. He is known throughout the process industries as a gifted communicator on safety matters, Trevor has wide knowledge of both practice and theory. He joined Imperial Chemical Industries after graduating as a chemist and spent eight years in research, sixteen in production management, and the last fourteen as safety advisor to the Petrochemicals Division. On retiring from ICI after 38 years of service, he joined Loughborough University, at first full-time and then from 1986 as a Visiting Fellow. He has written eleven books, more than 100 papers, and over 300 articles on process safety and loss prevention. He is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of



Engineers, the Institution of Chemical Engineers, and the Royal Society of Chemistry. Trevor Kletz has received numerous awards including the first Merit Award from the Mary Kay O'Connor Process Safety Center in 1998. In 1997, he was honored by the Queen of England with the Order of the British Empire. Currently, he holds the title of adjunct professor of the Artie McFerrin Department of Chemical Engineering at Texas A&M University.

Immediately following our 15th Symposium, I attended the IChemE, Hazards XXIII, conference in Southport, UK. Approximately 100 miles away from Southport is Birmingham and current home to Trevor Kletz. So, of course, Dr. Simon Waldram and I hopped in a car and drove from the beautiful coast of Southport through the countryside to Birmingham on a bright sunny day. As most of you know, a bright sunny day in the UK in November is rare—so we knew it would be a great day. The day was spent with my mentor, teacher and friend. I shared the video of the symposium attendees singing him happy birthday and photos of his cake and the banner announcing his birthday during the Symposium reception. Of course our visit was not complete without a deep philosophical discussion on the process safety issues of the world. As always, there it was a bittersweet end to the visit. I always feel as there is not enough time and more to learn. No matter how many birthdays I have; no matter how many symposia are held; and no matter how many years I am director of the Center; I will always look to Trevor for inspiration and guidance.



M. Sam Mannan

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