

The Society of Light and Lighting



Society of Light
and Lighting

Presidential Address 2019

JIM SHOVE MSL

Good evening and welcome, Past Presidents, Members, Honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I am deeply honoured to be standing in front of you this evening as President of the Society of Light and Lighting. "Standing on the shoulders of giants" is a much misused phrase but that is exactly how I feel looking back over the Past Presidents of the Society. I would also like to thank Iain Carlile for his work as President during this last year and thank him for the help and guidance.

Past –

How many of us in the room left school thinking, "I know, I want a career in lighting"? I know I certainly didn't and as most things with life it happened by accident. Most of my family were in various branches of the armed forces. My Father was a career soldier who had reached the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel so under normal circumstances that would have been my chosen career but unfortunately owing to a serious accident when I was young, which left me deaf in my right ear and a with a few other problems that course was excluded.

In 1969, having made a complete hash of my "O"- levels at Shaftesbury Grammar school my Dad gave me the option of re-sitting my exams or leaving school. I had already attended a course with a possible idea of joining the Royal Fleet Auxiliary as an engineering artificer but again the issue of my deafness meant I could not progress with that idea. As I was obviously interested in engineering and had had enough of school I was offered the opportunity of an apprenticeship with a local firm in Shaftesbury. The local company was called Conelight (there is a clue in the name) and I started as an articled apprentice toolmaker in September 1969. In those days apprenticeships were four years long and included not only on the job training but also day and night release at college to do the City and Guilds course. Luckily for me the college work suddenly made sense as the maths etc was for a purpose and I went on to complete my City and Guilds with credit in 1974 at what was then Weymouth Technical College.

As a fully-fledged toolmaker I was then involved in the design and manufacture of press and machine tools involved in the manufacturer of luminaires which covered basic luminaire design as well. Oddly enough Conelight was taken over by Marlin in 1977 and I understand that the original factory is now owned by Dextra so the lighting tradition carries on.

By 1976 I decided I wanted to expand my knowledge about lighting and I applied for a job as a regional salesperson at Thorn Lighting in the Dorset area. Unfortunately I wasn't successful but in 1977 I received a call from Thorn and I moved to Bristol from Dorset to work with the sales team based out of the Cardiff branch office. Over time I completed the Thorn lighting training modules and spent time in their training centre at the lamp factory in Leicester on



advanced lighting courses. I also received a lot of on the job training from the likes of Colin Hunt and Tom Fairhurst.

In 1981 I moved to Holophane Europe as a project engineer and was a trifle startled to undergo eight weeks of in-house lighting “re-education” at the hands of Keith Rippon, Jim Winchester and John Moody. I remember spending a whole week doing point source and glare calculations by hand with the aid of a slide rule! Please don’t ask me to show you now.

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I won’t go through my career at Holophane, suffice it to say that I was there until 2005 and during that time was involved in some memorable projects. Among them was one to relight the old Severn Bridge toll approach roads, which involved the use of 30 metre high masts with multiple heads. There was a lot of light spill calculations on the surrounding housing so my week doing point source calcs was time well spent! Another strange project was for Englehard Industries where the factory in the Forest of Dean was recovering precious metals from batteries and photographic film. Because of the nature of the metals extraction process the lighting had to be around 600 nanometres which meant the only light source available was SOX. As you can imagine a factory lit to 500 lux looked very odd and must have been difficult to work in.

I was made redundant in 2005 and joined Luxonic for a year before moving onto Fagerhult in 2006 where I remained until I retired in February 2018. Again I became involved in many interesting projects; lighting the central stair core of the Shard, Sheffield Children’s Hospital and lots of new buildings for Bath University.

By my reckoning that means I have been involved with the lighting industry for 50 years and of course I hope my involvement will continue. Over this time I have seen many changes from GLS to fluorescent to Mercury Discharge to Multi-Vapour; SOX and onto SON and then SON Deluxe and then the advent and rapid rise of LED. I have also been witness to the change in our industry from hand calculations to early manufacturer computer design packages and then Dialux and Relux and now into the realm of BIM REVIT and Virtual Design.

During my time at Holophane I had joined the Institute of Public Lighting Engineers which went on to become the Institute of Lighting Professionals. In 2008 I became a Member the Society of Light and Lighting and was “volunteered” to be the Regional Lighting Representative for the South West Region by a certain Mr Stephen Lisk! I really enjoyed y time on the South West CIBSE committee and in 2016 I received a call from Brendan after the Nominations Panel had convened to ask if I would consider joining the Exec with a view to becoming President in 2019. After the initial shock I readily agreed, which is how I come to be standing in front of you now.

Present –

My aim for the year is to carry on the sterling work done by my predecessors and strengthen the Society’s links with other professional institutions and bodies.

It is also my intention to promote the Society as one of the arbiters for standards within the construction industry. We write the guides but we seem to do little to police their implementation. For those involved in the design and implementation of projects it is very depressing to see what starts out as



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excellent jobs being "value-engineered". The end clients may see the "savings" on the bottom line but not the impact they have on the project; from the overall reduction in appearance to the energy usage on the project being increased.

With the huge growth in LED and controls the task is going to be difficult; especially with the massive influx of low cost, non-regulated products. The only way is to liaise with all those bodies involved in the building industry and government to try and get them to understand the ramifications of "value-engineering".

This leads me onto the perception within our industry that the way forward is via "Human Centric Lighting" (HCL). End Users and Clients are being sold on an idea which at the moment to my mind is unsubstantiated. The Society has issued a statement with regards to its position on HCL and I urge all those of you who haven't read it to do so. It seems to me to be acceptable for manufacturers to make bold statements concerning their supposed HCL luminaires and designs without reference to actual evidence. As we know there is a great deal of academic research work being done in this field but until such time as empirical evidence is produced we should be very careful not to bring our industry into disrepute by making unsubstantiated claims. The Society waits with interest to see the results of the BRE research into the Biophilic Office, which I believe is due for publication at the end of this month.

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Future –

This brings me onto the need for education within the schools, building industry and specifically our industry. I came across a phrase the other day which I think is very apt, "Talent is everywhere, opportunity isn't".

To me this sums up the issue we have whereby schools are being pushed to achieve targets and goals set by various governments without any thought being given to what the children will do when they leave school other than go university. I think there is a definite need for some schools to be geared towards technical education rather than academic achievement. As I mentioned at the start of my speech, I was not academically bright at school, although my excuse is I had discovered rock music and scooters and it was the end of 60's after all! Once I started college and realised that maths etc had a purpose, I gained in confidence and ability.

It seems to me that there is still a stigma attached to apprenticeships despite the amount of money now being allocated by government. The launch of the Degree Apprenticeships scheme is surely the way forward and I am really excited to see the number of young men and especially women taking the opportunity to go down this route. I don't know if any of you saw the BBC2 series about the building of Cross Rail but I was excellent to see the number of women in senior project manager positions.

I hope to work with the other Institutions and the Engineering Council to improve the acceptance of apprenticeships within mainstream schooling and



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industry. There is sterling work being done by the LIA and ILP with lighting training courses which are also supported and advanced by the MSc in Lighting at the Bartlett plus the new BA (Hons) in Lighting Design at Rose Bruford College. There is also the LET Diploma in Lighting Design and various CIBSE training courses. However, speaking as an ex-apprentice, it is my contention that we also should be focusing on STEM and encouraging young people into engineering.

Activities –

The Lightbytes events, which started last year has continued to be very successful this year and the intention is carry on the format into next year with one or two tweaks. It would be nice to see more of our members in the regions attending however.

The Regional Reps are also very busy organising their own local events and we have set up an HQ database of speakers to assist with this.

After a lot of hard work by the Marketing and Communications committee we are now into the second print of the new Society Light Lines magazine, which has been well received.

The Technical and Publications Committee continue to work hard in keeping the Guides up to date with the new Handbook being recently published and the Guide due out soon.

LR&T continues to be the Gold standard for the Society with several changes taking place amongst the Editorial board.

Finally, I am looking forward to working with the various committees within the Society and the wider CIBSE team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brendan and Juliet for their help and direction during my year as President Elect.

In summary, I am looking forward to my year and I now invite you to join me for refreshments and I look forward to talking to you later.