

Ed Trewin – Death of a Composites Pioneer



Many in the carbon fibres and composites world will be sad to learn of the death on 2nd April 2009 of Ed Trewin at the age of 64 years. He had battled courageously with motor neuron disease over the previous two years.

Ed joined Courtaulds plc (now Akzo Nobel) in Coventry straight from University in 1966. By the time he left the company 30 years later he had made a lasting international name for himself in the field of advanced materials. After a few years in research and development Trewin joined the Carbon Fibres Unit (CFU) where his technical, commercial and marketing skills enabled Courtaulds to make a rapid growth in this new technology, at the same time as elevating the business status of CFU to that of an independently reporting entity, and then as a joint venture Hysol Grafil Ltd., later trading as Courtaulds Grafil Ltd.

Ed was promoted in 1987 to be Managing Director of Courtaulds Structural Composites, Advanced Filament Winding, involved in the manufacture of state of the art tubular structures.

He spearheaded the acquisition from Dow of a French company near Rouen and managed both French and UK affairs. Here Ed's fluency in French and German was a great asset in this international role.

Ed moved again in 1991 to be Director of Business Development at National Plastics in Coventry, where he successfully won major defence contracts supplying advanced fibre reinforced armour in vehicles and helmets to the security forces.

During his career with Courtaulds in all these different roles Ed travelled around the world many times and had built up the friendship and professional respect of a very large group of international contacts. With this background, when he finally left Courtaulds in 1995, rather than just retire, Trewin set up his own business as Specialist Consultancy Ltd.

In this role he went from strength to strength. His reputation and integrity gained him a constant stream of contracts – preparing strategic technical market reports - over the next 10 years, until he finally decided to hang up the business towel in 2006. As well as many direct customer contracts, Ed carried out much high quality sub-contract work for the celebrated Kline Group, some of these projects going beyond his core technical field of advanced materials.

“Under-promise but over-deliver” was Trewin's quiet personal motto during his consultancy days.

Those who knew Ed understood that he was a generous and kind person and in this context he gifted his knowledge and expertise willingly in the service of The Society for the Advancement of Materials and Process Engineering (SAMPE) where he was a member for over 30 years and an extremely active committee member from 1996 to 2005 when he served with great humour and distinction both as Publicity Manager, and for a period as European Committee Secretary. As creator of and journalist for the much-loved SAMPE UK Newsletter, Ed had great pleasure in using the services of his other special fringe creation - "The Puerile Press". This "boyish enthusiasm" was, as he said many times in his own words, due to the fact that "My work is also my greatest hobby."

In recognition of his work for SAMPE, Ed was awarded Honorary Senior Membership by the Past Presidents Committee of the International Board of SAMPE.

Outside work, Ed was a local magistrate and an active member of The Lions charity organisation.

He is survived by his wife Janice and his two daughters Michelle and Becky and his 3 grandchildren
