

Peter Arthur Heims

I am certain to be but one of very many who will wish to pay tribute to the legendary Peter Heims.

Although Peter enjoyed the self-given title derived from his understandably limited grasp of what was to him in his senior years a modern day phenomenon known as IT, a fool he was not by any means.

It was for me personally a heavy emotional burden to have to announce at the start of the Centenary AGM on the 27th April 2013 of the sad death of my close friend the previous day, following a period of illness.

A charitable, kind, hugely respected and talented man with a sharp wit and great sense of humour, Peter's enviable achievements touched on every professional aspect of the investigative world as indeed with his wife Iris, they touched every heart of all those who became privileged to know them in every corner of the globe.

The most famous among his peers known not only for his accolades as the professional that he truly was but retaining a huge influential presence among those from his roots as a former paratrooper having started his adult life and career serving in the British Armed Forces between 1947 to 1953. As a Corporal Peter's unit formed part of the Army's last ever mass airborne assault into a conflict zone when it parachuted into the Sinai desert as part of Operation Musketeer.

Peter confided in me his youthful aspirations to be a policeman but finding enrolment eluded him for no more reason than his misguided interpretation of tall.

It may thus explain why immediately after his military service, Peter became a professional investigator, a career which proved successful, rewarding and by 1962 enabled him to form his own agency and establish himself as a leading character within the profession. By 1973 he was regarded as an industry captain when he was elevated to President of The Association of British Investigators [ABI].

Peter's views were always ahead of his time. An active international investigator, he saw the benefits of interacting with other overseas national associations but having failed to persuade his colleagues on the board of the ABI to join the European umbrella body, the IKD, he took it upon himself to represent the UK as a single member, which he maintained until eventually the ABI became the UK member organization in 1969. His professional pioneering success is also notable in the contents of his books and industry political papers, not least his in-depth analysis on the threats posed to society so long as government fails to acknowledge the very existence of investigations in the private sector and more to the point steadfast refusal to move forward proposals to regulate the profession by statute; a cause he championed to his very end.

I am honoured to be one of the privileged people who came to know Peter well. We worked closely on ABI and IKD matters and following my own elevation as President he became my mentor in the political arena. And what a great influence this short giant character became. We spent many hours together travelling to meetings. With his vision for shaping the industry into a profession Peter was not short of enthusiasm nor did he fear change. Drawing on his own experiences his most memorable and accurate piece of advice to me in the early days as President, as I repeatedly expressed frustration in moving the ABI board towards modernization: "The ABI decision process is by committee. A committee to work must always consist of an odd number and three is too many". Such vision...

Peter will be missed by everyone but forgotten by none.

Tony Imossi

Utrinque Paratus

President

Association of British Investigators

The Peter Heims Lifetime Achievement Award

Some months before Peter became seriously ill, he expressed a wish to dedicate an ABI award in his name. After some consideration we decided that because of Peter's inspiration, and forward looking influence over so many years, the above title would be fitting, and that this unique award would not be an "annual award", but presented only to a member who could be considered to be truly worthy of the high standard and dedication set by Peter.

Peter was shown the design whilst in hospital and gave his approval. We also left it to Peter to choose the very first recipient, to be a complete surprise at the centenary banquet in London. Those who were in attendance saw this special award being presented to member George Rivers.

None of us could have known that Peter was to sadly leave us the very day before the AGM, making the announcement of his passing and the presentation of the award more moving and meaningful.

