

The Society of Light and Lighting

Presidential Address 2018

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PRESENT/FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

Good evening and welcome, past presidents, members and honoured guests.

It gives me great pleasure to be standing here addressing you this evening as the President of the Society of Light and Lighting. I feel truly honoured to follow in the footsteps of so many great lighting professionals in service to the Society.

Firstly I would like to thank Richard Caple for all his hard work this past year as President, he has made some fantastic achievements during the year, steering the SLL admirably during his tenure.

WHO AM I?

So who am I?

How did I end up here, and what path did I take in order to find myself addressing you today?

Whilst having an interest in light from an early age, playing with prisms, lamps and LEDs in science classes, like most, I was not aware of a potential career in lighting.

Driven by a love of Lego, Doctor Who, the A-Team, science fiction and air-fix kits (geek status confirmed), I pursued mostly science, technology and maths related subjects at school, although I did also dabble in the arts, through the study of drama.

It was during the study of drama, through assisting with the stage lighting for a number of school plays, that I gained my first appreciation of the ability of light to create different moods, effects and to facilitate tasks. My interest in the application of light had been sparked...

With Doctor Who having been cancelled in 1989 I realised I would never be the next Doctor and decided to pursue a different career to acting (I know, who knew?!), and upon completion of my GCSEs decided to take the path of engineering related subjects for my A-levels.

As a teenager, having a Saturday job in the local British-Home-Stores lighting department ended up with me advising customers on the application of decorative lighting, choice of lamps (or bulbs as I called them then) and on a few occasions even helping them with the lighting layouts in their homes. A further interest in lighting had been kindled, that was to lay dormant for just a few more years yet...

Taking a year out from my studies, I worked in computer programming for British Nuclear Fuels Limited, and by the end of my year out confirming to myself I did not want to be a computer programmer for the rest of my life, but still was not sure what path to take.

It was during my holidays from my undergraduate electronic engineering course that I worked for TDP, a small building services engineering consultancy in Swindon, where I worked under an engineer passionate about light and its many applications, David Moore. I was immediately hooked, to me lighting was the part of the built environment that could instantly have an effect on people's appreciation and comfort of a space.

My spark of interest in lighting had turned into a raging fire and I wanted to know more about lux, lumens, luminance, candelas, colour temperature, perception and all aspects of light. It was at this time that I was first introduced to CIBSE and the Society of Lighting and Lighting, the then code for lighting (1994 edition) permanently sat on my desk, frequently referenced in my day to day work.

After graduating I embarked on a career in building services engineering with WhitbyBird Engineers, furthering my passion for light, embarking on the Light and Lighting post graduate Masters degree at University College London and eventually moving to **dpa** lighting consultants, fully concentrating my career as a lighting designer, learning and honing my craft under Barry Hannaford, Nick Hoggett and Gary Campbell.

It was about this time that I attended the SLL Conference in Dublin in 2003 and was bowled over by the passion and dedication, not just from the speakers, but even more so the community of lighters attending, this was a community I wanted to be part of, so when during the conference Mike Simpson asked me if I would like to get more involved with the activities of the Society I instantly said yes, only later wondering what I might have signed up for...

Since then I have sat on the Newsletter committee, later to become the Marketing and Communications committee, which I myself chaired at one point, along with being a member of the Lighting Research and Technology journal editorial board, various sub committees, and in more recent years the SLL Council and SLL Executive.

EDUCATION

As can be seen, like many lighters, my route into lighting as a career was not a straightforward one, and therefore as part of my year I wish to continue and reinforce past presidents' Jeff Shaw and Richard Caple's work on appealing to the next generation of lighters, STEM and the lighting career pathway, and how we can inspire future generations of lighters. I am pleased to say that out of the legacy of Night of Heritage Light, we are looking at how we can implement the schools engagement programme Pockets of Light with the support of the SLL Regional Lighting Representatives across the regions.

APPEALING TO ALL PRACTITIONERS OF LIGHT

I believe one of the key strengths of the society is its members and the diverse range of backgrounds and careers they represent. To quote the "About SLL" website page

“The SLL welcomes all those who are interested in any aspect of the world of light, lighting, and its applications. Lighting designers, consulting engineers, researchers, students, professors, manufacturers, sales staff; all contribute and all are members of the SLL.”

Everyone has something to bring and I want to encourage this more. This inclusivity is what originally attracted me to the Society as my professional body of choice.

During my tenure as Chair of the Marketing and Communications committee we had an informal meeting (it was in a public house) where we considered all careers that may have an interest in light and what benefits the Society could offer them. On this list we had everyone from obvious choices such as engineers, lighting consultants, manufacturers and educators, to less obvious choices such as facilities managers, film makers and even astronauts.

In my working life, I have on many occasions been discussing the benefits of being a member of the SLL with persons who, whilst working within the field of lighting with years of relevant experience, do not see themselves as being eligible to join, believing they do not have the right credentials to do so.

I would like to reach out to these individuals and groups, dispelling any misconceptions and reinforcing what the Society can do for them, and how they might become involved in the Society’s activities, and in doing so getting the message of good lighting to a wider audience for the benefit of all.

SUPPORT THE EXISTING MEMBERSHIP - WHAT WE DO TO STAY RELEVANT?

The Society continues to grow and we currently have more than 4000 members, all at various grades of membership, and we would all like to see this number continue to grow expanding our lighting family.

However, whilst encouraging future generations in lighting as a career and looking at how we attract new members within the immediate profession and further afield is something I would like to progress during my year as President, more importantly, we need to continue to support our existing members and ensure that the Society stays relevant to their needs, by continuing to offer our members the tools to help progress in their careers, achieve professional recognition and hopefully have a bit of fun along the way.

This is a task made more difficult with rapidly changing technology not only having an effect on light sources, luminaires and controls, but also in the methods that we communicate, disseminate and deliver information.

To that end as part of my year I would like to review what the Society offers, how this is delivered and to find out what our members want from us (and hopefully even offer some things that they do not yet know they want).

HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

So, how are we going to achieve these aims?

Thankfully I can draw on the combined knowledge and experience of many talented members of the Society who all volunteer their time to its work, be this in the activities of various committees and boards, writing guides, organising events, and getting the word out to the regions. Having chaired the Regional Lighting Representatives Committee this past year I have been extremely impressed by the work put in in the regions which can be seen in the level of engagement at a local level.

Knitting this all together, I am very glad to say that the Society has fantastic support from our Secretary, Brendan Keely, and Coordinator, Juliet Rennie, and I look forward to working with them both more closely during my year as President.

I also look forward to working and engaging with the wider CIBSE team, Societies, Groups and Networks, and especially the recently inaugurated CIBSE president, fellow lighter, past president of the SLL, and alumnus of the SLL Marketing and Communications committee (where he and I first met), Stephen Lisk.

A year is not a long time to enact everything I would like to achieve, but I am well supported in the shared vision of promoting lighting going forward and I look forward to continuing to work with Past President Richard Caple, President Elect Jim Shove, and Vice Presidents Bob Bohannon, Ruth Kelly-Waskett and Andrew Bissell.

SUMMARY

So in summary, the main items I wish to progress during my year as President are:

- To review what we do, and how we engage with our membership, ensuring we stay relevant to our existing members in their professional activities, now and in the future
- To appeal to the wider lighting community, attracting new members and raising the profile of the SLL
- To continue past presidents' work on lighting career pathways and STEM, encouraging future generations of lighters

and through doing all of these, promoting the message of good lighting to a wider audience, for the benefit of all.

And finally, as many of you have been enquiring over the last few weeks, I can confirm that, yes, I am still under 40.... but only just.

So, all that remains is for me to say how much I am looking forward to my year to serve you as President, and to invite you all to join me in the Gallery for refreshments, where I look forward to talking with you further.

Thank you

Iain Carlile

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