



The main hall was packed on Friday 29th October when members of the BREL Board and many others from around the Group joined with friends and colleagues from Wood Lane for a presentation to mark the retirement of BREL's Director and Research Manager, David Margolis.

John Banks (Chairman of BREL and Managing Director, Group Services) delayed the proceedings long enough to ensure that an intruding pneumatic drill could be silenced, before reminding the audience that David had come to Wood Lane as a Scientific Officer as long ago as November 1949, when he was immediately seconded to the Physical Chemistry section of British Dielectric Research. (The now defunct BDR was a tripartite venture between BICC, TCC and the United Insulator Company, set up to do capacitor research, and it survived into the 1960's). By 1957 he had been appointed Research Manager of BDR. He subsequently held posts in the primary Wood Lane structure as Joint Assistant Research Manager, Deputy Research Manager and Research Manager, before his appointment as Director and Research Manager, BREL, in 1975.

Before coming to Wood Lane, David Margolis had worked for Franks Laboratories, which he joined at the outbreak of the Second World War. Before he had a chance to demonstrate his abilities there as Assistant Chemist he had become a Sapper with the Royal Engineers, eventually rising to the exalted rank of Acting Corporal! After the war he rejoined Franks, completing his BSc in Chemistry (and in later years a PhD) by the arduous part-time route at Birkbeck College.

Mr. Banks said that David was a man with a considerable breadth of knowledge and interests, who had made many positive and constructive contributions to Wood Lane's work. Outside the office he enjoyed photography, conversation and language, walking (he had always walked to work), old clocks and Italy. As well as conveying the thanks of BICC for almost 33 years service, Mr. Banks said he wished to add his personal thanks for tasks carried out beyond the normal duties. He particularly recalled David's outstanding contribution to the ITT/Corning anti-trust case in the USA, and his fine P.V. Hunter Memorial Lecture in 1980.

On behalf of all friends and colleagues in BICC Mr. Banks presented David with a camera and two new supplementary volumes of "The History of Technology".

In reply David thanked Mr. Banks and all friends and colleagues for their good wishes and gifts. He said that his interest in chemistry started about 51 years ago when he was initiated into the art of making fireworks, although at the time he had no ideas about his future career. He had greatly enjoyed his time at BICC, and recalled that it had taken him to such diverse places as New Orleans, the Great Wall of China and that most intimidating place, the lecture hall at the IEE.

He had decided to seek slightly early retirement to allow himself the opportunity to catch up on some of the things he enjoyed but had found little opportunity for doing during his working life. Amongst those he included reading novels, visiting his "second home" (Northern Italy), making things with his own hands and generally thinking about the world.



Two Scenes From The Presentation