

*J.I.A.* 119, 1, 5-7

## PRESENTATION OF AN INSTITUTE FINLAISON MEDAL TO MR CHRISTOPHER DAVID DAYKIN

[The Institute of Actuaries, 28 October 1991]

**The President (Mr H. H. Scurfield):** Chris Daykin was awarded a scholarship to Cambridge from Merchant Taylors' School, he read mathematics and graduated with a first in 1970. He took the precaution to have a father who was an Associate of the Institute and also subsequently married an actuary, which made a good start. In 1970 he entered the Government Actuary's Department where he has continued to work. Shortly after joining the department he spent a year in Brunei teaching mathematics on Voluntary Service Overseas, and continued his interest in VSO with 14 years as chairman of his local branch. His unbroken career in public service has included two secondments, one as technical adviser to the Government of Montserrat and another at the Treasury with particular responsibility for National Health Service expenditure. During his time at GAD he has been involved first hand in the full breadth of its operations.

Since becoming a Fellow in 1973 he has acted as a tutor, as Secretary of the Staple Inn Actuarial Society and has served on several Institute Committees, twice as Chairman, and continues on three, General Insurance, Joint Planning, and Education Joint. He served on Council from 1985 to 1991 and as Honorary Secretary from 1988 to 1990.

Within the profession he has been responsible for a prodigious output of publications. This list includes at least 25 papers, and this alone would be noteworthy. That they cover such a range of subjects and achieve so uniformly high a standard is a remarkable achievement. Several of them have been formally recognised by the award of prizes and commendations.

As Chairman of the AIDS Working Party between 1987 and 1989, he and his team made essential progress in distilling the available statistics and reports into a coherent whole. The work resulted in the publication of that group's paper 'The Impact of HIV Infection and AIDS on Insurance in the United Kingdom,' in 1988, as well as the series of updating bulletins. It was appropriate that this should have been recognised in an Institute commendation.

Chris's chairmanship of the Education Strategy Working Party over the last three years has steered the most fundamental review of actuarial education in this country for many years. The syllabus objectives have attracted interest world wide, and particularly in Scotland where his efforts seem to be bringing together our examination systems. A very singular and noteworthy achievement.

He was a natural person to chair and to drive the new Joint Planning Committee which has led to the production of the 'Strategy for the 1990s' document and to the very full list of objectives which will form the basis of activity which will point our profession positively forward. His concern for the future of our profession has not been limited to this country alone. He has

promoted his department's influence overseas, and returned only last week from Toronto and Washington, where he has imparted the U.K. experience of the Appointed Actuary system to our North American counterparts.

More recently his eyes have turned east and he is working to pass on our professional expertise to the newly enfranchised eastern bloc countries. There he has employed his linguistic skills and has inspired and lectured at courses on actuarial mathematics. In Europe and around the world he has promoted tirelessly the U.K.'s unique system of life insurance control and the partnership between the supervisors and the profession. Actuaries around the world will have benefited from his incisive thinking, his persuasive style, his determination and his abounding energy.

Chris Daykin, it is with great satisfaction that, acting with the authority of the Institute's Council, I present you with this Finlaison Medal.

**Mr C. D. Daykin:** President, guests, fellow actuaries, thank you very much indeed for a very great honour. I was astonished and delighted when it was announced at Council that I was to be a recipient of a Finlaison Medal, the more so, since I was fully aware of the other two medallists, Stewart Lyon and John Martin, but was not aware at all that I would be joining them on this roll of honour.

The President has been very generous in his words of introduction; it is almost embarrassing to hear him recounting all the things which he mentioned. I do not think, however, that my activities should be seen as at all exceptional, since this is a profession in which so many people do so much, unstintingly giving their time for the profession. It is really a privilege for me to be a member of the Institute, a privilege to have served on Council and some of its committees, and indeed to have presented some papers here at Staple Inn.

I am delighted that my mother has been able to join us this evening as a guest, a delight which is tinged with regret that my father, who was an Associate of the Institute and qualified in 1962, did not live long enough to see the development of my career and the honour which has been bestowed upon me. It was from my father, perhaps not surprisingly, that I first learned of the profession, when he was taking his actuarial examinations at about the same time as I was taking my eleven plus. It was to my father and to his friend and colleague, Leslie Martin, that I owed my introduction to the idea of a career in the Government Actuary's Department. Sir Herbert Tetley had a brother who had been at school with my father, and so he gave me a friendly welcome at GAD, in spite of my somewhat unreasonable request that I should be given a year's sabbatical after 4 months of work at the department. That enabled me to spend a year as a VSO in Brunei. It also ensured that my life contingencies text book became well-travelled, although it did not receive much attention whilst I was out of the U.K.

There are too many others who have inspired me and helped me along the way for me to mention them all by name, although I would like to mention Sir Edward Johnston, who was Government Actuary for 16 of the 21 years that I have been at, or associated with, GAD. It was really at his instigation and

encouragement that I wrote my first Students' Society paper, joined the Students' Society Committee and began to take a more and more active part in Institute affairs.

A particular inspiration to me has been Professor Teivo Pentikäinen, the notable Finnish actuary who is an Honorary Overseas member of the Institute. His career has spanned the management of an insurance company, heading up the insurance supervision department and being a professor at a university. I have worked together with him for nine years now on general insurance cash flow modelling and simulation, which has been a great challenge and encouragement.

Finally, I must thank my wife, Kate, who has been extraordinarily long-suffering and patient with my rather demanding schedule. Unfortunately, owing to family commitments, she has not been able to join us this evening, but, as the President said, she is also a Fellow of the Institute and so is not a stranger to this Hall.

It was a great honour for me to be appointed to the post of Government Actuary, a position which, I believe, carries a heavy responsibility, both as the senior representative of the profession within the government and the senior representative of the government within the profession. I see the award of a Finlaison Medal, both to my predecessor in 1988 and to myself, as in some way recognising the esteem in which GAD is now held by the profession.

Perhaps on a lighter note, I could recall the words of George King 99 years ago in this Institute, when he was concerned about the possibility of government actuaries being involved in supervision. He said these words: "to have a government official who has probably been educated in red tape interfering at every turn would soon paralyse all energy and enterprise. He might be officious and fond of magnifying his office, prejudiced, narrow-minded, incompetent, or even corrupt; and it is difficult to say which class of men would exert the worst form of influence. At the best he would be narrow and ignorant as compared with the aggregate of the profession outside the government bureau, because he, from the nature of the case, would not have had the education and experience that are gained only by the daily intercourse with the public. He would not appreciate the benefits of, or the necessities for, the changes of plan or the new features which naturally present themselves to the active man of business. The government official, therefore, even with the best intentions, could not help being more or less an obstructive."

Well, I hope that I do not fit any of the characteristics of that reference. Maybe he will go down in history as being more narrow-minded than the Government Actuaries who followed.

I have spoken for long enough. I would just want to say, in closing, that the President and others have suggested that I do a great deal. For me it is all part of the working out of my Christian faith. I do it because I feel that I can serve the community in some way.

I want to say thank you very much to you for your kindness in awarding me a Finlaison Medal, but to God be the glory. Thank you.