

Past Shaping the Future

Every now and then you have to look back to understand the present and future. This might seem almost too logical to start this editorial with but at times these old truths become very actual. This seems to be one of those times.

First of all, we received the sad news that on Tuesday 8 May, rear admiral Steve Ritchie CB DSC passed away at the age of 97. Steve Ritchie held numerous positions such as Hydrographer in the Royal Navy, president of the Directing Committee of the International Hydrographic Bureau in Monaco from 1972 until 1982, founding president of the Hydrographic Society UK and many more. For us he was first and foremost one of our most legendary contributing editors. From the very beginning of *Hydro International* in 1996 he contributed with his history column 'As it Was'. But his fame, amongst members of the editorial board of varying composition and here at the publishing company with a line of colleagues that worked with Steve, was mainly based on his knowledge in combination with a deeply sympathetic and involved character. Visiting tradeshows and conferences with Steve was a party. Listening to his stories was a joy, from those about World War II to hydrography in the sixties or Oceanology International in Brighton or Hydro conferences in the United Kingdom or elsewhere. Steve kept informing about *Hydro International* and stayed involved until the end. He was an icon for the big world of hydrography in which he played a big role shaping its institutionalised form. In the future, people entering the field will always stumble upon the name of Steve Ritchie, one of the founders of modern hydrography. We will surely miss him!

On a more cheerful note: we interviewed another icon of hydrography in this issue of *Hydro International*: Rear Admiral Chris Andreasen. Andreasen worked with NOAA until 1992, before becoming director and president of the International Hydrographic Committee in Monaco between 1992 and 1997. Subsequently, he became active as chief Hydrographer with the National Geo-Intelligence Agency of the United States, from which he will retire later this year. Christian Andreasen draws from a career spanning 50 years in the interview conducted by contributing editor Giuseppe Angrisano of *Hydro International*. Andreasen shares his ideas about where hydrography will need to go. He identifies a clear need for more current data to mariners and he calls upon hydrographic offices globally to support mariners in this. He also calls upon governmental bodies to co-operate and continue the dialogue with the industry. Increased volume of data and higher accuracy depends heavily on the relationship of the IHO and others with technologists with vision. In addition, Andreasen discusses developments over the past decades and what these will lead to. One thing is very clear: the future is built on the past!

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