



## Notes From The General Secretariat

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### Jelle Witteveen - Honorary Member of CIB



Whether Honorary Membership can properly be called a category of membership must be open to doubt. What cannot be disputed is that it is by far the smallest group of members and its rare conferment will ensure that it remains so.

It is awarded for outstanding services to CIB and almost invariably the General Assembly has been the occasion for handing over the coveted Golden Pin.

So it was at the recent General Assembly in Gävle when the distinguished Past President Jelle Witteveen was honoured.

Unfortunately he could not be there in person to receive the award and to hear the glowing tribute paid to him by his successor as President, Christer Sjöström.

Fortunately, it turned out to be possible to utilise a scheduled visit by the new Treasurer Erkki Leppävuori to the General Secretariat on 24th August 1998 to bring Jelle Witteveen along for a celebration.

Christer Sjöström was able to congratulate Jelle in person on the telephone and, before Professor Leppävuori officially handed over the insignia, Deputy Secretary General Chris Pollington read the original citation.

An extract is reproduced below.

Wrote Christer Sjöström:

I should like to commence my citation of Jelle Witteveen by quoting directly from a message which he himself wrote in the CIB Information Bulletin in 1992 shortly after he had been elected to the Presidency of CIB.

Jelle said on that occasion:

"As your newly elected President I should first of all like to thank you for your confidence and to assure you that, throughout the coming three years, I shall do my utmost to fulfil the trust you have placed in me.

The President by the very nature of his Office is not elected from among those who are unfamiliar with CIB. It has been my privilege to have been personally involved in its activities and to have observed its development over a number of years. In earlier times I was an active member of CIB Working Commission W14 - Fire and later in my capacity as Director of a CIB Full Member Institute I became acquainted at first hand with other aspects of CIB, not least through members of my staff serving as Coordinators and representatives in various Working Commissions.

More recently as a member of the CIB Board and as Treasurer I have been intimately involved in guiding important aspects of CIB's life".

While this does summarise the salient points in Jelle's CIB career as an involved Working Commission Member; CIB Board Member; CIB Treasurer and finally CIB President, it does not do justice to that singular quality which he brought to bear on everything which he tackled in connection with CIB.

This was his total commitment and support.

If Jelle Witteveen decided to do something for CIB - no matter what - we in CIB could rest assured of one thing. He would give it everything he had. However busy he was and he had a highly demanding task in running one of the major building research institutes in Europe - he would always find time to focus attention on the CIB job in hand.

Commitment and enthusiasm - two most effective attributes and of great benefit to those of us on the receiving end.

Honorary Membership is conferred for outstanding services to CIB and these can take many forms. Some of Jelle Witteveen's more evident acts I have mentioned earlier. But there were other less obvious and yet significant ways in which his initiatives enhanced CIB's operational efficiency to the advantage of the membership.

He recognised the absolutely vital role which Coordinators fill in CIB and consistently followed a policy of raising their public profile and according them the credit they deserved. The result was that on their side, Coordinators grew to feel a stronger sense of belonging to the CIB family and become more motivated in leading their Commissions towards their objectives.

Jelle Witteveen was also instrumental in extending the part played by CIB in the Career Development of its members and in one of the most imaginative initiatives in years, he proposed the setting up of the Gyula Sebestyén CIB Young Researcher's Fellowship in memory of a most distinguished former Secretary General. This is now in its 4th Year and some budding young research leaders of the future have every reason to be extremely grateful for having been given this Fellowship.

As regards W14 - Fire Jelle Witteveen was certainly one of those whose contributions make this particular Commission a world leader in its field.

This is an award that is not made frequently but without any doubt our newest Honorary Member is a most distinguished addition to this very select club.

**Hearty Congratulations from CIB to Jelle Witteveen.**



## **Dick Wright To Retire**



Dr. Richard N. Wright will retire in January 1999. He has served, since its founding in 1991, as Director of the Building and Fire Research Laboratory of the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The Laboratory, in cooperation with industry, has made important contributions such as: measurements, models and data instrumental in identifying alternatives to the refrigerants and fire suppressants threatening the ozone layer and in developing refrigeration and fire suppression equipment using them effectively; open systems protocols and test methods for building automation systems incorporated in national and international standards; open systems protocols for international standards for automatic exchange of information between dissimilar computing systems in the planning, design, construction and operation of



constructed facilities; knowledge systems and computational materials science for high performance concrete; recommendations for building code provisions for the first precast concrete framing system suitable for zones of high seismic hazard; and economic methods for guidance in construction decisions.

Since 1994, Dick Wright has served as a founding Co-Chairman for the Subcommittee on Construction and Building of the President's National Science and Technology Council. The Subcommittee has worked with industry to develop National Construction Goals and to organize the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing which the President announced in May, 1998. Since 1982, he has served as Chairman of the Interagency Committee on Seismic Safety in Construction which has developed and helped implement Executive Orders on Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally Assisted or Regulated New Building Construction, and Seismic Safety of Existing Federally Owned or Leased Buildings. Since 1983, Dick Wright has served as U.S. Chairman for the U.S.-Japan Panel on Wind and Seismic Effects which has made substantial contributions to the world's knowledge and practice for wind and earthquake hazards mitigation.

Most significantly for us Dick served as CIB President with conspicuous success from 1983 to 1986.

He was Director of NIST's Center for Building Technology from 1974 to 1990, and prior to that was Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Dick's host of friends around the world remember with gratitude his signal services to CIB over a long period and wish him and his equally popular wife Teri a long and happy period of retirement.

He will not be lost to CIB since he has stated that he wishes to keep in touch through Individual Membership.

