

## **Rupert Middleton's speech for presenting David Hobbs with the BPIF's 2010 Award for Outstanding Contribution to the UK Printing Industry**

I am delighted to present to you today a quiet and generous man, who has done so much for his company, his community and his industry. David Hobbs is first and foremost a family man, with three fast-growing children all achieving great things at school, university and post-graduation and challenging David to keep up, both mentally and physically! He is a keen sports fan, having been a Saints season ticket holder for most of his life – this can't be easy I guess, but at least he's loyal! He's also a Hampshire Cricket fan, a dinghy sailor when time permits, and a keen occasional golfer and tennis player. In recent years he has been specialising in military golf!

David was a Chartered Accountant with Deloitte (although we won't hold that against him) and obtained a diploma in Printing and Publishing Studies for Graduates at the London College of Printing before joining the family business in 1982. In 1990 he succeeded his father, Peter, in becoming Managing Director of Hobbs the Printers Ltd, becoming the fifth generation of his family to lead the company. During his time at Hobbs David has overseen significant changes within the company, including the move to a new purpose-built 80,000 sq ft factory in 1994 and a complete change in its customer base.

In fact David has sustained - and built upon - a remarkable legacy at Hobbs. The company has in fact been thriving since 1884. Of course surviving in the world of print for 125 years does require an element of luck, and Hobbs's greatest good fortune was to survive the Second World War when their factory was located close to Southampton Docks, which was a target for the Luftwaffe! But its success in more recent years is very much a testament to the leadership and insight of David and his father before him. Hobbs has achieved this success by always focusing on providing the highest quality of customer service and developing a professional team through investing in training. These two tenets have been the cornerstone of the company's business philosophy over the years.

Colleagues will tell you that David's style is to work quietly without seeking attention. He is often to be found working alongside his production and estimating teams demonstrating his commitment to clients' needs. He is liked and trusted within the business and by his customers: people know that he is both honest and sincere.

He is also a great supporter of our industry. A member (and former Chairman) of the BPIF's South Eastern Regional Board, he is also a Board Member with the IPN (International Printers Network) guiding this international partnership of independent companies.

Outside of work, David is a passionate supporter of national and local charities such as the Muscular Dystrophy Society, for whom he has run the London Marathon on more than one occasion, and Wessex Heartbeat, for whom he has cycled around Northern France as part of a Hobbs team on several occasions, all to raise much needed funds for these very worthy causes. Now though, he also gives even more of himself as a Trustee of the Wessex Cardiac Trust.

David was recognised by the Southampton Rotary Club in 2006 with a Paul Harris Fellowship. This is remarkable for many reasons, not the least being that he is not actually a Rotarian! This award is given by Rotary International to people who are considered to have made significant contributions to either the Rotary Club or the community. The club presented the award to David and his father, who is a long-standing member, and they wanted to make this unique double award to pay tribute to the Hobbs' quiet and unsung support of Rotary and other charities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to present David Hobbs with the BPIF 2010 Award for Outstanding Contribution to the UK Printing Industry