

Annual review 2004

A year of progress



In my first year of presidency I have seen a number of existing initiatives developed and progressed.

Of these, perhaps the most important has been the training groups on the drylining foundation course. More than 20 companies participated in the pilot courses, taking on many new trainees.

It is a fantastic achievement for the industry being the first nationally recognised drylining training course developed jointly by specialist contractors and plasterboard manufacturers. It aims to provide a direct route to a fully qualified professional workforce for the benefit of everyone in the industry.

The developments of Key Performance Indicators, launched last year, have also progressed and 2005 will see the publication of the first set of results for the plastering and drylining industry.

Council has also approved the first stage in the development of the membership criteria. This is a vital first step in being able to publicly promote the specification of FPDC members.

Brian Woolnough, President

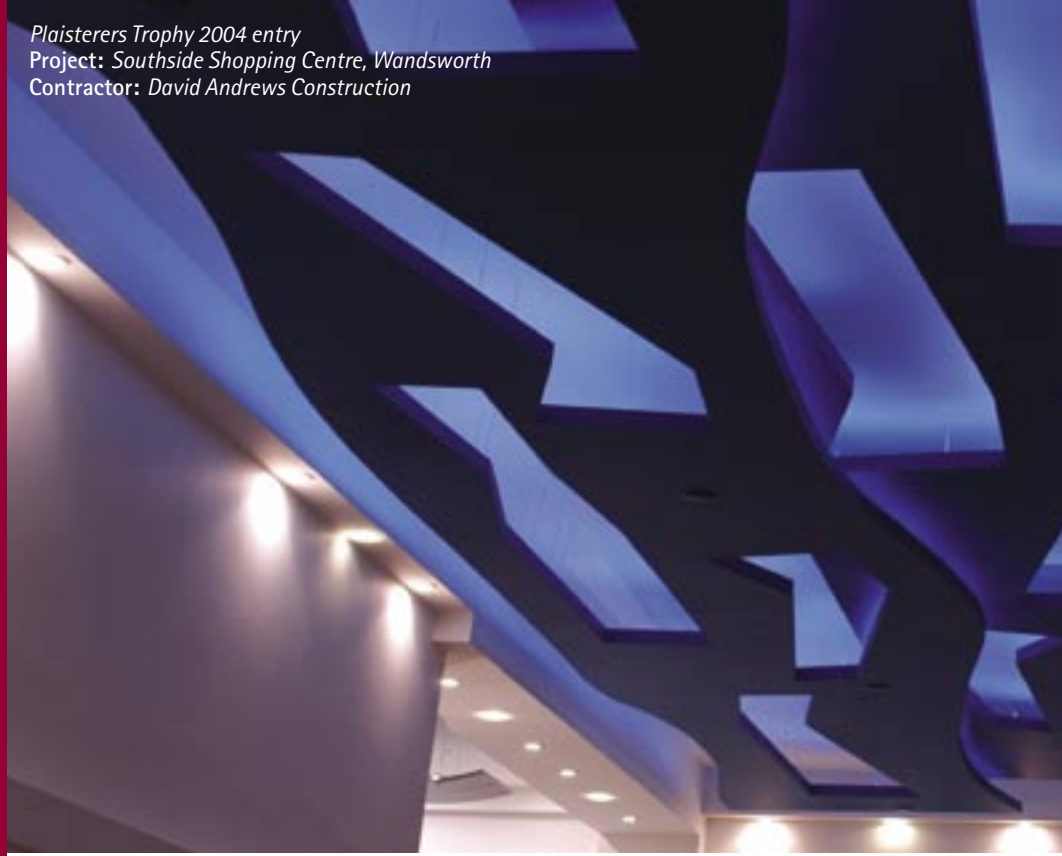
January 2005

"...a fantastic achievement for the industry being the first nationally recognised drylining training course developed jointly by specialist contractors and plasterboard manufacturers."

Brian Woolnough, President

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Financial Report by the Honorary Treasurer

The FPDC audited accounts for 2003 incorporated the accounts of the three subsidiary National Independent Training Groups.

The final audited accounts for 2003 showed a combined operating surplus of **£30,087** for the three training groups and an operating surplus of **£51,708** for FPDC, taking the members reserve for FPDC to **£138,642**.

For the first time it is expected that the 2004 audited accounts will be made available for the Annual General Meeting. The 2005 budget, approved by Council, is for an addition of a further 5% of the current operating surplus.

Core Advisory Services

Technical Advisory Service

The existing technical enquiry service has been boosted by free site visits which are available to members experiencing disputes relating to the standard of workmanship on a contract.

2004 saw an increase in the number of visits made by the technical consultant – which saved members more than £300,000 worth of remedial work which otherwise would have been carried out.

FPDC is also representing members' interests on the 12 British and European Standards committees and has achieved final approval of the European Standard for the *Design, Preparation and Application of External Rendering*. This will be published and made available to the industry within the next few months.

Two other European Standards are due for vote and publication later in 2005 including *Design and Application of Plasterboard Systems on Frames and Design, Preparation and Application of Internal Plastering*.

FPDC's detailed work ensures that members' best interests are secured. This is shown by the writing of BS 8204 Parts 1 and 2, published during 2004. The Federation ensured that the test for the measurement of surface regularity saw a reduction in the straightedge used from 3m to 2m and also a change to the length of the straightedge under which the deviation of the screed surface was measured, to that between the two points in contact between the straight edge the screed surface.

A sound test of insulation for new houses and flats was introduced on 1 July 2004. The Federation has supported the concept of RSDs and actively supported the work of the House Builders Federation and other organisations in their development.

FPDC's appreciation and thanks is extended to the members, manufacturers and distributors for their technical assistance and support during the year.



Health and Safety

This year the H&S Task Group joined forces with the HSE to investigate the risk of injury to dryliners from handling plasterboard panels. The initiative also examined equipment which may reduce risk and possibly improve the quality of work.

Key issues discussed included the weight of plasterboard, ensuring the environment worked in is suitable for manoeuvring materials, and the promotion of delivering materials at the height to be used. The FPDC will offer bespoke manual handling courses, which will run nationwide during 2005.

A full CDM review has now been approved by CONIAC and, subject to approval by the Cabinet Office and the Commission, will be subject to a public consultation in the spring of 2005.

» *The Federation was very sad to hear of the death of Mr Roger Measom in June 2004. Roger had been the Chairman of the Federation's Technical Committee for over 25 years. His expertise and enthusiasm for technical matters will be much missed.*

Legal

The FPDC played an integral role in Sir Michael Latham's review of the Construction Act through its membership of the National Specialist Contractors Council (NSCC).

Reports from the two working groups have been forwarded to the DTI. A consultation document will be circulated to industry for comment.

Discussions have centred on the review of payment practices and the establishment of how much is due and when. FPDC members will be invited to become actively involved in the consultation process and provide real evidence and examples of payment abuse and the damage it does to members businesses.

NSCC successfully changed a key procedure within JCT contracts, which now allows referring parties to select their preferred Adjudicator Nominating Body in the event of a dispute.

Previously where an ANB had not been agreed between the parties, the referring party had to use RICS or RIBA depending upon the contract. FPDC currently subscribes the NSCC nomination service from NSCC, which provides the free nomination of adjudicators where NSCC or AICA is selected as the ANB.

Taxation

The Inland Revenue and the construction industry are working towards an April 2006 deadline for the implementation of the new Construction Industry Scheme.

The scheme proposed a number of major changes, including annual checking by computer system of tax compliance by companies - currently compliance is checked every 3 years. Other key changes include the need for a new monthly return statement and means of submitting all information online via the Inland Revenue website.

NSCC has been represented on the Construction Industry Advisory Reform Panel that has put together the new regulations and is currently developing how the scheme will work.

Key issues for NSCC members have been:

- » *Retaining the off-set concession when an employer is found to have taxed workers as self-employed when they should have been taxed as employees*
- » *Retaining the flexibility within the construction workforce to use genuine self-employed workers*
- » *Lobbying successfully for individual directors non-compliance with tax obligations to remain separate from a company's compliance with tax obligations*

Industrial Relations

NSCC spent time with the Home Office during the early part of 2004 to ensure that the implications of the amended Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 were fully understood.

From May 2004 all employers were required to view and check original documents such as passports to confirm that the new employee had the right to work in the UK.

Major changes to the dismissal, disciplinary and grievance laws came into force in October 2004 and all FPDC members were given a detailed briefing on the necessary procedures if considering dismissal or disciplinary action.

NSCC also reviewed the Industrial Relations advisory service provided to Specialist Contractors. An internal advisor was appointed in January 2005 to ensure employment issues are dealt with thoroughly, with advice available to all NSCC member organisations via a helpline.



Phil Burkin running a mould at Troika Architectural Mouldings workshop in Sheffield.

Marketing

A new FPDC website has been developed and will be launched in January 2005.

The new site will be simpler to navigate and include a members' only area with an extensive archive of guidance notes. The website will also include a notice board allowing members to post issues of concern or interest.

The Federation's magazine, Spec Finish, now into its fourth year, has been a hugely successful venture. It was recently reviewed to see what improvements could be made and will be re-launched in June 2005.

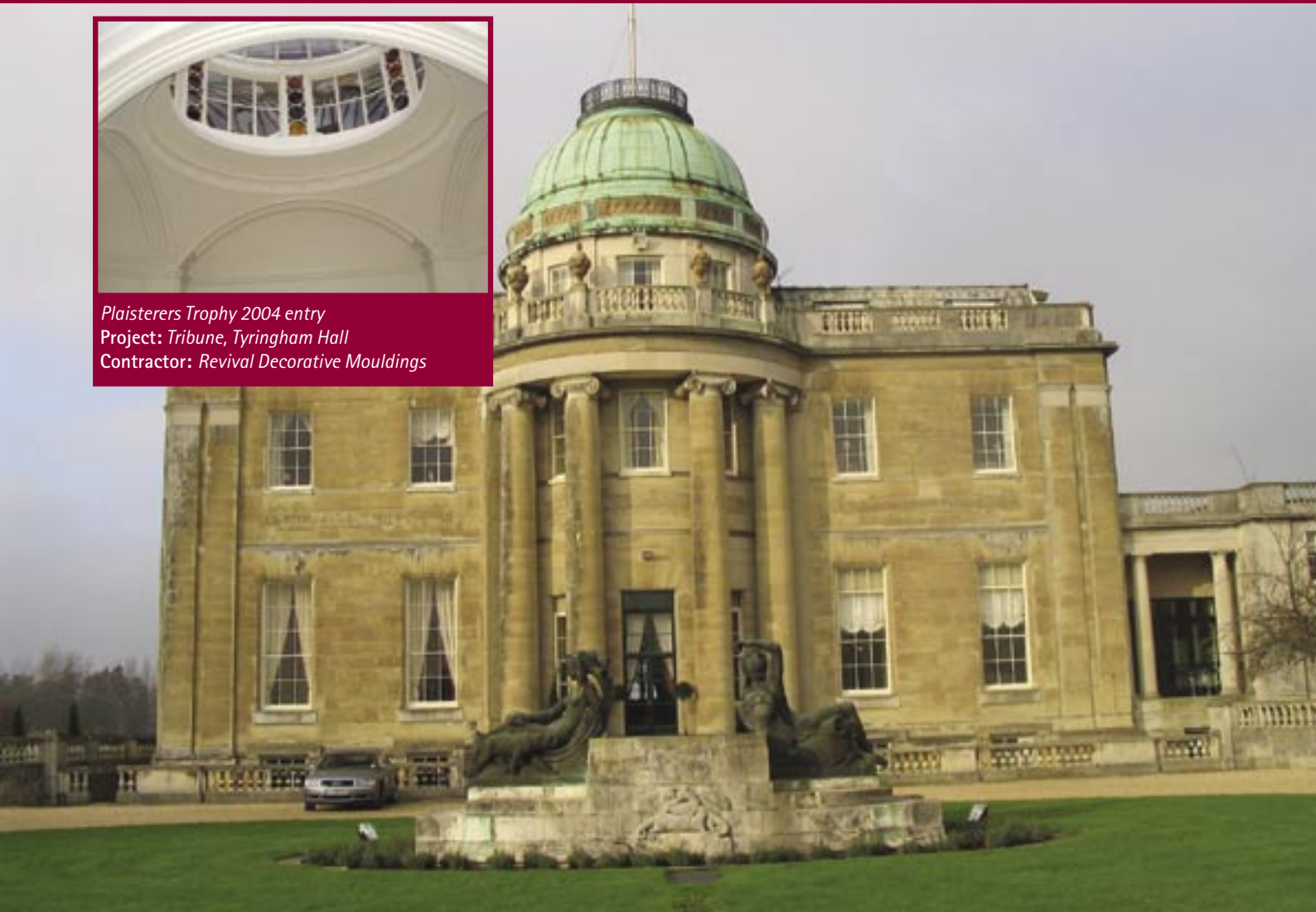




Above: Royal Albert Hall, London Contractor: BWDL



Plasterers Trophy 2004 entry
Project: Tribune, Tyringham Hall
Contractor: Revival Decorative Mouldings





*Winner of 2003 Plaisterers Trophy
Project: Bullring, Birmingham Contractor: Stevensons of Norwich*

National and Regional Events

Plaisterers Trophy 2003

The amalgamation of the National Drywall Awards and Plaisterers trophy has proved to be a great success, attracting a record number of entries.

The Plaisterers Trophy was presented to Stevensons of Norwich for their work at Birmingham's Bullring.

The 2004 awards will be held at the newly refurbished Plaisterers Livery Hall, which has been re-opened after the completion of a three-year redevelopment programme of the building above.

Golf Day and Sportsmen's Dinner

This popular event, held for the second year at Belton Wood, Lincolnshire, saw Richard Hutchinson, Hanburys (FP) Ltd, scoop the title of overall winner, with the members contractor cup being won by Steve Quinn, London Drywall Ltd.

Conference

The main aim of the conference is to provide members with the opportunity to network with competitors, manufacturers and suppliers. In 2004 we were delighted to welcome several members who attended for the first time.

The event included a half-day business session, which offered delegates industry and legislative updates. The presentation, worth £650 per delegate, was relevant to all those senior personnel within a company, and included the main duties and responsibilities faced by decision makers regardless of position.

Regional Events

There were 7 social events held around the regions during the year including updates on the Robust Standard Details and an update on adjudication from Barrister, Tony Bingham.

Membership Criteria and Raising the Federation Profile

The National Specialist Contractors Council (NSCC) has been in discussions with the National Contractors Federation (NCF) about the Federation's membership criteria, with a view to being able to specify members of trade associations.

Following an FPDC review of current membership criteria, it has been decided that together with references of recent contracts taken up and registration of the company with CITB, evidence of up to date insurance policies and adequate health and safety policy must be provided upon application and kept up to date.

This first step in developing our criteria will support the program of presentations planned for next year. Council Members and others interested in participating will give presentations at regional Chartered Institute of Building meetings, aimed at raising the profile of the Federation.

FPDC Staff

Emma Tomlin	Director
Donna Peache	Executive Administrator
Ann Ryce	Group Training Officer
Jayne Norris	Training Administrator
Rosemary Ward	Financial Controller & Membership Administrator
David Cole	Technical Consultant
John McKinney	Scottish Administrator

FPDC Officers and Chairmen

as of 31st December 2004

Brian Woolnough, BWDL
President

David Grint, Grint Drylining (Freethorpe) Ltd
Senior Vice President & Technical Committee Chair
& Solid Plastering and Screeding NITG Chair

Mat McAdams, W A Browne (BS) Ltd
Junior Vice President & Marketing Committee Chair

Robert Atkin, Plasterers L & C Ltd
Hon Treasurer

Andrew Measom, Measom Dryline Ltd
Immediate Past President

Phil Garland, Kingston Finishes Ltd
Yorkshire and North East Regional Chair
& Drylining Suspended Ceiling NITG Committee Chair

Damian James, Ceilings and Partitions Ltd
North West Regional Chair

Chris Morton, Manorcrafft Ltd
South West & South Wales Regional Chair

Michael Gavin, MPG Contracts Ltd
London & South East Regional Chair

Adrian Jamieson, Jamieson (Plasterers) Ltd
President FPDC Scotland

Tony Thorne, BDL plc
Health and Safety Committee Chair

Ian Whitt, Whitt Brothers Ltd
Contracts and Employment Committee Chair

Terry Wright, Troika AM Ltd
Fibrous Plastering NITG Chair

Maurice Rugg, Clark and Fenn Skanska Ltd
Trophy Organising Committee Chair



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and Drywall Contractors

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