

IBP BULLETIN

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION PRESS (UK BRANCH)

January/February 1983

IN THIS ISSUE... IBP Awards winners... Broadside at BDA DG... More on the Flaklands...

AWARDS

Chief Secretary to the Treasury presents IBP Journalism Awards...

The RT Hon Leon Brittan QC MP, Chief Secretary to The Treasury presented Awards to five winning construction journalists in the International Building Press Annual Award Scheme at The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, on Wednesday 17 November. The winners were as follows:

1) IBP Architectural Journalist of the Year. Sponsored by: Royal Institute of British Architects. Winner: Jonathan Glancey - "Architectural Review".

2) IBP Building Journalist of the Year. Sponsored by: Chartered Institute of Building. Winner: Steve Macvicar - "Building".

3) IBP Civil Engineering Journalist of the Year. Sponsored by: Costain UK Ltd. Winner: John Richard Dadson - "New Civil Engineer".

4) IBP News Reporter of the Year. Sponsored by: Willett Ltd. Winner: Andrew Taylor - "Financial Times".

5) IBP Rehab writer of the Year. Sponsored by: Blundell-Permoglaze Ltd. Winner: Michael Hanson - for articles in "Country Life".



Leon Brittan is fourth from left with all the winners (l to r) Jonathan Glancey, Andrew Taylor, Michael Hanson, John Dadson and Steve MacVicar.

Following his presentation of the IBP Journalism Awards, and more than a little timely goading by IBP President Peter Murray, Mr. Leon Brittan made the point that journalists have a powerful influence on business confidence and that excessive press gloom is counterproductive at a time when prospects for recovery can be seen but their realisation depends on this very confidence.

Defending the Government's record and its performance, Mr Brittan said Central Government was not to blame for local authorities not investing enough in capital construction and was now trying hard to reverse the trend. The Conservative Government's policies had brought down interest rates which would greatly help the industry, especially housebuilding. However, he emphasised, a sound monetary framework was being established which would ensure future stability. This was no short-lived, pre-election 'boomlet'.

Outlining recent economic moves, Mr Brittan said he thought that within the containment of public spending, construction should be relatively well off next year, although he refrained from reference to a construction 'boost'.

Assessors Reports:

Building journalist of the year award, 1982 - Steve MacVicar of "Building"

Seventeen entries were received, two more than last year. These represented a wide variety of styles and subject matter ranging from topical news reports to carefully



A happy Steve MacVicar after receiving his certificate from the Treasury Secretary

researched features of some weight.

We were disappointed in the apparent lack of spontaneity or originality in many of the submissions: the approach seemed a little laboured or uninspired and the selection of articles making up an entry lacked variety. There were also some cases where little apparent effort had been made to present submissions in a professional manner: the primary need of any successful journalist must be to attract his reader's attention.

However, the panel found little difficulty in deciding upon a small group of entries which had outstanding qualities. From these, one emerged as the unanimous winner. His articles were felt to show considerable creative and perceptive skills and the ability to develop a variety of subjects in an informative and interesting manner.

Civil Engineering Journalist of the year, 1982 - John Richard Dadson of "New Civil Engineer"

Eleven entries were received - the same as last year. Generally, we felt that most articles were too long and too general in content. We would also liked to have seen a wider representation of journals and newspapers and look forward to seeing shorter and more technical articles next year.

The top five entries were all very close to each other and, in fact, each assessor initially picked a different winner. However, democratic liberalism prevailed. The topicality of his article on the Falklands swayed the Award.

News reporter of the year, 1982 - Andrew Taylor of the "Financial Times"

Entries totalled eleven - the same as last year and they were once again of a high quality and in one case the news value was such that the story received significant national coverage. Subjects were varied and in general displayed a great deal of imagination, research and professionalism. Marking was close, but a clear winner emerged. His entries were of a consistently high standard with a spread of three varied stories revealing substantial detail in research and a high level of news value.

Rehab writer of the year award, 1982 - Michael Hanson

We were disappointed at the low number of entries received - five, compared to last

year's 13 - especially in view of the fact that rehab work is the main growth area for the building industry. The assessors believe that the layout of rehab articles is of major importance. By the nature of the subject, photographs and drawings have an important part to play in telling a story. We felt that too little attention was being given to this aspect.

The winner is someone with long experience of the building industry. The three articles submitted were all published in "Country Life", the subject matter discussed was very relevant to the readers of that magazine and raised a number of interesting topics. Rehab is as important to a large country house as to an inner city terrace.

The assessors noted that Michael Hanson has been writing the same weekly column in "Country Life" for 20 years and felt that other magazines might benefit from adopting "Country Life's" consistency and understanding of the needs of its readers.

N.B. Unfortunately we had not received the assessors report on the Architectural Award at the time of publication.

IBP BULLETIN

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September/October 1983

IN THIS ISSUE... New faces on IBP Committee... Award for IBP author... canine disposables... answer to new housing problems... dire warnings of failures to come...

diary dates

Reception

IBP members are organising a reception for American journalists visiting Interbuild. It will probably be held in London during or soon after the exhibition. Details to be announced.

Future activities

In the pipeline are visits to the Old Vic, Churchill's bunker, the Thames Barrier and a PR seminar. We are still prepared to organise a visit to TVam if there is sufficient interest in spite of the delay in getting this off the ground. Let the "Bulletin" editor know if you are interested. Any ideas and suggestions for visits, or speakers are welcome.

IBP Awards

A reminder that the awards will be presented by Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin on



November 16 at the RICS, 12 Great George Street. Copies of the winning articles are to be displayed, and Kodak will display the entries for the photo-journalism award.

NEWS

AGM Report

At the AGM on 22 September, the following were elected:

Hon President: Peter Murray

Hon Secretary: Rosey Harding

Hon Treasurer: Mike Farish

Committee: Jeanne Brinton, Brian Daniels, Madeleine Dyer, Paul Finch, Alice Heggen, Derek Hollier, Graham Howard, Sutherland Lyall, Kathy Stansfield, Don Westcott.

After the elections there was some lively discussion about possible new directions for IBP. It was generally felt that IBP had to expand and diversify its activities in order to offer a services of continuing interest to its membership. One suggestion was that IBP should hold lunches/dinners, with a celebrated speaker, to which IBP members could invite guests. The Committee would welcome members' opinions on this.

The Committee hope to make some contact with overseas construction journalists this year. Several ideas were put to the Chairman of the Awards Committee for their consideration next year.

The date of the next AGM is Thursday 27 September 1984, 6.30 pm at The George.

Award for Maltese connection

Charles Knevitt, architectural correspondent of the "Sunday Telegraph", has received an

Knevitt:
making
the most
of
"Manikata"



award for his book, "Manikata: The Making of a Church", which was published three years ago in Malta.

It was ranked seventh out of 88 titles from 19 countries in the books competition at the Second World Biennale of Architecture, InterArch '83, held in Sofia, Bulgaria in June. The six-man jury included an Argentine, an Indian, three from Eastern bloc countries (Russia, Cuba and Bulgaria) and one Briton.

The Biennale was organised by Gueorgui Stoilev, president of the Bulgarian Society of Architects and formed part of the International Union of Architects' events.

"Manikata" will be reprinted in Malta later this year. A monograph by Knevitt on the Maltese architect and designer, Richard England, will be published by Lund Humphries (London) early next year. The book covers 20 years of England's work and is profusely illustrated. Dennis Sharp, the architectural historian, has written the Introduction to the 200-page paperback, which is called "Connections".

BITS N' PIECES

Foul play

Croydon Council are about to provide their citizens with dog bins 'for disposing of canine excreta'. The press release explains that the bins are being introduced in selected areas 'so that dog owners whose pets succumb to the call of nature will have somewhere suitable in which to deposit the offending material'. The bins are to be mounted on steel posts, and will come complete with plastic liners and bags will be emptied regularly. However there is no explanation of how the owner of the animal is to get the mess into the bin in the first place - perhaps you have to supply your own spade if you can't face actually handling the stuff!

Bottoming out

On a similar subject, but this time with reference to humans, Protecto Products have launched a paper toilet seat cover which they say has 'already changed people's habits in the US - women no longer avoid sitting on toilet seats (how on earth do they manage?). It is a good time to launch the product, says the firm because of the 'increasing incidence of social diseases' (remember the lyrics of West Side Story). It is indeed a frightening thought that the herpes virus can apparently survive 'for up to four hours on a toilet seat', as well as other unmentionables. Now read on, if I haven't put you off completely...

Scaremonger

Rumours that all is not well with their CRAPPY system have been angrily denied by housing developers Cutehawk and Chancer Ltd. Developed in the 1970s, the CRAPPY system was heralded as a trailblazer on both the housing and the recycling fronts. Using a process never fully revealed but believed to involve a tin bath and several pairs of size 14 feet, the inner cores of toilet rolls were magically transformed into sturdy, weather resistant panels that interlocked at a touch, or a kick if a trifle recalcitrant.

Householders were urged to contribute their cardboard cores at a selection of gaily coloured disposal points and the company paid for all collection and delivery costs. Numbers of local authorities, spurred on by Government's encouraging withdrawal of nine-tenths of their housing cash, saw the CRAPPY system as the answer to their newbuild problem and were quick to go for CRAPPY housing. The Department of Enveloping gave it its blessing and building reached a peak in the late 1970s. Lately, however, there have been disturbing reports of householders who have had their housing pulled apart by a pair of loveable golden retriever puppies.

IBP BULLETIN

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November/December 1983

IN THIS ISSUE... AWARDS SPECIAL - All the winners... Strong AP flavour of new mag... and hunt for new AJ editor... Up and down "Guardian" visit... Novel idea for Battersea

diary dates

Christmas Party

Date: Thursday 15th December.

Venue: Mother Bunches Wine House, Old Seacole Lane, EC4.

Time: 7 - 11 pm.

Tickets are now available for IBP's biggest and brightest ever Christmas Party, to be held at Mother Bunches Wine House, under the arches hard by Ludgate Circus in Old Seacole Lane. We are taking the place over from 7-11 pm (hours are theirs not our preference) on Thursday 15th December. Tickets cost £5 from Brian Daniels, Redland Publicity, Kern House, 36-38 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6JL (Tel: 01-405 2876). They cover a buffet and LIVE entertainment from Rock Island Line. The group has been on circuit since the '60's, and toured with Chuck Berry, Bill Haley and Screaming Lord Sutch. They have produced 10 albums and appeared on TV with Shakin' Stevens and Alvin Stardust on 'Oh Boy'.

Friends and guest are welcome - the more the merrier. See you there!

(Cheques made out to IBP (UK Branch) please)

Outline Programme of Future Events (details and dates later)

January: Meeting with members of the 'World In Action' team.

February: PR Seminar.
Visit to Bury Court.

March: Annual Dinner.

April: Visit to BBC TV Centre and Newsroom 26th April.

May: Meeting to be finalised.

June: Young journalists seminar.

July: Summer Party.

August: Meeting to be finalised.

September: AGM.

October: Meeting to be finalised.

November: Awards presentation.

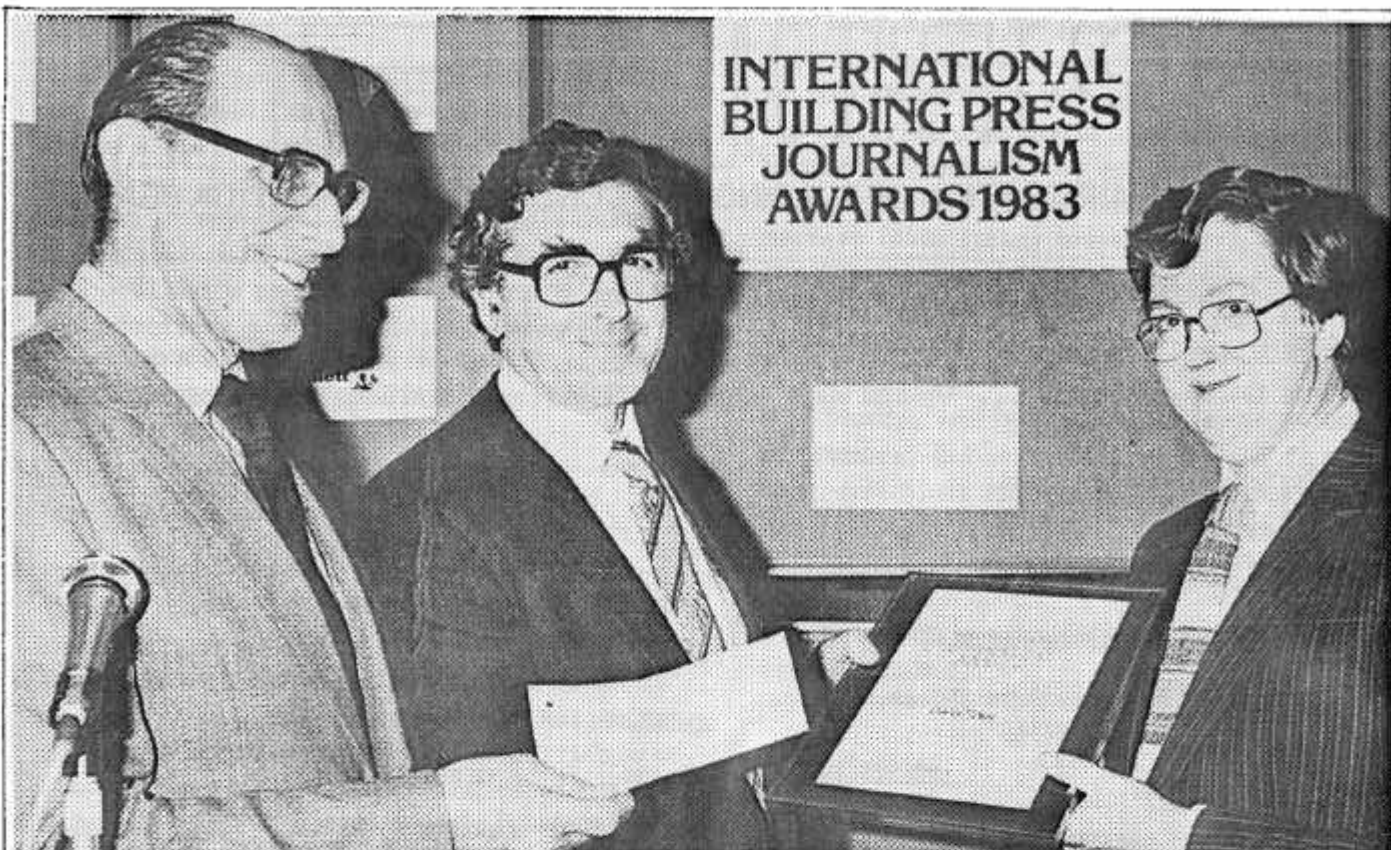
December: Christmas Party.

1983 IBP Awards Winners and Reports

The RICS was packed for the biggest awards event ever held by IBP, with displays of the award winning articles and photos unveiled after the Minister's speech and prize giving.

Patrick Jenkin got off lightly compared with Leon Brittan last year. Peter Murray's warm-up was merely polite, though he was concerned at winner Charles McKean's demise from "The Times", hoping that the paper would not for long lack a replacement architectural correspondent.

But if anyone hoped that Jenkin would let fall anything worth reporting, they were to be disappointed. He confined his speech to the relationship between politicians and the press, polite words about skill in the art of communication, complex and ambivalent relationships and mutual interdependence. He was rather smug about the number of interviews he had conducted with the press - his audience might remember the almost indecent haste with which he crammed us all into a week or so, filing in and out of his office like peas in a pod. He did admit that on occasions he had "been in trouble, but that was my fault, not yours". A few wise (and oh so familiar) words about the construction industry, the recession, planning, refurbishment and architectural competitions, and he was done.



Double winner of the Architecture and Building Awards Charles McKean (right) is presented with his Certificate for Building Journalist of the year by Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin (centre) while Professor R Burgess is ready to hand over the cheque on behalf of sponsor the Chartered Institute of Building

ARCHITECTURE

Winner: Charles McKean, of "The Times", described as "someone with great vitality and who has shown a consistently high standard of journalism in the national press. His entry entitled 'No designs on the past please', which commented on the present architectural scene, had impact for the public and the professional alike, and was considered by the assessors to be the 'best piece of journalism this year'. His ability to put his finger right on the point is brilliant".

The three assessors were Ian Leslie, Honorary Fellow of the RIBA and former editor of "Building", Ken Martin, head of Liverpool School of Architecture, who recently presented a six-part television series about architects and architecture in the North West, and Peter Melvin, former vice president for promotion at the RIBA and presently chairman of promotion for next years' Festival of Architecture.

The assessors were conscious of the difficulty in comparing the two distinctly different types of journalism represented by the 10 entries. Description and analysis of a new building on

the one hand and accounts of 'what's going on in architecture' on the other. In particular, they had difficulty in comparing works written for quite different purposes and audiences - those written for the professional and those aimed at the general public.

Brian Waters was singled out to receive a Commendation for his objective, well-researched technical writing. His articles were stylish, and sustained their impact despite the demands of writing for the technical press.

Martin Spring was also praised for high standards of technical writing for Building, and the assessors considered that George Perkins' pleasant style of writing was excellent, despite the handicap of writing in 'concrete boots' for a house magazine!

Stephen Games' ability to find the 'telling phrase' was particularly refreshing and the assessors were impressed with his article written for the radio and published in "The Listener". Deyan Sudjic, an enjoyable and at times cynical writer was considered to be at his best 'when writing with his heart on his sleeve', and Janet Abrams, a good young writer, shows great promise for the future.

BUILDING

Winner: Charles McKean of "The Times". The assessors commented "In his article entitled 'Built for Speed without Stability' written for a wide and generally uninformed readership, the author showed considerable ability in tackling a subject of public concern in an informed and highly readable way. His three articles gave evidence of interpretative and perceptive skills clearly based upon thorough and painstaking investigation, all demonstrating his concern for the interface between buildings and the society which they serve".

The two assessors were Martin Laing, a name well known to our industry and Michael Cassell, property correspondent on the "Financial Times".

The 14 entries in this section varied widely in both style and content, some being directed towards the general public and others to a more highly informed readership. This made the panel's task more difficult as it was necessary to equate a very wide range of approaches.

All entries had qualities to merit their submission, though the standard of actual presentation scarcely reflected a journalist's need to attract his reader's attention.

The assessors recommended most highly the submission of Anne Bunce of "Building" 'whose article on accident victims was most compelling and gave the reader much food for thought'.

NEWS

Winner: Mira Bar-Hillel, freelance, who achieved in the judges view, "particularly high standards combining impact and news value with clear, tightly written copy."

All three articles - 'Nationwide's £30 million boost for 1500 extra new homes' for "Building", 'Timber triumphs' for "The Economist" and 'Southwark misses out on Technopark homes' for "Building Design" were consistent in their level of competence; all were well researched without being too lengthy. The assessors felt that the Southwark Technopark homes article was particularly newsworthy".

The two assessors were Sir Laurie Barratt and Arthur Bennett, formerly of the "Financial Times".

12 entries were received which is the same very acceptable level as last year, although there were one or two journalists and papers notable by their absence. Entries covered a wide variety of topics ranging from a story on projected M25 traffic forecasts to news of a suppressed D.O.E. report on Stonehenge.

Although the standard could have been higher, particularly in news content, the judges felt that the entries were well presented and generally well written.

REHAB

Winner: Richard Catt, freelance, "a highly qualified writer whose entries were original,

Mira Bar-Hillel is congratulated by Patrick Jenkin



Richard Catt



The assessors for the Rehab Award considered that generally speaking the standard of entries submitted was good. It was felt however, that as Rehab is a wide subject - covering, as it does such aspects as planning as well as design; historical craftsmanship as well as high technology - the areas covered by the entries was extremely small.

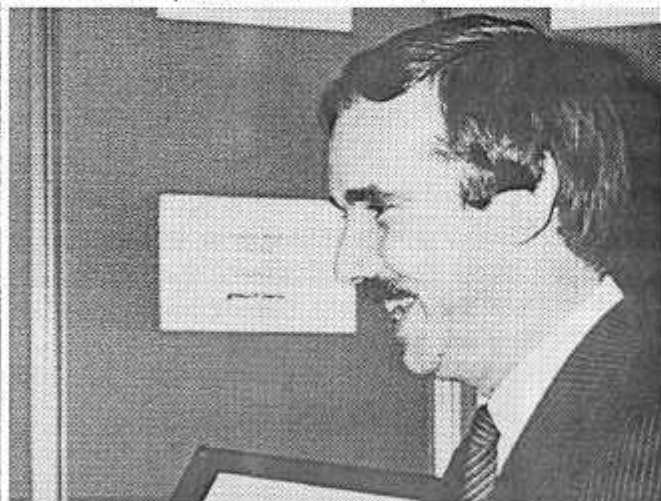
The assessors believe this reflects the attitude to Rehab stories held by editors rather than attitudes held by the entrants.

Highly commended was Kathy Stansfield of "Local Government News" with articles which were well-written in relation to her target readership".

BUSINESS/FINANCIAL

Winner: Jerry Gosney, "Contract Journal", one entrant who demonstrated a greater consistency in developing a good variety of subjects in a lively and highly readable manner". His articles were on sports sponsorship, on a company profile of Sir Alfred McAlpine and on ways to raise business finance.

The assessors were Malcolm Brown of stockbrokers James Capel and Company and Ed Mitchell, Head of the BBC Financial Unit.



This is the first year in which an Award has been offered for Business/Financial journalism. Six very interesting entries were received. We are conscious, however, that the Award is relevant to a much larger group of journalists and we hope that in future years the organisers are successful in attracting a greater number of entrants, particularly from the ranks of national and provincial newspapers.

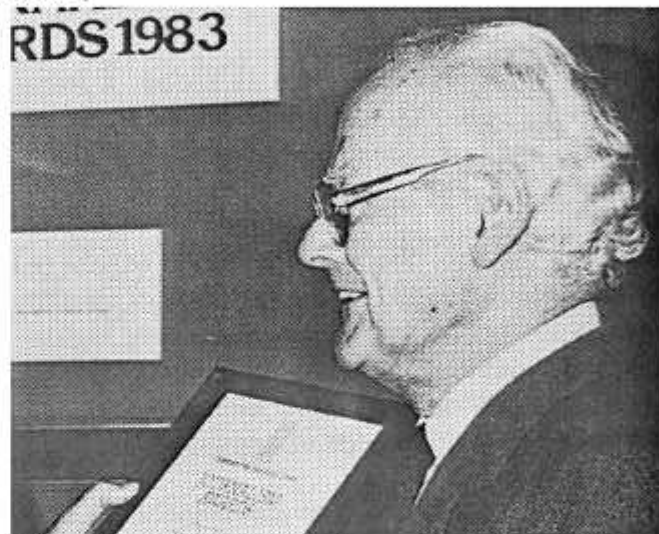
The six entries received covered a wide span of subjects, so much so that direct comparisons

were difficult. No one entry initially stood out. All were competent and workmanlike, all were written with fluidity and made newsworthy point effectively.

TECHNOLOGY

Winner: George Atkinson, of "Building", "one writer who stood out for the in-depth research of his chosen subjects and the wealth of information contained in the articles, which covered the properties of glass for buildings; the biodegradation of timber; and the corrosion problems of structural and reinforcing steel.

RDS 1983



When the IBP Award's Committee accepted our suggestion of a new award for the best technology writer, we began to wonder if the award might flop, because the building and construction industry is not renowned for its enthusiasm for high or even low technology.

We were therefore delighted to receive several entries which we consider to be a reasonably good response considering the nature of the subject and the fact that this is the first award of its kind.

What particularly struck the judges of this award was the breadth of the subjects written about. At one end we had the predictable computer applications and at the other end the application of road building techniques developed by the Romans, 2000 years ago - and this is still considered new technology by the industry!

However, the entries convinced the panel that the industry is examining new techniques and materials and that its commentators have a knowledge of and interest in the science of what happens on and off site.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Winner: John Huxley, of "The Sunday Times". The three articles submitted by Mr Huxley were considered to be extremely well written with the content being of interest to the readership.



It was found to be very difficult to compare Mr. Huxley's articles with the other entries in that the other articles were aimed at a completely different audience which would naturally inhibit the written style. Bearing this in mind it was extremely difficult to choose between the eventual winner John Huxley and the runner up Robert Matthews. It was decided therefore to commend Mr Matthews on his entries as they were extremely well written but did contain more 'jargon than thought necessary.

CIVIL ENGINEERING

Winner: Simon Fullalove of "New Civil Engineer". Last year the assessors made a plea for a widening of the submissions for the Civil Engineering section to bring in more



journals. This year all the entries submitted were from the same publication. The standard of journalism in this magazine is extremely high and it was reflected in the entries with each of the entrants selected as 1st, 2nd and 3rd submitting one very good story.

PHOTOJOURNALIST

Winner: John Dadson, of "New Civil Engineer". The winning entry was unquestionably eye-stopping, and at the same time presented the viewer with an easily assimilated and interpretative picture of the chosen subjects. The winning entry in this category caught the eye of all three judges early in the judging session, and the elimination of the unsuccessful entries was marked by unanimity in all cases. One of the three pictures fulfilled this function so well that one of the judges suffered an attack of vertigo.

The chief shortcoming in the eliminated entries was mediocrity of interpretation. The building industry abounds in just those elements which photography can interpret so well: beauty of line and shape, immense height and size, subtle colour and brilliant colour, texture. Yet few of these were taken by the photographers and interpreted dramatically.

Whilst physical presentation of the photographs was not taken into account, future entrants should try to achieve higher technical quality. However, impressive the image itself, an under- or over-exposed print does little for the enthusiasm of the judges, and un-trimmed prints do even less.

On the other hand, the entrant who submitted pages cut from the magazine in which his work appeared attracted sympathy. The judges were, told at the end of the session that the entrant had been unwilling to pay £50 for colour prints to be made from his transparencies. They suggest that transparencies should be allowed in future.

One entry, which the judges agreed should be highly commended, was that submitted by Michael Walters of M W Walters and Associates, Photographers.

(NB. We are sorry not to show John Dadson, but he was unable to attend the ceremony)

Organising the awards takes a huge amount of effort, and many thanks are due to the Awards Sub-Committee, headed by Don Westcott, and including Mike Winney, Catherine Meredith, David Evans and Andrew Leech. And of course, all would be impossible with the very generous support of our sponsors - the RIBA, CIOB, Costain UK, Willett Ltd, Blundell Permoglaze, Redland, Glasurit Beck, Transmitton and Kodak.