

Chairman of HVAC Specialist, Senior Hargreaves, Brian G Ward Retires After 48 Years

Submitted by: Ainsworth Maguire

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On February 13, Senior Hargreaves, the largest private sector employer in Bury, will say farewell to Brian G Ward. After 48 years with the company, ten of them as managing director, he leaves with Hargreaves enjoying a healthy order book, at a time when much of the construction industry has experienced mixed fortunes.

Brian's career has been exclusively with the heating and ventilation ductwork specialist. He joined the company in 1956 from Bury Technical School and began training as an apprentice sheet metalworker, training both at the company and at Bury Technical College. While still an apprentice, he began working as a fitter on-site at paper mills throughout the UK and abroad before moving to London in 1959 to work on high profile projects such as the Esso HQ, the Hilton Hotel and many others.

Brian spent 24 years leading installation teams on technically advanced and prestige projects. These included installing systems for the accelerated life testing of the prototype Concorde at Farnborough. This groundbreaking air handling system, using revolutionary lightweight stainless steel ductwork, subjected the airframe to cyclical air pressures and temperature swings equal to 40 years service. Early in his career, Brian was also involved in work for the nuclear industry at the prototype Windscale Advanced Gas Cooled Reactor. Just recently, he has revisited this plant to see decommissioning taking place, using world-class contamination control technology that was built and tested at Hargreaves Lord Street factory.

In 1978, Brian was recalled to the Bury site to become contracts administration director, then works director in 1980. He became managing director in 1993. In 1994 he became a director of Senior Construction Services, a division within Senior Engineering Plc, which included various ventilation and construction interests. Brian headed the team that between 1997 and 2000 restructured this division to divest non-core activities. Hargreaves was recognised at this time as a major asset and remains a key business in the Senior portfolio.

"Hargreaves has always been a company at the forefront of technology," Brian explained. "In addition to the nuclear decommissioning work - where the equipment we have installed meets the most exacting performance standards - we will also be working on prestige projects in the capital such as the new Wembley Stadium, Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Canary Wharf and St Pancras Station. Work starts soon on new laboratories for Welcome Trust at South Fields in Cambridge and there is ongoing work for the MOD."

In a tribute from the Engineering Employer's Federation, director general Marin Temple said. "Brian has been an active member of the EEF for many years. He is a passionate supporter of manufacturing in

Britain and has a personal commitment to the training of people, particularly the young. He has put this into practice by EEF involvement both regionally and nationally. In particular Brian played a major role in the merger of EEF Lancashire into the North West Association, creating a strong body to represent the interests of the region."

In his retirement, Brian does not intend to slow down. "I have a strong belief in the value of training and I am keen to continue to make a contribution to the local community." Brian will continue to be a governor of Bury College, working with the principal, Dr. Helen Gilchrist CBE. He also holds directorships with the new North Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Bolton/Bury Chamber and independent engineering training provider, Alliance Learning. "I also want to find more time for charity fundraising and country pursuits. My wife and I will complete our exploration of the Pennine Way and some areas in the Yorkshire Dales and Scotland that have a special attraction to us."

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High/low resolution images are on the web at www.ainsmag.co.uk/ha166/3616ha1a.htm