

## OBITUARY

### R. E. BEARD

11th January 1911–7th November 1983

On 7th November, 1983 the actuarial profession lost one of its brightest lights when Mr. Robert Eric Beard, “Bobbie” to all who knew him, died. He will be best remembered for his contributions to Non-Life Insurance, both in the wide variety of the papers which he wrote, and in his enthusiastic participation at meetings. He always gave the impression of a man with a thousand ideas all trying to tumble out at once and many of his friends had difficulty in keeping up with his thoughts, but always the smile and the twinkling eyes were there to tell you of the warmth of his personality.

Bobbie Beard became a fellow of the Institute in 1938. During the Second World War he was one of a select band of very clever people working in the Admiralty and was closely involved with the early development of techniques such as operational research which in those days was classified as secret. After the war he readily gave his services to the Institute of Actuaries and served as Examiner from 1945 to 1948, and was a member of Council for thirteen years between 1951 and 1965. During that time he was Honorary Secretary from 1959 to 1961 and Vice President from 1962 to 1965.

He presented two papers for discussion at the Institute, and the Journal of the Institute contains a number of his notes, mostly on mathematical subjects. He also contributed papers to International Congresses of Actuaries, to the Students’ Society, to the Royal Statistical Society, to ASTIN, to the Assurance Medical Society and to other bodies. He took a leading part in the development of the mathematical theory of risk and in recognition of his contribution to a symposium on this subject in Stockholm in 1968 was awarded a bronze medal by the organizers, the Filip Lundberg Foundation for Scientific Research. He was joint author with Pentikainen and Pesonen of a textbook on Risk Theory published in 1969. He travelled widely and gave talks to actuarial bodies in Australia, Denmark, Finland, Holland, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa and Sweden. He was corresponding member of the Association Royale des Actuaire Belges. He was nominated for the Council of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications and was a Vice-President of the British Cancer Council. For all these services he received the Institute of Actuaries Silver Medal in 1972.

Bobbie played a central role in the founding of ASTIN. From its beginnings until 1967, that is for ten years, he performed the very important task of the Secretary of the ASTIN Committee. In 1959 and 1960 he was, in addition, editor of the *Astin Bulletin*, and from 1962 to 1964, Chairman of ASTIN. He continued to place his wide experience and highly valued counsel at the disposal of the Committee until 1977.

It is not easy within the compass of a few remarks to pay adequate tribute to such prolific activity. Basically it derives from Bobbie’s roving and enquiring

mind, his enthusiasm for research and his interest in mathematics. His earlier contributions were largely mathematical in the field of graduation. Later, however, he applied his mathematical ability to problems of Non-Life Insurance. Development of *ASTIN* and of its *Bulletin* owes much to his enthusiasm. But it would do less than justice to Bobbie's services to the profession if the impression was left that they consisted largely of mathematical research. He was concerned, particularly in recent years, with the practical application of actuarial methods of Non-Life Insurance and was a most valuable ambassador for the profession in persuading those with practical experience in that field of the contribution that actuaries can make to the financial steering of Non-Life business.

Bobbie was an enthusiast in all he did and was always ready to help the profession both on his own initiative and in response to any request made to him. To go to him for advice and comment was always a stimulating experience because he always had something new and interesting to say about a problem.

He will be sadly missed by all his friends and the profession is the poorer for his loss.

F. E. GUASCHI



Photograph shows the presentation of Silver Medal to Mr. R. E. Beard, O.B.E. (centre), by Mr. R. S. Skerman (President) June 1972.