



Contract
Flooring
Association
Member

Contract Flooring Association

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The chief executive of ficer: Richard Catt

CFA has a highland fling

I RECENTLY had the great pleasure of hosting the 2008 CFA dinner dance at the Thistle Hotel in Glasgow. An annual event, it was of course my first as CEO of the CFA.

I think it is a universal truth that we in the flooring industry know how to enjoy ourselves, so a good a time is guaranteed, particularly when the event is so ably organised by Helen Tidmarsh from the CFA offices (Thanks Helen!).

But there is another universal truth, which is that the Scots provide a special kind of welcome and atmosphere.

So add the two together and you can imagine that a great time was had by all. How many dinner dances have you been to where the president was piped in by not one, but two pipers and the evening finished with a highland fling? It was also a fantastic opportunity for me to meet more of our members, some 236 to be precise. It was also the first opportunity for our new president, John Alcock from Bostik, to address members.

He laid out his goals for the CFA during his office and focussed on wanting to increase environmental awareness as well as broaden our appeal to include more interest from younger members. i.e. we need to change the perception that the CFA is an old boys club.

That last theme is one that John and I share and will be working on over the next few months, so watch this space.

The evening was mostly about fun, but I cannot ignore the networking opportunity for all and the chance to speak with some of the leading contractors, manufacturers and distributors was not missed by anyone. A full list of companies which attended appears on the right.



Suitably attired, CFA council member George Rose demonstrates the Highland Fling in true Scottish style

The companies represented at the 2008 CFA dinner dance included: Altro, Ardex, Bonar Floors, Bostik, Butler Cox, CSB, F Ball & Co, Florprotec, F M Birch, Flooring Forensics, Forbo Flooring, Gradus, Instar mac Group, InterfaceFLOR, MacGregor Flooring, Morleys, NICF, Nora Flooring, Peter Evans Flooring, Quantum Profile Systems and Tremco Illbruck.

In my short speech, I mentioned the fact that there is little doubt that we are now in a period of some economic decline. Recent figures released by the Construction Products Association, who represent the CFA manufacturers at government level, suggest that the overall output from the construction industry is likely to drop by as much as 1.3% this year.

With another industry measure, housing start-ups, dropping to an all time low for the last 60 years. At a recent CFA meeting, Simon Storer, external affairs director for the CPA, said that the only comment they had received after releasing these figures were that they were potentially too low. We all hope that this does not mean a long term recession, but few are now arguing with the commentators that rough waters are ahead.

Some will respond by cutting budgets and there is no doubt that this is likely to be a period where investing money wisely will be ever more important. But I believe membership of your trade association remains on the 'must do' not 'nice to do' list.

One of the conversations I had at the CFA dinner dance expressed this very clearly. I was speaking to Angus Fotheringhame, md of Forbo-Nairn, regarding our commitment to training through FITA and how I want to increase the awareness of main contractors, architects and other specifiers regarding the benefits of using a CFA member.

He scanned the room and put the message across as well as I have heard it. He said that these are people who he considers will do a good a job and in the unlikely event they have a problem, they are also the ones that can be relied upon to resolve the issue.

What better testament could you ask for to describe, in a realistic way, what the values and benefits of a using a CFA member are. CFA members are professionals with a fantastic support network to compliment their own expertise.

Stand out from the crowd is one of my consistent messages and while you are doing it come along to our dinner dance and enjoy yourself too! What could be better than enjoying doing business?



ABOVE: Some of the guests at the recent CFA dinner dance at the Thistle Hotel in Glasgow



Phil Poser, left, president of the NICF, chats to Terry Wolfe, immediate past president of the CFA, and Terry's wife Gillian

