

MICHAEL MAYER

Michael Mayer, formerly Manager, Lead-Acid Batteries, at the Lead Development Association (now International Lead Association) died suddenly on 1 November 2016 at the age of 82. Well known to almost everybody in the industry following a lifetime of involvement with lead-acid batteries, Michael had been retired (officially at least) for a number of years, but had maintained his involvement with the European Lead Battery Conferences – which he created – throughout his retirement, and was busy networking with friends old and new as recently as the 2014 Conference in Edinburgh.

Michael graduated in 1955 with a BA in mathematics and physics, and began his professional career in North America with Alcan in Canada. After a few years in computer sales and installation with Honeywell, and a few more as a computer consultant with Urwick Orr and Partners, Michael moved into the world of lead-acid batteries in 1971 with Globe Union Overseas, where he had responsibilities in battery technology and equipment sales. When Globe Union Overseas was absorbed by Johnson Controls in 1978, Michael continued in this role for the new owners, before becoming Marketing Manager for Europe and the Far East with responsibility for battery technology licensing and equipment sales.

In 1979, Michael returned to the United Kingdom and joined the Lead Development Association to head up the organization's lead battery initiatives and activities. These were very wide-ranging and included the promotion of lead-acid batteries; writing, editing and publishing newsletters and technical brochures; and arranging and taking part in lead-acid battery seminars and workshops in Europe and the Far East. Michael's irrepressible enthusiasm and personable nature endeared him to everyone, and ensured that the events he organised were invariably well attended.

It was in the field of meetings organization that Michael developed a particular flair, because here he identified a series of topics that merited special attention and brought together the relevant communities to debate them. A series of such meetings throughout Europe culminated in the creation of the first European Lead Battery Conference which took place in Paris in 1988. The European Lead Battery Conferences were an immediate success and after 28 years they are still growing and are the largest event of its kind in the world, providing the industry with a unique opportunity to learn about all the latest developments and to meet with all the key players.

Michael's wife Kim sadly died two years ago. He is survived by his son Kirk, his daughters Sian and Juno, and his granddaughter Daisy. Michael's legions of friends throughout the industry will miss him greatly.