

# Lighting the fires of enthusiasm



As the eldest of six brothers, it was a necessity to earn to help the family budget. I passed the Ordnance Survey exam and trained as a land surveyor. I went to night school to take civil engineering, and progressed into site engineering. During a period of working on Ordnance Survey, I had a part time evening and weekend job, cleaning offices in new buildings prior to occupation.

#### Peter Casey on... his career

During my early career, working for others fuelled the ambition to develop my own company. I was taught the facts of life and importance of cash flow for survival.

My ambition was realised when the Casey Group Ltd was established in 1968. Initially, the work consisted of sub-contract earth works, landscaping, and minor civil works.

We now carry out refurbishment of residential property for local authorities and housing associations, as well as schools and industrial developments. We also have new build and development divisions, and do major environmental works, land reclamation and plant hire across the country.

#### Peter Casey on... social responsibility

The Casey Group's policy was to put something back into local community. This ranged from working with schools to sponsoring sports teams.

Internally, policy was to encourage the further education of staff and apprenticeships. We organised courses for staff that were tailor made for the construction industry.

Alumnus Peter Casey is the embodiment of a Salford success story, and graduated from Salford Technical College with an ONC in 1960. Peter is the founder and executive chairman of the Casey Construction Group and generously funds a scholar for the duration of their course through the annual award of the Peter Casey Scholarship, which recognises and supports excellence in construction. We asked Peter about how his successes have enabled him to make an impact on current students, and about his continued association with the University and the City of Salford.

#### Peter Casey on... his early life

I was born and grew up in Swinton. I left school at 16 years of age with eight O levels.

#### Peter Casey on... supporting Salford

I am all for philanthropy, and wish there was more of it. I think there is no greater joy than to give or do something that makes a difference to people's lives, and educational opportunities fall within this.

I have such fond memories from my nights at Salford Technical College. Despite being sent out to flea bitten classrooms in almost condemned buildings throughout the city (invariably with no heating) I enjoyed every minute of it and was grateful for the opportunity to be there. It was my first venture into higher education and all I had to do was turn up and do my best. Today that is not the case; there are financial barriers to getting started that in my youth I could not have overcome.

#### Peter Casey on... the Peter Casey scholars

I have met both the current recipients of the Peter Casey Scholarship, Stuart and John. I was extremely impressed by both and I am sure they will both do very well in their chosen careers.

My first piece of advice to scholars would be always do your best, and play with a straight bat. I would hope that when the opportunity arises in the future they will be at least as generous to people they can help as life has been generous to them.

Secondly, and importantly, I would say that if working long hours don't neglect your family while growing up. There are no second chances, and no guarantees in life.

It is through lighting the fires of enthusiasm that I hope to generate success – after all, the Great Fire of London started with a candle!



#### John Kelso BSc Construction Project Management, 2017

I'm in my early thirties and have had many jobs over the years. Although I've always worked hard, I've always known I was capable of much more. In April 2012 my son was born, and everything changed. I wanted a better future for him so went back to college to study construction. Getting good grades made me more determined and motivated than ever, and I progressed to study Construction Project Management at Salford.

When I heard about the Peter Casey Scholarship I worked as hard as I could to obtain it. Having achieved my objective, I'm aiming to graduate with First Class Honours. It is an honour to be awarded this scholarship

and it enables me to carry on working to the best of my ability.

Ten years from now I see myself as a project director for a top construction company. I believe I can excel in the construction industry due to my self-confidence, commitment, motivation and my ability to learn quickly. My personal ambition is to buy land and build my own houses.

I've been through some bad times and made many mistakes, however my experience has made me a stronger person. Thanks to my love for my son and past mistakes, my resolve and motivation have never been stronger. I intend to put things right, like I should have done ten years ago, and enable my dreams to come true.



Left to right: John Kelso, Hisham Elkadi (Dean, School of the Built Environment), Peter Casey, Stuart Hartley

#### Ground-breaking gift by Gerry Mason to support even more promising engineers

In March 2015 Gerry Mason, founder and chairman of Morson Group, pledged £270,000 to establish the Gerry Mason Engineering Excellence Scholarships at the University.

Available to students across all disciplines of engineering, the purpose of these special awards is to ensure that gifted individuals are not deterred from studying at the University of Salford.

Gerry sadly and very suddenly passed away in July 2015, so never had the chance to

meet his scholarship recipients. His generosity, however, will ensure that his legacy lives on at Salford and will have a huge impact of the lives of future students.

We extend our sincerest condolences to Gerry's family, friends and colleagues.