

Welcome to the 2025 KCLEA Annual lunch

It is so good to see so many Kings engineers of so many different discipline careers and ages here today – with their guests -and some of the leading students from both the Department of Engineering and the School of Biomedical Engineering and Imaging Science.

This Year is very significant to me as **It is 50 years since I graduated**

So I am pleased to welcome those who I met when I arrived at Kings.

Firstly **Prof Turner** – the William Siemens Professor of Electrical Engineering who had likewise just arrived at Kings and went on to grow the Electrical and Electronic teaching and research . and the IEEE in the UK and more latterly his work in IEEE History matters has drawn me in with Plaques marking Alan Blumlein and John Logie Baird –

Three people from the year before me - **Vernon de Silva** – a civil engineer who was the Secretary of KCLES, **Elizabeth Slome** as she was then – **Liz Beckmann** as we know her now - and **Peter Calvert Smith** – who actually graduated with me – and we have worked together for many years in BBC Resources BBC Technology..... it was sold to Siemens

And finally and by no means least **Keith Newton** who was one of the KCLEA committee that came to me as President of KCLES and suggested that KCLEA members could meet / mentor the Students over Wine and cheese parties – Keith has served KCLEA for a long time – and is still researching who are our members and finding many delights- we sometimes meet up for a pint and meal in Kew.

I have also invited **Dave Thurtell** who mentored me when I started full time in the BBC here – we still meet up most weeks! And his wife **Jessica** who has family connection with BBC External Services /World service at Bush House!

Can I just say that with the world in the state that it is the World and the UK need the BBC World Service in TV radio and Websites even more than it did when I joined – and since 2009 has had a 24/7 TV channel in Farsi

Two Kings Engineers **Bob Jolly** who like me started at Bush House – he now is a senior manager at Broadcasting House – after working for me in BBC Resources, **Dr John Zubrzycki** the principal BBC R&D Researcher for UHD who with Peter Calvert-Smith as Senior Liaison engineer and myself as Project Director masterminded the First international transmission of UHD2 “8K tv” with 22.2 sound (over IP) for the BBC and NHK some 17 years ago... a major broadcasting milestone

And My sister **Ann** – who as a teacher inspired so many girls to do double maths A levels and is very good at organising people as you have heard!

And it’s also so good to welcome back the **Class of 73 group and Keith’s group from 58** and those who were with us last year – and to see more **recent graduates** become involved with KCLEA and share their experience

In the last newsletter I hinted at my business acumen from Student days - it is also 50 years ago that the college opened the new Student Union and Engineering building – Named after the Mechanical Engineer **Iverson Macadam** – who founded the NUS and Royal Institute Of International Affairs better known as Chatham House - And **Sir Iverson** served on KCL governing Bodies for 20 years!

It was thus highly appropriate that the committee set up to deliver the new building was chaired by **Professor Kastner** – the Head of Mechanical Engineering

With the new building the Union Society decided that it should run the bars – and approached the college to start negotiations –

The **Principal Sir John Hackett** called a meeting of the College leadership and a group from the Union society to discuss this – and started by saying he would Chair it as Sir John – and asked the Assistant Principal **Prof Kevin Nash** the much beloved and wise Professor of Civil engineering to put the college viewpoint – basically in 1936 when the students ran the bars “the bar steward ran off with the takings and the college has been running them since ... “ and John Smith President of the Union society put forward our arguments – “most other universities had union run bars ... “

then there was a pause and I posed the following question....

Can the college finance officer inform us of “ **Why the bars made a Ten thousand pound LOSS last year ...????**” this caused much consternation from the admin team Who reluctantly admitted it was true ... to which Sir John said –

I think that settles it – they must be the only bars in the kingdom to run at a loss!!!!

Getting control of the bars was **Probably a greater achievement than my degree!!!!**

Last year I introduced two sayings and these very nicely sum up the 50 or so years since I graduated

The first is by the philosopher Kierkegaard.

**Life can only be understood backwards;
but it must be lived forwards.**

So I certainly have lived my post graduate life forwards – and have done many things – I have been future to achieve many things from mentoring 250 plus grad trainees, to the establishment of the technology and sometimes the policy and editorial of almost all the TV access services – and the first open standard EPG – and more

see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2lP4GD3gos> . – recorded in the Nash Theatre

The role that gets most laughs was being the BBC official spokesmen on Sex and Violence in Programmes – with regular appearances on radio talking about the previous evening Dramas on Television!

The second came from the late Prince Philip

**What was not created by God ...
... was invented by Engineers**

And just see what parts of Modern life has been invented in those 50 years!!!

And it is us here in this room who have been doing all sort of things to make the world a better place and it is so good to see so many of you here today

Which brings me to two quotes about us today

From last year – Samriddhi Sehgal the EE Student who reported the advice ...

“ Join the Group that has the people most different from you “

Which was how the seating plan was done last year – but today I add a second criteria

To find that we

“have far more in common with each other than things that divide us.”

From Jo Cox MPs maiden speech

So please find out where though you have differences there are many things that bind us together by what we have in common

Looking over the past year – some key points – there are more on the PowerPoint

(available on the website <https://www.kclea.org.uk/annuallunch.html>)

KCLEA is a members society and we need **more reliable enthusiastic** members to operate it in Membership Marcoms and Events etc if it is to have a future ..

We have got close link with KCLES and WiSTEM – thanks to **Dr Ernest Okon** for leading work with them And learning about bridging the two faculties!!

And the college has opened its two most recent buildings – **David Blacoe** and I were alongside the Student Societies when HRH the **Princess Royal** Opened the Quad labs – **officially!** – all be it some four years after they entered use !!!! and a fortnight after KCLEA held its sixth set of activities with Students in the labs!

And the London Institute of Health Engineering **LIHE** - we are holding the **KCLEA Lecture** there this year Hearing from “**Entrepreneurs in Medtech**” – it is a building with a great position just across the River from the Houses of Parliament – and full of so many innovators in Biomedical engineering –including Siemens Healthineers

it will be great to see many of you and your friends there – **it is a public lecture** showing what Kings Engineers have achieved **so bring your friends along on 30 July 2025**

Ending with a long evening on the terrace! <https://www.kclea.org.uk/annuallecture.html>

At both opening events the **Vice Chancellor and President Prof Shitij Kapur** talked about the Long traditions of Engineering at Kings – as you know KCLES/A is older than any engineering institution than the Civils - we beat the Mechanicals by a Fortnight.

But he only talks of Wheatstone and others of the 19th /Early 20th Centuries but **Professor Sir Bashir Al-Hashimi** gave an important insight – as “most engineers are fundamentally modest and their great works always come in through collaboration rather than single person being inspired..... “

We need to find some **more modern examples of our achievements** and get them recorded Whether on Linked in or in the KCLEA Bulletin or for the 200 Years of Kings College in 2029 or in the **Vice Chancellor & Presidents speeches!**

KCLEA has ways to reflect achievements - We start with students where we award Medals for final year students and we awarded bursaries of £1000 each to Anna Julia Morais-Schwarz Biomedical Engineering and Jean Anselm Dela Cuesta in General Engineering. Who are here today Can I just point out their contributions to Kings Life beyond Engineering –

And we are also very pleased to have Lily Gregory here – She was the UK Undergraduate Engineering Student of 2024 – and has just been awarded the 2025 Cadzow Smith Engineering Award by The Worshipful Company of Engineers - it which acknowledges leadership potential, academic excellence, and initiative in engineering, - Its been a joy working with her as President of WiSTEM!

But KCLEA has its own award – the **13 Club Trophy** awarded to those who

“have made significant achievements in their professional or personal life, have raised the profile of King’s Engineering or have given significant service to King’s Engineering or the KCL Engineers’ Association.”

It gives me much pleasure to hand “Silver Reggie” on to

Liz Beckmann who Started work with EMI on CAT Scanners and Medical Imaging
Has been Managing Director of a range of companies and she still working in training
Was President of the British Institute of Radiology from 1993-94
And still Organises many International Conferences on Radiology and Imaging
Is Co-author of the book "Godfrey Hounsfield: intuitive genius of CT"
President of KCLEA (twice) and long serving committee member
Congratulations and Thanks for all that you have done

With that enjoy the Food Drink and each other’s company –

And note that we will be here again for the **KCLEA Annual Lunch on 20 June 2026**