

Speech by Peter Pexton

First Chair of STEP Jersey

Happy Anniversary to STEP Jersey. It is wonderful to be here.

Hard to believe that the Jersey Branch is 30 years old. It has come a long way since 1993.

When I first became a member of STEP in 1993 I telephoned the Secretary of the Society to find out how to join the Jersey branch. He advised that there was no local branch, and asked if I would like to do something about forming one. He then sent me details of the handful of local Jersey members so I could arranged contact with them to suggest we all meet up.

The initial meeting was held on 28 June 1993 at my offices in Bath Street (Ernst & Young) at which a Steering Committee was appointed. Rosemary Marr became secretary and John Harper the treasurer. I think the wine and buffet proved popular as I was elected Chairman.

The steering committee then met regularly to establish a structure for the Branch, approve new member applications and liaise with STEP centrally.

The inaugural meeting of the Branch was held at the Jersey Museum on the evening of 17 January 1994. More than 70 people attended the presentation on Jersey Wills given by Advocate Michael Richardson. At the formal part of that meeting, I was elected Chairman of the Branch and the other officers and steering committee members were confirmed in post.

We had expected to hold our Branch meetings at Committee members offices, but membership grew so rapidly that we always had to use much larger venues. Our membership size enabled us to attract high calibre speakers from the outset.

My understanding is that STEP centrally recorded the formation date of the Jersey Branch as 1 July 1993. I represented the Branch at the November 1993 STEP AGM and Branch Chairmans' meeting at the Lansdowne Club in Mayfair. It was a low-key affair held on a grey Winter Saturday afternoon but the excitement and enthusiasm of the delegates was amazing. Having a branch in Jersey was thought to be very exotic!

The first STEP Jersey International Conference was held at the Pomme D'Or Hotel on 21 November 1994. It was pretty revolutionary to have a whole line-up of well-known industry experts speaking here in Jersey, rather than us having to go over to London and further afield for topical conferences and seminars.

The event proved highly popular and was also commercially successful, giving the Branch a sound financial footing and the confidence to run such conferences annually.

Thanks to the enthusiasm and commitment of the early Members the Branch made a strong start, and the hard work of successor committees has ensured the continuing success of STEP in Jersey

Congratulations to STEP Jersey. Happy 30th Anniversary and every success in the years to come.

