



Media Release

Friday, October 6, 2017

Pioneer of oil and gas engineering firm honoured at Northern Star Business Awards

A LEADING North-east entrepreneur who founded and built a hugely successful international engineering group has been posthumously honoured with a lifetime achievement award at last night's Northern Star Business Awards for his outstanding contribution to the region.

There was pride mixed with sadness as Conrad Ritchie, managing director of Score International, collected the accolade on behalf of his late father Charles Ritchie during the glittering black tie ceremony at the AECC.

Charles, whose contribution to his local community was as immense as his contribution to business, died after a short illness earlier this year. He had been selected for the prestigious award before his untimely death.

Organised by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce and now in their fourteenth year, the Northern Star Business Awards recognise companies in the North-east for their exceptional accomplishments across a range of fields from energy to innovation, people development to customer service.

42 finalists joined the 600 guests at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre, all eager to find out who would lift the award in each of the 14 award categories.

Winner of one of the top awards on the evening was AISUS Offshore, which received the Overall Business of the Year award.

Launched in 2013 to address a gap in the market servicing the UK North Sea, its success has seen the company expand into new markets including Trinidad, Norway, Denmark and the Mediterranean, with plans for Malaysia and the Middle East.

It achieved profitability after just six months and has exceeded its financial growth targets. It expects to achieve sales growth within the UK of 30% each year for the next three years as it increases its market share.

Chief executive of the Chamber Russell Borthwick said: "We see a big part of our role being leading the celebration of our city region as a great place to live, work, study, invest and do business.

Companies in this part of the world and their staff are renowned for their innovation and entrepreneurial spirit and these awards provide a great stage to showcase and celebrate this. If we're not prepared to talk ourselves up, no-one else is going to do it for us.

"The Chamber congratulates the winners and finalists from all sectors of our economy who have again raised the bar across a whole range of disciplines from exports and research to their commitment to staff development and impact on the community. We should draw inspiration from everything we saw and heard during these awards and redouble our efforts to do better and do more to drive our economy forward."

The winners in the 14 categories were as follows:

- Lifetime Achievement Award
 - Charles Ritchie, Score International
- Achievement in International Business Award
 - Churchill Drilling Tools
- Best Campaign of the Year Award
 - Korero PR
- Commitment to Innovative Use of Research & Development Award
 - TWMA
- Commitment to People Development Award
 - James Laing & Sons Ltd
- Excellence in Customer Service Award
 - Aberdeen Performing Arts
- Excellence in Health & Safety Award
 - Stewart Milne Group
- Outstanding Contribution to Society Award
 - Absafe
- Excellence and Innovation in Procurement Award
 - Craig International
- Overall Business of the Year Award
 - AISUS Offshore

- Rising Star Award
 - Andrew Johnson, Blaze Manufacturing Solutions Ltd
- Student Placement Award
 - Marathon Oil
- The Green Award
 - Douneside House Ltd
- Inspiring the Next Generation Award
 - Royal Air Force and Mackie Academy

Ends

Notes to editor

- AberMedia are at the awards and can supply photography this evening if required. Please contact them direct in advance before 4pm today to arrange. (07769978984)
- Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) is North-east Scotland's leading member-focused, business organisation. The Chamber represents more than 1,250 businesses with almost 125,000 employees in the private sector covering all industry sectors, ranging in size from sole traders to multi-national corporations.
- Charles Buchan Ritchie's story is an inspirational one. He was born into a fishing family in the village of St Combs in 1947 and, despite leaving school at 15 with no qualifications, went on to be an outstanding business success.

He served his apprenticeship at CPT Fraserburgh and attended night school three nights a week to obtain a HNC in mechanical engineering. After serving his time he went to Strathclyde University where he gained a BEng and returned to Cleveland Twist Drill in Peterhead as production manager.

In 1979, he successfully set up Wood Group's operations in Peterhead and three years later followed his dream and set up Score. He initially worked on his own from a 3,000sq ft unit on the outskirts of Peterhead, with assistance from his family, but very quickly the company and workforce grew.

Today Score Group plc operates worldwide offering engineering services across five continents in a range of sectors including oil and gas, nuclear and marine.

Providing engineering apprenticeships has always been at the heart of the organisation and more than 1,000 have been trained during its 35-year history. More than 400 apprentices are currently employed worldwide and many past trainees are now in director roles around the globe. In

addition, the organisation has encouraged and supported trainees to continue their training and many have obtained degree level engineering qualifications.

Charles Ritchie was passionate about his business but also about the communities in which it operates. In 2007, he had a vision which would benefit the local community and this year an £8.5 million state of the art medical centre, which was underwritten by Score, was opened in the village of Crimond. It provides GP-led medical services as well as a community café, fitness suite and community rooms.

In 2014, to help regenerate the local community, Score Group bought HM Convict Prison, Peterhead, which now forms part of The Admiralty Gateway and is home to Peterhead Prison Museum, Peterhead's most famous lifeboat the Julia Park Barry which saved almost 500 lives over 30 years, and Score Training. The museum opened last year, has achieved VisitScotland four-star status and is proving a major tourist attraction.

Charles Ritchie was also a generous patron of both Peterhead and Fraserburgh football clubs.

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