

ACT

END OF AN ERA FOR ACTICAS

THE CE REPORT THIS MONTH MARKS A KEY EVENT IN THE ACT'S EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND WE ASKED **PHILIPPA FOSTER BACK** TO BE OUR GUEST WRITER. PHILIPPA WAS PRESIDENT OF THE ACT IN 1999-2000 AND CHAIRMAN OF ACTICAS FROM 2001-2003.

Back in April 1992 ACTICAS, under the Chairmanship of Archie Donaldson, was formally launched, as a joint venture partnership between the ACT and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS). For more than ten years this partnership has managed the provision of the Associate Examination, which is absolutely central to the ACT as the qualification leading to associate membership. ACTICAS is now being dissolved as a partnership and I am delighted to have the opportunity to pay tribute to ICAS and their contribution to the success of the ACT's educational programme.

The working relationship between the ACT and ICAS was well established before 1992. ICAS played a crucial role in the design, development and writing of what is now called the Associate Examination, papers I-IV. This was due to the enthusiasm and active participation of Ian Marrian and Mark Allison, whom I personally and on behalf of the ACT would like to thank.

It was back in 1989 that Council gave the go-ahead for the Education Committee to design a new own-brand examination called ACT (Tech), which also served as the Part I examination to the then called Diploma Examination (ACTDip). That in retrospect was the easy bit! The Committee set about the task with fervour, but recognised early on that the best way forward was through partnering. But with whom?

The question answered itself when Ian Tegner, then Vice President of ICAS, introduced me to Ian Marrian. We quickly established a common purpose between the two professional bodies and took it from there. ICAS had a long history of developing study material for their own professional examinations, which the ACT drew upon. They also had natural expertise in the topics that the ACT wished to cover in the new Papers I-IV: Accountancy, Economics, Taxation and Law.

From 1990 onwards the work proceeded in developing the new manuals until they were formally launched in autumn 1992. Since that time ACTICAS has overseen the whole process relating to the Associate Examination. A key aspect has been the examination setting and marking process. It is a very rigorous process, as you would expect, but I think it is often underestimated by those who have not had the pleasure of being involved in it. It has been great fun, too: I recall many a light-hearted moment as academics and practitioners discussed the merits of particular questions around the ACTICAS board.

In the end of course the proof of a successful partnership in the

academic/professional field is whether students benefited from the process and were able to pass the exams. They did. Pass rates under the new system of examination were significantly raised. The foundation papers also served as a building block to those of V and VI, which in the main were designed by the ACT, though ICAS had many valid comments to contribute as well. The result was a cohort of people qualified, at equivalent first-degree level, to practise treasury. Many students of course continued their studies to the Diploma (or Membership) level. Here too, as a consequence of the better basic introduction that they had studied in the earlier papers, the pass rates rose. All in all this was a very satisfactory outcome for the individuals and the profession.

ACTICAS has been an active joint venture with regular meetings alternating between Edinburgh and London. Many people have participated and served on the board over the years whom I would also like to thank, including the four Chairmen, Archie, Norman Tribble, Gerry Leahy and Jeremy Wagener.

In April 2003 ACTICAS met for the last time in its present guise but the warm relationship that exists between the two professional bodies will live on. We continue to co-operate in the wider educational arena and ICAS will be directly involved in working with us on the Associate Examination. **PHILIPPA FOSTER BACK**

ON THE MOVE

■ **David Abbott AMCT**, previously at Heron Corporation, has been appointed Financial Controller at Laing Investments, PPP developer of the year 2002.

■ **Noelia Bastida AMCT**, has been appointed Treasury Operations Manager at Avery Dennison UK Ltd after previously being European Treasury Cash Manager.

■ **Jeremy Clark MCT**, formerly Treasurer of Barclays Caribbean, has been appointed Executive Director (Group Treasurer) of FirstCaribbean International Bank.

■ **Kieran O'Regan MCT**, previously worked for Shell International Trading and Shipping Co Ltd, London, as Treasury Advisor, has been appointed Senior Relationship Manager, Energy and Chemicals at Fortis Bank, London.

■ **Julie Pomeroy AMCT**, has joined Carter and Carter International Ltd as Group Financial Director. Previously she worked for Weston Medical Group plc as Chief Financial Officer.

Please send items for inclusion (including daytime telephone number) to Anna McGee, amcgee@treasurers.co.uk.