

Notes from the Eastern Chair



Geoff Fennah MBE
Chairman, British Business Association
Eastern Province

Happy New Year from EP and hopefully 2007 will be successful and prosperous for all. I don't know where 2006 went but it has gone! EPBBA closed the year in style with a magnificent Winter Ball, run jointly with the ABA, at the Crowne Plaza, Bahrain. The evening was attended by almost 250 people with dancing continuing until the early hours and it was especially pleasing to see representatives from RGBB and Bahrain BBF in attendance as well.

Membership numbers continue to grow steadily and it is looking like we will pass through the 200 mark before year-end, which would put us firmly back in the region of historical norms. This is largely due to new arrivals from the significant project activity in EP but is also an indication of returning confidence in Saudi and a slow return to normal.

Reflecting on 2006, it was a year of significant change for the EPBBA with several changes in the committee ranks. The Association also took a step back and looked critically at how it operates and this resulted in some new initiatives being considered and the results of this will hopefully be seen in 2007.

British Trade Office (BTO) also continued to see change with the "free transfer" of Richard Wood on promotion to Riyadh where I am sure he will make as significant a contribution as he did in EP. We also welcomed Neil Wilson arriving from Caracas, as a replacement for Richard, and he has settled quickly into the Al-Khobar scene. We wish both every success in their new assignments.

Looking forward, 2007 will be a year of consolidation, as we continue with our successful series of business functions as well as other work in progress to further develop the business activities of the Association. Accordingly, a new sub-committee has been established to specifically focus on "business" as well as to forge a closer working relationship with BTO to better support their objectives. Social activities, of course, will also continue with a variety of events being held in both Al-Khobar and Jubail.

Don't forget our open invitation to RGBB members to attend our functions, either business or social, as you will always be welcome. Any enquiries relating to our events should be communicated to bbakhobar@atheer.net.sa



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