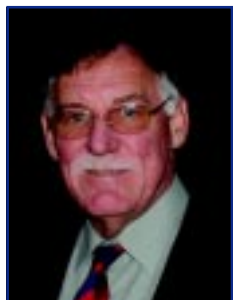


Notes from the Eastern Chair



Geoff Fennah MBE
Chairman, British Business Association Eastern Province

Well 2007 has almost past us by and everyone is starting to focus on the upcoming Festive Season. It has been a hectic year in EP with a significant number of large projects in various stages of development across the Province. This level of activity is expected to continue through 2008 and for a number of years beyond with a peak of startups planned in the 2011 / 2012 timeframe.

2007 saw us say our goodbyes to HMA, Sir Sherard and wife Bridget and we wish them well in their future endeavours and especially with the new assignment in Afghanistan. The Queens Birthday Party provided an early opportunity to welcome new HMA, William Patey and Vanessa back to the Kingdom after a ten year absence.

It has also been a busy year for EPBBA with some turnover in the Committee ranks but we have still been able to record a number of notable achievements and not least being the launch of our first website. This is already proving to be a useful aid to our communications and will continue to be developed and improved as we move forward. The address is www.bbaep.com so feel free to visit the site and even provide us with you thoughts & comments (as long as they are polite!).

Our successful program of business dinners continued with an interesting update on the South Rub Al-Kali (SRAK) project by CEO, Patrick Allman-Ward in March, a detailed insight into the mechanics and trends of the Saudi economy presented by Mohammed Ramady, Associate Professor, Finance and Economics, KFUPM, in May and an interesting insight in project management strategies by Giancarlo Cotone, Senior VP, Foster Wheeler ME in September

In September, I attended the Opportunity Arabia 4 conference in London at the invitation of the MEA, to give a short talk on Business activities in EP. The conference (pictured below) provided some excellent high profile speakers and was very successful. It was especially encouraging to see a full auditorium and




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considerable business interest in the Saudi market. It also provided me with an opportunity to meet up with Riyadh Chairman, Luke Bowen for the first time and also an unrecognizably young looking (no moustache!) Owain Raw Rees. Along with Andrew Mead (camera in hand), Colin Clarke (EP) and Mike Hurley (ex EP BTO) we were able to conduct an excellent post conference critique in the Westminster Arms.

The social scene has also been busy in Jubail and Khobar with their regular quizzes being well attended. The annual Summer Ball was held on 7 June at the Golden Tulip Hotel, Bahrain with a good time being had by all and it was especially pleasing to see representatives from RGBB and Bahrain BBF in attendance again.

As we approach year end we are in the final stages of preparation for our Winter Ball which is being held jointly with the ABA at Crowne Plaza, Bahrain on 6 December 07 and the format will be the same as the successful event of last year. We also have some interesting speakers lined up for the 2008 Business Dinners and I would like to extend our welcome to any RGBB member who would like to attend any of our functions – just contact our Secretary via the website or at bbakhobar@atheer.net.sa

Geoff Fennah
Chairman, EPBBA

