

**Ian Phillips - Chair Membership, Marketing & Communications Committee & Chair
Offshore Achievement Awards**



Ian has over 30 years' experience in the upstream oil and gas industry, including 18 years with oil operating companies (Shell, BP, Marathon and Ramco) and 6 years with a major service company (Halliburton). He worked up from being a reservoir engineer involved in exploration and field development projects to being a Project Director responsible for full field development programmes.

In 2007 he became a founding Director of CO2DeepStore Limited, one of the first companies specifically seeking to provide the service of CO₂ capture, transportation and deep geological storage to alleviate the worst effects of climate change. In late 2014 he became the Chief Executive of OGIC – the Oil and Gas Innovation Centre – a Scottish government backed research funding agency that is entirely demand-led. OGIC provides grants to support company-led research and

development in Scottish Universities. In March 2020 he joined Pale Blue Dot Energy as the Project Director for the Acorn low carbon and hydrogen and CCS project planned for the St Fergus gas plant north of Aberdeen – an early Energy Transition project.

He obtained an MEng in Petroleum Engineering from Heriot Watt University in 1983 and an MBA through the Open University in 1994. He is also a Fellow of the UK Energy Institute and a Chartered Petroleum Engineer.

Ian has been a Director of the Aberdeen Section of SPE since 1986 and has served as Treasurer, Continuing Education Chairman and as Section Chair for 4 years. Since 2012 he has chaired the Offshore Achievement Awards Committee. Ian has also served as North Sea Regional Director on the SPE International Board and as a Director of SPE Europe Limited.

In the Spotlight

What career advice would you give your younger self?

Look closely at the company you are joining – sometimes all is not how it seems.

What do you think are the benefits of being a member of SPE?

Networking, networking and networking – plus a liberal sprinkle of keeping up to date technically.

Best Achievement so far?

Having the bottle to join three others and launch a new company (CO2DeepStore – a climate change business that was ahead of its time).

What did you want to be when you were younger?

An architect – but my Dad persuaded me to do civil engineering as there were many more successful and well paid civil engineers (unfortunately I loved the degree but hated being a civil engineer).

What are the main career stepping stones you have taken?

Biggest one was earning my M.Sc. in Petroleum Engineering from Heriot Watt. Close second was earning my MBA from the Open University.

Anything you would do differently?

Strike a better work-life balance – our industry makes some pretty stiff demands on people and their relationships.

Who has been your greatest influence?

Undoubtedly my Dad – who taught me to be hungry to know about our world. Also Jacob Bronowski, who present a TV series called “The Ascent of Man” which fired my interest in how the people tick.

What’s your idea of perfect retirement?

Continued (but very selective) involvement in our great industry – plus having my health so I can enjoy hill walking and travelling and share in my sons’ success.

What would your autobiography be called?

“The View from Up Here” (I’m 6ft 7ins tall!!)

What is the best way to motivate others?

Set clear and fair expectations – then let them get on with it – making sure you provide enough support to help them succeed – but to know that they did it.

Your favourite stress-buster?

A glass of cold white wine and a perfectly cooked steak.

What’s your dream job?

My current one – a mix of leading an amazingly effective team, moving in uncharted territory, supporting exciting technology and helping people create companies.

Where is your favourite place to go on holiday?

Anywhere with warmth and some history to go exploring.

What are you reading, listening to or glued to on TV?

Last Tango in Halifax (TV series) – for its brilliant acting and the twists in the plot.

If you were a character in a TV series or movie who would you be?

I’m going to cheat a bit here – I’d like to be David Attenborough – finding, recording and showing people the wonders of our planet.

What’s on your bucket list – the things you still want to accomplish?

To visit a few really remote places – Greenland, Galapagos Islands, The Andes.

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