

## SAA PRESS RELEASE

### **Permabond 'Legend' awarded the 2004 de Bruyne Medal**

Dr. William ['Bill'] A. Lees, formerly of Permabond Adhesives Limited [later National Starch & Chemical Limited] of Eastleigh, Hampshire in the UK, is the 2004 recipient of the de Bruyne medal.



Dr. Lees is only the fourth recipient of this prestigious award; and the second from Permabond. Dr. Stephanie Wellman of Permabond was the first in 1996, Dr. Iain Webster of Smith and Nephew, the second in 1999 and Dr. Michael Owen of Dow Corning, the third in 2001.

The de Bruyne medal is named in honour of the founder of Aero Research Limited: Norman de Bruyne FREng, FRS [1904 - 1997]. De Bruyne was a multi-disciplined scientist who had the ability and foresight to translate theoretical science into very practical, commercial applications. Three apposite examples are: the development, in 1936, of the first structural composite [Gordon Aerolite<sup>®</sup>] for use in aircraft; in 1942 the invention of Redux<sup>®</sup> - a synthetic heat-curing adhesive - for structural bonding; and patenting, in 1938, the concept of metal honeycomb. All three concepts are still widely used in the aerospace industry.

The medal is presented to an individual who displays these characteristics. It is an acknowledgment of the recipient's personal contribution to innovation in the field of adhesives.

Dr. Lees has, had a distinguished 35-year career with Permabond: initially the R+D arm of the Borden Chemical Company; this became Avdel Adhesives, which in its turn became Permabond Adhesives and then the Permabond Division of National

Starch and Chemical. He made significant advances in very varied fields within the adhesion and adhesive disciplines as well as being responsible for establishing the entire *modus operandi* of the Company which was to become Permabond.

His achievements include: the development of chemical techniques for soil stabilisation in, for example, the construction of tunnels and dams; the development of a range of anaerobic adhesives which were manufactured by novel techniques; the introduction of cyanoacrylates adhesive manufacture to the UK – this led to the so-called toughened acrylic adhesives. Adhesive innovations by Bill and his team have significantly advanced the construction technologies of the automotive industry [ECV3], civil engineering [gas pipe repair] and defence [Law 80 rocket launcher]. One of his enduring legacies, apart from his numerous papers and books, is the development of the expert system – ‘PAL’ – used for guiding adhesive selection by the end-user.

The Medal Committee comprises members of the Society for Adhesion and Adhesives [SAA], TWI and Huntsman Advanced Materials [originally Aero Research Limited/Ciba]; the CEO of Huntsman Advanced Materials – Paul Hulme – is to present the award to Dr. Lees at the major international conference on adhesion and adhesives [Adhesion ‘05], which is to be held at St. Catherine’s College in Oxford on 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> September 2005. Dr. Lees will also deliver a paper entitled: *De Bruyne: Legend and Legacy*.

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Nominations are now being sought for a de Bruyne medallist for 2006. An application form is to be found on the SAA Website:  
<http://www.ukxaa.org>

**For Further Information contact:**

**John Bishopp: e-mail [john.bishopp@btinternet.com](mailto:john.bishopp@btinternet.com) or telephone+44 1223 861338 at the Society for Adhesion and Adhesives, c/o Star Adhesion Limited, Star House, 40 Station Road, Waterbeach, Cambridge, CB5 9HT, UK**