

The World Maritime Technology Conference 2006

The second World Maritime Technology Conference, known as **WMTC 2006**, was hosted by the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) and held on March 6-10, at the Queen Elizabeth II Convention Center in Westminster, London. The inaugural WMTC had been held in San Francisco in 2003, organized and premiered by SNAME, and the next will be hosted by the Institute of Marine Engineers (India) in January 2009, and located in Mumbai, India.

This year's theme was "Maritime Innovation – Delivering Global Solutions," and 25 international maritime organizations enthusiastically supported the four-day technical conference and exposition with 1200 delegates (55 US attendees) from 40 countries. Over 230 authors and presenters participated in the ten technical paper tracts and poster sessions covering Marine Engineering Systems, Commercial Shipping, Marine Renewable Energy, Exclusive Economic Zone Management, Operational Oceanography, Naval Engineering, Offshore Oil and Gas, Underwater Vehicles, Coast and Ocean Mapping and Reefs of the World. Additionally, some 100 exhibitors filled the five floors of the convention center showcasing their latest creative marine products and technology. The Society was enthusiastically represented by Executive Director, Phil Kimball, who managed SNAME's exposition booth over the four days, and participated in a number of the WMTC's technical sessions, social events and Annual Dinner.

The opening plenary session was highlighted by the presence of HRH, The Prince Philip and Duke of Edinburgh, who officially opened the conference. His Royal Highness demonstrated innovation in marine technology by starting a live remotely operated vehicle (ROV) demonstration at the National Aquarium in Plymouth via the Internet.

He also presented Tom Mackey with a certificate of commendation in recognition of Tom's service to the maritime profession as the first Chairman of the World Maritime Technology Congress and Chairman of WMTC 2003. Succeeding Tom Mackey as Chairman of the WMT Congress will be Frank Mungo, a past President of the IMarEST.

Speaking at the plenary session were Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO); Commissioner Joe Borg, Directorate General for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, European Commission; Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmospheric and NOAA Administrator; Choo Chiau Beng, Senior Executive Director, Keppel Corporation, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Keppel Offshore and Marine Member, Executive Committee; and Adm. Robert E. Kramek, President and COO of The American Bureau of Shipping.

Keynote speakers through the four days included Admiral Sir Jonathon Band KCB, the First Sea Lord, who opened the International Naval Engineering track, Sir David King, Chief Scientific Advisor to HM Governor and Head of the Office of Science and Technology, who opened the Marine Renewable Energy track and Transport Minister, Dr. Steven Ladyman, who addressed the closing plenary session on the final day. There was a full social and networking program of receptions in the evenings followed on Friday night with a combined WMTC Conference Dinner and the 103rd Annual Dinner of IMarEST.

Overall, the second WMTC was a resounding success, and we all look forward to January 2009 and Mumbai, India.