

HFMA UPDATE

Martin Last, Director General



HFMA Awards

The HFMA is proud of its 60-year heritage and over this time, has yearly recognised companies and individuals for their contributions to our industry.

The HFMA Awards are given at the HFMA Annual General Meeting, which is typically held each spring in central London. Whilst a regular part of the calendar, it is worth remembering where the awards originated and the importance their originators have in our history.

The Maurice Hanssen Lifetime Achievement Award has been in place since 1995, with 29 recipients. It remains the highest accolade for individuals who, over time, consistently demonstrate commitment and dedication towards our industry.

Nominees for the award are requested from member companies, which are then assessed by Council, which collectively make the final decision on a worthy winner. Council is under no obligation to give this award every year, only doing so if there is a clearly deserving recipient. This demonstrates the high standard that is applied to presenting this award and reflects the good company that they then share with previous winners.

Why is it called the Maurice Hanssen Award? The HFMA and our industry as we know it today exists because of Maurice Hanssen. Maurice was an extremely charismatic and inspirational man who not only had a huge knowledge but a practical approach to make things happen. He formed the



HFMA on March 1, 1965, and was our first Chair. He saw the need to help protect the interests of the emerging health products industry which, in the mid-1960s, was growing fast. He formed the organisation designed to safeguard the companies who operated in the industry and to instil that the highest possible standards be consistently maintained and followed – a philosophy that continues after 60 years and will no doubt continue to be the underpinning of the association's role.

Maurice was well connected not only in Government but also with high profile personalities, such as Dame Barbara Cartland, who shared Maurice's enthusiasm for the health product industry. She was a strong advocate and promoter

of its values and would be a regular attendee at industry events.

Maurice could see that changes were coming, and the sad events that surrounded the use of the drug, thalidomide, during the late 1950s and early 1960s saw the authorities needing to regulate the pharmaceutical industry. This resulted in the Medicines Act of 1968, which defined and regulated medicines as products or services which seek to diagnose, treat or prevent disease. Maurice saw that many popular food products could get caught in this definition and initiated discussions with the then Medicines Control Agency (MCA, now MHRA) for an exemption to be made for food supplements, later known as

Section 12 of the Medicines Act, and which he successfully achieved. Looking back, without this intervention, it is most likely the food supplements market would not have been able to flourish as it has.

Maurice was also a sommelier, an expert in wine tasting, and was a regular guest on BBC TV on *The Good Food Programme* during the late '70s and '80s. And in 1984, Maurice became an author with his best-selling book, *E for Additives*, which became a bible for the whole of the food industry, and consumers alike, to help identify additives in foodstuffs as their numerical reference number.

Overall, Maurice established and helped the HFMA to grow into the strong and influential trade association that it is



today, so was the first recipient of this Award of Honour (*pictured left*) and why it is now presented in his name.

The Lanes name has been synonymous with health since it was started by Gilbert Lane in the 1930s. For nearly a century, Lanes Health has been a cornerstone of the natural health and wellness industry in the UK and Lanes Health is proud to have been members of the HFMA for much of the past 60 years.

Roger Lane (*pictured above*)

joined his father's company after the Second World War with a strong focus on innovation, helping to develop the company's portfolio over the years. In the 1970s, Roger was elected to HFMA Council, where he shared his father's passion for the industry. He saw that the industry needed to be aligned so that innovation and growth could flourish. Roger was also a strong advocate for effective training by manufacturers for retailers to achieve these aims. Roger continued his father's expertise for natural remedies forming the backbone of the business and helped establish a legacy of trust that continues to this day and is extending into future generations of the Lanes family. It is in his name that his legacy continues.

After some years of association with the Health Food Institute, it has been agreed that the renamed Roger

Lane Growth and Innovation Award be brought back into the HFMA as an annual award for a company or individual that generates creative and innovative new approaches that help grow our specialist industry. This could be performance led, improvements in products or formulation, in their presentation, or through packaging, or similar innovations.

Nominees are invited from all industry and publicised through the trade publications and through HFMA communications, with selected nominees assessed by HFMA and the Lanes family to select a winning candidate. This will be presented by a Lanes representative at the HFMA AGM, who will be presented with the newly created sculptured award to apply in their name for that year, plus an individual certificate and medal that the winner retains.

Our historic Journalist of the Year Award has now been renamed Media Communicator of the Year, reflecting changing times and trends towards less written press journalism to online comms and social media activity and appeal to a broader section of nominees. The winner is chosen by Council in recognition of an individual who provides that year outstanding journalism and media activity that supports and promotes the industry.

These annual awards complete the issues of the HFMA AGM and are recognised by the industry.

If you would like to know more about the benefits of membership, visit www.hfma.co.uk to learn more, or contact me on 020 8481 7100.