

# Profile: Trevor Gosling

IF you could trap Trevor Gosling's enthusiasm in a bottle and cap it tight, it would not take long before either the cap blew off or the bottle itself exploded. Few can keep that boundless energy, wit combined with roguishness, and of course, charm, suppressed for long.

Trevor has been in the air conditioning industry for close on 27 years. While we all know he holds a dictionary of information regarding the industry within, he is impossible to interview. He says much, but at the same time, reveals nothing. But his effervescent charm allows him to get away with a multitude of peccadillos, including his pantry of subtle puns.

It would take an awful lot of chiselling to prise out the real Trevor Gosling, but what can be seen during a short period of time is a hard worker, possessing an obviously sharp business brain, an ego which rules the Trevor roost, and a tenacious determination to succeed. Sometimes he loses, but more often he wins.

'It was a bit of a shock,' confessed Trevor, when asked as to when and why he became involved in the air conditioning industry. A shock because 'My very first working day in the new world of air conditioning landed on January 1, 1962. Nobody works on New Year's Day! Or at least, I hadn't ever done so. But there I was, complete with hangover.'

And there he stayed. The company was Hall and Kay based at Ashton-under-Lyne, Manchester.

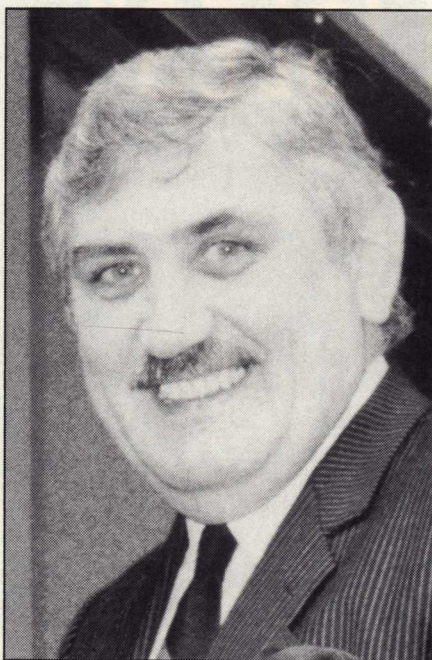
Trevor landed the job despite not having had any previous experience in the industry — I personally suspect because of his wonderful ability to convince. He is the type who can tell somebody to go to hell in such a way as to make them look forward to the trip.

Trevor completed his formal training in Manchester for R. and J. Dempster, where he built gas holders. Later he went to Key Engineering and at the age of 21 was involved in underfloor ducting work.

Within 18 months of joining he was asked by the company to become production controller, which he accepted. At this stage the company was called Key Terrain.

Possibly because of his 'gift of the gab' Trevor later moved into the company's sales division on a temporary basis. He was in and out of London during this time, and because circumstances changed within the company he took up the offer from Hall and Kay.

By September of the same year he was asked to start a subsidiary company to sell Carrier equipment (mar-



*For anyone joining the industry on New Year's day, a hangover is almost compulsory. Cheryl Robertson spoke to Trevor Gosling about his 26 years since that promising start*

ked in Britain at that time under the Carlyle label). He 'borrowed' a group company's name — Ductwork Ltd — to form the new company, Ductwork Engineering Services (DES), which officially started on October 7, 1962.

'Four of us were working out of a broom cupboard in our headquarters in Mayfair — 36 St James' Street to be precise,' mused Trevor. The others in the broom cupboard were Brian Hopkins, Stewart Lomas and a secretary.

In 1963 Trevor was sent to the USA for formal training by Carrier. On his return to Britain DES became a full distributor, importing directly from the USA. The company also started its own Carrier orientated training courses, which continued until 1983.

Some 1,500 people passed through the formal DES training scheme, although initially 'We had to sell the concept of air conditioning to the industry' because of its relative youth. The trainees went through a rigorous course, being tutored as sales engineers as opposed to sales people.

In December, 1963, the company

moved to Commerce Way in Croydon, on London's Southern outskirts. The site was a portion of the Ductwork Ltd factory, run by John Bishop.

Ten years later a subsidiary called Applied Industrial Refrigeration Ltd, selling industrial refrigeration equipment, was formed, involving Trevor, Brian Leaney and Derek Siveter. A year later this company was also selling Liebert computer air conditioning equipment in the UK under the AIR banner.

In 1975 Heenan Spark, the parent company of DES went broke, so Trevor picked up the pieces — the agreement was that Carrier bought DES and Trevor bought it from the Carrier Corporation under the terms of a debenture. In 1983 Carrier bought out Trevor.

In the meantime, Trevor had purchased Rollason Engineering in 1980 (originally an engineering company associated with the aircraft industry) which was renamed DES Rollason. This became too large for the site in Commerce Way, so DES Rollason moved to new 38,000 sq ft premises in Biggin Hill, Kent.

Today, the name is retained in Rollason Air Conditioning, which operates out of the Commerce Way premises.

Next on the company formation agenda was Modular Air, which came into being in November, 1987, with the old team from AIR — Derek Siveter, Brian Leaney, Arthur Lancaster and Trevor are now directors.

In between buying and selling companies (or as Trevor would put it, playing musical companies), acquiring a farm and a luxury apartment, he managed to write a book entitled 'Applied Air Conditioning and Refrigeration.' This was adapted from a series of articles on air conditioning and refrigeration which appeared in this journal from 1968 to 1972.

Trevor also found time to produce two daughters who live on the farm in Godstone, buy and enjoy a 40 ft yacht and play rugby. He has had more than his fair share of skinned knees and muddy shirts from competing on the rugby field, at one time playing for the Bromley Rugby Club, where he was captain for two seasons. He is also a Penguin tourist.

From his apartment in Croydon, Trevor is a 20 minute walk from the offices of Rollason Air Conditioning. Sometimes he drives there — in his Rolls Royce complete with chauffeur — and sometimes he walks. While his usual reply when asked as to his state of health is 'average,' his achievements are certainly above average.