ATT Welcome: Edinburgh fun– and Tax Adviser!

Welcomes



20 May 2025

As I write this month’s column, I am just back from Edinburgh and the Joint Presidents’ Reception on board the Royal Yacht Britannia.

What a magnificent event this was! A sunny evening and a short stroll down the wonderfully named Whisky Quay, past a brand-new super yacht, to where Britannia is berthed – an interesting contrast of 1954 and 2025 styles. Britannia is a magnificent, elegant and refined old lady who wears her more than 70 years lightly. The super yacht had sleek lines, an eye catching blue and white colour scheme and oozed opulence. We were piped on board Britannia and taken up in the Queen Mother’s lift (due to Jan’s current wheelchair use) to the State Drawing Room where the formal part of the reception was being held.

Speeches from Senga Prior and Charlotte Barbour followed, along with the presentation of certificates of appreciation and merit, before the chance to tour Britannia and catch up with friends old and new. The evening ended with a ceilidh on

the Royal Deck where we tried to guess who had done Scottish country dancing at school and who clearly had not. My lips are sealed on who fell into which category, but rumour has it that there is video evidence out there!

One topic of conversation among the people I spoke with was *Tax Adviser*. Now I know if you are looking at this welcome page you are obviously an avid reader of *Tax Adviser*, but the question we were discussing was how well we are meeting your needs. Not necessarily in the coverage of topics but more its frequency and format. The people I spoke with clearly had a view but we were all towards the older end of the population so probably not entirely representative of the ATT and CIOT membership. So, I will pose you the three key questions we were discussing:

- There are currently ten issues of *Tax Adviser* each year, as it is not published in January (tax return season) or August (holiday time). Is this what you want or would you prefer a less frequent (say, every other month), bigger magazine with more in-depth articles and a wider spread of topics?
- If there were fewer issues of *Tax Adviser*, what additional topics would you want to see – for example, practice management, personal development, news from the branches? Also, would you want more online content than the weekly ATT/CIOT news in between issues?
- *Tax Adviser* is currently published in hard copy and online. Do you want to move to online only or stay with the current option to opt out of hard copy if you wish?

Please let me know what you think using the email address at the foot of the page. Based on my conversations, I suspect that the third question could be the most difficult to deal with without your input. I am sure many of you will remember the furore surrounding the decision a few years ago to stop sending members their ATT mousemat because with the advent of track pads and optical mice the prevailing view was that no one used them anymore. How wrong could we have been, so please do get in touch.

On the same evening in London, members of our magnificent technical team and supporters were attending the Taxation Awards at the London Hilton on Park Lane, where they were shortlisted for the award for outstanding contribution to taxation in 2024-25 by a not-for-profit organisation. Sadly, they did not win, although they are clearly winners in our eyes, but congratulations to the winners on the night, The Tax Academy CIC.

Finally, I am drawn back to the story of another vessel moored near to Britannia. The Spirit of Tasmania IV is a very big, brand-new roll-on roll-off ferry built to operate across the Bass Strait between Australia and Tasmania but she is currently laid up in Leith Docks. The reason? She is too big to use the dock in Devonport, Tasmania! I should emphasise that this is not because they misread the plans but, in a lesson to project managers everywhere, because the new dock in Devonport is about 18 months behind schedule. To make matters worse, her sister ship Spirit of Tasmania V is under construction in Finland. Does anyone want to hire a couple of 700 foot-long ferries?

Until next month.