

Civic Services and Processions in Edinburgh

The background to the participation of representatives of The Institution of Civil Engineers in the Civic Services and Processions held in Edinburgh each year to mark significant dates or events has become somewhat shrouded in mystery. These days, no one at ICE Scotland seems to know much about these events apart from the fact that invitations are received 'from the Lord Provost of Edinburgh each year'. Furthermore, there seem to be few these days willing to participate. This appears to be yet another symptom of a more general lack of enthusiasm among members of the Institution of Civil Engineers, or their employers, to participate in the activities and committees of the several branches.

It was not always so! When Bob McGowan, serving on the Council of the Scottish Council Development and Industry [SCDI] in 1991, discovered that RIAS, RICS, and other such institutions and organizations participated in The St Andrew's Day Procession to St Giles Cathedral, he was somewhat incensed and made it his business to find out why and, furthermore, how to remedy this unacceptable oversight on the part of whoever organized these Civic Parades.

Bob recalls that, with the assistance of SCDI Chief Executive, Alan Wilson, representations were made to the organizers (Although it is not clear who the organizers were). The result was that The Glasgow and West of Scotland and Edinburgh and East of Scotland Associations of The Institution of Civil Engineers were invited to participate, with their first outing being on the first of December 1991, to mark St Andrew's Day at St Giles' Cathedral after a procession to, and along, the Royal Mile.

Bob McGowan, Chairman 1991/92, ICE Glasgow & West of Scotland and Ben Ireland, Chairman 1991/92, ICE Edinburgh & East of Scotland, processed in their newly acquired blue and gold robes and lunched afterwards at The Sheraton Hotel with their respective wives and ICE Secretaries or Treasurers.

Having investigated the genesis of ICE's involvement, Jim McCafferty established, from the secretary to the Minister of St Giles' Cathedral, that The Knights of The Thistle lead the St Andrew's Day Procession each year followed by the various merchant, trade, Institutional and other civic organizations to a Civic Service at St Giles' Cathedral. The Minister's secretary also confirmed that ICE is still on the invitation list and that The Lord Provost of Edinburgh also invites participants to his own Civic Parades marking other events such as The Opening of the Edinburgh Festival.

Jim McCafferty also established that SCDI's Alan Wilson [now retired] has no recollection of SCDI being involved in these parades nor can he recall facilitating ICE's involvement!

ICE participation was still well supported during Jim McCafferty's era on the ICE, Glasgow & West of Scotland Committee; he was Chairman 1998/99. Furthermore, ICE has just had the robes repaired and cleaned awaiting the participation of the next group of willing enthusiasts.

JP McCafferty 24 July 2018



R McGowan [G] & Ben Ireland [E]
First ICE attendance Civic Service for St Andrew's Day
1991 at St Giles Cathedral Edinburgh

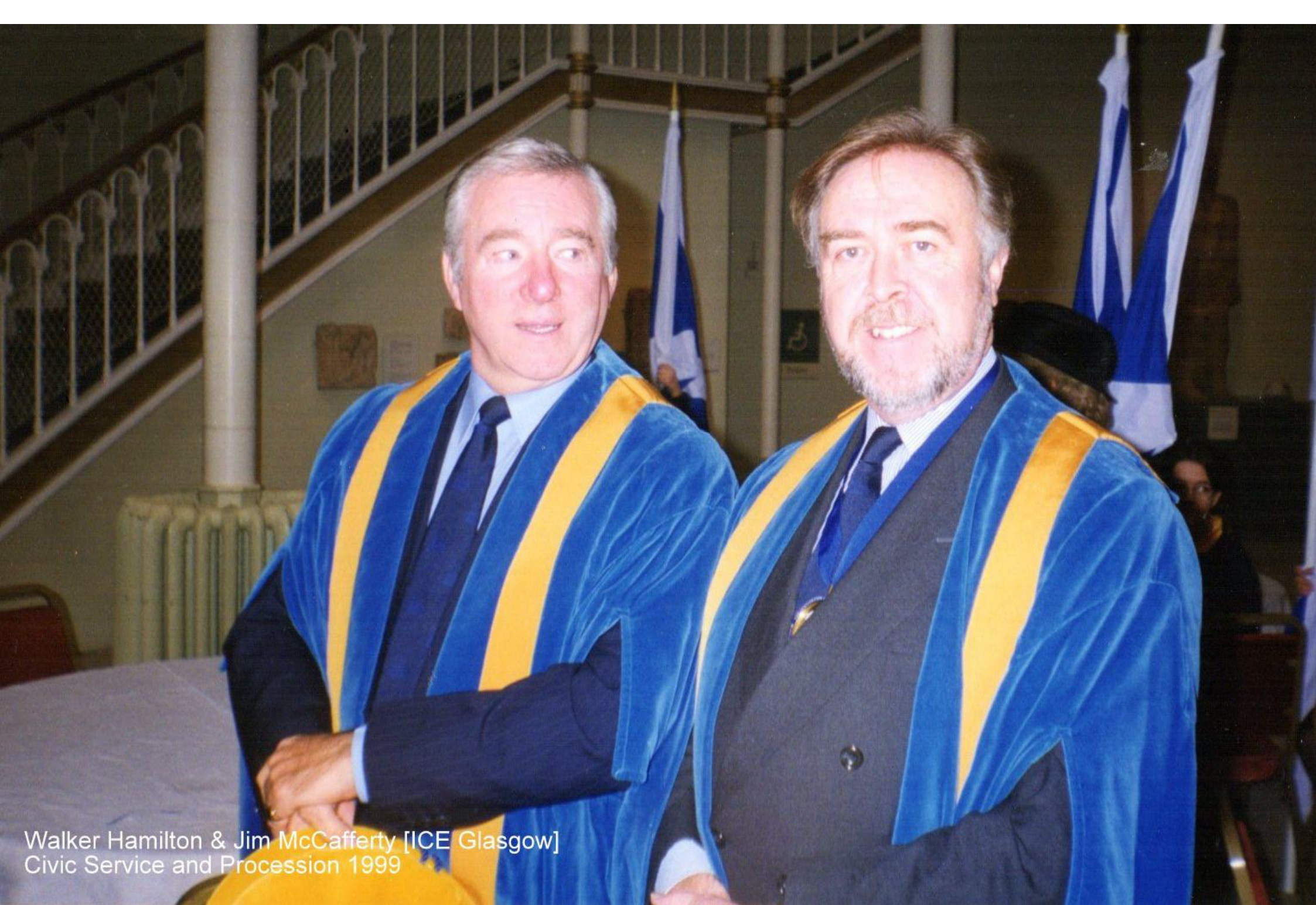
SUNDAY 1.12.1991 SHERATON HOTEL EDINBURGH FOLLOW
THE ST ANDREWS DAY PROCESSION TO ST GILES CATHEDRAL
(WITH BEN IRELAND (W ICE GATES))



Dr Fraser Smith [ICE E], Jim McCafferty [ICE G], Walker Hamilton [ICE G]
Civic Service & Procession to St Giles' Cathedral Edinburgh 1999



Walker Hamilton [ICE G], Douglas McBeth [ICE E], Jim McCafferty [ICE G]
Civic Service & Procession to St Giles' Cathedral Edinburgh 1999



Walker Hamilton & Jim McCafferty [ICE Glasgow]
Civic Service and Procession 1999