

## **Acceptance speech on Induction to the Scottish Engineering Hall of Fame**

**James Watt Dinner, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014**

I'm delighted to be here tonight to accept this great honour on behalf of my grandfather, Tom Brown. I know he would love to be here himself and I will do my best, in his absence, to share something of his indomitable spirit with you all.

I'm a human rights and social justice campaigner. It hasn't always been easy to find common ground between my passion for building a fairer, more equal society through campaigns, advocacy and influencing policy makers, and my grandfather's passion for building, well, physical things that involve mathematical solutions, engineering ingenuity and an understanding of physics that I simply don't have!

However, as I've got older, I've come to realise how important a contribution my grandfather has made, not only to his world of engineering and inventions, but to the cause of making life a little safer, a little fairer and a little better for everyone. I think his own words about the impact of his life's work can say that better than I can. Here's something Tom prepared earlier:

"Glasgow and the West of Scotland, homes of Engineering and Shipbuilding, can be justly proud of being the birthplace of medical ultrasound in the mid 1950's. It wasn't an easy birth, nor one that was recognised at the time for the impact it would have on diagnostic medicine in general, and mothers and babies in particular. But it was the "little acorn" out of which would grow the great oak it has become.

"While I'm identified with it now, I was by no means the only one involved in adapting the industrial and World War Two technology to this new purpose. As usual the medics tried to claim more than their due share of the credit, but it was the engineers who made it happen. Again as usual, through our seeming national incompetence at exploiting our own inventions, we lost out to the Americans and others, and ultrasound machines are now only made abroad and imported back to us.

But despite all this, my greatest satisfaction came fifty years later, when an ultrasound scan indirectly saved the life, and intellect, of my unborn grandson Tom,

from what would have been the tragic consequences of a rare, otherwise undetected complication of his Mum Rhona's pregnancy. Tom is now completely normal, very bright and nearly eight. What better pay-off could there possibly be for a life spent in developing medical ultrasound."

I am, as I'm sure you can imagine, immensely proud of my grandfather's work and of the life-saving, protective impact it has had for so many people, everywhere, not least in my own family. On behalf of all of the family and of Tom Brown himself, I would like to thank the Institution once again for this honour, for the recognition of Tom's great engineering legacy to the world, and for the inspiration I hope it will provide to budding engineers, innovators and change-makers everywhere.

**Emma Hutton, delivered on behalf of Tom Brown**