# Stephanie Trotter OBE - President & Director of CO-Gas Safety

# Stephanie Trotter is a barrister (not practising at the moment), who has run the independent registered charity CO-Gas Safety since its launch at the House of Commons in January 1995 with help from other voluntary directors (mainly victims and MPs).

# The charity has been supported by a grant from the Department of Health in the past. However, for many years now the charity exists on donations from business etc. Stephanie is a full time volunteer and the charity is run almost entirely by volunteers, apart from a very small amount of assistance to help collate the data of unintentional deaths and injuries from CO, which the charity has been doing since 1995 see <http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/data/> . The charity is indebted to the many Coroners and their officers who have assisted the charity since 1995.

# Stephanie became interested in safety when her older son, Alex, then aged 12 suffered a clot on the brain at a children’s activity holiday centre. The accident was just one of those things but Stephanie was extremely concerned about the wrong First Aid and the centre failed to notify her or her husband of the injury despite a request to do so. Stephanie felt that they were lucky because after brain surgery, Alex recovered. However, she was very concerned about other children attending the centre, especially as the centre did not appear to take her concerns seriously. Stephanie did some research and found there were no controls whatsoever on these centres. After the canoe tragedy (four teenagers drowned in March 1993 in Lyme Bay), Stephanie wrote her first legal article advocating licensing of these centres and this was published in the New Law Journal and read by the Judge in the subsequent manslaughter trial. The Judge in the trial, Mr. Justice Ognall publicly urged the government to license these centres and the Activity Centres (Young Persons’ Safety) Act 1995 was enacted. The need to license was supported by the responsible centres. Through this work Stephanie met Molly Maher, who lost her son Gary to carbon monoxide (CO) in 1985 and whose daughter Sheree was confined to a wheelchair as a result of the same incident while they were on holiday in Tenerife. Molly founded Consumer Safety International, a registered charity to help prevent deaths and injuries on holiday helped by Nigel Griffiths MP and the late David Jenkins of RoSPA. Molly also founded CO-Gas Safety along with the late David Jenkins and Stephanie agreed to run it.

# In over 21 years of CO-Gas Safety, Stephanie has helped innumerable victims of CO, gas leaks, explosion and fuel emissions other than CO (we call these CO+) and lobbied Ministers, Government and industry to make simple and practical changes to save lives and preserve health (see <http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Press-Pack-2015.pdf> page 16). Together with the members of CO+SAVi (victims & victim groups under the All Fuels Action Forum set up by the All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group) CO-Gas Safety agreed changes that could become amendments to the Energy Bill. These were professionally drafted paid for jointly by CO-Gas Safety and the Katie Haines Memorial Trust see <http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/our-professionally-drafted-suggestions/> and some of these were put down as amendments in the House of Commons, but were not successful.

# Stephanie has also appeared many times on TV, (including NewsNight) radio etc.

**January 2015 marked CO-Gas Safety’s 20th anniversary at the House of Lords with over 120 guests.**

**January 2016 the charity published 20 years of 699 data of deaths & over 5,000 injuries/near misses from unintentional CO poisoning that the charity knows about. We try to check every death with the Coroner concerned and most help. We know there are deaths that are never suspected as or tested for CO.**

In 2005 Stephanie and CO-Gas Safety was presented with the CORGI Gas Safety award.

In 2007 Stephanie was awarded an OBE for her work on gas safety.

Stephanie has been greatly assisted by directors, who are mainly victims and MPs. CO-Gas Safety has one industry member, Jonathan Kane of Kane International, which makes flue gas analysers see

<https://www.kane.co.uk/> CO-Gas Safety’s patron is Lord Hunt of Kings Heath. CO-Gas Safety has also been greatly helped by a gas expert, gas installers and by the Guild of Master Sweeps who are also deeply concerned at these preventable deaths.

Stephanie’s husband is John Trotter, who is a consultant in Bates Wells & Braithwaite, a firm that specializes in charity law. After pupillage and about six months of practice at the bar, (mainly crime) Stephanie became a Senior Lecturer at the Inns of Court School of Law (the final year of the Bar examinations – post graduate students mainly from Oxbridge) for nine years. They have two sons, Alex and Paul, now married with children.

Stephanie has many interests including house renovating, sailing, ice skating, gardening and writing. She has done a Roman mosaic course and would like to spend a lot more time on artistic pursuits and playing with her three granddaughters. © Copyright Stephanie Trotter 2016