# Stephanie Trotter OBE - President & Director of CO-Gas Safety She 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 was supported by a grant from the Department of Health in the past matched for 3 years by British Gas. However, for many years now the charity has existed on donations recently mainly from Kane International. is a full time volunteer and the charity is run almost entirely by volunteers, apart from a small amount of paid assistance to help collate the data of unintentional deaths and injuries from carbon monoxide (CO), which the charity has compiled since 1995, <http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/data/>. The charity is indebted to the many Coroners and their officers for their invaluable help.

**Please watch our one minute film about Sue who had carbon monoxide poisoning – could save your life** [**http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/one-survivors-story/**](http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/one-survivors-story/)

*Background*

*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. Stephanie was extremely concerned about the wrong First Aid and the lack of notification about the injury from the centre involved. This led to a deep concern about the safety of children attending such centres, particularly as her concerns did not appear to be taken seriously. After brain surgery, Alex recovered; he was lucky. Research by Stephanie found that there were no controls on these centres apart from Health & Safety law. After the canoe tragedy (four teenagers drowned in March 1993 in Lyme Bay), Stephanie wrote her first legal article advocating licensing of these centres, 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, (died April 2020) 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 David Jenkins and Stephanie agreed to run it.*

In over 25 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.

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 2020 the charity marked 25 years & published 24 years of data of 712 deaths & over 5,541 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 were presented with the CORGI Gas Safety award.

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

**In 2015 the charity received £50,000 from Thomas Cook thanks to the efforts of the parents of the children who died of CO in Corfu in 2006.**

In 2017 in the finals for three out of four entries to H & V News the charity won ‘Safety Initiative of the Year’. See <http://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/news/>

New Law Journal article by Stephanie proposing clarification/change in the law on landlords & CO alarms 23.03.18 <https://www.newlawjournal.co.uk/content/hidden-killer>

**In January 2020 the charity marked 25 years of work and published an anniversary press pack** <https://www.co-gassafety.co.uk/information/press-pack-2020/>

**Please see New Law Journal article** January 2020 about how difficult it is for those suffering from carbon monoxide to prove CO even to obtain the correct medical help, let alone make legal claims <https://www.newlawjournal.co.uk/content/co-the-hidden-dangers>

Stephanie has been greatly assisted by directors, who are mainly victims and MPs. CO-Gas Safety has one industry member Jim Lambeth, retired from the Solid Fuel Association also joined. CO-Gas Safety’s patron is Lord Hunt of Kings Heath.

CO-Gas Safety has also been greatly helped by gas experts, Roland Johns & Ben Kuchta, and by the Guild of Master Chimney Sweeps who are also deeply concerned about these preventable deaths.

Stephanie Trotter is a barrister (not practising at the moment). Her 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 Lecturer, later 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, swimming, wake boarding, ice skating, gardening and writing. Stephanie has recently taken up yoga and ballet to replace the ice skating as there is no rink on the Isle of Wight and, due to Covid, the theatrical business her husband runs with a friend, has had to be put on hold and the flat in Guildford has been rented out.

She has written a book (and wants to make it into a film script) and would like to spend a lot more time on artistic pursuits and playing with her three granddaughters.

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