



Dame Stephanie (Steve) Shirley
Life President Xansa plc (previously F.I.Group)

Dame Stephanie Shirley (68) is a highly successful entrepreneur turned ardent philanthropist.

Having arrived in Britain as an unaccompanied child refugee from Germany in 1939, she started what was recently rebranded as Xansa on her dining room table with £6 in 1962. In 25 years as its Chief Executive she developed it into a leading business technology group, pioneering new work practices and changing the position of professional women (especially in hi-tech) along the way. According to The Sunday Times Rich List 2002, she is one of Britain's 100 wealthiest women and one of the top five most generous givers.

Since retiring as honorary Life President in 1993, her focus has been increasingly on philanthropy based on her strong belief in business people giving something back to society. Her main interests are autism (her autistic son Giles died aged 35 in 1998) and making better use of IT in the voluntary sector. She is also much in demand as a keynote speaker at international conferences.

Her charitable Shirley Foundation is now one of the top 50 grant-giving foundations in the UK with £50m donations committed over the past six years. It only supports autistic and IT causes (never individuals), and has initiated and funded a number of projects that are pioneering by nature, strategic in impact and significant in money terms. These include:

The Kingwood Trust	Long term care for adults with autism
Prior's Court School	New school for children with autism
autism99	First Internet conference in the disability field
autismconnect	First web user-community to deal with disability issues on the Internet
Autism Cymru	New organisation focused on promoting the development of services to people with autistic spectrum disorders in Wales
Autism West Midlands	Support of new school for children with autism
IT Livery Company Charitable Trust	Infrastructure costs and projects aimed at helping the disadvantaged
Oxford Internet Institute	The world's first truly multidisciplinary Internet Institute based in a major university

Dame Stephanie continues her keen interest in the business world and was the first non-executive director of the John Lewis Partnership plc (1999–2001) and is on the European Advisory Board of Korn/Ferry International.

August 2002

SHIRLEY, Dame (Vera) Stephanie, (Steve), DBE 2000 (OBE 1980); FREng; FBCS; Life President, Xansa (formerly F.I.Group) PLC; *b* 16 Sept. 1933; *d* of late Arnold Buchthal and Mrs Margaret Brook (formerly Buchthal, *née* Schick); name changed to Brook on naturalisation, 1951; *m* 1959, Derek George Millington Shirley; (one s decd).

Educ: Sir John Cass Coll., London. BSc (Spec.) London 1956. FBCS 1971; CEng 1990.

PO Res. Stn, Dollis Hill, 1951-59; CDL (subsid. of ICL), 1959-62; F International Group, later F.I.Group, 1962-93 (Founder Dir and Chief Exec., 1962-87; Settlor FI Shareholders' Trust, 1981); Director: AEA Technology Plc, 1992-2000; Tandem Computers Inc., 1992-97; John Lewis Partnership plc, 1999-.

Member: Computer, Systems and Electronics Requirements Bd, 1979-81; Electronics and Avionics Requirements Bd, 1981-83; Open Tech, MSC, 1983-86; Council, Industrial Soc., 1984-90; NCVQ, 1986-89. Pres., British Computer Soc., 1989-90; Vice Pres., C&G, 2000-. Consulting Editor on information processing, J.Wiley & Sons, 1978-87. Member: Council, Duke of Edinburgh's Seventh Commonwealth Study Conf., 1991-92; British-N American Cttee, 1992-2001. Chm., Women of Influence, 1993. Trustee, Help The Aged, 1987-90; Patron: Disablement Income Gp, 1989-2001; Centre for Tomorrow's Co., 1997-; Founder: The Kingwood Trust, 1993; The Shirley Foundn, 1996; Prior's Court Foundn, 1998. Master, Information Technologists's Co., 1992 (Liveryman, 1992); Freeman, City of London, 1987.

CIMgt (CBIM 1984); FRSA 1985; FREng 2001. Hon. FCGI 1989. Hon.Fellow: Manchester Metropolitan Univ. (formerly Poly.), 1989; Staffordshire Univ. (formerly Poly.), 1991; Sheffield Hallam Univ., 1992; Foundn Fellow, Balliol Coll., Oxford, 2001. Hon. DSc: Buckingham, 1991; Aston, 1993; Nottingham Trent, 1994; Southampton Inst., 1994; Hon. DTech: Loughborough, 1991; Kingston, 1995; DUniv: Leeds Metropolitan, 1993; Derby, 1997; London Guildhall, 1998; Stirling, 2000; Hon. DLitt de Montfort, 1993; Hon. DBA West of England, 1995; City, 2000. Recognition of Information Technology Achievement Award, 1985; Gold Medal, Inst. of Mgt. 1991; Mountbatten Medal, IEE, 1999. US Nat. Women's Hall of Fame, 1995.

Publications: articles in prof. jls, reviews, proc.of confs, and papers.

Recreation: sleep.

Address: 47 Thames House, Phyllis Court Drive, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 2NA.
T: (01491) 579004, *Fax*: (01491) 574995; *email*: steve.shirley@dial.pipex.com.

Who's Who 2002