



■ Howard Dawber, of Canary Wharf Group, and Kevin Wall, of Barclays Bank, with the portrait of Reg Ward

Picture: David Williams

Tribute to man who laid the foundations of Docklands

Friends, colleagues and family paid tribute to the man who Michael Heseltine said "laid the foundations" of Canary Wharf and the Docklands on Monday night.

Gathered at a reception in the East Wintergarden in Canary Wharf, former members of the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) spoke fondly of its first chief executive, Reg Ward, who died in January, aged 83.

His daughter, Sarah, said his passion for the area had never died and described him as "the love of her life".

He was charged with re-generating the depressed Docklands area when he was appointed by Mr Heseltine, the then Secretary of State for the Environment, in 1980.

He has been credited as the mastermind behind the Docklands Light Railway, London City Airport, the Royal Docks and Canary Wharf itself.

Mr Heseltine, who was out of the country and spoke to the assembled crowd through a video message, said: "He was a tough guy, he was opinionated, determined. He was going to do it his way.

"Officials didn't take to him. I don't know why - I suspect because he wasn't in awe of them."

Stuart Innes, a director of administration at the LDDC, said it was a national disgrace that Reg did not receive "even an MBE".

Howard Dawber, Canary Wharf Group's strategic advisor, accepted a portrait of Reg commissioned by former colleagues in the LDDC and sponsored by Barclays Bank.

It will hang in a newly-named Reg Ward room in One Canada Square.

He said: "When I speak to people about the early days [of the Docklands] there were all these stories and one name kept cropping up - Reg Ward."