



## SEPTEMBER 2013 NEWSLETTER

By now news of our rebranding and the launch of our new logo (and very beautiful it is too!) is 'old' news... but just in case there are those amongst us to have been living on a desert island for the past few weeks and missed the press release – I thought I'd include a link to it: <http://www.instrumentation.co.za/7844a>

The Durban technology evening was held on 4 September at the Durban Country Club. We were fortunate to have a visitor (and sponsor) from Johannesburg and Kenneth McPherson, Managing Director of Beckhoff Automation kindly did the honors, travelling and presenting to the Richards Bay branch the next evening.



The topic for the evening was: EtherCAT - The Ethernet Fieldbus and here is Chairman Howard Lister thanking Kenneth for his sponsorship and presentation.



Kenneth was an enthusiastic and knowledgeable presenter and the audience was absorbed

in his interesting presentation. Beckhoff implements open automation systems based on PC-Control technology and Kenneth explained that his reason for presenting on this topic is that EtherCAT is the open, real-time Ethernet fieldbus originally developed by Beckhoff Automation. Kenneth said that not only is the communication system a central part of the system architecture, but its performance also determines whether the entire system is able to reach its full efficiency. The bus system is also a key factor in defining system costs, commissioning time, and robustness. With EtherCAT being the fastest Industrial Ethernet technology available, and the largest Industrial Ethernet organisation in the world, it **is** the engineer's choice when it comes to selecting the right bus technology as the first step to system design. Everybody enjoyed Kenneth's last slide: 'Why go for something slower, just because it is more expensive?'

Kenneth seen studiously preparing for his presentation (left) and the Beckhoff Boys in full force (right): Rudi von Fintel (Technical Engineer) Kenneth McPherson and Mike van der Walt (Sales Engineer) both Rudi and Mike are based in Durban.



The evening concluded with a meal to the usual high standard that we have come to expect of the Durban Country Club, and of course some enjoyable and productive networking over a few drinks. I don't think I should apply for that food-styling job *just* yet.....



Ronald Korevaar was on hand to collect his membership certificate but there were a few missing in action ..... Bronwyn? ☺



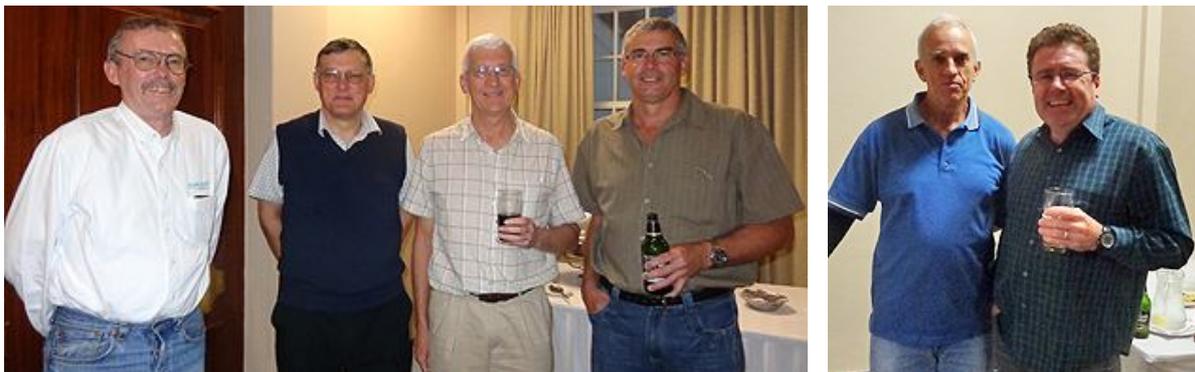
And then we realised that we had FIVE past Chairmen of the Durban branch together in one room! Left to right: Dean Trattles, Carl Reinecke, John Owen-Ellis, Kevin McElroy and current Chairman, Howard Lister.



Back to the networking.....



Competition time! Who knows what happened here? .....it almost looks like Keith smiled politely at the joke..... then finally 'got' the punch line and nearly fell off his chair..... The most innovative answer gets a free beer at the next technology evening...



**Enjoy the fun of being an active participant in our industry with this great networking opportunity and stand a chance to win an external hard-drive in the process. Attend the most technology evenings during the period May-December and be part of the draw!**

There was a very successful site visit to Engen Refinery on 12 September. For obvious reasons we don't have any Kodak moments of the event but suffice it to say that everybody enjoyed the tour of one of the most challenging measurement and control environments they will probably ever have the privilege to visit.

### Forthcoming Attractions – Technology Meetings

Here are the proposed topics and months for future technology meetings. These may be subject to change during the year – depending on sponsor and presenter availability.

- Nov – Unfortunately another postponement. We are working on a plan to have a backup presentation standing by “in the wings” next year in case of unforeseen circumstances preventing our planned presentation taking place.
- December – Social gathering, proposed Nominees to present themselves, Feedback from the subcommittees

Our schedule of technology evenings is provisional and subject to availability of speakers. Please send one of the committee members a message if there is a topic which you consider will be of general interest and you want included – the plan is a flexible one and intended to benefit you as a valued member of the SAIMC.

### Forthcoming Attractions – Site Visits



17 October – SAB (with refreshments!) 13h30 – 15h30

If anybody is interested in attending, please contact Kevin McElroy on 0832519993

Remember the Durban branch holds a technology evening on the first Wednesday of each month and the venue is the Durban Country Club. Members and visitors alike are most welcome. Contact Jane van der Spuy on [jane@technews.co.za](mailto:jane@technews.co.za) for further details or call 031 7640593.

### What has your committee been working on lately?

- Ongoing: Kevin McElroy and Eugene Sithole are actively involved in liaison meetings with representatives from Durban University of Technology, University of KZN and Mangosuthu University of Technology. We are still awaiting feedback from the Industry Liaison meeting which he attended with the Department of Electronics at Durban University of Technology about this time last year.....

We are still trying to form some sub-committees to help share the load:

#### **Do we have any volunteers? PLEASE!**

- ECSA Liaison (needs to be led by an ECSA Registered member: a volunteer will be greatly appreciated; please contact a committee member)
- Site Visit organisation

- Monthly Technology meetings: we are now planning events for 2014 and need a small team to follow up the speakers, venue arrangements and sponsorship.
- Technical paper/formal technical presentation: To seek and support the authors of papers written and presented by Durban branch members.
- Social function organisation for next year (golf day and annual function)

**Council matters:**

- The new Website is up and running but still needs some de-bugging. Please report problems you experience with the website to our focal point, Selvan Murugan, at [selvan.murugan@rhdhv.com](mailto:selvan.murugan@rhdhv.com).
- We encourage members to register with ECSA. The costs of registration are hugely offset for SAIMC Members!

Durban continues to be represented regularly at Council meetings which are sometimes being held as teleconferences or Webcons to save the cost of transporting councillors from the various branches. If there are any matters where you feel that the SAIMC can help you to develop your career in the fields of automation, control and instrumentation please contact one of your committee or council members. Constructive suggestions for some new activities for your local branch will also be welcomed.

Don't forget to talk to a committee member about becoming a corporate sponsor. "The Durban branch seeks corporate sponsorships of nominal value to assist with the hosting of monthly meetings and reduce dependency on sponsored talks. We want to promote the presentation of technology and interesting topics from anyone who wishes to participate even in their private capacity. Those who have kindly provided a sponsorship for 2013 have their logos proudly displayed on our corporate banner at all of our meetings and functions and now on all our correspondence."

**Corporate sponsors for 2013:**

