



FEBRUARY 2013 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first newsletter of the year. We trust you had a refreshing and invigorating break over the holidays and are ready to face the year ahead. Holidays? *What* holidays? They already seem a dim and distant memory and as for the year ahead – it's already *full steam* ahead!

The new year for the Durban branch of the SAIMC started as always with the AGM. Thanks to John de Castro we again took technology by the horns and did our voting electronically *before* the AGM, so by the time the evening arrived all that remains is to hear the Chairman's report, the Treasurer's report, the President's report, have the new committee announced and enjoy an evening of networking with our peers. We believe that nominating and voting this way gives more of our branch members a more accessible way of participating meaningfully in the selection of their committee than relying on those who can attend the AGM or sending their proxy.



As it was a special occasion, the AGM was hosted at a different (special) venue – Sica Guest House in Westridge, Durban. It was a beautiful venue and the food and service were superb. Fortunately the evening's proceedings must have been interesting as nobody was seen floating in the pool or having a quick game of tennis!

John Owen-Ellis being thanked for his sterling contribution during the year by President Johan Maartens.



Outgoing Chairman, John Owen-Ellis presented his annual report and after going through the various activities, concluded:

“The Durban branch has had a generally successful year, and I believe that we have increased awareness of our various activities. We held eight Technology meetings during the year, plus the AGM and a Members’ braai evening, and we were unfortunate to have to cancel one Technology evening because the presenter was sent overseas at short notice by his company. Our Branch was represented at the Durban University of Technology Industry Interface meeting. We had a stand at the Control Roadshow; many newsletters were prepared in a very professional manner by Jane van der Spuy and placed on the SAIMC Website; and enjoyable networking was a feature of our Golf Day, Annual Function and Members’ braai.

Our financial position improved yet again thanks to profits made by the Golf Day and our Annual Dinner, though the braai reversed some of that benefit.

Echoing what was written last year, we still do not attract as many members as we would wish to our technology evenings – it would be more satisfactory if we had an average attendance of 40 instead of less than 30, so we have some way to go in that area.

More Plant Visits, while giving another interest to our members, can also be used to promote interaction with people who are not yet members but could contribute to their careers and also offer us the benefit of their experience if they were to join. They are also important for scoring well in the Branch Classification and consequently receiving more money from Council so we can do more for our members.

Our interaction with tertiary educational establishments has suffered with the move of Prof. Ed Bojé from UKZN to University of Cape Town, but we are fortunately able to retain our ties with DUT thanks to the enthusiasm of Carl Reinecke. Unfortunately our efforts to establish a working relationship with Mangosuthu University of Technology have been unsuccessful and more work is needed to generate a good relationship with them.

The student awards need to be the subject of greater focus, though we should not support awards for mediocrity and we rely on the professionalism of those in the tertiary educational establishments to ensure that awards are only made to those who merit them.

It has been a pleasure to serve on a committee that has worked so well together and whose members have overcome the problems that inevitably arise with conflicting demands between their profession, family commitments, and SAIMC related tasks”

A full copy of John’s report can be found on the SAIMC website under the Durban Forum.

For the first time in many years we had a number of nominations for new committee members and we think this is a clear indication that members wish to make a difference to our institution. Although not all of these nominees were successful we plan to take advantage of their eagerness to help and second them onto sub-committees to help carry the load, be provided with a platform to be heard and ultimately make that difference to our institution and industry.

Some sub-committees we still need formed are:-

- 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 have listed our plan but 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

The new committee is:



Top (l to r) – Howard Lister (Chairman), John de Castro (Secretary), Jane van der Spuy (Media liaison)
 Front (l to r) – Kevin McElroy (Treasurer), Hennie Prinsloo, John Owen-Ellis (Vice Chairman), Dean Trattles.

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Howard Lister	Chairman	howard@nickzn.co.za	0825688264
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John de Castro	Secretary	john@decastro.co.za	0833208590
Kevin McElroy	Treasurer	kevin@eastcoastsolutions.co.za	0832519993
Jane van der Spuy	Media Liaison	jane@technews.co.za	0832345412
Hennie Prinsloo	Member	hennie@specas.co.za	0823245379
Dean Trattles	Member	dtrattles@osisoft.com	0824504006

Seen enjoying the evening:



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.

- April – Barry Mercer, Welding Metallurgy for instrumentation and control systems
- May – Compressor Anti Surge Control
- June – Swagelok / Hoke
- July – Hi Speed weighing systems
- August – Vega – Level
- September – Ian Pike, Profile filling systems (Bezerba scales)
- October – Design Fundamentals for Hazardous Areas
- November – *Watch this space-still negotiating!*
- 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.

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

What has your committee been working on lately?

Council matters:

- The Website upgrade which is now in its preliminary testing phase and looks good so far.
- Technical education; There is still debate about some aspects of the questionnaire about Industry's views on areas of weakness in the C&I fields. The delay is a concern.
- There is a drive to involve the SAIMC more in education at the secondary and tertiary levels. Most school and university leavers do not have the information to see career possibilities in Automation, Instrumentation, Measurement and Control and the SAIMC is well placed to assist.
- Value to Members has been enhanced in the form of offering discounts on some purchases (check out the website!).
- There is no more "Branch of the Year" and all Branches are being graded in a different manner which also has its teething problems which are being worked on. The best category of Branch will receive 15% of their members' subscriptions, decreasing in steps to the point where the worst performers will receive 2% – which The Durban branch committee believes is likely to accelerate their decline to the vanishing point and may need to be reconsidered.

- The Draft of our revised Constitution is still with legal experts who will review it and may suggest further changes before it is submitted to the members so that a vote for its adoption can be submitted at a Special General meeting in March 2013. The driving force behind the change is to facilitate the planned change of de-registering as a Section 21 Company and re-registering as a Non-Profit Voluntary Association; a change that will bring us in line with the other major professional organizations such as the SAIMEchE and SAIEE. The coming year we will be urging members to register with ECSA while we hope that our Council representative, Vinesh Maharaj, will attempt to ease some of the current numerous obstacles to registration.

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; and John de Castro is awaiting feedback from the Industry Liaison meeting which he attended with the Department of Electronics at Durban University of Technology last year.

Durban continues to be represented regularly at Council meetings. Dean's proposal for the purchase of equipment that will enable Branches to make Audio Visual recordings of Technology meetings, which can be available to members via our new website, has been approved by Council. We hope to help members who live too far away or work hours that prevent them attending our evening meetings to benefit from the information imparted, and we also are investigating ways of having viewers qualify for CPD points.



Everybody has been catered for with small, medium, large and extra large – even with or without pockets! These are available (the shirts not the pockets) on request from John Owen-Ellis (seen here trying his hand at modeling) on owenellisjohn54@gmail.com or at the Technology meetings and the cost is R180.00

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. ICA, Vision Automation and Pulse have kindly provided a sponsorship for 2012 and their logos are proudly displayed on our corporate banner at all of our meetings and functions and now on all our correspondence."

Corporate sponsors:

