

SAIT PRESIDENTS REPORT 2020

I wish that we were all able to listen to Doug giving the President's Report 2020 this evening. Unfortunately, as we all know, Doug died in hospital 3 weeks ago after a very long and brave battle with cancer. He was one of our first members, with 34 years of good standing, and our first President to die in office. I spoke to him in hospital just before he died, and right up to the end his mind was clear and his heart was still on the needs of the SAIT. In honour of Doug let us have a minute's silence to a man who gave his life to the South African lubricant's industry.

The SAIT is organised and run by the executive committee, who are all volunteers, and it is this group of dedicated people who we must thank for pulling the Institute through what in some ways has been a tough year. I must add that it is largely this same group of volunteers who lecture our courses. Fortunately this is largely their way of sharing their knowledge with industry and the country in general. And of course we must thank Gill and the ladies in the office for their contribution, they are the real heroes of the Institute, who keep us all going.

Over the past year the SAIT has focused on becoming more meaningful in the IT IA era, with web based training and seminars. We have discovered that these are not always easy to implement, but the COVID pandemic has introduced Zoom and we have just run our first Zoom Lubrication Engineering course, LE5 126e. I'm very happy to report back that the course was a success, with 2 distinctions and unfortunately 2 failures. Some comments by the students sum up the course

- (Day 2) Done very professionally and with high standard.
- (This course) was really well presented and the flow of the course was good.
- Attended another online course during lockdown and it was very disorganised and the course was all over the place.
- Overall a very good course and extremely satisfied.

You will all be aware of the importance of tribology at this time. We are almost the only science that can help industry to become more efficient, reducing the cost of ownership, while at the same time reducing carbon emissions through reduced friction. Currently we have just under 80 members, which is not a big number for such a critical science. We encourage all students on our courses to take out private membership if their companies are not members. This is also a heartfelt plea for all of us to work on gaining new members. The current racial split is about 75% white, which is not acceptable, particularly when the age of our members is taken into account. The current split of students is now about 75% black.

Many years ago the SAIT developed a working relationship with the STLE. Under this relationship membership of the SAIT includes a free copy of STLE's TLT magazine, which is an excellent way of keeping up with the world of tribology, both with technical papers and commercial matters. The TLT magazine alone is worth more than the annual SAIT private membership!

Every 4 years the global governing body for tribology, the International Tribology Council, holds an international congress, called the World Tribology Congress, or WTC. I was fortunate enough to be invited as a keynote speaker to the last WTC, held in Beijing, China, 3 years ago, and to have attended several other of these events. They draw the cream of the tribology world and are very well attended. WTC 2017 in China was attended by more than 2000 delegates. The next WTC 2021 will be in Lyon, France, next year, and the ITC has asked the SAIT to bid to host WTC 2025 in South Africa. We are working hard on a bid, and if it is accepted we will all have our work cut out to make this the most successful WTC to date.

It is important to ensure that our courses and interactions always maintain a good standard. For example all of our courses are approved by ECSA, and the appropriate number of points are given according to the event and the number of days. We are also in the process of gaining ISO 9001 accreditation. Here is our quality policy.

Before handing over to our Treasurer, I just need to add that due to difficulties with SARS we are currently registered as a Non Profit Company (NPC). When these difficulties are over we will apply for re-registration as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO), which will reduce our tax burden and improve our legal status.

In summing up, please remember that the SAIT digital microscope and thermal camera are available on loan by our members for investigation projects. Proof of insurance is required.

Patrick Swan
Vice President SAIT 2019/2020