

# Durban branch

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

2009 has been another very successful year for the SAIMC Durban branch. We have managed to grow our membership even in this recessionary environment, giving credence to those famous words of Charles Dickens: 'It was the best of times and the worst of times.'

Branch activities included monthly technology talks at the University of KwaZulu-Natal on the first Wednesday of each month with topics like earthing, alarm management and robotics being covered. Attendance at these meetings was good with a record high of 45 people attending the robotics talk! SMS technology is now being employed to remind our busy members of these events.

In addition, site visits to the new Durban Harbour control tower, the Sezela sugar mill and the Umgeni Wiggins waterworks were undertaken. Upcoming events for next year include a visit to the PetroNet control room in Durban central.

One of the aims of the SAIMC is to provide linkages between industry and tertiary institutions. In implementing this we arranged a well attended visit by UKZN control engineering students to Eston sugar mill where they were exposed to some heavy industry. Furthermore, with the assistance of the national council, we have set up a communication channel between Prof. Ed Boje and the IIG to assist him in implementing some innovative ideas to maintain and improve the quality of training for students. The IIG is a group of C&I business leaders who have access to the resources that the tertiary institutions desperately need. Once the system has been piloted with Prof. Ed Boje, it will be rolled out to DUT with Mr Carl Reineke and then country-wide.

One of the exciting developments this year was the re-establishment of the Richards Bay sub-branch. Peter Molokoane, approached us at the Durban AGM in February and with some networking and campaigning, we managed to have an inaugural meeting in May and



Durban branch chairman, Vinesh Maharaj, thanking SAIMC chairman, Johan van Jaarsveld for attending the Durban branch annual function. The theme for the evening was 'Hits of the '60s' which went down a treat and it was fun to see just how many people were singing along.

by July we had gathered sufficient support to create a committee, now chaired by the highly enthusiastic Donald Pittendrigh. The RB sub-branch has its meetings on the last Wednesday of each month. The talk for November was on financial management by an expert from Old Mutual – a welcome departure from the normal technical themes.

## TOUR OF WIGGINS WATERWORKS

The visit was arranged by Sean Bouverie who is in charge of instrumentation and control at the Wiggins Waterworks. Sean, along with his two instrumentation

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[L to R]: Anoop Haripersad – Schneider Electric, Pierre Bonnet – DUT, Dave Govender – TEKmation Training, Jay Soobramoney DUT, Jason Ullbricht – Schneider Electric, Vinesh Maharaj – Cube Technologies, Geoff Gregson – Schneider Electric.