



SAIW 68th Annual Dinner and Awards

The 68th SAIW Annual Dinner and Awards Presentation was held on September 23 at the Gold Reef City Casino Convention Centre. Compèred by Bongani Nxumalo with entertainment by Coda Africa, the South Africa welding fraternity attended in numbers to celebrate, following a difficult year.

“It is indeed an honour to be here tonight celebrating our 68th Annual Dinner with the welding and fabrication industry,” said Sean Blake, opening his keynote address. “There can be no doubt that we are experiencing challenging times at the moment. The challenges are numerous: we have social and political unrest coupled with low economic activity driven by low oil and commodity prices. Some may call these events a perfect storm,” he says.

Admitting to have consulted his two favourite friends, Google and Wikipedia, he says that he discovered 1984 to have been a stormy year from a meteorological perspective, with two devastating tropical cyclones in quick succession, Domoina and Imboa. “32 years later and 2016 is again proving to be stormy,” he notes.

“But South Africans are known to be a tough bunch, after all we play rugby. We have weathered many storms over the years and I am sure we will rise to the challenge and come out stronger from

our current circumstances. I am hoping that we can soon put the stormy years behind us and look forward to calm weather for smooth sailing in the years ahead,” said Blake.

Despite the difficult economic position that industry finds itself in, he said that it is extremely encouraging to experience the tremendous support which industry has provided to SAIW. “We have had an excellent response to our annual dinner and filled up this hall to capacity once again. I was also astounded at the response we received from our sponsors and I am most grateful for the contributions we have received from our nine event sponsors tonight. From my side, a big thank you, without your support this event would not have been possible,” he added.

Shifting attention to the achievements of SAIW in the past year, he said that the Institute continues to issue internationally recognised qualifications. “Since the beginning of 2015 we have presented 38 International Weld-



Sean Blake, SAIW executive director, presents at the 2016 SAIW Annual Dinner and Awards.

ing Engineer diplomas in collaboration with our academic partners, Wits and University of Pretoria; 39 International Welding Technologist diplomas; 631 SAIW Welding Inspector Level 1 diplomas; 353 SAIW Welding Inspector Level 2 diplomas and 393 International Welder diplomas. As an organisation, that is an achievement that makes us feel proud,” Blake revealed.

In 2013 SAIW formed a Foundation and “I am pleased to inform you that we have provided valuable training opportunities out of the SAIW Foundation. We have recently completed the training of our four SAIW Foundation students on the International Welder programme and they are now working on one of the power stations doing repair work on the

Below left: Winner of the SAIW Presidents Award for NDT, Wessels Vermeulen receives his award from SAIW president Morris Maroga (left) and executive director, Sean Blake. Right: Phil Santilhano Award winner, Berita Blaauw receives her award.





boilers. In addition, we currently have two students undertaking the Welding Technologist course supported from funding provided by the Foundation.

"At the beginning of this year, we began operations at a permanent purpose built facility in Durban," he continued. "We have two permanent staff manning the facility and can offer a wide array of courses at the facility, including NDT training.

"Our Material Testing Laboratory is going from strength to strength and earlier this year obtained ISO 17025 accreditation from SANAS. The laboratory can offer a full range of tests specifically designed to evaluate welds. The laboratory is equipped with modern state-of-the-art equipment and is run by well-qualified and experienced personnel," he reported.

Turning attention to SAIW's ISO 3834 Manufacturer Certification Scheme, Blake said that it continues to go from strength to strength. "SAIW started the scheme late in 2007 with the support of industry. I am pleased to report that we now have 106 certified companies on the register. This is a tremendous achievement and it would not have been possible without the support of our industry partners.

"We have now extended our Manufacturer Certification Scheme into the railway sector." He continued, "and we are partnering with GSI-SLV, our German colleagues, to offer EN15085 certification for the South African market. To date the Germans have visited South Africa twice to undertake audits

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Jim Guild – A tribute from SAIW

Jim Guild, winner of the SAIW Gold Medal Award for 2016, is one of the most deserving Gold Medal winners in the Institute's history. This highly successful organisation owes its current status and achievements almost entirely to his inimitable, charismatic and professional management.

When he took office in 2000, the SAIW was a small organisation with no international recognition for its courses. It was struggling financially and was fully reliant on sponsorship for its income.

When Jim Guild left in 2015, not only had it become the leading welding training organisation on the African continent with its courses recognised internationally, but it had also become financially self-sufficient, largely through a doubling of its training population.

Guild says that his tenure at the Institute can be described as "steady progress". The fact, however, is that it is more apt to describe his achievements as massive. These include:

- In 2001, the SAIW becomes a Regional Designated Centre of the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology.
- In 2003, the SAIW becomes an Authorised National Body of the International Institute of Welding.
- In 2005 the Young Welder of the Year competition is established and soon becomes the premier welding competition in South Africa.
- In 2006, permanent representation of the Institute is established in Cape Town and Durban.
- In 2006 and 2012, the SAIW hosts the IIW Regional Congress with speakers and experts from all over the world in attendance. SAIW also celebrated its 60th Anniversary by holding an Anniversary Conference in 2008, which included a number of well known international speakers in the field of welding.
- In 2008 the SAIW is accredited by the IIW as an Authorised National Body for Company Certification enabling it to certify fabricators to the ISO 3834 standard.

The Institute expanded significantly in 2010 when under Jim's leadership an additional building was built with extra office space and a state of the art multi-purpose auditorium. The inside of the existing building also underwent a major refurbishment, modernising the Institute.

Between 2011 and 2013, SAIW started an ambitious project to begin a material testing laboratory. This initiative expanded the services of the Institute to include testing of



welds and the laboratory was equipped with state of the art metallurgical and mechanical testing equipment.

"Jim has had a long association with the Institute, both as Executive Director and prior to that. His relationship with the SAIW started in the 1980s when he was involved in the establishing of the welding inspector programme as well as with the activities of SAIW Council. During this time Jim established many excellent relationships thanks to his warm and likeable character," said current Executive Director, Sean Blake.

"Jim's achievements were based on sheer hard work and his professional work management style. During my association with the Institute, his reputation was well established. He is well known in many circles both locally and internationally. Many of the speakers at SAIW Conferences visited South Africa on Jim's personal invitation and he went to great lengths to make them feel at home here," Blake remembers.

He was also well respected at the IIW where he was chair of IAB Group B from 2004 to 2011 and Chairman of IAB from 2015, a position he still holds today. One aspect that characterises Jim Guild's success in the IIW is his ability to deal with difficult situations. "He listens to both sides of the story and develops solutions that are acceptable to both parties, whilst always upholding the principles of the IIW," Blake adds.

Jim Guild's undoubted successes are based on impeccable business acumen and leadership traits. SAIW grew many fold in the 15 years that he was at the helm.

"SAIW, the Welding Industry and IIW have much to thank Jim for, including the hard work that he put in over the years and the numerous SAIW and IIW successes that he delivered. Jim, tonight we honour your achievements and celebrate with you," Blake concludes. ■



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and we now have three companies that have achieved this certification for the design and manufacture of railway equipment.

In addition, SAIW's NDT department continues to achieve: "Earlier this year, the SAQCC NDT Qualification and Certification scheme was registered under Schedule 2 of the ICNDT Mutual Recognition Agreement. This gives our SAQCC NDT scheme international recognition and puts it on a par with other schemes around the world such as the British Institute of Non-Destructive Testing PCN scheme. South African NDT qualifications can now be internationally recognised, which will be of great benefit to the South African NDT industry and its personnel.

"SAIW also sent a delegation to the World Conference on Non-Destructive Testing, which took place in Munich earlier this year. Four technical presentations were delivered by SAIW staff, for which we received positive feedback. Harold Jansen has also been appointed Chairman of the International Certification Executive Council, which further entrenches our position in the international NDT community," reported Blake.

SAIW is also well represented in IIW where we make a significant contribution to this global organisation. "An SAIW delegation recently attended the Annual Assembly which was held in Melbourne this past July. Jim Guild continues to represent SAIW and South Africa in his role as chairman of the International Authorisation Board. We are also working on bringing more IIW qualification and certification programmes to South Africa to further benefit our industry and the people of our rainbow nation," he said.

SAIW has established a Thermal Spray Association and Blake expressed pleasure to have members of TSASA join SAIW at the dinner. "We look forward to this association growing and playing a greater role in future annual dinners as well as making a significant impact on industry," he added.

Finally, he announced that SAIW had completed an office reconfiguration project at its Johannesburg head office. "This has created a customer service centre at the front of our building, which also houses our administration staff. We have built a new library and updated this important service to our members. The canteen and kitchen facility has received a significant upgrade and we have



The award for the best paper presented at a SAIW/IIW event was awarded to Pieter Pistorius (centre right), Charl Orsmond (centre left) and Kris Kruger (not present).



Jim Guild was made an Honorary Life Member and received the SAIW Gold Medal Award, SAIW's highest honour.

been able to bring SAIW Certification into its own facility, which will improve its independence and impartiality. An additional classroom and extra office space has also been added as a result of this project.

"I look forward to report further positive SAIW and industry developments at future annual dinners, but for now, please enjoy this evening with us," Blake concluded.

2016 SAIW Awards

Honorary Life Members: Three welding industry stalwarts became SAIW Honorary Life Members at the start of the awards ceremony: Louis Breckenridge, John Mcleish and James Christopher (Jim) Guild.

The Phil Santilhan Award: Berita Blaauw won the Phil Santilhan Award

for the best student on an SAIW Fabrication, Welding Inspectors or Welding Supervisors course.

SAIW Presidents Award for NDT: The 2016 award for the best student on an SAIW NDT course was awarded to Wessels Vermeulen.

The Harvey Shacklock award: The award for the best paper presented at a SAIW/IIW event was awarded to Pieter Pistorius, Charl Orsmond and Kris Kruger for their paper: "Repair welding of carbon steel pipe that has experienced partial graphitisation during elevated temperature service".

SAIW Gold medal award: The highest SAIW Award, awarded to a member of a company or person who has made an outstanding contribution to the SAIW was awarded to James Christopher (Jim) Guild. ■