

# Allyson Lawless made an International Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering

ALLYSON LAWLESS, SAICE's president in 2000, was made an International Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, at a glittering function in Drapers Hall, London, on 5 November 2012.

The Royal Academy of Engineering (RAE) was founded by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh in 1976 to promote engineering and technological development, provide independent and impartial advice to government, work to secure the next generation of engineers, and provide a voice for Britain's engineering community. The RAE scope has since extended to supporting engineering and technology development, and the development of the engineering profession in emerging nations.

Academy Fellows are drawn from the UK's most eminent engineers and international specialists representing the best of engineering worldwide. Their role is to provide leadership and expertise to address the relationships between engineering, technology, and the quality of life. Academy activities are grounded in a vision that engineers have essential roles to play in addressing the world's most pressing challenges, including climate change, global poverty and international security.

SAICE is very happy to report that Allyson was one of four international Fellows to be inducted on 5 November. She was honoured for her pioneering skills development work. Most SAICE readers are familiar with Allyson's ground-breaking *Numbers and Needs* books and her mentoring programmes.

The other three Fellows who shared the honour with her on the day were:

Shirley Anne Jackson, the first woman and the first African American to serve as chair of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and who is now a member of President Obama's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology. She is currently the president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute – the institution in the USA that first offered a degree in civil engineering.

Michel Virlogeux, the talented bridge designer responsible for the construction of the iconic Normandy Bridge, and the Millau Viaduct (the world's longest bridge at this altitude – 343 metres). Dr Virlogeux has designed over 100 of his native France's most beloved bridges, and has also designed bridges further afield, including the Vasco de Gama Bridge in Lisbon.

Tony Gibbs, a pioneer in promoting safe architectural and engineering designs that can withstand natural hazards. He is particularly passionate about designing health care buildings in such a manner that they are not destroyed or made inoperable by earthquakes and hurricanes. He has enjoyed a distinguished career in the West Indies and beyond, and has been recognised by the United Nations for his contribution to disaster risk reduction in the Caribbean and throughout the Americas.

Allyson reports having had a wonderful day, which included attending a briefing at which Fellows showcased their pioneering work. She was particularly thrilled to have met Dr Stephen Myers, the Director of Accelerators and Technology in Geneva, the body which recently announced finding the Higgs boson, which explains why objects in our universe have mass.

She was also impressed with Suranga Chandratillake, an unassuming young man who has created the world's premier video search company, Blinkx, valued at £500 million, before his 35<sup>th</sup> birthday! An exceptional engineer, his work is focused on the convergence of the web, television and online advertising. He has also designed a data mining solution to enhance searches – one of the internet's greatest challenges.

According to Allyson the evening's event represented a who's who in engineering. She was inspired by the number of professors, engineers, scientists, Sirs and Lords who had made a significant contribution to engineering over the years, both in the UK and further afield. Her only regret was that the Senior Fellow of the RAE, Prince Philip, was not well enough to attend!

Congratulations Allyson! ▣



Allyson Lawless signing the Royal Academy of Engineering International Fellow Roll



Allyson, who received her scroll from Lord Browne of Madingley (right), is congratulated here by Sir John Parker, chairman of Anglo American PLC