



## **INSTRUMENTATION AND MONITORING 2019**

Speaker Interview: **Jonathan Gammon**

### ***Why did you go into ground engineering?***

At school I had always had an interest in geology. I found the Soil Mechanics content of my Civil Engineering degree course at the University of Surrey initially challenging. However, I was soon under the soil mechanics spell of lecturers Noel Simons and Bruce Menzies. I was very fortunate to be accepted on to the Soil Mechanics MSc Course at Imperial College, where I was equally spell-bound, attending lectures given by the leading academics and practitioners of that time. In 1975 I started work in the Geotechnical Department of WS Atkins & Partners; there were then seven of us in a Department which is now a global resource of more than 500 staff.

### ***Do you have a favourite project?***

Yes. I worked for leading Swiss Contractor Marti AG on their fantastic Felsensau Bridge contract, north of Bern, during the third year of my Civil Engineering degree, from 1972 to 1973. That was a wonderful year; full of hands-on experience of forming different types of foundations and constructing columns and bridge spans of varying configurations for a then-record-breaking bridge and I had also gained fluency in German.

### ***What would you say to your younger self?***

Be patient, Jonathan. Leslie Davies, Director of Civil Engineering at WS Atkins, said that to me when I was initially a Graduate Engineer there. He was right, of course, as at that time we were bursting with enthusiasm and energy and we wanted to get on with our careers without the benefit of first acquiring the valuable experience and skills that patience would bring.

### ***How is retirement suiting you?***

Very well. However, during my entire career I was very fortunate to work with wonderfully talented colleagues from countries all around the World. After I retired from CH2M, in August 2017, I missed their company. However, I have maintained my active involvement in the UK with Engineering New Zealand (ENZ) and the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE), having lived and worked in both countries. I am a Volunteer at London's Science Museum and continue to be a STEM Ambassador. In November this year I commenced my exciting role as Advisor/Non-Executive Director at Geotechnical Observations Limited so I'm now "semi-retired".

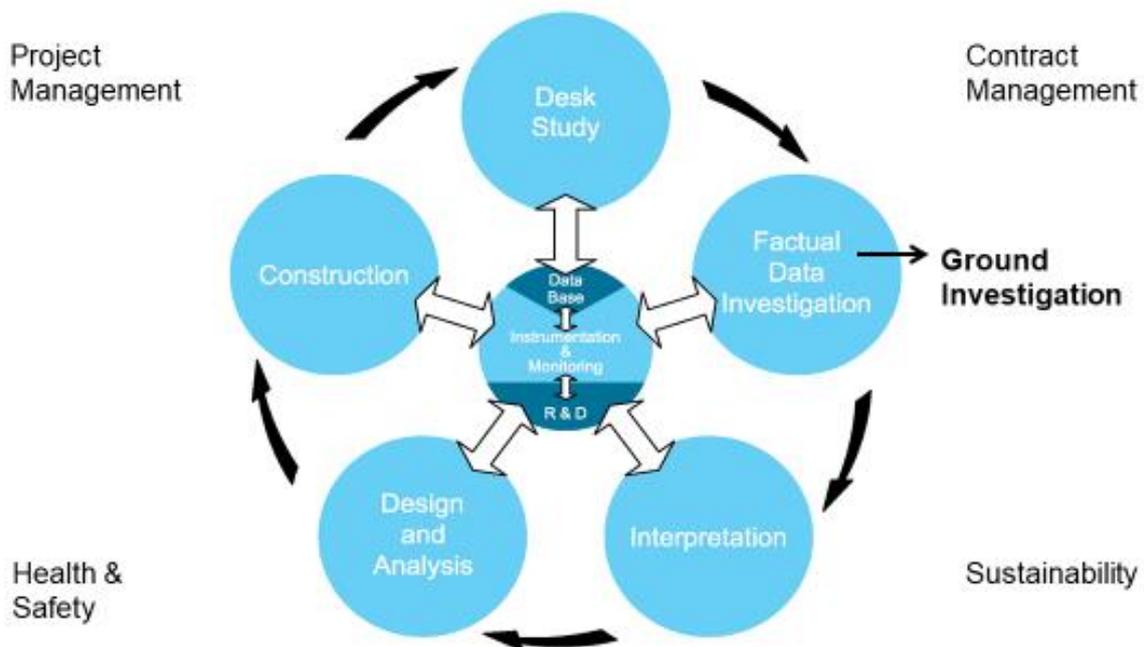
### ***Has your career gone the way you expected?***

More the way I hoped, than the way I expected! I started to take an interest in Civil Engineering at about the age of 12 or 13. At that time the opportunity to go to Hong Kong and New Zealand would have seemed impossible and the stuff of dreams. Overall, I have

greatly enjoyed my career, which has spanned almost 45 years. I ended it - in terms of full-time work - on a good and happy note. I've led the largest-ever ground investigations in Hong Kong, for West Rail, and in the UK, for HS2 Phase One; I never expected that to happen. I neither hoped nor expected to be made redundant twice in my career!

***You were one of the original driving forces behind the I&M conference. Why do you think it's an important event?***

I&M finds application across the entire spectrum of ground engineering and construction activity. It is often required before, during, and after project implementation. Those involved in research, design, construction, maintenance and whole-life considerations need to be provided with the opportunity, that the Conference provides, to gain a better awareness and understanding of I&M. I&M provides a vital link between prediction and reality. It is no accident that it appears at the hub of my GeoWheel diagram, below, which illustrates the key areas of work, and their interaction, within ground engineering. Rapid changes in some areas of I&M technology lend weight to the opportunity the conference provides to keep up with such technology and an accompanying exhibition provides a valuable opportunity to engage with companies actively involved with I&M. Increasing demand to protect third-party assets also increases the importance of an I&M conference.





On site at Felsenau Bridge, Bern, Switzerland. My industrial year at the University of Surrey was spent as a section engineer during the construction of the Bridge from 1972 to 1973.



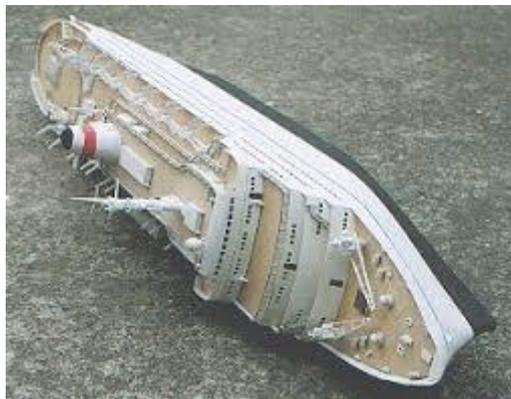
A completed span at the Felsenau Bridge, Bern, Switzerland.



Two contrasting projects of mine in Hong Kong while at Fugro (Hong Kong) from 1980 to 1984. The Academy for Performing Arts sat in reclamation alongside Hong Kong's Harbour (left) and the multi-storey St John's Building sat above the Lower Peak Tram Station in steeply sloping ground (right).



Tauranga Harbour Crossing, New Zealand; a major project of mine during my time working for Murray-North (now Aecom) from 1984 to 1988.



An unusual project, determining the uplift forces required to permit a whole hull recovery of the sunken "Mikhail Lermontov" cruise liner resting on the sea bed in shallow water at the northern tip of New Zealand's South Island.



Tsuen Wan West Station nearing completion in 1993.



Completed Tsuen Wan West Station.

