I’m absolutely delighted to have the opportunity to give this citation for a man who I’ve known for over thirty years as a very dear friend and wonderful colleague – and that lucky man is Larry Benjamin.

Larry, as you know, has made numerous outstanding contributions to ophthalmology throughout his career and he’s recognised internationally as one of the most gifted and innovative educators of his generation.

Put simply, he has revolutionised surgical training. He began by creating from scratch the first ever Microsurgical Skills Course and Skills Lab, based in Stoke Mandeville.

Following on from this he became the principal innovator in developing the National Microsurgical Skills Lab and Training Course at the College and, to go with it, he established the Microsurgical Skills Sub-Committee that he chaired himself for six years. You may not be aware but it was this model which became the blueprint that’s been widely adopted by so many eye units today.

Larry was also instrumental in establishing the use of the EyeSi simulator both at the College and around the UK and worked in a leading role to establish the curricula for simulation training.

His achievement in changing the face of surgical training is exceptional. It’s a testimony to what can be achieved by one person with an original idea combined with a vision of how it can be achieved and a tireless energy and commitment to bring it to fulfilment. Unbelievable and worthy of this honour on its own. But there’s more!

Any of you who have had anything to do with the college know the extraordinary level of commitment and success that he’s achieved in his many roles: as a Member of College Council, Regional Adviser, College Secretary, Vice President and Senior Vice-President. In fact many colleagues, myself included, consider Larry to be the best President that we’ve never had!!

He’s also been involved with the international eye charity Orbis for many years. Initially as a member of its Volunteer Faculty. But inevitably “cream rises to the top” and he became Chairman of the Programme Committee with responsibility for Europe, Middle East and Africa. As a result of his exceptional contribution to Orbis he was awarded, by the Charity Staff Foundation, the national honour of “Care Service Provider of the Year for 2016”.

To top all this, he’s published over 60 peer-reviewed papers and authored three books that have become essential reading for ophthalmologists. But apart from all that, to be honest, he hasn’t done much.

We all know that Larry’s other great gifts are his warmth, generosity, humour and humility. All of which make him one of the most if not THE most popular and much loved individuals in ophthalmology. In all honesty I can’t think of ANYONE I’d consider more worthy of this Honorary Fellowship so I give my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to the man, the myth, and the legend who is my dear friend – Larry Benjamin. Many congratulations on this well-deserved award.