



SACLAP NEWS

16 January 2018

South African Council for the Landscape Architectural Profession

TRIBUTE—STEVEN MARSHALL THOMPSON

SACLAP MOURNS THE LOSS OF A PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT.

It is with deep regret that SACLAP announces the passing of Mr Steven Thompson— one of registered Professional Landscape Architect. Steve, as he was fondly known was registered with SACLAP in April 2008. As a small and intimate profession we are certain that a number of you knew Steve and interacted with him. May his soul rest in peace.

TRIBUTE BY A FRIEND—CLARE BURGESS

Clare Burgess has known Steve since 1975.

After another busy and successful working year in the United Arab Emirates as Director of landscaping for LMS International, Steve Thompson sadly passed away suddenly and unexpectedly back in Cape Town whilst hiking up Table Mountain on Christmas Eve 2017. He had returned home to celebrate his 31st wedding anniversary and to be with his family and friends for the festive season and was enjoying a well-deserved holiday break.

Steve was born in Lancashire in North West England and started his landscaping career in Britain in a very 'down-to-earth way', working in a tree nursery and with a well-known landscape contractor prior to studying for his degree at Manchester Polytechnic. In 1980, at the end of the course, Mike and Kari Fuller-Gee contacted the students and invited any who were interested to apply to take over their jobs in Cape Town, the first Municipality in South Africa to employ landscape architects. Steve and I saw this as a fantastic opportunity to travel and see the world and we were both appointed to work in the Parks and Forest Branch at the Cape Town City Council. On arrival in South Africa in January 1981, Steve enthusiastically took up his post and started his career working on public play facilities for the developing township of Mitchell's Plain in the harshest of social and climatic zones on the Cape Flats. Little did he know then, that the sand he encountered there would be an ongoing theme and challenge later on in his career in the Middle East!

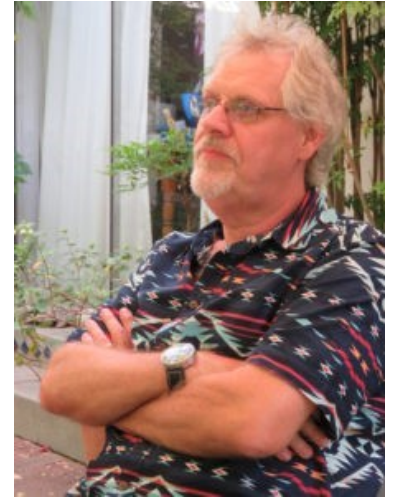
However, he quickly spotted an opportunity to work in the private sector and was offered a job by Gary Bartsch Landscaping who created wonderful high budget gardens and landscapes for wealthy clients and corporate institutions. Steve later moved around South Africa to work in Durban and Johannesburg for stints with various other landscape firms and then returned to Cape Town to join Johan van Papendorp in the expanding practice of OvP & Associates and settled down in Marina da Gama to married life with Nicci and his 2 boys, Tristan and Angus.

In 2001, after a downturn in the South African economy, Steve was invited to visit Dubai by Mark Smoot, where he took up yet another opportunity to practice his profession somewhere else in the World and started working for Cracknell and Associates immediately. Those were exciting years in the UAE, with incredibly challenging projects and unlimited budgets and Steve's wonderful imagination and creativity were able to be expressed in some of the well-known and internationally recognised projects which emerged from the Middle East during this time.

In recent years, Steve has been working on a number of beach resorts and exciting residential developments for LMS around North Africa and the Middle East. Steve worked hard but he also played hard and in the short periods of time when he could take leave, he recently managed to execute a life-long ambition of flying up to Everest Base Camp by helicopter.

I am sure that Steve's wealth of knowledge and experience will be sorely missed by the landscape teams that he is currently working with. He will certainly be missed by all of us in the landscape fraternity here in Cape Town who knew him well and enjoyed his dry British sense of humour and love of life. Our thoughts go out to his wife and children at this sad and unexpected loss of a man who loved life and lived it well.

A memorial service will be held to celebrate Steven's life but no date has yet been set by the family.



“SACLAP COUNCIL AND STAFF EXTEND HEART-FELT SYMPATHIES TO THE FAMILY, FRIENDS & COLLEAGUES ”

