



## THATCHERS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA TAKKERSVERENIGING VAN SUID-AFRIKA

Newsletter 3/2020  
20 May 2020

### NEWSLETTER

#### **THE EFFECT OF THE CORONA VIRUS ON ACTIVITIES**

A letter received from the Board of the International Thatching Society is equally applicable to our own Association and the situation in our own country. It reads as follows:

*“We hope you are all in good health. The current situation around Corona makes us realize that we live in a new reality. A reality that is far removed from the way we used to live in.*

*Through the Corona crisis you realize the power of a free world - a world in which you can easily meet and come together.*

*This has always been the strength of the ITS: getting together, sharing knowledge and building friendships.*

*Unfortunately, our planned gathering in May 2021 (Holland) is also under pressure due to the current Corona crisis. May 2021 still seems a long way off and the situation around Corona will undoubtedly be different then ... right? To be honest, we don't know! There is too much uncertainty at the moment.*

*It is clear that the organizing country of the event will have to make (financial) obligations, while it is still entirely questionable whether the event can go ahead by then. If it turns out that May next year the Corona crisis in any form still limits, then the event may not go ahead anyway.*

*There are simply too many uncertainties to organize the event in a fashionable manner.*

***For those reasons the planned ITS meeting of May 2021 in Holland has been postponed by one year.***

***Postponement:***

- ensures that we have more certainty about the corona situation.*
- prevents financial setbacks for the participants and organization.*
- enables everyone to participate in the event in a safe way.*
- allows the organization to organize the event in a fashionable way.*

*Although the decision to postpone goes against everything ITS stands for, the board of ITS thinks this is the most responsible approach at this moment.*

*We hope to see you in 2022, stay safe!*

*Kindest regards,  
On behalf of the ITS board”*

#### **THATCHERS ASSOCIATION'S 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The reasons stated in the International Thatching Society's letter above also apply to our situation. The travel restrictions between provinces cause that a date cannot be set yet and further arrangements cannot be made.

## **ARTICLE AND ADVERTISEMENT IN THE LEADING ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN SOURCE BOOK**

We were asked to write an article for this source book's June/July issue, which will be posted free of charge under the editorial section focussing on Roofing and Safari Lodges.

During lockdown they are sending digital links to their print subscribers to reach all their readers. This is in addition to their existing 4 000 digital subscribers of which 79% are architects and designers.

The article reads as follows:

“Thatching is a universal and age old practice and is one of the most sustainable industries in the world. It is perfect for rural settings because thatch darkens as it begins to age. The colour allows the roof to blend in more with its surroundings and creates a sense of harmony and belonging.

It's almost inconceivable to think of safari lodges, game parks, holiday resorts, etc in the African continent without thatched roofs. But especially since most of these lodges are located outside municipal areas and far from major towns and / or cities, it is of the utmost importance to design thatched roofs thoroughly and effectively to reduce maintenance and to ensure a long lifespan.

Modern techniques have advance thatching to a very fine art but there are some important fundamental aspects to keep in mind when designing a thatched roof, such as:

- Keep the design simple. The more complicated it is, the more maintenance it will require at a later stage.
- Make sure that the contractor or engineer supplies the Thatchers with structural drawings. This prevents unnecessary guesswork and specifies exactly how much material will be required.
- A thatched roof should have a minimum pitch of 45 degree and minimum of 35 degree over dormer windows.
- The smoother a thatched roof, the more velvety its finish, the better the thatching and the better water will run from it – and the longer it will last.
- Flashed areas, features that penetrate or interrupt the roof should be avoided as far as possible.
- Chimney shafts should be designed to penetrate the roof plane at the ridge, thus avoiding the necessity of back flashing
- Soil vent pipes are best located on external walls so that they penetrate the thatch near the eaves line.
- Rain water must not be allowed to discharge from a high level roof onto a thatched roof at a lower level.
- Thatched roofs are constructed with dripping eaves, meaning rainwater gutters and down pipes are not provided. Eaves overhangs should be at least 500 mm and provision should be made at ground level, around the building, to prevent erosion due to water dripping from the eaves overhang.

The Thatchers Association of South Africa has become a force and grows from strength to strength. It is one of the founder members of the International Thatching Society which is an international platform for exchange of knowledge and news about thatching and thatched constructions. The long term goal is to upgrade thatch to become a modern and competitive roof, acknowledging the historic skills and techniques for future reference.

The Thatchers Association of South Africa's two publications namely “A Guide to Thatch Construction in South Africa” which clarifies by means of photos and descriptions the SANS 10407 (Thatched Roof Construction) Specification and the “Pros and Cons in the Thatching Industry”.

The latter contains excellent information and advice on all aspects of building and maintaining thatched roofs. To promote the Thatching Industry, both publications are made available for free and can be ordered from the TASA office.”

Our advertisement is attached to this newsletter.

We trust that with the necessary permits our members will be able to resume their activities to a great extent. We do everything in our power to make it possible for our members.

Kind regards



André Friis

**NATIONAL CHAIRMAN**

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