



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

NEWSLETTER 2/2018  
7 March 2018

NEWSLETTER

### **„A GUIDE TO THATCH CONSTRUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICA“**

The team of translators are hard at work translating the TASA's "Guide to Thatch Construction in South Africa" into Setswana and IsiZulu. It is expected to be introduced during the next Annual General Meeting, as we have done with the English version. Details of the AGM will be submitted to our members with our next newsletter.

Special thanks to our National Vice President, Mr. John Smith of Biggarsberg Thatchers, who came from Natal at his own expense to lead the working group. Besides the fact that he was responsible for the establishment of the original Guide in English, his ability to explain technical aspects in isiZulu and to solve problems with terminology was indispensable.



Left to right: Brenda Mokaba, John Smith, Dr Refilwe Ramagoshi en Alice Motsei

### **FINANCIAL YEAR END**

On 28 February 2018, the TASA's financial year closed and we would like to appeal to our members who have not renewed their membership yet, to please do so as soon as possible. The 2018 membership certificate stamps will be posted to our members after 28 February.

### **Administrative Expenses**

The TASA website and e-mail address hosting was taken over by another firm which assisted greatly with the result that we saved R255 per month. The cost of maintaining the TASA's office remained unchanged for seven years and has been reduced even more over the past three years, as the Administrative Officer has taken responsibility for the Telkom landline and Internet access amounting to R699 a month. Office equipment and maintenance is also not the responsibility of the TASA.

## CONSTRUCTION PROBLEMS IN OUR INDUSTRY

The TASA's Facebook page receives a lot of attention and many queries are received as a result. Particularly construction problems are being placed under the magnifying glass to draw public attention to the SANS 10407 specification requirements as well as the existence of the "Guide to Thatch Construction in South Africa."

### FACEBOOK

Our members are welcome to visit the TASA's Facebook page. Our placement of 27 January 2018 "Rondawels with a Steel Structure" had 8 649 visits, while other recent posts also showed 2 332 to 3 350 visits. "👍 1,182 people like this week" en 📶 1,185 people follow this week"

### STREET ADVERTISERS

Signs are placed at robots on roads with high traffic with the words "Thatching repairs" and the cell number. This causes uninformed members of the public to grab a cheap option and later paid the price for that. It also hurts our Industry tremendously and financial losses occur.

Our goal is to provide as much information as possible to the public to make informed decisions to restore confidence in thatch roofs. Secondly, to draw our own members' attention to pitfalls that can make them responsible for losses and damage.

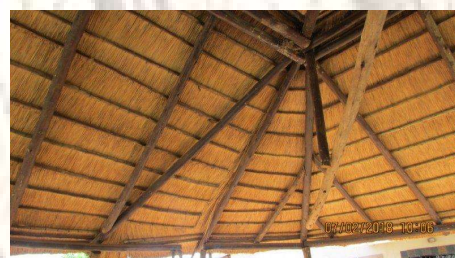
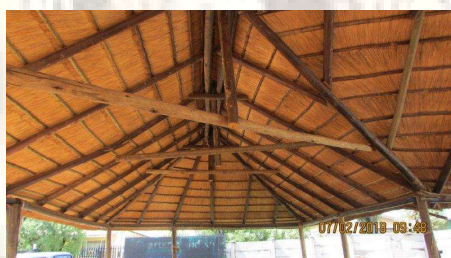
***What should not be forgotten is that, apart from our two certified members, JNA Thatchers and Biggarsberg Thatchers, no other member has gone through a certification process of SATAS as new members need to comply with. Both members also undergo unannounced inspections annually to which our other members are not exposed. Thus, information is passed through the newsletters to ensure that all of our members are 'on the same page'.***

### When is a roof repairable or not?

Below are photos of a lapa that has been rejected by our member and whose insurance claim has not been paid out. The size of the lapa is 101 m<sup>2</sup> and the length of the fiberglass ridging 12 m. There is no storm or wind damage visible to the exterior of the lapa. In our opinion the lapa is busy collapsing due to structural failure.



The pole construction as well as the fiberglass ridging that was installed was extremely unprofessionally done.



Not only is the diameter of the poles used too thin, they are too far apart. They are only nailed together, splitting open and so the list goes on.





Currently the structure is a danger and can collapse at any time. Our recommendation is that it be removed as soon as possible.

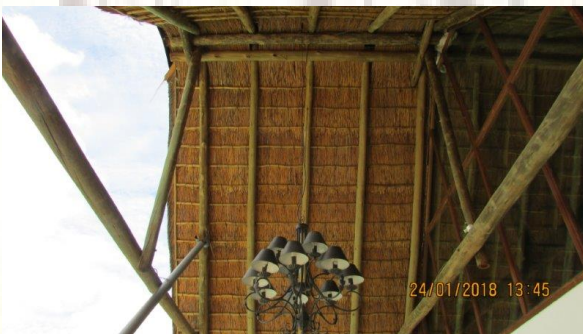
The contractor (who is known to the client) who originally erected the lapa should be held accountable for the above.

### **Here is a structural problem that was recoverable**

The roof is  $\pm$  11 years old. The width of the building is 7 m with an 800 mm overhang on either side.



The open verandah extends 3.2 m from the main building and is supported on two wooden columns with a wooden ring beam spanning from the columns back to the wall.



Structurally the roof has two bolted tie-beams, one next to the gable of the building and one in the front. Facing the building it is noticeable that the wooden columns on the left are leaning over outwards, which in return puts additional stress on the two rafters in front. This is held together by the tie-beam and king post. They both have bent considerably.





Judging by the photos we are not sure if the left rafter has broken or is it only the bark on the side that split off.



It is not clear what is the reason for the column leaning over. One possibility is a strong gust of wind that only affected the structure and not the thatch.

The solution to the problem is to remove all the thatch up to the gable wall. Support the existing structure, remove and replace the left column, as well as the two bent rafters in the front, together with new structural members.

### **After repairs have been completed**



Our members' contributions in this regard will be greatly appreciated. These photos and information will be published on the TASA's Facebook page after it has been approved.

### **LIGHTNING CONDUCTORS**

Complaints are being received from neighbors of thatch roof owners where lightning conductors are installed because their electronic devices are blown out by the lightning.

Our associated members who install lightning conductors report that the copper wire is stolen at substations and that the ground in many areas is a major problem. They carry out inspections and give a complete report regarding the condition of the lightning conductor and how it is earthed.

### **TRADITIONAL THATCH HUTS OF AFRICA**

A link to very interesting pictures of traditional thatch huts of different countries and cultures in Africa.  
<https://za.pinterest.com/WeetaK/african-traditional-huts/?lp=true>

Kind regards

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