

**SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNERS  
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT: SEPTEMBER 1994**

**Robert Lamont Smith**

**1 THE PROFESSION'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY**

On 15 February 1954 a meeting of nine like-minded town and regional planners was held in Professor J Fassler's office on the campus of the University of the Witwatersrand to look into the possibility of creating an institute for the profession in this country. At that meeting it was decided that an Institute of Town and Regional Planners for South Africa be established and an executive committee was nominated to launch the process.

The first meeting of the executive committee was held on 24 June 1954. Amongst other business, such as the approval of draft rules, a total of 55 Corporate members, two Graduate members and 11 Students were approved. It will interest members to note that of these founding members, four have been honoured with corporate life membership as follows: DM Calderwood, TB Floyd, Prof EWN Mallows and PS Reinicke. Those who have retired include BWB Ball, WJ Brown, RD Hill and J Morgenstern. The last-mentioned was registered as a student member on 24 June 1954 and retired this year as a Corporate member. Our Institute brings tribute to these pioneers who framed the early parameters of our profession. They certainly serve as inspiration to us. Many of the day to day problems of town and regional planning have changed, yet the basic ground rules laid down by those pioneers have remained relatively consistent. It would therefore be fitting that this milestone in our profession's history be recorded.

To mark this anniversary, Council would like to create a new bursary. This bursary should be dedicated to the particular needs and demands placed on society through the Reconstruction and Development Programme. The details and conditions attach-

ing to awarding this Bursary, to be known as the SAITRP RDP Bursary, will be finalised by Council after wider consultation. However, it is proposed that the criteria for receipt will be aimed at a person who has been disadvantaged by past policies in our country. It is proposed that the SAITRP RDP Bursary will initially be made to a student for a period of two years. The amount to be disbursed will be in the vicinity of R5 000 for each of the two years. I would like to use this opportunity to invite other persons, bodies or institutions to contribute to the SAITRP RDP Bursary to make it possible for this Bursary to grow, increase and be continually extended as a long term instrument as seed capital for the continued growth of the profession.

One of the most fundamental challenges to the profession in the recent past was that posed by a group of concerned planners early in 1993. At a special meeting held with this group in March 1993, some 14 issues were discussed as issues of importance to the group. Further debate on the issues was held and at the 1993 Annual General Meeting of the Institute, Prof John Muller, who acted as spokesman for the group, addressed the meeting and made a number of pronouncements on the issues. The Council agreed that these issues were of importance to it, and found that a large percentage of the issues were already embraced by the Institute. However, it agreed to follow the other matters up in the appropriate manner and attend to those areas of concern on which clarity had not been tested amongst the membership at large.

Council has tested the feeling of a number of issues on the membership by way of a referendum during the past few months, asking amongst others, whether the broadening of membership should be entertained and whether there should be an unequivocal stance taken on the issue of race,

gender and like issues.

It is with pleasure that I can report that the result of the referendum was as follows:

- On the question of broadening the membership by means of an examination, 83% indicated positively to the question.
- On the question of whether persons may be invited to become members on account of long service, who have the required qualification, but have not had the occasion to take up membership, 88% responded positively.
- On the question of accepting a clause which presumes against discrimination in any form, some 93% indicated their acceptance of such a provision.
- On the question of tightening up on the rules with regard to planners in public positions undertaking private work, some 94% indicated their acceptance of the provision.

Council has now implemented a programme to translate these goals into reality and will be inviting the Education Advisory Committee of the Statutory Council to formulate the terms and references of such an examination. The Council will also be approaching persons to encourage them to serve voluntarily on tribunals, capacity building programmes and the like. Furthermore, Council has decided that practitioners will be approached to serve as players in a programme to be introduced on a similar line to that of Lawyers for Human Rights.

It can safely be said that there is a ground swell of opinion that needs to be harnessed and used as a clear mandate to Council to move in the required direction. The discussions which were arranged to be held at this 1994 Biennial Conference to explore

the possibilities of widening the membership, flows in part from the unresolved issues raised at the Port Elizabeth Conference, as well as the 14 issues raised by the group of concerned planners. The findings of the discussions were heartening and serve also to reinforce Council's commitment to introduce appropriate changes. Council was of the opinion that the discussions held at this Conference were a legitimate and appropriate way in which opinion of the Institute could be assessed in a democratic and transparent way. Analysing the overall response of members at these discussions it will now be probable for the incoming Council to shift forward and explore the possibility of accepting the 14 issues, and finding others.

It is hoped that the findings of the discussions on widening flowing from this process will bring the recently established Development Planning Association of South Africa closer, if not back, into the Institute. It is Council's opinion that the decision to establish the Association was premature, since the process of consultation within the Institute had not even run its full course. Qualified town and regional planners and the associated disciplines are thinly spread throughout the country, and division amongst them is regarded as unwarranted.

Another challenge facing the Institute directly, is a small amendment to the Town and Regional Planners Act, 1984 (Act 19 of 1984), currently being considered by Parliament. This amendment will do away with the present requirement that a town and regional planner is compelled to be a member of a town and regional planning institute before he can register professionally as a town and regional planner in terms of the Act. This may prove to be a direct threat to the membership numbers of this Institute.

On the other hand, delinking in this manner proposed, will liberate town and regional planners to associate with whomever they wish. Voluntary association in an institution, such as our Institute, which by its very nature is a voluntary organisation, is the only way of gaining and retaining members who sincerely have the art and science of town and regional planning at heart. The promotion of these ideals will not

and cannot be promoted by the Registration Council; that Council has a completely different goal and mission. It was with confidence, therefore, that the Institute supported this amendment to the law. Members will now be able to qualify for membership of the Council without being beholden unto compulsory membership of the Institute. In contrast to what is indicated above, Council believes that the change to the Act will reflect an unprecedented growth in the Institute.

## 2 COUNCIL

As far as Council matters are concerned, it was with regret that we took leave of Prof Sakkie Badenhorst who was forced to retire from Council for health reasons. Over the years he has played a valuable role in promoting educational issues and the absence of his customary wit, charm and vision in Council, will be sadly felt. During the year, Council also took leave of Hannes Botha who was promoted to the post of Town Clerk in Potchefstroom. Hannes was just getting into his stride on Council and we wish him all the best in his new appointment. Council resolved to appoint Peter Dacomb and Mrs Karen Burger to serve in stead of Hannes Botha and Sakkie Badenhorst respectively.

As was reported last year, Mrs Amanda Louw, who was the previous Honorary Secretary, left the Council to take up residence in the Cape, but most importantly to extend her family. In her place, Charlotte Moss has proved an excellent replacement and she comes to Council with considerable skills and dedication.

Members will recall that, with the retirement of Mr J Beeby as Registrar of the Registration Council in 1991, Mrs Franca Giudici, who was at that time the Institute's Secretary, applied for and was appointed in the position of Registrar. Consequently, it was decided that it would be necessary that a person should be appointed in a half day capacity to do the secretarial work of the Institute. For this reason Mrs E van Straaten was appointed as the Institute's Secretary. After a thorough evaluation, it was found that it would be possible for Mrs Giudici to do the work of the Institute as well as that of

the Registration Council and an agreement with the Council was reached in this regard. Consequently Mrs Van Straaten's post was found to be redundant and she was released after 13 month's service with a severance package. It was, however, with pleasure that we could welcome Mrs Giudici back into the post of Secretary; a job with which she is familiar. Mrs Giudici joined the Institute as Secretary in 1984 and the ten year's experience that she brings back with her is truly appreciated. We all thank her for agreeing to take on her old post in addition to her duties as Registrar. Her experience is of great value in running and maintaining the profession as whole.

## 3 MEETINGS OF COUNCIL AND MEMBERSHIP

The Council and Executive Committee have met three times during the year. Membership of the Institute is as follows:

	1991	1992	1993	1994
Corporate	611	649	668	615
Graduate	276	323	350	323
Associate	30	37	40	32
Retired/ Hon/Life	45	32	44	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>1041</b>	<b>1102</b>	<b>1019</b>

These figures represent a 7,5% drop in the membership and is a reflection of the tighter economic conditions in which we all find ourselves and which seems to influence continued membership of voluntary organisations such as ours.

## 4 FINANCE AND BUDGET

The success of a business is usually measured by the way it makes a profit and the way it delivers its services. While the Institute is not in the game of making money in the sense that it should show a profit to its shareholders, it is essential that the money it has at its disposal is used wisely in rendering its services. In this regard, I can happily report that the finances are

in good care under the ever watchful eye of Tiaan Ehlers. The income for the year ended 30 June 1994 was R182 110, which represents a 3% increase over the past year. A special word of thanks go to Tiaan Ehlers for his dedicated stewardship over the financial matters. It is with regret that we take leave of him from Council. However, I would like to welcome Brian Gray who has agreed to assume the post of Honorary Treasurer.

In the past year some 33% of the budget was used for creative services as opposed to running costs. This deviates from Council's stated goal to attain a 60%-40% ratio between creative projects and actual running costs. As reported to you last year, this goal seems to be unobtainable, and it is possibly a signal to Council to either change its priorities or scale down certain maintenance programmes.

## 5 BRANCHES

You will be in a position to peruse the published reports of each branch which are tabled for your convenience tonight. It is not possible for me to paraphrase each report today, but I leave it up to you to evaluate your own branch's report to see whether you are getting value for your money.

However, I would like to bring tribute to one or two of the branches whom I feel are truly doing an excellent job of promoting the profession at branch level.

The Far Northern Branch, under the leadership of Theo Pieterse, held a seminar on a future vision for town and regional planning in their area. They also arranged and held a successful family week in September 1993.

Members will recall that at the last Annual General Meeting, Christo Theart of the Border Branch, made a strong plea for a new approach on the structure of the Institute. On the strength of his good ideas and his obvious enthusiasm, it was agreed that he should draw up a paper setting out his thoughts on the structure of the Institute. Unfortunately this was not forthcoming.

In the East Cape Branch, which has been chaired by Schalk Potgieter, a number of exciting activities have been taking place, the most noteworthy of which is the Technikon Initiative where the Branch has taken the lead to introduce a Town Planning School at the Port Elizabeth Technikon. The branch has also been instrumental in arranging a planners workshop to look into an appropriate planning and development framework for their area. An innovative social initiative with related professions, was undertaken, and by all accounts the Nauticat venture sounds like a welcome variation on the theme of getting like minded people together to familiarise themselves. Council's thanks go to Schalk for agreeing to draw up a report on the structure of the Institute.

Notwithstanding the enormous workload involved in preparing a Biennial Conference, the Western Cape Branch has quietly been going ahead with its activities such as producing a regular newsletter which has generated a lot of interest. They have also successfully created an opportunity for students to visit the United States of America for training purposes and have initiated a workshop to be held at the time of this Biennial Conference to address the widening of the membership.

In the Free State, Piet de Bie has performed a sterling task in promoting matters of interest to his branch. He arranged discussion group sessions on the Khatse Dam, Koffiefontein mine and a trip to Botswana/Zimbabwe.

In Natal, Prof Rodney Harber brought some new lateral thinking to Council.

As indicated in last year's presidential report, the branches are the mainstay of the Institute; please give them your undivided support and encourage them to do things of interest, relevance and importance to you.

## 6 CONSOLIDATED FUND

The Consolidated Fund now stands at R71 527,00 which indicates a 76% growth from last year's amount of R40 638,00. The growth is in part attributable to the proceeds of the 1992 Port Elizabeth Conference which was received in this financial year.

Again, the manner in which the financial administration of this fund is run is a tribute to Tiaan Ehlers. The growth in this fund now paves the way for Council to make more appropriate and significant grants and awards.

The portfolio was ably administered by Piet van Zyl during the year. On the strength of the guidelines which he has prepared, it is possible for Council to make awards and bursaries in an objective and consistent manner. Awards were made to the best students of each University. Due to the improvement of the Fund as indicated above, it was possible to increase the annual student award to R400,00. It is Council's intention to increase this amount consistently with a view to keeping the awards abreast with inflation.

As was announced last year a new award for the best published article on town and regional planning has been introduced and the first recipient of this award will be announced tomorrow. The winner for the Biennial Award has not been decided yet. This is as a result of the fact that the date for holding this Annual General Meeting was put forward and it was consequently not possible to do the adjudication in time for this meeting. Consequently, the date for adjudicating will be in November and members will be advised of the outcome in an appropriate manner.

## 7 OPENBARE BETREKKINGE

In hierdie verband het Christo Kannenberg 'n toonaangewende rol gespeel om te verseker dat sake van die Instituut die nodige publisiteit ontvang.

## 8 KONFERENSIE

Die Wes Kaap Tak onder die bekwaame leiding van Geoff Underwood, het daarin geslaag om die 1994 Tweejaarlikse Konferensie te reël, wat ons bevoorreg is om tans by te woon. Die manier waarin die Konferensie beplan is, die kombinasie van sprekers wat bymekaar gemaak is en die manier waarop die logistiek tot in die fynste detail beplan en uitgevoer is, getuig van die vermoë van die Wes Kaap Tak om 'n Konferensie van hierdie omvang

te reël. My dank en dié van die Raad aan Geoff en sy span toegewyde helpers wat alles in hul vermoë gedoen het om hierdie Konferensie 'n sukses te maak.

## 9 OMGEWINGSAKE

Die beplanningsprofessie en die omgewing self is in hul besondere geartheid in mekaar ingewef. Stads- en streekbeplanners, wat hierdie feit ignoreer kan enorme kritiek op hulle toe-eien. My ondervinding is dat stads- en streekbeplanners het reeds op verantwoordbare wyse op die uitdagings van die "groenvraagstuk" gereageer. Vir die rede, speel die Instituut 'n sentrale rol in die bevordering van die omgewingsvraagstukke. Piet Claassen was veral instrumenteel in die voorbereiding van onder andere, beleidstukke oor die voorgestelde regulasies wat vir kommentaar voorberei en versprei is deur die Departement van Omgewingsake. Hy het ook standpunte aan die Raad vir die Omgewing voorberei. Stads- en streekbeplanning, as aktiwiteit, funksioneer in alle sferes van die omgewing; die menslike, ekonomies, biologies, ekologies en kultureel.

Dit is die beplanner se strewe om te verseker dat 'n gesonde en selfonderhoudende omgewing vir toekomstige geslagte ontwikkel word. Ons dank aan dr Claassen vir die toonaangewende rol wat hy namens ons speel.

Vir 'n lang tyd het die Instituut deel geneem in die aktiwiteite van OMPIK. Die werk wat Hannes Botha in die verband namens ons gedoen het, word hoog op prys gestel.

A further development in this regard was touched on at the Annual General Meeting at Port Elizabeth in 1992. At that meeting, Mr Peter Ucko introduced a motion that he would like to initiate an award to be known as the Glenn Carboni Award. This award would bring tribute to Glenn Carboni, a town and regional planner who worked at the Durban Corporation and who passed away in September 1989 as a result of a bone marrow condition. Glenn's primary point of departure in his planning philosophy was the promotion of the interests of the environment as it relates to human needs.

The Award will be made biennially and will be presented to a town and regional planner who has consistently demonstrated his practical ability to plan for the environment in the interests of humanity. It is with pleasure that I can announce that the first recipient of this award will be made tomorrow evening.

## 10 NUUSBRIEF EN JOERNAAL

Dit is met vertroue dat ek kan sê dat die Nuusbriëf, wat Piet Claassen oor die afgelope drie jaar saamgestel het, as een van die Instituut se vooraanstaande produkte ontwikkel het. Die standaard wat gestel word, sowel as die inhoud, tydigheid, en geskiktheid daarvan, getuig van sy entoesiasme waarmee hy die taak uitvoer. Vir 'n persoon wat hierdie taak bo en behalwe sy eie dagtaak met soveel ywer en gehalte uitvoer, is moeilik om te ewenaar. Dit is dus geen wonder dat niemand sy plek wou neem toe hy mense uitgenooi het om sy pos by hom oor te neem! In die afwesigheid van vrywilligers om die taak oor te neem, het ek ingestem om dit te doen tot tyd en wyl 'n paslike persoon gevind kan word.

Wat die Instituut se Joernaal betref, die werk van Tod Welch is bestendig en van 'n hoë gehalte. Een van sy vernaamste probleme is dié van befondsing. Inflasie het die geneidheid om sy beste begrotings te ontwig en afgesien van die beste beplanning ter wêreld, gebeur dit dat sy kosteparameters verander het en dat addisionele befondsing gesoek moet word. Ek wil my persoonlike dank aan prof Welch, vir hierdie kwaliteitprodukt wat altyd relevante en tydige artikels bevat, betuig.

## 10 ONDERWYS

As gevolg van die bedanking van prof Sakkie Badenhorst, het hierdie portefeulje nie die gewenste aandag ontvang soos wat verlang word nie. Die werk wat reeds gedoen is, is egter nie gemors nie en sal as vertrekpunt dien vir die nuwe lid op die inkomende Raad.

## 11 PROFESSIONELE FOOIE

Die Instituut speel 'n sentrale rol in die proses om 'n fooiinstruktuur te ontplooi. Die Registrasie Raad het die verantwoordelikheid om riglynfooie vir die professie te publiseer en hierdie fooie word opgestel op sterkte van die aanbevelings van die Instituut. Tot op hede, moet die Minister van Grondsake hierdie riglynfooie goedkeur vóór publikasie daarvan deur die Raad. Daar word verwag dat, met die amendement aan die Wet op Stads- en Streekbeplanners wat tans voor Parlement dien, daar met hierdie bepaling weggedoen sal word. Indien dit die geval is, sal die Instituut se rol al hoe meer belangrik wees, aangesien die "politieke filter" dan afwesig sal wees en 'n groter verantwoordelikheid op die georganiseerde professie sal berus om die werk korrek en tydig voor te berei.

Betreffende die Instituut se rol in die voorbereiding van 'n fooiinstruktuur, wil ek hulde aan Christo Kannenberg bring, wie se enorme ondervinding in hierdie verband tot die voordeel van die hele professie benut word.

## 12 REËLS EN HANDBOEK

Soos hierbo genoem, is aansienlike wysigings aan die reëls goedgekeur. Dit impliseer 'n wysiging aan die Reëlboek en in die verband sal die nuwe Raad die saak opvolg. Daar word voortdurende navrae oor die reëls ontvang. In hierdie verband is die Raad dankbaar vir die wye ondervinding van Paul Waanders. Sy raad en goeddeurdagte opinie is van groot waarde om wysheid tydens geskille te vind.

## 13 BEPLANNINGSVRAAGSTUKKE

Gedurende die jaar is twee dokumente gepubliseer en aan lede versprei. Hierdie dokumente getiteld "Stadsvorm" en "Landelike Ontwikkeling" is deur prof D Dewar en Catherine Laburn-Pearl onderskeidelik opgestel. Die twee dokumente reflekteer 'n standpunt oor die twee onderwerpe en verteenwoordig die eerste in 'n reeks onderwerpe wat mettertyd aan lede versprei sal word. Ander stukke oor

byvoorbeeld die omgewing en openbare deelname word tans opgestel. Daar word vertrou dat hierdie standpunte vir lede van waarde is. Ek wil weer eens van die geleentheid gebruikmaak om lede uit te nooi om kommentaar op die stukke te lewer om te verseker dat die dokumente vir hulle tydige en relevant bly. Die toonaangewende rol wat Christo Kannenberg in dié verband gespeel het word hoog op prys gestel.

## 14 NEW BRANCHES

No new branches were created in the past year. However, it is anticipated that a new approach will be evaluated in the near future, especially in the light of the new provincial boundaries that have been accepted. The matter will be looked into by the Eastern Cape Branch, and here I would like to thank Schalk Potgieter for the strong lead that he has taken in this regard.

## 15 PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONS CAUCUS

As was reported last year, a Construction Professions Committee was established to look at the question of coordinating design professional activities in the delivery of housing. This committee has subsequently changed its name to the Planning and Construction Professions Caucus. As a unified Caucus, acknowledgement of the design professions in addition to the construction professions in the process of housing delivering and related matters has been confirmed. The Institute is indebted to Johan Biermann who has represented the Institute as well as the Association of Consulting Town and Regional Planners in this regard.

## 16 SAITRP CONSULTATION

During the year your Council has been engaged in numerous consultations and have submitted considered opinions to all levels of government as well as to outside bodies. I would like to mention but a few. As you are aware, the new boundaries of the provincial authorities were agreed to during the year. The Institute submitted proposals for consideration in this regard. The

Institute has made representations on the Development Facilitation Bill, the proposed Environmental Regulations, the Town and Regional Planners Amendment Bill, the Physical Planning Amendment Bill, as well as certain local authority regulations.

The Institute has been instrumental in ensuring South Africa's participation in Habitat II. In this regard, Piet Claassen's efforts in gaining acceptance for the Institute as a non-Governmental Organisation in Habitat II is an achievement in itself. Through his efforts, South Africa has been accepted as a participant in Habitat II where the Department of Housing will take the lead in close liaison with the Institute and others to prepare a national standpoint in this regard. The Institute also made a significant contribution to the United States Book of Congress and has been accepted in The Africa Initiative, a non-Governmental Organisation which will promote direct links with the rest of Africa by means of continuing conferences, seminars and discussions on all matters relating to the broad issues confronting the Continent such as the problems of ignorance, poverty, disease and housing. The Institute was also represented on an evaluation committee looking into an acceptable approach to the development of Bruma Lake in Johannesburg.

## 17 INTERNATIONAL CONTACT

As indicated above, contact with Habitat II has been successful. It has also been possible to make contact with the International Association on Housing and Planning. The Institute has also been successful in making direct contacts with the Planning Institutes of New Zealand and Australia to formally share information, compare entry requirements, define reciprocity for academic qualifications and so forth. Replies are awaited on our invitations to Canada, Britain (RTPI), Malaysia, Zimbabwe and India.

## 18 THE WAY FORWARD

The Institute is in the midst of an enormously challenging developmental environment, made even more exciting by the rapid pace of change. To name

but a few matters that will fundamentally affect our profession as well as the perceptions of those with whom we come into contact is the effect of the Development Facilitation Bill, the changes to local governments, the new provincial authorities as well as the strident demands that will be placed on all professions to help achieve the demands of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. This Institute unequivocally accepts these challenges and identifies itself with the new goals which have been set by the Government. With regard to the overall demands of the RDP as well as the new planning parameters that will flow from the Development Facilitation Bill, the Institute sees the profession as one of the most important contributors to meet the demands that will follow. In addition to the conventional role of the planner, the planner is already playing the role of the facilitator, coordinator and negotiator to cope with the increasing challenges of development. These roles imply that planners have to work with individuals, groups, and organisations, including a new bureaucratic staff, politicians and NGO's. Planning is increasingly becoming an outcome of a process of reconciling different views and interests in development. The challenges set in the RDP are in fact nothing fundamentally new to planners; the priorities and terminology may sound different, but the aims and objectives are found in the writings of those early masters such as Patrick Geddes. I am of the opinion that in bringing the RDP to fruition especially within the rapidly changing milieu, planners need to rededicate themselves to those elements which first made the profession strong. The one most important role of the planner can be likened to that of a conductor, who by his central coordinating role can bring the various instruments of an orchestra together to produce beautiful music, so that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

## 19 CONCLUSION

A ship is as good as its crew. While the SS SAITRP has been ploughing its way through the turbulent oceans of the past two years, I have been thankful of the fact that I have been buoyed up by such a fine body Council mem-

bers and branch representatives. My thanks go to each one of you and in particular our Past President, Peter Robinson who has been a continuing source of support and inspiration.

But more importantly, I would like to thank all our members for their unstinting support. Without your encouragement and positive appraisals it would be impossible to keep this ship on course. I wish our successors the best of success in managing the ship from now on; I believe I hand over a good ship, well equipped, admirably well staffed and set on a good course to help further the art and science of town and regional planning to the benefit of all South Africans.