



**Our Track Record**



With acknowledgement to the following architectural practices

- Bolt Architects
- Boogertman + Partners
- CM Architects
- Comrie + Wilkinson
- DBM Architects
- GAPP Architects
- GLH & Associates
- Integrale Architectural Design
- MDS Architecture
- Messaris Wapenaar Partnership
- Stefan Antoni Olmesdahl Truen Architects
- TPS.P Architects
- VDO Consulting



**Personal service to satisfy the needs of our clients**

We place great emphasis upon satisfying the needs of our clients. This has resulted in the development of specialised knowledge within the organisation and a constant quest to improve the level of service which we are able to offer our clients. Based in Johannesburg and Pretoria, we have since 2000 built up a remarkable track record of involvement with significant property developments in South Africa, elsewhere in Africa and in the Middle East.

QUANTITY SURVEYING | DISPUTE RESOLUTION | PROPERTY VALUATION

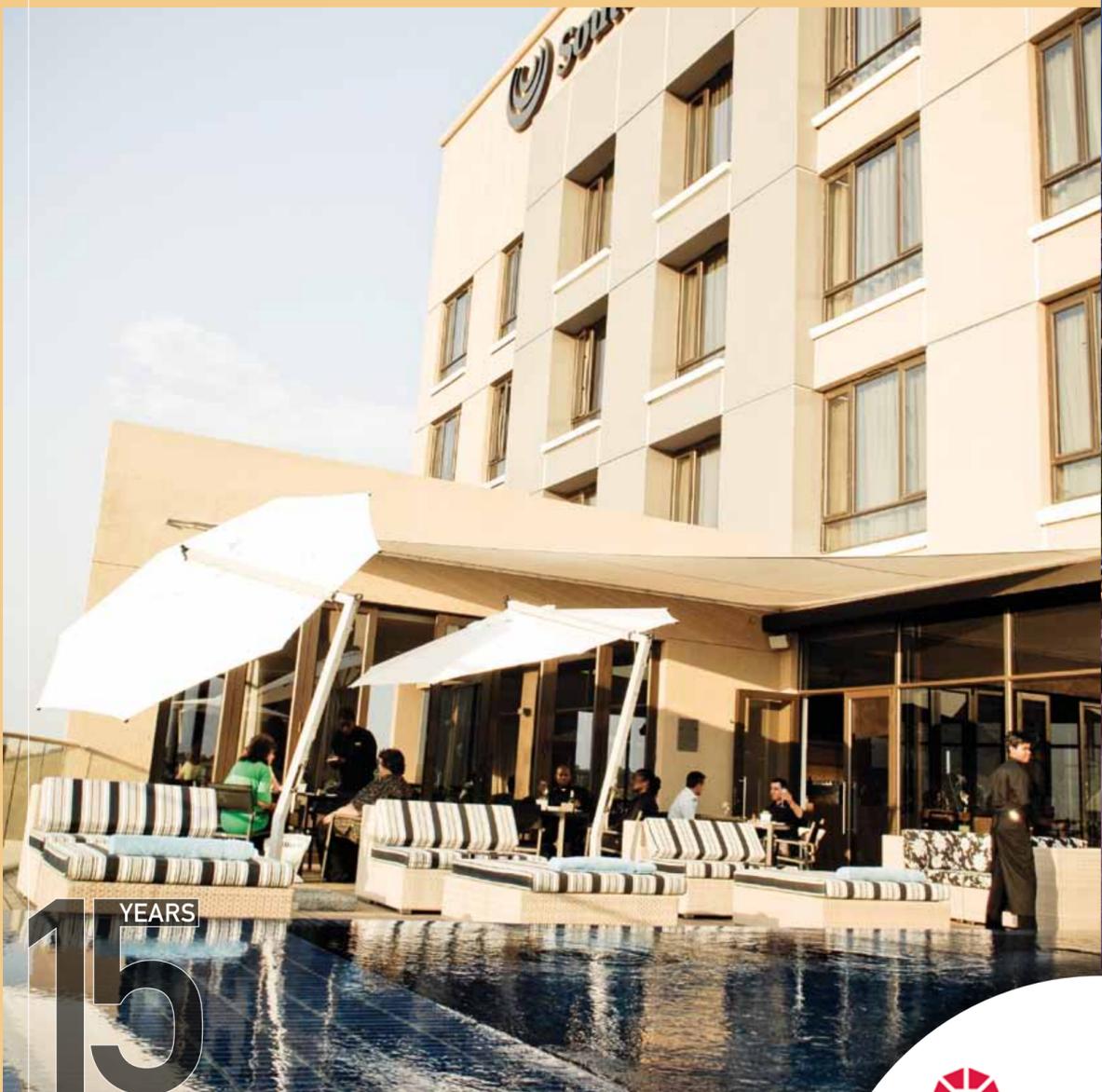
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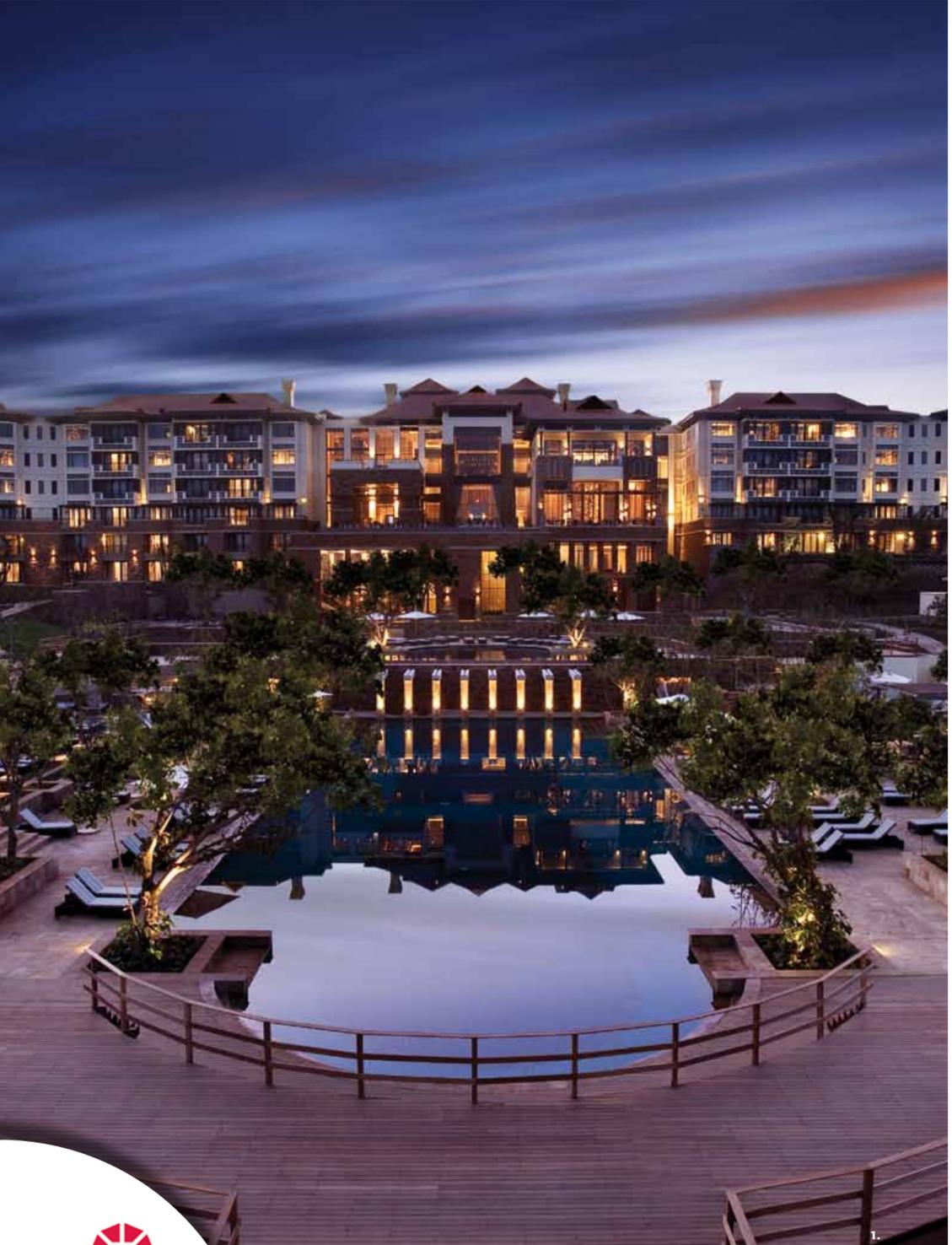
# SOUTH AFRICAN PROPERTY REVIEW

February 2011



15 YEARS

**Our people - our future**



- front cover: Southern Sun Hotel, Hyde Park
1. Fairmont Zimbali Hotel and Resort, KwaZulu-Natal
  2. Peter Mokaba Football Stadium, Polokwane
  3. Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls, Meyerton
  4. Villa Ismail, Zanzibar
  5. Southern Sun Hotel Elangeni refurbishment, Durban
  6. Isando Warehouse
  7. Sabuti Residential Development, Durban
  8. HemingwaysMall, Eastern Cape
  9. Retail pods, Canal Walk Shopping Centre, Cape Town
  10. Pavilion Shopping Centre refurbishment, Durban

**B**etts Townsend's managing director, Howard Betts, tells *SA Property Review* that the company had humble beginnings – having been started in 1995 in his garage as Betts Projects, with only himself and one employee. The chance to grow came when, only a year into its existence, Betts Projects was awarded a large project by Commercial Union Life (which was later acquired by Metropolitan Holdings). The company moved to larger offices in Village Walk, Sandton. In 2001, John Townsend joined Howard and the company was renamed Betts Townsend. Three additional shareholders have come on board. These are Mike Taylor, Toni Capuzzimati and Tina Jones. The company now has a staff of some 55 people operating from offices around the country. Offices are located in Woodmead (now the home of the head office), Durban and Cape Town, and there are satellite offices in the Northern Cape and Mauritius.

Betts Townsend's service offering ranges from project initiation and briefing to concept and feasibility, design development, tender documentation and procurement, construction documentation and management, and project close-out. Its focus until now has largely been on the retail, leisure, commercial, residential and mining sectors, with particular focus on retail projects. Mining infrastructure

has formed a fairly small side of the business but increasing involvement in this sector is just one of the growth plans that the shareholders have lined up. Betts Townsend has completed work for a number of well known listed property companies in the retail sector and has already attracted large corporate clients such as BHP Billiton on the mining infrastructure side.

While the 'work hard and play hard' phrase has become somewhat overused these days, this is one of those companies that certainly epitomises that spirit. Its 'mantras' of "Failure is not an option" and "It can be done!" are not taken lightly and staff work long and hard to make sure that commitments to clients are kept – which means that those clients keep coming back. According to Howard, Betts Townsend has yet to lose a client. Each project has a director in charge so that clients have a direct line to management. "We have a very motivated and capable team. Staff have a vested interest and an incentive to work hard," he adds.

Betts Townsend has a very low staff turnover and the current team works extremely well together. The company culture tends towards the 'non-corporate' although that does not make for a lack of accountability. If anything, the opportunities that are made available for everyone to grow, develop and carve out a path for themselves within the company rather than having to move on to progress, makes for extra commitment and a willingness to be accountable and go the extra mile.

The past two years have certainly held challenges for the construction industry.

Tina comments: "During this time, Betts Townsend focused on their clients and not the Dollar or Dirham and I believe this is our success." In spite of the challenges, the company has been able to retain all of its staff and keep its growth plans on track. Toni adds: "We want to afford people a growth path within the company so that they can develop their careers with us instead of moving on. I strongly believe that the rewards for investing in people come back to the company."

Plans for the future include growing the company's footprint nationally and in other African countries, as well as diversifying into other economic sectors. Toni explains that in a cyclical industry where there are also new competitors entering the market, diversifying across sectors will help even out the impact of the cyclical dips and provide a more even work flow. Servicing new and existing clients remains the main driver of business at Betts Townsend, but John notes that the company has done one or two developments in which it has an equity stake and hopes to complete more in the future. Mike expands on this, saying that the next step forward is to look at opportunities to partner with clients or other companies and become equity partners in selected developments.

The enthusiasm that all five shareholders display about the company and their work is certainly likely to rub off on clients, colleagues and new staff alike. "It's all about the people" is not just the theme for this year's 15th anniversary celebration – it is a company philosophy that makes for a strong team who, to put it quite simply, just love what they do.

## HOWARD BETTS

• **Started the company:** 1995 • **Highlight project:** Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in Meyerton • "The contractor downed tools at the last minute but we did everything it took to finish the job for the high profile public opening two weeks later. It was especially rewarding to get a personal mention from Oprah herself at the opening."



## MIKE TAYLOR

• **Joined the company:** 2003 • **Highlight projects:** Canal Walk Retail Pods extension in terms of challenge and Villa Ismail in Madagascar for richness of experience • **What he loves about the job:** "There is a tangible milestone every day in this job – it offers an immense sense of satisfaction to take friends or family past a building and be able to tell them that we helped build it."



## TINA JONES

• **Joined the company:** 2002 • **Highlight project:** Peter Mokaba Football Stadium in Polokwane • **What she loves about the job:** "I love working at Betts Townsend. Five years into my time here I was appointed financial director and shareholder, and I want to aim towards commercial director status."



## JOHN TOWNSEND

• **Joined the company:** 2001 • **Highlight projects:** Hemingways Mall north of East London (R1.4 billion); La Lucia refurbishment in KZN; Fairmont Zimbali Hotel and Resort. • **What he loves about the job:** "Every project is interesting – it brings a new professional team together and presents new problems to solve."



## TONI CAPUZZIMATI

• **Joined the company:** 2003 • **Highlight projects:** Horizon View Shopping Centre on Gauteng's West Rand; Peter Mokaba Football Stadium in Polokwane • **What he loves about the job:** "It brings new challenges every day. It is interesting to see how the different personalities integrate on each job. It is also very rewarding to see a building come out of the ground and eventually reach completion," he says.



# IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE



CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY BETTS TOWNSEND CELEBRATES ITS 15TH YEAR IN BUSINESS IN 2011. IN A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT WHERE MANY A START-UP COMPANY DOESN'T MAKE IT OR QUICKLY GETS ABSORBED BY LARGER PLAYERS IN THE MARKET THROUGH MERGERS OR ACQUISITIONS, THIS COMPANY HAS STEADILY GROWN BOTH ITS STAFF COMPLEMENT AND ITS FOOTPRINT TO BECOME AN ESTABLISHED CONTENDER IN THE MARKETPLACE. (1)

