



# Swanbury Penglase

**#93** 58 years ago, Eric Swanbury commenced his architecture degree; little did he know what he was getting into, or that he would go on to found Swanbury Penglase in partnership with his good friend Steve.

In this issue of Sitenotes we farewell Eric who has decided to step away from the practice. We've given him the floor to reflect on his years as an architect. The SP family thanks him for his contribution over the last 35 years and wish him the very best for the future.

## Architecture - It's so much more

In the beginning, there was no plan and no idea of what a career in Architecture would be. A broad idea that Architects had a role in the design of buildings was matched by a total lack of understanding of how architecture impacts the lives of people.

A lifetime later I now know that the personal satisfaction that comes from designing and seeing a building come to life is matched and surpassed by the impact on people, the backstories of the people and the purpose for which a building was created, be it a home, (secure, uplifting, a place to grow) or a vehicle through which ideas and visions would be fulfilled, or a quiet place, a retreat or a place of worship.

Architecture gave us the opportunity to travel (almost a mandatory requirement to practice architecture back in the day) and we were privileged to visit many architectural gems, some contemporary, some older.

Evidence of the impact that architectural expression has on, or is reflective of lifestyle and politics is plain to see in the Spanish cities of Grenada and Cordoba where the Moorish influences (colourful arched forms, central water features and beautiful intricate wall and ceiling decoration) over 700 years or so was impacted by the catholic influences of the northern monarchy (traditional gothic forms and features) when they took power. It was good to see that the conquerors generally respected the architecture and tended to adapt rather than destroy, so what we experience now is simply a treasure.

Buildings rarely match the beauty and grandeur of the natural world which speaks to the awesome nature of the creator, but I wanted to share some images of examples that illustrate the power of architecture to impact people and in the cases below how they impacted me.

La Sagrada Familia is well known; Antoni Gaudi's creation, over 141 years in construction. The design is divisive, love it or not the building speaks powerfully to the Christian narrative to which it is dedicated. For me, that an architect could so clearly express the narrative is

remarkable but the sheer grandeur and beauty of the internal spaces within, even full of tourists evoked a sense of wonder and awe as a cathedral should. The story behind the design and construction, Gaudi's life and accidental death, the struggle to build it are heroic but the result speaks for itself.

Kamppi Chapel in the heart of the busiest part of Helsinki is a place of peace, refuge and contemplation. K25 Architects designed the building with walls made entirely of wood, Spruce externally and Ash internally to be a place of sanctuary, apart from the hustle and bustle that surround it. The chapel, indirectly lit from above (it has no windows) is enclosed with continuously curved sculptured timber walls. Simplicity itself, absolutely serene.

The Reichstag dome which sits above the legislative government building which is the seat of the German Bundestag was designed by Sir Norman Foster from an idea by Gottfried Bohn to symbolise Germany's move away from its past. An amazing space both aesthetically and functionally the overlapping spiral ramps and the central mirrored structure directing light into the heart of the building. It represented a new, clean, technically sophisticated image.

Architecture needs to be functional and efficient, practical and useful, it has a job to do but it can do so much more.

I want to say an enormous thank you to my clients, the people and the companies or organisations they represented who entrusted me to work alongside them and design buildings which would deliver on the visions and purpose for which they were created. It was a great reward to see completed projects commissioned and handed over, to see them to perform as intended and in the best cases to see a positive impact on people's lives and our overall environment.

- Eric Swanbury



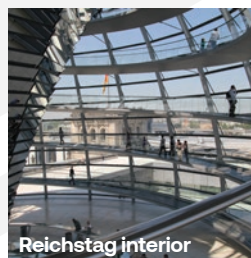
La Sagrada Familia



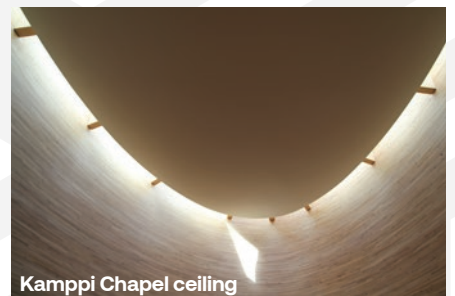
Reichstag Dome



La Sagrada Familia



Reichstag interior



Kamppi Chapel ceiling



Kamppi Chapel



Eric's farewell morning tea



Immanuel Site Tour



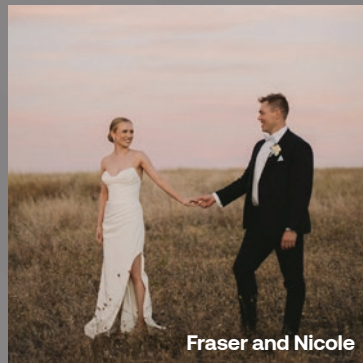
Nathan P's song



Steph and Matt



Aaron and Emma



Fraser and Nicole



SP's 35th Coral Anniversary

## Staff Notes



**Name:** Eric Swanbury

**Position:** Architect

**Current projects:** Workshop Projects/Timber sculptures

**What inspires you?** Nature/Beauty

**Design idols:** Harry Seidler, John Wardle

**Design you wished you could take credit for:** Australian Embassy in Paris (Harry Seidler)

**Pencil vs computer (your preference):** Love them both

**Best thing about living in Adelaide:** Just Adelaide

**Fav eatery:** Star on Gouger or Wah Hing

**Fantasy (or next) holiday destination:** To see some new (to us) parts of Australia

**First favourite song as a kid:** "Tubby the Tuba" Danny Kaye

**Currently listening to:** Carole King, Don McLean

**Growing up you thought you would be:** Always an Architect

**Most treasured possession:** Memories of things we have done and places we have visited

**Life motto:** Do it now

**Superpower:** Instant recall

**Memorable SP (Swanbury Penglase) moment:** RAI Awards Night 2010

## Office News

2023 was an eventful year, concluding with our Christmas Party held at Vigna Bottin winery. The office was lucky enough to stop off first at the recently completed Discovery Centre at Immanuel College, for a guided tour by former Principal Kevin Richardson. It was great to hear from him how the new centre is facilitating innovative teaching methods and supporting forward thinking students.

The outdoor garden looking out over the vineyards at Vigna Bottin was the perfect spot to share a beverage with colleagues and reflect upon projects and events that had unfolded throughout the year. New Golden Swanny hosts, Architect Emma Dohrmann and Graduate of Architecture Cam Burfield did a fantastic job presenting their first ever award ceremony – even introducing a brand new award for outstanding fashion at the Christmas Party; Jenny's Black Cardi Award. Looking as stylish as ever, votes flowed in for winner, Senior Landscape Architect Margi Bartolo. Sue Kyriacou from the admin team took out the 2023 Golden Swanny, inching ahead of the other nominees.

The start of 2024 has seen some special milestones for Swanbury Penglase. We recently celebrated the 35th anniversary (Coral anniversary) of the firm, with a special lunch event taking place at Bloom Winwood. Staff dressed in all shades of coral to mark the occasion. Emma and Cam were asked to unveil a shortened, yet very special edition of the Swannies: the 35th Birthday 'Coral Swanny' Awards. The Coral Swanny is a dedication to all past and well-deserving winners of the award since its inception in 2001. Director Matt Raven took out the award, for his memorable win back in 2012. Adding to the excitement of a new event, Senior Associate Nathan Purdie took the stage to perform a traditional Swanbury Penglase song that hadn't been heard for quite a few years.

In other news, Sitenotes would like to introduce Graduate of Architecture Tom Reynolds, who started with us last year. We are glad to have you amongst the team!

Congratulations to newlyweds, Architect Steph Copson and husband Matt, who were married at Mitolo wines, McLaren Vale, as well as Graduate of Architecture Fraser Murison and his partner Nicole, who tied the knot at Lloyd Brothers, McLaren Vale. We wish both couples a very happy married life together. We were delighted to hear the news that two of our Architects, Emma Dohrmann and Aaron Fox recently became engaged during their trip to New Zealand. On their adventure, they travelled through Christchurch, Nelson and the Abel Tasman National Park, Fox Glacier, and around Mount Cook to pass through the centre of the south island, finishing in Queenstown.

Swanbury Penglase joined in IWD activities by attending the 'Adelaide IWD Breakfast 2024' as a team via the live streaming of the event to our office. Identified as the 'Superbowl of IWD breakfasts' by guest speaker Annabel Crabb, this major event was hosted by Senator the Hon Penny Wong and included a special guest appearance by the Hon Linda Burney. This year's theme was 'count her in'; a call to action for all of us working towards gender equality in all facets of our lives.

In the last couple of weeks, we held Eric Swanbury's farewell morning tea. After hearing Steve Penglase reflect on their successful business partnership and firm over the years, Eric shared some inspiring words about his career and experiences as an Architect. Eric's presence will be missed here in the office, but we trust that he will enjoy whatever is in store next!

Sitenotes

