

A tribute to Robin Wilter

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A celebration of Robin Wilter's life (14 April

1944 to 7 February 2010) was held at Shepstone Gardens in Mountain View and was attended by some 600 people. We have taken an extract written by Katie, Robbi's daughter which was placed on www.caringbridge.org/visit/robingwilter. Below also find an article which Screen Africa has kindly given us permission to use. We would like to extend our sincerest condolences to the family as well as to everyone at Southern Lighting **Courtesy Screen Africa** A veteran of the film, TV and events lighting industry, Robin Wilter, passed away early on Sunday morning 7 February after a battle with cancer. Screen Africa was very saddened by the news and we would like to pass on our condolences to his wife Carol and children Katie and Oliver as well as everyone at Southern Lighting.



Robin with his lovely wife

Carol and son Oliver Angela van Schalkwyk remembers that when they first launched a trade magazine for the film and television industry, then called Southern Screen and Stage (later to change its name to Screen Africa), that Robin and his partner John Harrison were one of the first to support the new publication by placing a Southern Lighting advertisement. "We always remembered that gesture of support," says Angela.

In July 2007, Screen Africa ran a feature on four of the veterans of the South African film and television industry. Robin was one of them and here we quote him in his own words about his life in the lighting sector of the industry.

“My introduction to the South African film industry was in 1969 with *Creatures the World Forgot*, a Hammer Film Production. At the end of this film, I sold my car and set off for the UK to seek my fortune. I scoured London for a lighting company I might bring back to South Africa. Vic Froud of *On The Spot (OTS)* was interested and in 1970 we launched in South Africa. A four year struggle ensued as few films were made at that time. Then David Millin gave me my big chance with *The Voortrekkers*. Karat Films and OTS subsequently had a prolific run with films directed by Jurgan Goslar and various German cameramen. Sadly we lost our electrician, Garth Robinson, at that time in a fatal accident. It was time to expand and Gordon Anderson became a partner, and we launched *The Lamphouse*. Cal Morris also joined us. I continued to gaffer on many local and overseas feature films. Meantime, I was becoming better known, and also owned the lights. My responsibility was growing. My next milestone was as gaffer on the famous movie *Wild Geese*, shot in Tshipise. I was now working with big names such as Richard Harris and Roger Moore. After *Wild Geese*, Cal (Morris) and I bought out the opposition, *Southern Film Services (SFS)*. We were extremely busy by now and the advent of television increased our scope. I revelled in working with people like Alex Thompson BSC and other luminaries. In 1980, Cal and I separated, with Cal keeping *The Lamphouse* and I kept *SFS/OTS*, which was subsequently rebranded as *Southern Lighting*, in partnership with John Harrison. John’s forte was admin, and I relished being on location. Bill Faure’s *Shaka Zulu* was a memorable production; it was a very privileged year of my life. In this time, we also contracted to service Cannon Films in South Africa and Zimbabwe. The work was rolling in. Today *Southern* is lighting big popular TV Shows like *How to be a Millionaire*, *Big Brother* and other blockbusters. Lighting sporting events has also become one of my passions. On the home front, my wife Carolyn has been a superb helpmate and homemaker, and our two children, Katie and Oliver, have married and given us grandchildren. I am proud of all the gaffers we have trained and nurtured, amongst whom is my son Oliver. To the South African film and TV industry - thanks.”



Robin and his lovely wife

Carol **A note (as well as the photos) from Robin's daughter, Katie, as seen on www.caringbridge.org/visit/robingwilter** Firstly THANK YOU so very much for all the beautiful flowers and also to everyone who donated to Caring Bridge in my Dad's Honour.

Caring Bridge was truly such a blessing to my Dad, he just loved hearing all the notes of love, caring and support.

The service was just wonderful - exactly what my Dad would have wanted. We had his coffin covered in all his ID's that he would get for every movie, commercial, sports event or concert or Miss World Pageant and of course his TV shows like "Who wants to be a Millionaire" and "Big Brother". There were hundreds of them and we also had 3 flowers for his 3 Grand Daughters.

Roses for Coco Rose, Shamrocks for Miss Molly and Daisies for Daisy. The service was lovely and we had a couple of estimates of how many people were there to Honour my Dad. Some said 250-300 others thought 300-400. We had some big screens up with photo's of my Dad and some of his favourite songs playing while the photo's kept playing - like a movie I guess.

We had Rose wine and boerewors rolls. Our friend Steele catered some delicious food. Thank

you Steele!

There were family and friends from all over South Africa. Thank you to everyone who was there. Thank you for all the notes and flowers.

If I get some pictures of the day from friends I will put some on this Page.

Otherwise I say "Good-bye Daddy. I love so very much and I miss you so much. My Heart aches to hear your laugh and see your smile. Thank you for giving me life Dad. I long to see you playing with your Grand Daughters. I feel you around us and can almost hear your voice at 5 First Street. Your energy is comforting. May you rest in Peace my Handsome Daddy"
I could not say any words yesterday during the service but this is what I would have said if I could have.

So with my sad heavy Heart I will sign off! Love to everyone. From Katie.

