

SOUTH AFRICAN FLOWER UNION SUID-AFRIKAANSE FLORA UNIE



THE HISTORY OF S.A.F.U. (South African Flora Union)

1. ORIGINS AND EARLY YEARS

The **South African Flower Union (SAFU)** originated from **SAFLORA**, founded on **28 May 1971** with the following members:

- Cape Floral Art Adjudicators' Union
- Orange Free State Floral Union
- Transvaal Floral Judges' Union
- Natal Panel of Floral Art Judges
- South West Africa Floral Union
- National Botanic Gardens of South Africa

Mrs. Tini Vorster, wife of then Prime Minister John Vorster, served as Honorary President. SAFLORA provided financial aid for South Africans participating in international floral exhibitions.

- **1980:** The **South African Floral Union for Judges** was founded in **Durban**.
- **1980:** **W.A.F.A. (World Association of Flower Arrangers)** founded in England. **S.A.F.U. Judges Union** becomes a founding member.
- **First President:** **Mrs Bettie Groenewald** (O.B.U.) followed by Isobel Semeyn, Marie Pretorius, Nad Upton, Beatrix Awe and Rita Nel.
- **1981:** First S.A.F.U. Congress in Maselspoort.
- **1984:** First World Flower Show in Bath, England. **Babsie van der Walt** wins "Best in Show".
- **SAFLORA disbanded in 1985**, paving the way for SAFU's later structure and continuity in floral art development.

2. INTERNATIONAL ISSUES & TRANSFORMATION

- **1990 (W.A.F.A. General Assembly – Paris):**
 - South Africa's 5-member representation in W.A.F.A. is challenged. South Africa warned to consolidate into **one national body** or face suspension.
 - **Lettie Kritzinger** (Vice-President of S.A.F.U.) successfully defends S.A.F.U.'s position by invoking constitutional procedure.
- **20 October 1991: S.A.F.U. Judges' Union dissolved** in Bellville. New, inclusive **S.A.F.U. (South African Flora Union)** is formed. A stylised *Cynaroides Protea* adopted as the emblem of SAFU.
- **First S.A.F.U. Executive Committee (1991):**
 - **President:** Lettie Kritzinger
 - **1st VP:** Rosemary Ladlau
 - **2nd VP:** Elma Greyling
 - **Secretary:** Babsie van der Walt
 - **Treasurer:** Mrs Auerswald
 - **Board Members:** Emmie Pabst, Beatrice Awe (later replaced by Elsa Kolver)

3. KEY EVENTS & GROWTH

- **1992–1994:**
 - First AGM held in Pretoria (Florafolia).
 - First Congress in Rustenburg (1993).
 - S.A.F.U. Diary published.
- **1994:** New **8 Provincial Unions** replace 4 original ones, aligned with new national boundaries.
- **Presidents of New Provincial Unions (1994–1997):**
 - Gauteng: Lettie Kritzinger
 - Mpumalanga: Elmarie Celliers

- Natal (N.A.F.A.): Una Watson
 - Northern: Elma Greyling
 - Northwest: Alida du Preez
 - Free State (O.B.U.): Elsa Kolver
 - Eastern Province: Joan Jorritsma
 - Western Cape: Alta Cilliè
 - Engela Bloch secretary and Jack Nevett treasurer
- **Under President Rosemary Ladlau (1994) the national panels were established:**
 - **Judges' Panel:** Beryl Hansen (Chair), Lettie Kritzinger (Vice)
 - **Demonstrators' Panel:** Barbara Bamber (Chair), Stefanie Borchers (Vice)
 - **Teachers' Panel:** Elma Greyling (Chair), Dawn Fallet (Vice)
- **W.A.F.A-S.A. Management Committee (1996–1999):**
 - President: Rosemary Ladlau Vice-President: Elsa Kolver
 - Other members: Engela Bloch, Jack Nevett (replaced by Peter van Emmenis), Lois Armitage (replaced by Dawn Little), Lettie Kritzinger, Alta Cilliè, Emmie Pabst, Althea Higham, Una Watson
- **1999: 6th World Flower Show in Durban (I.C.C.)**
 - Huge success: financial surplus, great reputation
 - SA donates more to W.A.F.A. than previous 5 countries combined
 - Each province receives R20,000; S.A.F.U. receives R600,000 in loan capital back
- **Late 1990s:**
 - Introduction of **National Design Diploma** (Theory + Practical)
 - Requirement for judging, teaching, and demonstrating credentials.
 - Move toward **standardized criteria across provinces**

- **S.A.F.U. becomes a strong national body** respected internationally
- Emphasis on **cooperation, enthusiasm, and growth in floral art**
- **SAFU Instagram page** inception date March 2022
- **Techniques booklet** published in 2023 followed by **Plant Manipulation booklet.**
- February 2023 **SAFU Facebook “Floral Art Design SA”** was launched.
- **First SAFU Virtual show “Inspirations”** was held in October 2023– SAFU members only
- February 2025 **All Africa Virtual Show “A Dream Unfolds”** – participants from Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa
- **Monthly fun virtual competitions on Facebook with sponsored prizes 2025-2026**
- February 2026: **First SAFU International Virtual Show “Exploration”**

FINAL WORDS:

"S.A.F.U. has really gone from strength to strength and everyone works together like one big family to build up the Floral Arts. Long live S.A.F.U.!!"

— *Lettie Kritzinger*

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm" – Ralph Waldo Emerson

YEAR(S)	SAFU PRESIDENT	WAFU HOST COUNTRY	SAFU JUDGES AT WAFU	SAFU DEMONSTRATORS AT WAFU	SAFU HONORARY EXHIBITS AT WAFU	MAJOR SAFU AWARDS AT WAFU SHOWS
1981/82	SOUTH AFRICA FOUNDER MEMBER OF WAFU UNDER THE FOLLOWING: *CAPE FLORAL ART ADJUDICATORS UNION *NATAL PANEL OF FLORAL ART JUDGES *SOUTH AFRICAN FLOWER ADJUDICATORS UNION *ASSOCIATION OF CAPE FLOWER CLUBS					
1984		GREAT BRITAIN 207 COMPETITORS	X			BOS: BABSIE VAN DER WALT
1987		BELGUIM	B. GROENEWALD	ROSEMARY LADLAU	MARIETJIE DE LA BAT (CAPE FLORAL ART) J. HUISAMEN + MRS VAN NIEKERK (CAPE FLOWER CLUB) MRS TAYOR (NATAL) LILY VISSER + E. GREYLING (TRANSVAAL)	BOS: ELIZE OLIVIER COLOUR: DAWN LITTLE ORIGINALITY: ELSA DE JAGER
1990	MEMBERSHIP: 1,860 AMALGAMATION TO FORM ONE BODY: SAFU	FRANCE	ROSEMARY LADLAU	EULAH NISSEN	EMMIE PABST + ALTA NORTHLEY (CAPE ACFA) META RENCKEN (NATAL) ELISIE V.D. MERWE (SAFU) WENDY BERETTA + GRETCHEN CILLIERS (TRANSVAAL) ELISE OLIVIER (CAPE FLORAL)	PLANT MATERIAL: DAWN LITTLE
1993	LETTIE KRITZINGER MEMBERSHIP: 1,900	CANADA	LETTIE KRITZINGER	ALTHEA HIGHAM	MARIETJIE DE LA BAT + CHARLES KINNEAR	COLOUR: DAWN FALLET BEST QUILT SQUARE: HETTIE NEL
1996	ROSEMARY LADLAU MEMBERSHIP: 3,300	NEW ZEALAND	ROSEMARY LADLAU		ELMA GREYLING LETTIE KRITZINGER	COLOUR: HELENE BARNARD

1999	ELSA KOLVER MEMBERSHIP: 3,300	SOUTH AFRICA	HELENE BARNARD, MARIETJIE DE LA BAT DAPHNE DOOLEY ELMA GREYLING JEANETTE HABLUTZEL BERYL HANSON BRIDGET MORRISON DOT SHAW	GAIL TAVERNER, ROSEMARY LADLAU	BETTIE V.D. MERWE + MARIETTA VAN ROOYEN	BOS: DI WAYNE RUNNER UP: ELSA DE JAGER HORTICULTURAL PERFECTION: JEWEL KHAN TEXTURE: KATHLEEN POTTEN FOLIAGE: BESSIE VAN ZYL BEST PETITE: BABS V.D.SCHYFF
YEAR(S)	SAFU PRESIDENT	Wafa HOST COUNTRY	SAFU JUDGES AT Wafa	SAFU DEMONSTRATORS AT Wafa	SAFU HONORARY EXHIBITS AT Wafa	MAJOR SAFU AWARDS AT Wafa SHOWS
2002	MARIETJIE DE LE BAT MEMBERSHIP: 3,300	UNITED KINGDOM - GLASGOW	ALTA CELLIÉ, EMMIE PABST ALTHEA HIGHAM	X	MARIE KUHN	BOS: YVONNE EYLERS
2005	TOY V. DE PYPERKAMP MEMBERSHIP: 3,300	JAPAN	TOY V. DE PYPERKAMP ELSA KOLVER	X	MARIETJIE DE LA BAT	NFD AWARD: LES BRENT TEXTURE: HELEN BELLEW
2008	ALTHEA HIGHAM MEMBERSHIP: 3,400	PAKISTAN (CANCELLED)	NOMINATED JUDGES: STEPH BORCHERDS, GAIL TAVERNER, ALTHEA HIGHAM	NOMINATED DEMONSTRATOR: HELEN BELLEW	X	X
2011	EMMIE PABST MEMBERSHIP:	USA	HELEN BELLEW MARJOLIJN MALAN	X	LES BRENT	BOS: ELBETH LIEBENBERG + MARIETJIE DE LA BAT RUNNER UP: KATHLEEN POTTON BEST IMPOSED: ROSEMARY LADLAU+ JANE MATKOVICH SPACE: ELBETH LIEBENBERG + MARIETJIE DE LA BAT ELEGANT: GAIL TAVERNER INNOVATIVE: HENNIE DE BRUIN
2014	JOAN JORRITSMa MEMBERSHIP:	IRELAND	STEPH BORCHERDS ELSA KOLVER	LES BRENT	HENRIETTE LOUW	
2017	VAUGHN HARRINGTON MEMBERSHIP: 1,620	BARBADOS	JILL HOSKIN, ELSA KOLVER	X	GAIL TAVERNER	
2021	LOCIA HARTZER MEMBERSHIP: 1,274	INDIA	ANETTE BADENHORST VAUGHN HARRINGTON	X	LOCIA HARTZER	BOS: GLENDA ADAMS AND CORRICE HOLMES
2024	JILL HOSKIN MEMBERSHIP: 1,034	OMAN	X	X	X	X
2027	JILL HOSKIN	AUSTRALIA				

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