

Nicolò Rocco Maria Giuricich

(Founder of Giuricich Bros)

Date of birth: 16 August 1910

Place of birth: Lussinpiccolo (Istria)

Passed away: Johannesburg, 9 September 2004

At the age of 16 Nicolò Giuricich left his place of birth together with his father, Matteo Giuricich, they departed from Monfalcone, Italy to go the United States of America via Panama to look for work. Landing in New York City they set out for Hoboken where they settled for four years.

As it was during the years of the great depression, they struggled to find employment as carpenters, nevertheless, through tenacity and determination managed to survive. Nicolò Giuricich enrolled at the "Stuyvesant College" where he learnt English and his formal education as a carpenter and joiner.

In 1935 World War II was becoming a reality and Nicolò decided to immigrate to South Africa as he had heard that there were opportunities of employment especially on the gold mines. He arrived in Cape Town on 13 June 1935 and made his way to Johannesburg where fortunately he had contacts with other Italians and opportunities for employment. Soon afterwards his father and his two younger brothers Simon and Cesare also arrived in South Africa followed by the rest of his family at a later stage.

Being Italian and living in a foreign country at the outbreak of World War II, Nicolò together with his father and his brothers were supposed to be interned as prisoners of war (POW) but thanks to the intervention of Monsignor Whelan they were not sent to the POW camp. They were given the task of going to Kroonstad to build aeroplane hangars for the air force as well as other government buildings.

During this period, Nicolò met Claudia Troianich (who was also originally from Lussino) and they were married in 1942. They had a family of nine children. Claudia, with her involvement in the Italian community, was honoured with the title of Cavaliere della Repubblica Italiana in June 1984.

In 1940 after resigning from a local building company, Nicolò and his



father decided to start their own enterprise and together with his younger brothers Giuricich Bros (Pty) Limited was born. The new company was instrumental in employing many co-nationals offering employment and opportunities for training and development. Many immigrants from Italy were employed and today they are successful businessmen thanks to them being originally brought out to South Africa and employed by the company.

Nicolò had a passion for teaching and helped many previously

disadvantaged employees to obtain a trade and up to today some are still employed as skilled artisans by the company and others are independent private subcontractors working not only for Giuricich Bros but also for other major contractors in South Africa.

This 64-year-old construction group has successfully completed many prestige contracts and is based in Gauteng with representation and operations in all major centres countrywide including Maputo.

Up to his untimely passing away, Nicolò Giuricich still actively enjoyed the business and visited the head office on a daily basis. Eight years ago he became the honorary chairman of the company.

The year 2004 brought a new chapter into the life of both Giuricich Bros and the 94-year-old Nicolò Giuricich. A new BEE company was formed with Ukhamba Holdings (owning 20%) together with the existing previously disadvantaged employees of Giuricich Bros (owning 6%) of the company. His sons, Edward, Adrian, Julian, Gerard, Leonard and Nicky, who are responsible for managing the company today together with various other directors and staff members, own the balance of the shareholding.

A few weeks prior to his death, he witnessed the birth of the new "BEE" Giuricich Bros by being present at the signing of the "Heads of Agreement". The company now officially trades as Giuricich Bros Construction (Pty) Limited with its BEE partners and the 94-year-old founder's wish has come true once again. This new company will ensure the growth and continued succession of a 64-year young company.

Nicolò Giuricich leaves his wife Claudia, nine children, twenty-six grandchildren and two great grandchildren all of whom are resident in Gauteng.