

## TRIBUTE TO GREAT MATHS TEACHER

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- BRIAN ISAACS



ONE of the greatest school mathematicians, Kenneth Sampson, passed away on September 9, 2020. My association with Sampson started in 1998 when my eldest son Dale was in Grade 11 at South Peninsula High School.

South Peninsula High School in the late 1990s and early 2000s was struggling with maths higher grade. I approached Victor Ritchie, Charles Liberty and Sampson to assist the school in improving the standard of maths.

From 2004-2008 these teachers were instrumental in pushing up the numbers of students doing maths HG to 120/ 200 learners doing maths HG. A truly remarkable feat. The school has never looked back. Sampson believed that students with natural ability with the correct teaching would do well.

However, his main concern was with the average and belowaverage student.

Sampson had an afternoon class once a week for his grade 11 and 12 learners. They all attended regularly.

At parent-teacher-learner meetings at school, parents stood in queues to see Sampson, not because they came to complain, but to congratulate him on their children doing well in maths.

Sampson was not only a brilliant teacher but a teacher who could motivate other teachers.

The maths department at SP benefited from his experience tremendously.

Sampson taught at Belgravia High for many years where he established it as one of the top academic schools in Cape Town. Sampson travelled the length and breadth of South Africa as a subject adviser under the Western Cape Education Department.

Teachers relate stories that here was a teacher who knew his subject, was passionate about the teaching of the subject and who was a lover of maths.

I remember when I first met him at SP, he told me about the great mathematicians Archimedes (287-212 BC) and Thales of Miletus (626-547 BC).

A famous saying of his when he entered a classroom: "Keep calm students, it is my maths lesson."

All his learners knew the meaning of the word maths – that which is learnt. He believed that it is the basis for all other subjects.

Kenneth Sampson, you taught your learners the value of hard work.

You can feel proud that you promoted maths in our schools and you can look proudly at the many lives you touched and the community of mathematicians you moulded as well as the students you taught who went on to study not only into the science field but other fields of study. We salute you, Sir. We thank your family for sharing you with us. You passed this way but you taught us so many valuable lessons in life.

You made maths come alive, and you made students believe (contrary to the mainstream belief) that maths is easy.

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