

Tribute

Bart Vlamincq BSc MSc (1960-2002)

Zarko Peric DVM MVSc (1962-2002)

The death of Bart Vlamincq and Zarko Peric on 9th December 2002 was a massive shock to their families, friends and colleagues and a very sad loss to the aquaculture industry.

They died together in a tragic car accident in Sicily. Bart was an MSc Aquaculture student at Stirling in 1990-91 and then a Project Manager and Consultant with Stirling Aquaculture until the end of 2001. Zarko was also well known to many colleagues as a very active member of the European Association of Fish Pathologists and as an Associate Consultant to Stirling Aquaculture.

Bart



Bart was a much loved and highly respected aquaculture manager, always leading from the front and making a success of all the projects he tackled. When he died, Bart was overall technical manager at Acqua Azzurra SpA, a major sea bass and sea bream farm in Sicily, one of the biggest and most technically challenging units in the Mediterranean. He had been working with the company for four years, initially under a contract between the company and Stirling Aquaculture as production manager, responsible for the development of the farm's offshore cage site and on-shore tank units, and latterly also the hatchery. Together with Zarko, and with the many dedicated project staff he built around him, he successfully reorganised existing units, expanded the site and greatly

improved reliability and consistency of production.

As a national of Belgium, Bart graduated with a degree in Zoology from the University of Ghent in 1982. It was then that he commenced his overseas career, moving to Haiti to work with a Belgian non-government organisation as a manager of a tilapia farm. He grew to love the Caribbean and soon moved on to working with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation still in Haiti, supporting a wide variety of fisheries and aquaculture development projects, through extension and training inputs. It was during their seven years here that Bart and his wife Anouk had their children Zjos, Wannes and Anabel, with all the family moving to Stirling in 1990 when Bart studied at the Institute.

On graduation, Bart joined Stirling Aquaculture, the consultancy and project management group at the Institute of Aquaculture. He was directly employed by the group for over ten years and was still a highly valued member of the team as an Associate Consultant when he died. After a good initiation in his MSc project on intensive tank farming of seabass and bream in Cyprus, Bart's first projects were based in Stirling, but he was soon on the move again to Malta in 1991, to manage the installation and start-up of a marine fish hatchery at the National Aquaculture Centre. Stirling Aquaculture's association with Malta continued with the establishment of Malta Mariculture Ltd., an offshore cage farm funded by local investors in partnership with the Commonwealth Development Corporation. Bart was technical manager, overseeing the establishment and development of the farm over four years. It was also a period of great change in Bart's personal life, when he became separated from Anouk, who returned with their children to live in Belgium, and met his subsequent long-term partner Maria.

After Malta, Bart moved to Madeira to manage another Stirling Aquaculture project with the Regional Directorate of Fisheries, to introduce offshore aquaculture to the island. As always, he settled in quickly and gained the close friendship and loyalty of local staff, helped by his impressive ability to pick up new languages and communicate across

cultural barriers. Eighteen months later, through the efforts of Zarko Peric, a contract was concluded between Stirling Aquaculture and Acqua Azzurra SpA., taking Bart to Sicily. Although fully occupied with his responsibilities there, he found time to play an instrumental role in the development of two further Stirling Aquaculture projects in Turkey and Libya, and was studying for an MBA by distance learning. His expertise in offshore aquaculture was widely recognised and he contributed to several international workshops and seminars, most notably talking about his development work on collarless cage design and management. He remained keen to promote opportunities for others, and helped arrange and supervise several student placements and projects at each of the locations he worked.

Bart put tremendous energy and commitment into his work, but also made the most of his limited time for family and friends. He was a gentle giant of a man with the warmest of smiles, the most infectious laugh, and a genuine interest in everyone he met.

Zarko

Zarko Peric was born in Ghana, but returned to his family home in Yugoslavia for his education, culminating in his graduation in 1986 as Doctor of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Belgrade. He then worked in the Fish Disease Laboratory at the National Veterinary Research Institute of Yugoslavia, involving collaborative visits to the University of London's Institute of Tropical Parasitology and the MAFF Fish Disease Laboratory in Weymouth. Through this work he gained a Masters Degree in Veterinary Sciences in 1990. The following year he moved to Malta to take up an appointment at the National Aquaculture Centre in Fort San Lucjan. It was here that he met Bart as they worked together to develop the pilot marine finfish hatchery, and as Zarko established a fish disease laboratory and commenced a pathology service to the local industry. He also took up the position of Fish Health Manager at Malta Mariculture Ltd. as that company was established. In 1996, he moved to Sicily where he was employed as a full time consultant in fish pathology to Acqua



Azzurra SpA, and later Production Director. In 2000 he became an independent consultant, working especially for Acqua Azzurra SpA, Ittica Mediterranea SpA (Italy), the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture of Malta, the Malta Centre for Fisheries Sciences and Stirling Aquaculture. With Stirling Aquaculture he conducted consultancy work in Turkey and Libya, and developed strong collaborative links with Professor Hugh Ferguson at the Institute of Aquaculture.

Zarko had worked extensively on research aimed at solving endemic disease

problems in the Mediterranean, improving laboratory diagnostic techniques and diversifying the species used for aquaculture production. At Fort San Lucjan, he was working on the immunogenic properties of Atlantic cod PNNV in sea bass, and testing vaccine formulations for Aquaculture Vaccines Ltd (UK). Zarko was a very hard worker, ever willing to share his considerable knowledge with all his colleagues. Besides his day-to-day duties, he initiated and pursued a number of academic activities with articles in various scientific journals, notably the cell culture isolation of nodavirus *in vitro* as published in the Journal of General Virology in 1996. Zarko was entrusted with the organisation of the 11th International Conference of the European Association of Fish Pathologists, scheduled to be held in Malta in September 2003. He was also a member of the steering committee for the European project on the domestication of bluefin tuna (DOTT-REPRODOTT). More recently, due to Zarko's particular contribution to nodavirus research, he was

invited by top international pathologists to join them in undertaking an EU-funded project that would scrutinise the scientific basis for current zoo-sanitary control requirements imposed upon transfer and trade in seed stocks for international aquaculture.

Zarko will be remembered for far more than his professional achievements. He was a gentleman with the highest standards of integrity, often outspoken in his views, but with a warm and generous nature that made him very easy to work with. He had a total commitment to his chosen profession always seeking to do the best job possible and to go beyond easy answers through a rigorous approach to diagnostics and research. In spite of his long work hours, Zarko would always find time for his wife Cathy, his sons Vasilije, Luca and Sasha, as well as his family and close friends. He was a man who gave priority to love and values.

We join both Bart and Zarko's loved ones in mourning their premature passing.

Gordon H. Rae 1947-2003

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Gordon Rae following a brave fight against cancer. Gordon was one of the pioneers of fish health, beginning his career with Unilever at Lochailort in the early days of experimental salmon farming some 30 years ago. During his time with Unilever, Gordon was instrumental in developing the first vaccines against furunculosis and the original treatment of sea lice infestation with Nuvan. He developed many of the farming practices such as fallowing and single yearclass sites which we now take for granted. Following his move to the Scottish Salmon Growers' Association and latterly, Scottish Quality Salmon, Gordon continued with his passionate interest in sea lice control and convinced the larger international pharmaceutical companies to become involved, leading to the current ability to practice integrated pest management control with a panel of antiparasitic agents backed by sound husbandry methodology. Gordon was an excellent networker who steered his colleagues into effective



action and who extraordinarily livened up the most difficult of meetings with his dry wit and incisive comments. Gordon can largely be thanked for bringing together fishfarmers and wild fish interests with the government in the Tripartite Working Group which is proving so effective in

developing a future strategy for sustainable aquaculture in Scotland.

Gordon will be known to many of you as a regular contributor to international conferences and as an honorary lecturer at the Institute of Aquaculture. His wide experience and excellent practical skills were a source of inspiration to many aspiring aquaculturists.

Gordon will also be remembered as a man who loved life. He especially enjoyed stalking deer on the Isle of Skye and liked nothing better than to treat visitors to Lochailort with lobsters that he had fished himself, washed down with an excellent champagne. Gordon was a committed family man who throughout his long and painful illness, constantly put his family first. Our heartfelt condolences go to his wife Mairi and his children Robbie and Michael.

He will be sorely missed by his many close friends in the Institute and working in aquaculture throughout the UK and internationally.