

# IFEA HALL OF FAME



**Janet Landey, CFEE, CSEP  
Founder, Skills Village 2030  
President, IFEA Africa  
Johannesburg, South Africa**

Janet Landey has lived a life of big visions...visions that have changed the realities of countless thousands of individual lives and organizations, both close to home and around the world.

With husband, Crispin, by her side and cheering her on since their marriage nearly 50 years ago, their multi-generation family now numbers 82 and counting! A family that, with her eight brothers and sisters and their families added in, learned quickly that life was going to be about special events...lots of them, and welcomed everyone to join the celebrations.



Janet 'officially' started her career in the 1970's with a toy company – Tri-Ang Pedigree - and motivated by the birth of their first child, she started making Cabbage Patch Kids clothing for a licensed toy company in South Africa. With over 50 sewing machinists and a creative artist, the business soon expanded into making licensed character costumes for Smurfs, Care Bears and Womble merchandise.

Perhaps it was a desire to celebrate the success of that early endeavor that led her to create her next role as the Founder, Event Architect and Chief Experience Officer of PartyDesign, a Johannesburg-based event design and décor company, whose expertise and visions were equally at home providing the joy of small (but life-changing) birthday parties for underprivileged children (something that she continues to provide today), to celebrations honoring the birthdays and release from prison of South African President and global icon Nelson Mandela.

Janet's hand extended into global-focus events like the 2010 FIFA World Cup; the training of 2500 volunteers for the ICC Cricket World Cup; and the on-field entertainment for the 2005 World Cup Rugby match, including an unforgettable moment for everyone when she arranged for a Boeing 747 to fly over the stadium, with messages of 'Good Luck' stenciled on the underside. A moment captured forever through a painting signed by Mandela, the pilot and even the 747 itself making it's mark by taxiing over the bottom right corner with a paint-splattered nose wheel. While at the same time she was growing the success of her children's events, recruiting the involvement of such world voices as Dr. Jane Goodall to launch a new 'Roots and Shoots' program for local children, with a larger, long-range goal of creating jobs for youth through the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) events, activities and memorabilia.

It didn't take long for Janet's focus to move from the *excitement* of events to the *power* of events and her BIG dream and vision of using events as a positive platform for social inclusion, environmental health, and the sustainability of communities by maximizing the multiplier effect of what we all produce and do.

Her global journey toward that vision led her to cross paths with many other passionate industry leaders, peers and mentors (Joe Goldblatt, Bill O'Toole, Glenn Bowdin, Don Getz, Julia Rutherford-Silvers, Philip Mondor and others among them) who – together – created a foundation and roadmap of event knowledge (the Event Management Body of Knowledge – EMBOK - the first ever codified body of knowledge in the field of planned events) – that has led to much of the formal university-level training and governmental support that our industry enjoys today.

After having met years earlier, in 2007 Janet invited IFEA President & CEO Steve Schmader to join the conversation at a South African EMBOK symposium, which resulted in the beginnings of IFEA Africa and Janet's role as the President of that new global affiliate, helping to build the global IFEA brand, while further positioning the organization as a leader in education, professional certification, sustainability and life-changing empowerment through festivals and events.

A path that led to her roles on the IFEA World Board from 2013-2021, including service as the IFEA World Board Chair in 2019 and the coming together of her IFEA family with her own in South Africa. An opportunity to share one of her greatest achievements...the creation and visionary management of Skills Village 2030 in Bez Valley, Johannesburg. Skills Village 2030 is a cooperative village, providing a workplace experience for hundreds of South African youth that uses festivals and events to bring to market commodities, goods, services and experiences unique to the local community. Believing that events build 'communitas', competency, capacity and personal capabilities that matter to everyone they touch – internally and externally – Janet designed the Skills Village 2030 platform to use practical event activities to raise workspace experiential learning opportunities that can prepare young participants with single-occupation training, to learning that can be translated to a cluster of other related occupations, based upon common knowledge and skills; a desire for lifelong learning; and cross-training and alternative pathways for progression and growth, through the end result of producing a Community Market Day. All skills of which can contribute to solving the global challenge of unemployed youth.

Janet's impact on our global festivals and events industry is perhaps most humbly obvious in the multitude of proud, empowered, well-trained, confident and secure graduates of the Skills Village 2030 program. An impact best summed-up by a small, local South African event director at one of the early international EMBOK gatherings in Johannesburg. When asked by IFEA President & CEO, Steve Schmader, what resources they needed more of to be successful, their quick, sincere and thoughtful response was, "We need more Janet's."

There are very few people in our global industry who have touched and impacted so many – close to home and around the world; individually and collectively; personally and professionally – than Janet Landey.

**Please join us in congratulating our 2022 IFEA Hall of Fame inductee, Janet Landey!**

## Thoughts Shared from Friends:

*The long history of planned events was given a major acceleration through the phenomenal leadership skills of Janet Landy. From the cradle of civilisation in South Africa, two decades ago Janet joined the embryonic discussions that resulted in the creation of the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) which became the first ever codified body of knowledge in the field of planned events. Along with others, she helped give birth to a new and globally respected profession that creatively and safely brings people together through festivals and events for mutual benefit and results in producing greater knowledge, peace and harmony for all. Her contribution will be historically recorded as one of the major milestones in the positive development of this noble profession.*

**Dr. Joe Goldblatt**  
**Emeritus Professor of Planned Events**  
**Queen Margaret University**  
**Edinburgh, Scotland**

*Janet Landey has been an inspiration to me since the first day I met her at an ILEA (formerly ISES) conference in London, where we bonded over the issue of ethics in the events industry. From that moment, our paths intertwined when she invited me and others to South Africa to turbo charge the development of the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK). While others will no doubt comment on what we achieved in developing EMBOK, and how this provided a structure to discuss and develop professional events management, my key takeaway is the sheer passion and determination of Janet to make a difference in South Africa and beyond, to professionalise the planning and management of events for the benefit of all stakeholders including communities and workers, and also how events (and providing employment through events) can be used positively to change people's lives. Peace, poverty alleviation and purpose through events struck a chord and remained a driving force for Janet through her many initiatives over the years, from the Institute of Event Management in Johannesburg, training through Party Design, the birthday club, and driving the establishment of Skills Village 2030. Janet has not been a bystander – she has led from the front, pushed from the back, overcome many obstacles and opened doors to many along the way and provided a welcoming helping hand into the industry. Whether through her work or through volunteering for association, industry, or community initiatives, when we look for someone who has made a difference in our industry and communities through actions rather than words, consistently over many years, Janet is a role model we can point to.*

**Glenn Bowdin**  
**Principal Lecturer in Events Management,**  
**UK Centre for Events Management,**  
**Leeds Beckett University, UK**

*Janet has been an inspiration to countless people – to those most vulnerable, tenured academics, professionals in the events industry worldwide, policy makers, and to her family. She has boundless energy and steadfast devotion to enabling others to do better, to build community and promote wellbeing. For Janet, events have been the catalyst for creating purpose.*

**Philip Mondor**  
**President and CEO**  
**Tourism HR Canada**

*The events sector has come a long way from when we were described as the 'party people'. Surprisingly it was a person from a company called 'Party Design' who helped take it from a party to a profession. Janet recognised the power of celebration to unite communities and engender economic development for all. Through event conferences and her inspiring talks, she gave us all a call to action. From the Minister of Tourism in Uganda to the sheikhs in Dubai, she left a legacy by demonstrating a pathway of inclusive development. Her unflinching enthusiasm, knowledge and compassion drew all the key event people from around the world to the EMBOK conferences in South Africa. This historical moment was seminal in the creation of the new events sector in every city, state and country of the world.*

**Bill O'Toole, CFEE**  
**Events Development Specialist**  
**Event Project Management System, Pty., Ltd.**  
**Bondi Beach, Australia**