

Veterinarian of the year **2016**



CELEBRATING WORLD VETERINARY DAY 2016 (30 APRIL 2016)

NOMINEE	NOMINATOR	MOTIVATION
Dr Piet Botha	Dr Francois van Niekerk	<p>Piet Botha graduated from Onderstepoort in 1955 with 11 classmates. 3 of the original 15 in his class finished later.</p> <p>Drs Daan Verwoerd, Andrew Pettigrew and Peter Masters were other members of this class.</p> <p>Piet worked for a year in Benoni for Harry Botha and Charles Howell. Piet remembers Harry Botha as a very practical vet with good people skills. He encouraged Piet to remember every owner's name and if possible, the dog's name as well.</p> <p>A spay cost three guineas in those days.</p> <p>A severe outbreak of lumpy skin disease caused the bankruptcy of many dairy farmers on the East Rand.</p> <p>In 1957 he returned to his father's farm at Golden Valley near Somerset East.</p>

		<p>At that stage the following vets were practising in the Eastern Cape.</p> <p>Kayzer van der Walt and John Dovey in Port Elizabeth, Andries du Plessis in Cradock [Chris Marlow later bought his practice] and Malherbe van Heerden.</p> <p>Piet had a small Friesian herd [about 20 cows] and also farmed with Merino sheep and Angora goats.</p> <p>As with most rural vets, Piet's wife, Marlene, acted as receptionist, secretary, bookkeeper and theatre assistant if necessary.</p> <p>On one occasion Piet had had a very quiet veterinary week and was on his way to town [Somerset East] on the Saturday morning when the phone rang three times in quick succession. A dairy farmer from Alice [Ballantyne] had a cow with a prolapsed uterus, Cecil Michau in Cradock with a dystocia, and Henry Nash at Jansenville had a horse case. Piet got home at midnight!</p> <p>On another occasion when John Bowker was working as an assistant for Piet, Piet had a routine call at Alice [again a Ballantyne] and another at Komga [David Hart]. John had left that morning on holiday at Gonubie, so Piet detoured a little on the way home and had a beer [or beers?] with John at Gonubie and got home much later. Besides John Bowker, Rick Mapham and Jean van Niekerk also worked with Piet.</p> <p>The Rift Valley Fever outbreak of the 1970's barely affected the Golden Valley area.</p> <p>A severe outbreak of Three day-stiffness caused many deaths in the area in about 1995.</p> <p>The Veterinary laboratories which Piet used, were Grahamstown [which produced a ball 3 heartwater vaccine] and Onderstepoort.</p> <p>On one occasion Piet had been pregnancy testing beef cows at Swaershoek in the mountains between Somerset East and Cradock. The manager's name was Ken. Back at home, at about midnight that night, Piet was wakened by the shrill ringing of the party-line telephone – "Ken here, I have a calving" said the voice. Piet jumped up and headed back to Swaershoek [at least an hour's drive]. All was quiet and in darkness when he knocked on the door and was told by the surprised manager "I did not phone". Only then did Piet realize it was Ken Ross, a Friesian stud breeder from the Cowie Valley in the mountains north east of Bedford and two hour's drive away, who had phoned. He duly backtracked and delivered the calf.</p>
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Dr Glynn Catton	Dr Lesley Lunn	Regarding nominations for veterinarians who have contributed to veterinary affairs in South Africa Dr. George Gaenssler and I would like to nominate Dr. Glynn Catton. I have attached Dr. Catton's abbreviated CV . I think that it speaks for itself and we feel that Dr. Catton has served the veterinary profession with dedication and honour.
Dr Brian Rippon	Dr Francois van Niekerk	<p>Proctorsfontein in the Grahamstown district, the former home of our esteemed and well-loved colleague, Brian Rippon, was for decades a place of warm hospitality for veterinarians from South Africa and from all over the world. Brian farmed with beef cattle, sheep and Angora goats on Proctorsfontein and it was the base for his rural veterinary practice.</p> <p>When Brian and his wife Jenny, retired to Knysna and he leased Proctorsfontein to Shamwari Game Reserve, the internal fences were removed and today large game roam freely on this beautiful farm. The historic settler homestead in its beautiful setting and in its magnificent, extensive garden with well-groomed lawns has been converted into an exclusive lodge. Proctorsfontein was a special place to the veterinary fraternity and especially to those in the Eastern Cape. An era in Eastern Cape veterinary history ended with Brian's move to Knysna.</p> <p>Brian is a very special person, always humble, loved by his colleagues and his clients. He has a puckish sense of humour and is the first to tell a joke against himself, such as the following which caused him great amusement. He was seeing a sick Afghan in his surgery and commented to the longhaired, longfaced owner (a legal friend); "funny how dogs and owners look alike", to which the quick-witted attorney parried: "have you not just acquired a bulldog?"</p>

		<p>Always a great talker and raconteur and a great character, the stories about Brian himself are numerous and legendary.</p> <p>In his younger days he was renowned for the speed at which he roared up and down country roads on his rounds - farm labourers compared the sound of his passing bakkie with that of a Boeing passing overhead. He once hit an ox at night at such speed that it flew over the cab and landed up on the load body of his bakkie.</p> <p>TB testing in his early days in practice involved accreditation schemes where every bovine on the farm had to be accounted for from test to test. This involved hours of office work and on one occasion Brian worked till 3am balancing the TB registers, realized that he had an early TB test near Port Alfred and drove straight there instead of going to bed. The farmer was rather surprised to find the veterinarian sleeping in his bakkie at the cattle crush in time for the test the next morning!</p> <p>He would spend hours giving free advice to farmers, not a few of whom abused his kindness without making use of his professional services. This advice was given freely telephonically at all hours, in the cattle crush, and possibly most characteristically while he was seated in his bakkie, engine running and arm out of the window. The latter habit was endearing and simultaneously infuriating – endearing to those who were getting a free consultation and infuriating to those who were waiting for him to keep an appointment! Because Brian kept Eastern Cape time, not Greenwich time, he became universally known (in the Albany, Alexandria and Bathurst districts at any rate) as the late Dr Rippon. Because of this reputation, a competition developed amongst his many farmer clients as to who could delay Brian in characteristic pose with his engine running and his arm out of the window for the longest. The record is said to be 20 minutes! (Brian of course denies this - he claims it was 10 minutes!)</p> <p>A colleague tells the story of visiting Brian and accompanying him on his rounds. Suddenly Brian jammed on the brakes, jumped out of his bakkie, over the fence and proceeded to inject a sick cow he had spotted next to the road. When the colleague queried the financial wisdom of such actions, he reportedly said – “it’s old Jack’s cow and both cow and owner are poorly - I won’t charge him”. Such is the man who served his clients and local community for 46 years.</p> <p>Brian graduated from Onderstepoort in 1962 and was in rural practise in the UK and Western Canada until 1965 when he returned to South Africa.</p> <p>Brian has served the veterinary profession unstintingly. He served on the committee of the Eastern Cape & Karoo Branch for many years and as Chairman from 1975 to 1978. He was an elected Federal Councillor of the SAVA from 1978 to 1988. During this time he also ran his rural veterinary practice and ran his 3200ha farm.</p>
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Dr Peter Rogers	Dr Roy Aronson	<p>I would like to nominate Dr Peter Rogers of Provet Veterinary Services in Hoedspruit.</p> <p>Dr Rogers has been a passionate wildlife veterinarian for over thirty years</p> <p>He is truly one of the great stars of our profession</p> <p>He has appeared on TV internationally many times and his dedication and expertise really need celebrating</p> <p>He was recently seriously injured by a rhino and yet this dedicated man is back at his job, barely recovered.</p> <p>Dedication and selflessness like this need to be rewarded by recognition</p>
Dr Jotello Festiri Soga	Dr Paidamwoyo Mutowembwa	<p>Jotello Festiri Soga was born in 1865 at the Mgwali Mission in the Eastern Cape. He was the fourth son of Reverend Tiyo and Janet Soga. Dr Soga completed his matric at the Dollar Academy in Fife, Scotland and obtained his veterinary medicine degree in Scotland in 1886. Thereafter, he returned to the Cape Colony. On 09 July 1892, Dr Soga married Catherine Watson Chalmers, a Scottish woman. They had three daughters.</p> <p>Seven years later he was appointed a veterinary surgeon for the colonial government. He was sent to Fort Beaufort and was also responsible for veterinary services for Victoria East, Stockenström and neighbouring districts. Dr Soga was also directly responsible for the inoculation against contagious lung-sickness, which was decimating cattle in South Africa. He conducted his own inoculation experiments on lung-sickness and thereafter, his vaccinating method was accepted as standard.</p> <p>Dr Soga was also a lecturer to farmers whom he lectured on ways to control and treat diseases of livestock throughout the Cape Colony and the former British Bechuanaland, now Botswana. Moreover, Dr Soga conducted</p>

		<p>research on the effect of plants on animals, and comparative physiology. He frequently served as a judge at horse shows at the East London Agricultural Show, and was regularly invited to give lectures to farmers' associations.</p> <p>In the late 19th century, Dr Soga's skills as a trained veterinary doctor were ideally suited and required when rinderpest and other animal diseases threatened to decimate farmers' herds and flocks. As the first qualified South African veterinarian, Dr Soga was the first to send a warning about the dangers that rinderpest posed to the Cape Colony.</p> <p>In 1905 Dr Soga became a founding member of the former Cape of Good Hope Veterinary Association, which today is known as the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA).</p> <p>In veterinary circles Dr Soga was best known as the pioneer researcher in the study of toxic plants and their effect on animals. In acknowledgment of his original research work, the Jotello Soga Ethno Veterinary Garden was created at ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute next to the Veterinary Museum.</p> <p>Dr Soga passed away on 06 December 1906 in Amalinda, East London.</p>
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