

# MEMORIES OF ROBERT PATERSON



I met Robert in January 1970 when we both arrived at Onderstepoort, all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready to embark on our journey as Veterinarians. Robert arrived, as those of us who did have vehicles, in an antiquated Morris Minor which his family nicknamed "Miranda".

As those of my vintage will remember, we were a relatively small group and had to line up before dinner outside the "Old Hostel" and be introduced to the seniors.

This lasted for a week, after which we were tested on our ability to remember the seniors. Depending on the result, we were then awarded OP colours and the right to wear an OP blazer! In typical Robert fashion, he accepted this process with much muttering!

During our limited vacations from OP, we shared trips to the Drakensberg and Fannies Island, Lake St Lucia. Great time of camaraderie! These outings were usually preceded by an overnight with Robert's parents at Western Agricultural College, where his father was the principal.

After we qualified, Rob had a short stint with the State Vet in Estcourt. I remember having lunch with him there on the eve of his marriage to Lyne. Being naïve in matters of the heart, I asked him how he knew he had made the right choice. He answered that he had absolutely no doubt that Lyne was "the one", and so it was. Their marriage, which started in the unlikely town of Dannhauser, Natal, lasted for well over 50 years. The Patersons had an "open house", and we seldom visited Natal without spending a night or two with Rob, Lyn and their sons, Gareth and John.

True to his Scottish heritage, Robert loved a good argument, and we would be up late into the night arguing about something to the ninth degree. I remember evenings, usually after a vet meeting, when Rob, who loved to tell jokes, would tell one after another. Robert was one of the most non-materialistic people I knew. He was a true Natalian who was not impressed with the trappings of life in the Fastlane!

After a short stint as State Vet in Estcourt, Rob started a mixed Practice in Greytown, where he was based until an unfortunate embolism during a canoe race left him unable to continue private practise.

He returned to State service before retiring to Howick.

Lala kahle, my friend.

*Eddie Lee*