

Wednesday, May 13, 2009 (Blog post on the Jotello F. Soga Library Blog)

Jotello Festiri Soga - his significance today



Jotello F. Soga was the FIRST South African to qualify as a veterinary surgeon (Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies, Edinburgh 1886).

“Dr Soga played an important role in combating rinderpest and lung-sickness in the country as the first qualified South African veterinarian. He also laid a foundation for veterinary education in South Africa. But he is better known in veterinary circles as a pioneer researcher in the study of toxic plants and their effect on animals – both for their poisonous and curative effects.” *(Prof Gerry Swan, Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria)*

The South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) has established a tribute to Dr. Soga as mentioned on its [website](#). The SAVA awards the annual Soga Medal in “recognition of exceptional community service” rendered by a veterinarian or a veterinary student.

“The fact that we award the Soga Medal is an indication that we respect and admire his contribution – not only his work as a veterinarian but his commitment to the community. This is what we want to instill in our profession. Veterinary medicine is not only a job but a commitment to the community – the entire South African community.” *(Dr Colin Cameron, CEO South African Veterinary Association)*

(Author: Erica van der Westhuizen)