

# In Memoriam

## Gilbert Theo Hinze: 1943 - 2024



Gilbert Hinze was born on 22 October 1943 in Paulpietersburg, KwaZulu-Natal and grew up on his parent's farm in the Comondale district near Piet Retief. His schooling was at the Comondale Primary School and the Piet Retief High School where he matriculated. Gilbert went on to study Veterinary Science at Onderstepoort, Pretoria University and graduated as a veterinarian in 1967. At university, Gilbert was a very enthusiastic member of the Onderstepoort football team. In later years his main outside interest was playing golf.

Gilbert married Alida de la Rouviere Badenhorst. The couple were blessed with a son, Werner, who was their only child. Werner later qualified as a mechanical engineer and moved to England where he lived in the village of Hook in Hampshire. Werner has his own business and also consults as a Certified Enterprise Consultant. Gilbert and Alida were later divorced and Gilbert then married Martie de Beer who passed away a few years ago. Gilbert never remarried.

Gilbert followed a chequered and interesting professional career. After graduating he joined a private practice in Zululand. In 1970 Gilbert left private practice to join Merck Sharp & Dohme in Johannesburg as a technical adviser where he was predominantly involved with the registration of veterinary pharmaceuticals. In 1978 he returned to private practice in Piet Retief showing a specific interest in embryo transfer in cattle. At this stage, he also participated in some farming on a part-time basis. In 1986 he moved to a private practice in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

In 1994 Gilbert joined the Meat Board of South Africa in Pretoria where he was actively involved in the Meat Board's Red Meat Abattoir programme and to a lesser extent in the Board's Pig Health Scheme. In 1997 Gilbert attended the First Symposium on Electro Chemical Activation (ECA) in Moscow. (The ECA process uses water, salt and electricity to produce a potent and natural disinfectant and detergent). At the end of 1997, with the disbanding of the Meat Board, Gilbert founded a company Radical Waters in order to exploit the use of ECA technology in South Africa.

For the next 6 years, Gilbert and his company researched various possible applications of ECA technology in the South African context. Interestingly this dealt with multiple applications of ECA including decontamination of food products either by immersion or fogging; replacement of salt in hide preservation; ECA-treated drinking water to replace the use of antibiotic growth promotants in pig and broiler rearing systems; the treatment of wounds, burns and pressure sores in humans and numerous other applications.

In 2004 Gilbert left Radical Waters to become independently involved in a multitude of veterinary-associated activities in South Africa and abroad. Some of these activities were linked to the application of ECA Technology. At one stage he was particularly active in China promoting the replacement of medicated feeds in intensive pig and broiler systems by using ECA solutions in the drinking water.

In China, where the intensive rearing of rabbits is done on a large scale, Gilbert became involved in developing a unique Foliar Organic Plant Growth Promotant derived from rabbits' urine. In these trials, Gilbert claimed that his findings showed a 99% increase in yield as opposed to the controls. In South Africa, Gilbert became involved in the rabbit industry with special reference to intensive rabbit rearing systems, improved nutrition, disease prevention strategies, breeding programmes/progeny testing of bucks and the possibility of performing artificial insemination on a large commercial scale.

Gilbert was a unique character, known for his friendliness, dedication and enthusiasm. He was fluent in English, Afrikaans, German and Zulu. In later years he became known for his enquiring mind and his ability for testing the boundaries of science to the limit in his own enthusiastic manner. Over the past few years, Gilbert's health gradually deteriorated and he passed away on 25 June, 2024, in Paulpietersburg. He will be sorely missed by his family, friends and his Onderstepoort classmates in South Africa, Namibia, Israel, Australia, USA and England.

*Vincent Turner, pp. Class of 1967*