

In Memoriam

IN MEMORY OF MAURICE ANTHONY JOSEPH AZZIE (1935-2022)



Remembering Maurice Azzie.....

Maurice was born in East London, South Africa, on the 29th of October 1935, the son of Tim and Mary Azzie.

Having completed two years of a Bachelor of Science (in Biology) at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, he went on to study Veterinary Science at Onderstepoort University of Pretoria. After qualifying in December 1958, he spent time in the UK, the Republic of Ireland, Europe and North America. On returning to South Africa in August 1960, he established private veterinary practices in Alberton and Rosettenville, Johannesburg treating small animals and Thoroughbred racehorses.

He married his wife, Bernadette Cole, on the 28th of December 1961 in Ardee in Co. Louth, Ireland. They are blessed with six children: Kevin, Maurice, David, Bernadette, Christopher, and the late Brendan.

In February 1966, he obtained his private pilot's licence and flew a single-engine Mooney aircraft supporting his veterinary practice on remote stud farms. Shortly after that, he suffered a fracture to the base of the skull and severe facial injuries, having been kicked by a mare he was examining for pregnancy on Cape stud farm.

Maurice was the founder of the Equine Practitioners Group (EPG, later renamed the South African Equine Veterinary Association – SAEVA) of SAVA and served actively on its executive committee from its inauguration in 1967 to 1972, and as chairman for two years. He organised the first international EPG conference in 1974.

Maurice has done some remarkable work for the Equine Industry; he was a founder of the Hawaii Foundation Fund of SAEVA and also financially supported it; he co-founded the WARC School of Farriery in South Africa and dedicated 31 years of service to training upcoming farriers in this school, and he was co-organiser of the first Southern Africa Farriers Congress in 1993. Many veterinarians started their early equine veterinary careers in his practice at Newmarket in Alberton. He served on the board of the Veterinary Foundation for 11 years. He was chairman for five years. From 1968-1986 he served on the Board of Trustees of the Witwatersrand Owners and Trainers Association.

From 1987-1996 as a Steward of the Newmarket Racing Club. He participated in the updating of the Rules of the Jockey Club of Southern Africa. He actively improved dope testing facilities and anti-doping control in equine athletes.

He submitted a dissertation in 1972 on the "Blood of the Horse" to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. He completed a doctoral thesis on "Aortic Thrombosis of the Horse", which he presented at the University of Zurich in January 1974, for which he was awarded the Dr. Med. Vet. qualification. He lectured on Aortic Thrombosis at an American equine veterinary conference in San Francisco.

He gave 23 years of community service to the Alberton Rotary Club, where he was instrumental in setting up a Bursary Fund for Tertiary Education in 1984.

He also sat on the Board of Management for Grantley College in Parktown, Johannesburg, assisting children with learning disabilities.

On the 18th of November 1976, he survived a plane crash at the Baragwanath Airfield; he also survived after being shot during an armed robbery of his veterinary practice in October 1992.

Maurice's veterinary service was not limited to South Africa. Apart from spending three years in Mauritius working for the Mauritian Turf Club, he also rendered professional services in Greece and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, as well as giving lectures around the world and attending conferences.

In December 2006, Maurice retired from private practice in South Africa and relocated to Ireland, where he continued to do locums. In February 2011, he was awarded a Meritorious Silver Medal by the Irish Veterinary Council for 50 years of service to the veterinary profession. He was awarded the Spirit of SAEVA award in 2013 for his unwavering contribution to the welfare of the horse and the horse industry in South Africa. He retired in September 2016, spending time with his wife and children in Dublin, Ireland.

Maurice passed away on the 22nd of December 2022, leaving his wife, five children and grandchildren, who will miss him dearly.

Maurice was a kind man who embraced life fully. He created opportunities for many a young veterinarian to enter the equine world and many apprentices to become fully-fledged farriers. He will be remembered as a man who dedicated his life to furthering the welfare of the horse and horse industry in South Africa and as a man who stood on his principles.

On behalf of us, and I'm certain all his colleagues, family and friends. . . . we will miss him.

Bernadette Azzie and Ann Carstens

MAURICE ANTHONY JOSEPH AZZIE

Maurice's fifty-eight-year commitment to veterinary practice includes a sincere contribution to the advancement and spread of equine veterinary knowledge to the profession, equine research, farriery and the South African horse-racing industry.

As the Equine Practitioners Group 1966 (EPG) founder, now renamed SAEVA, he continued to contribute to the advancement of the veterinary profession. Upon receiving a personal award from the Late C W Engelhard for his veterinary services rendered to the great horse "Hawaii 1968", he established the Hawaii Foundation fund within the South African Veterinary Foundation.

With this commensurate fund, he promoted the development of postgraduate courses for practitioners and the internationally well-remembered First International Equine Veterinary Conference held in the Kruger National Park in August 1974. Twenty years later, at an international equine sports medicine conference in San Diego, exact reference was made to the trigger effect of the successful Kruger National Park conference on the development of additional specialised fields of study and communication between equine veterinarians internationally. These activities, together with his thirty-year service on horse racing administration boards and associated input with establishing the Equine Research Institute in 1989, will remain his South African veterinary milestones.

Annette Boshoff

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU GIVE TO THE
BETTERMENT OF YOUR PROFESSION.
ENJOY THIS PLEASURE; ACHIEVEMENT IS
YOUR PERSONAL AWARD!**

Maurice A J Azzie 1966

