

In Memoriam

IN MEMORY OF ALAN FAIR



"I'll start by setting the scene of a life full of fun and enthusiasm and a touch of crazy; he won't mind me saying this.

Attending a sick cow, he was warned about a male ostrich that was lurking in the camp nearby; halfway across the field to the cow, his eye caught movement to his right; sure enough, it was the ostrich, and before he could blink an eye it charged straight for him, he knew the camp gate was too far. He would never outrun the damn thing. The only choice left was to turn and charge right back! Dropping all his unnecessary gear, he charged, waving his medical case, kicking his legs up to the sides and shouting like a madman. Of course, it worked; that ostrich knew he had met his match that day!!"

This is a tribute to the late Dr Alan Fair, who sadly passed away on 26 February 2022 at the young age (as he liked to say) of 87. Some may remember his witty and sometimes brutally honest column called "Fair Comment" published in this magazine for several years.

Anyone who met Alan knew him as a loving father, husband and amazing storyteller. He would so easily share his knowledge and experiences with anyone ready to listen.

Alan started out as a State Vet in Rustenburg, then spent a brief time in Pietermaritzburg, after which he worked most of his life in private practice in Bethlehem, known and respected by many in the farming and local community.

His first marriage was to Margaret; they had four wonderful children together, Cathy, Robert, Colin and Dianne. His second marriage was to Dennise in 1977; she gave him three daughters, Laura, who he lovingly adopted, and his two laatlammetjies, Helen and Susan. Sadly, Dennise passed away in 2010. His third marriage was to Nadine in 2018.

Alan had 17 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He was an active member of the Bethlehem Golf Club, of which he was the Club Captain for several years, as well as a member of the Round Table for many years.

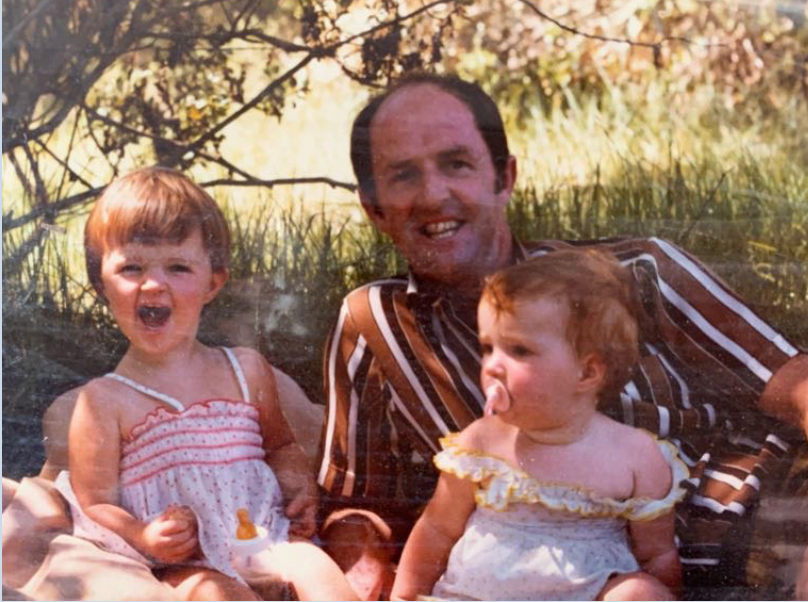
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He enjoyed travelling around South Africa with his caravan when he wasn't in the fields or his surgery looking after animals. A dirty and disgusting job that he absolutely loved. It kept him fit, healthy and strong. Of course, all Vets have a wonderful way with animals, but Alan was intuitive and knew when something didn't look or feel right. He brought the most sorrowfully looking animals home as pets and would not hold back when someone's stupidity was the reason their animal was circling the drain.

He has left a huge hole in the community and his family's lives.

Rest In Peace.

Susan Fouché (daughter)



ALAN FAIR



My 2 cents worth is the remarkable two months I spent driving with Alan in the Bethlehem-Clarens district as a part of my BVSc training.

I learned so much – one image on a farm in Clarens comes to mind of a cow with milk fever – the remarkable recovery after Ca -administration. And then the famous “shirking” (Alan’s term for “jerking” and “shaking”) to deliver a dystocia calf. And then his stories.... truly, the following urban legend of “umbrella disease” started with Alan (as he told me on one of our drives) when he saw a cow chewing on an umbrella. A few days later, he was called to the same farm and recognised the cow as the same cow now bloated and off her food. He took one look at her, told the farmer it was a typical case of “umbrella disease”, and summarily removed said umbrella during the rumenotomy – he had a client for life! My first spay with him... turned out to be a male dog after a fruitless few minutes searching for the ovaries – all special memories... During our discussions, he often remarked on “experts” being “retired drips”.... and I could go on.

Alan, you were a special person in my life, touched many peoples’ lives, and were a veterinarian extraordinaire!

The profession will miss you!

Ann Carstens (colleague and friend)