

In Memoriam

Crispian Garth Newbon Trace: 1936 – 2024



Crispian Trace was born in Parktown, Johannesburg to parents Garth Newbon Trace (an airline executive) and Doris Mary Trace. Cris had 2 sisters, Wendy and Susan.

His primary schooling was in the Western Cape (1945-1949) and his secondary schooling was at Michaelhouse, Natal (1950-1953). He then proceeded to Natal University for a BSc degree (1954-1956) and the University of Pretoria (1957-1961) for the BVSc degree.

In 1962 he married Elizabeth Joyce Rivett-Carnac and they moved to Rhodesia, where Cris initially worked for the De Beers Shangani Ranch near Bulawayo (1962-1965) and then at the Abrey, Sugden and Wright mixed practice in Salisbury (1966-1969) before Cris struck out on his own, building the first of his purpose-designed practices in Newlands and Avondale.

These were staffed by recent graduates who Cris mentored and encouraged in their development (1969-1976).

He retained ownership of these practices when they moved to a farm near Plettenberg Bay, where they raised pigs and grew proteas ((1977-1979).

Cris also later ventured into an airline business, Plett Air, an AI station at Ogies, and a large bakery in Soweto and Johannesburg.

The family moved back to Zimbabwe in 1981, where Cris started Pet Aid and the first 24-hour service practice. He established the Nyazengu Private Nature Reserve in the eastern highlands, operating as a trout farm and eco-tourism destination. Two holiday homes were built in Mozambique but later lost, and the Nyazengu farm was confiscated in 2005. He then returned to South Africa where he lived in Simonstown where he investigated and then marketed a novel copper/zinc dermatological regeneration product before retiring to the Helderberg Village.

Dr Trace was a many-sided sportsman and participated in many codes including horse hunter trials, hockey at the national level, and master yachting which led to many adventures.

He also obtained a private pilot licence, used for recreation as well as providing veterinary services. Cris was a multi-talented, innovative entrepreneur, determined, enthusiastic and demanding in all his ventures. He continued to care for his old staff members in their retirement.

Crispian Trace died on 30 August 2024, just 10 days after Elizabeth, his wife of 64 years, died. He is survived by his daughter Jacqueline, son James and 5 grandchildren.

He is fondly remembered and respected by his family, friends and colleagues.

Gareth Bath, with many contributions from those who knew Crispian