REGISTRAR'S FAREWELL MESSAGE

After seventeen years, it's time to say goodbye. With this farewell message I would like to pay tribute to the capable presidents, board members, committee members and staff with whom I worked over the years. I also take this opportunity to record part of the history of the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) and the Administration.

The period from 28 March 1983 to 31 October 1993 is based on my reading of the minutes, but from 1 November 1993 I have highlighted certain aspects during the tenure of the respective Presidents that made an impression on me.

Veterinary Board

The SAVC's predecessor was the Veterinary Board established in terms of Act 16 of 1933. Council members were appointed by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture attended to the administration from 8 March 1933 to 31 March 1983. Mr. C.S. de Villiers, employed by the Department of Agriculture, was the last Registrar. With the commencement of the Veterinary and Para-Veterinary Professions Act, 19 of 1982 on 1 October 1982 the Veterinary Board remained in place for further period of 6 months. The new Act also stipulated that a president may only serve two terms of office.

Prof B C Jansen
28 March 1983 – 31 March 1986

Prof Barend Cornelius Jansen was the first President of the SAVC. Prof Jansen served on the Veterinary Board from 1961 and was also the last president of the former Veterinary Board.

The first board members, the majority (6) elected, were Dr. P.C. Ardington, Dr. C.M. Cameron, Dr. G.C.Dent, Dr. J. M. Erasmus, Dr. G.E. Frost, Prof J.M.W. le Roux, Dr. B.H. Pappin, Prof. N.C. Owen, Dr. B.L. Romberg and Mr. H.E. Thompson.

During the first year of the SAVC's existence the board members waived their meeting fee of R 60.00 per day to enable the SAVC to start on a sound financial basis.

From 1 April 1983 to 31 October 1993 the administration of the SAVC was managed from the Pretoria Show grounds by the Northern Transvaal Chamber of Commerce that rendered secretarial services for a variety of organizations. Mr. J.G. Toerien was the first Registrar of the SAVC.

Initially, the SAVC only had one standing committee, namely the Education Committee. Most of the SAVC's time was occupied by investigations into professional conduct and in May 1985 a Disciplinary Committee was established to hold hearings and their decisions were referred to Council for ratification.

Dr G E Frost
14 April 1986 - 31 March 1992

Dr. George Edwin Frost was elected the second President of the SAVC. Members who served with him were Dr. P.C. Ardington, Prof. P.C. Belonje (new), Prof. R.I. Coubrough (new), Dr. J.M. Erasmus, Prof. J.M.W. le Roux, Prof. N.C. Owen, Dr. C.B. Rippon (new), Dr. B.L. Romberg, Mr. H.E. Thompson and Dr. R.A. Wilson (new). During the term Prof. Le Roux, Dr. Rippon, Mr. Thompson and Dr Wilson resigned and their vacancies were filled by Mr. P.A.J. Burger, Prof. J.F.W. Grosskopf, Dr. A. Immelman and Prof. R.C. Tustin.

Dr. Frost also chaired the third term of the SAVC namely 1 April 1989 – 31 March 1992. For the first time Sr. D du Toit represented the veterinary nursing profession and Mr. W.J.S. Botha the veterinary technologists. Other board members were Dr. P.C. Ardington, Dr. J.C. Austin (new), Dr. J.M. Erasmus, Dr I.G. Horak (new), Dr A. Immelman, Prof. N.C. Owen and Dr. B.L. Romberg.

The process by which investigations into professional conduct was done was amended and an Investigation Committee was established that undertook preliminary investigations (as it still happens today) whilst the Disciplinary Committee was dissolved and hearings once again held by the Council.

The first newsletter of the SAVC - A4 photocopied pages - was circulated to members of the profession in August 1986.

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME

In reviewing the minutes, I once again realized the truth:

"What has been will be again,
what has been done will be done again;
there is nothing new under the sun."

Themes repeat themselves and apart from the usual matters such as the registration of veterinary surgeons, nurses and facilities, complaints of unprofessional conduct, qualification and experience required for specialist registration the use of etorphine hydrochloride was discussed on 4 February 1985 “The Wild Life Group of the Veterinary Association should indicate to all veterinarians that they prescribed this medicine the animals concerned should be under their personal control”.

The SAVC had from time to time make peace with criticism and on 27 May 1985 noted that “at recent branch meetings of SAVA branches severe criticism was expressed that the Council was sitting in an ivory tower and imposing their views on the profession as a whole..."
On the 15th September 1986, the need for a Survey of Veterinary Manpower was discussed with a request that the Ministers of National Education and Agriculture be approached for financial assistance (which was never received). Later, upon receiving the draft report at a cost of R 50,000 for the Council, the following remark was made "some concern was expressed at the fact that, due to many variable considerations, it had not been found to be possible for the Human Sciences Research Council to gauge with any degree of accuracy the actual future veterinary manpower requirements ..."

Prof R I Coubrough
7 April 1992 - March 21, 1994

Prof Rhoderick Ian Coubrough was elected as President for the fourth term of the SAVC. Several new board members served with him - Mr. L. I. Bester, Sr. P. L. E. Calder, Prof. T. W. Naude, Prof G. H. Rautenbach, Dr. K. J. Schmidt, Prof H. M. Terblanche, Prof. S. S. van den Berg, Mr. P. van der Walt and Prof. C.M. Veary. Council members who previously served included Dr. P.C. Ardington (Vice President) and Dr. J.M. Erasmus.

On 1 November 1993 the SAVC's administration was taken over by Veterinary Management Services CC for a trial period of 12 months. The only members of the CC were Lynette Havinga and I.

The main purpose was to create an own identity for the SAVC and bearing that in mind two offices were rented and equipped in the SA Perm Building 3rd floor, corner of Pretorius and Paul Kruger Streets from where only SAVC affairs were conducted. It was a milestone in that for the first time since its existence the SAVC apart from its own offices had its own phone number, fax number and postal address. Until the takeover the SAVC did not have any assets or infrastructure. The tender for the work was done on the basis that if the SAVC changed its administration in future it would have an established infrastructure. The total costs for providing all administrative, legal and financial services, including the rental of the offices and making available conference facilities for meetings and hearings amounted to R12 000 per month.

As director of Mendel Cohen and Partners Inc, I was appointed Registrar with effect from 1 December 1994. The offices of Mendel Cohen and Partners Inc were on the same floor as the new council offices. Lynette, as administrative officer, attended to the day to day administrative functions of the SAVC and was assisted by a half-day assistant. I was responsible for the financial management of the SAVC and the delivery of legal services in the ordinary course of business of the SAVC. The SAVC was entitled to make use of other legal representatives where necessary but the option was never exercised. I also attended all Executive Committee, Board and Investigating Committee meetings, gave legal advice and acted as the pro forma complainant.

Due to his workload Prof. Coubrough resigned on 21 March 1994 before the expiry of his term as President, although he remained a board member and Dr. Peter Christopher Ardington was elected as new President.

Dr P C Ardington

One of the first things that Dr. Ardington as President addressed was the composition of the SAVC and the co-option of committee members. A meeting was also at his request held on the 23th September 1994 with the Deputy Minister of Agriculture on the transformation of the Council and the profession. Under Dr. Ardington's capable leadership and negotiation abilities among others with Minister Derek Hanekom and his later replacement Minister Thoko Didiza, the model that is still used for the composition and appointment of Councillors was finalized. The amendment to the Act was only implemented a few years later on 13 February 2004 and the first meeting of the new transformed SAVC was held on 2 August 2004.

Dr. Ardington, after 18 years of uninterrupted service to the profession, did not make himself available for election as Councillor in 2001, but was and remains willing to serve when his assistance is required. He served as the team leader during the visitation to the University of Pretoria during 2006 and mediates cases between practitioners on behalf of the SAVC.

Councillors who served with Dr. Ardington during his second term as President from 20 April 1995 to 31 March 1998 were Sr. Botha (new), Prof. R I Coubrough, Dr A Immelman, Prof. T W Naude, Dr M E Mogajane (new), Prof J S J Odendaal (new), Prof H M Terblanche (vice president) Dr. K J Schmidt (new), Prof S S van den Berg, Mr P van der Walt and Professor C M Veary. Dr S T Cornelius, Dr. A M Karodia and Dr W Rabolao were also co-opted during this period.

The format of the Newsletter was amended in December 1994 and it was printed in two colours and circulated twice a year.

In so far as the administration is concerned, after the initial trial period a three-year contract was concluded with the CC from 1 November 1994 to 31 October 1997. The contract was subsequently renewed with minor amendments until 30 June 2000.

The offices of the SAVC relocated from the SA Perm Building on 1 September 1996 to Hamilton Forum on the corner of Hamilton Street and Hamilton Avenue and that remained the offices until 31 January 2008 when the SAVC acquired its own property at 874 Church Street.

Prof H M Terblanche
31 March 1998 - March 31, 2004

Prof Hercules Morkel Terblanche was appointed President on 31 March 1998. An important contribution that few people are aware of is that he wrote and maintained the computer program that served as the first database for registered members of the SAVC.

As the need for keeping more data grew a programmer (who also developed the Law Society's database) was later appointed to develop the database further that is still used today.
The board members who served during this period was Dr. P C Ardington (Vice President), Mr E Boelemma (new), Sr. A E Botha, Prof R I Coubridge, Dr. P S Humphreys (new), Dr R Linde (new), Dr M E Mogajane (new) Adv R J Nagel (new), Prof G H Rautenbach (new), Dr W Rabolao, Mr. L L P Sinclair (representing Laboratory Animal Technologists), Prof. S S van den Berg, Prof C M Veary. Dr. S T Cornelius, Dr. A M Karodia and Prof. TW Naude were co-opted during this term.

Due to the continued expansion of council activities and the increase in staff the SAVC at my request took over the staff of the CC on 1 July 2000 and for the first time had their own administration in place. Only my services as Registrar were outsourced.

On 3 April 2000 the Council accepted my proposal that that the SAVC creates its own web site in order to communicate more effectively with the professions. To do this in a cost effective manner Lynette attended a course and she is the creator and maintainer of www.savc.co.za. Due to limited bandwidth and the speed of communication no graphics or pictures were included on the website but all the important information and approved documents were available online.

During Professor Terblanche’s second term as President from 1 April 2001 - 31 March 2004 the councillors were Mr E Boelemma Dr P S Humphreys, Dr P E L G Kloek (new), Prof. N P J. Kriek (new), Dr R Linde, Sr. C J Manitz (new), Prof. B L Penzhorn (new), Mr L L P. Sinclair. Prof. S S van den Berg and Prof. C M Veary. Dr. M E Mogane and Mrs S M Masapu were only appointed by the Minister of Agriculture towards the end of 2001. Mr. Boelemma who resigned during the period was replaced by Mr J Müller.

From 2003 the Newsletter is circulated four times per year.

Prof Terblanche remains involved with the SAVC as a member of the Specialist Committee.

Prof S S van den Berg
1 April 2004 – 30 July 2007

Prof Sybrand Smit van den Berg was elected as President of the Council on 1 April 2004. His first term was only for a period of four months. Although the legislative amendments in terms of which the composition of the Council was changed the date of commencement was not timely enough to avoid two elections in quick succession. Many new members served during this interim Council namely Dr J R Adam, Sr. I de Goede, Dr. F. Malan, Dr C P Marwick, Dr I Sonntag, Dr B D. Stevenson and Dr. S M L Varrie. The other members were Prof N P J Kriek, Ms S M Masapu, Dr. M E Mogajane, Mr. J J Müller and Mr. L L P. Sinclair.

The board members that served during Prof. Van den Berg’s second term was the first members of the enlarged and transformed council namely Dr J R Adam, Dr S T Cornelius, Dr. A P de Vos (new), Sr R Kenyon, Dr. C P Marwick, Ms S M Masapu, Dr. B M Modisane (new), Dr. L E Moorosi (new), Dr R Moerane (new), Prof M J Mphahelele (new), Mr. J J Müller, Dr. N V H Nombekela-Madiba (new), Mr. I W G Radmore (new) and M. E Mogane and Dr J L P Sinclair, Dr I Sonntag, Prof. H M Terblanche, Dr J van Heerden (new) and Dr. S M L Varrie.

The first inauguration meeting was attended by the then Minister of Agriculture Ms Lulu Xingwana.

Prof. Van den Berg left a rich legacy for the profession. Since appointment as a councilor in 1992, he served as chairman of the Investigation Committee and strived to ensure that the rules governing the conduct of the veterinary profession remained relevant and that the minimum standards of facilities were in line with the requirements of the time. He had the perceived need for the establishment of a code of conduct and was the convener and chairman of the committee responsible for the Code of Conduct and Practice.

Prof. Van den Berg was also instrumental in ensuring that the SAVC became involved with the global accreditation initiative in conjunction with the RVCS, AVMA, AVBC and EAVE.

Prof. Van den Berg remains involved with the Council as an inspector although he did not make himself available for re-election to Council in 2007.

From June 2006 advertisements were published in the Newsletter that allowed for the printing of the Newsletter in full colour.

Dr R Moerane
August 6, 2007

Dr Rebone Moerane was elected on 6 August 2007 as President of the Council. The other members of the council were, Dr J R Adam, Dr. G A P Carlisle, Dr. S T Cornelius, Dr. A P de Vos (new), Sr. A M Glen, Adv N Y Memani- Balani (new), Dr. B M Modisane, Dr. L E Moorosi, Prof M J Mphahelele , Mr. J J Müller, Dr. N V H Nombekela-Madiba, Dr. D J Odendaal (new), Mr. I W G Radmore, Dr. D M Sim (new), Mr. L L P. Sinclair, Dr I Sonntag (Vice- President), Prof G E Swan and Dr J van Heerden. During January 2008 Adv Memani-Balani and Dr. Sim resigned and their vacancies were not filled by the Minister of Agriculture.

Since Dr Moerane’s appointment as board member, he was the driving force to ensure that policies were put in place for personnel matters and that the salaries of employees were market related.

Dr. Moerane also donated his annual honorarium due to him as President, to the skills development fund that was used for improving the skills of the SAVC’s administrative staff. He was consistently on the look out to save money for the SAVC.

The Newsletter undergone a metamorphosis in 2009 and after 10 years the web site www.savc.org.za got a face lift.

On 30 July 2010 Dr R Moerane was re-elected as President. The board members who serve with him are Dr. A P De Vos
Finally

During my tenure as Registrar, the persons on the Council and committees always served with the utmost integrity. Decisions were never taken randomly, but after careful consideration of all arguments and without self-interest. Criticism without knowledge of the facts is of no value.

Thank you all for your support. It was a privilege to cross the paths (and sometimes swords) of so many different people and to exchange ideas over the years. It was an enriching experience. I appreciate the many messages and good wishes I received. May the SAVC and the administration go from strength to strength. God bless.

Finally I want to thank Lynette and my husband Charl my true partners in creating an efficient administration for the SAVC without their support this would not have been possible.