

Editorial

ORBITUARY: PROF WILLIE VÖRSTER

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Prof. Maryna Steyn

Anatomy at the Technicon Natal, now known as the Durban University of Technology, where he taught and served as head of Department until 1991. He then moved to the University of Pretoria as senior lecturer for 10 years before he went back to the University of Stellenbosch in 2001.



Prof. Willie Vörster

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our colleague and friend, Willie Vorster. Willie passed away on 27 September 2015 at the age of 69, after a 2-year battle with cancer. At this time he was the head of the Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Namibia, Windhoek, a department that he started in July 2010 when Namibia's first medical school was established.

Willie has devoted much of his career to the advancement of Anatomy and Embryology. He started his career as a school teacher before he joined the University of Stellenbosch as technical assistant in 1980. Both his MSc (1980) and PhD degrees (1987) were obtained from the University of Stellenbosch. For his PhD, he studied the development of the chondrocranium of *Gallus gallus*. In 1989 he established the Department of

From here he moved to Namibia where he established another Anatomy department at the University of Namibia in 2010. Willie continued to serve as associate professor and head of department until his passing in 2015. He has the honour of being accredited with the establishment of two anatomy departments in the southern hemisphere – no small achievement!

Throughout his teaching career Willie was responsible for development of new undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Anatomy and Embryology and also supervised several post-graduate students as well as projects of international students from the Netherlands, UK and Austria.

During his career Willie was very active as a member of ASSA (Anatomical Society of Southern Africa), including being on Council and as Honorary Treasurer. Willie was a member of various societies; amongst others, he served on the executive committee of the International Society of Vertebrate Morphology (ISVM). He was also on the Editorial Board of the Argentine Journal of Clinical Anatomy.

Willie's research focused mainly on Embryology, but his many research interests included the anatomy and function of the internal vertebral venous plexus (IVVP) in various animal species

and humans. In this research he closely collaborated with researchers from the Netherlands (including Profs. Piet Hoogland and Rob Groen). During his career Willie presented his research results at numerous international conferences and he has published several papers in national and international academic journals.

We will always remember Willie for his entrepreneurial spirit, enthusiasm for life in general, wonderful wit and keen love of sports (especially rugby!). He was a true academic and faithful friend who was always available for those in need. Willie was popular with students and colleagues alike and everyone was always happy to chat with him during conferences. He was very good at storytelling due to his wealth of knowledge and experiences which he shared with all.

Willie leaves behind his wife of many years, Albie. Our thoughts go out to her and his family.

The EDITORIAL BOARD of the **“REVISTA ARGENTINA DE ANATOMÍA CLÍNICA”** adds to the sadness caused by Prof. Willie Vörster pass away and thoughts to his wife and family.



Timisoara – Romania, 2008



Cape Town – South Africa, 2009



Timisoara – Romania, 2008