



IN MEMORIAM

Wally Cox

‘Live so that when your children think of fairness, caring and integrity, they will think of you.’ This says everything about Dr Wally Cox who passed away on 23 March 2005 at the age of 85. Anything else that I may write will be nothing more than commentary.

Wally was the epitome of what family practice means – caring, considerate, empathetic, and scrupulously honest, and I consider it a privilege to have been his friend and colleague.

As a young married doctor he practised in Victoria West from 1947 to 1949, when he went to London to study for the FRCS, which he unfortunately never completed. While there, his uncle by marriage, Roux Cloete, invited Wally to join him and Koos Louw in their practice to fill the position of his father-in-law, Norman Cloete, who had left to take up the post of Medical Superintendent at Groote Schuur Hospital. He accepted the offer, and became one of the stalwarts of the practice from 1951 to 1972, involved in all the facets of rural general practice, e.g. medicine, paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology, surgery, and became a well-known and much loved figure in the community. Among his colleagues his opinion was frequently sought, and always valued. His

departure for Cape Town in 1972 left a gap which is remembered to this day.

In Cape Town, apart from a 6-month stint in a day hospital, he joined the practice of Tuppy Owen-Smith and Brian Brokensha in Rondebosch where he practised for 17 years, when failing health forced him to ‘retire’ – doing outpatient sessions at Groote Schuur Hospital until he finally retired completely. In all these years of practise his integrity remained as a constant reminder to his colleagues of what it means to be a doctor.

The Cox family is very much a medical family – Wally married Pam, Norman Cloete’s daughter, and there are 4 children – Penny, whose mother-in-law was Margaret Braun, a paediatrician at Red Cross Hospital, Peter, who is a professor in paediatric critical care in Toronto, Margaret, married to Martin Bailey (paediatrician) – a son of the late Mick Bailey, and Christopher, a general practitioner in Vancouver.

To Pam, the children, and the 10 grandchildren we extend not only our sympathy, but we share their pain on the passing of a gentleman whose death leaves a gap in their lives and also in the lives of so many of his friends and colleagues.

Morris Cohen