



Nematological Society of Southern Africa

Nematologiese Vereniging van Suider Afrika

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EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues,

Nematology in South Africa is boiling!!! and the Newsletter contributions are coming from as far as Cuba. So put your feet up and enjoy.

Jeannie van Biljon

Newsletter editor

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear member and interested person

The incessant nature of time and the coincidence of circumstances have brought about a number of issues that need the attention of organised Nematology in southern Africa and its associates. Let me share those that I am aware of with you.

First and foremost I wish to remind you of the oncoming 18th Symposium. Take your diary right now and mark the dates 6 – 9 May 2007, which will be when you'll be at the Boardwalk Conference Centre, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Remember to book your accommodation as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Refer to the first circular, which is also on the website www.sanematodes.com. Dear reader, you would not want to miss this one. Current prospects are that it would be the best one ever, which will be something. I am aware of a significant number of renowned colleagues from abroad who plan to attend. Chances are also very good that we will have the best student representation ever, simply because we have a large number of Nematology students in South Africa at the moment. Of course there will be you as well! Get working on that presentation and start preparing your abstract. Although the second circular is due a little later, the format will be similar to that we used previously. Remember, it is neither the venue nor the number of people attending that make a symposium. The quality and topicality of presentations constitute the essence of a symposium and only you, the scientists, could provide those. I am confident that, as before we will not be disappointed in this regard.

In terms of in-between meetings a number of us attended a meeting of nematologists preceding the annual Soil-borne Diseases Interest Group Workshop in Stellenbosch from 19 – 21 September. We were once more privileged to have Patrice Cadet, currently from Mont Pellier, France at this meeting, complimented by his customary valuable contributions. Unfortunately all members of the Executive Committee could not make it, so we could not have a meeting. We are trying to arrange another workshop and hope to have an EC meeting during the same event at Nelspruit. We will keep you posted.

I am happy to report that we had another two-week short course at the Potchefstroom Campus of North-West University during 19 – 30 June this year. We had a record attendance of 18 students, which implies that there was far greater interest in the course than the compliment that

was sponsored by the VL.I.R-project. This is a clear indication to me that there is indeed a demand for Nematology training in the country. Therefore I would like to urge people who know of interested candidates to contact me without delay. If we need to organise an additional course next year we need to start arrangements early next year. If we do not get the required minimum number of entries to justify costs, candidates will have to wait another year until June 2008, when VL.I.R will sponsor another course. Our contact details are provided elsewhere, as well as on the web.

Talking of the web, it gives me great pleasure to announce that Rinus Knoetze has been the 2006 recipient of the George Martin Scholarship. Although he had to supplement this amount from his pocket, he used it for training in website establishment and maintenance presented by the University of Stellenbosch. From conversations we had since I can vouch that he has great ideas and gained knowledge that will benefit our website significantly. I suggested that we have a workshop on the website during the next symposium, which I will request Greg to see to. We are indebted to Rinus for his willingness to be webmaster and for all the free time he dedicates to this task. I would like to inform you that the statistics on the site look really satisfactory. However, please do not hesitate to contact Rinus if you have any comments or suggestions. We regard this as a dynamic enterprise and we would like to keep it alive and progressive.

Applications for the George Martin Scholarship for 2007 could be submitted from now on. The announcement is published elsewhere in this newsletter and this scholarship will be announced during the gala dinner at the next symposium.

At last the abstracts of the previous symposium have been published in the latest issue of African Plant Protection. You could visit the website <http://journals.sabinet.co.za/app/> to access the abstracts. I have an electronic copy of the set in PDF format, which is available on request. This aspect and issues such as closer cooperation between related societies will be on the agenda for the next General Meeting that will be held sometime during the next symposium. Your vote could make a difference. Be reminded that those present at a meeting constitute a quorum, according to our Bye Laws.

Unfortunately we once more have to deal with real sadness. This time we mourn the passing away of Kent (K.P.N.) Kleynhans. This distinguished colleague and Honorary Member of our Society lost the battle after a long period of suffering. We will remember him as one of this country's great nematologists who left a priceless legacy to the Society, the scientific community

as well as to many crop producers and related industries. May he rest in peace. Sadly, Dr. Neal Theron of Potato SA, whom I reported very ill last time, also passed away.

On this note, but fortunately not as final I need to confirm that Dr Esther van den Berg of Nematode Biosystematics, Plant Protection Research Institute will retire at the end of November this year. This career end of Esther's marks the end of an era to many of us in more than one way. Not only is she deservedly regarded as one of the greatest nematode taxonomists of her time (and probably the most modest one too) but also I think I am correct in saying that she is the last founder-member of the Society to go into retirement. Fortunately, I wish to add quickly, that we made sure she would not be lost to the Society by having awarded her Honorary Membership some time ago. Esther and I have spoken about her position recently and I was relieved to learn that she will continue with her publishing as long as it suits her. This is excellent news indeed, because, believe me she has lots to offer the science still! Her position at the ARC is a matter of concern, though. In the first instance she was not afforded the opportunity to train her successor herself, which speaks for itself. We have to see what perspires when the position is advertised. From organised Nematology's perspective I pray that the relevant authorities make a well-considered decision, because it is not only their institute's requirements that are at stake but also all those that would be dependant on that position. Chances are remote that Esther will be replaced per se but we need someone to build upon. All of us you leave behind Esther wish you a very satisfying post-retirement period. I want to thank you for the many years of dedication and huge contributions to Nematology. You are one that imposed respect on your colleagues as well as adversaries (if any). Nematology will always respect you because you made everybody that dealt with you respect our subject. We will certainly go out of our way to keep contact with you. I salute you.

Many of you may also not know that Dr Robin Jones, formerly from Bayer Agrosience South Africa has also retired recently. Robin has been around since the inception of the Society and has been a staunch supporter throughout his career. He has made huge contributions to the Nematology industry. This Society has also directly benefited from Robin by way of sponsoring over the years, particularly lately of the Rhône Poulenc trophy. Robin told me he is going to establish a consultancy to keep him busy after retirement. We thank you for the years of loyalty and dedication to Nematology Robin. I believe you will keep in touch and that you still have a lot of value to add in your new capacity. Enjoy your extended holiday. You deserve it after a long and illustrious career in the chemical industry.

All these clearly illustrate what I said in the beginning: time does not stand still. Therefore, I want to urge everybody to not put aside those things you need to do any longer. Start preparing that presentation, book your accommodation, write that manuscript, plan those trials, contact that person you always want to but never actually do, consider who you want to lead the Society and contemplate the outcome of your choices, give thought about who might need recognition, etc. Just get going and keep going!

Till next time.

Kind regards to all.

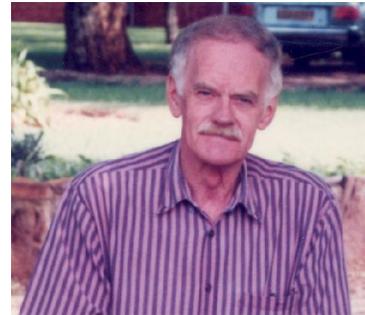
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Obituary

Kent Peter Noël Kleynhans

10.10.1935 – 31.5.2006



Kent Kleynhans was born in Boksburg on 10 October 1935. He matriculated from the Helpmekaar Boy's High School in Johannesburg in 1953. Besides his scholastic achievements, he was also a keen rugby player. He finished his military training at the Air Force Gymnasium, where he also qualified as a pilot. In 1954 he started his working career at the Department of Public Works and Land Affairs. A few years later he decided to go underground (legally) and found himself surrounded by gold as an official at a gold mine in Randfontein. Seeing that he could not stand narrow corridors he left the riches behind and became self-employed by opening a shoe repair shop in Pretoria.

His abiding interest in biology eventually led to a formal study in Entomology and Zoology at the University of Pretoria and a B Sc degree in 1962. With this new piece of paper in his pocket he started researching external parasites of animals at the Veterinary Research Institute at Onderstepoort, which formed the subject for an M Sc in Entomology and Zoology at the University of Pretoria. A looming transfer away from Pretoria prompted Kent to resign and join the staff of the Medical Research Institute in Johannesburg, where he remained until 1968. Kent realised he was actually a taxonomist at heart and decided to make a change. Towards the end of 1968, while waiting for a position to be vacated at the National Collection of Insects in the Department of Agriculture, he temporarily joined the staff of the Nematology Section under Prof. Juan Heyns at the Plant Protection Research Institute. He immediately knew this was where he belonged and he literally went underground again pursuing a future in the study of the taxonomy of plant-parasitic nematodes. Kent never looked back again and at the same time Nematology in South Africa profited from his knowledge.

Kent was involved in exciting work on the golden nematode of potato (no connection with his former years in the mines although it kept him digging in soil), maize and cotton nematodes, nematodes of nurseries and quarantine nematodes. A special interest in stunt nematodes

resulted in a Ph D in 1982 under Prof. Heyns, who, in the meantime had moved to a teaching post at the Rand Afrikaans University in Johannesburg. He continued his research on stunt nematodes as well as root-knot nematodes until his retirement on 31 January 1998. His interest in the difficult taxonomy of root-knot nematodes once made him say that he, the worms and the roots were all tied up in knots, but he was thoroughly enjoying himself.

In his work Kent was a perfectionist. His Ph D. thesis "Taksonomie van sekere terestriële nematode van die Ordes Tylenchida en Dorylaimida" was the first thesis without any mistakes submitted to the university. It was also the first doctoral thesis in Nematology presented in Afrikaans. Apart from the taxonomic research much effort went into the correct translation of nematological terms into Afrikaans, which was a first for South Africa. His articles were always returned by the referees who complimented him on his error-free work. He was meticulous in every aspect from the study of morphological structures on the nematodes to his excellent use of the English language. His good sense of perception of the minute structures on nematodes, as well as his ability to delve into obscure and virtually unobtainable literature, helped him to develop a compendium of the Family Tylenchorhynchidae, which was invaluable at that stage.

Kent will be remembered for his good nature and his ability to get along with everyone who passed his way. He was always willing to help anyone in any situation, collaborating with fellow scientists both within and outside the country. He was more than willing and eager to train young people in the science of Nematology and consequently was asked to assist with Nematology classes at the Pretoria Technical College for a couple of years. He will also be remembered for the good times we had on field trips, not only when things went well, but also when Murphy intervened and problems had to be solved. He was always the pillar you could rely on. His love for animals was an inspiration to all. Needless to say, Kent will be remembered for his interest in nature, the universe, everything around him, his research contributions and the species named after him but, also for just being a friend to all of us, who have known and worked with him for many years.

**Esther van den Berg - ARC-Plant Protection
Research Institute Pretoria**

AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRAM FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN NEMATOTOLOGY IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA



SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

In the first year of the project the following progress has been achieved:

Regional Training

- Seven nematologists from Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe attended a 6-week training course to update nematological, statistical and presentational skills and expertise. These individuals are the founder core group of the Nematode Initiative in Eastern and Southern Africa (NIESA).



Fig. 1. The first participants of the NIESA Training Course (back row: Dr Herbert Talwana, Mr Cornel Massawe and Dr John Kimenju; front row: Dr Waceke Wanjohi, Ms Nessie Lambano, Dr Zibusisu Sibanda and Mr David Kamangira) with Simon Gowen, Brian Kerry and David Hunt (inset), the nematology lecturers.

Post Graduate Training

- Three graduates working in government research stations in Tanzania and Malawi were identified by their ministries for further training in nematology. The students have successfully completed a 1 year MSc course in Tropical Agriculture Development at the University of Reading in September 2005 in preparation for their registration for PhD degrees at the Universities of Makerere, Nairobi and Kenyatta. Their research projects were conducted at the University of Reading and at CABI Bioscience and Rothamsted Research.

New Laboratories

- Six laboratories in the participating countries were equipped for nematological research and the diagnosis of soil nematodes of economic and ecological significance.

Research activities

- The initial collaborative research conducted by NIESA scientists involves three projects that target root-knot nematode control in vegetable crops, evaluating potential biological control agents and other measures and assessing the impact of these measures on nematode communities in soil.

Project titles are:

1. The use of *Pasteuria penetrans* in an appropriate cropping strategy with non or poor host crops for root-knot nematodes.
2. Optimisation of the use of *Pochonia chlamydosporia* for the management of root-knot nematodes on vegetable crops in East and Southern Africa
3. Effect of management practices on nematode communities

Details about these projects are available on the website.

Website Development

- An interactive website (<http://www.africannematology.info/index.asp>) has been established to provide access to the major nematological journals and to exchange information between NIESA scientists. The site has a public area with general information to raise awareness of nematode problems in the region.

Regional Meetings

- Two meetings of NIESA scientists have taken place, the first at the International Livestock Research Institute, Nairobi, Kenya in August 2005 and the second in Kampala,

Uganda in March, 2006 to determine research priorities and coordinate activities and to develop a long-term strategy for NIESA.

Publications

- An illustrated leaflet was produced by participants in the training course to inform policy makers, funding agencies and interested individuals/organizations about the mission of NIESA and its relevance to nematological problems in the area.
- A Training Manual, produced by NIESA is near to completion and will be available on the public-access area of the website.

Invited presentations

- Dr Sibanda was invited to give a presentation at a meeting for the NGO and donor community (including FAO) in Harare on 30 March. The talk highlighted the effect of nematodes on horticultural crops grown by smallholder farmers, with whom the donor communities are greatly involved.
- Dr Herbert Talwana gave a presentation about NIESA's activities at the European Society of Nematologists at their biennial meeting in Bulgaria in June 2006.
- Prof Brian Kerry was invited to contribute to the British Association of Science meeting in Dublin in October 2005 and has been invited to give a similar presentation at the European Federation of Plant Pathologists meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark in August, 2006.

Prof Kerry also gave a talk to science correspondents about the relevance of his work to Africa's pest problems

Herbert Talwana

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NEWS FROM ARC-GRAIN CROPS INSTITUTE

Three students from the ARC-GCI attended the Nematology Short Course that was held from 19 – 30 June 2006 at the North West University, Potchefstroom Campus. Eighteen people attended the course that was mainly sponsored by the VLIR-project. Dirk De Waele from Belgium paid a brief visit to GCI in connection with the VLIR project and also presented a lecture on Tropical Nematology during the Nematology Workshop.

One of the DST-students, Tshiamo Mothata is currently busy to compile her thesis as the final requirement to obtain the Masters Degree in Plant Protection (Nematology) at North-West University. Her project entails the evaluation and verification of resistance in vegetable crops for sustainable root-knot nematode management in developing agriculture in South Africa. This project forms part of the VLIR-project sponsored by the Flemish Interuniversity Council (Belgium). Tshiamo also successfully completed the Nematology Short Course mentioned above. Nancy Ntidi is also busy with the academical and practical modules of the MSc-course in Plant Protection and will finalise this degree at the end of 2007. Regarding other students, Hangwani Muedi (PDP) and Lucas Ngobeni (DST) are currently conducting research projects for their PhD-studies. Hangwani's project encompasses the evaluation of dry bean genotypes for host suitability to root-knot nematodes and introgression of resistance into local, popular material. On the other hand the project of Lucas focuses on root-knot nematode resistance in maize.

Personnel of the Nematology Department of the GCI attended a number of congresses during 2006. Driekie Fourie, Lucas Ngobeni and Hangwani Muedi attended the 6th Plant Breeding Symposium held at Club Mykonos in Langebaan from 13 – 15 March 2006. Driekie received the price for the best paper presentation during this meeting. During 4-9 June 2006 Driekie also attended the XXVIII Symposium of the European Society of Nematologists (4–9 June 2006, Blagoevgrad in Bulgaria where she presented two posters. Nancy Ntidi presented a paper during the SRL Congress in July in Pretoria where she elaborated on plant-parasitic nematodes that are associated with weeds in developing agricultural systems in South Africa. Furthermore, Alex McDonald and Sonia Steenkamp attended the Soilborne Meeting in Stellenbosch during September.

Personnel of the Nematology Department of the GCI were also involved in contract work for various companies concerning the evaluation of potential nematicides on groundnut, soybean,

maize, etc. An addition to the personnel corps of the Nematology Department also took place with Mr Abram Tladi being appointed as Research Assistant during July 2006.

**The Nematologists from Potch
ARC -GCI**

NEWS FROM THE WESTERN CAPE

Nemlab, Durbanville

First of all we would like to congratulate Mario Ontong with his achievement. Mario managed to pass the Nematology Short Course presented at the University of North West, Potchefstroom, 19 – 30 June 2006. A celebration in honour of his achievement was held at the Hillcrest Berry Farm on the 12th September where we enjoyed a lovely lunch and view.



Sheila has made an interesting discovery from a fig sample collected from the farm Hoogwater, Wolseley. Both root knot nematode as well as a cyst nematode were discovered in this sample. Antoinette Swart (ARC, Biosystematics Division, Pretoria) identified the cysts as *Heterodera fici*, a nematode which is not often seen or heard of. Antoinette Malan, Caroline Mouton, Rinus Knoetze and Sheila Storey is currently executing further studies on this nematode and its host and will hopefully be presenting a poster on this nematode at the next NSSA symposium in 2007.

Another interesting field Sheila is currently working on is the problem of citrus nematode on persimmons. Approximately 10 years ago the first imported consignment of persimmons was destroyed by Plant Health Diagnostic Services (Stellenbosch) on account of heavy infestations of citrus and root knot nematode. Producers were informed of the possible future problem since citrus nematode already occurred in certain areas of the Western Cape at that stage and grapevine is also a host of citrus nematode. Currently, the citrus nematode problem is occurring and quickly increasing on the persimmons. The damage to the trees are severe, especially when the trees are ring barked (a normal practice). The extra stress of the citrus nematode together with the ring barking causes the trees to die. According to the literature, persimmons are even more susceptible to citrus nematode than Citrus itself.

The Nemlab website has finally been completed and is up and running. Sheila apologises that it took so long and invites you to visit her website at: www.nemlab.co.za

Sheila Storey and Caroline Mouton

Plant Health, Stellenbosch

Rinus visited Chile in July for a pre-importation inspection of Hazelnuts. During his visit he had the opportunity to visit the central laboratories of Chile's Servicio Agricole et Ganadero (SAG) and meet their nematologists, which were so kind to take him on a tour of Santiago.



Rinus and the Chile nematologists.

Rinus Knoetze - Plant Health, Stellenbosch

ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij, Stellenbosch

The very sad news from Infruitec-Nietvoorbij is the sudden death of Dawn Smith's husband, Andrè, on 23 August, after suffering a heart attack. Dawn is Hans's left and right hand, without whom he would be lost. Our thoughts go out to Dawn and her two young daughters Chandrè and Simonè.

Hans Hugo, with major inputs from Antoinette Malan, completed a report for Winetech, the wine industry's research arm, on the occurrence of parasitic nematodes in irrigation water. The report also listed the gaps in our present knowledge and areas that need to be researched. At the report-back meeting Winetech showed some interest in these proposals and hopefully this will lead to some funded projects.

Nematologists were well represented at the 16th annual symposium of the Soilborne Plant Diseases Interest Group held at Stellenbosch 19-21 September 2006. Hans Hugo was the chairperson of the Nematode Discussion Group on the Tuesday afternoon, Alex McDonald was the chairperson of the 1st Session until his voice ran out of decibels and he was reduced to less than a whisper. As we all know is alcohol a sterilant so his condition can only be attributed to not swallowing enough wine the previous evening. Sheila Storey was the chairperson of the 3rd

Session, which featured Shaun Berry and Patrice Cadet, both discussing different aspects of silicone and plant health. As there were nothing wrong with these people's voices, they obviously swallowed enough wine to keep their throats healthy. Mieke Daneel also made a valuable contribution in her presentation during the 2nd Session. Other nematologists that attended were Antoinette Malan, Sonia Steenkamp, Vaughan Spaul, Anelia Steyn, Jeannie van Biljon and MC Pretorius.

Retired Prof. Bertus Meyer is still very much unretiring and is a co-worker with Hans Hugo on a project on nematode damage and root pathology of apple roots. As the bulk of the work is done during the spring root flush of the trees, this work will keep them very much occupied until the end of November. Apart from that his time is filled to capacity with experimental field work looking at possible new and safer nematicides.

Hans Hugo - ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij

University of Stellenbosch

The Department of Entomology and the Conservation Ecology officially formed a merger on the 1st March 2006 and will onwards be known as the Department of Conservation Ecology and Entomology (ConsEnt). The new department will interact and integrate, but will still maintain the identity in the two fields.

A third year introductory undergraduate semester course in Nematology is presented at the University of Stellenbosch, which includes plant and insect nematodes. Emphasis is placed on the morphological characteristics which are of diagnostic value, this also forms the basis of the taxonomic classification of nematodes. General reproduction and biology of nematodes are discussed. Control of plant parasitic nematodes and the control of insects with the use of entomopathogenic nematodes are covered. Focus is placed on the biology, identification and control of plant parasitic genera of economic importance to agriculture. The lectures are combined with 14 practical sessions in which extraction techniques, symptomatology and live specimens of nematodes are being studied by stereo and light microscopy. At the end of the module the students should be familiar with the theoretical, as well as having a practical knowledge of plant parasitic nematodes and the biological control of insects by using nematodes.

Students attending the undergraduate semester course in Nematology are from Plant Pathology, Viticulture, Horticulture and Soil Sciences. As this semester course is attended by 32 students this year, two undergraduate students, Jeanne de Waal and Tiarin Ferreira, are employed as "demi's" to assist with the practical classes. Post graduate studies in Nematology resume on M.Sc. and Ph.D. level with either insect or plant parasitic nematodes as the topic of study. Jeanne will start her MSc in Entomology in 2007, and her thesis will be on the control of codling moth with entomopathogenic nematodes.



Jeanne de Waal

Tiarin Ferreira

Antoinette Malan - University of Stellenbosch

PLANT HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE (INISAV) - CUBA

Some considerations on the nematodes in crops under plastics
(Protected crops) in Cuba.

The development of protected crops is very fast in Cuba, they include mainly tomatoes, cucumber and peppers of high quality .Some pests such as plant parasitic nematodes (Meloidogyne incognita is the most common)are very important because all these crops are susceptible to them. Different scientific institutions are working in the nematode control practices in order to reduce the losses.

Use of healthy seedlings, soil tillage, remove of roots after each crop and biological control agents (such as *Trichoderma* spp, *Pochonia chlamydosporia*) are include in Nematode Management Systems in different parts of the island.Recently has been studied the efficacy of trap crops as lettuce, which is possible to use in short times (27-29 days)to reduce the root-knot nematodes in the soil and also allows to obtain a fresh vegetable to sale for the farmers.

Cuban institutions are open to do collaboration projects in this sense in order to improve our goals.

Emilio Fernandez

SOME NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Two nematology students have completed their PhD studies this year. Firstly, Hugues Baimey (from Benin) completed his dissertation titled "Scutellonema Bradys as a pathogen of yam in Benin" . From his study the following three publications have appeared in scientific journals :

Coyne, D., Tchabi, A., Baimey, H., Labuschagne, N. & Rotifa, I. 2005. Distribution and prevalence of nematodes (*Scutellonema bradys* and *Meloidogyne* spp.) on marketed yam (*Dioscorea* spp.) in West Africa. *Field Crops Research*,96:142-150.

Baimey, H., Coyne, D. & Labuschagne, N. 2005. Assessment of inoculation methods in evaluating response of yam cultivars to infection by *Scutellonema bradys*. *Nematology*, 7(3):375-379.

Baimey, H., Coyne, D. & Labuschagne, N. 2005. Effect of fertilizer application on yam nematode (*Scutellonema bradys*) multiplication and consequent damage to yam (*Dioscorea* spp) under field and storage conditions in Benin. *International Journal of Pest management* 52(1):63-70.

Secondly , Shahasi Athman (originally from Kenia) has completed her PhD study titled "Host-endophyte-pest interactions of endophytic *Fusarium oxysporum* antagonistic to *Radopholus similis* in banana (*Musa* spp.) ." From her thesis the following article has been published:

S.Y. Athman, T. Dubois, A. Viljoen, N. Labuschagne, D. Coyne, P. Ragama, C.S Gold and B. Niere. 2006. In vitro antagonism of endophytic *Fusarium oxysporum* isolates against the burrowing nematode *Radopholus similis*. *Nematology*8(4):627-636.

From her thesis a number of other articles are also in preparation.

Our congratulations to these two students.

With kind regards,

Nico Labuschagne

ESTHER VAN DEN BERG - RETIRING

As most of you probably know Dr Esther van den Berg is retiring at the end of November. That is the official date but she promised us that she would continue helping us and that she would also continue with the biosystematics of "her worms". Dr Esther's last official day at PPRI will be on Tuesday the 30th November and we have graciously granted her a rest day on the Friday, but she promised to be back in her laboratory behind her microscope on Monday the 4th of December. There will be one major difference, from now on she would not have to deal with all the administrative red tape that is part and parcel of being a programme manager in the ARC.

Writing this is tough because it brings the reality of her retirement so much closer, but it is also a privilege to tell every one about a lady that we have shared so much with, a lady that mentored and taught us about nematodes and taxonomy, a lady that we have travelled thousands of kilometre with, first in a small Mazda 323, then in station wagons and bakkies and even in a air-conditioned 4 X 4, a lady that was always there when one of us had some kind of crisis and also somebody to share all those slightly risqué jokes with.

Esther van den Berg was born in Ermelo on 18 November 1941. Her father worked for the Department of Labour and they moved around quite a lot. Therefore before matriculating from the Hoërskool Langenhoven in Pretoria in 1959 she was enrolled in seven different schools. This is probably when she got bitten by that travel bug, but more about that later. Dr Esther wanted to become a pharmacist but one month into her practical year (way back then you had to do your practical year before starting your degree), the powers that be told her that they do not need her any more – bad luck to them. After an aptitude test at the University of Pretoria where they told her that she would be a perfect entomologist she enrolled for a B.Sc., which she obtained in 1962. In March 1963 while working towards a M.Sc. on the taxonomy of a beetle she started working at the Department of Entomology of the University of Pretoria, which was back then still part of the Department of Agricultural Technical Services. In 1968 because with a M.Sc. she was over qualified for the post at Tukkies, she moved to the Transvaal Region of the Department of Agricultural Technical Services. After a few months of intense boredom she went to ask for help from Dr Lenie Meyer. Dr Meyer knew that Dr Johan Furstenberg was leaving the Nematology Section to join the University of Port Elizabeth and she went to speak to Prof Juan Heyns. Apparently Prof Heyns's first reaction was that he does not want a woman, because they just want to get married and then they leave and then he has to start training somebody else.

Luckily for us he changed his mind. A few years back when we were celebrating Dr Esther's sixtieth birthday she asked Prof Heyns, to his delight, if she may now get married. So in November 1968 Dr Esther joined the Nematology Section of PPRI and with that the pioneering taxonomic team of Heyns, Kleynhans and Van den Berg was formed. Prof Heyns started Dr Esther working on the genus *Hoplolaimus* and then the rest of the family *Hoplolaimidae* and also the genus *Pratylenchus*. In 1974 Dr Esther obtained the first Ph.D. in Nematology in South Africa from the Rand Afrikaans University. Through the years she also specialized in the taxonomy of the *Criconematidae* and the *Tylenchulidae*. Dr Esther published a vast number of peer reviewed papers and the last count stands at 142.

Esther van den Berg is now a fellow of the NSSA and is also one of the founding members of the society and was one of that group that attended the first symposium at Nelspruit in 1973. She, with her co-authors of the book "Plant nematodes in South Africa," was awarded the Rhone-Poulenc award for achievement in Nematology in 1997.

But let us get back to that travel bug business. Dr Esther have what we in Afrikaans call "jukkende voete" that means that she have this intense desire to see what is around the next corner and to see what all the unknown places look like. During the last decade or three Dr Esther travelled far and wide, from Alaska to Zambia and everywhere in between. Her other passion besides travelling of which the guinea fowl, lapwings, weavers, barbets, sparrows and even the mynahs at Rietondale can be witnesses is her love for animals, especially the feathered variety. During the 20 years that I have worked with Dr Esther we also got to know a few highly spoiled, much loved budgie "children".

Mariette Marais & Antoinette Swart

MEMENTO FOR SONJA STEENKAMP AND
ALEX Mc DONALD



Jeannie van Biljon

ARC-IIC, Rustenburg

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NEMATOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA GEORGE MARTIN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are invited for the "GEORGE MARTIN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP" tenable for the year 2006. The award, to the value of R 4000.00 is open to persons from countries of southern Africa: South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

The purpose of the scholarship is to promote nematology in southern Africa, preferably by assisting the successful candidate to attend a recognized course in nematology.

Applicants must be serious about pursuing a career in nematology and about furthering the science of nematology. The successful candidate will be expected to give a paper at the next NSSA symposium and/or report in the Society's newsletter how the funds were used.

A letter of application and a curriculum vitae should be sent before 30 March 2007 to:

Dr Alex Mc Donald
Divisional Manager – Crop Protection
Agricultural Research Council – Grain Crops Institute,
Private Bag X 1251, Potchefstroom, South Africa
Tel: (018) 299 6369 / Fax: (018) 294 7146 (Int: + 27 18)
mcdonalda@arc.agric.za

OR

Dr Driekie Fourie
E-mail address: fouriehd@arc.agric.za
Postal address: ARC – GCI, Private Bag X1251, Potchefstroom, 2520
Fax: +27 18 294 7146
Tel: +27 18 299 6352

NEMATOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
NEMATOLOGIESE VERENIGING VAN SUIDELIKE AFRIKA
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I _____
(Name of applicant)

apply for membership of the Nematological Society of Southern Africa.

I am enclosing _____ US \$ for the period 19____ - ____ (RSA member: R 50.00/annum;

Non-RSA member _____ US \$ 25.0/annum)

Please make cheque payable to:

Nematological Society of Southern Africa, and sent to:

Mrs Driekie Fourie Agricultural Research Council – Grain Crops Institute,
Private Bag X 1251, Potchefstroom, South Africa
Tel: (018) 299 6352 / Fax: (018) 294 7146 (Int: + 27 18)

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NEMATODE GROUPS _____

OLD MEMBER: Yes / No _____ SINCE _____

NEW MEMBER: Yes / No _____ DATE OF APPLICATION _____

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