



LEST WE FORGET

Terence William Higginson

16 June 1949 – 8 June 2025

Terence William Higginson, known to his colleagues as Terry, was born on 16 June 1949, soon after his parents had emigrated from England to South Africa. He was the second of eight children.

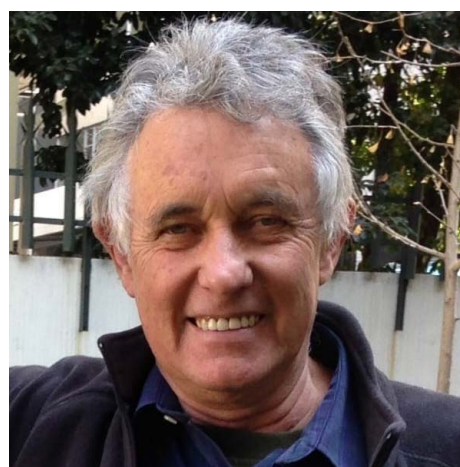
The family first settled in Durban North, where Terry, as a young child, developed severe asthma. In 1955, hoping the inland air would help his condition, the family moved to Manor Gardens, Durban. This house became the vibrant heart of the Higginson household until the 1980s.

In 1958, to further support his health, Terry was sent to a primary school in Underberg. There, his asthma improved, and he embraced rural life—collecting snakes and field mice with enthusiasm. Terry finished high school at St Henry's Marist Brothers School—conveniently accessed via a back gate just 100 meters from the family home.

As teenagers, Terry and his brother Gavan shared countless adventures with school friends and neighbours. They especially loved the Sea Scouts and even formed a band during the 1960s. Terry's musical talent blossomed with the Hammond organ, and though he performed beautifully, he eventually grew tired of being expected to entertain. In a famous family anecdote, Terry once secretly played a Dennis van Rooyen record while pretending to perform it live—receiving rave reviews from the guests and endless laughter from the family after the ruse was revealed. He never played publicly again.

In 1968 Terry enrolled at Durban Tech to study pharmacy. This coincided with his hippie days, and he enjoyed the free-spirited lifestyle of the era—jazz clubs, weekend escapes to Kloof Gorge and Nagel Dam, and playing music with friends. In 1971, he enrolled at Maritzburg Varsity where he did a year of medicine before returning to Durban to complete his Pharmacy diploma. In that year he also met his wife to be.

After graduating from pharmacy school, he moved to Cape Town where he became operations manager at Amalgamated Chemists Association (ACA). After marriage in 1976, the couple travelled to Europe, hoping to relocate to Ireland. Unfortunately, the reciprocal agreement that would have allowed Terry to register as a pharmacist had expired. The weather also conspired against them, and they returned to make South Africa their home. They bought their first “fixer upper” in Mowbray, Cape Town in 1980 and in 1983 he travelled to the



United States to study warehouse designs for ACA's new premises—a notable career milestone.

In 1986 the family, now including two young daughters, relocated to Pietermaritzburg, where Terry joined Midlands Wholesale Chemists as part of the management team. He remained there till the year 2000, when he bought the well-known Fields Pharmacy in Boshoff Street, Pietermaritzburg. It became a cherished community hub, though the changing pharmaceutical industry eventually forced its closure in 2013. When the doors closed for the last time, customers—some loyal for over 40 years—arrived with flowers, cards, and cakes. “It was quite moving... I didn't realise these relationships went so deep,” Terry reflected.

He continued to serve as a locum pharmacist, both short and long term in retail and hospitals, working tirelessly until his very last day. Terry was deeply dedicated to his profession – knowledgeable, kind, and respected by colleagues and customers.

Meanwhile, when not dispensing medicine and advice, Terry kept busy socially. Around 2009 Terry joined the Durban Ramblers Hiking Club. What began as a gentle attempt at fitness soon turned into a passionate hobby. Within months, he was tackling all but the most strenuous hikes and enjoyed many weekends away, social dinners and parties. After a severe asthma attack in 2016 effectively ended his hiking days, Terry remained a part of the group and continued to

attend the annual New Year's Eve parties at Cumberland, right up until his last, in 2024/25. He continued his beloved walks in the hills above Blackridge with his two loyal dogs, and often with his daughters, Lisa and Rita, on weekends.

He loved family holidays to Mozambique, Lesotho, Kruger Park and adventures across the country. Trips with Terry were always an adventure. It was also in 2009 that he travelled to Southeast Asia and Australia with his daughters, to see the sights, and to spend time with his brother Gavan in Australia. He visited again in 2017, before Gavan died in January 2018. Gavan's tragic departure inspired Terry to make the most of his remaining years. He enjoyed family gatherings, social outings with friends, sports, reading, movies and documentaries.

When Terry arrived in Pietermaritzburg in 1986 he became an active member of the Inland Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA). Terry had a sharp, irreverent sense of humour and loved a good debate. He held strong opinions on everything from politics

to music to sport and enjoyed lively conversations. This kept fellow pharmacists on their toes at PSSA meetings. Terry could also be relied upon to express useful opinions on posts published on the Druginfo mailing list.

He was elected Chairman of the branch from 1995 to 1998. He was elected as a committee member in 2016 and as Vice Chairman in 2020 and in 2021.

In January 2008 the branch awarded him Honorary Life Membership. That same year, at the Society's Annual General Meeting, Terry was designated a Fellow of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa. Two well-earned honours indeed.

Rest in Peace, Terry Higginson.

Susan Buekes

My heartfelt thanks to Lisa and Rita for permitting me to select content from their eulogy delivered at their father's memorial service.