

Tribute to Johannes Frederik Izak Smit (Hannes): 15 December 1962 to 30 August 2014

I have known Hannes for many years, first he was one of my employees and after I left the KZN Department of Transport, Hannes stayed in contact. At least once a month he would phone me to find out how we as a family were doing and update me on the news of the Department and some of his own family news. He was a true and loyal friend indeed.

On occasions I would visit him and his wife, Meisie, in Ladysmith when travelling down to Pietermaritzburg. I always got the impression that it was extraordinary for them to receive visitors. And they went out of their way to make me feel very special.

The highlight of any year for Hannes was undoubtedly to be involved with the budgie show and to come and help the Pietermaritzburg Budgerigar Club at the budgie shows. He was an Honorary Member of the club due to the exemplary service to the club. He was an example to all of us.

Hannes would become extremely agitated if he was not kept informed of arrangements.



He was an absolute “freak” when it came to selling raffle tickets at the entrance to the bird hall. Nobody escaped his claws. He would do this tirelessly from early morning to closing time. I believe that if the show was scheduled for a week he would do his duties every day with the same enthusiasm. Whenever one saw Hannes he was either selling tickets or disposing of surplus birds. Never a word of complaint!

Two facts that made his efforts even more remarkable are:

- Hannes only had a few budgies as pets. He was not a bird breeder with a large aviary, breeding cages and exhibiting birds on the shows.
- He did not have transport. He used to come down from Ladysmith and return by taxi (minibus type), bus, and train and on occasions hitchhiked!

One year Hannes was mortified as he was hospitalized with high blood pressure during the show. His solution was that he would book himself out of hospital for the two days of the show and then afterwards he merely goes back!! It took a lot of convincing to keep him in hospital

On the 15th December 2014 we will commemorate his birthday and it would be the first without Hannes and 2015 will be PMBBC’s first show season without Hannes. He will be sincerely missed!

It has been an honour for me to know Hannes and I continued to be humbled by his commitment and dedication to our hobby. I am proud that Hannes considered me as his friend.

Hannes was keen to join us as a member of AWEBSA but unfortunately passed on before we were founded on 14 September 2014. He would have been proudly AWEBSA.

“Die Heer droog al die trane af,

Verby is droefheid, dood.

Ja, pyn en smart wyk uit die hart –

Ons moeite, angs en nood.”

May his soul rest in peace. We will miss you, Johannes Frederik Izak Smit, alias “Ys beertjie!”

Johan Lucas

AWEBSA Chairperson