

OBITUARY: Dr Paddy Ewer

Witness late Feb 2015

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RESPECTED Pietermaritzburg academic and sportman Dr Paddy Ewer (71) died on Sunday, after losing the battle against cancer.

Fondly known as "Mr P" to his friends, he had a long association with the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal as senior lecturer and past deputy dean.

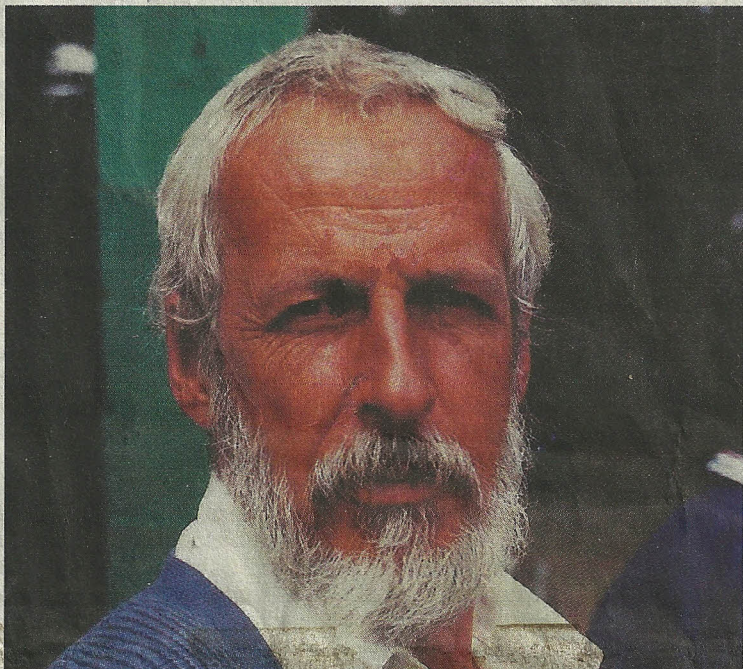
His parents taught zoology in the then faculty of science during the 1950s and 60s. He went on to study mathematics at the University of Cape Town, gaining a BSc (1965) and MSc (1967).

He started his post-university career as a junior lecturer at Cape Town followed by posts at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana; St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Varndean School for Girls, Brighton, England, as a teacher; and the University of Malawi, where he rose to associate professor and dean. He then went on to the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe.

While in England he completed a second master's degree at the University of Sussex in 1971 (with distinction). During his tenure as senior lecturer in Zimbabwe, he completed a doctoral qualification in 2000.

Ewer taught mathematics at Pietermaritzburg and from very early after his arrival as a senior lecturer developed a reputation for being a tough but lovable teacher.

His administration skills were well honed from his time at the University of Malawi where he served as dean of the faculty of science for seven years, overseeing many new educational ini-



Dr Paddy Ewer.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

tiatives. He also served UKZN in this critical area.

As was typical of the man, he completed the 2015 Student Handbook late in 2014 while in hospital fighting the cancer that he succumbed to.

His razor wit, plethora of appropriate jokes or stories and his willingness to participate in every fun-run, dressed as ridiculously as possible to honour the theme, will stay with all who had the privilege of working with him.

He was, for many years, a stalwart

of the Grignard Pub darts team, earning himself an "honorary" membership of the chemistry department. He was also a very skilled bridge and poker player, often putting a deadpan expression to good use to win money from unsuspecting young guns.

His great sporting loves were tennis and cricket. He served as an umpire for KZN Club Cricket for several years.

Ewer is survived by his wife Patricia and children, Katie and Jonny.

The family will hold a private wake.