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AUTHOR:

John H. Hoffmann¹

AFFILIATION:

¹Department of Biological Sciences,
University of Cape Town, Cape Town,
South Africa

CORRESPONDENCE TO:

John Hoffmann

EMAIL:

John.Hoffmann@uct.ac.za

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Vincent Clifford Moran (1937–2023): Internationally recognised entomologist and committed administrator

Cliff was born on 22 September 1937 in Harare, Zimbabwe (formerly Salisbury, Rhodesia) where he grew up, attending Prince Edward High School and attaining Cambridge 'A' levels. He then went on to study Entomology at Rhodes University in Makhandla (formerly Grahamstown), South Africa, where he graduated with a BSc (Honours) (1959), MSc (1962) and PhD (1967). In 1962 he married Peggy Maureen (née Fellowes). They had two sons, Derek (1967) and Peter (1970).

After completing his MSc, Cliff was appointed as a Lecturer in Zoology at Rhodes, with promotions to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and, in 1979, Professor of Entomology, a position he retained until 1985. He also served as Dean of the Faculty of Science at Rhodes from 1983 to 1985 and was elected to the Rhodes University Council from 1984 to 1985. In 1986 he moved to the University of Cape Town (UCT) where he served as Dean of the Faculty of Science, a permanent, full-time appointment he held until 1998. He was also elected to the University of Cape Town's Council from 1987 to 1995. He retired in 1999, becoming Professor Emeritus and a Research Fellow at UCT.

In his early career, Cliff excelled as a lecturer and inspired many young undergraduate and postgraduate students to pursue careers in entomology. He also became a diligent administrator and was widely appreciated for his fairness and untiring efforts to facilitate and improve the working environment for all. Cliff developed a keen enthusiasm for research, specialising in plant/insect relationships. Initially he worked on citrus pests, but he changed direction in 1974 when he teamed up with Dr Dave Annecke of the then Plant Protection Research Institute (PPRI) of the South African Department of Agriculture to become involved in research on biological control of invasive alien plants.

Cliff's role in the relationship was to bring university-based researchers on board, to complement those working at the 'coal face' at PPRI. Cliff tackled the task enthusiastically and the synergy flourished. A substantial team of entomologists and pathologists became established in facilities across the country, working on a diverse array of problematic plant species with some outstanding successes. The collaboration continues with researchers at several universities now actively involved, working closely with each other and with colleagues at the PPRI. Thanks to the leadership provided by Cliff and Dave in driving this initiative, South Africa became recognised as a world leader in the field of biological control. Cliff was especially pleased when his commitments to biological control turned full circle in 2017 with the formation of the Centre for Biological Control at Rhodes University where he had first become involved in this field of research.

Although Cliff was increasingly committed to administration as his career progressed, he never shied away from remaining active in research. He continued to supervise postgraduate students, leading to the award of 18 MSc and 18 PhD degrees. He particularly enjoyed being involved in projects which provided opportunities to spend time in the field where he could interact and socialise with students and colleagues. He and Dave Annecke wrote a book on insects and mites of cultivated plants in South Africa which remains a definitive work. He is an author on more than 100 research articles, most of which are published in international journals of repute (with citations of ca 5500, an *h*-index of 42, and *i10*-index of 93). Cliff was always convinced that research being undertaken in South Africa deserved to be exposed on the international stage. He insisted that findings should be published only in the most high-profile journals possible, and that MSc and PhD theses should be examined by overseas experts. He also took every opportunity to spend sabbaticals at the best universities he could get to, including Oxford University, Imperial College of London, Cornell University, University of Arizona, and Oregon State University. He befriended many overseas world leaders in the field of plant/insect relationships and persuaded several to spend time in South Africa working with colleagues and students here and providing an abundance of lasting benefits, particularly for research into biological control in South Africa.

His contributions to entomology were widely recognised both nationally and internationally. He was awarded an A-rating from the South African National Research Foundation from 1992 to 1996. Other national awards included the Botanical Society of South Africa's Denys Heesom Award (1990); Fellowship of the Royal Society of South Africa (1991); Life Fellowship of the University of Cape Town (1991); Founder Member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (1994); Honorary Life Membership of the Entomological Society of Southern Africa (1999); and Doctor of Science *honoris causa* (Rhodes University) (2005). Internationally he received fellowships from the Royal Entomological Society of London (1966), the Linnaean Society (1972), and the British Ecological Society (1984). He was also regularly invited as a plenary and keynote speaker at international conferences.

Cliff contributed in many ways to the advancement of entomology in South Africa and to other avenues of science. He served as editor of the *Journal of the Entomological Society of Southern Africa* (1972–1979) and as President of the Society (1981–1983). He also sat on several national science committees and was involved in organising national and international conferences, including as Chair of the IX International Symposium for the Biological Control of Weeds (Stellenbosch, 1996) and on the scientific programme committee of the International Congress of Entomology (Durban, 2008). In everything he became involved in, Cliff was always fully committed to the task at hand and ensured that any outcomes would be the best possible. There was no place in his life for half measures, or for accepting a position only to gain some limelight.



Cliff will be remembered by many as a diligent colleague, a fine tutor, a keen sportsman and a committed friend. He had boundless energy for everything he did. On the sports fields he excelled at squash, representing both South African Universities and Eastern Province. He was also a fine single-figure handicap golfer. He loved walking and spent many hours striding the countryside, exercising and gathering his thoughts. He never tired of visiting national parks and remote areas where he was seldom without a pair of binoculars, relishing the opportunity to observe animals, particularly birds, in their natural surroundings. Cliff also excelled at woodwork, having a well-equipped workshop in which he made, among other things, beautiful inlaid tables and very fine benches, both for his home and as generous gifts to appreciative friends. Listening

to classical music was another pastime Cliff really relished, through both live performances and playing his extensive collection of vinyl records and CDs.

An integral part of Cliff's life was to settle down of an evening and reminisce over a beer or two. He was a raconteur of note, reciting tales of past experiences or making plans for what to do next. He lived life to the full – an enthusiasm that rubbed off and brought out the best in those who were lucky enough to spend time with him. With his passing on 30 August 2023, Cliff has left a great void and he will be very much missed for his many fine attributes.

Sincere condolences to Peggy, and to Derek and Peter and their families.