

Dr Daryl Hunt

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce myself to you, just a few weeks after Dr Jacqui de Villiers-Rodmell and myself become the new veterinarians at the Craggs Veterinary Clinic.

I was born in Johannesburg in the early 1970's and was lucky to have parents who not only encouraged my early fascination with animals, but who tolerated the expression of this in my collecting of all manner and number of small, furry creatures. Breeding everything from mice to Ferrets soon led to a substantial collection of reptiles too, and at one point I cared for a Bushbaby called Binki, the pinnacle of my small menagerie.

This all changed when I went to boarding school, but the passion for animals continued, and I focused my attention on becoming a vet. I started a BSc at Wits and after my 1st year of general science, I was accepted into the veterinary degree at Onderstepoort, where I graduated in 1996. Half way through my degree, Jacqui began her veterinary nursing diploma, and being very much birds of a feather, we have been firm friends ever since.

I then went to England to get some experience while paying off student loans, making the most of this opportunity to travel quite extensively, and ended up spending about 5 years abroad. But the South African sunshine is a difficult habit to break, and I returned home in the early 2000's, just after finishing a course in Veterinary Acupuncture, delivered in the UK by the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society.

When I came back to South Africa I wanted to experience something different from the big city that I had grown up in, so I decided to stay a locum and move around the country a bit. Work took me from Jozi to the Natal Midlands and then down to the Mother City. I decided to settle in Cape Town in 2003.

Up until then I had worked mainly with Small Animals (dogs, cats and other companion animals, as apposed to farm animals) other than a few locum jobs in Equine practices, and wanted to broaden my professional horizons. So when the opportunity arose, I took a job at

the Johannesburg Zoo in 2007 where I gained some fantastic clinical experience with wildlife and many exotic species.

I then moved back into the small animal field in a private practice in Johannesburg where I met Cindy, who was the veterinary nurse there at the time. We moved down to Cape Town in 2008, and have been together in the Southern suburbs since then. In 2012 we were blessed with our first child, Eden, who is now teaching us all about life and Love in the way that only a two-year old can. I currently work at the Cape Animal Medical Centre in Kenilworth, Cape Town, a Small Animal referral and emergency centre.

When I was 12 years old I was lucky enough to join a friend of mine's family on the Otter Trail (and even luckier to have done it again twice since then!), and we were spoilt to be able to stay on after this in Nature's Valley for a week of holiday. I remember being in absolute awe of the natural beauty of the place and its surroundings, and even at that age, wondering why people live in Johannesburg at all.

Again, when I returned to South Africa from England and made trips to the Craggs area, I have always felt a yearning to live in this wonderful part of our country, but somehow the opportunity never arose, until now. I am very pleased that my friend Jacqui and her family made the bold move last year, re-locating to Ingwe from England, and opening up the possibility of us perhaps working together some day. And that it then so serendipitously happened that Laura decided to follow a different path, and has seen us fit to take over the practice that she has so lovingly and passionately built over the last two and a bit years. So that I now have the chance to be part of the Craggs community as your veterinarian.

I am very much looking forward to bringing my growing family to live in one of the most beautiful parts of our country, and to offering you my service, both as a veterinarian and as a member of your community.