

Richard Peter Mohring



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Richard Peter Mohring, fondly known by us all as 'Rick'.

Rick was born in Johannesburg in 1947 and died in Johannesburg in March 2016 after a two-year struggle with cancer. He received his formative education at King Edward VII School, also in Johannesburg. Therefore, Rick was surrounded by mine dumps from an early age and it must have been during these years that mining crept into his blood, because on leaving school he enrolled at the University of the Witwatersrand to read for a Bachelor's degree in Mining Engineering.

On graduation as a mining engineer in 1972, Rick started his career with Rand Mines on Durban Roodepoort Deep gold mine, where he progressed through the ranks to that of Underground Manager. In 1975, Rick was transferred to the Rand Mines coal division, where he began his illustrious career in coal mining. He underwent a meteoric rise in the coal division – in 1981 at the age of 34, Rick was appointed General Manager of Welgedacht Exploration Company and in 1984 he was appointed Managing Director of Rand Coal.

Rick was involved with many achievements in the South African coal mining industry, *inter alia* the design and running of Middelburg Mine, a 10 million ton per annum coal mine; the development of the Khutala and Majuba collieries utilizing high-capacity continuous miners; conducting coal-bed methane drainage tests (the precursor of 'fracking'), and combining a large export colliery (Middelburg) with an Eskom supply colliery (Duhva). During this time he rose to be the Senior Operations Manager of Ingwe Coal Corporation and then the Chief Executive Officer of NewCoal, an initiative set up by Anglo Coal and Ingwe to create a Black Economic Empowerment entity in the coal mining industry. After an 18-month process the largest BEE coal company, Eysizwe Coal, was formed with Rick as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer to oversee a smooth transformation. Thus, Rick has played a major role in the transformation of the South African coal mining industry to the inclusion of Black entrepreneurs having a major stake in the industry.

Apart from his direct work as a professional mining engineer, Rick was associated with the Engineering Council of South Africa for many years. He served as a Council Member from 1992 to 2008 and as Chairman of various ECSA committees. He represented ECSA internationally in the negotiation for ECSA's acceptance in the Washington Accord and the Engineers Mobility Forum, which gave rise to the recognition of registered engineers throughout the world.

Rick was also involved with tertiary education. He was not only a member of many of ECSA university accreditation teams over the years, but also a member of the Industry Advisory Councils for mining engineering at both the University of Pretoria and the University of the Witwatersrand.

Rick served with many industry associations, including the Chamber of Mines of South Africa, the Fossil Fuel Foundation, the International Committee for Coal Research, and the International Energy Agency, where he represented South Africa on the IEA Coal Industry Advisory Board from 2000 to 2003.

With the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, Rick's involvement has been prolific. He was a Member from 1971 and a Council Member since 1988. He served on many committees – TPC Mining, Publications, Membership, Banquet, and Scrutineers among others, and was a trustee of the SAIMM Scholarship Fund.

Rick was the President of the SAIMM for the 1997/1998 term and was an Honorary Life Fellow of the Institute. The Institute's highest honour, the Brigadier Stokes Memorial Award, was presented to Rick at the 115th AGM in August 2012.

Rick, we in the Institute will miss you and remember you fondly.

J.A. Cruise