

OBITUARY

**Collins Mwatahwa (15 February 1969 to 11 May 2023)**

Collins was born on 15 February 1969 and raised in Harare, with his family being pioneers of Glen Norah a suburb established back in 1973. Being the third son in a family of eight, he spent most of his childhood growing up in Glen Norah. Collins attended Zuvarabuda Primary School where he stood out for his exceptional excellent behavior and character. Later, he joined Glen Norah High School for O-Levels before proceeding to A-Levels at Ellis Robin School.

Collins entered the world of geology as an undergraduate student at the University of Zimbabwe in 1989 having successfully completed A-levels. A brilliant student, he won a scholarship with Anglo American Corporation Zimbabwe which took him through to the fourth year (1992) where he obtained his Honours Degree in Geology. In the interim, he worked on the Great Dyke with then Anglo-American chrome subsidiary Zimbabwe Alloys Limited as a student on attachment. He worked at Caesar Mine, Rhonda, and Inyala operations.

Upon completing his studies, he joined Prospecting Ventures (Limited), an Anglo-American exploration subsidiary in Zimbabwe. There he was to find a home as a competitive young geologist keen to make his mark. One of the qualities that was evident was that Collins always found something useful to do. He did not need to be pushed, no idle time for the industrious young geologist even though by nature of exploration rainy season could maroon an exploration geologist in the office for weeks on end. He worked on various commodities including gold, Platinum Group Elements (PGEs), and base metals which took him virtually to every greenstone belt on the Zimbabwean craton. He rose through the ranks culminating in his appointment to the position of Exploration Manager in 2003, at a relatively youthful age of thirty-three. In 2004, Anglo American Corporation Zimbabwe divested most of its mining and exploration operations preferring to position itself in the Great Dyke PGE Resources. The Unki project, on the Great Dyke became the main area of focus for Platinum Group Metals' evaluation and exploration. As the project advanced to commissioning, and after Unki mining commissioning in 2009 he moved into the role of Chief Geologist. Later, on 1 March 2021, Collins was appointed to the position of Mine Planning Manager, a position he held until his premature death.

Besides his professional work within Anglo-American, Collins was committed to the development and international relevance of the Geological Society of Zimbabwe. At the time of his passing on, he was society treasurer with many years of service behind him. He was known for his humour and was complimented for such by many he interacted with across company and Geological Society boundaries and the Zimbabwe geological landscape.

Collins was known throughout the Geology community as a true expert in his field. His work on the Great Dyke and nickel exploration at the Hunters Road deposit were instrumental in advancing the understanding of these complex geological formations. His contributions to

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gold exploration in Mutare were also significant, as he worked to develop techniques for identifying new gold deposits in the region.

But Collins was much more than just a skilled geologist. He was also a devoted family man and loyal friend to many. In his spare time, he loved to go fishing, and could often be found casting a line along the banks of Zimbabwe's many rivers and lakes. He also had a deep passion for soccer and spent many weekends cheering on his beloved Arsenal Football Club.

Collins's unexpected passing on 11 May 2023 has left a vacuum within the geology community and in the lives of those who knew him well. But his legacy will endure through the many geologists he trained, the discoveries he made, and the memories he created. We will always remember Collins as a brilliant geologist, a devoted family-oriented person, and a great friend who left an indelible mark on the world around him.

Collins mixed easily, enabling him to be a great teacher and motivator of young geologists. He is a loss to the geological and mining industry which will however take solace in the fact that he left his mark as surely as he wanted to.

Collins leaves behind his son Lee Ray, daughter Lindsay and wife Angeline. Collins will be missed by many and will be fondly remembered at Unki and in many geological and mining circles.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Complied

Caston Musa and Arimon Ngilazi