

## RIAAN CRUYWAGEN

Riaan Cruywagen is the longest serving TV news presenter yet in South Africa. In 2020 he celebrated 55 years as a broadcaster, of which the first 10 years were spent at radio as an announcer/newsreader, and the last 45 years at television.

He graduated from Stellenbosch University in the sixties with an SABC scholarship. One of the conditions of his bursary was that he had to work at the SABC in Cape Town over weekends and during varsity holidays. He read the Afrikaans regional radio news, did bilingual continuity and news shifts on Radio Good Hope, took part in radio dramas and serials for the Afrikaans Service and Springbok Radio, and recorded numerous commercials.

In the early seventies he worked as an Afrikaans announcer at the Dutch World Broadcasting Service in The Netherlands for 3 years. From 1981 to 1984 he represented the SABC in the United States, Canada and at the United Nations, based in Washington DC.

Riaan presented his first TV newscast on 26 November 1975 during the TV test transmissions, before the official start of television in South Africa in 1976. Exactly 37 years later to the day, he said his final goodbye as an SABC news anchor amid unprecedented media attention and public interest.

His “retirement” was short-lived, because only two weeks later he was recruited by M-Net’s Afrikaans channel *kykNET* to join their new breakfast show *Dagbreek* as a newsreader and presenter. Since the demise of *Dagbreek* in April 2015, he had been presenting *kykNET*’s evening news actuality show *kykNET Verslag* until March 2018, when he decided to change focus from live to pre-recorded television programmes. Since then he has been the anchor presenter of the *kykNET* magazine programme for people over 50, *Met ’n huppel in die stap*.

Riaan and his wife of 50 years used to live in Randburg, but relocated to Mossel Bay on the Western Cape Garden Route in November 2019 from where he easily commutes by air between George, Johannesburg, Cape Town and other major destinations for television, radio and other professional commitments.

In 2012, Riaan published his autobiography, *What’s News?*, both in Afrikaans and English. For a number of weeks it was one of the Top 10 best-sellers at Exclusive Books.

In December 2006 Riaan Cruywagen was the first recipient ever of a *Golden Plume Award* by the SABC and the Department of Communication, in recognition of his contribution to the South African Television Broadcast Industry since 1976.

Awards and honours bestowed on him include a gold medal for his “*contribution to Afrikaans in general and television in particular*”, presented to him by the Club of Student Representative Council Chairpersons at his *alma mater*, the University of Stellenbosch, in 2007.