

In Memory Of

Professor Lance Graham Nash, BSci., MSci., PhD.
(1961 - 2016)

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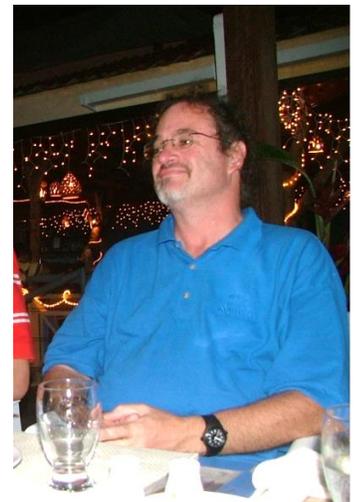
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Professor Lance Nash died on the 14th September 2016 at the age of 55. This tribute is a celebration of his life and the extraordinary contribution that he made to clinical anatomy and plastination. We knew Lance for a long time. He completed his BSc, MSc and PhD degrees in our Department, University of Otago, New Zealand, and then worked at the American University of the Caribbean in St. Maarten, Netherlands Antilles, and was promoted to Full Professor in 2011.

Lance devoted his life to clinical anatomy and plastination. Clinical anatomy is a unique and challenging discipline that requires diverse skills in dissection, an ability to perceive three-dimensional relationships of anatomical features and their relationship to function, and other health professional knowledge. Lance was a classically-trained clinical anatomist with a comprehensive knowledge of the anatomy discipline with skills in the dissecting room and plastination laboratory. Lance initially trained as a healthcare professional in Orthotics and Prosthetics, and spent more than a decade working with medical and paramedical staff in a clinical setting. In this role, he was promoted to Regional Manager for Orthotic services with the Wellington Capital Health Corporation, New Zealand.

His PhD work at the University of Otago resulted in high impact publications and was included in the 40th edition of Gray's Anatomy. Together with his PhD classmate, Dr Mark Phillips, he established a novel technology: "The use of confocal microscopy for the examination of E12 sheet plastinated human tissue" (Phillips et al., 2002) and successfully applied it to the clinical anatomy research on the deep cervical fascia (Nash et al., 2005a; Nash et al., 2005b; Nash et al., 2004; Scali et al., 2015a; Scali et al., 2015b). Lance's plastination skills were trained by Mr Russell Barnett, a well-known pioneer in the international plastination society. During his time in Otago, Lance helped Russell to prepare one transverse and one sagittal sets of the whole cadavers that have been heavily used in both research and undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in our Department for almost two decades.

Professor Gareth Jones was Head of the Department of Anatomy in Otago when Lance was undertaking his postgraduate studies. Professor Jones recalls that, since Lance's background was quite different from so many postgraduate students, he had to learn to fit in with this new environment. He was older, and had a Maori background, which is not common in Anatomy. While he sometimes stood out as being different, what shone through was his infectious enthusiasm; rarely could he be held back. He was very conscious of mapping out new paths for those like him who had had to make their way up through the ranks. He was a pathfinder in many ways, but rather than see this as a hurdle, he tried to embrace it.

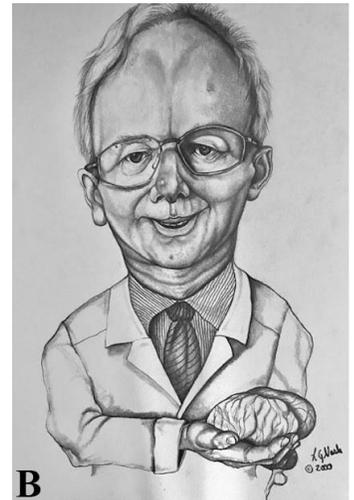


Professor Lance Nash

On completion of his postgraduate research training, he took a lecturer position at the American University of the Caribbean (AUC), a US-accredited medical school on the island of Sint Maarten. He developed extensive experience teaching all parts of the body and led dissection/sectional anatomy/osteology/radiology laboratory sessions. He contributed to the histology course. As a successful and highly rated academic he was appointed Chairman of Anatomy, Embryology and Histology in 2008 and Full Professor in 2011. He initiated and led a number of key reforms in the ACU, including innovations in audio-visual and IT equipment use in teaching and assessment, improving quality and availability of cadaveric material through negotiations with a Dutch University and the design and development of a completely new anatomy facility.

Outside of the classroom and laboratory, Lance was a great team man. He would always be the first person organizing social events, whether it be small scale gatherings at the local bar, or large-scale bus trips for team building and morale. He was a genuinely selfless person, who would offer support and assistance to friends and colleagues in whatever way he could. He was also an extraordinarily perceptive individual, seemingly always able to identify when people were having problems, and doing his best to help them. His sense of humor was somewhat quirky and droll, and not always immediately appreciated by everyone, but his intention always was to lift the mood of the people around him.

His attention to detail in clinical anatomy was supported by a keen artistic talent – as a student, he took to drawing caricatures of his peers to celebrate things like Ph.D. completions. He was also full of surprises, as shown by his sketch of Professor Jones on the latter's birthday (Figure B). He did this entirely of his own volition, and it came as a total surprise to Professor Jones. It still hangs in Professor Jones's office as a reasonable approximation of what he looked like all those years ago! It also reminds him of an unforgettable character and blossoming academic. He will be missed by all those that knew him.



B
**Professor Jones sketched
by Lance**



Lance and his friends at the 13th ISP conference, Vienna, 2006

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