Douglas Gordon Potts, MD

We are saddened to inform you that Dr Douglas "Gordon" Potts passed away on March 6, 2021, at the age of 94.

Gordon Potts was born on January 27, 1927, in Otahuhu, a suburb of Auckland, New Zealand. He went to a university in Christchurch and obtained a bachelor of science degree, majoring in atomics, nuclear physics, and mathematics. His initial intent was to become a physicist but he changed that later to radiotherapist, which subsequently led to a career in radiology. In 1953, he started training in radiology at the Auckland Hospital, where he was very much influenced by Stephen Moor, who had recently returned from neuroradiology training with James Bull at the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases in London, England, and Eric Lysholm at the Serafimer Hospital in Stockholm, Sweden. Intrigued by the new techniques in neuroimaging developed in Europe, Gordon decided to further pursue training in neuroradiology.

In 1955, he embarked on a 7-week journey as a cargo ship's doctor from Auckland to London, where he completed his radiology training at University College Hospital. He then started his neuroradiology training at the Atkinson Morley Hospital. This institution was known to be the most active neurosurgical unit in Britain with Wylie McKissock as Head of Neurosurgery and James Bull as the Consultant Neuroradiologist. After 1 year, Gordon moved to Queens Square as a senior registrar working with James Bull, who was the neuroradiologist in charge at that time.

In 1960, Gordon was recruited by Juan Taveras to join the staff at the Neurological Institute at the Columbia Presbyterian Center in New York, which included Norman Chase and Ernest Wood. It was one of the first institutions in the United States to receive National Institutes of Health funding for neuroimaging research. This focus on research was further strengthened by the recruitment of Sadek Hilal, who was interested in cerebral vascular flow conditions.

In 1967, Dr. John Evans, Chairman of Radiology, recruited Gordon to the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center to become Head of the Division of Neuroradiology. The National Institutes of Health approved the neuroradiology training program at Cornell and provided funding for research in CSF production and absorption. Michael Deck was recruited from Queens Square to further complete the neuroradiology research team at Cornell.

It was at this time that Gordon and Hans Newton decided to embark on creating a textbook on neuroradiology, entitled *Radiology of the Skull and Brain*, which consisted of 2 volumes and a series of 6 books. Theirs was a joint work that took more than a decade to complete and resulted in one of the most admired and respected textbooks in our field, often referred to as the "Red Bible."

Gordon was also an inventor and designed the "Pottometer," a device that demonstrated on the radiographs at the time of myelography the degree of angulation from the horizontal, as well as the "Potts" needle for direct puncture of the carotid and brachial arteries. He also designed the "Potts Chair," which made it possible to obtain biplane radiographs during a somersault procedure at the time of pneumoencephalography.

From 1968 to 1978, Gordon Potts was very much involved in the National Institutes of Health and served on multiple committees including the Radiation Sciences study section, and he was the Chairman of its Diagnostic Committee.

By 1985, Gordon had acquired an interest in health care organization and planning. Having had previous experience with public health care systems in New Zealand and Great Britain, he decided to accept the position of Chairman of Radiology at the University of Toronto, Canada. Gordon was instrumental in restructuring the previously independent radiology training programs at the 5 University of Toronto–affiliated hospitals and merging them into a single program. In doing so, Gordon enhanced the experience of the trainees and created the largest such program in Canada. The University of Toronto's annual Best Resident Award in Radiology was named in Gordon's honor. During his tenure from 1985 to 1992, Gordon was also the Radiologist in Chief at the Toronto Western Hospital, and his presence, guidance, and active participation greatly contributed to the successful formation of a dedicated Neuroscience Center at that institution.

During his professional career, Gordon remained strongly focused on research and teaching in neuroradiology, while always striving for innovation, scientific excellence, and education. He was one of the 14 founders of the American Society of Neuroradiology in 1962, was its President from 1970–1971, and received its Gold Medal in 1998.

In retirement, Gordon remained active at his country home on Shelter Island, NY, where he was known to make a delicious "Potts" jam and participated in growing oysters as part of a program at Cornell University to replenish the shellfish stocks of the Peconic Bay system on the East End of Long Island. Gordon's annual oysterfest party was a highlight for many of his friends and neighbors.

At the same time, he remained committed to his New Zealand roots. In the 1980s, he acquired a large plot of bush land on the Northern Island of New Zealand called Doubtless Bay. For almost 30 years, he slowly developed the land and constructed a simple, country home near its waterfront. One of his greatest achievements and pleasures there was to be part of the Whakaangi Landcare Trust, which aimed to protect and promote the native bush and the Kiwi population.

As part of his ongoing commitment toward neuroscience education in New Zealand, he founded the Moor Trust Annual Educational Meeting in 2014 in honor of his mentor Stephen Moor, to facilitate a Visiting Professorship in Neuroradiology at the University of Auckland, providing exposure to and discussion between radiology residents and staff in Auckland with innovative leaders in neuroradiology from around the world.

We will remember Gordon as a genuine, warm human being, who was down-to-earth even as an innovative world leader in neuroradiology. He had a skill for making friends all around the globe and was a role model for many. Gordon is survived by his 3 children, their partners, and his 6 grandchildren.

K. ter Brugge

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