

## Obituary Clyde Lester (Les) Nash, Jr., MD

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The SRS lost a major member of our society on September 13, 2019. Dr. Les Nash, age 86 years, had a very illustrious academic career in the treatment of pediatric and adult spinal deformities. He was both a Past-President (1982) and Lifetime Achievement Award winner (2010) of our society. Perhaps most importantly he was the first surgeon to develop clinically applicable somatosensory cortical-evoked neuromonitoring in the mid 1970's [1]. This occurred at Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital (RBCH). This dramatically improved the safety in spine deformity surgery in both pediatric and adult patients throughout the world and laid the groundwork for the further advancements we have available today. He was academically dedicated and never profited from his innovation.

Dr. Nash was raised in Shaker Heights, OH, graduated from Shaker Heights High School and later became a member of the Alumni Hall of Fame. He attended Amherst College and majored in economics. He was president of his class and fraternity before graduating in 1955. After 2 years in the US Army in Heidelberg, Germany he attended Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) School of Medicine. His internship and residency in orthopaedic surgery were at the same institution under

the direction of Charles H. Herndon, MD, one of the 1966 SRS Founding Members. Following his internship, he did 4 months of research at University Hospitals of Cleveland in 1964. After residency he was RBCH Fellow from 1968 to 1969. During that time, he studied with John Moe, MD in Minneapolis, MN, Jacquelyn Perry, MD in Downey, CA as well as in Helsinki, Finland. The Nash-Moe classification of pedicle rotation was a product of his time in Minneapolis [2]. He subsequently returned to Cleveland where he spent his entire career at the CWRU-affiliated institutions of UHC, RBCH, St. Luke's Hospital and MetroHealth Medical Center before retiring from surgery at the latter in 1999.

While at UHC and RBCH he founded the University Youth Spine Center and instituted a regional and then a state-wide school screening program for scoliosis. His collaboration with the late Richard Brown, PhD led to the development the first clinically applicable spinal cord monitoring system. He was a very active participant in SRS activities, including the annual meeting and other spine courses. He published 70 peer-reviewed articles as well as numerous abstracts and textbook chapters. He was an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*, an Advisory Editor of *SPINE* and was on editorial and review boards for many other journals.

Dr. Nash was always an educator and mentor. During his career his many appointments included Director of Surgical Education and the Interim Associate Dean of the CWRU Medical School. He served on the CWRU Faculty Senate, Committee on Appointments, Promotion and Tenure, the Bylaws Committee as well as numerous departmental committees, many of which he chaired. He became the Director of the Department of Surgery at St. Luke's Hospital in 1982 and later the Director of Orthopaedic Surgery. During this time, he developed a relationship with Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital, now MetroHealth Medical Center, the Cuyahoga County health system. He later became the chairman at that facility. During his chairmanship he designed and implemented the Orthopaedic Learning Center featuring state-of-the-art

computers and web-based teaching and learning resources within a modern library. In 2007, the Clyde L. Nash, Jr MD Professorship of Orthopaedic Education was established by CWRU, with an endowment to support the educational and research activities of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the MetroHealth Medical Center—a well-deserved honor for such a renowned educator, surgeon and leader.

Dr Nash is survived by his wife of 64 years, Deborah, three children (Elizabeth, Douglas and Katherine), eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. Elizabeth, also a physician, is married to Brendan Patterson, MD, the current Chairman of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Finally, Dr. Nash was my personal friend and mentor who helped guide me during the early years of my

career. He will be especially missed by me and all who knew him.

George H. Thompson, MD

## References

1. Nash CL Jr, Lorig RA, Schatzinger LA, Brown RH (1977) Spinal cord monitoring during operative treatment of the spine. *Clin Orthop Relat Res* 126:100–105
2. Nash CL Jr, Moe JH (1969) A study of vertebral rotation. *J Bone Joint Surg Am* 51(2):223–229

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