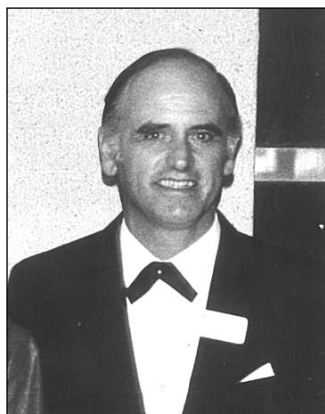


IN MEMORIAM



**Lionel Shelsley
(LS) Smith
(10 July 1922 -
29 November
2009)**

With the death of Professor Lionel Shelsley (LS) Smith, we have lost an early icon of forensic medicine and pathology in South Africa. It was through his farsightedness and that of his colleague, Professor Theodor

Gottfried Schwär, that the first Diploma in Forensic Medicine was instituted by the South African Colleges of Medicine of the time. Thereafter, the MMed in Forensic Pathology was simultaneously introduced at the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Durban, Pretoria, Wits, Medunsa and the Free State.

After obtaining his MB BCH degree from Wits in November 1945, LS completed his internship at Krugersdorp Hospital. After private practice in Delmas for 3 months, he entered the service of the Department of Health as Assistant District Surgeon in Bronkhorstspuit for 22 months and thereafter as District Surgeon in Bellville for nearly 7 years. From March till September 1956 he was Senior District Surgeon in Bloemfontein. His true career in Government service started in October 1956 as Assistant Government Pathologist in Cape Town, and he was promoted successively to Government Pathologist, Senior Government Pathologist and Part-Time Professor of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at the University of Cape Town. On 1 January 1976 he was appointed as Chief Government Pathologist/Professor of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at UCT, a post he filled with distinction until his retirement on 20 February 1985.

After his appointment as Emeritus Professor, LS Smith remained actively interested in forensic medicine and medico-legal aspects of health care. As medico-legal adviser to the Superintendent of Groote Schuur Hospital he rendered invaluable advice and support for many years.

He obtained the following post-graduate qualifications: Diploma in Public Health (UCT, 1956), Academic Post-Graduate Diploma in Bacteriology (London, 1962), MC Path (London, 1964), FRSB (London, 1964), and FRC Path (London, 1968). In 1965 he was registered as Specialist Pathologist in Forensic Pathology.

As lecturer to medical students, other health care students and law students he was popular and exuded confidence and

enthusiasm which inspired his audiences. His collection of lecture slides was jocularly known as the 'Rocky Horror picture show'. For 20 years he was a lecturer in Medicina Forensis, an optional course (*capita selecta*), for final-year LLB students at UCT. After he retired he lectured in the Law Faculty of the University of the Western Cape for the next 9 months of 1985. In advisory capacities he also held the posts of Chief of Pathology Services and later Director of Health Laboratory Services in the Department of Health, Pretoria.

His particular interests in forensic medicine concentrated on iatrogenesis, and valuable guidelines on how to avoid therapeutic mishaps are still valid. In public health he concentrated on water purification, alcohol and traffic accidents, which culminated with his co-authorship with Advocate W Cooper of the definitive book *Alcohol, Drugs and Road Traffic*.

LS co-authored many publications: *The Health Legislation of South Africa* (1970); *Rabies* (1974); *Statutory, Public and Ethical Obligations of Medical Practitioners* (1976); *Alcohol, Drugs and Road Traffic* (1979); *The Medical Practitioner in the Health Services* (1981); *Heart Transplantation: The Present Status of Auto- and Heterotopic Heart Transplantation* (1984) (chapter contributor); and *Pitfalls in Primary Health Care* (1986) (chapter contributor). More than 25 articles were published in peer review journals. He attended, as observer, some 22 national and international conferences, and as many conferences as invited speaker.

With his special interest in public health matters he served on many advisory committees, among others regarding blood transfusion, water purification, the Poliomyelitis Foundation, pesticide control, rabies and others. As head of the Government Pathology Laboratory and the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, he was an inspirational leader and well-liked by his colleagues, staff and post-graduate students. As an expert witness and an unbiased and objective assessor, when asked to assist judges and magistrates in difficult medico-legal inquests and murder cases, he was highly respected. The contribution of Professor LS Smith to forensic medicine and pathology and equally to public health, was and still is invaluable.

His sons remember him with love, gratitude and admiration. Their father nursed and supported his dear wife and their beloved mother in the last difficult years of her life. Professor Smith's last years of frailty were endured with patience and fortitude.

Condolences are expressed to his sons, Jerome and Lester, and their families.

**Emeritus Professor G J (Deon) Knobel
Dr Hannah Reeve Sanders**