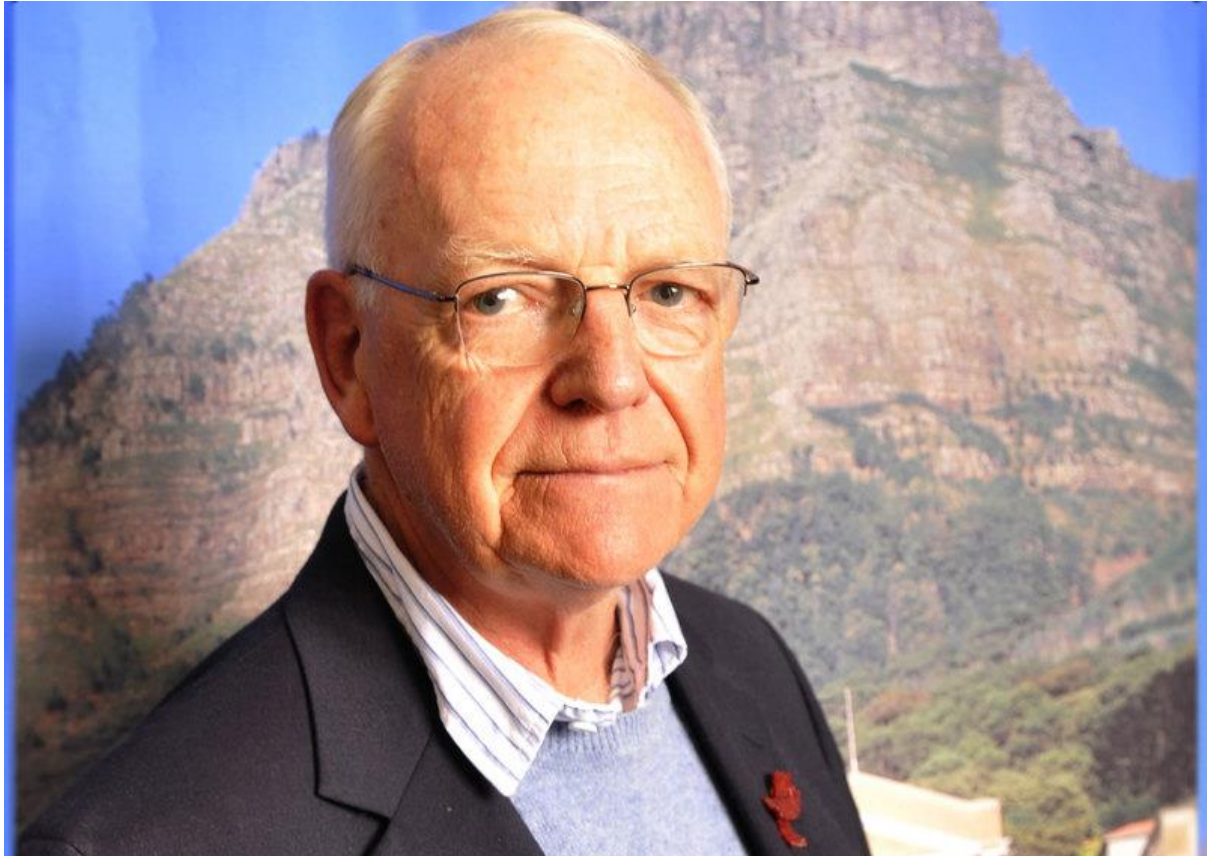


## Emeritus Professor John Terblanche: 1935-2023



The UCT Department of Surgery is deeply saddened by the passing, on Monday 6 March 2023, aged 87, of Professor John Terblanche, a former Head of the UCT Department of Surgery from 1981 to 2000.

Professor Terblanche, internationally recognized as one of the world's leading researchers in the treatment of portal hypertension, graduated from the University of Cape Town in 1958 and qualified as a surgeon in 1964 when he was awarded the Douglas gold medal as the best graduate of the year. His first research experience was in the laboratory with Professor Chris Barnard investigating profound hypothermia using extracorporeal circulation for which he was awarded a Ch.M. degree in 1964. This initial research experience was continued in Bristol where he developed a life-long interest in surgical diseases of the liver. There he was an early pioneer of experimental liver storage and transplantation, an interest he brought back to Cape Town where it flourished under his guidance. He became co-founder of the MRC Liver Research Centre

in 1973 with Professor Stuart Saunders, a position he shared later with Professor Ralph Kirsch, resulting in a highly productive and collaborative research partnership that lasted almost 30 years and which produced key findings published in the NEJM, Lancet, Hepatology and elsewhere.

Professor Terblanche was a very highly regarded clinician, researcher, and educator but perhaps his biggest contribution was the visionary and pioneering leadership he brought to the endoscopic treatment of oesophageal varices at an international level. His abiding interest in surgical aspects of liver disease led to the establishment of a robust and sophisticated experimental and clinical surgical research programme which attracted international Fellows to the HPB training mecca in Cape Town, to later return home, spreading the gospel according to Terblanche. Many in turn become independent researchers, leaders and mentors in their own right, willingly passing on the Terblanche legacy. The prodigious output from his strong and stable research team including Hickman (lab research), Bornman (endoscopy), Kahn (transplantation) and Krige (portal hypertension) elevated the importance of the Unit's work to an international audience.

John Terblanche was the editor of four books, 109 invited chapters and over 260 highly cited peer-reviewed publications. He was an ardent ambassador for South Africa and a popular and much-in-demand speaker at international meetings for over two decades. He was a consistent and eloquent advocate for the continued support of surgical research and the promotion of academic surgery. Many benefited from his wise counsel and he took great pride in the successes of his proteges. His personal qualities included boundless energy and enthusiasm, his positive thinking and determination to solve problems, the clarity with which he could see through and articulate issues, and the thoughtful way in which he incorporated new knowledge and insights into his lucid writing, and his caring clinical practice. The national and international esteem in which he was held is reflected by the award of ten honorary Fellowships from each of the ten English-speaking Colleges and Surgical Associations in the world.

He was a significant office bearer in numerous distinguished societies and President of various international bodies including the International Federation of Surgical Colleges (1997-2000), the International Association for the Study of the Liver (1996-1998) and the Pan African Association of Surgeons (PAAS) (2000-2002). In South Africa he was President of the College of Medicine

(1989-1992), the Association of Surgeons of South Africa (1992-1995), The Surgical Research Society of Southern Africa (1986-1988) the Southern African Transplant Society (1979-1981) and the Pan African Association for the Study of the Liver (1982-1984). He was an active Vice-Chairman of the South African Medical Association from 1989-2000).

John Terblanche will be long remembered by many as the consummate clinician-researcher-academician but also as a kind and generous teacher and mentor. His legacy is set to endure and we remain indebted to him for his vision, his values, his vigorous leadership, his innovative scientific contributions and the standards of excellence he practised and demanded. His influence was immense and will last beyond his physical presence.

His continued love for his family was a cornerstone in his life. Anne, John's loving wife for more than 60 years, was a constant supporter of his career and a gracious hostess to the innumerable visitors, ranging from distinguished international visitors to junior trainees, invited to dine at the Terblanche home. Our thoughts and sympathies go to Anne, his children Michelle, James, Michael and Christopher, their spouses, and grandchildren.

Emeritus Professor Jake Krige

Professor Lydia Cairncross