

In Memoriam: René Garrido Neves 1929 - 2012

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On last May 12 Brazilian Dermatology was saddened by the loss of one of the greatest masters and supporters of our specialty.

René Garrido Neves has left us, to our great sadness.

Professor René was a living legend in the classical Brazilian dermatology. The dermatology that originated in the Leprology Institute, "São Miguel" Pavillion and Polyclinic of Rio de Janeiro.

It was in Niterói that, after graduating from the School of Medicine of the Federal Fluminense University (Universidade Federal Fluminense - UFF), in 1953, that René began his specialization working together with the great masters and founders of what became our Brazilian Society of Dermatology (Sociedade Brasileira de Dermatologia - SBD). His strength of character, respect for ethical precepts and remarkable communication skills became evident through his career in the Institutions where he worked: with rare exceptions, he usually achieved the highest positions. At the Dermatology Service of UFF, he arrived as student and left as Full Professor, a position also held after a selective examination at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). At the Leprology Institute, he directed and was head of the Pathological Anatomy Laboratory; at the Hansen's Disease Brazilian Society he was president more than once; in 1986, he was president of the Brazilian Society of Dermatology. Among all these activities, the one that made him feel most gratified was the National Course of Tropical Dermatopathology, which he founded and coordinated for almost 30 years. The course had the objective of expanding throughout the country.

Having had the opportunity to witness not only the roots but also the wide canopy of the great tree Brazilian dermatology has grown into, René represented a transition link between the classical and the innovative.

He knew, like few people do, how to transmit important and profound knowledge about dermatology and SBD, in a cheerful and entertaining way charac-



teristic of his manner that charmed all those who were in contact with him, without deviating from the enormous respect and dedication for the patients, especially the underprivileged ones.

He was the narrator and the character of many stories about friends, students, dermatologists and dermatology that those who admired him never tired of hearing.

His enthusiasm and great teaching ability influenced the family environment, making René, if not the greatest, surely one of the greatest record breakers in Brazilian dermatology: one son and two daughters, all dermatologists! God knows how many students René influenced or on whose formation he had direct participation.

To undergraduate students, residents, master's and doctoral degree students, and above all numerous friends, René leaves an enormous legacy and he will be always remembered with affection and deep respect.

René liked to cite the great American poet and educator H. W. Longfellow, who wrote the poem partly transcribed here in his honor:

*"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time".*

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