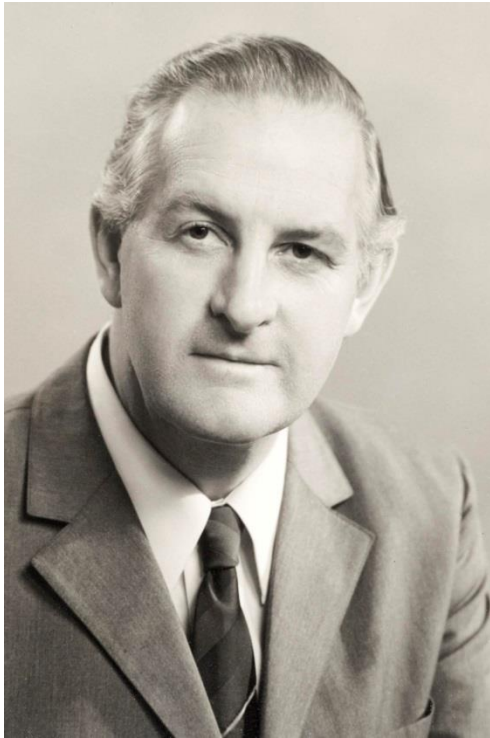


Professor Barrie Jones



Barrie R Jones (1921-2009) was a New Zealander who did a year as an eye registrar in Wellington. He then travelled to London with the intention, like many New Zealanders before him, to undertake postgraduate training at Moorfields Eye Hospital and then return home. He did not return home until he retired to Tauranga. Jones' contribution to Moorfields Eye Hospital and to external eye diseases was so significant that Dr Peter Leaver dedicated his book 'The History of Moorfields Eye Hospital, forty years on' to Barrie Jones. After Jones completed his Moorfields training 'on the House' in 1956, he joined the staff of the Institute of Ophthalmology in London and began his studies in clinical microbiology with special reference to viral infections and trachoma, while he maintained his surgical skills with appointments as a senior registrar at the London Hospital and a clinical assistant at Moorfields.

His interest in trachoma originated with his early association with Rowland Wilson. Professor Doug Coster wrote an excellent history of these two remarkable New Zealand born ophthalmologists. In 1963 Jones was appointed to the newly created Professorial Chair of Clinical Ophthalmology at Moorfields. To quote Leaver: "To understand the dynamics at work within the academic world of ophthalmology in this period, it is helpful to recall something of the personalities involved. Duke-Elder, already firmly established as the doyen of the ophthalmic world, was by all accounts polished, urbane and outgoing. Ashton, holder of a personal Chair in Ophthalmic Pathology since 1959, was equally polished and brilliant, an outstanding public speaker with a keen sense of humour and razor wit, but vain and easily offended, while Jones was charming, unpretentious, equally capable, and fired by relentless determination and ambition".... "It had been Barrie Jones's original intention to take advantage of the educational opportunities that London had to offer, prepare a PhD thesis in microbiology and, after getting his higher degree, return to the Antipodes most probably to take up a role in Rowland Wilson's department at his alma mater, the University of Otago. He also felt bound to repay a debt of some six hundred pounds borrowed from his grandfather's estate, to enable him to come to the UK in the first place. All thought of the former disappeared in a whirlwind of research and clinical activity, his unquenchable enthusiasm and boundless capacity for hard work taking him relentlessly along paths he had not sought or been prepared to tread. Duke-Elder, in particular encouraged him to set up his own laboratory, with funds from an oil company, which he had at his disposal. An invitation to apply for the newly created professorial chair in Melbourne, which could well have derailed him, seemed attractive, until the job specification of the post changed at the last minute, when unacceptable conditions were imposed. So it was that Barrie Jones remained

in London, was appointed Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology in 1963, and went on to change, forever, the face of British ophthalmology”.

Reference

Coster, DJ. Ancient Egypt to modern ophthalmology: via Otago, New Zealand. *Clinical and Experimental Ophthalmology* 2009; **37**: 810-813.