

## In Memoriam A Tribute to David Bradshaw Stewart



**David Bradshaw Stewart, 1916 – 2006**  
**MBE, BSc (Man), MD; FACS (Can), FRCOG**  
**Founding Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology**  
**UCWI/UWI**

*“There are not great men except those who have rendered service to mankind”*

David Bradshaw Stewart, a Canadian by birth, came to Jamaica with his family in 1953 to take up the post of Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the then University College of the West Indies (a College of University of London) later established as the University of the West Indies.

The founding Professor with other colleagues ensured that foundations were well laid. In the specialty, David Stewart must be credited as the cornerstone on which a superstructure could be built. Surely fifty-eight years have passed since the inception of the University of the West Indies and the record of achievement of fifty-six years since the teaching of the specialty started attests to the strength of the components of its early beginnings.

Those of us who came under his tutelage received sound grounding in the Science and Art of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Those of us who entered the postgraduate programmes which he initiated collaborating with allied institutions in the United Kingdom and the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology benefitted greatly from the exposure. This training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology equipped us to carry on the work of contributing to the well-being and health of women.

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During his tenure, four academic staff members from the United Kingdom returned to Chairs in Belfast, Bristol, the Royal Free and Westminster. At The University of the West Indies, a West Indian colleague became his successor and, to date, four others have gained professorial status. Professor Stewart's influence through the multiplying effect has reached beyond the bounds of Mona (Jamaica), St Augustine (Trinidad and Tobago), Cave Hill (Barbados) to international institutions.

A stickler for details, it was manifest in his teaching, clinical practice, research and surgical technique. This is paramount for one who occupied this position and on reflection it was those qualities of the man that moulded so many under his influence.

Many activities were initiated in his seventeen years at the University of the West Indies. He initiated research on common conditions of the time: Granuloma inguinale, vulval carcinoma and lymphogranuloma venereum. He introduced the need for cervical screening (Pap Smear) and the use of inter-cavity radium in the treatment of carcinoma of the cervix. He emphasized the need for Family Planning which has reached greater heights since his pioneering initiatives.

Professor Stewart published many articles in prominent journals and with Professor John Lawson of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, wrote the first postgraduate book on Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the tropics. He wrote on matters not only of his specialty but in his other interests. After retirement, he edited Gosse's work on Jamaican Birds in which he was deeply interested.

I could continue *ad infinitum* paying tribute to this revered gentleman, with whom I had the privilege of being his student, later a colleague, his successor and his friend. With his wife, Ruth, daughter Elva, sons John, Neil and Allan, they showed the virtues of family, a quality to be respected and emulated.

All his students through me express gratitude for his contribution to their lives and to The University of the West Indies.

*“The measure of a man's character is not what he gets from his ancestors but what he leaves his descendants.”*

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