Abraham Leib (Lampy) Maresky
The medical fraternity of Cape Town has been bereft of an exceptional physician and respected colleague. Abraham Leib Maresky, popularly and affectionately known as Lampy by one and all, died of postoperative complications on 2 July 2012.

Reared in the schooling of those legendary teachers of traditional clinical medicine during the period popularly referred to at the University of Cape Town Medical School as the ‘Forman years’, but nevertheless having kept abreast of the most technical advances in medicine of the current era, he earned the respect of his colleagues as the complete physician.

Lampy was born in Kimberly on 9 April 1932, and attended the Kimberly High School where he excelled at Latin, maths, and physical science. Influenced by his older brother he chose to pursue a medical career. He enrolled at UCT in 1949 and graduated MB ChB in 1954. He obtained the Physics Medal in 1949 and the Anatomy Medal in 1950. He served his internship at Groote Schuur Hospital, and left for the United Kingdom in 1959, where he achieved his MRCP, having worked at the Hammersmith Hospital. He was made a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians for the work he had done during the years he spent in the UK. He returned to Cape Town in 1961 and served as a registrar on a rotational basis, *inter alia* in the firms of legendary clinicians and teachers such as Frankie Forman, Jack Brock, Len Eales, Helen Brown, and the formidable Isaac Grayce. During this period he also attended at the outpatients department at Woodstock Hospital. In 1964 he opened rooms at the old Medical Centre on the Foreshore and ultimately moved to the City Park Hospital, later to be re-named the Christiaan Barnard Memorial Hospital. He regularly attended medical outpatients at Groote Schuur Hospital, while also tutoring fourth-year students, and was invited to examine fourth- and final-year students. In recognition of his contribution to clinical medicine, Lampy received the Distinguished Physicians Award.

With advancing years he retired from these various commitments, and devoted himself entirely to his private practice at Christiaan Barnard Memorial Hospital.

Lampy was a dedicated doctor, practising holistic medicine in its truest sense. In his report-back letters he meticulously detailed the patient’s clinical problems, but also included the patient’s family dynamics and background, relevant to the context of the illness. He embodied the truism expressed by the doyen of clinical medicine, Sir William Osler, who stated, ‘The good physician treats the disease: the great physician treats the patient who has the disease.’ It is also said that the qualities of a good doctor include clinical skills, communication skills, and availability. Lampy was always available day or night when called upon by his colleagues to assist with difficult medical problems. Remuneration was not his priority, and it was known that he would waive his fees when attending to the indigent. Nevertheless, every patient received his diligent and dedicated attention.

Lampy was not only a dedicated doctor but also a most affable and engaging personality. How well do I recall Lampy regaling us with some of his more humorous experiences during his Groote Schuur days, and his mimicking the odd behaviour and mannerisms of some of his more eccentric chiefs. We will miss those special occasions.

Lampy married Cynthia Lewis in 1965. They have three sons. The couple were always very proud of their Jewish heritage, and named their sons after those iconic leaders in Jewish history, Jonathan, Gideon and Saul, who garnered their strengths in times of adversity. The medical fraternity expresses its deepest sympathy to Cynthia and...
her family, and hope that they will gain strength from their biblical heritage to overcome their sad loss.

M V Silbert