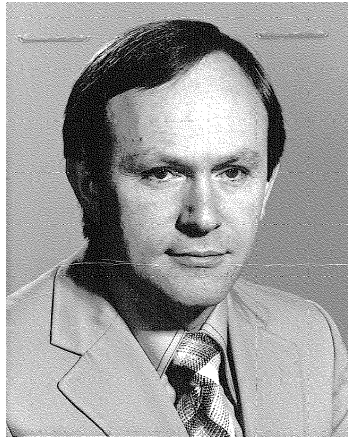


**Constantin (Costel) Vasilescu**  
**February 1933 – January 2006**



Costel Vasilescu was born in Cluj, the capital of Transilvania, central province of Romania. His happy childhood came to an abrupt end in September 1940 due to the Hungarian occupation of northern Transilvania and the subsequent 'ethnic cleansing' of the area.

Vasilescu studied at Cluj University Medical School and at the end of his studies was sent to work in a small village near a colliery where he experienced the misery of the population and the dictatorial behaviour of the Communist Party bosses. Hard work and a bit of luck gave him the opportunity to train in plastic surgery, then a new speciality, at the only dedicated hospital in Bucharest. In 1960 after a fiercely competitive examination, Vasilescu moved to Bucharest and began training under Professor Agrippa Inoescu.

A temporary lull in the cultural isolation of the Romanian medical world made it possible for Vasilescu to publish a significant paper in the *British Journal of Plastic Surgery*. This brought him to the attention of Professor A.B. Wallace, the famous plastic surgeon in Edinburgh who, at the time, was running a training scheme for young plastic surgeons, preferably from non-English speaking countries. Professor Wallace offered Vasilescu a six month appointment at his unit in Bangour near Edinburgh.

After leaving Romania, Vasilescu, already a well-qualified plastic surgeon, had to repeat his medical training from basic registration to specialist, while working at the same time to support himself. He did this in a foreign language and different, non-familiar culture.

In 1971, Costel met Australian born Nita Bryce, in Europe who was on post-doctorate studies at the time. Costel came to Australia and settled in Townsville with Nita and in 1973 Vasilescu was introduced to Benjamin Rank. He was eventually registered as a specialist plastic surgeon in Australia and commenced a new successful career and a fulfilling family life.

In 2002, Costel Vasilescu authored his life story 'More than Skin Deep: A Remarkable Life Story.' Read the book review by Sir Benjamin Rank here: <https://www.deepdyve.com/lp/wiley/more-than-skin-deep-a-remarkable-life-story-4jtMY0ytdz>