



G. Robert Tharp, DC, DABCO

Dr. Tharp is a relative new-comer to Canadian Chiropractic. Since moving to Nova Scotia from Michigan he has been very active within the provincial association. Originally he would have liked to have practiced in Newfoundland, but as there was no chiropractic legislation, he settled for Halifax. Presently, one of his goals is to see the implementation of a chiropractic act in Newfoundland. As the Canadian Chiropractic Association representative for Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, he has been reorganizing the Newfoundland and Labrador Chiropractic Association and assisting in negotiation with their provincial government.

Dr. Tharp became interested in a chiropractic career after injuring his back while diving for his high school swimming team and realized the potential of sports and chiropractic care. He entered National College of Chiropractic in September of 1960. Like many other students he had to work part-time to pay his own way through college. Jobs in Chicago were scarce, which necessitated a move to Lincoln Chiropractic College, Indianapolis, after completing his first two years. Here, he was able to obtain work in a local hospital. In this environment he gained valuable experience due to the influence of some of the specialists in radiology and orthopedics. He graduated from Lincoln Chiropractic College in 1964, but unfortunately, missed writing the Michigan State Board Examinations as he was still an intern at the time. He continued to work in a hospital until he could write the Boards.

After being away from chiropractic for a year, he started a practice in a small community of 2,000 people just outside Kalamazoo, Michigan. In September, 1965, he enrolled in the General and Regional Orthopedic program under the auspices of the post graduate division of National Chiropractic College. The reason for taking this course was to restore his confidence due to his absence from the profession for a year after graduating. On completion of the course in 1973, he was awarded Diplomate status with the American Board of Chiropractic Orthopedists. In 1981, Dr. Tharp completed an Occupational Health program put on by the Ontario Chiropractic Association and the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College. He also enrolled in the Occupational Health course sponsored by Northwestern College of Chiropractic in Montreal. He found both courses stimulated his interest in low back pain and with the emphasis on ergonomics, gave him a different view of the complex problem.

While studying at Lincoln College he was a student of the late Dr. Earl Rich, who together with a medical radiologist, stimulated his interest in x-ray. This led to his completing a post graduate course in x-ray at Lincoln Chiropractic College and is Board Certified in this area.

After several vacations in Newfoundland, Dr. Tharp and his wife, Sal, decided they would like to live in Atlantic Canada. As

Newfoundland did not have a Chiropractic Act they decided to settle in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1977.

Dr. Tharp has had a life long interest in the treatment of sports injuries. While practicing in Michigan, he worked closely with the athletic department of Western Michigan University and also treated the athletic injuries from the local high school. He continued in this area when he moved to Halifax. He was invited by Dr. Bill Stanish (who was twice Chief Canadian Medical Officer for the Olympic Teams) to join the Nova Scotia Sports Medicine Clinic. This he has found to be a very interesting and educational experience, but is taking second place to his interest in orthopedics and treating low back pain.

His practice is strictly limited to orthopedics and is 90% low back pain. He anticipates that in the future, his practice will be limited to treating just low back pain and associated syndromes.

Dr. Tharp is a very active member of Atlantic Canada's Chiropractic Association. He is presently representative of Nova Scotia in the Canadian Chiropractic Association, and has held this position since 1984. From 1980-84, he was president of the Nova Scotia Chiropractic Association. Among his many duties on these Boards, he has co-chaired the bi-annual CCA Convention in Halifax in 1982, and also several Maritime Chiropractic conventions held in Halifax. Last year he also hosted the Canadian Federation of Chiropractic Regulatory Board's Annual Meeting. He has been vice president of this board since 1985.

After his arrival in Halifax, Dr. Tharp served Nova Scotia's representative on the Canadian Chiropractic Examining Board for four years, submitting and grading questions. He has been chairman of the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners since its inception in 1978.

While chiropractic is the major part of Dr. Tharp's life, he has also found time to be an active Rotarian and in September will become a senior active Rotarian. He has also been secretary of the Halifax North West Rotary Club for six years and a director for two years.

Dr. Tharp would like to see the establishment of a Canadian Board of Chiropractic Orthopedists as he feels it is becoming an integral part of the modern chiropractic practice, and essential that the profession begin to develop specialists in chiropractic orthopedics. With dedicated chiropractors like Dr. Tharp, chiropractic can only move forward – especially in Atlantic Canada.

Jane Mannington, DC