As a medical illustrator, Nancy Joy is best known for her contributions to J.C.B. Grant’s *Method of Anatomy* and *Atlas of Anatomy*. She worked with Dr. Grant for over thirty years, and was influenced by his views on the importance of illustration as a tool for teaching and research. However, she also had a profound influence on the evolution of medical illustration education in Canada. As a professor, she was an influential leader in shaping medical illustration as an academic discipline. Nancy served as the Chair of the University of Toronto’s Department of Art as Applied to Medicine (AAM) (now Biomedical Communications) from 1962 to 1985, one of a few female Chairs of a department at U of T in the 1960s. Under her guidance AAM was elevated from a diploma program to a three-year Bachelor of Science degree in 1967.

Nancy was the daughter of an artist and a lawyer, and grand-daughter of a surgeon, anatomist, and Dean of the UofT Faculty of Medicine, Dr. Alexander Primrose, and combined art and medicine throughout her life. In 1939 she enrolled in a four-year diploma at the Ontario College of Art; she later attended classes in anatomy, histology, embryology, and neuroanatomy with U of T’s medical students, and, from 1944-1946, studied and worked with Tom Jones in the Department of Medical and Dental Illustration at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Upon her return to Toronto in 1946, Nancy enrolled as a special student in the AAM program and worked as a freelance illustrator for Dr. Grant.

Nancy was an accomplished pen and ink and half-tone watercolour practitioner, and she was a forward thinker: as early as 1982 she introduced a course in the design of computer-aided learning for medical education within the AAM program. She was also an active advocate for artists’ rights.

Prof. Joy was an Honorary Fellow of the Ontario College of Art (1984) and a member of the Association of Medical Illustrators. The AMI honoured Nancy Joy and another of Grant’s artists, Dorothy Foster Chubb, at their annual meeting in 1998 in Toronto, when the publisher of Grant’s *Atlas* presented the original artwork used in the book to Biomedical Communications and the Department of Anatomy. Her legacy as an artist, educator, and advocate continues to flourish in the BMC program and through her medical illustrations in Grant’s *Atlas*, now in its thirteenth edition.

**Medical artists should be “born teachers, artists by vocation and scientists by nature”.**
—Nancy Joy, 1974