Obituary

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Prof. Matti Lempinen

1936–1996

Professor of Experimental Surgery Editor-in-Chief, Munich, Germany

Lempinen

Prof. Matti Lempinen died after enduring severe illness on November 26, 1996, at his home in Helsinki/ Finland. Born July 2, 1936, in Soanlathi he was graduated in 1963 from the Medical School of the University of Helsinki, after successfully defending his doctoral thesis in 1964. Already 4 years later he became Specialist in General Surgery and his PhD thesis was accepted in 1971, followed by promotion to Docent of Surgery at the University of Helsinki. An International Postdoctoral Research Fellowship provided him with an opportunity to collaborate with Prof. Ben Eiseman at the Department of Surgery, University of Colorado, Denver, USA. Upon returning to Finland he became Assistant Professor for Surgery at the University of Helsinki. Prof. Lempinen served as Administrative Surgeon-in-Chief at the Central Hospital of the Helsinki University 1974 until 1993. In 1989, the President of the Republic of Finland awarded him with the title *Professor honoris causa*. His illness forced him, unfortunately, to retire in October 1993.

Matti Lempinen is certainly one of the internationally most prominent and well-known Finnish surgeons of our time. General and visceral surgery, pancreatic surgery, pancreatitis research in particular, became his major scientific areas including, however, also shock research and organ transplantation. He was Managing Editor of the *Annales Chirurgiae et Gynaecologiae* from 1973 to 1979, serving also as Editor-in-Chief for this internationally well-recognized journal from 1980 to 1988. Also other international journals, for example *European Surgical Research*, enjoyed the excellent advice and support of Matti Lempinen. Accordingly, he was member of the editorial boards of *Cirugía Española*, the *Florence Journal of Surgery*, the *European Journal of Surgery*, the *Zentralblatt für Chirurgie* and, last but not least, the *European Surgical Research* from 1986 to 1996.

Matti Lempinen was representative of the Finish surgeons in the European Society for Surgical Research, acquiring there all honorable positions available, i.e. Local Delegate (1975-1981), Vice President (1976-1977), President Elect (1977-1978), and finally President of the Society from 1978 to 1979. He was the organizer of the still memorable Annual Congress of the European Society for Surgical Research in his home town of Helsinki in 1979. Together with his wife, Peggy, Matti Lempinen was a most wonderful host of the ESSR Congress, when it was held for the first time in Finland. Both succeeded in establishing a well-balanced program of scientific and social activities. No wonder, the outstanding meeting was attended not only by his fellow scientists but also a large group of personal friends coming from all over the world. I have always considered it as a great privilege of being a close personal friend of Matti and Peggy markedly raising the pleasure of our collaboration in the Society and for the Journal.

We will miss his excellent scientific contributions, his competence as teacher of surgery and surgical research – foremost, however, his warm and graceful friendship. We will miss him – but not forget him.

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