In Memoriam: Jean Thivolet

The scientific, university and medical communities pay homage to the memory of Professor Jean Thivolet, who died on February 4, 2011. By all those who knew him he will be remembered as a doctor, teacher and exceptional scientist who took French dermatology to the highest levels of international renown.

Born on February 4, 1926, in Lyon, France, Jean Thivolet was Chair of the Department of Dermatology, Venereology and Allergology at Edouard Herriot Hospital (Pavillon R), Lyon, from 1972 to 1992, after having been Head of the Dermatology Department at Antiquaille Hospital and holding the Chair for Hygiene and Social Welfare.

Jean Thivolet was a dermatologist and researcher with visionary insight about future developments in medical practice. In parallel with his clinical activities, he built the laboratory of cutaneous immunopathology, which he directed from 1977 to 1992, and which was quickly recognised as the first INSERM (Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale) dermatology unit. This grouping of clinical and research services was to become one of the most efficient dermatological research centres in the world and attracted clinicians and researchers of all nationalities. The cosmopolitan aspect was very important to him. His energies led to the establishment of a Master in Cutaneous Biology and to an annual seminar on immunodermatology. His team contributed to major advances in knowledge about immunodermatology, in particular in the fields of Langerhans cells, bullous auto-

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immune diseases and the culture of epidermal cells for the treatment of major burns.

Jean Thivolet exacted as much from himself as he did from others, and was very open-minded, energetic, enthusiastic and determined. He was full of charisma and inspired many vocations. Pavillon R was a training platform for innumerable students and fellow workers who

are now dermatology professors or brilliant researchers, both in France and in the rest of the world.

Jean Thivolet was president of the French Dermatology Society and established the French and European Societies for Dermatological Research. Being convinced that medical and scientific excellence is attained via peer contacts on an international level, Jean Thivolet was involved in the steering groups of dermatological associations around the world. He was a member of the managing committee of the International League of Dermatological Societies and of the International Dermatology Foundation.

Jean Thivolet retired in 1995 to spend more time with his family and friends while at the same time continuing until 2009 to act as editor-in-chief of the *European Journal of Dermatology*, which he had founded in 1991.

In addition to his professional career as a leading specialist, Jean Thivolet will be missed by all those who had the good fortune to know and appreciate his abilities, his honesty and his scientific rigour, his simplicity, his deep humanity and his unwavering friendship.

Jean-François Nicolas, Lyon, France