

EMS Newsletter 25, February 2009

Dear EMS member,



L. Ginsel
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It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Professor Leo Ginsel, Treasurer of the EMS, who passed away on January 7, 2009. He will be greatly missed by his many friends and colleagues throughout the microscopy community. This month's EMS Newsletter is dedicated to Leo Ginsel in a tribute to his work as a scientist, teacher and first Treasurer of EMS.

Leo Ginsel was born on July 24, 1947 in Leiden and died on January 7, 2009 in Mook, both in The Netherlands. In Leiden he was educated at the Christian Lyceum after which he chose to study biology at Leiden University. He finished his studies in 1973 and his ambition was to obtain a research position at the Laboratory for Electron Microscopy. His scientific work focused on the structure and function of intestinal cells, for which he used the EM and associated techniques. His diligent laboratory work accumulated results which culminated in a PhD thesis in 1979. The title was called: "Lysosomes and storage diseases, a morphological, cytochemical, and autoradiographical study on the function of lysosomes in the absorptive cells of the human intestine in relation to the transport and secretion of cell-coat material": a long title for a nice story about the network of interactions between cell coat, surface organelles, lysosomes, uptake and degradation in intestinal epithelial cells. After his thesis, Leo managed to get a permanent position at the EM lab, where he ultimately became Head of the Department in 1987. In 1991 he moved to Nijmegen and became full professor of Cell Biology and Histology. Teaching was not, or almost not an issue for him in Leiden, but he accepted a full teaching load in Nijmegen.

We have seen Leo as a hardworking, sympathetic biologist engaging himself in many different aspects of life. Apart from scientific work itself, it became evident that scientific organizations also attracted his attention. He was not only chairman of the Dutch Society for Microscopy (NVvM) in the period 1996 – 2003, but also a member of the Executive Board

of the European Microscopy Society (EMS), where he accepted the role of Treasurer by the end of the year 2000 soon after the birth of this new society. Initially, the cash-box did not contain an appreciable amount of money but, thanks to the adoption of new rules, such as the en-bloc membership, and particularly Leo's careful management, the revenues grew with the result that the EMS is now on quite firm financial grounds. It was in connection with the European Microscopy Society that his human qualities shone out most brightly for those of us who did not know him as a scientist. His ability to deal with the different styles and attitudes of the presidents, secretaries and treasurers of the many national and regional microscopy societies throughout Europe was most impressive – even those most reluctant to pay their membership fees finally succumbed to his courteous pressure!

Leo published many articles, at first concerning his work on intestinal cells; later his studies also included monocytes, macrophages, granulocytes and finally the diaphragm. Many of his articles are written in collaboration with colleagues from other universities, indicating his ability to cooperate successfully with investigators outside his home institute. These articles were published in high-ranking international journals. Leo was also a member of many learned societies.

In Nijmegen, he found himself teaching medical and biomedical students at different levels, including both practical and theoretical training. He was actively involved in lecturing, but he was also a moving force in many committees concerned with the maintenance and development of education. From outside Nijmegen, it is difficult to describe these aspects of Leo's professional life, but we can say with confidence that every single person involved in education must have appreciated his human and practical attitude. In recent years Leo was strongly involved in the production of the histol-

ogy textbook "Functionele Histologie" from the eighth to the eleventh edition (2000–2007). The publication profited greatly from Leo's experience of what students need and appreciate during the process of increasing their knowledge. During many other occasions, all of us also appreciated Leo's stories about the long and distant travels he made to different countries and the way he enjoyed meeting and talking to people, often in support when needed, apparently another expression of his interest in the human soul.

The shocking news of his early death brought many people to his funeral at which the strong appreciation for his person was expressed by the many flowers and touching speeches. We sincerely hope that Marija, his spouse, and his children Bastiaan and Dorien felt supported by the expression of our appreciation for Leo. We will miss his kindness, his professional support and his great humanity very much, so it is with the deepest respect that we would like to co-sign this in memoriam for Leo who has been a meticulous professional and caring person who will leave a strong and lasting impression on all of us.

Wolfgang Baumeister, Last President CEMES, Martinsried, Germany; Eddie Wisse, First secretary EMS, Keerbergen, Belgium; Peter Hawkes, Founder-President EMS, Toulouse, France; José Carrascosa, First President EMS, Madrid, Spain; Ueli Aebi, Former President EMS, Basel, Switzerland; Paul Midgley, President EMS, Cambridge, UK; Nick Schryvers, for all former and present members of the Executive Board of EMS, Secretary EMS, Antwerp, Belgium

Contact:

Prof. Dr. D. Schryvers, PhD
Electron Microscopy for Materials Science (EMAT)
Department of Physics
University of Antwerp, Belgium
Tel.: +32 3 2653247
Fax: +32 3 2653257
nick.schryvers@ua.ac.be