
In Memoriam: Jan Parmentier

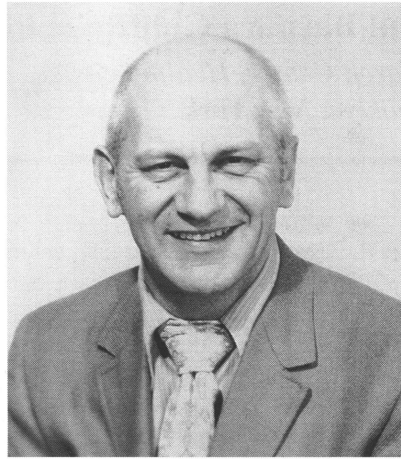
We who are fortunate to have had the privilege of knowing Jan Parmentier as a friend, colleague, and teacher mourn his loss.

Jan Parmentier, born in Naarden, Holland, in 1925, embodied in his personal and professional lifestyle qualities that have endeared him to all who knew him. Such qualities included intellectual honesty, insightfulness, integrity, empathy, and an ability to understand one's neighbor. He was a friend on whom one could count. His interest in his fellow man was demonstrated throughout a lifetime that recognized the importance of values of family, friends, religion, and colleagues. As busy as he always was, time was always put aside for family, friends, and religious teaching.

His education included the Stony Brook Preparatory School, Stony Brook, NY; graduation from Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA, with bachelor of sciences degree in electrical engineering, and numerous post-graduate courses in physics and mathematics. He was devoted to the Stony Brook Preparatory School. His membership in societies included the Cum Laude Society. Probably Jan was most proud of his acceptance as a member of the Bárány Society and the Association for Research in Otolaryngology.

Jan Parmentier was the individual who introduced to the otolaryngology community in the United States the significance of the rotary chair for vestibular diagnosis. His many friends worldwide, established through the years, appreciated his boundless energy and patience. His special contribution and expertise to vestibular physiology was recognized by the Bárány Society, an honor society of which he was a member. As a teacher, Jan was able to bring to his students an enthusiasm for the topic being taught and an ability to simplify a problem. The teaching experience involved an integration of didactic material with open-ended discussion of the problem to which the lesson would be applied. At the end of such a session, both teacher and student had benefited from each other; it was a learning experience for both.

Jan's activities were also commercial in nature. He was originally employed by the Sperry Gyroscope Company in Lake Success, NY, and thereafter by the Contraves Corporation, Zurich, Switzerland, where he par-



ticipated in research and development programs associated with the design and deployment of the submarine-based Polaris missile system and with emphasis on development of ultraprecise gravity reference devices. This application of education and experience benefited the military.

Jan's desire to contribute to his fellow man by education and innovation was borne out in the design, manufacture, and development of quality medical instrumentation. By cooperation with members of the medical profession, and using his engineering expertise from his military experience, he applied high technology to the development of rotary chair systems for vestibular diagnosis and experimentation in both humans and animals. He founded the company Neurokinetics in Pittsburgh, PA, of which he was president. Together with his staff, he devoted himself not only to the production, design, and distribution of the chair, but extended himself with teaching to professionals worldwide. Together with his colleagues, he attempted to foster progress in the development and application of the rotary chair for improving the accuracy of diagnosis for patient complaints of the balance system. This activity was international in scope. Consultantships were many and included an appointment as lecturer at the Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn, State University of New York, in 1982. The membership of the international organization of the Neurootological and Equilibriometric Society (NES) has celebrated Jan's membership and achievements by establishing the Jan Parmentier Memorial Lecture in June 1999. This will be continued at future annual meetings of the NES.

The Martha Entenmann Tinnitus Research Center, Inc., and the 4-G-Forschung will forever remember the teaching and assistance provided by Jan, who tailored the rotary chair equipment for the tinnitus patient. We join with Jan's family in recognizing Jan to have been an exceptional human being whose brightly shining personality is sorely missed. We share your loss and celebrate his life.

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