

Obituary

PAUL A.J. SPETH

In memoriam

RADIANT with health, bearing witness to an energy seemingly inexhaustible, Paul was overtaken by death. Together with his best friends during their regular jog his source of energy was cut off. Despite every possible effort, they were not able to bring him back to life. And so he died, this remarkable person, on Sunday, 11 December, 1988. A doctor who never spared himself, he worked day in and day out for others confronted with the finitude of life.

Paul had already distinguished himself in his student days when he spent four months in the Artificial Lung Test and Evaluation Facility Laboratory, Providence, RI, United States and four months in the Sumve District Hospital in Tanzania. After taking his finals in medicine in 1977, Paul trained to become an internist under Prof. C.L.J. Majoor, M.D. ♣ and Prof. A. van 't Laar, M.D. He wrote a book under the pseudonym Arnold Weterings in which he describes his personal experiences. From this book one obtains a good idea of Paul's way of thinking and what it meant to him to be a doctor.

Paul was not only a doctor for his patients, to whom he gave all that medical care had to offer, but he went a step further continually seeking new ways of improving existing methods.

In the Hematological Department he studied pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics. On 19 June, 1986, he graduated with a thesis on 'Cellular pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of anthracyclines in man'. He joined the staff of the Medical Oncological Department in July, 1986 and became an authority in the field of continuous infusion of cytostatics. He acquired an international reputation for research on pharmacokinetics. He was a frequent invited speaker on these subjects. As a result he was often asked to referee scientific articles for publication in journals like the *European Journal of Cancer & Clinical Oncology*. Under a fellowship of the NCI-EORTC Exchange Program he spent a year in the Pharmacological Branch of the National Cancer Institute with Jerry Collins which provided him with new insights and techniques later introduced into Dutch cancer research. We discovered that we had a very special man amongst us who never ceased to amaze us with his inexhaustible inventiveness. He was a creative artist among scientists. Also he was a man whose kindness endeared him to all those around him. Paul was in heart and soul a 'Radboud man'. He supported the interest of his fellow workers. The department, the hospital, the faculty and the university all have lost an unforgettable person; one of the great men of the future.

Paul was the happy father of Daan and Marijn and his wife Agnes has lost a brilliant husband. We were not given the opportunity to take our leave of him. We are grateful for having known him. He enriched our lives.

Nijmegen, December 1988

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