

Jean Durlach (1925-2017)

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Past president of SDRM

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Jean Durlach, honorary president of the international Society for the Development of Research on Magnesium (SDRM), passed away on August 2017. He leaves his wife Marie-Thérèse, four children and ten grandchildren.

Born in 1925 he commits himself as a French resistance fighter in the later stages of the World War II before studding medicine in Paris. Pulmonary tuberculosis contracted at the Laennec Hospital and a long stay in sanatorium disrupted the beginning of his university career. Jean Durlach was officer of the French national order of the Legion of Honour. His visionary role in the field of magnesium is unanimously recognized. Jean

Durlach perceived the importance of magnesium almost 50 years ago and the necessity to develop the researches by establishing a scientific society the SDRM, organizing international meetings and then editing *Magnesium Research*.

I was greatly impressed by the relevance of his scientific analyses during my participation as a young scientist, in the first international symposium on magnesium in Vittel (1971). This meeting was followed by further international symposia in Montreal (1976), Baden Baden (1981), Blacksburg (1985), Kyoto (1988), Indore (1991), Lisbon (1994), Heraklion (1997), Vichy (2000). . . The last one in Roma (2016). In addition, several European meetings were held and local societies funded under his guidance. The clinical and experimental works of Jean Durlach underline the frequency of an inadequate intake of magnesium in industrialized countries and emphasize the role of dysregulation in the control of magnesium metabolism. The neuromuscular consequences have been particularly studied. His work has been the subject of more than 300 publications and a book “*Le Magnésium en Pratique Clinique*” (JB. Baillière, Paris 1985) that has been translated into several languages. His contribution has been recognized by several universities, which have awarded him the title of Doctor Honoris Causa.

Any remembrance of Jean Durlach cannot separate the man from the scientist. Everyone who came close to Jean will remember his great human qualities, his humour and his intellectual curiosity, which pushed him to be interested as well to a forgotten author of the French literature than a master of the Japanese prints. The diners organized by Marie-Thérèse in Paris or in the family property of Eguzon were particularly stimulating for the mind.

We have lost a friend and a truly great scientist.

Dr Yves Rayssiguier