

Obituary



Bengt Nylen 1924–1986

Bengt Nylen died in an accident, when a tractor overturned, on his beloved summer island, Isskar, May 9. The message of his unexpected death came as a shock to all who knew him well and have worked with him.

Bengt Nylen was born in 1924. After medical studies and training in otolaryngology and surgery, he specialized in plastic surgery and started his training in the United States in 1953–54. After his return to Sweden he worked with Tord Skoog in Uppsala until 1961, when he moved to Karolinska Sjukhuset in Stockholm to become Associate Head of the Department of Plastic Surgery. In 1968 he succeeded Allan Ragnell as Head of the Department and remained so until 1986 when he retired in order to organize a private unit for plastic surgery in Stockholm.

Clinically and scientifically the department progressed under his leadership. He organized a well functioning unit where the results of well-founded research and followup studies guided the development of clinical practice. A large number of theses and papers on various subjects as well as numerous papers given at congresses resulted from his stimulating and inspiring leadership. Under his guidance the plastic surgical department at Karolinska was well known worldwide and a must for plastic surgeons visiting Sweden.

His thesis about cleft palate function following treatment was a classic for research in this field. Bengt maintained an interest in clefts throughout his career. Another interest of his was burns. The Burn Unit at Karolinska became famous and it was quite natural that the Fifth International Congress of Burn Injuries was held in Stockholm in 1978. During organization of this meeting he carried a heavy load. His flair for organization was also called upon when he became Secretary General for the Congress of the European Section of the International Confederation of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in Stockholm in 1985. Both of these meetings were great successes from a scientific point of view and widely appreciated.

Bengt was a warmhearted, humorous and friendly man with wide cultural interests and was extremely generous in his friendship. He was sincerely appreciated by patients, friends and colleagues alike. We all share with his wife, Ingrid, his children and their families the deep grief and loss.

Sten Jacobsson, Malmö
