



## Flemming Gjerris 1936–2024

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Flemming Gjerris, Professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Copenhagen and past president of the EANS, brought Europe to Denmark and Denmark to Europe.

Many will remember him from EANS training courses where he, as chair of the training committee reformed courses and emphasized strict criteria for quality of teaching. He assumed the duty of leading and improving training- which he paired with “*det danske smil*”, the Danish smile. The smiling approach was successful and appreciated, but also invited a tradition of training course participants helping Flemming to an “unexpected” swim during

course banquets; a challenge Flemming tackled by wearing a dark suit fitted with a diving mask. Maybe scuba gear was the helpful ingredient in navigating the deep waters of neuropolitics and initiating the process for a European neurosurgical curriculum, a European Exam and a vision of enabling all European trainees access to EANS training courses.

At his department in Rigshospitalet, the university Hospital of Copenhagen, Flemming Gjerris was a very appreciated leader. Today's Danish neurosurgeons fondly describe his support of them as residents as starting their journey in neurosurgery. On the larger scale, he also led the Danish Neurological Society and Academia Eurasiana Neurochirurgica as president and was co-founder of the Danish Neurosurgical Society. Scientifically, Flemming concentrated on pediatric neurosurgery, brain tumors in children and most of all in hydrocephalus. He authored nearly 300 scientific articles and the research group he established is still growing and flourishing in the form of the Copenhagen CSF study group.

Flemming and his wife, Annette, a psychiatrist, formed part of a European neurosurgical family in the 1990s. We remember Anette had ideas about neurosurgery and personality, yet both were instrumental in developing the international ties that contributed to growth of organized neurosurgery in Europe. Apparently, Flemming acknowledged neurosurgery as a cross-border enterprise; he foresaw how international collaboration fostered a new neurosurgical “*lingua franca*” succeeding Latin, German and English in international history of science; he described the new tongue as a slightly anarchistic mixture of different English socio- and dialects—not least “Danish-English.”

Our thoughts are with the bereaved, with gratitude for a great figure in Danish and international neurosurgery. May Flemming Gjerris’ memory be honoured!

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