Obituary: In Memoriam Jerzy Hildebrand, MD, PhD

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75

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In Memoriam Jerzy Hildebrand, MD, PhD

Jerzy Hildebrand, MD, PhD, died on February 11, 2013. Jerzy was born in Warsaw in April 1936. Soon after the invasion of Poland by Russia, his father was executed in 1940 in Katyn with many other Polish officers. Jerzy and his mother were then sent to Siberia where they spent 5 years in very difficult conditions. He described this episode of his life in a recently published beautiful book entitled “Wanda”.

After World War II, Jerzy and his mother were eventually granted visa for Belgium – an opportunity for which Jerzy was always grateful. He attended medical school in Brussels and became professor of neurology and chairman of the Department of Neurology at the Erasmus university hospital. In this position, Jerzy was a pioneer in European neuro-oncology and among the first to engage in clinical trials in gliomas. He founded the Brain Tumour Group of the EORTC (European Organization on Research and Treatment of Cancer) in 1972, and was its chairman for more than 10 years. He also played a key role in the creation of the European Association of Neuro-Oncology and was its chairman from 1995–1996. Jerzy retired in 2001 but remained very active as a consultant at the Institut Jules Bordet in Brussels and at the Salpêtrière hospital in Paris where he volunteered for 10 years. He was made Chevalier de la Legion d’Honneur in 2006 for his remarkable dedication.

On a humane and professional point of view, Jerzy Hildebrand was an outstanding man. We will miss him greatly. We express our deepest sympathy to his wife Michele and to his three children.

Jean-Yves Delattre and Charles Vecht