

In Memoriam



Marcel Ecabert

Born in Les Bois, Switzerland in 1947, Marcel Ecabert studied physics at the University of Neuchâtel where he also obtained his degree *docteur ès sciences* in 1977 for research in Solid-state physics.

From 1977 to 1979, Marcel Ecabert worked in the research division for a large company in Zurich.

Following his post in Zurich, he turned his career in a direction where his flair for human relations would flourish. Starting in research at the EPFL in 1979 he was given the task of developing the University's relationships with the private sector which eventually lead to the creation of the Industrial Liaison Programme (CAST).

In 1985, Marcel Ecabert joined the FSRM, the Swiss Foundation for Research in Microtechnology in Neuchâtel, as the assistant manager. Two years later he took over the management of the Foundation. During his 20 years of professional leadership at the head of this institution, Marcel Ecabert put forward all of his energy into the development of Microtechnology in Neuchâtel and in Switzerland. Those who had the good fortune to work side-by-side with him recognized an incredible aptitude to rally around a new idea, project or common cause. His fundamental understanding of human nature and relationships always stood at the centre of all of his numerous projects. He was particularly successful at fostering the cooperation between research institutes of Western Switzerland and neighbouring France. To his credit, he is the founding force responsible for the union of three large-scale scientific congresses linking the Time, Frequency and Navigation domains. This scientific fusion has given birth to the joint congress at which you are participating today – TimeNav'07.

Those who had the chance to know Marcel will always remember his generous, glowing personality. A cultivated man, he appreciated and knew many forms of art; music, painting and architecture to name a few. From his country roots in the Jura mountains of Switzerland he developed a cultivated knowledge of nature which he admired with every chance he could. A good physicist, he was passionate about the origins of the universe and prehistoric times. This passion was present in all that he undertook, whether it was a project in cross-border cooperation in Microtechnology or a quiet walk in nature with his family. He adored his family. Above all else, he loved to get together with his wife and two sons for Sunday breakfast. The family spirit was so strong in Marcel that he naturally extended it to all with whom he was dear. Because of his warm, generous open and fair-minded nature, Marcel Ecabert was always surrounded by a "large family".

He died on April 18, 2007, after a long sickness through which he showed an enormous amount of dignity and a rare lucidity, leaving in place all the necessary measures to allow his projects to continue after his departure. His TimeNav'07 colleagues are extremely grateful for his boundless and contagious enthusiasm which were an integral part of all his actions.