

*Antonino Roberto Antonelli obituary*

Prof. Antonino Roberto Antonelli passed away peacefully on May 25, with his beloved wife Anna and daughters Paola and Chiara by his side.

He was born in Milan in 1934; his father's family came from Molise, while his mother's family had roots in Abruzzo. In 1958, he obtained the MD in Medicine and Surgery at the University of Milan, and in the subsequent three-year period, he completed his residency in Otorhinolaryngology, under the direction of Prof. Ettore Bocca. Notably, Professor Antonelli spent one year (1960) at the Institute of Physiology of the University of Pisa, where he performed several experimental studies on neurophysiology of the hearing and olfactory system. The development of his clinical and scientific activity took place under the leadership of Prof. Bocca first at the University of Sassari (1961-1968), then at the University of Ferrara (1968-1972), and subsequently at the University of Milan, where he returned in 1972. In 1982, he was appointed Associate Professor, and in 1983 he took over the Chairmanship of the Section of Otorhinolaryngology of the University of Brescia – Spedali Civili. In 1986, he developed a program of Residency at the University of Brescia, which rapidly became one of the most attractive for young physicians. In 1990, he was ranked Full Professor, a position he maintained until retirement, in 2006. For many years thereafter, he continued to serve as an enthusiastic tutor for residents, who enjoyed his medical knowledge and culture—spanning well beyond the limits of otorhinolaryngology—his teaching skills, his wisdom, and his characteristic humility, even in his interactions with them.

Everyone who had the chance to know Prof. Antonelli was impressed by his vivid intelligence and his unique ability to put at ease any interlocutor,

whether a student, a patient, or a peer. Equally remarkable was his versatility in approaching any aspect of our discipline with focus and depth. His career evolved from the field of audiology, where he pioneered the fundamentals of acoustic impedance and auditory evoked potentials, and spread them among the younger generations of practitioners. In view of his widely recognized expertise in the field, he was included in the CRS Amplifon Scientific Board with Biondi, Dufour, Avanzini and, after 1980, with Martini. In the second part of his professional life, Prof. Antonelli clinical and scientific activity privileged head and neck oncology, and Brescia rapidly ranked among the leading centers for the management of head and neck cancer.

With Prof. Antonelli's death, the otorhinolaryngological community has lost one of the most prominent leader of the past fifty years. He was a passionate and dedicated mentor, and his pupils were encouraged to explore and apply new techniques in head and neck surgery under his reassuring supervision. Many colleagues sought his opinion on challenging cases, and many medical students and otorhinolaryngology residents were endlessly captivated by his lectures. Besides his professional merits, Prof. Antonelli was a man of great culture, a lover of jazz and classical music, and a strong believer in the value of human relationships and friendship.

His mentees have the duty to keep alive and pass on his legacy to the new generations of otorhinolaryngologists, and to wish them that they can be so lucky as to meet a mentor with Prof. Antonelli's charisma.

Farewell Maestro, it was a privilege to walk the same road for many years, together.

*Piero Nicolai*