



## Obituary

**Professor Dr Paul Wilflingseder**  
1916–1993



Professor Dr Paul Wilflingseder, retired head of the University-Hospital for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Innsbruck, died on 23 January 1993. Patients and university have lost one of their most qualified surgeons. His life was guided by an incredible devotion to his profession as a surgeon, teacher and scientist at the University of Innsbruck, as well as to his Tyrolean family, and by his love of the mountains.

He was born in Ried im Innkreis in Austria on 24 March 1916. He studied at university in Vienna and Innsbruck, where he graduated in 1939. He had to enter the army as a war surgeon until the end of the war in 1945. From that time onward he became resident in the department of surgery in Innsbruck. In 1948 he visited the USA, where he worked at the Lahey Clinic in Boston and at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. In 1950 he came to Britain, where he had the opportunity to work with Sir Harold Gillies and McIndoe. During this stay friendship developed with Gillies, which resulted in a visit by Gillies to Innsbruck.

As an excellent general surgeon, Wilflingseder was not just dealing with plastic surgery alone, but also had other interests, such as the development of heart surgery. In 1955 he became lecturer with a thesis about the disease of goitre and in 1962 he received the title of University Professor. In 1966 he founded the first chair for plastic and reconstructive surgery in the German speaking countries. This chair became a completely independent institution in 1972.

Professor Wilflingseder wrote many scientific publications which were published in national and international journals and presented at many congresses and meetings. His reference-list included more than 150 papers of a high scientific standard. He was an excellent teacher and very much respected by his students. He was Visiting Professor in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, became a corresponding and founding member of many national and international societies all over the world and for his merits was honoured with several awards. His tolerance for other ideas was remarkable, even if this attitude could have endangered his profile. Four of his pupils became professors and were appointed to leading positions in several countries. One of his pupils, Professor Hans Anderl, became his successor in 1986.

Beside work, his family was his centre of recreation and repose. An excellent climber and skier, he was fascinated by the Alps and the mountains of many other parts of the world.

His personality will remain in the hearts of his pupils and friends.

UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR DR H. ANDERL