

IN MEMORIAM

# Menso Bult

27 November 1953–3 March 2014



**Menso Bult**, European Manager for Plasma Protein Therapeutic Association's (PPTA) global access activities, passed away after a long illness on March 3, 2014. Menso, who was born in Arnhem, the Netherlands on November 27, 1953, was a stalwart of the plasma protein therapeutics industry who managed important programs for supporting albumin and immunoglobulin in Europe for the past 12 years. In addition, he was an expert in information technology and constructed the first PPTA product support websites which evolved into our highly professional web page in these areas.

Menso trained as a nurse in psychiatry in the 70's, and then worked in his father's audio business in the 80's. He was a pharmaceutical sales representative for a few companies (Byk, Bayer and Astra) and became a specialist in cardiology. He then moved to St. Jude and worked with cardiac pacemakers, where he was trained to do patient check-ups. He joined PPTA 15 years ago.

Menso was my closest colleague in the Association and I worked closely with him since I joined the PPTA in September of 2008. For this considerable time, we worked together to build up awareness for the important products albumin and immunoglobulin, particularly through medical education of physicians in Europe.

In this aspect, Menso constructed a network of supportive opinion leaders in intensive care and immunotherapy, through support for clinical projects and key conferences. These included the International Symposium on Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine (ISICEM) and the biannual congress of the European Society for Immunodeficiency Disorders (ESID). Through patience and hard work, the PPTA presence in these meetings was built up to the level of constant and high visibility which has enhanced the acceptance of albumin and immunoglobulin immeasurably in the clinical areas which are major in Europe. In addition, crucial studies on disease pathology and diagnosis were conducted with PPTA support, with Menso acting as the critical coordinator and facilitator with the clinical groups.

In all of this, Menso, who was a self-effacing but highly competent individual, was indefatigable in his commitment, hard work and total professionalism. He became widely recognized for these qualities throughout, and this enabled us to continue to build important collaborations. In addition, Menso managed the product Task Forces recruited from the companies to oversee and develop these projects. Always the quiet achiever, Menso ensured that all the logistic demands of these complex operations were always fully functional, in ways which are never sufficiently visible but which were crucial.

I was always impressed by his commitment, patience and phlegmatic approach, and in many ways we were a great complement to each other. Menso ensured, as an example, that we were recruited directly into the ISICEM faculty and thus able to speak directly to the KOL community and publish in peer reviewed journals. He also managed the funding contract for important diagnostic activities such as the ESID patient registry, all activities yielding valuable fruit in these difficult economic times.

In the years of our association together, Menso was never enjoying good health. Sadly for an athletic person as he was once—he hit off the tee in golf to a handicap of eight—Menso suffered from a skiing accident which left him with a chronic and increasingly painful injury. Throughout this time, he soldiered manfully on and never complained, so that many people hardly knew of his suffering. He started a series of operations a year ago, which sadly failed to improve his condition and his final illness was the result of complications from these interventions; throughout all this, he underwent great suffering uncomplainingly and increasingly philosophically.

I saw him last on February 25, less than a week before his passing. It was obvious to me that I was seeing my old comrade for the last time. Nevertheless, we had a good and cheerful exchange and were able to reminisce about the many things we did together over the years.

He was my friend, colleague and comrade. We shared many interests; a love of golf, of quirky antiques, and our tastes in music were similar, and, of course, impeccable. Many times while on conference calls with him, I would hear Dylan or Cohen in the background. And because Menso, I know, liked the Rolling Stones, I will cite the poem Mick Jagger read in Hyde Park two days after the death of his comrade Brian Jones:



"Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep,  
He hath awaken'd from the dream of life;  
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep  
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,  
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife  
Invulnerable nothings."

**Adonais: An Elegy on the Death of John Keats,  
Author of Endymion, Hyperion, etc.**

*Written by Percy Bysshe Shelley for John Keats in 1821*

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**VALE DEAR MENSO, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE WITH US**

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Albert Farrugia  
Brussels  
March 3, 2014