

Laudatio Jozef Uyttenhove

D. Segers

Academic personal, doing research on the history of their research domain, is since a number of years awarded a distinction by the Sarton Committee of the Ghent University. Besides a chair the committee also presents a number of medals coupled to a series of lectures. The chair and the medals are denominated by Georges Sarton who lived between 1884 and 1956. He was a pioneer in the study of the history of science and started his career at our university.

For the academic year 2007 – 2008 the faculty of science could propose a candidate for the Sarton medal and this was Prof. emeritus Jos Uyttenhove.

Colleague Jos Uyttenhove was born in Antwerp on February 22nd 1944. He went to the “Royal Atheneum” in Antwerp and afterwards he started the studies of physics at the former Ghent State University. He obtained the diploma of “Licentiate in Science, group Physics” in 1967.

Immediately thereafter, from August 1967, he was appointed as a certified researcher of the former “Interuniversity Institute for Nuclear Science” (in Dutch abbreviated by IIKW), a subdivision of the form “National Fund for Scientific Research”. He performed research in the field of experimental nuclear physics at the “Laboratory Verschaffelt” with the late Prof. J. L. Verhaeghe. He obtained the degree of “Doctor in Science, group Physics” on May 25th 1971.

He performed his military services in the period between 1972 and 1973. Thereafter he was again employed at our university. He became “assistant” and later on “Researcher in Charge” at the “Physics Laboratory” headed by Prof. Dr. J. Demuyne.

He expanded his nuclear research what in 1985 resulted in a “Habilitation Thesis in Experimental Nuclear Physics”.

Colleague Uyttenhove performed research in different disciplines such as nuclear electronics and instrumentation, experimental nuclear physics, natural radioactivity, measurements of low radioactivity levels in-situ, gamma spectroscopy, radon research,... This resulted in numerous contributions at international conferences and about fifty publications in A1 journals.

Colleague Uyttenhove built on his academic career and run through all the different academic levels from University Teacher, Senior Lecturer, Full Professor up to Extraordinary Professor.

Courses belonging to his teaching duties were “Physics”, “Experimental Physics” and “Principles of Physics”. These courses were lectured to large groups of several hundreds of students in the disciplines of veterinary science, medicine, dentistry, physical education and physiotherapy. He also lectured a course on “Electronics” to students in physics. Undoubtedly colleague Uyttenhove is an expert in the grew up and later development of nuclear electronics. Later on he also founded a course “History of Science”, which was an optional course in the discipline “Licentiate Physics” and which was also offered to the engineering faculty.

From January 1991 on Prof. Jos Uyttenhove was director – head of department of the “Physics Laboratory (group 2)”. From 1992 till 2000 he was chairman of the interfaculty department “Physics for the biomedical sciences”. From November 2001 till September 30th 2006 he was director – head of department of the “Museum for the History of Sciences”. During this period of administration he further developed the Museum for the History of Sciences. He actively participated at many international conferences on the history of sciences and he was a member of associated organizations such as SIS (the Scientific Instrument Society), the SIC (the Scientific Instrument Commission) and the

National Committee on Logic, History and Philosophy of Sciences. He also published a number of scientific works on subjects in the field of history of sciences.

From the 1st of October 2006 he obtained the emeritus status. He is still performing active research in his specialty fields such as low activity measurements, natural radioactivity and the history of radioactivity and electronics.

Colleague Uyttenhove will now talk about a subject on which he is an expert: the history and the impact of the evolution of nuclear electronics. The title of his speech is “Nuclear electronics as a pioneer in the development of instrumentation in the 20th century”.