Obituary for Em.O.Univ.Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Benno Lux

Benno Lux, professor emeritus of Chemical Technology of Inorganic Materials at Vienna University of Technology, died Monday, March 04, 2013, at the age of 82 after a long illness.

Born on June 16, 1930 in Styria / Austria he got first impressions about technology in his parents' home, because they managed a mill and a sawmill. Benno Lux studied "Technical Chemistry" at "Technische Hochschule Graz" and graduated as engineer "Dipl.-Ing." in 1954. For his doctoral thesis he worked at Metallwerk Plansee in Reutte/Tirol and graduated as "Doktor der Technischen Wissenschaften" in 1956.

During his first job at the Battelle Institute in Geneva / Switzerland he was involved in industrial research of inorganic technology. For his research work on cast iron and the theory about nucleation and growth of graphite he received the "Eugen-Piwowarsky-Preis" from the "Verein Deutscher Gießereifachleute" in 1963. An other important invention was the process for depositing α-Al_2O_3-coatings by chemical vapour deposition (CVD).

In 1972 he got the "Venia Docendi" at "Technische Hochschule Wien" and in 1977 he followed the appointment for Professor at the Institute for Chemical Technology of Inorganic Materials at Vienna University of Technology.

In Vienna Benno Lux continued with his research and became a popular lecturer because he had the ability to link theory with the needs of industry. Highlights of his work were on "Powder Metallurgy" and "CVD" during this period. In cooperation with "Wolfram Bergbau und Hüttengesellschaft" the reduction of tungsten oxides to tungsten, carburisation to WC, production of hardmetal and tungsten heavy alloys were investigated. Due to his excellent connections to Sandvik Coromant it was possible to start with the Low-Pressure Diamond deposition in Vienna 1984. This research has been sponsored by several companies and the "Austrian Science Foundation FWF" for several years.

He became president of the "Internationale Plansee Gesellschaft für Pulvermetallurgie" due to his commitment to research in powder metallurgy.

For his scientific work Benno Lux got the "Erwin Schrödinger Award" from the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW) in 1993. In 1994 he became corresponding member of the ÖAW.

Shortly after his retirement, Benno Lux fell ill. The disease broke his enquiring mind, making further research impossible. During this hard time his wife Traudl kept contact to the institute and his friends all over the world.

He is survived by his wife, Traudl, their three children Heribert, Angelika, Cornelia and also by several grandchildren.

Roland Haubner, Wolf-Dieter Schubert and Herbert Danninger