Prof Arnold van de Vijver, aged 91 years, passed away on 27 February 2014, in Culemborg, the Netherlands. He was previously attached to the Department of Anesthesiology at Stellenbosch University from 1968 until 1979.

Arnoldus Emile Dominicum van de Viyver was born in Biervliet, the Netherlands, on 26 October 1922. He completed his studies in medicine at the University of Utrecht after numerous interruptions owing to World War II. He qualified as an anesthesiologist in 1954 at the University of Utrecht, where he had to work without a salary for more than a year and a half, and then started his anaesthetic career at St Joseph's Hospital in Heerlin. He obtained a MD degree from the University of Utrecht in March 1960, whereby he was declared competent to train Dutch and Belgian students in anaesthesiology.

Although he had the opportunity to obtain a senior position in his home country, he had a lifelong dream of working in Africa, and was offered a senior lecturer post at the Department of Anesthesiology at Stellenbosch University 1967. At that time, the faculty was expanding and moving into the new Tygerberg Hospital. He accepted the post, and moved with his family to Durbanville. In 1968, he was promoted as a senior specialist in the Karl Bremer Hospital, and in 1976 was appointed Associate Professor under the late Prof Pat Foster.

The consequences of internment and forced labour (during the World War II) on his health obliged him to return with his family to the Netherlands in 1978.

Prof van de Vijver was a dedicated teacher, who was especially focused on the patient as a human being in need. He insisted that patients should be managed with sympathy and compassion, and this approach was especially evident when he conducted premedication rounds and postoperative pain management. Prof van de Vijver had a keen interest in pharmacology and anesthesia for cardiac and neurosurgical procedures, and preferred the neurolept anaesthetic technique which preceded present-day concepts with regard to balanced anaesthesia. Postgraduate students had the wonderful opportunity of being taught the technique, which was relatively unknown in South Africa at the time. Many of us can still recall the multiple small doses of various drugs which he used to induce stable anesthesia.

Prof van de Vijver published a number of peer-reviewed articles and chapters in anaesthetic text books. He was well educated in philosophy, could keenly debate modern and classic history, and was well versed in classic and modern languages.

He had strong sense of responsibility towards the profession, acted as a father figure to many, and in many ways was a true doctor, as well as a dedicated lecturer. He made a significant contribution to the development and expansion of the Department of Anesthesiology and Critical Care at Stellenbosch University.

Prof van de Vijver is survived by his wife, Nettie van de Vijver-Keyser, six children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. We honour and remember him for his many positive contributions to the department, and express our condolences to his family.

Dr Hannes Loots
Prof Andre Coetzee