

## In Memoriam - Professor Kurt Ruf, MD, FRCP(C)

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### IN MEMORIAM

**Professor Kurt Ruf, MD, FRCP(C)**, sometime Carnegie and Rockefeller Professor and Head of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at Dalhousie University Medical School (1983-1987) has died. Dr Ruf was born in Switzerland in 1934, and graduated with an MD from the University of Basel in 1960. Following postgraduate training in Clinical Medicine in Zurich, he embarked on a research career, first at the St Louis University School of Medicine and then in the Neurophysiology Research Unit of Hoffmann-La Roche in Basel and the Institute for Brain Research in Zurich (1963-1966). His growing interest in the new field of neuroendocrinology led him to a formative collaboration with G.W. Harris in Oxford, a founding father of this new endeavour. Dr Ruf subsequently came to Canada as a senior member of the Medical Research Council Group in Developmental Neurobiology, established in the new Medical School at McMaster University. It was during this period that he formulated what came to be widely known as the 'Nerve Growth Factor Theory of Sexual Maturation'. This influential paper presaged the current focus on the primary importance of neurotrophins in our understanding of how the brain regulates the process of puberty. His research career continued through faculty appointments in the Department of Physiology at the University of Geneva, and in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at McGill University. He published widely and served on the Editorial Boards of several learned journals. In Halifax he was a dedicated and courteous Head until his retirement to private practice in Lucerne. He and Annelis eventually returned to Montreal to be close to their children Franzisca and Bernard, and several grandchildren. His friends will long remember fine cuisine, wine and conversation at Kurt and Annelis' country home in the Eastern Townships. He will be missed by his former students, colleagues and friends.