

Prof. Dipl.-Phys. Helmut A. Müller

* November 30, 1929 † September 15, 2015

Helmut A. Müller, founder and for many years head of the acoustical consulting firm "Schalltechnisches Beratungsbüro Müller-BBM", passed away on September 15, 2015, at the age of 85. We have lost an outstanding personality who decisively influenced the adaptation of acoustical engineering to the requirements of modern technology by essentially contributing to better understanding and applying practically relevant acoustic phenomena.

Helmut Müller was born in Neuburg an der Donau in 1929 where he later graduated from high school. During his school days, he already pursued his wide-ranging technical and physical interests which he put into practice with ambitious developments leading to useful, sometimes even successfully marketed results. Although he was temporarily interested in developing and manufacturing radio sets, he finally started studying physics at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich in autumn 1949. His second main interest, music, took him - together with his close friend Manfred Heckl - to the challenging acoustics course given by the private lecturer Lothar Cremer. He and his presentation strongly fascinated both of them and were to permanently attract them to this specialist field.

As early as during their university studies, they supported Lothar Cremer in his private acoustical laboratory "Schalltechnisches Laboratorium" with acoustical measurements, evaluations and calculations. In 1954, Helmut Müller completed his studies with his diploma thesis in physics in which, amongst others, he summarized the results of many detailed in-depth analyses for the acoustic design of the Munich Herkulesaal.

In 1958, Lothar Cremer, who had accepted a chair at the Technical University in Berlin, asked his assistant Helmut Müller to liquidate the consulting firm in Munich and then to follow him to the University's Institute of Technical Acoustics. However, things were to turn out differently. New and challenging assignments for the Munich Nationaltheater and the Stuttgart Liederhalle made Helmut Müller stay in Munich, take over the firm from L. Cremer in 1958 and then run it as his own acoustical consulting firm "Schalltechnisches Beratungsbüro Helmut A. Müller".

So, at the right time, he was perfectly prepared to meet the technical needs of the post-war years when acoustics - being underestimated then as conclusively understood and lacking new challenges - was changing significantly. The years of fast reconstruction and rapid mechanization were characterized by a growing demand for environmental compatibility and better quality of life and thus turned acoustical engineering into an indispensable interdisciplinary field. Numerous assignments as well as the satisfaction of private and public clients made the new firm grow rapidly, above all in the areas of trade and industry, construction and transportation. Therefore, together with his asso-

ciates Lothar Cremer, Manfred Heckl, Ludwig Schreiber and the acoustical consulting company BBN, successful in the United States for some years and represented by Leo Beranek, Helmut Müller set up Müller-BBN GmbH in 1962, renamed to Müller-BBM GmbH in 1972.

Based on Helmut Müller's competence, dynamic spirit and inspiration, Müller-BBM continuously developed its potential and activities in all areas of acoustical engineering as well as in other areas of environmental engineering. Nowadays, the Müller-BBM Group located in Planegg near Munich comprises 30 internationally active companies with more than 1,000 employees. The combination of expert qualification, the high level of responsibility of each employee and the unique share-based employee participation initiated by Helmut Müller and the co-founders continues to be the key to the Group's success.

With entrepreneurial courage, pioneering technological spirit, outstanding and internationally recognized expertise, great empathy and an unmistakable sense for fostering motivation and commitment by granting individual responsibility, Helmut Müller had a decisive influence on acoustical engineering and its technical as well as entrepreneurial implementation that continues to resonate today. In recognition of his lifetime achievement, he was awarded the Helmholtz Medal of the German Acoustical Society (DEGA) in 1999 and the German Federal Cross of Merit on ribbon in 2005.

In addition to his manifold activities in the field of acoustics, Helmut Müller gave regular lectures at Munich's University of Applied Sciences and at the School for Violin Making in Mittenwald for many years. Moreover, he passed on his wealth of knowledge in books - some of them still being standard references today - as well as in numerous technical publications and lectures. The discipline of Technical Acoustics has lost an outstanding colleague with influential activities in many fields. By his technical/physical creativity and his unparalleled sense for the practical implementation and application of physical findings, Helmut Müller has lastingly influenced our acoustical environment.

Joachim Scheuren, Planegg