

OSA Fellow Pal Greguss A Reminiscence

It is my sad duty to report the tragic death of OSA Fellow Professor Pal Greguss, as the result of a tragic accident, in his beloved Budapest. He was 82 years old and still very active in research, art, music and the many other fields he loved so well. Those who knew him will want to join me in offering the most sincere condolences to Edith, his wife, secretary and constant companion, as well as to their children and grandchildren.

I first came to know Pal through holography, a field pioneered by Dennis Gabor, a fellow Hungarian. Pal was the first to make an acoustic hologram. More recently, he had turned his attention to another of his inventions: the NASA prize winning panoramic annular lens (PAL). The PAL, the first 360-degree lens to be both simple to fabricate and capable of good imaging, has proved valuable in several areas. The invention of the acoustic hologram and the PAL are probably the best-known aspects of a remarkable scientific career that resulted in over 300 refereed papers, 20 patents and much, much more.

The measure of a man is more than the number of his published papers and the prizes with which he has been recognized. It also includes his impact on the rest of humanity. A man who suffered unspeakable abuse under the Nazis and indignities under the communists, Pal was a true pioneer of the "reunification" of the once-separated East and West scientific blocs. If there was any bitterness in him, I never saw it in over 35 years of close friendship. He had mastered the supreme art of letting go of the past in order to embrace the future. I and



Pal Greguss, the inventor of the acoustic hologram.

countless others are grateful for that as well as for his enthusiasm and optimism. I have learned that these characteristics, which I first saw in Dennis Gabor and Pal, were common among all the great scientists and mathematicians of the time in Budapest, perhaps the most remarkable such group our world has ever seen. Pal will be sorely missed.

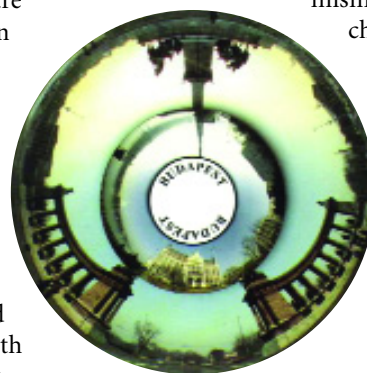


Photo of Budapest, taken with a PAL lens.

— H. John Caulfield
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Each December, *Optics & Photonics News* publishes information about OSA members who have died during the course of the year. To ensure that our memorial information is as comprehensive as possible, we need your help. Please write us at opn@osa.org should you learn of the death of a friend or colleague active in optics so that we may recognize them in the pages of OPN. Please include a phone number where you may be reached.