

Kalle Emil Kallio

1899 – 1986



The academic pioneer of orthopedics and traumatology in Finland Kalle Emil Kallio died on June 7, 1986. From the beginning, he was professor of general surgery, but fought vigorously in the Helsinki University Council to change the professorship to orthopedics and traumatology in 1960, which is still the only chair of its kind in Finland. Further, he transformed the First Surgery Unit at the Helsinki University Central Hospital into a casualty hospital, which has been of fundamental importance for the development of casualty patient care in Finland.

Kalle Kallio was born in a farming family of 11 children; thus, he was used to hard work already in early life. In 1919, he matriculated from Jyväskylä Lyceum, the oldest high school in Finland. Before that, he had become a second lieutenant at a military school during the war for Finland's independence in 1918. In 1927, he graduated as a physician from Helsinki University. After this, he was a practicing rural physician in his native Central Finland for a year before he began specializing in surgery at Turku County Hospital under the guidance of Professor Tauno Kalima, and at Maria Hospital in Helsinki, where his chief was Professor

Henri Bardy. Kalle Kallio worked first at Viipuri Military Hospital in Carelia and after that as chief surgeon in a county hospital in Carelia for 7 years until the 1939 war. During the Second World War, he served for 3 years as a surgeon in field hospitals until the time of his appointment as a surgeon at the new Invalid Foundation Hospital in Helsinki under Professor Fabian Langenskiöld.

In 1932, Kallio published his doctoral dissertation on intestinal tumors; the faculty opponent was Professor Richard Faltin. In 1944, Kalle Kallio became docent in surgery and in 1950 professor of surgery at Helsinki University succeeding Professor Kalima. He was acting professor of orthopedics and traumatology between 1960 and 1967, after which he was successful in getting his chair changed to include traumatology. He guided the change of his department into a casualty hospital in the true meaning of the word. This called for new appointments, new methods of treatment, and the training of young surgeons in clinical and scientific work. After all his success, Kalle Kallio still regarded the transformation of his professorship of general surgery into that of orthopedics and traumatology as his



Figure 2. This medal was struck by the Finnish Medical and Surgical Societies to honor Kalle Kallio at his 75th birthday. The sculptor, professor Aimo Tukiainen, has used stone age carvings to develop an operating theatre scene. Note the orthopedic tree at 10 o'clock.

most important achievement, even though he was internationally well known as the pioneer of skin arthroplasty.

Kalle Kallio was a charter member of the Finnish Orthopedic Society, and served as its vice president and then president during the years 1951-1963; and in 1964, he became an honorary member. Kalle Kallio was president of the Finnish Medical Society (1956-1958) and the Finnish Surgical Society (1957-1958). A medal in his honor was struck by these societies for his 75th birthday in 1974 (Figure 2), and he received several war decorations; he became commander of the Knighthood of Finnish Lions.

Kalle Kallio traveled widely as an invited lecturer at scientific meetings and congresses; and during his visits abroad, he performed numerous operations. His international activities proved to be important for the development of orthopedics and traumatology in our country. He was elected honorary member of the International College of Surgeons in 1955, and was vice president of that society between 1962 and 1965 and the European Federation secretary between 1966 and 1969. Moreover, Kalle Kallio was the Finnish delegate to the International Society for Orthopedics and Traumatology (SICOT) between 1957 and 1967. Also, he served as president of the Scandinavian Orthopedic Association in 1956. Kalle Kallio was an honorary or corresponding member of 22 domestic and foreign societies and academies. He was fluent in five languages besides his native Finnish: namely, Swedish, German, French, English, and Russian, and he was a good speaker.

As regards his scientific publications, the most important were the use of skin in reconstructive surgery, e.g., skin arthroplasty of the hip joint, which aroused interest at the time internationally, developments in Krukenberg's kineplastic operations, as well as his principle of early nonstop joint motion after orthopedic operations or trauma. He was a demanding department head, but, especially in his later years, he allowed his younger colleagues much independence in their clinical work, and he inspired them to engage in research, which resulted in 16 doctoral dissertations under his guidance. Among his protégées are a professor of surgery in Finland, a professor of orthopedics in Norway, and the undersigned, who enjoys the same appointment as Kalle Kallio held in his time.

As a schoolboy, Kallio played the violin, drew, and painted; and he was very interested in literature. During his undergraduate days, Kalle Kallio was a member of the Helsinki University Choir. During his leisure time, Kalle Kallio enjoyed nature — walking and skiing; further, he was fond of literature and foreign languages, and was an art collector. He wrote his autobiography in Finnish, *My participation in life*, which was published in 1973, and in which his style of writing and description of events can be enjoyed. Of further interest, he introduced into the Finnish language the terms "kuntoutus" and "monivamma" (rehabilitation and polytrauma).

In sum, Professor Kalle Emil Kallio was, indeed, a distinguished patriot and a great pioneer in orthopedics.

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