

In Memoriam:



Jack Stanley "Stan" Fennig (April 17, 1938 – May 19, 2025)
Born in Seattle, Washington, passed away at age 87.

*"The future belongs to those who believe in the
beauty of their dreams."*

- Eleanor Roosevelt

The Cardiovascular Perfusion community is saddened by the loss of Jack Stanley "Stan" Fennig and he leaves behind a deep void that he would expect each of us to fill. Stan was an exceptional Perfusionist, Educator, and Mentor to many in our profession throughout his lengthy career which began in 1963. He also studied Pre-law at University of Texas at Arlington, Class of 1966.

He will be deeply missed. Stan retired as a Clinical Perfusionist in 1996. He formally began his professional journey at the University of Texas Health Science Center, Dallas, Texas performing extracorporeal circulation at Parkland Memorial Hospital, Children's Medical Center, the VA Hospital, and Presbyterian Hospital where he cultivated a young and talented perfusionist, Marcus Stiles.

He developed a Perfusion Training Program while at the University of Texas Health Science Center, producing some of the most outstanding Clinical Perfusionists in the country. Among his prominent trainees were: J. Crockett English (a Charter and Founding Member of The American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion in 1979), Mike Norton, James "Mickey" Wheeler (Fellow American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion), Bobby Wiskera, Gary Denson, and Marilyn Hatfield, to name a few. Along with the aforementioned contributions, he was very active in the establishment and early

organization of AmSECT at the national and regional level. He was very proud of this legacy.

On a personal note, Stan shared with me a story that reveals his enthusiasm in desiring to become a Perfusionist. In the early 1960's, he observed from the outside looking in as an open-heart procedure was being conducted and Jay B. Denman operated the cardiopulmonary bypass machine. There was no air conditioning in those days, the windows were open, and Stan's enthusiasm overwhelmed him, so he climbed in the operating room to get a closer look and query his future colleague. From this point forward, the door was always open to him and he seized this game-changing opportunity.

His ambition to make a clinical contribution was very highly motivated by a passion to make a pioneering difference in congenital heart disease. He had experienced the tragic loss of a daughter to this dreadful disease. We gain insight into the impact of this event upon his life as referenced in the poem below (authored by Stan), dedicated to his beloved daughter, Belinda. Much is to be gleaned from his poem which reveals the remarkable unwavering quest to conquer cardiovascular disease and his pioneering efforts. Stan was in possession of immense knowledge and perseverance in this endeavor. It is a detailed summary of much in the way of a determined and unrelenting spirit.

Thank God and Belinda

*"What now God?
What now Belinda Faith?
I am so young dumb and lost."
Jane and a life was born
Belinda Faith
CMC at Welboln St.
Irene Williams RN
Nurse Dalton, Angel's Unaware
St. Paul Bryan St.
Five inch coil Oxygenator Tygon
Kay-Cross Oxygenator
Cleaning disks and Toluene
Sharpening the needles
Cleaning glass syringes
Disks and heat exchangers
Travenol and Rygg
Halothane Forane and Morphine
Jay B. and Joe Methodist Lab
Bettye and Phillis, Emma
ER Johnson*

ECDO and ECMO
Regional and Cerebral ECC
Waters Rotating Arm Membrane
Lande-Edwards and bone wax
Jim Collins and Ran Bellows
Sundstrand Isochronic Myocardial Augmentation, System.
SIMAS and chicken heart.
Circulatory arrest 14 degrees
RVAD, LVAD and such
Ascending and triple arch
Melanoma and Osteomyelitis
Alkeran "X" and Dr. Jones
Frank X. and Bobby
Booster Neal
Bentley and Galen
Mel and Larry
Roger and Bo
Transplants '68
Watts and Stennis
"Haveacadaver" and Denson
Crockett and Marilyn
Rea and the VA
Wheeler, radioactive bead Bowels
and PMH
Nikaidoh and CMC
Audrey Bell, and Doreen R.
Kennedy and Connally
We saw it all
"Sub-endocardio-fibro-elastosis, She's gone,"
They said," closing her tiny sternum
God took our Belinda Faith, in 1961
My prayer, "what now God?
What now Belinda Faith?
I am so young dumb and lost."

The phone rang. "Would you be interested in something new?" they asked...

- Stan Fennig

Poem summary: We see references to several Nurses (some of whom either cared for Belinda or worked with Stan in the early days), much of the recognizable Perfusion Oxygenators (I worked with several physicians who were starving medical students that Stan paid \$25.00 to disassemble-clean-reassemble the rotating disc oxygenator, they always humorously recalled their relationship with Stan), St. Paul Hospital on Bryan St. before it moved to its present location, Melvin "Mel" Platt, M.D. and Lawrence "Larry" Mills (Cardiac Surgeons) along with Hisashi Nikaidoh, M.D. (Pediatric Cardiac Surgeon), Jay B. Denman (Honorary Fellow AACP) and Joe Guzman (first Perfusionist in Dallas), you notice Arnold Landé (membrane oxygenator) and the founders of Cobe

Products Jim Collins and Ran Bellows (name formed from the combination of the first two letters of their last names); the "Waters Rotating Arm Membrane (Waters Medical Systems) is a reference to a comparative study of membrane oxygenators in infants published in 1973 by Winfred "Bo" Sugg (Chairman Cardiac Surgery UTHSC)-Stan-Mel Platt (Cardiac Surgeon), other procedures and names (uncertain, Dr. Jones may be Dr. Ron Jones, Chair of Surgery) along with other names of surgeons with whom Stan worked.

This poem reveals insight into the depth of Stan and the pride he took in blazing the trail he chose as his career endeavor to eradicate and treat heart disease. All who were cited were very instrumental and inspirational to him, especially the pioneering Perfusionists along with many others who influenced and inspired this remarkable man.

"Don't Cry Because He is Over, Smile Because It Happened"

- Dr Seuss

We offer our condolences to his loving wife Mille and his extended family to whom we gratefully acknowledge. Stan's contributions were many to our society at large and to our profession. What a remarkable life and legacy?

Steven W. Sutton, Fellow, American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion
James "Mickey" Wheeler, Fellow, American Academy of Cardiovascular Perfusion