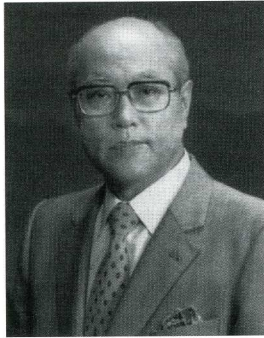


## IN MEMORIAM

Mitsumasa Nishi, M.D.



*Mitsumasa Nishi, MD (1925-1998)*

Professor Mitsumasa Nishi, distinguished scholar, world-renowned “cancer surgeon,” winner of the prestigious Nakayama Prize (1994), and former President of the Japanese Society of Lymphology died on July 29, 1998, in Tokyo, Japan. Born in Kagoshima, Japan, Prof. Nishi graduated from the Nagoya School of Medicine (1949) and after time in pathology (1950-58), and surgery (1960-67), became Chief of Surgery with special interest in gastric, hepatic, pancreatic, and biliary tract cancer at the Cancer Institute in Tokyo. In 1972, he was appointed Professor of Surgery at the University of Kagoshima and in 1984, assumed the position as Head of the Department of Surgery and Vice President of the Cancer Institute and later served as its President (1988). Prof. Nishi devoted his life in medicine to eradicating visceral cancers and his contributions to superradical gastrectomy (left upper quadrant evisceration) for cardia malignancies were landmarks and unparalleled. He always had a special interest and close relationship with the International Society of Lymphology, attending the

Congresses in Florence (1979), Tel Aviv (1983), and Vienna (1987) and was President of the highly successful 12<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Lymphology held in Tokyo-Kyoto, Japan (1989). Prof. Nishi was usually calm and reserved, but once the conversation turned to cancer and its control, his demeanor became highly animated and focused. I remember well a heated discussion on management of gastric cancer during an annual meeting of the Japanese Society of Lymphology. Professor Nishi’s detailed mapping of the lymphatic drainage and nodal basins of the various portions of the stomach were legendary, and his clinical pathologic correlations, which led to pioneering extirpative surgery for gastric cancer, were especially vivid and are now the gold standard for gastric surgeons around the globe.

His favorite pastime was listening to music especially opera and singing his favorite arias at Congress socials. His Japanese style garden at his home in Kagoshima was designed to resemble a stomach. The last annual meeting of the Japanese Society of Lymphology (500 members) was dedicated as the “Nishi Memorial Meeting” and was held at Kagoshima University last June (1999) where his colleague and successor, Prof. Takashi Aikou, continues his work to improve survival of patients with gastric cancer.

We all mourn his passing.

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