



Conference Dedication
in honor of
Prof. Francesco Resmini
1938-1984

FRANCESCO RESMINI: IN MEMORIAM by H.G. Blosser

On Feb. 29th Francesco Resmini died in Milan at the young age of 45--in the midst of the prime years of his life and of his career. All who knew him suffered a staggering loss. Our deepest sympathy and our heartfelt support go to his family and to the staff of his outstanding laboratory.

We, the cyclotron builders of the world, have lost a giant from our small community-- a man who was at the forefront of both physics and technology, a man unsurpassed as a leader, who gathered a skilled and dedicated group and who guided this group through a maze of political obstacles unmatched in the experience of other projects in the world, and beyond all this a man with incredible energy and enthusiasm, who enjoyed his work to the fullest, and who passed enthusiasm and vibrancy in a flowing stream to all around him. Several times Resmini told me the advice he gave young people entering the field as to the commitment he expected--he said he would tell them "physics is not a job--it is a mission"....Above all he was himself, a man with a mission.... A small element of this but one observed by all was the pace at which Resmini moved through the halls of laboratories, like a man stretching for the walking speed record of the world. We have had some good steppers at NSCL over the years, but no one who has come close to matching Resmini's pace from office to computer room.

In the summer of 1982 I spent a good deal of time sitting with Resmini at the console of our K500 cyclotron through some long and difficult days when the beam refused to come out, and diagnostic systems melted without yielding information. The critical night that the beam threaded the deflector for the first time, I had grown tired some hours earlier and proposed we stop for the evening--but Resmini's energy flowing in its usual fashion kept us going and much later as the meters finally showed beam coming through the deflector, he pounded the console and shouted "We've got it!!!", and leaped from his chair with overflowing exuberance--our custodian who had been watching as he often does in the evening, said to me afterward, "I really like it when that Italian is here--you can tell when something's happened--the rest of you guys sit there like rocks--he really gets into it". No one could say it better--Resmini really "got into" his work--he loved to build cyclotrons and he had fun as he did it. I of course especially remember his glee in Zurich as he put on the screen my Vancouver prediction that superconductivity would have little to do with cyclotrons, and gave us all the best laugh I think we've had at any of these ten conferences--and at the same time Resmini was deadly serious whenever he needed to be--his dogged, but brilliantly successful maneuvering of his project through the political process in Rome, largely orchestrated from his desk in East Lansing, is a classic--he told me many times of his message in Rome--"I will not return to Italy unless I get both money and positions--you're crazy if you think I start a project like that without positions" ...He got the money and he got the positions and yet still, a real struggle remained to get the building, a struggle interrupted by the major operation which signaled the beginning of the illness which was to take his life--but Resmini persevered and when I last talked to him a few weeks before his death, he told me with all his normal vigor that the excavations for the building were at last completed, and the contracts for erecting the building were signed and erection work was about to begin...If he knew how serious his illness was, he did not choose to tell me--we made plans for his next visit to East Lansing.

Clearly he did not want to stop doing all these things--he wanted to finish his project--a few days before his death he was in his lab discussing with visitors from Finland their plan to copy his Milan K800--"a real K800" as he liked to say--it was not to be--and so in every way, truly, we have lost a giant from our community.

I have shared here my own knowing of Resmini--each of you who worked with him would have a different set of experiences to relate, and yet, in a deep sense, your experiences would be the same, for we all draw from this same remarkable man....and so I then ask all of you to stand and observe with me a 30 second silence in honor of Francesco Resmini.