

## Lauri Ahtinen in Memoriam (1940–2026)

Lauri "Lasse" Ahtinen officially became a member of Puunjalostusinsinöörit on 01.01.1969, right after his graduation as Pulp & Paper Engineer from Helsinki University of Technology. During his university years, he covered various positions in student organisations, such as vice-chairman of the student association of the university of technology (Teknillisen Korkeakoulun Ylioppilaskunta, TKY) as well as active board member of Teknologföreningen (TF), contributing among other to the voluntary work linked to the construction of TF's student union building Urdsgjallar (inaugurated 60 years ago), and probably to a few parties, as well.

After his master's thesis at Ahlström's Cartiere Bosso, in the little Northern Italian town of Mathi (Piedmont), Lasse was employed in that same specialty paper mill as laboratory manager. Within the mill's purchasing department, he met his future wife, Fiorenza, whom he married in August of 1970. Two years later, they moved with their one-year-old boy Marco to Ethiopia, as Lasse had taken over an assignment by Jaakko Pöyry in connection with a development project to finalise and start up the local paper mill in the town of Wonji. After the project, Lasse stayed on as mill manager until, in 1975, the surging revolution urged him and the team of foreigners to move out of Ethiopia with their families.

After two weeks at the Varkaus mill and 2.5 months in Kauttua and quite a drastic change in scenery and temperatures, compared to Africa, the young family moved back to Northern Italy, where Lasse became mill manager of Euran Paperi's specialty packaging paper mill in Lanzo, close to Turin. Lasse and Fiorenza had their second baby, Eliana, in 1976.

In 1978, they moved close to Milano, where Lasse joined Finncell, as technical sales engineer for Finnish pulp grades. In 1981, he was appointed to join Finncell's Zurich office, so the whole family moved to Switzerland. Lasse traveled the whole world as technical pulp sales engineer, and later established Fi.Co.Se., a fibre consulting and sales branch within Finncell.

In 1993, Lasse took over a Sales Director assignment from Weyerhaeuser Company and relocated to their European sales headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, with his wife and daughter. After retiring from Weyco as Head of their European Sales HQ, in 2005, Lasse enjoyed one month as retiree, before continuing to support the pulp & paper industry as consultant, supporting among others Burgo/Marchi Group in Italy with optimised and focused pulp purchasing, Glocell's market introduction for optimised and data driven fibre selection processes, and various new pulp plant project feasibility studies.



Lasse loved his job, linking nature's forest fibres to everyday engineered consumer goods. His job took him several times around the world, from British Columbia all the way around to the Philippines, combining his Finnish Engineer mindset and education to his openness for different cultures and landscapes. But he rejoiced spending his summer vacations in the Finnish wilderness, at the family mökki, for just about every year of his life, with very few exceptions. Despite the many travels, he remained a very loving and present husband and father. And he cherished meeting his friends whenever and wherever possible, many of which dating back to those wonderful years at Helsinki University of Technology.

Lasse passed away in late January 2026, just a few weeks before his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday, in the closeness of his loving family. He left a huge void in our lives, but we shall fill it with fond memories we share of him, and, why not, here and there with a few of his preferred songs from his student years at Helsinki University of Technology (TKK).

In loving memory,  
Fiorenza, Eliana, and Marco Ahtinen