



*In Memoriam*  
***Seppo Edvard Laine***  
*10.1.1939 - 10.8.2007*

Seppo Laine, the founder of our company and chairman of the board, died on 10th August, 2007, aged 68 years, following a sudden illness. Seppo's passing means that the small group of specialists in the field of IPR in Finland has lost one of its most prominent representatives and we, his younger co-workers and colleagues, have lost our good friend and mentor.

Seppo was born in Helsinki on 10th January, 1939. In 1944, towards the end of the war, he was evacuated to Skåne, southern Sweden, where he spent over a year on a farm. When he returned home, he, like many other evacuated children, had forgotten his mother tongue, Finnish. In its place, he had picked up the Skåne dialect of Swedish.

At secondary school, the foundations were laid for his excellent command of English, German and French. He passed his matriculation examination in 1957. Seppo was a distinguished linguist and later in his life he learnt Hungarian; he was one of the very few Finns to be interviewed in Hungarian for Hungarian television.

Drawn by his interest in logic and his fascination for the harmony of nature, he went to Helsinki University of Technology, from where he graduated with a MSc. degree in electro-technology, in 1966.

For a few years Seppo worked as a translator, but, in 1964, he was offered a position at Oy Kolster Ab by Mr Arne Kolster, at the time, the leading patent agent in Finland. There, under the guidance of Arne, Seppo was trained in the field of patents. He learnt the importance of combining intellectual property theory with its practical applications. Like his mentor, he viewed it essential always to treat examiners politely and friendly, even in tough situations.

After 15 years at Kolster, Seppo left to set up his own patent agency, Seppo Laine Oy Patent and Trade Mark Agents, which he led for 23 years. With his understanding of the value of discretion, and his personal modesty, Seppo created a culture of mutual respect, in which he fostered opportunities for every employee in the firm to develop both personally and professionally. Even after his retirement, he remained a well respected mentor, continuing his support for his younger colleagues, and willingly sharing his knowledge and his experience of life.

Seppo expressed himself very clearly when speaking and writing. He had an exceptional talent both to simplify and to find practical solutions to complex questions and problems. As a result, he was professionally respected among his customers and colleagues alike.

He was well known for his impartiality and he was invited to be an arbitrator in patent disputes in cases where the parties wished to settle outside court.

At different times in his life, Seppo was board member and chairman of the Association of Finnish Patent Attorneys, and for six years he was the Finnish delegate on an executive committee of FICPI, the Association of the International Federation of Intellectual Property Attorneys. In 2004, he was elected an honorary member of the Association of Finnish Patent Attorneys.

Seppo was a keen swimmer. In his teens, he joined the Helsingfors Simsällskap (HSS) swimming club. For 12 years he captained the HSS representative water polo team on tours in Europe. His other interests included classical music, and above all he enjoyed great operas, such as those of Wagner.

Seppo was cheerful and unreserved; a genuinely sociable person. With his harmonica, he brought great cheer and enjoyment to numerous parties and festive events, playing western ballads, and the songs of Edvard Persson – the latter recalling memories of his childhood in Skåne.

Seppo Laine will be much missed by his wife and three adult children, three grandchildren, and a large sphere of friends and colleagues both in Finland and abroad.

*Seppo's co-workers, colleagues and friends at Seppo Laine Oy*