

# Dr. Ted Diethrich

## 1935-2017



Yesterday, we lost one of the world’s greatest pioneers in cardiovascular surgery. Dr. Edward B. Diethrich, MD died at the age of 81. Known to many as “Ted”, Dr. Diethrich was the founder and medical director of the Arizona Heart Institute and Foundation. He started Endologix in 1997, serving as our medical director and on our board of directors until 2012.

Early in his career, Dr. Diethrich trained under the tutelage of famed heart surgeons Dr. Michael E. DeBakey and Dr. Denton Cooley in Houston, Texas where he assisted in many of the earliest coronary artery bypass procedures, multiple organ transplantations and other revolutionary procedures. With a vision beyond his years, Dr. Diethrich set out to extend the skills and knowledge he developed in Houston and started the Arizona Heart Institute in 1971, the nation’s first freestanding outpatient clinic devoted solely to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart and blood vessel disease. Arizona Heart would later become one of the world’s leading centers for pioneering research and education in the field of heart and vascular surgery and endovascular therapies. It was at Arizona Heart where he established the nation’s first outpatient cardiac catheterization laboratory (1979) and the world’s first school of cardiac ultrasound (1982). There, he served patients and physicians worldwide for over 40 years.



Dr. Diethrich operating with Dr. DeBakey



His influence spanned beyond his peers and into the public domain. An enthusiastic educator, he would frequently



1983 - "The Operation"



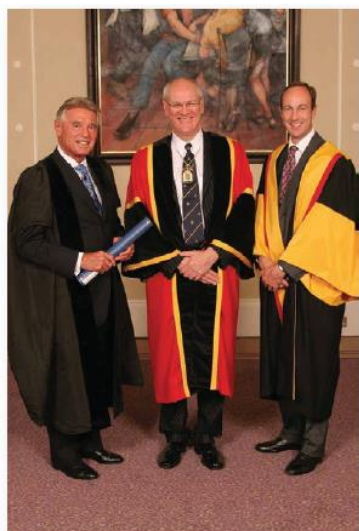
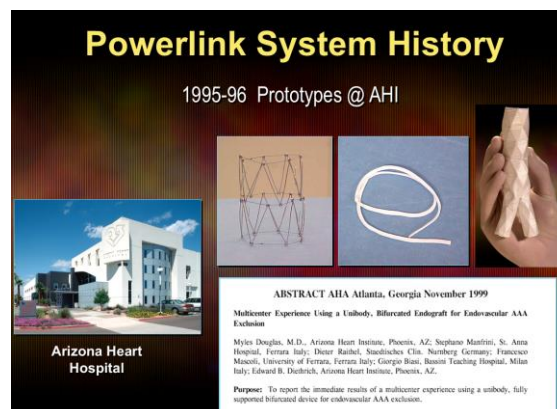
2009 - Channel 3 TV

appear on television news programs answering call-in questions, and in 1983 he performed an open heart surgery broadcast live on PBS to “demystify” the fears of this life saving procedure. Once featured on

the cover of *Life* magazine wearing a T-shirt with the words “Ted Terrific”, he pioneered direct to patient advertising and promotion decades before others.

Dr. Diethrich was also a serial inventor and successful businessman who started six companies. His first was the Sarns Company for his first invention, the sternal saw. Then he founded the first ultrasound company which was sold to Squibb for obstetrics. He later started both Endologix and EndoMed for aortic endografting.

Dr. Diethrich was almost synonymous with the endovascular revolution. One of the first vascular surgeons to master endovascular skills, he learned his catheter and wire skills from doing arteriography and started early with laser technology. Inspired by Professor Nikolay Volodos from the Ukraine who was an honored guest at the Arizona Heart *International Congress on Endovascular Interventions* in 1994 who described the world's first endovascular repair for abdominal aortic aneurysm, Dr. Diethrich developed endografts in his laboratory which later became commercial products. He performed the world's first EVAR for ruptured AAA in 2000.



Lister Lecture

Dr. Diethrich promoted endovascular therapy at a time when there was great resistance from the surgical community. In an interview with *Vascular News*, he said "I tried so hard to prove that endovascular is the way of the future in the face of great resistance. At the time the SVS would not accept an abstract if it was endovascular. So I started the International Society of Endovascular Specialists in the face this resistance." Shortly thereafter, the *Journal of Endovascular Therapy* was born, a new peer-reviewed journal with an international editorial board designed to communicate the society's scientific mission to the surgical community. He was the recipient of numerous awards, including the honorary royal fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons during in 2009, an important testimonial to his international contribution to his specialty.

His latest mission was to inform the public about how constant exposure to radiation in his early career spurred his brain tumor in 2012. Most recently, his contemporary and dear friend, Professor Roger Greenhalgh acknowledged the "huge debt" owed to endovascular pioneers such as Dr. Diethrich affected by radiation.

**We will greatly miss you, Ted. On behalf of Endologix, our customers, and patients, thank you for *Revolutionizing Aortic Care for Life.***

**May you rest in peace.**

