

August 19, 2005 - Press Release

## **Dr. Wolfgang Bürkle dies aged 77**



On 18 August 2005, Dr. Wolfgang Bürkle, Chairman of the Supervisory Board and former CEO of SIMONA AG, passed away at the age of 77. With an ownership interest of 24.19 per cent, Dr. Bürkle was also the principal shareholder of SIMONA AG.

As Managing Director, CEO and more recently Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Dr. Bürkle directed and shaped the company for a period spanning more than 50 years. He joined Carl Simon Söhne, Kirn, in the mid-1950s and guided the family-run business, then a leather processor, through its financial difficulties before finally laying the foundation for the company's future as a plastics manufacturer. In 1956, he spearheaded the company's first trials within the area of plastic sheet production. In 1962, by which time he had been appointed Managing Director, he channelled additional resources into the industrial production of plastic sheets. The company's leather processing unit was finally discontinued in 1973. Today, SIMONA AG has established itself as a global player and a leading international supplier of semi-finished thermoplastics.

Dr. Bürkle felt bound to SIMONA's staff both on a professional and personal level. When the company's leather processing operations were discontinued, he guaranteed jobs within the area of plastics production for all members of staff, while at the same time protecting their vested rights with regard to social security. In establishing SIMONA Sozialwerk GmbH in the 1980s, whose Managing Director he remained until his death, he laid the foundation for an occupational pension system that was unique for a medium-sized enterprise.

In 1993, Dr. Bürkle resigned as CEO of SIMONA, which by then had become a stock corporation, and took up the duties of Chairman of the Supervisory Board, a position he held until his death. Dr. Bürkle was held in high esteem not only as a successful businessman but also as a friend to the people of Kirn and a benefactor to the town, supporting various cultural and social facilities. In recognition of his service to Kirn, he was awarded the Freedom of the City in July 2005.



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