



# NEWSLETTER

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Gesellschaft für Arzneipflanzenforschung · Society for Medicinal Plant Research

<http://www.ga-online.org>

## Message from the President

The 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of GA in Barcelona has been a great success. We owe a big debt of gratitude to the organizer, Prof. Dr. Salvador Cañigueral, who has set up such an interesting programme and offered such an attractive meeting place for this jubilee meeting, that he could attract almost 700 scientists from more than 60 countries. The success is also due to the collaboration with SEFIT, the Spanish Society of Phytotherapy, which attracted many colleagues from Spain.

The meeting was very well attended by young scientists. GA never before had so many applications for travel grants and we never spent so much money for travel grants – in total ca. 15.000 Euro – as this year. We are very happy about that development, because it is one of our major goals, to bring young scientists together and to facilitate their exchange of ideas and personal contacts.

The high level of the scientific programme and the high number of presentations demonstrated how skillful and productive scientists in our field are. It was evident that natural product research is extremely vivid.

Since last year, again a high number of colleagues has joined our Society. We now have more than 1000 members from more than ca. 70 countries. A special welcome to all the new members in our GA family.

In the year 2003, on April 8<sup>th</sup>, our Society will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was founded in Bad Camberg, Germany, where we will organize an attractive birthday symposium on that occasion. The topic will be "History and future of medicinal plant research". Detailed information can be found in the enclosed flyer. I am inviting you to gather at the historic place of the foundation of GA and to celebrate our anniversary.

On the occasion of our anniversary, the BoD of GA has decided to publish a book on the history of GA and on the development of medicinal plant research during these years. We are very grateful to Prof. Sprecher, Hamburg, that he has taken over the duty of being editor in chief of this publication. At the meeting in Bad Camberg, we will present it to all attending members and we will send it to every member, who will be prohibited to come.

Later on in the year we will have our annual congress in Kiel, which is organized by Prof. Blaschek. It will be another chance to meet.

So, 2003 will become again an exciting year for our Society. I wish you all a healthy, lucky and successful year and I am looking forward to seeing you in Bad Camberg or Kiel.

Rudolf Bauer, GA President

## Egon-Stahl-Award in Bronze / Silver 2003

On the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Egon Stahl donated a medal, a document and a monetary prize in order to recognize and promote young scientists working in the field of Pharmacognosy (Pharmaceutical Biology) and Analytical Phytochemistry.

As a rule, the silver medal and an award of € 3.000 shall be awarded to scientists up to the age of about forty who have published outstanding scientific work during the years after their graduation. The bronze medal and an award of € 2.000,- (at present) will be given to young scholars up to the age of about thirty whose PhD thesis was of outstanding quality.

The prize 2003 will be awarded during the annual GA congress in Kiel.

Members of the Society for Medicinal Plant Research are invited to submit nominations for candidates, together with supporting data, to the President of GA, Prof. Dr. R. Bauer, Graz.

A nomination for the prize has to include a curriculum vitae incorporating the most important data on the candidate's scientific career, an index on his/her publications, and reprints of several of his/her more recent publications. All publications can be taken into consideration, including already published papers of the last six years.

All documents have to be submitted **in triplicate**.

Deadline for submissions is **March 15, 2003**.

R. Bauer

## Minutes of the Members' Meeting, 2002 in Barcelona

The annual Member's Meeting was held on 10 Sept 2002 in Barcelona, 72 persons attended the session.

The president, Prof. Bauer, gave a welcome address.

### 1. Passing of the Agenda

The agenda was passed unanimously.

### 2. Approval of the minutes of the annual Members' Meeting 2001/ Erlangen

The minutes of the Members' Meeting in Erlangen 2001 were published in the GA-NL 2/Dec 2001. They were accepted from the assembly unanimously with no remarks.

### 3. Annual reports

#### 3.1 Report of the President Prof. R. Bauer

In a short obituary Prof. Bauer commemorated the honorary member, Prof. Van Os, formerly University of Groningen, who passed away on 2 Dec 2001 in his 95<sup>th</sup> year (birthday 15. July) and the recently passed away famous scientist Monroe Wall, finder of Paclitaxel, († 6 July 02) and Jeffrey Harborne, editor of Phytochemistry and "Flavonoids" († 21 July 02). The audience stood up in silence for a minute of commemoration.

Honorary member Prof. von Schantz, Helsinki, celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on 20 Jan 02. The president wrote a congratulatory letter and gave a welcome address on the GA-Symposium "Phytoestrogens" on 5 Jul 02 in Helsinki in honour of Prof. von Schantz and Prof. Adlercreutz, Helsinki (70).

Activities of the Executive Council (ExC) and Board of Directors (BoD):

- The previous ExC met for a last meeting in Düsseldorf on 10 Dec 2001, the new ExC on 14 March 2002 also in Düsseldorf and on 7/8 Sept 2002 in Barcelona.

- The newly elected BoD met for its inaugural meeting on 15 March in Düsseldorf and in Barcelona on 8 Sept 2002.

Prof. Bauer thanked the former president, Prof. Scheffer, the secretary, Dr Frank, the former members of the BoD, Profs Winterhoff, Dingermann, Harnischfeger, and the chairman of the PC "Quality control", Dr Linnenbrink, for their great engagement and merits rendered to the GA over many years.

- A statement of GA (Prof. Scheffer, Prof. Bauer, Prof. Kopp, Prof. Alban, Prof. Nahrstedt) on the occurrence of colchicine in Ginkgo (referring to an article by Petty et al in J Chem Res

Tox) was published in DAZ, ÖAZ, PZ, also sent to the BfArM, Bonn, and to the editor of the journal.

- A committee with Dr Abel, Prof. Alban, Prof. Bauer, Dr Frank, Prof. Harnischfeger, Prof. Kopp, Dr März, Prof. Schilcher, Prof. Winterhoff wrote a statement on the draft of the German "positive list".
- GA has been invited to the annual public hearing of the EMEA HMPWP on 29 Oct 2001 and was represented by Dr Abel
- A new permanent committee (PC) "Regulatory Affairs on Herbal Medicinal Products" was established; Prof. Vlietinck, Antwerp, was elected as chairperson.
- Thanks to the editor, Prof. Hensel, the GA-Newsletter (NL) is published now again regularly in 6 months period with 2 new sections: "Books and journals" and "Diploma and PhD theses". General deadlines for contributions: May 30 for the summer-edition, Nov 30 for the winter newsletter.
- The GA homepage was transferred to the University of Vienna, new webmaster is Prof. C. Wawrosch (Thanks to the former operators under Prof. Bauer, Dr. Stöhr, Mr. Stöber and Mr. Lohmann)
- A questionnaire was sent out with the last NL in July with 100 returns until Sept.
- A new GA information flyer was printed for distribution during meetings; copies can be ordered at the GA secretariat.
- A checklist for congress organizers was drafted.

Workshops supported by GA:

- 15 Febr 2002, Leiden LOF Symposium (Prof. Verpoorte/ Prof. Scheffer): Medicinal Use of Cannabis, 150 international participants.
- 25 March 2002, Zürich: Symposium in honour of the retiring Prof. Sticher: From Ethnopharmacy to Molecular Pharmacognosy (Prof. Sticher/Dr Heilmann), 200 participants, welcome address by the president.
- 5 July 2002, Helsinki: Phytoestrogens (Prof. Hiltunen/Prof. Adlercreutz/ Prof. C.Wähälä et al): 100 participants, welcome address of the president.

3.2 Report(s) of the Vice-Presidents: Prof. G. Kopp and Prof. W. Kreis

Prof. Kopp participated in the workshops in Zürich and Helsinki and will participate in Vienna and Berlin, both in Oct 02. Prof. Kreis drafted the Congress Checklist, established an internet calendar for congresses ([www.calendar.yahoo.com](http://www.calendar.yahoo.com); ID "congress\_info"; Password "congress"); he contacted VdBiol regarding a membership of GA.

3.3 *Report of the Secretary: Dr. Renate Seitz*

Transfer of the secretariat in Dec 01, perfectly prepared by Dr. Frank. Many thanks to him! The new membership list is under preparation and will be sent out in Jan 03.

Members's statistics: Since last Sept. 108 new members (60% students) joined GA, in April GA had 1000 members from 72 countries.

The numbers are as follows for 2002 (2001):

Total Members: 1023 (958)  
 Honorary Members: 11 (11)  
 New Members: 108 (60)  
 Cancellations: 38 (53)  
 Deceased members: 3 (2)  
 Exclusions: 2 (5)  
 Companies: 40 (41)  
 Members from countries with reduced fees: 86 (47)  
 Members with unknown address: 47 (23)

3.4 *Report of the Treasurer: Dr. Gudrun Abel*

Dr. Abel presented the "Annual Cash Report 2001", the "Budget Draft 2002" and the Annual Statement 2001/ Egon Stahl-Awards (see enclosures).

The budget was accepted unanimously.

The main aspects of the budget 2001 were support of young members by travel grants, support of GA workshops and support for the GA secretariat.

Report of the Auditors : Profs. Harnischfeger and Schilcher

The cash auditors thanked the treasurer and her helpers for having done everything perfectly and clearly. Since the money is at the upper limit allowed, Prof. Harnischfeger proposed to increase the amount of the Egon Stahl Award (ESA) and a money transfer to the ESA foundation, what was approved by the assembly. The proposal will be discussed in the next BoD meeting.

3.5 *Discharge of the Treasurer and the Executive Council*

The treasurer was unanimously relieved from her responsibilities.

The members of the ExC, too, were unanimously relieved from their responsibilities.

The cash auditors were reconfirmed for the next cash audit, they accepted.

#### 4. *Report of the Editor-in-Chief of Planta Medica: Prof. Nahrstedt*

The number of submitted papers increased again to 695 in 2001. 229 were published in 2001 in 9 issues. From 2002 on, 12 issues will be produced per year. China is leading (as for many years) in submitting papers, followed by India, Korea, Japan, Brazil, USA; Germany fell to position 7. Concerning the origin of published manuscripts, China now came up to position 1 followed by Japan, Korea, Germany, USA.

In 2001, 115 Full Papers were published, as well as 110 Letters, and 4 Reviews. In contrast to earlier years, no Rapid Communication was accepted.

The mean number of publications was 25.5 per issue. After increasing the number of issues to 12 per year in 2002, the main problem of long publication times was almost solved in that now 8–9 months as a mean are necessary from submission to appearance of a manuscript. It seems that in view of the increasing number of submitted manuscripts, a stronger selection might be necessary to further decrease publication time. The Impact Factor (IF) of 2001 was 2.085 for *Planta Medica*; this represents the highest IF *Planta Medica* ever had, and of all journals in the field of medicinal plants and natural products.

Some changes in the Editorial Board are ongoing: Prof. Fischer (Oxford, MS) will leave the Editorial Board by end of 2002, Prof. Ikhlas Khan (Oxford, MS) will newly enter the board starting in January 2003.

The editor thanked the editorial board, the reviewers, all authors and Thieme.

#### 5. *Reports of the Permanent Committees*

a) Breeding and Cultivation of Medicinal Plants (Report Prof. Ch. Franz)

The Good Agricultural Guidelines were now fully accepted by all regulation authorities such as EMEA etc. In consequence to last year's title of the workshop "Wild plants' crafting practice guidelines" (by Prof. Harnischfeger) this year's topic was: Is a certification of wild crafting possible?

b) Manufacturing and Quality Control of HMPs (Report Prof. Meier)

This year's topic "Stability control and documentation with modern TLC in the field of HMPs" is a follow up of earlier workshops on TLC (Zürich) and Stability (Erlangen). Topic of next year's workshop will be Near Infrared Spectroscopy.

c) Regulatory Affairs on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPs) (Report Prof. Vlietinck)

The EMEA Herbal Medicinal Products Working Party (HMPWP) is now fully working. Quality and Safety papers are accessible in the CPMP website. Papers on efficacy can be set on the website with a disclaimer, since the HMPWP will become an independent group from CPMP. Prof. Vlietinck gave an overview of further activities and pending actions of the HMPWP

d) Biological and Pharmacological Activities of Natural Products (Prof. Winterhoff)  
(Since pharmacology was a major topic of the congress, there was no extra workshop this year)

6. *Future congresses, symposia and workshops*  
*2003 GA congress*

Sun, 31 Aug – Thurs, 4 Sept in Kiel, organized by Prof. Blaschek, who gave some short informations.

*2004 Joint meeting of GA, ASP, EPS, AFERP*

Sat 31 July – Wedn 4 Aug in Phoenix, Arizona, USA, organized in 4 sections as Biotech Symposium, Desert Symposium, Herbal Symposium, and Marine Symposium. GA is mainly responsible for the Herbal Symposium.

*2005 GA congress*

Florence/Italy under the auspices of Prof. Vincieri and Prof. Bilia

*Working group "Bioavailability of Herbal Medicinal Products"*

Presymposium at the DPhG congress in Berlin on 9 Oct 02. Topic: "The product is the process: Biopharmaceutical characterisation of HMPs".

Joint meeting with German Soc. of Phytotherapy and with G Clin Pharmacol Ther

10–12 Oct 2002 in Berlin, organized by Prof. Schulz and Prof. Roots

*Workshops:*

4./5. Oktober 2002 in Vienna: Symposium "Bioactive secondary plant products in veterinary medicine", organized by Prof. Chlodwig Franz

*2003*

3–8. Feb. 2003: WOCMAP 3 "Third World Conference on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants for Human Welfare" in Chiang Mai, Thailand, supported by GA

28. Feb. 2003: Antwerp LOF Symposium (Prof. A. Vlietinck): "Tropical diseases" (mainly Malaria and Trypanosomiasis)

08 April 2003: Bad Camberg: "50 Years GA" - Birthday Symposium of GA

Flyers were sent out with the NL. On this occasion a book on the history of GA will be edited.

Sept. 2003: Donau-Symposium, Vienna, Prof. Jurenitsch/Prof. Kopp

20–22. Nov. 2003: 3 rd Mistletoe symposium (Dr. Scheer)

7. *Miscellaneous*

Prof. Schilcher suggested to include a physician experienced in phytotherapy as a speaker at the Bad Camberg Symposium.

Prof. Dr. Rudolf Bauer, President  
Dr. Renate Seitz, Secretary

**Egon Stahl Award in Gold for Prof. H. Wagner, Munich**

The Egon Stahl Award in Gold is the highest scientific honour to be given by the Society for Medicinal Plant Research. It acknowledges the outstanding scientific lifetime work of a scientist in the field Pharmaceutical Biology in its full range.

During the opening ceremony of the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of our Society, held in Barcelona on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2002, the Egon Stahl-Award in Gold was awarded for the second time since its inauguration. The president of GA, Prof. Bauer, mentioned that after a difficult evaluation process due to several nominations of excellent

scientists, the jury came to an unanimous decision. Then he announced, that the Egon Stahl Award in Gold 2002 has been awarded to Professor Dr. Dr. hc. mult. Hildebert Wagner, University of Munich.

Professor Hildebert Wagner was born in Laufen, Germany, in 1929. He studied pharmacy at the University of Munich and graduated as a pharmacist in 1953. Also in Munich, in 1956, he received his PhD with "Summa cum laude" under the supervision of Prof. Ludwig Hörhammer; and achieved his habilitation there 4 years later with a thesis on "Phosphatides of the soy bean".

Already in 1963, after refusing a chair at the University of Vienna, he got the professorship in pharmacognosy at the University of Munich, where he became full professor and director of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology in 1972. He held this position up to his retirement in 1998.

In his scientific career, Professor Wagner touched almost all fields of Pharmaceutical Biology, and really developed it in its full range. He always was a pioneer and pathbreaker heading this disciplines into new directions. Starting his studies with Prof. Hörhammer in classical pharmacognosy, he focused on the isolation, structure elucidation and analysis of natural products during his doctoral studies. He became well known working on flavonoids and glycolipids, later on anthraquinones, xanthones, alkaloids, coumarins, cardiac glycosides, lignanes, saponins, terpenes and polysaccharides. In his laboratories he intensively followed the development of emerging technologies in natural product research, like mass spectrometry, nmr, x-ray analysis and HPLC. He is also one of the first pharmacognosists, who set up pharmacological *in vitro* and *in vivo* assays in his laboratories for activity guided medicinal plant research. He investigated the active principles of well known European medicinal plants, such as Valerian, Allium, Melissa, Chamomilla or Crataegus, but also those of South American, African, Indian and especially of Chinese origin. He became famous for combining the traditional knowledge with the western scientific approach. His main scientific interest lay in plant compounds with anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic, anti-hepatotoxic and immunostimulatory activity.

Along with the new German drug approval process for medicinal plants in the 80 s, one of his aims was also to establish methods for the standardization of herbal medicinal products based on the elucidation of the active principles. And again, in the 80 s and 90 s, when it became evident that clinical studies will be necessary for the acceptance and approval of herbal medicinal products, he started to collaborate closely with medical doctors, and was one of the first pharmacognosists who was engaged in clinical research. He initiated and organized a working and research group with the aim of integrating phytotherapy in the medical curriculum of Munich University. His initiative resulted in the so-called "Münchener Model". It was the first attempt when Natural Medicine was taught at the medical faculty of a German University. Nowadays it belongs to the regular medical curriculum Germany-wide.

He has been an enthusiastic and innovative teacher all the time. As head of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology and also as Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy, Professor Wagner always knew how to inspire young scientists. 109 doctoral theses under his supervision were the results of those years and efforts. He established strong international collaborations with scientists from all over the world, especially during his stays in USA, Japan, Hungary, Sweden or China, where he was regularly invited as guest lecturer. In 1970, he spent his sabbatical year as "Distinguished Professor" with Prof. Beal at the Ohio State University in Columbus, USA. But he also has good relationships to University of Illinois at Chicago. He hosted about 100 Humboldt and DAAD fellows from all continents in Munich thereby got contacts to scientists from all over the world. He also organized 6 international conferences on natural product research, flavonoids or phytotherapy in Munich, some of them in collaboration with GA.

His professional reputation led him into the German Pharmacopoea Commission (1970 to 1980) and he served as a board mem-

ber of GA for almost 10 years. For many years he acted as co-editor of *Planta Medica*, and later he founded and is still editor of the journal *Phytomedicine*. In addition, he is in the editorial board of many other high ranked scientific journals.

Prof. Wagner has authored ca. 900 original papers and 30 review articles and edited and authored 11 books and series e.g. "Immunomodulatory Agents from Plants", "Plant Drug Analysis", "Echinacea", the series "Progress in Economic and Medicinal Plant Research" or "TCM Monographs and Analysis". His textbook "Arzneidrogen und ihre Inhaltsstoffe" is presently available in its 6<sup>th</sup> edition, and his book "Phytotherapie" is an invaluable source of information for healthcare professionals with regard to clinical studies of drug preparations and the efficacy and safety of herbal medicinal products.

His accomplishments have been widely recognized: He received the Rudolf Fritz Weiß-Award for his merits of founding and promoting evidence based medicine and later the Bundesverdienstkreuz for his vital contributions to the development of the pharmaceutical sciences. He was awarded four honorary doctorate degrees by the Universities of Debrecen, Budapest, Helsinki and Dijon, and he is honorary member of the American Society of Pharmacognosy.

So it was just a consequence that the Society for Medicinal Plant Research selected him for the Egon Stahl Award in Gold for his outstanding scientific lifetime work.

After the laudatio Prof. Bauer handed over the certificate, the gold medal, and the cheque of 5000 Euro, a generous donation of Bionorica Arzneimittel. The document reads as follows:

"The Society for Medicinal Plant Research (Gesellschaft für Arzneipflanzenforschung) has pleasure in dedicating the Egon Stahl-Award 2002 with a gold medal to Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. mult. Hildebert Wagner, in recognition of his extraordinary lifetime work in the area of pharmaceutical biology in its whole range, in particular by his many pioneering scientific contributions in the field of medicinal plant research. Barcelona, September 9, 2002".

R. Bauer

#### **Egon Stahl-Award 2002 with a silver medal for Dr. Bilia, Castelnuovo**

On the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, our honorary member, late Professor Dr. Dr. h. c. mult. Egon Stahl donated a medal, a document and a monetary prize in order to recognize and promote young scientists working in the field of Pharmacognosy, Pharmaceutical Biology, and Analytical Phytochemistry. The Egon Stahl-Award with a silver medal should be awarded to scientists who have published outstanding scientific work in the years after their graduation.

After a careful evaluation of the nominations by the panel of judges it was decided that the Egon Stahl Award 2002 with a silver medal should be given to Dr. *Anna Rita Bilia*, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florence, Italy. The awarding ceremony took place by Prof. Bauer on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2002 during the opening ceremony of the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of our Society held in Barcelona.

Dr. *Bilia* was born in Castelnuovo di Garfagnana, Italy, in 1964. She studied pharmacy at the University of Pisa and finished with a Full-Honours Degree in 1988. Subsequently she started a PhD study in chemical sciences with specialization in organic chemistry at the Department of Bioorganic Chemistry of the same university. The title of the thesis, which was accepted with full marks in 1992, was "Isolation and characterization of bioactive molecules from Rosaceae plants".

Afterwards, she did a three years course in Science and Technology of Medicinal Plants also at the Department of Bioorganic Chemistry, University of Pisa. The title of the experimental thesis was "Isolation and characterization of bioactive molecules from

Chrysobalanaceae plants". She did another two years course in Clinical Pharmacy at the University of Milan. The experimental thesis entitled "Quality control and stability tests of some clinical galenical preparations" was carried out at the Hospital of Viareggio and at the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Florence.

In 1997 she joined the group of Prof. Vincieri at the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Florence, where she has currently the position of a researcher at the Faculty of Pharmacy.

During her studies she has characterized numerous new constituents from medicinal plants, such as terpenoids, phenylpropanoids, coumarins and lignans. She has made contributions to quality control and stability testing of herbal drugs, herbal drug preparations and herbal medicinal products, not only by conventional methods, but also by unconventional ones, like 1D- and 2D-NMR and biosensors. She has developed innovative methods for the improvement of bioavailability and technological features of extracts and herbal drug preparations by supramolecular complexes, such as liposomes, micelles and cyclodextrin microinclusions. Therefore, analytical phytochemistry has always been a major part of her work.

She has collaborated with many other scientific groups and has assimilated the concept of interdisciplinary research, which is essential for the modern study of medicinal plants. Her interests have covered the aspects of botany, chemistry, technology, pharmacognosy, and clinical research. Doing this, she has already contributed a lot to the development of herbal medicinal products in Europe in general and in Italy in particular. She is Italian delegate in the scientific committee of ESCOP and she is board member of the Italian Society of Phytochemistry.

The list of Dr. Bilia's publications shows more than 80 papers, the majority of them in important journals, including *Planta Medica*. She has presented lectures and posters at numerous congresses, some of which have received awards. Also her teaching activities are very much appreciated. She has been active in organizing workshops and symposia, and, together with Prof. Vincieri, she will be in charge of the preparation of the GA Annual Congress in Florence in 2005.

The panel of judges for the Egon Stahl Award decided unanimously that the studies of Dr. Bilia are an excellent example of an interdisciplinary approach in medicinal plant research, covering the fields of pharmacognosy, pharmaceutical biology, and analytical phytochemistry, and therefore fully reflect the spirit of the Award.

Prof. Bauer congratulated Dr. Bilia and presented the silver medal, the document and the monetary prize. The document reads as follows: "The Society for Medicinal Plant Research (Gesellschaft für Arzneipflanzenforschung) presents the Egon Stahl-Award 2002 with the silver medal to Dr. Anna Rita Bilia in recognition of her valuable contributions to pharmacognosy (pharmaceutical biology) and analytical phytochemistry, in particular by her outstanding and innovative interdisciplinary studies on the quality control of herbal medicinal products. Barcelona, 9. September 2002".

After the opening ceremony Dr. Bilia gave a lecture to present in more detail the studies she had performed.

R. Bauer

#### **Future GA Meetings**

##### **51<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress in Kiel, Germany, 2003**

The 51st Annual Congress of the Society of Medicinal Plant Research including the annual business session will be held from August 31st to September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 in Kiel, Germany. The Organizing Committee, chaired by Prof. W. Blaschek and Prof. S. Alban, has planned a programme with the main topics:

- bioactive carbohydrates
- efficacy and safety of antioxidants
- molecular biology and biotechnology

- quality of herbal medicinal products.

Scientific contributions (posters and short lectures) to these and other topics concerning medicinal plant research are kindly requested.

Additionally, four workshops of the permanent committees on 'Manufacturing and quality control of medicinal products' (HMPs), 'Breeding and cultivation of medicinal plants', 'Biological and pharmacological activities of natural products', and 'Regulatory affairs on herbal medicinal products' will be organized.

On the last day of the congress, there will be a botanical excursion to the 'Wattenmeer' as well as one to the highlights of the region. All important information can be found in the enclosed Second Circular as well as on the website: <http://www.pharmazie.uni-kiel.de/ga>.

### Int. Symposium: 50 Years GA – History and Future of Medicinal Plant Research

April 08. 2003, Bad Camberg (near Frankfurt)  
[www.ga-online.org](http://www.ga-online.org) and: GA Secretariat/Dr R.Seitz  
 E-mail: [ga-secretary@t-online.de](mailto:ga-secretary@t-online.de)  
 Phone/Fax: +49 8141 613749

### GA travel Grants 2003

Graduate students who are members of the GA and like to present their scientific results during the meeting in Kiel, Germany are eligible for a travel grant. Applicants have to submit the following data and documents for review before the application can be considered:

- abstract of the scientific contribution
- letter of recommendation by the supervisor
- curriculum vitae
- GA membership number and the year of joining the GA
- the year(s) of already received travel grant(s)

The appropriate registration fee must be paid by the participant in all cases. The number of grants is limited and recipients who will be informed by the GA travel Grant Committee, will receive their grants during the meeting in Kiel.

Applications should be sent before the deadline of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2003 to:

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Hermann Stuppner, Institut für Pharmakognosie der Universität Innsbruck,  
 Innrain 52, Josef Möller Haus 1, AU-6020 Innsbruck, Austria

### Other Meetings

*Bornheim-Walberberg (Germany), April 6–9, 2003*  
 Phytochemistry and Biology of Lignans  
<http://www.lignans.de>

*Wädenswil (Switzerland), May 6–7, 2003*  
 Biotech 2003, 7<sup>th</sup> Conference on Applied Biotechnology: Bioanalytics  
<http://www.biotech2003.ch>

*Valencia (Spain), May 8–10, 2003*  
 European Colloquium on Ethnopharmacology  
<http://www.ethnopharmacologia@uv.es>

*Chapel Hill, North Carolina (USA), July 12–16, 2003*  
 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Society of Pharmacognosy

*Nonnweiler (Germany), November 20–22, 2003*  
 Die Mistel in der Tumortherapie (3 rd. Mistletoe Symposium)  
 Dr. R. Scheer; [scheer.carus@t-online.de](mailto:scheer.carus@t-online.de)

### Meeting Reports of Selected Symposia in the Year 2002

#### 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of the Society for Medicinal Plant Research

The 2002 Congress of GA was its 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress and was held in Barcelona (Spain) from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> September. It was jointly organised by the University of Barcelona and the Spanish Society of Phytotherapy (SEFIT, Sociedad Española de Fitoterapia), under the chairmanship of Prof. Salvador Cañigueral and Prof. Roser Vila, from the Unit of Pharmacology and Pharmacognosy of the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Barcelona.

The get-together party took place in the evening of 8<sup>th</sup> September and the opening ceremony in the morning of 9<sup>th</sup> September, with the welcome addresses of Prof. J. Tugores (Rector of the University of Barcelona), Prof. S. Cañigueral, and Prof. R. Bauer, President of GA. During this ceremony the Egon Sthal price in gold was awarded to Prof. Hildebert Wagner (Munich), who also gave the opening lecture of the congress. Egon Sthal price in silver was presented to Prof. Anna Rita Bilia (Florence). Honorary GA membership was bestowed to Prof. Otto Sticher (Zürich), and also many travel grants were donated. The ceremony included a nice performance of the choir Argentum, from the Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Barcelona.

The welcome to the University of Barcelona was completed with an extraordinary reception and cocktail during the evening of 9<sup>th</sup> September in the Main Auditorium and the gardens of the Historical Building of the University, in the city centre.

The congress brought together 676 participants from ca. 60 countries, that presented 575 scientific contributions in form of 12 plenary lectures, 18 workshop lectures, 26 short lectures, and 519 posters. The abstracts were published as a special issue of *Revista de Fitoterapia*. Excluding the joint meetings, the Barcelona Congress has probably been the biggest GA congress, both in number of participants and number of scientific contributions.

The topics of the congress were:

- Analysis of complex mixtures of natural products, including plenary lectures of Prof. K. Hostettmann (Lausanne, Switzerland) and Prof. J. Casanova (Ajaccio, France), on the utilisation of hyphenated chromatographic and spectroscopic methods, and of <sup>13</sup>C-NMR for the direct analysis of mixtures.
- Anti-inflammatory natural products, which were the topic of the plenary lectures of Prof. M.J. Alcaraz (Valencia, Spain) and Prof. E. Muñoz (Cordoba, Spain).
- Medicinal plants from Latin-America, that attracted a considerable number of researchers of that region, specially from Brazil and Mexico. The biodiversity of the last country as a source of new drugs was the topic of the lecture of Prof. R. Mata (Mexico). In the last years, the Subprogram X (Fine Pharmaceutical Chemistry) of the Iberoamerican Program of Science and Technology for Development CYTED has highly contributed to the advance of the research on medicinal plants from Latin-America. Its activities were presented as a workshop with the participation of Prof. M.P. Gupta (Panama), Prof. A. San Feliciano (Salamanca, Spain), Prof. A. Cáceres (Guatemala) and Prof. A. Giménez (La Paz, Bolivia) as speakers.
- Marine natural products, with plenary lectures of Prof. W. Fenical (San Diego, USA), Prof. J. Kobayashi (Sapporo, Japan), and Dr. J. Jimeno (Tres Cantos, Spain), who presented the advances on the research on new marine anti-cancer molecules.
- Clinical research on Phytopharmaceuticals, with 3 plenary lectures of Prof. G. Franz (Regensburg, Germany), Dr. B. Giannetti (Bonn, Germany) and Prof. W. Wuttke (Göttingen, Germany), and a workshop with Prof. A. Brattström (Romanshorn, Switzerland) and Prof. J.M. Sempere (Alicante, Spain), in addition of Dr. Giannetti, as speakers.

Three additional workshops were held. First one on the worldwide perspectives for the elaboration of modern monographs on herbal medicinal products, in which Prof. A.J. Vlietinck (Antwerp,

Belgium), Dr. B. Steinhoff (Bonn, Germany), Prof. A. Cáceres (Guatemala) and D.B. Roll (Rockville, USA) talked about monographs of European Pharmacopoeia, ESCOP, WHO, CYTED and USP. A second one was on the stability control and documentation of HMP's by means of TLC, in which speakers were K. Thiekötter (Sinzing, Germany), A. Mulà (Mollet del Vallès, Spain), A.J. Koch (Hamburg, Germany) and Prof. B. Meier (Romanshorn, Switzerland). In the last workshop, under the chairmanship of Prof. C. Franz (Vienna, Austria), the certified wild crafting of medicinal plants was discussed with the participation of L. Dunjic (Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina), R. Melisch (Frankfurt, Germany) and A. Van Ginkel (Santa Perpètua de Mogoda, Spain) as speakers.

In the closing ceremony, the best posters were awarded after the selection made by congress participants. In the categories of best research design as well as for the best lay-out, poster awards were presented.

During the closing ceremony, a beautiful ballet performance, the folk Bihu dance of Assam, was offered by Ms. Makani Barman, from Guwahati (Assam, India).

The congress dinner took place in the evening of Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, and included a musical performance of the "Tuna" of the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Barcelona.

Finally, during Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> September, a botanical excursion to the Montseny Natural Park, let us visit the most important European landscapes, including mediterranean, eurosiberian and borealpine vegetations.

Prof. Dr. S. Canigual, Barcelona

## Anniversaries

### Honorary Membership for Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Otto Sticher

According to the Standing Rules of the Society for Medicinal Plant Research, the Board of Directors has the option to award the Honorary Membership to individuals who have rendered special service either to medicinal plant research or to our Society.

Based on an unanimous decision of the Board of Directors of GA the honorary membership was awarded this year to Prof. Dr. Otto Sticher, ETH Zürich, Switzerland.

The awarding ceremony took place on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2002 during the opening ceremony of the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of our Society held in Barcelona. Prof. Bauer stressed in his introduction that Prof. Sticher fulfilled both criteria: he is an outstanding scientist in medicinal plant research and he has served our Society in many ways.

Prof. Sticher was born in Hochdorf, Switzerland, in 1936; he studied pharmacy at the ETH Zürich and graduated as pharmacist in 1962. He obtained his PhD degree in 1965 also in Zürich under the supervision of Prof. Flück. Thereafter Prof. Sticher was working in a pharmacy for two years and then as a post doctoral fellow at the Institute of Organic Chemistry, University of Zürich, under Prof. Schmid. 1970 he finished his habilitation in pharmacy and became private docent. 1972 he was appointed associate professor of pharmacognosy and phytochemistry at the Faculty of Pharmacy at ETH Zürich and already in 1976 he became dean of the faculty. In 1979 he was appointed full professor of pharmacognosy and phytochemistry at the Faculty of Pharmacy at ETH Zürich, the position he held until his retirement in 2002.

The broad scientific interest of Prof. Sticher is reflected by the various topics of his almost 400 publications. The major fields of his activities are:

- analysis, isolation, and structural characterisation of biologically active natural products,
- ethnobotany and ethnopharmacology,
- quality control of medicinal herbs and herbal medicinal products, and the
- development and optimization of chromatographic separation methods.

The expertise of Prof. Sticher has been requested and appreciated in many institutions and commissions, like in the Swiss IKS in Bern,

the European Pharmacopoeia Commission, the WHO Expert Advisory Panel on the International Pharmacopoeia and Pharmaceutical Preparations, the United States Pharmacopoeia Committee of Experts on Dietary Supplements/Botanicals, the Board of supervising Editors of ESCOP, and the Board of Directors of the American Society of Pharmacognosy Foundation, just to mention a few. He has been invited regularly for plenary lectures all over the world, and his scientific advice has been appreciated as co-editor of *Planta Medica* and in the Editorial Board of many other journals. The most recent highlight of his publishing activities is the most valuable text book *Pharmakognosie – Phytopharmazie*, which he authored together with Prof. Hänsel.

Prof. Sticher has served our Society over a long period and in an extraordinary way:

His engagement for GA started already in 1975, when he was elected as a member of the advisory board. In 1977 he organised the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of our Society in Zürich and did this again in 2001. Both congresses were highlights in the history of GA and very stimulating. In 1978 he was elected as president of GA and kept this position for six years. During this period GA developed more and more from a German into an international Society. The subsequent four years Prof. Sticher was vice-president and then again, until 1996, member of the Board of Directors. It must be mentioned, that he initiated the GA Newsletters, the joint meetings with other Societies (the American Society of Pharmacognosy, the Phytochemical Society of Europe and the Association Francaise pour l'Enseignement et la Recherche en Pharmacognosie), and also the successful series of GA Workshops, four of them organized by him and his co-workers in Zürich.

The scientific work of Prof. Sticher has already been acknowledged in several ways. He has recently been awarded with the honorary doctorate from the University of London. He already owns the honorary memberships of the Association Francaise pour l'Enseignement et la Recherche en Pharmacognosie and of the Hungarian Pharmaceutical Society and he received the Medal of the Pharmaceutical Association of Egypt and the Semmelweis Medal of the Semmelweis University, Budapest.

After reading the laudatio, Prof. Bauer handed over the document belonging to the honorary membership of GA which reads as follows: "The Society for Medicinal Plant Research (Gesellschaft für Arzneipflanzenforschung) is awarding the Honorary Membership to Prof. Dr. Otto Sticher in recognition of his outstanding contributions to medicinal plant research, and of his long and intensive engagement for the interests of our Society. Barcelona, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002".

R. Bauer

### Professor Dr. Ewald Sprecher, 80 years

Professor Dr. Ewald Sprecher, our honorary member since 1995, celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 17, 2002. For almost 20 years, from 1969 to 1988, he held the chair of the Department of Pharmacognosy at the University of Hamburg. During this time he transformed the department from a wallflower existence to a greatly respected institution of Pharmaceutical Biology in Germany.

When he accepted the chair and arrived in Hamburg with his wife and son, in 1969, very difficult and laborious years lay behind him. After school he had no other choice than to go to war as a soldier for four years. Afterwards he was a prisoner of war for two further years. During this time he decided to study pharmacy but could only start his practical training in 1947. From 1950 to 1953 he studied pharmacy in Karlsruhe, continued there with a doctoral thesis and received his postdoctoral lecturing qualification already in 1960. He became a professor in 1965 and was a lecturer in pharmacognosy, pharmaceutical microbiology, food chemistry and applied botany.

In Hamburg, assisted by his later successor Karl-Heinz Kubiczka, he was very successful in building up an effective research team

and in establishing a very innovative field of research. His main topic was the secondary metabolism of fungi, especially the correlation between primary and secondary metabolism, in particular transformation, biogenesis and accumulation of terpenes. Antibiotics and phytotherapy were also among the many areas of Professor Sprecher's interest. His scientific results have been published in numerous theses, more than 100 papers and in one book.

Research was only one part of his professional life. Gladly he dedicated a large part of his time to many additional tasks. He took over various administrative duties at the university, he promoted the development of pharmaceutical education in Germany, he invested considerable energy in pharmacopoeial tasks and in the further vocational education of pharmacists. Moreover he took over honorary offices in a variety of professional societies. Among other positions he was the dean of the biological faculty for several years, an expert at the "Institut für medizinische und pharmazeutische Prüfungsfragen" in Mainz, a member of the Pharmacopoeia commission, the President of the "Deutsche Pharmazeutische Gesellschaft, Landesgruppe Hamburg" and last but not least the President of the Society for Medicinal Plant Research (GA) from 1989 to 1989. Aside from that he was extremely committed to teaching and has always been acknowledged as a respected teacher and an understanding examiner. One could always rely on his enormous scientific knowledge which he generously offered to all colleagues, co-workers and students. He had a very good strategy coping with the different characters of his colleagues in the department and could focus their talents to a common goal. His balanced nature, his unselfish decisions, admirable self-discipline combined with academic excellence are qualities, which were exemplary for his colleagues and co-workers, yesterday, today and tomorrow.

After his retirement he was no less busy giving lectures, writing scientific papers and always keeping up-to-date on scientific matters. Within the last several years he dedicated his time to the chronicle of the GA which will appear on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GA in April 2003. Professor Sprecher has been a very reliable participant at the annual meetings from the beginning of the GA. He has dedicated extensive and devoted service to the GA for many years and the GA has been the beneficiary of his scientific and social input as the President 1998/1989, the Vice-President (8 years) and as a member of the Advisory Board for many years. He organized an outstanding congress in Hamburg in 1986. The GA wishes him and his wife Helga vitality and health for the years to come and many happy returns of the day.

Elisabeth Stahl-Biskup, Hamburg  
Rudolf Bauer, GA President

### New Books and Journals

*Medicinal and Aromatic Plants – Industrial Profiles. Taylor & Francis UK, Pricing between 49 and 95£.*

A series of meanwhile 30 volumes, discussing in each volume all topics on a special genus: plant sources, commercial cultivation, phytochemistry, quality assurance, pharmacological properties, toxicology, applications, market trends. The following volumes have already appeared on the following geni: Artemisia, Eucalyptus, Thyme, Citrus, Fenugreek, Oregano, Cardamom, Lavender, Mistletoe, Ginkgo, Tea, Cannabis, Ergot, Panax, Papaver, Carum, Perilla, Valeriana, Neem, Crocus, Pepper, Melaleuca, Magnolia, Narcissus, Daffodil, Pueraria, Stevia, Vetiveria. Each book between 200 and 450 pages with enormous references lists.

*Advances in Phytomedicine (Vol. 1): Ethnomedicine and Drug Discovery. Ed by M.M. Iwu and J.C. Wooton; Elsevier Science BV, 2002, ISBN 0-444-50852 X. 317 pages.*

The book provides an interphase between ethnomedicine, ethnobotanical approaches, and biotechnology advances. The content covers within 25 chapters ethnobotanical aspects from different countries, natural products for high throughput screening, data-

base methods, development of public standards, remarks on the EC regulations of botanicals as drugs and functional food etc. Summarizing a highly interesting publication covering all aspects of modern ethnobotanical drug discovery.

### Recent thesis on medicinal plant research PhD thesis

PhD thesis, 2002: Nichtflüchtige, phenolische Inhaltsstoffe in *Thymus vulgaris*, Untersuchungen mittels LC-MS und anderen Verfahren. By Charlotte Reither; promoter: Prof. Dr. G. Reznicek, Prof. Dr. T. Erker. Institute for Pharmakognosie, University of Vienna, Austria

PhD thesis, 2002: Optimierung von Rotklee-Extrakten und Analytik von Isoflavonen in Rotklee (*Trifolium pratense* L.). By Iris Unterrieder; promoter: Prof. Dr. L. Krenn, Prof. Dr. R. Albert. Institute for Pharmakognosie, University of Vienna, Austria

PhD thesis, 2002: Über die Inhaltsstoffe des aus Grenada stammenden Aphrodisiakums "Bois bandé". By Angelika Lendl; promoter: Prof. Dr. J. Jurenitsch, Prof. Dr. H. Bartsch. Institute for Pharmakognosie, University of Vienna, Austria

PhD thesis, April 2002: Entwicklung eines einfachen chemischen Nachweisverfahrens im Mageninhalt von Thuje mit Hilfe des Rusitec-Systems. By Silva Hayek; promoter: Prof. Dr. Ch. Franz, Institut für Angewandte Botanik der Veterinärmedizinischen Universität Wien, Austria

PhD thesis, November 2002 Phytochemische und biopharmazeutische Untersuchungen an *Harpagophytum procumbens* DC. By Kerstin Boje; promoter: Prof. Dr. A. Nahrtedt, Fachbereich Chemie und Pharmazie der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Germany

PhD thesis, June 2001: Einfluss der Gewürze Thymian, Rosmarin und Majoran auf die Verderbnisflora von Zubereitung aus Hackfleisch. By Susanne Stiegler, promoter: Prof. Dr. Frans Smulders, Institut für Fleischhygiene, Fleischtechnologie und Lebensmittelwissenschaften der Veterinärmedizinischen Universität Wien, Austria

### Diploma thesis

Diploma thesis, Dec. 2002: *Godoya antiquensis* – a bio-guided flavonoid study. By Birgit Benedek; promoter: Prof. Dr. B. Kopp, Prof. Dr. R. Anton. Institute for Pharmakognosie, University of Vienna, Austria

Diploma thesis, 2002: Inkulturnahme von *Vitex agnus-castus* L. – Vergleiche verschiedener Herkünfte. By Leopold Draxler, promoter: Prof. Dr. Ch. Franz, Institut für Angewandte Botanik der Veterinärmedizinischen Universität Wien, Austria

Diploma thesis, Dec. 2002: Antiinflammatory Activity of *Bupleurum fruticosum* using Nuclear Factor kappa B as a Molecular Target. By Heidi Birkmayer; promoter: Prof. Dr. B. Kopp (Institute for Pharmakognosie, University of Vienna, Austria) and Prof. Dr. M. Heinrich (Imperial College, London)

### Editorial remark

All contributions for the GA-Newsletter are welcome. Deadline for submission for the next edition is fixed to May 30<sup>th</sup>. 2003. Please send all contributions by e-mail or disk to:

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