

Editorial

Thank you Vienna—over to you, Bristol

A message of thanks to the outgoing Editor-in-Chief of Diabetologia, Professor Werner Waldhäusl

Professor Werner Waldhäusl took over as Editor-in-Chief of Diabetologia in 1998 and served until the end of 2003. He was the eighth Editor of the journal, taking Diabetologia north from the Mediterranean town of Pisa where it had resided previously under Professor Ele Ferrannini's stewardship, to Vienna and "Mittel-europa". Professor Waldhäusl had justifiably lofty ambitions for the journal [1] and managed to put many of his ideas to good use. Whereas most previous Editors had discussed changing the cover of the journal at length without acting, Werner managed such a change within the second year of his term, banishing to history the infamous mustard-coloured bands and mortuary-black font! This incisive approach marked his tenure. He was fastidious in his handling of papers and carefully read each issue from cover to cover with an objective and highly critical eye. Indeed, he introduced an entirely new process of evaluation of the finished product by the editorial board. He was acutely aware that Diabetologia was the standard-bearer of EASD, providing a major portal to international diabetes research with a unique European flavour. Professor Waldhäusl deserves the gratitude of the Association and all its members for all he did to improve the journal while taking care never to compromise standards by innovation for the mere sake of it (Fig. 1).

The job of Editor-in-Chief of a major international journal is not an easy one, especially with competition for precious printed pages as hot as it is for EASD's journal. With acceptance rates at Diabetologia as low as 20%, you make four times as many "enemies" as friends! Professor Waldhäusl was a strong Editor. His final decisions were just that: disappointed authors soon learned not to waste their energy arguing. It is amusing to see how each Editor tackles hostile or re-

bellious authors. Werner's approach was Viennese and patrician, never patronising or condescending and certainly never impolite. Without ever raising his voice he simply made his case and it became apparent that any more discussion would be a waste of time—I speak from experience! The very British Edwin Gale will interact with authors quite differently, just as the very Italian Ele Ferrannini did before Werner: one of the great joys of EASD is this journey from one great European culture to the next that we take with every change of editorship of Diabetologia.

No Editor-in-Chief works alone. A journal is only as good as the team that makes it and Professor Waldhäusl had an outstanding team. He was helped throughout his time in office by two highly dependable Deputy Editors, Decio L. Eizirik and J. Antonie ("Ton") Maassen as well as by several effective members of staff in the Vienna office including Helga Reiter, Ann Nicholas, Alexandra Sumper and Alexandra



Fig. 1. Professor Werner Waldhäusl

Zeiner (administrative assistants), Christopher Robinson, Thomas Evans (copy editors) and Cathy Warley (proof reader). Anyone who has served as Editor knows that a journal depends to the greatest extent on its Managing Editor. Here again, Werner was so well served, first by Mrs Elise Langdon-Neuner and since September 2000 by Mrs Milene Wirth-Fernandez (who had worked in several other roles almost from the start). Our collective thanks go to each of them, to the various Associate and Assistant Editors and to the members of the Advisory Board.

As a member of the EASD Executive Committee, Professor Waldhäusl left his mark on the journal and on the Association in so many other ways. He was instrumental in negotiating a new contract with our publishers, Springer. He introduced the Annual Best Paper Awards, the first of which were presented by Werner in person in August 2003. These prizes reflect his wish to attract bright new talent to Diabetologia, as expressed in his first editorial [1]. He was also involved in the early discussions leading to the creation of our foundation, EFSD, and provided great support

throughout these exciting first years. You can depend on Werner: he does what he promises to do, to great effect and always with the greatest courtesy. It was my privilege to work with him during the first two years of my presidency and I should like to take this opportunity to thank him personally as well as on behalf of EASD and its many thousands of members worldwide for all he has done for us, for Diabetologia and for European diabetes research.

And now for Bristol. Watch out Edwin, this will be a tough act to follow!

Philippe Halban
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References

1. Waldhäusl W (1998) Where do we go from here? Diabetologia 41:1

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