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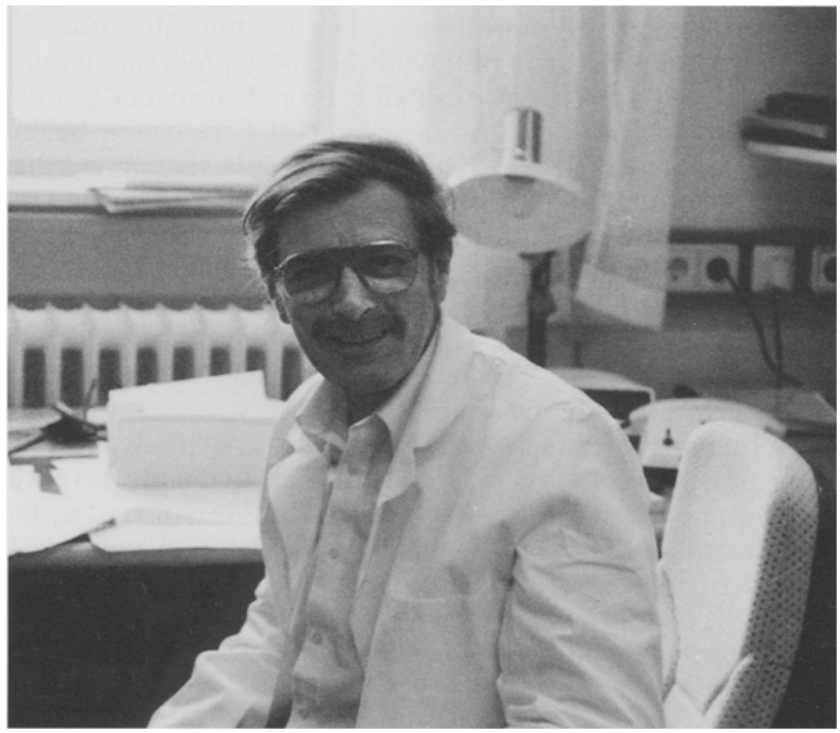
In Memoriam

o. Univ. Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Hermann Esterbauer

(30 July 1936–7 January 1997)

Professor Dr. Dr.h.c. Hermann Esterbauer, an internationally renowned biochemist, died on January 7, 1997, in Graz, Austria. At the time of his death Prof. Esterbauer was Head of the Department of Biochemistry at the Karl-Franzens-University in Graz and was acting chairman of the special collaborative research effort "SFB Biomembranes and Atherosclerosis."

Hermann Esterbauer, born on July 30, 1936, in the Austrian town of Ach, began his scientific career as a University assistant in the Department of Physical Chemistry at the Karl-Franzens-University in Graz (1963–1968). He then joined the newly founded Department of Biochemistry in Graz as a University Assistant under the department's first chairman, Prof. E. Schauenstein. After obtaining his *venia docendi* in 1970, Prof. Esterbauer continued his scientific training through successive post-doctoral fellowships



at the Universities of Pittsburgh and Michigan. After his return to Graz he was appointed a.o. Professor in 1974. He established a subdivision of analytical biochemistry, within the Department of Biochemistry, which concentrated its efforts on the analysis of lipids. Between 1984 and 1989 he was guest professor at the Universities of Torino and Siena, Italy. The University of Torino honored him with the title Doctor *honoris-causa* in 1992. In 1990, Esterbauer was promoted to full Professor and Head of the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Graz.

Esterbauer's contributions to the fields of lipid research and the chemistry of oxygen radicals resulted in 370 publications and an international reputation for excellence. The achievements of his group in identifying and characterizing products of lipid peroxidation provided crucial early information to elucidate the relationship between oxidative stress and atherosclerosis. This found its expression in the scientific literature where the analysis of LDL-oxidation by measuring spectrophotometrically the kinetic of diene formation at 234 nm is called the "Esterbauer-Method".

The scientific recognition promoted the Department of Biochemistry and the University of Graz to a center of lipid research.

Prof. Esterbauer was a member of several international research societies. He served as president of the Austrian Biochemical Society from 1993 to 1995, and was a member of the editorial boards of several renowned journals including *Free Radical Research, Biochemical Journal, Amino Acids, Free Radicals in Biology and Medicine* and the *Journal of Biotechnology*.

Prof. Esterbauer was, additionally, widely recognized as a dedicated and gifted eductor. Through his lectures he inspired generations of students with his enthusiasm for biochemistry. As mentor to countless graduate students his dedication and energy had a profound effect on the education of young scientists. The continued growth of the biochemistry program and the recent expansion of the department are testifying Prof. Esterbauer's strengths in teaching and research. A special achievement of Esterbauer, beginning in 1991, was to initiate a special research project, or SFB, that united the efforts of many departments in the University of Graz and the Technical University of Graz, which are active in the fields of lipid, membrane and atherosclerosis research. In 1995, with the beginning of the SFB "Biomembranes", Hermann Esterbauer succeeded in establishing a coordinated research effort that crossed departmental, faculty and university boundaries. Until his death, Prof. Esterbauer served as acting chairman and maintained a deep committment to the goals of the SFB. His enthusiasm was exemplary.

When Hermann Esterbauer died on January 7, 1997, an extraordinary scientist, educator, and colleague was lost. His great humanity, his enthusiasm for and committment to biochemistry research within Austria, at the Karl-Franzens-University in Graz, and within the SFB "Biomembranes" made Prof. Esterbauer irreplaceable and unforgettable.

On behalf of the scientific staff of the Karl-Franzens-University of Graz and the SFB-007 Biomembranes