

Laudatio

E.W. Fischer

On the Occasion of the 65th Anniversary of his Birthday

In February 1994 Prof. Dr. Erhard W. Fischer, scientific member of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften e.V. and member of the board of directors at the Max-Planck-Institut für Polymerforschung, Mainz (MPI-P), celebrated the 65th anniversary of his birthday. On this occasion and in honour of his outstanding contributions to polymer physics the national and international polymer community congratulates him and wishes him, for the future, excellent physical and mental health so that he is capable of stimulating the further development of polymer research, as he has done successfully in the past.

E.W. Fischer studied Physics at the Technische Hochschule Stuttgart, where he obtained his diploma and PhD degrees in 1954 and 1957, respectively. From 1957 to 1962 he was Wissenschaftlicher Assistent at the Institut für Physikalische Chemie of the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, working with H.A. Stuart. There he was concerned with the crystallisation of polymers, the formation of polymer single crystals and the physical properties of semicrystalline polymers using electron microscopy, X-ray diffraction and mechanical and calorimetric methods. These investigations, especially including the role of chain-folding, were also the topic of his Habilitation, which was completed in 1962.

Afterwards he worked as a Research Fellow at the Research Triangle Institute in Durham, N.C. with A. Peterlin and as Associate Professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, N.Y.

In 1966 he was appointed to a full professor position for Chemical Physics at the Institut für Physikalische Chemie in Mainz, where he stayed until 1983. During this time he served as a founder and chairman of the Polymer Physics Section of the European Physical Society (1969–75), chairman of the Polymer Physics Group of the Deutsche Physikalische Gesellschaft (1969–73), member of the Macromolecular Division of the IUPAC (1970–1975) and of the Scientific Council of the ILL, Grenoble (1974–78).

In 1983 he and his former co-worker G. Wegner were chosen to establish the Max-Planck-Institut

für Polymerforschung in Mainz. Since then he has held his present position, which includes heading the department of polymer physics, one of the six departments of this institute. The current research activities of E.W. Fischer, which are very diverse in nature requiring detailed knowledge of many techniques, are dedicated to the relationship between molecular parameters and macroscopic physical properties of polymers and the connection between specific polymer effects and the general physics of condensed matter. Therefore, his research projects concentrate on the structure and dynamics of polymers and their physical properties.

His co-workers, diploma- and PhD students as well as staff and guest scientists know him as a person who makes serious demands on scientific work, on his own as well as on that of his collaborators, and as a person who is always willing to discuss scientific strategies and attempts at solving problems and who has an excellent knowledge about the recent and earlier relevant polymer literature.

E.W. Fischer continues to have enormous scientific productivity: more than 190 papers, where he is the author or co-author, and more than 100 PhD and diploma theses, which were supervised by him. In addition, six of his former co-workers act now as co-director at the MPI-P or as full professors at different German universities.

His scientific work was honoured by the Frazer Prize-Memorial award of the University of the Massachusetts (1978), the award of the Polymer Physics Prize of the American Physical Society (1979), the election as a member of the Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (1984), the French-German Alexander v. Humboldt Award (1987) and the Award of the Japanese Society of Polymer Science (1990).

E.W. Fischer is a member of the Editorial Board of several scientific journals, dealing with polymer and material sciences. For 20 years he has also belonged to the Editorial Board of this journal, which dedicates to him the present issue.

B. Ewen