

Dedication



Rudolf and Gertrud Zahn.

This volume of *Mechanisms of Ageing and Development* commemorates the life and achievements of one of many extremely talented senior editors of this journal. My dear friend, Rudolf, was born on February 6, 1920 in the small village of Bad Orb-Spessart, Germany, as the son of an architect. His wife, Dr. Med. Gertrud, is also a talented scientist. Zahn has had two children and one grandchild.

Zahn had to serve in the German army, and when he became wounded and sick for some time, he was allowed to study medicine and natural science. He was recalled to active duty again and was a victim of Russian captivity, from where he escaped after the war and finished his studies.

His doctoral thesis on microcirculation of the kidney was accepted with honours and brought him in 1949 the nomination as a Rockefeller Fellow and one year as research fellow at Harvard. Zahn became the inventor or co-inventor of a dozen of patents. For some time he had to earn his money as a high temperature engineer,

when he developed an oil film distillation burner for steel fabrication, smelting and preparation of cement.

In 1951, he headed an international laboratory on microcirculation research, became a docent for biochemistry and for physiology and was appointed Associate Professor in physiology and biochemistry in 1961. A main part of his work was on fractionation and purification of proteins and especially on DNA. with Kleinschmidt he developed the mixed cytochrome C monolayer spreading technique for the visualization of the DNA molecules.

In 1966 Zahn was appointed chairman of Physiological Chemistry and Director of the Institute of the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz. Work, mostly together with W.E.G. Mueller, included isolation, modification and studies on mechanisms of action of anticancer compounds, c.g. Cytosine Arabinoside and Bleomycin, demonstration of primer forming and policing functions of DNase, studies on aging using quail oviduct as model on responses to hormone levels.

In 1971 he was elected full member of the Academy of Science and Literature (Mainz) and chairman of the Commission for Molecular Biology. He instituted the Karl August Forster Lectures on Programmed Biosynthesis. Among the lecturers were 14 Nobel Prize winners, of a total of 35 nominees, some being awarded the K.A. Forster Prize (this writer being one of them).

Since 1956 Zahn, with a German crew, began working for several months per year at Rovinj, Croatia at the Adriatic, where he founded a joint German-Croatian marine biological lab using marine life as model organisms and later, with W.E.G. Mueller, especially sponges as sources for pharmacologically active compounds. Work was also on impact of pollution on ornithine oxidase and mixed function oxygenases (MFO).

Beginning in 1988 he became head of a program on molecular mechanisms of environmental genotoxicity, which is mainly concerned with reduction or elimination of toxicity in Rhine waters and tributaries. He is a consultant with local and central governmental commissions and authorities. Lately, he was elected corresponding member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Zahn is author or co-author of about 400 refereed scientific articles.

B.L. Strehler
Editor-in-Chief