

David B. Vodušek:

In memoriam Dr Dr h c Helmut Lechner

Helmut Lechner, a leading neurologist of his time and our dear friend and colleague has left his family, his work and his friends on March 27, 2006, but only to be remembered for all his achievements – particularly for us the Central European and South-East European for the cooperation in neurology and psychiatry and the successful continuation of the Pula Congresses, in spite of all intervening difficulties.

Much has been said about Helmut by other speakers, whose collaboration with him was longer and more intimate. Nevertheless, in my name and the name of Slovenian neurology I would like to remember Professor Lechner for what he was: a cosmopolitan neuropsychiatrist of the old school, but always following all the modern developments, and with very modern understanding of both the science and the workings of science and health care in society. He was a formidable figure in advocating the well being of neurological patients and neuroscience and helped wherever he could, so also the integration of Central and South-Eastern European neurology into the wider European and World neuroscience community.

Helmut's interests were broad and integrated neurology, psychiatry and clinical neurophysiology, ranging from the cerebrovascular diseases to the epilepsies. Even after his retirement as the Head of Neurology Department of the University in Graz in 1995, his professional activities did not diminish and have been energetic till his end. Because of his tremendously active involvement in and support to the Pula Neuropsychiatric Congresses, despite his advancing age, it seemed as if he would go on forever. Our sadness is so much deeper as we have grown accustomed to his robust energy and his formidable ability to find solutions for all emerging problems.

Our memories of Helmut are fond. But our duty is in upholding his legacy – cooperation in the Central and South-East Europe, keeping and strengthening ties in different fields of neuroscience, and particularly of neurology, neurosurgery and psychiatry; continuing the successful International Neuropsychiatric Pula Congresses, which meant so much to Helmut.