

Editorial

'The results prove that this group of unique polypeptides is much more widespread in microfungi than was previously assumed... Furthermore, we predict that literally hundreds of new Aib-peptides with widely differing structures will be found and hence exhibit a broad range of bioactivities'.

Hans Brückner on the occasion of a lecture delivered at a peptaibol meeting at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris (1988).

As a result of the enthusiasm and organizational skills of Prof. Udo Gräfe, about 70 participants, among them newcomers as well as many well established 'peptaibomaniacs', gathered at the Hotel Esplanade in Jena on 9–11 October 2002, in order to participate at the workshop 'Peptaibols: Biosynthesis, Structural Diversity, Bioactivity and Mode of Action'. A welcome address was given by Udo Gräfe and a total of 18 lectures were delivered and 16 posters presented in the course of the workshop. The presentations gave an excellent overview of the state of art of peptaibol science and covered all relevant fields of this group of polypeptides, ranging from aspects of biosynthesis, new primary and crystal structures, syntheses of natural peptaibols and analogues, as well as reports on bioactivities and the unique membrane modifying activities.

Many of the presentations are compiled in this issue of the *Journal of Peptide Science*. As nowadays the structures of more than 300 peptaibols (peptaibiotics, lipopeptaibols, lipoaminopeptides) are stored in the peptaibol database, the above

prophetic words (cited in *J. High Resol. Chromatogr.* 1988; **11**: 735) became absolutely true.

When finally leaving Jena, nobody expected that it would be the last time that most of us would meet Udo Gräfe. The picture accompanying the obituary in this issue was taken by M. Kronen in front of Goethe's famous 'Gartenhaus' on the occasion of the participants' excursion to Weimar.

After busy months and after spending the morning of 14 February in the office, still dealing with manuscripts and leaving on the desk photos of the event ready to be delivered, Udo and his wife left Jena to spend the weekend in the family's holiday home, situated in the beautiful Thuringia forests. In the afternoon Udo left alone for cross-country skiing. He did not come back and, after being missed and the mountain rescue service being alerted, he was found in the forest, tragically struck by a heart attack. He will live on in our memories and for his scientific contributions forever.

As to the manuscripts gathered in Udo's office and being under the review process, I am deeply indebted to Dr Brigitte Schlegel and Prof. Siegmund Reißmann who took care of these contributions in Jena. I would also like to thank the Production Editor Louisa Garner the Executive Project Editor, Matt Smith and the Editor-in-Chief John Jones for help and for making possible the publication of this special issue on peptaibols. Last but not least, in the name of all the participants, I would like to thank the European Peptide Society and the Fond of the Chemical Industry for sponsoring this workshop.

HANS BRÜCKNER