

Walter Marget – 80 Years for Infectious Diseases

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Happy Birthday Walter Marget

This issue of *INFECTION* is dedicated to *Walter Marget*, our senior editor, who celebrates his 80th birthday on August 3rd. I assume that *Walter Marget* didn't get involved in infectious diseases right after his birth or during childhood. Therefore the title of this editorial should be regarded as an approximation to an adult lifetime devoted to our specialty.

It is rare to encounter colleagues these days who have witnessed the entire evolution of modern infectious diseases. The antibiotic era, as we know it, began with the first successful clinical use of Prontosil by *Klee* and *Domagk* in 1933 and the successful introduction of penicillin. These achievements were followed by the replacement of the "Zauberberg" by antituberculous drugs. In parallel to these milestones in the arena of antimicrobial therapy, great progress was also made in preventing devastating infectious diseases such as poliomyelitis through large-scale immunization campaigns and the establishment of vaccination programs in many countries.

However, *Walter Marget* is also witness to some more recent failures in the management of infectious diseases such as the global increase of antimicrobial resistance which threatens to bring the antibiotic era to an early end. On a more positive note, he will soon bear witness to the global eradication of poliomyelitis. Unlike most clinicians and researchers in infectious diseases who usually bid farewell to this field at age 65, *Walter Marget* has continued to play a very important role as an infectious diseases specialist. He created this journal, *INFECTION*, nurtured it and developed it into an indispensable forum for the presentation and discussion of progress in infectious diseases. His stewardship of *INFECTION* lasted a quarter of the 20th century. During all these years he made an exemplary effort to disseminate scientifically solid information among a wide, international readership. This is an almost unparalleled contribution to the progress of infectious diseases as a specialty.

Younger colleagues may look at *Walter Marget* as a role model. It may be well worthwhile to try to follow his example, since his way of mixing retirement with professional activities seems to have kept him young, as everybody who met *Walter Marget* in Stockholm during the most recent ECCMID meeting is surely able to confirm.

Since we are facing an uncertain future regarding the evolution of infectious diseases, we may take some comfort from the fact that we are, thanks to the contributions of *Walter Marget* and others, at least in part prepared to respond to the challenges ahead. We are therefore indebted to *Walter Marget* and thank him sincerely for his leadership as former Editor-in-Chief of *INFECTION*. We wish him all the best for his birthday and all the best for the future.