

# Jürgen Remane<sup>1</sup>

(1934 – 2004)



The picture has been taken in August 2004 during a short field trip with former school friends. Jürgen Remane is sitting on limestones of Kimmeridgian age (Malm, Weisser Jura, Urach quarry near Kirscheim village, Schwäbischer Jura, South Germany).

With the passing of Jürgen Remane, the Geological Institute of the University of Neuchâtel, *Eclogae Geologicae Helvetiae*, and geosciences in general, lost a scientist of international reputation, a gifted teacher, and – above all – a good friend.

Born 1934 in Kiel, Germany, Jürgen quickly became attracted by the natural sciences, following the footsteps of his father, a professor of zoology at the Universities of Kiel and Halle.

In 1954, he graduated in Plön and enrolled at the University of Kiel, and subsequently, at the University of Tübingen. After having passed the “Vordiplom”, he spent a year at the University of Grenoble, where he obtained a diploma “d’étude supérieure en géologie”. He returned to Tübingen, where he started a Ph.D. thesis under the direction of professor Schindewolf. Several times during his graduate studies, he also worked abroad, in particular together with the Swedish Geological Survey. In 1962 he earned his PhD degree and took an assistant position at the University of Göttingen.

In 1969, he was employed as “chef de travaux” at the University of Neuchâtel. He was nominated “privat-docent” in 1970, “assistant professor” in 1971, and finally “professor” in 1978. He also taught at the University of Geneva and in Linares, Mexico. The pioneering work on the biostratigraphy based on calpionellids in uppermost Jurassic and lowermost Cretaceous sediments of the Tethys is one of his best known research contributions.

At Neuchâtel University, he taught micropaleontology, palaeontology and stratigraphy. He did this in the broader perspective of Earth history and the evolution of life. Thereby he followed the tradition of Louis Agassiz, one of the founders of the University. Through his expertise in the evolution of fossil faunas and their use as biostratigraphical tools he became attracted by research groups that were concerned with establishing widely accepted geological time scales. His broad experience in the fields of geology and zoology, his active participation in the recognition and solution of stratigraphical problems and his perfect command of different languages quickly made him a privileged personal contact. His French was perfect, his English fluent, German

---

<sup>1</sup> Senior Chief Editor of *Eclogae Geologicae Helvetiae* from 1997–2004.

was his mother tongue anyway, and he also spoke Spanish and Swedish. First member of one of the numerous international stratigraphical sub-commissions, he was soon nominated secretary general and subsequently president of the International Commission of Stratigraphy. In this position he laid the foundation for the progress ICS made by establishing a stable chronostratigraphical calibration of the stages. Jürgen Remane was able to cope well with the evolution of thinking amongst his colleagues within his discipline and he successfully navigated ICS through occasionally rough waters. Parallel to his international responsibilities, he remained very active as a researcher and teacher, as demonstrated by the numerous articles published in international journals and by the number of diploma and Ph.D. students he guided.

In 1997 he became chief editor of *Eclogae*. The journal profited not only from his wide scientific background, but also from his first-hand expert knowledge in stratigraphy. His conviction that the *Eclogae* should keep on trying to unite the different branches of the ever-growing earth-science disciplines roots in the broad area of his scientific interests. He was determined that a Swiss journal ought to not only welcome established international scientists, but should also offer the opportunity to publish the work of young inexperienced students

working within Switzerland. At the same time he never lost his focus for maintaining a high quality standard. With his pragmatic way of thinking and his sense of humour, he safely guided both, the experienced author as well as the young student, through the process of publishing.

Jürgen's strong commitment to the journal, even during the most difficult periods of his long and painful illness, was outstanding and impressed all those who had the privilege to work with him. In fact, he did not resign from his job until the very end of his life. Even the editorial work concerning the current issue was largely done by him. Everybody who had the chance to work with him for the journal experienced his great enthusiasm. We are sure that the spirit of his enthusiasm will motivate future generations of editors and thus continue to guarantee the high quality of the journal.

His friends and colleagues will remember him as a man of exemplary scientific rigour and intellectual integrity, and – above all – as a jovial and very generous person. He will be surely missed.

28 of December 2004

Thierry Adatte  
Iwan Stössel-Sittig