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OBITUARY



In Memoriam Professor Ferenc Kutas (1930–2023)

Professor Ferenc Kutas, the retired Section Editor for biochemistry of our journal died on 20th February at the age of 92. His autobiography on the occasion of his 90th birthday was an honest confession of a man who was nearing his career and was satisfied with his fate. Ferenc Kutas was born in Budapest 17th September 1930. He graduated from the Piarist Grammar School in Pest, where the spirituality and the excellent teachers defined his humanistic worldview for life. When deciding on further education, he chose veterinary medicine as his career. It turned out to be a very lucky choice, which helped him to develop his best abilities. After obtaining his veterinary doctor diploma in 1954, he applied for a position at the Department of Physiology. Initially, he participated in the project on the thermoregulation and homeostasis of young animals. Using modern analytical methods, which he acquired at the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Medicine, Budapest, he and his colleague have achieved significant new results worthy of international publication. Later, the acid-base balance in domestic animals became the focus of his research interest. His results in this area were the subject of his candidate's thesis, then equivalent to a Ph.D. degree, which he defended in 1966. A significant event in his career was the one-year fellowship, supported by the Ford Foundation, at the Institute of Biochemistry, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of California in Davis in 1967/68. He continued his research into the development of metabolic acidosis in young and old domestic animals, with particular attention to dairy cows. His achievements in this field formed the basis of his thesis, submitted in 1991 for the award of the title of Doctor of Science.

He rightly felt successful in his scientific research career, nonetheless, his real matter of heart was education and the everyday relationship with the students. Within the Department of Physiology, a separate biochemistry section was established, of which he became the head, and the independent lecturer of the subject in 1973. He loved to teach, and his abilities made him excellently suited for the high-level exercise of the so-called "chair-teacher" role. He carefully developed the material for his lessons. During his experiential lectures, in addition to the logical explanation of the topic, the speaker's linguistic sophistication, extensive classical and humane education, and peculiar humour also appeared. His listeners were impressed by his amazing face and name memory. He was one of the most popular members of the teaching staff among the students. He received the title of the best predecessor of the year a total of 23 times by the votes of students of the Hungarian, German and English courses between 1981 and 2001. Although he officially retired in 1995, he remained in the department as Professor Emeritus until 2013. He stopped working as a regular instructor at the age of 83.

He was an enthusiastic sports fan. As the president of the Veterinary Sports Club, he was the guardian and organizer of the university's sports life. He inspired the creation of a memorial plaque at the campus to preserve the names of the Olympic and world champion Hungarian veterinary athletes.

Among his many roles and appointments in the scientific community, he considered the executive board membership in the World Association of Veterinary Physiologists, Pharmacologists and Biochemists and in the Hungarian Physiological Society to be the most important ones. He was an active member of the Editorial Board of *Acta Veterinaria Hungarica* for



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more than two decades. With the recent introduction of the electronic manuscript processing system, he stepped down, but from time to time he contributed to the editorial work through individual peer reviews and helped to find suitable

reviewers. His great knowledge, good humour and endearing personality will be long and immensely missed.

May he rest in peace!
Mária Benkő and Tibor Kassai

