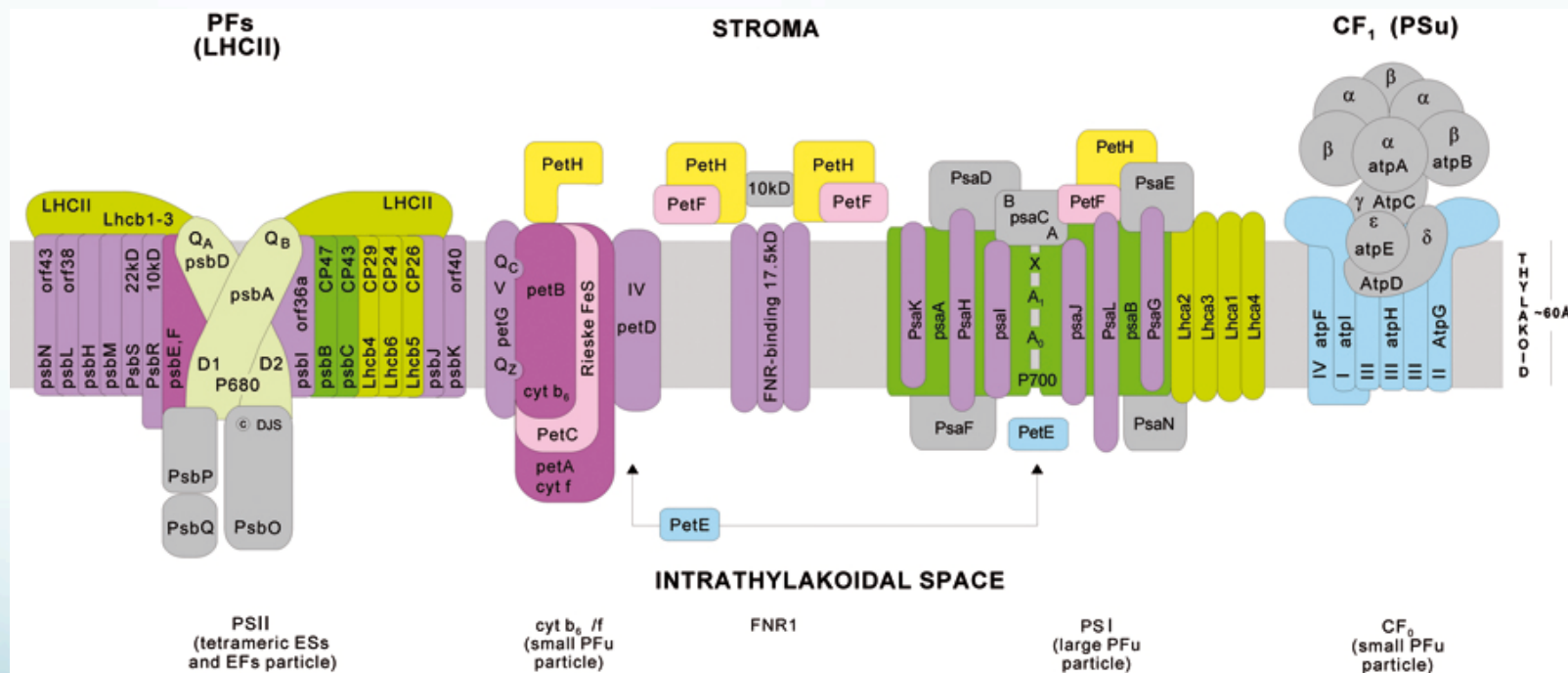


September 18, 2010, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, USA

Celebration for Diter Von Wettstein

“Man är blek och glåmig i blasten,
med den **von-Wettsteinska** kloroplasten”



Our heartiest congratulations
to
Diter von Wettstein
on receiving the 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award of
the Rebeiz Foundation

**He was born on September 20, 1929 in Göttingen,
Germany.**

**In a couple of days, we will be celebrating his
birthday. We can already say:**

**“Happy Birthday to you Diter” on behalf of all of
us gathered here today.**

Happy Birthday to Diter in 2 days, September 20. And?



From: Barry Osmond (2006) Crassulacean acid metabolism; now and then. In (eds.) Esser U et al. (eds) Progress in Botany. Vol. 68, pp 1-32. Springer, Heidelberg.

"Previous title chapters in Progress in Botany, **from giants of European botanical research** in the latter half of the 20th Century, have explored fascinating and significant areas of plant science. **I am honored, and more than a little over-awed**, by the Editor's invitation to contribute in this context (and alarmed to discover that I am only, but precisely, a decade younger than the previous contributor!!)". Diter wrote the title chapter for 2005, and **the discovery of his sharing birthday was based on the Series editorial policy calling for publication of a brief CV.[Well, you can see who else shares his birthday]**

Family Background

Diter's heritage is fantastic indeed. His father **Fritz von Wettstein** had once served as a Professor of Botany in Göttingen, then in Munich and as a Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Biology, Berlin, all in Germany.

Diter's grandfather **Richard von Wettstein** had been a Professor of Botany in Vienna, Austria.

And, his great-grandfather **Anton Kerner von Marilaun**, who had been a Professor of Botany in Budapest (Hungary), then in Innsbruck (Austria), and finally in Vienna, had corresponded with the very founders of Studies on Evolution and of Genetics, **Charles Darwin and Gregor Mendel**.

Education

- **High School Certificate in Innsbruck, Austria.**
- **Diter started graduate work in 1949 at the University of Tübingen, under the world-renowned Erwin Bünning on the induction of polarity in mosses.**
- **After just 2 years, due to financial reasons, he went to work with Åke Gustafsson, in Stockholm, as a research assistant at the State Forest Research Institute, where, he worked with barley mutants in addition to continuing his research on the mosses.**

Wow: Two PhDs and a DSc

- Diter submitted his work on **mosses** at Tübingen, obtaining a PhD (dr. rar.nat) in **Biology and Biochemistry**, in **1953**.
- Since at that time no position could be had in Sweden, unless he had a PhD there, Diter submitted another thesis, this time on the **barley mutants**, at the University of Stockholm, and obtaining also in **1953**, another PhD (fil. lic.), this time in **Genetics**, from the University of Stockholm.
- In **1957**, Diter obtained, from the same university a fil.dr. (equivalent to DSc) and obtained his *habilitation* the same year.

Positions Held

1957: University Lecturer (Assistant Professor) in Genetics at the University of Stockholm.

1958: *Rockefeller Fellow* at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in Pasadena, the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory and the Carnegie Institution in Stanford.

1962: Professor and Head of the Institute of Genetics at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

1972--1996: Professor and Head of the Department of Physiology of the Carlsberg Laboratory and Director of Carlsberg Plant Breeding, and moved in 1975 into the newly erected Laboratory building.

1966, 1969, 1972 and 1974: Visiting Professor at the University of California at Davis; at the Washington State University in Pullman (1969).

Current position

- **1996--present: R.A. Nilan Distinguished Professor in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences of Washington State University**
- **University of Giessen: Mercator-Visiting Professor, German National Science Foundation (DFG)**
- **One major activity is: Development of gliadin-free wheat, which can be tolerated by celiac patients, but still retains good baking properties**

Andy Benson, last year's Awardee wrote

Andy Benson



"I am pleased to learn that Diter von Wettstein has been selected for the prestigious Lifetime Award of the Rebicz Foundation. There could be no finer scientist in biological sciences than Diter. He has been a giant among giants in many areas of biology, from chemistry to genetics. Without self-assertion, he has ascended to leadership in many „fields for many years."



Diter von Wettstein

1976--1978 photographs
courtesy of David J. Simpson
Presentation by Govindjee

When was it ?



- **Diter seated at a table with beer bottles at a “harvest fest” at the Carlsberg experimental farm.**
- **Quiz : Who are these onlookers?**

November, 1977



- **Diter is seated on the front stairs of the Carlsberg Lab**

Diter :Who are the others with you?

November, 1977



**Diter is standing in his
new laboratory**

**Diter: What are
you really doing
besides drinking
wine, your favorite
pastime?**

October, 1978



- **Diter with a group of scientists from the lab on a walk in the Danish forest.**

- **Diter: Who are the other scientists? And, which Danish forest is it?**

In Trins, Austria, Diter's family home



- **Diter** is identifying some of the wildflowers collected on a 5-day visit to Austria on a botanical expedition, organized by the Lab
- **Diter:** What were the names of the wildflowers the others had collected? And who were those around you?

In Trins, Austria.....



- **Diter: What wildflower was it? Who were the other two with you?**

Well, having fun...in Austria



- **Diter is enjoying lunch on the mountainside.**

- **Diter: Who were the others?**

In Austria... on the top of a mountain



**Diter: Which mountain
was it?**

Who were the others?

In Austria..



Diter with his daughters Kim and Heidi--
no more questions from Govindjee

Honors...I did n't know that we had that many
academies in the World

Foreign Associate of the National Academy of Sciences, USA

Member: Royal Danish Academy of Sciences

Member, Royal Physiographical Society, Lund

Member, European Molecular Biology Organization

Member, Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina

Member, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences

Member, Academy of Technical Sciences, Copenhagen

Member, Academia Europaea

Member, Académie Royale des Sciences de Belgique

Member, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften

Member, Nordrhein-Westfälische Akad.d.Wissensch.

Honors

Member, Washington State Academy of Sciences

Honorary Member Swedish Seed Association, Svalöf

Lillö-Stiftelsens Prize for Genetic Research

**Gregor Mendel Medal & Kurt Mothes Gold Medal,
Leopoldina**

Dr. agronomiae honoris causa, Copenhagen

**And, now today (September 18, 2010) : Lifetime
Achievement Award of the Rebeiz Foundation for
Basic Biological Research**

Acknowledgment

- **Tino Rebeiz** for the opportunity to honor **Diter**
- **Diter von Wettstein** for providing me a copy of a letter and his notes on his ancestors
- **Robert Clegg and Sanjay Govindjee** for their help with the translation from German into English
- **David Simpson** for providing me photographs of **Diter** shown today
- **Lars Olof Bjorn** for the text, used in my slide 1, that was taken from a banner used by **Diter's** fans at a lecture given by **Diter** in Lund, Sweden, long time ago

Top 5 Websites for Diter von Wettstein

- <http://www.springerlink.com/content/k87g25n611334387/>
- <http://cahnrsnews.wsu.edu/2008/04/23/von-wettstein-receives-nih-award-to-develop-wheat-free-of-harmful-gluten-proteins/>
- http://www.biomedexperts.com/Profile.bme/1495199/Diter_von_Wettstein
- <http://www.labome.org/expert/usa/washington/von/diter-von-wettstein-455275.html>
- <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/diter-von-wettstein/9/ab3/1b1>