



In memory of Prof. Dr Hans L. Grafelmann

Dr Georg Bach, Germany

“Anyone who has visions should see a doctor!”—who doesn’t know this possibly a little overly used quote of the former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt. Hans L. Grafelmann did not see a doctor but rather worked unimpressed and resolutely on realising his visions. Thus when the above stated sentence was spoken during the parliamentary elections in 1980, one of Grafelmann’s visions was already having an anniversary: The German Association of Dental Implantology (DGZI) was celebrating its first decade of existence.

In order to reach such an anniversary, it really needed visions and more importantly visionaries. Hans L. Grafelmann was one of these visionaries. The dentist from Bremen was one of the first in Germany to adopt the idea of oral implantology, until then mainly originating from North America, and he was further one of the first practitioners inserting the implants available at that time. Thus our colleague Grafelmann was right from the start part of German implantology.

How important this subject was to him can be measured in terms of the solutions he aimed at finding for practical application problems, like, e.g. general availability of implant products and further by how dear uniting the former implantological elites was to him—resulting in the birth of the DGZI. One might smile to oneself about such problems today, but they visualise in which diaspora Hans L. Grafelmann and his colleagues were moving at the time. In our current days of implantological expert societies with thousands of members, of implantology being taught in universities everywhere and funds of several millions available for oral implantol-

ogy research one cannot honour Grafelmann’s pioneering achievements enough. This should be especially regarded while keeping in mind how in those days he and his allies were confronted with much animosity. It was definitely not in Grafelmann’s genes to give way in such situations, instead he consequently developed his DGZI further and enjoyed watching “his child” flourish. His incredible strength in networking and his communicative, humorous personality being especially beneficial. Hans L. Grafelmann stayed connected to our association his whole life and even after retiring from the operative business he was always interested in its developments.

Needless to say that such achievements as I am describing here, did not stay unnoticed, especially by those intensively involved in implantology. Strong symbols of this appreciation were the various honours and doctor’s degrees he received. They are too numerous to list them all here, but I am entirely sure that Hans L. Grafelmann would not have cared, as for such he was of much too humble and unpretentious personality.

How much we would have liked to have our honorary president on stage for our 50th anniversary. It goes without saying that we will be organising this anniversary congress in Bremen, Germany, to return to the founding location of our association and also to the home of our honorary president. How much we would have liked to receive his advice and to have him by our side for many more years.

Unfortunately, we now how to say goodbye to Hans L. Grafelmann. On behalf of the DGZI family I would like to say a last “Thank you!”.

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