

## Professor Heinz Zemanek and IFIP

If one name can be intimately associated to IFIP it is clearly and undoubtedly Heinz Zemanek, Past President, Honorary Member of IFIP and IFIP Historian.

As IFIP honorary member, colleague and friend of Heinz having worked with him for a long time I want to come back to some aspects and souvenirs all relating to his deep involvement in the IFIP history and existence.

Having worked together for many years (starting in 1968) we were not only colleagues within IFIP and IBM but became soon very close friends.



Heinz Zemanek served as IFIP President from 1971 to 1974 but already during his time as Vice-president he was already very active and a kind of acting assistant to President Dorodnicyn. I worked with him since 1969 on many aspects of IFIP organization, in particular the transfer of the IFIP Seat and Secretariat to Geneva.

I have been his secretary during his Presidency and witnessed his remarkable ideas and talents to improve the IFIP organization and develop its reputation within the whole society. He was a very charming person, listening to everybody, expecting to be reliable and timely at work and always recognizing good performance.

He started TC 6, TC 7 and TC 9, the latter after a long fight within IFIP and his first conference Human Choice and Computers (Vienna, 1974). It was a great success, gathering for the first time international entrepreneurs, trade unions, social and computer scientists to discuss common problems and mutual understanding and using a common language. TC9 on the Relationship Between Computers and Society also considers him as its father. It was eventually created in 1976.

Heinz Zemanek invented and introduced many management tools: IFIP Annual Report, IFIP Information Bulletin, IFIP Summary, Activity Planning Ctee, set of IFIP rules: Statutes and By-laws, Standing Orders and Guidelines, etc.. Establishment of IFIP National Correspondents, Public Information Ctee., TC Cognizant Officers, ICIL (IFIP Ctee. for international Liaison) which became the interface with International organizations, especially UNESCO. Signature of the first contract with UNESCO (area of Education) followed by several others in various fields, establishment of several TC's and WG's stimulating IFIP dynamics, introduction of the Silver Core Award, IFIP Technical Day, State of the Art Reports, Computer Compacts, FIACC of which he was the President 1973-1975 (Five International Associations Coordination Ctee), and a lot of other significant innovations and improvements.

He has been concerned and gave a lot of thoughts to IFIP issues such as information technology for handicapped people and the lack of enough ladies in our profession where more female spirit is needed.

In 1998, he became the third recipient of the IFIP Auerbach Award. In addition he received an impressive number of recognitions: Prizes, Honorary Memberships, elections as Academicians, Fellow positions, etc.. (<http://computer.org/computer-pioneers/zemanek.html>).

Citation from an interview: "I trust in the life of IFIP, simply because it is a need for society to be aware of information technology, to foster it beyond the immediate technological nature, and to do this in international, in global cooperation (if there is any global village: IFIP is the global village). Information Technology has a big future and IFIP has a big future. Find the right people – and it will prosper".

His IFIP Congress, 1974 in Stockholm, was an immense success: over 4'300 participants from 50 countries. In addition and at the same time the first Medical Informatics International Conference (Medinfo 74) was organized by the TC 4: 930 participants from 33 countries. This first conference has been the starting point for the triennial Conference on Medical Informatics and the base for the IMIA (International Medical Informatics Association).

From 1961 to 1975 Professor Zemanek was Director of the IBM Laboratory Vienna (established for him and his research team "Mailüfterl group")with the program: Formal methods for the development of computer-based systems. From 1975 to 1985 he was IBM Fellow, the highest rank that a technician can reach in IBM. Among the most important achievements were the management (including money and material procurement ) of the building, the design of the Vienna Definition Language and Method (VDL and VDM) and the creation of the formal definition of the programming language PL/1. During all those years he gave each year at least two lectures. The number of his publications exceeds 450.

Retired from IBM since 1985, he not only continued to lecture at his Vienna University of Technology (where he read since 1947 – more than 50 years, and during all that time he also had a room in the electrotechnical building), he published and was an often invited speaker. The subjects on which he lectured were his main fields of interest and hobbies: history of information technology and automata with computers and human aspects: relationships between brain and computer and theory of design which he called abstract architecture ("what makes a design a good design?").

He has accumulated an unusual collection of IFIP documents and designed the format of the IFIP books. He had made a photograph of all the IFIP books on one shelf: a long impressive colored picture (Page S72 of "A Quarter Century of IFIP", 1986)

Humanist, interested in many fields: astronomy, history of civilizations, origins of the calendars, of mathematical algorithms, in addition of course to the informatics and computers, he was also collecting stamps: he very thoroughly chose the stamps for Christmas cards he sent steadily to his friends. He was very religious and believed in God. Heinz very friendly to everybody, was listening to people and open to original ideas and suggestions. He was a gentleman and a great scientist.

At the 25th Anniversary of IFIP (March 1985) he contributed a remarkable paper: "Must we do everything we can do? Sense and Nonsense in Information Processing" in which he proposed and discussed in depth 10 definitions of Information. An illustration of his wide philosophical understanding of our society.

This is only one amongst over 450 papers and conferences marking his so exceptional rich career.

In the early IFIP days, Professor Zemanek played also a decisive role in the IFIP TC2 and as the founder of the Austrian Computer Society (OCG). As the OCG did not exist yet, he was the Representative of AFIPS in the IFIP GA from 1966 to 1969 and he served as an IFIP Individual Member and IFIP Treasurer from 1969 to 1972, establishing the IFIP Finances, in many respects as they are today.

Heinz Zemanek was appointed in 1962 Chairman of IFIP TC 2 on programming languages, Austria was not yet an IFIP member. In order to remedy this status, a small committee was composed in Vienna within the framework of the Austrian Productivity Center based on the cooperation of the Federal Trade Unions and the Employer's Association; the center offered the meeting room for the committee and was ready to pay the IFIP membership dues. By 1964 this committee became the Austrian IFIP member association with Heinz Zemanek as chairman and IFIP representative. This was not a really satisfactory solution and Heinz continued working very hard including at Government level until 1975 when a genuine Austrian Computer Society was established with Heinz Zemanek as the founding president. After his transfer to IBM Germany and becoming IBM Fellow, he had to resign in 1976.

He has been constantly working on the true cooperation of IFIP with as many countries as possible, using his fantastic personal network. This has been true for the Eastern countries including successor nations of USSR and with China, to name only a few.

I know that during the last years he had a disappointment in his attempt to start an Archive for the History of Information Technology in Austria (including its relationships to the world development, USA in particular). In spite of the support by the ministry of research his efforts did not succeed and he withdrew from it, saving his material – the main body of the archive content when he left – to his university where he got the necessary space and furniture. But he said "this is a mausoleum rather than an archive: a storage of dead material without custodians. There is too little interest for history in our time and there are no people willing to contribute to the enterprise (even if paid)".

Heinz has been an extremely active ambassador in promoting IFIP everywhere and to all people and instances he was associated to.

And this has been true even during his last years during which he continued to actively promote computer science through well-known conferences and papers.

I have a great admiration and respect for Heinz and what he has accomplished. He deserves the highest recognition of the international computer science community.

We all can be proud and thankful to him and we all will remember him.

Peace be with him!

Pierre-André Bobillier

Past President and Honorary Member