



Klaus Brunnstein (Germany, * 25. May 1937 in Köln; † 19. May 2015 in Hamburg)

On 19 May 2015, Prof. Dr. Klaus Brunnstein passed away following a short, severe illness. With Klaus Brunnstein we have lost an important scientist and visionary, who gained high national and international recognition both through his scientific work and his volunteer work. We have also lost a dear colleague and good friend whose involvement in discussions was always strong and committed. His relationship with young researchers and students in particular was constructive and encouraging. He was an example for all of us, a role model and mentor for many, including myself.

He studied physics and mathematics at the Universities of Marburg, Muenster and Hamburg from 1957 to 1964 with a diploma in 1962 and dissertation in 1966. From 1964 to 1973 he worked in Hamburg for the computer centre of DESY, the Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, a national research centre that operates particle accelerators used to investigate the structure of matter. Klaus Brunnstein was co-founder of the Faculty for Informatics at the Hamburg University where he became professor for Applied Informatics in 1973. He was a polymath with an understanding of many diverse areas during his long career: High Energy Physics, Computer-Aided Instruction, Medical Informatics, Applications in Sciences, Economic Applications, Social Implications of Informatics, Data Protection, Computer and Network Security, Incident and Risk Analysis of IT Systems, Legal and Ethical Aspects of Informatics, Computers, Culture and Media. And probably more.

Klaus Brunnstein had always taken an interest in politics and public affairs and he was politically active in the early eighties: member of a political party, chair of that party in the federal state of Hamburg and even a member of the German Parliament (Bundestag) for a short while.

He played a pioneering role in Germany in the area of informatics and society as well as in the areas of privacy and ICT security. He was a champion of informational self-determination and privacy and had triggered the 1983 landmark decision on informational self-determination by The Federal Constitutional Court of Germany. In 1988 Klaus Brunnstein initiated and later maintained the Virus Test Centre at Hamburg University, one of the first centres of defence against virus and malware attacks. At the same time he was one of the first scientists who understood and dared to openly explain, that the threats from viruses and other malware were strongly related not only to criminal activities but to weak operating systems and software systems in general.

His volunteer work on national level included membership of the presidial board of the German Informatics Society (GI) from 1996 to 2001. He became a Fellow of GI in 2008.

Klaus Brunnstein had been involved with IFIP since 1975, a 40 year commitment with an active interest and involvement to the last. Because of his preoccupation with politics and public affairs and his deep belief in the social responsibility of computer scientists and scientists in general he brought into IFIP

his passion for a better society, underpinned by his knowledge of classics as well as computer engineering.

The list of his roles and contributions in IFIP is very long. A TC-9 member since 1975, founding chair of Working Group 9.2 Social accountability and computing in 1976, chair of TC-9 ICT and Society from 1990 to 1995, General Assembly representative for GI from 1999 to 2011, Trustee in 1999, Vice-President from 2000 to 2002, President from 2002 to 2007. He received many awards and recognitions for his contributions, the IFIP Silver Core in 1995, the TC-11 Kristian Beckman Award in 2009 and in 2011 he was unanimously accepted by the General Assembly as Honorary Member.

Klaus Brunnstein served on many committees, to mention but a few: Chair of the Congress Steering Committee and the Membership Society Relationship Committee, UNESCO Liaison Officer, and Member of the Task Force of the IFIP Digital Library. From 2007 to 2010 he was General Conference Chair for the IFIP World Computer Congress 2010, Chair of the IFIP 50 year Jubilee and co-editor of the IFIP 50 Year Book. Since 2010 he shared the task of IFIP Historian with Prof Heinz Zemanek.

His total commitment to IFIP has taken him into many meetings, discussions and committees always ready to advance the mission and vision of IFIP. Although retired from university a decade ago, he was still speaking and writing about his topics of interest and about his concerns, recently about electronic elections and about big data. Many of these efforts are not documented, but are part of the corporate memory of IFIP. Klaus Brunnstein will be dearly missed but his work will be carried on in IFIP, his encouragement and inspiration will continue to help us in achieving our goals.

Besides a passion for his work and politics, he was a keen sailor and also enjoyed music and literature. He had a great sense of fun, capable of seeing and enjoying the incongruities of life around him. His passing away is a great loss to all of us but in particular to his wife Gunda and his family who were a great support for him all these years. To them go IFIP's most sincere condolences.

Leon Strous
IFIP President