

## Professor Ferenc Fülöp

### A tribute



### Dedicated to Professor Ferenc Fülöp on the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday

Ferenc Fülöp (most of us call him Feri, which is easier to pronounce) was born on February 23, 1952 in Szank, a small village near to Szeged, Hungary. He studied chemistry and received his M.Sc. 1975 and Ph.D. 1978 from the Department of Organic Chemistry at József Attila University, Szeged, He received his Doctor of Science degree from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in Budapest 1990.

From 1979 he worked as a typical university teacher (assistant, lecturer, reader) at the Institute of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Albert Szent-Györgyi Medical University and in 1991 he became a full professor at the Institute of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Albert Szent-Györgyi Medical University. Since 1998 he has been the head of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, in the University of Szeged.

Feri is the proud father of three daughters Vanda, Fanni and Márta, and the grand father of his first grandson Ádám. Although Feri, for most of the time, is almost completely dedicated to his science he has a few hobbies which take him into the outdoors when time allows. Especially during his time in Turku he fished a lot and was very proud of his ability to hunt mushrooms and collect berries often together with one of the undersigned (KP). He is excellent company, enjoys good food and wine and sometimes a bit of palinka.

He has been a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 2007. He is widely decorated with different prizes and awards, the most important being: Géza Zemplén prize, 1983; Teacher of the year, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2003; Charles Simonyi Award 2002; Dénes Gábor

Award 2002; Károly Than Award 2005; Victor Bruckner Award 2006; George Hevesy Award 2008 and Khwarismi Award 2009.

He is very active in the administration at the University of Szeged being the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy since 2006. He has many other activities, for example as a member of several editorial boards. He is a member of several scientific societies including the Hungarian Chemical Society; the Hungarian Pharmaceutical Society; the International Heterocyclic Chemistry Society and the American Chemical Society. He has been the president of Csongrád-County group of the Hungarian Chemical Society for several years and is also the president of the Pharmacy Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Heterocyclic Chemistry Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He is also the Head of the Ph.D. School in the Faculty of Pharmacy in Szeged.

Perhaps due to the fact that he is a very inspiring speaker, he has given numerous invited plenary and keynote lectures and short oral communications in international scientific meetings, foreign universities and research institutes. He is widely used as a referee for international journals and is an author of nearly 500 original research articles in international journals, as well as numerous review articles and/or book chapters, 21 patents and numerous conference abstracts.

During the past years Feri has spent 1-6 months on nine extremely fruitful and productive occasions in Prof. Pihlaja's group at the Department of Chemistry, University of Turku. He was a Visiting Professor for 3 months in 1994 at the Department of Chemistry, University of Bonn, Germany and for two months in 1997 at the School of Chemistry, University of St. Andrews, Scotland. His visits to Turku were very successful in terms of both chemistry and social activity. Most of his cooperation goes back to his visits to Turku and in the field where both he and one of the undersigned (KP) enjoyed discoveries of the most important mathematical descriptors of ring-chain tautomerism of 1,3-heterocycles.

In his research Feri is and has been very versatile. He has published papers in collaboration with ca 15 foreign institutions, most prominently with the University of Turku, Finland. As the head of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Chemistry at the University of Szeged he continues and actively widens the research profile he inherited from his doctoral father Professor Gábor Bernáth.

The research activity on heterocyclic chemistry, chemistry of small molecules with biological activity and drug discovery has been ongoing for more than two decades. The following topics represent the principal focus of his research:

- (1) *synthesis and conformational analysis of saturated heterocycles,*
- (2) *preparation and application of natural and unnatural  $\beta$ -amino acids,*
- (3) *enzyme-catalyzed kinetic and dynamic resolutions,*
- (4) *studies on the secondary structures of  $\beta$ -peptide foldamers. The Institute has fast developing projects within enantioselective transformations and combinatorial chemistry.*

The Institute directed by Prof. Fülöp is deeply involved in drug research; numerous compounds prepared in the Institute were found to possess beneficial pharmacological activity. These molecules were investigated and developed in joint projects both with Hungarian and

other Pharmaceutical Companies and are described in several joint patents. Besides practical knowledge, the Institute has experience in the theory of drug development. The Institute's activity comprises the analysis of the structure-property relationships of the potentially bioactive compounds by means of NMR spectroscopy and molecular modeling. Nowadays the Institute possesses all the modern instruments required to aid the synthesis and analytical / spectroscopic characterization of compounds.

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### Selected Publications of Professor Ferenc Fülöp

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