



**In Memory of Prof. Jan Richard (Jim) Stockigt
Endocrinologist, Thyroidologist, and Musician (1938 - 2012)**

Jim Stockigt had been a member of the ETA since 1989. At the end of last year a wave of consternation and sadness ran around the endocrinological world, when it became known that this kind colleague and outstanding scientist had died from pancreatic cancer at the age of 73 years. From his bed he had written to his friends a brave and touching farewell letter.

Jim was born in Hamburg. His father was the leading clarinetist of the Hamburg Philharmonic, and his mother a noted Australian clarinetist and pianist. Thanks to his mother's Australian citizenship they could move to Melbourne shortly after the war. It was then not before he did his internship that he relearned German at classes of the Goethe Institute.

After medical studies and an internship at the University of Melbourne he received his M.D. in 1967. He then became a senior teaching fellow at the new Monash University dept. of medicine headed by the distinguished endocrinologist Brian Hudson. In 1968 Jim Stockigt was awarded a fellowship at the dept. of physiology, University of California, San Francisco. There he was able to establish the first RIA for renin in California, because, courtesy of Kevin Catt (later at the NHI in the US), he had brought from Melbourne in a thermos - unthinkable nowadays - the radioactive tracer and antibody of a RIA for angiotensin. A key training period for him were the clinical studies with Ed Biglieri, a known endocrinologist for hypertension.

After a further scholarship year at St.Mary's Hospital in London, he became in 1973 deputy director with Pincus Taft (doyen of Australia's endocrinology) of the Metabolic Unit at The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne. There, his main interest turned to thyroid disorders, and he established RIA for TSH, T4, and T3. In 1978 he became the director of the Metabolic Unit at The Alfred (altogether 24 coworkers), and an associate professor of medicine at the Monash University.

We Europeans got to know Jim Stockigt in 1980, when he was the organizing director of the VIII Internat. Thyroid Convention in Sidney. As vice-president of the Asia and Oceania Thyroid Association he forged links to the sister bodies in Europe and the US. He was secretary and then president of the Endocrine Society of Australia (1990-1992). He was appointed a full professor of medicine in 1992. The university relinquishing the Metabolic Unit, Jim started in 1995 a private practice at Epworth Hospital, continuing as a senior endocrinologist at The Alfred.

Prof. Stockigt's major contribution in endocrinology: one of the first indirect immuno-assays for renin, one of the first direct RIA for aldosterone, segmental renal vein sampling, familial dysalbuminaemic hyperthyroxinaemia, furosemide as a potent inhibitor of thyroid hormone binding, thyroid hormone changes in critical illness, dilution-dependent binding competitor artefacts in free hormone assays, limitations in free thyroxine methodology. Stockigt's international reputation was mainly due to his rigorous fight against hazardous analogue assays for FT4, which had stayed on the market for commercial reasons.

Jim Stockigt's "other life" is not so well known among endocrinologists: namely his lifelong passion for music. As a noted bassoonist playing with the Melbourne Philharmonic and in chamber orchestras he hesitated during his internship as to whether he should choose a medical career or an orchestral profession. Later, as an expert for the baroque bassoon, Jim regularly played at the well-known concerts for "old" music in Kronach, Germany, and he became a collector and curator of the baroque bassoon repertoire from 1688-1850 with more than 500 pieces (>www.jimstockigtinfo.com<). This collection will be continued by his wife Janice Stockigt (professor for music at the University of Melbourne).

Jim came often to Europe, to the ETA, and regularly to his original homeland Germany. Soon after the German reunification he established a program with Leipzig University, in which more than 30 medical students (from the former GDR) took part in an elective period in his department in Melbourne. Apart from seeing his friends, he mostly came because of his passion for music. He participated in concerts, and would spend days in the music archives in Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, and Bautzen for his collection of obligato baroque bassoon.

The multi-talented Jim Stockigt had a reputation not only in medicine and in the music realm, but he was also a competitive tennis player. Everyone will remember his charming nature. We lost a personality, whose connection of medical achievement, cultural competence, and humorous character is rarely to be found.

Prof. Dr. Klaus Werner Wenzel