

Dedication

This volume is dedicated to Gernot Rabeder on the occasion of his 80th birthday. We, his friends, colleagues and students wish him all the best and hope he enjoys this compilation in his honour.

Gernot Rabeder was born on September 11th 1939 in Linz (Upper Austria) just minutes before his twin brother Gisbert. Both went to the primary school in Bad Ischl where it was safer for children during the Second World War. There his love of and interest in the Alpine area evolved and, therefore, it is no surprise that Gernot decided to join the mountain troops during his military service between 1958 and 1959. The brothers became experts in mountaineering and wrote several books about hiking routes in the Austrian Alps (Totes Gebirge, Dachstein, Niedere Tauern).

In 1959 Gernot Rabeder enrolled in the study of college training for biology and mathematics at the University of Vienna but during his Ph.D. he strictly focused on the field of palaeontology and finished in 1970 with the topic “Die Insectivora und Chiroptera von Hundsheim (Alt-Pleistozän)”.

Six years later his habilitation followed with a detailed description of the complex karstic fissures of Deutsch-Altenburg and its carnivores (Early Pleistocene) supervised by Erich Thenius, an expert in mammalian palaeontology.

Stratigraphic work continued in various loess sites such as Stranzendorf and Krems and lead to a fruitful cooperation between the Department of Pre- and Early History, Department of Anthropology and the Department of Isotopic Research at the University of Vienna.

In 1979 Gernot Rabeder, still enthusiastic about micro-mammals, concentrated on the probably most important mammal in the Austrian Pleistocene, the cave bear. His first excavation started in the Ramesch Knochenhöhle 40 years ago where the remains of this cave bear showed significant differences to other cave bears. Many years of excavation followed in Austria as well as abroad (Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Greece).

The cooperation with Michael Hofreiter accelerated his insights into this fascinating group and genetic analyses of the cave bears changed the systematics completely. To give this new information a stronger platform he, together with Jörg Müller (Chur), initialised the first International Cave Bear Symposium 25 years ago and it has had a meeting every year since with participants from Spain to Russia and from Greece to Sweden.

He focused more on the Pleistocene and included in his studies different aspects of bears such as brown bear evolution or bear teeth as jewellery in Palaeolithic sites. He broadened his research from beavers in France to woolly rhinos from Germany, always looking for palaeoecological as well as palaeogeographical information.

In 1988 Gernot Rabeder became full professor for palaeobiology at the Department of Palaeontology at the University of Vienna. Twice he was named president of the Austrian Palaeontological Society (1988-1990 and 1996-1998), was Head of the Department of Palaeontology from 1995-1999 and Head of the Commission for Quaternary Research at the Austria Academy of Sciences from 1992 till 2014. Gernot Rabeder gained emeritus status in 2007.

An important part of his life was the communication of research in form of exhibitions. He organized, and was the scientific advisor of, several exhibitions in Linz, Grundlsee, Bad Aussee, Salzburg and San Kassian (South Tirol) just to name a few.

He held over 15 different lectures at the university all concerning palaeontology, speleology and evolution. Gernot Rabeder supervised many master students, Ph.D. students and, as the curriculum changed, also bachelor students. He nurtured their interest in caves and fossils, taught them how to excavate and inspired them to publish their thesis, and most importantly, he always supported their scientific career. No wonder most of them are still his friends and colleagues, always returning to take part in fieldwork or conferences. A Festschrift was compiled in 2005 (his 65th birthday) and a note of honour in 2009 (his 70th birthday).

His retirement/rest has nothing to do with rest but as he puts it 'it is more of an unrestment'. Many excavations and publications followed such as Ajdovska Jama and Vazecka cave (Slovenia), Steigelfadbalm near Luzern, Wildkirchli, Wildenmannisloch and Drachenloch (Switzerland), Arzberghöhle, Torsteinhöhlen, Pendling-Bärenhöhle, Gauerblick-Höhle, Leopoldinen-Höhle, Frauenhöhle, Repolusthöhle, Lurgrotte, Bärenfalle (Totes Gebirge), Flatzer Bärenhöhle and the most recent one: the Schwaigerhöhle.

We, his friends, colleagues and students, want to thank him for all he has done for us, for his knowledge, inspiration, insight, patience, help and most of all his humour. We hope to share this for many more years to come!

Doris Nagel, Nadja Kavcik-Graumann, Doris Döppes, Martina Pacher

emer. Univ. Prof. Dr. Gernot Rabeder
Department of Palaeontology
University of Vienna

Curriculum vitae

Born 11. September 1939 in Linz/ Donau (Upper Austria).
Parents: Dkfm. Friedrich and Maria Rabeder, 4 brothers and sisters
1969: Married to Ilse, born Plech
1970: Birth of daughter Sigrid
1981: Birth of daughter Sibylle
four grand-children

Education:

1945 – 1949: Primary school (Volksschule) in Bad Ischl and Linz – Urfahr
1949 – 1950: Elementary school (Hauptschule) in Linz – Urfahr
1950 – 1958: High school (Bundesgymnasium) in Linz, Spittelwiese
1958 – 1959: Military service (mountain troops)
1959 – 1966: Study of college training-degree at the Faculty of Philosophy/University of Vienna
1966: Teachership-degree for biology and mathematics
1966 – 1970: Studying for Doctoral degree
1970: Doctor of Philosophy (Paleontology and Geology). Thesis: “The insectivores and chiropteres from Hundsheim (Early Pleistocene)”

Career:

1966 – 1967: Assistant at the Institute of Paleontology/University of Vienna
1967 – 1988: Assistant professor at the Department of Paleontology/University of Vienna
1976: Habilitation: Thesis “The carnivores from Deutsch Altenburg 2 (Early Pleistocene), with contributions to the systematic of mustelides and canides”. *Venia legendi* in paleozoology
1985: Qualification as senior lecturer (Extraordinarius)
1988: Full professor of paleontology and paleobiology at the Department of Palaeontology (University of Vienna)
1992: Head Commission of Quarternary Research Austrian Academy of Sciences
1995 – 1999: Head of the Department of Palaeontology, University of Vienna
1988 – 1990 and 1996–1998: President of the Austrian Palaeontological Association
2007: Emeritus status

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