

## **In memoriam Prof. Dr. Walter Fürnrohr (1925-2021)**

The International Society for History Didactics announces with deep sadness that its Honorary President Prof. Dr. Walter Fürnrohr passed away on 3 July 2021 at the age of 96. Walter Fürnrohr rendered outstanding merits to our scientific society that will always remember him with gratitude and honour.

Walter Fürnrohr studied history, geography and the German language and literature at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. In 1952, he completed his doctorate at that university with a dissertation on 'Das Patriziat der Freien Reichsstadt Regensburg zur Zeit des Immerwährenden Reichstages' ['The Patriciate of the Free Imperial City of Regensburg at the Time of the Eternal Diet of Regensburg']. After passing both state examinations, he taught at various grammar schools from 1950 to 1963. Since 1964, he has been engaged in academic teacher training in the subject of history didactics. He first taught at the Pädagogische Hochschule in Munich-Pasing, which is now part of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. He was then appointed to the chair of history didactics at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg in 1971, where he devoted himself to intensive research and teaching until his retirement in 1994.

In addition to his research focus on Bavarian history, which thematically also included studies on Nazi forced labourers and displaced persons in Bavaria, Walter Fürnrohr provided very effective impulses for a fundamental modernisation of the study of history and the didactics of history in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1970s. For example, he advocated problem-oriented history didactics and empirical classroom research. Particularly noteworthy is his emphatic demand that German history didactics has to broaden its horizons and to direct its research interest towards international developments in the discipline and also universal history. Walter Fürnrohr was always convinced that international exchange and cooperation are scholarly indispensable, especially for disciplines such as history didactics – even beyond the harsh borders of the then Cold War. He always maintained an intensive network with international colleagues.

In this context, since 1976 Walter Fürnrohr initiated and organized annual international colloquia on history didactics at the Academy for Political Education in Tutzing (near Munich), a place that many ISHD members got to know because the ISHD conferences returned there again and again. At the 1980 meeting, Walter Fürnrohr, together with Piet Fontaine (Netherlands) and Adriano Gallia (Italy), finally founded the International Society for Didactics of History in Tutzing on March 4, and served as its first president for 10 years (1980-1990). At that founding conference

colleagues from Austria, Belgium, Cameroon, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Switzerland were present.

In the meantime, 40 years have passed and the powerful impulses that Walter Fürnröhr set together with his colleagues has become a widespread and successful society, which is internationally recognized as an international representative of academic history didactics and has become a member of the International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS).

In deep gratitude to the Honorary President, today's ISHD members carry on his valuable legacy and deeply respect Walter Fürnröhr's conviction that international exchange in history didactics is necessary both for scholarly innovation and excellence as well as for global peace, tolerance, and historical understanding in the present and the future.

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Susanne Popp