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Otto H. WALLISER (03.03.1928 – 30.12.2010)

Otto Heinrich Walliser was born in Krettenbach near Crailsheim in Southern Germany. He studied Geology and Paleontology at Tuebingen University under the head of Prof. Otto H. Schindewolf. The main interest at this time was the stratigraphy and paleontology of Jurassic ammonoids in Southern Germany.

In 1954 he graduated from Tuebingen University and came to the University of Marburg as assistant of Prof. Carl Walter Kockel. Besides research on Devonian goniatites he began the study of Silurian and Devonian conodonts of Germany and adjacent areas, especially of the Carnical Alps and Bohemia. His famous publication 'Conodonten des Silurs' did not only focus on their systematics, correlation purpose and detailed biostratigraphy. For the first time he reconstructed the conodont apparatuses theoretically by means of statistical methods.

In 1965 he became Professor of Historical Geology and Paleontology of Goettingen University and up to his retirement in 1993 he stimulated many theses, mostly on biostratigraphy, facies and fauna of the Silurian to Lower Carboniferous of Europe and Morocco.

Otto was very interested in biostratigraphy and bio-events and therefore he initiated and coordinated the ICGP 216 'Global Biological Events in Earth History', which was a very successful international program. The results were published in two volumes (edited by KAUFFMANN & WALLISER, 1990 and WALLISER, 1996).

For many years he stimulated the discussions on stratigraphic boundaries and international correlations of Silurian and Devonian sequences. His heart problems and the unexpected death abruptly finished the detailed studies on conodonts at the Eifelian/Givetian boundary, which hopefully will be published by P. Bultynck.

Helga Groos-Uffendorde (Göttingen University)



IGCP 216 "Global Biological Events in Earth History" (1st Meeting in Göttingen, 1986): Tatyana Koren, Otto Walliser and Art Boucot. (Photo H. Groos-Uffendorde)