

Hubert Willeitner

Formative Years and Career

Hubert was born in [Bodenmais](#), Germany, a small village in Bavaria on May 12, 1932. At age 19 Hubert graduated for university entrance at a school in [Landau/Pfalz](#) and then studied “Holzwirtschaft” (Timber industry) at the University of Hamburg, graduating in 1956 with the “Diplom-Holzwirt”. He completed his PhD at the University of Hamburg in 1964 with the thesis “Untersuchungen über das Verhalten von Holzspanplatten beim Befall durch einige Basidiomyceten” (Investigations on the behaviour of chip boards during infestation by some basidiomycetes), and remained in Hamburg as a scientific staff member at the Federal Research Centre for Forestry and Wood Products; Institute of Wood Biology and Wood Protection; in the 90th Head of the Institute of Wood Biology and Wood Protection, until retiring at the end of 1995.



In addition, Hubert was a member of the German delegation at the European standardisation committee CEN/TC 38 “Durability of wood and wood products” from 1968 to 2004, and served as its leader for 26 years. He was: Chairman of the National standardisation working group DIN 68800-3 “Preventive wood preservation” from 1972 till 2006. And then served as Chairman of the working group responsible for the revision of the National standard DIN 68800-1 “Wood preservation Part 1: General” published in 2011. Due to this convenorship he was also involved in the revision DIN 68800-2 “Wood preservation. Part 2: Preventive constructional measures in buildings”, 68800-3 “Wood preservation Part 3: Preventive protection of wood with wood preservatives” and 68800-4 “Wood preservation. Part 4: Curative treatment of wood destroying fungi and insects and refurbishment”. These three parts were published in 2012.



As a token of gratitude and recognition in National as well as European standardisation, Hubert W was awarded the “Beuth Denkmünze” (Beuth commemorative coin) in 2011.

Hubert also was an editor and/or author of a number of books, including:

Holz – Außenverwendung im Hochbau (*Wood – Outdoor use in building constructions*)
H Willeitner and E Schwab. 1981.

Wood Protection in Tropical Countries. A manual on the know-how. Technical Cooperation – Federal Republic of Germany. H Willeitner and W Liese. 1992.

2003: Holzlexikon. (*Wood encyclopedia*), 4th Edition, NIKOL Verlag, 2003.



IRG

Hubert was for many years a very important part of the IRG. He played up valuable role within the IRG during many years prior to his serving as IRG President during the period 1989 to 1992. Hubert continued to attend IRG meetings throughout the time following his presidency, and provided valuable insights through the continuing generational changes that occurred over his many years of service to the IRG.



An Appreciation of Hubert - by Angelika Voss

Hubert took a genuine interest in his staff and his students – not only in advancing your career but also in you as a person. He was a good listener, open to new ideas and original thoughts, practicing teambuilding and coaching long before it was advertised in management guidelines. I have still fond memories of the annual winter hiking tours of the working group where a traditional German dish was the reward for freezing noses or ploughing through the mud. Those team events were always fun.



Hubert had the rare ability to laugh about himself. It was a custom that the working group would prepare a play where everyday life at the institute would be characterized (and a lot of legs were pulled). In addition a competition between the PhD student and the professor was setup, which of course the student always won. Hubert always played along with enthusiasm and had a lot of fun.



I can still see Hubert how I first met him: hunched above his desk in deep thoughts, reading glasses at hand, buried in huge piles of paper, from which he would draw a required document within seconds. His knowledge about wood and wood protection was



encyclopedic. But in the many years I worked with Hubert I learned to admire even more the person he was: **generous, humorous and kind.**

And....some poignant thoughts from Gervais Sawyer

I remember the very first IRG that I attended in Harrogate, when then-IRG President Hubert told a couple of jokes that were based on the local Yorkshire dialect. It was brilliant.

Also, memorably, at that same meeting in 1992 Hubert asked all those who had been tutored by John Levy for their PhDs to stand up. Half the room stood up.

Think of how much our lives has been enriched by knowing Hubert. There is a bit of him in our makeup which we will pass on to everybody else.