

## IN MEMORIAM

### **Losanka Popova**

*Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*

On July 24th 2006 the community of Bulgarian plant physiologists lost one of the leading personalities and many of us lost a good colleague and friend, Prof. Martin Gibbs from the USA.

Professor Martin Gibbs was a very good friend of Bulgarian science and particularly of Bulgarian plant physiologists. He has visited Bulgaria two times as a guest of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Acad. Metodi Popov Institute of Plant Physiology.

In 1987, he participated in The International Symposium on Mineral Nutrition and Photosynthesis as an invited lecturer and presented data concerning the newly discovered physiological process of chloroplast respiration.

Prof. Gibbs usually manifested great concern about young scientists. He used to participate in discussions on their scientific interests and results giving valuable advice, which stimulated their scientific career development. When possible he invited some of them to take part in his workshops held in Brandeis University.

He was always helping without stint in organizing international meetings and conferences for young scientists. His name present in the list of The Organizing Committees usually attracted many distinguished scientists in the field of photosynthesis.

Prof. Gibbs helped the community of Bulgarian plant physiologists to establish fruitful and long-lasting collaboration with Prof. Clanton Black, Prof. William Outlow and Prof. Peter Hommann in whose laboratories many Bulgarian researches had been invited to work and study.

Prof. Gibbs's contribution to quality improvement of our publishing activity is also highly appreciated. During financially hard times for Bulgarian science when it was impossible for us to publish our otherwise good results in such a prominent journal as "Plant Physiology", he always found a way to assist and help us.

The Institute of Plant Physiology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and The Union of Bulgarian Scientists has awarded a medal to Prof. Gibbs for his special merit in the field of Plant Physiology.

I have always felt proud with the support which I received from Prof. Gibbs. For me he has always been a criterion for wisdom and knowledge with which I have

always verified my scientific gropings. From our correspondence which lasted for many years I learned to be strict, to aim high but also to work dedicatedly and with a heart.

When I informed him that I start lecturing on photosynthesis in Plant Physiology Department of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, he asked his students to send me the latest books on the topic issued in the USA right away. He used to advise me to cut across the framework of textbooks and to make students acquainted with the latest scientific achievements. His view which I readily apprehended was that in this way the future Bulgarian researchers will be well prepared to face the challenges of modern plant physiology. When some of my students went to work abroad, he used to share that for science there are no boundaries and our best ambassadors all over the world will be Bulgarian scientists.

I saw him for the last time in June 2005 at his place. I was impressed by his clear memories of his colleagues and friends in Bulgaria. We had a lively conversation about the future of plant physiology.

I will miss Prof. Gibbs very much! I’ll miss his wisdom and kindness, his great love of science. I will miss his gentle smile and aromatic pipe.

I was extremely lucky to cross scientific paths with Prof. Gibbs.

Professor Gibbs, I thank you for your friendship!