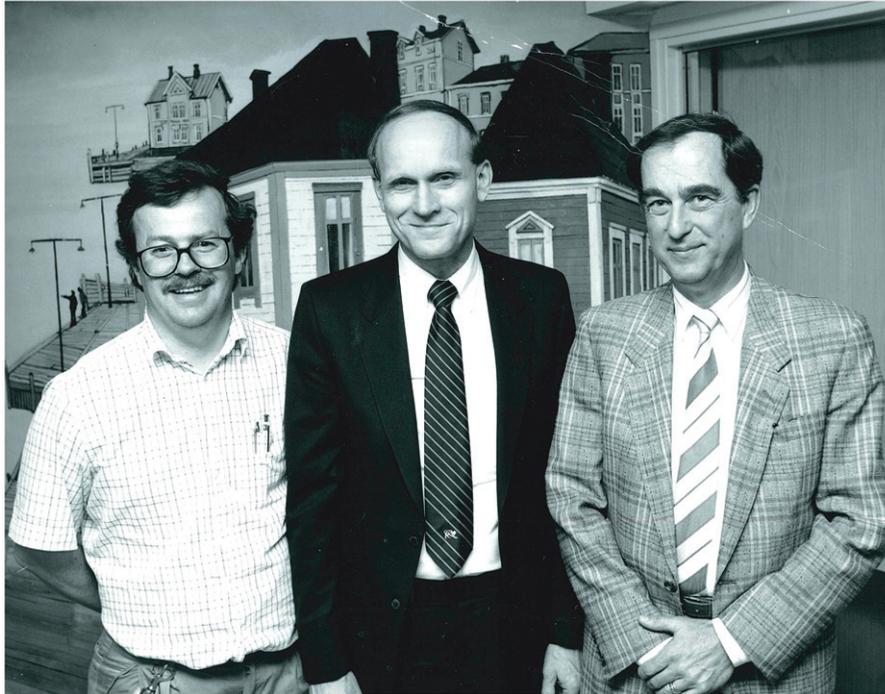


Remembering Claes Hellerström and those around him

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1. L-R: Arne Andersson, Dave Sutherland and Claes Hellerström Dave Sutherland, an outstanding pioneer in islet transplantation research, before the 1990 Kroc lecture, with Arne Andersson and Claes Hellerström.

I can still remember that early morning in May. I had picked up Susan Bonner-Weir, who had come to Uppsala to give the Kroc lecture of the year. We went to the neuropsychiatric ward at Ulleråker Hospital, where Claes Hellerström had spent the last couple of weeks after his devastating stroke four months earlier. I had learnt to interpret his body language in the sense that it was easy to understand when he liked what he heard or saw. There was no doubt that he very much enjoyed seeing Susan when sitting in his wheelchair in the garden under some apple trees in blossom. That chat was the last I had with Claes. A week later he passed away.

On approaching the tenth anniversary of this sad event, we decided to commemorate him with a special issue of *Upsala Journal of Medical Sciences*. At the time of his death Claes was one of the two editors of the journal. Gunnar Ronquist was the other. The two of them had struggled with the revival of the journal (1) and had introduced electronic publishing. When I was asked by Gunnar Ronquist whether I

would like to take over after Claes it was a point of honour for me to do so, keeping in mind the long tradition and history of the journal (2,3). At that time I had been following in his footsteps for some 40 years. So why not carry on? In particular I had assisted Claes as Associate Editor of *Diabetologia* for five years in the late 1980s. I can still remember how he spent hours formulating letters to authors—especially the refusals—that started with Claes praising the quality of the research reported (almost Nobel prize class) and ending with a very sad message that there was at present no space for the submitted article in the journal.

We—and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Leif Jansson and Nils Welsh for a positive and fruitful collaboration—are very glad to be able to present a commemorative issue, filled with interesting observations and remarks on Claes's long-term relationship with pancreatic islet research. Many more could have been included, but contributions from former students (Kjell Asplund, Michael Welsh, Leif Jansson, Decio Eizirik, and Ulf Eriksson), hosts for visits

abroad (the Simon Howell group), a thesis respondent (Timo Otonkoski), collaborators (Jens Høiriis-Nielsen), and old friends (Erik Gylfe, Partik Rorsman, and the Bonner-Weir family) have been most welcome and appreciated. These articles will undoubtedly enhance the reputation of our journal so that it can remain a major distributor of reports in diabetes research (4). By courtesy of our local Kroc endowment, a direct result of the personal friendship between Claes and the Kroc brothers, free copies are available from our department (nils.welsh@mcb.uu.se) on request. This year's Kroc lecture will be given by Mark A. Atkinson on 18 May. Thirty years have passed since Paul Lacy came to give the first lecture.

Six years later Dave Sutherland (see picture above) was given this honour. Enjoy your reading.

References

1. Andersson A, Ronquist G, Westermark B. On the revival of an old and venerable journal. *Ups J Med Sci.* 2000;105:3–4.
2. Lindberg BS. Proceedings of the Upsala Medical Society: How it all started 150 years ago. *Ups J Med Sci.* 2015;120:65–71.
3. Karlsson T. Progress and milestones in scientific communication – a 150 years perspective. *Ups J Med Sci.* 2015;120:63–4.
4. Andersson A, Lau Börjesson J. Operating in an era of impact factor mania. *Ups J Med Sci.* 2015;120:124–31.