

# FOLIA MENDELIANA



Edited by Jiří Sekerák ■

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MORAVSKÉ ZEMSKÉ  
MUZEUM BRNO 2020

## THE INTERNATIONAL MENDEL DAY 2020 IN AUSTRIA

After London in 2019, Vienna/Austria has been hosting the 2020 edition of the International Mendel Day which was celebrated on March 6, 2020 in the ceremony hall of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (Universität für Bodenkultur / BOKU). Gregor Mendel had a multitude of connections with the city of Vienna throughout his scientific and ecclesiastical careers. Reciprocally, Vienna is honoring Mendel in such ways as naming the university street “Gregor Mendel Strasse”. And the local Mendel society, Gregor-Mendel-Gesellschaft-Wien has been the organizer of the 2020 meeting, which brought inspiration and diversity in both arts and science to the participants of the event.

Hermann Bürstmayr (president, Gregor Mendel Society of Vienna) and Eva Matalova (Mendelianum Brno) opened the meeting with their welcome addresses. Daniel Fairbanks (Utah Valley University, Orem, UT) had created an expressive Gregor Mendel portrait bust in bronze, which was unveiled and presented to the Mendel society of Vienna



Fig. 1. Prof. Hermann Bürstmayr (President, Gregor-Mendel-Gesellschaft-Wien) and Prof. Eva Matalová (Mendelianum Brno) opening the International Mendel Day 2020.



Fig. 2. International Mendel Day 2020 in the ceremony hall of Universität für Bodenkultur Wien, Austria.



Fig. 3. Prof. Donna Fairbanks (performing) and Prof. Daniel Fairbanks (both: Utah Valley University, Orem, UT) during the unveiling of Daniel Fairbank's Gregor Mendel portrait bust.



Fig. 4. Donna and Daniel Fairbanks presenting the Gregor Mendel portrait bust.



Fig. 5. Dr. Peter van Dijk (Keygene, Wageningen) lecturing about the influence of plant breeding on Gregor Mendel.



Fig. 6. Dr. Jiří Mitáček (Director General, Moravian Museum, Brno) and Dr. Jiří Sekerák (Director, Mendelianum, Brno) presenting the Gregor Mendel Memorial Medal 2020 to Prof. Johann Sölkner (BOKU, Vienna).  
Photo credit: All photos by Lorenz Vollmann.

as a marvellous donation. The unveiling was perfectly framed by Donna Fairbanks (Utah Valley University, Orem, UT) performing amazing pieces of violin music by Jakob Dont and Fritz Kreisler.

In the scientific session, Daniel Fairbanks showed new evidence on the influence of Charles Darwin on the writing and thinking of Gregor Mendel. This influence becomes visible both in the final paragraphs of Mendel's 1866 paper as well as in personal annotations in Mendel's copy of the German edition of Darwin's "Origin of Species". Peter van Dijk (Keygene, Wageningen) presented a different approach in explaining Mendel's motivation into science. He convincingly illustrated Gregor Mendel's starting point as a plant breeder and how he was transformed into a scientist trying to explain the segregation of traits in deliberately planned experiments. After a short report by Toshiyuki Nagata (Japan Mendel Society, University of Tokyo and Hosei University) on the fate of Mendel's grapevine in Tokyo and its re-establishment in Brno, Jiří Sekerák (Director, Mendelianum, Brno) introduced the audience to Brno following the footsteps of Mendel.

Finally, Jiří Mitáček (Director General, Moravian Museum, Brno) presented the Gregor Mendel Memorial Medal 2020 to Johann Sölkner (Professor of Animal Genetics, BOKU, Vienna) for his constantly promoting of Mendelism. Johann Sölkner will deliver his Mendel Memorial Medal award lecture on Mendelian traits in animal genetics later this year.

*Johann Vollmann, Vienna*

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