

FAREWELL TO A VISIONARY

Dr. Wolfgang Stempfll retires

The name Dr. Wolfgang Stempfll belongs to one of the great pioneers and visionaries in the brewing industry. Google this name and you get over 15,000 hits! Stempfll has made Doemens Academy a household word nationally and internationally in the brewing, beverage and food industries and will be retiring at the end of August. A 30-year era at Doemens comes to an end: That's how long Dr. Wolfgang Stempfll has been at Doemens, 16 of them as its successful Managing Director. In an interview with BREWING AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY INTERNATIONAL, we look back at Dr. Stempfll, the person with his unmistakable charisma.

BREWING AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY INTERNATIONAL:

You have been Managing Director at Doemens since 2001. What are the most important highlights of your 16-year term?

Dr. Wolfgang Stempfll: There is no short answer to your question because there were many memorable highlights at Doemens during the past 16 years. Broad acceptance of our professional development programs by the entire beverage and food-processing industry, the success of our international courses, the beer sommelier "boom" and the many ways in which the public perception of beer has changed for the better all bring me great joy.

BBII: *How would you sum up your 30 years at Doemens?*

Dr. Stempfll: When I started out as Doemens' head lab technician 30 years ago, the service and support laboratory was just being put together. I quickly realized that my assignment at Doemens would be more than just another "job." The opportunity to implement everything I believed in made me very happy. Knowing one's ideas are taken seriously makes it easy to be enthusiastic about the work involved. If you're a people person and are able to help others build a strong foundation for their own professional careers, you can look back with satisfaction on your 20 years as head teacher.

BBII: *How would you describe yourself as a person?*

Dr. Stempfll: Most of all, I'm persistent, especially when I believe in something. There were some project ideas that did not immediately garner the appreciation of others in the industry to the extent I would have liked, but over time these ideas were eventually implemented. Sometimes you just need to be a bit stubborn. It also helps to have a highly competent staff who also firmly believe in an idea and are willing to fight for it.

BBII: *You must be quite pleased to have guided Doemens to becoming one of the leading institutions in the national and international brewing and beverage industry!*

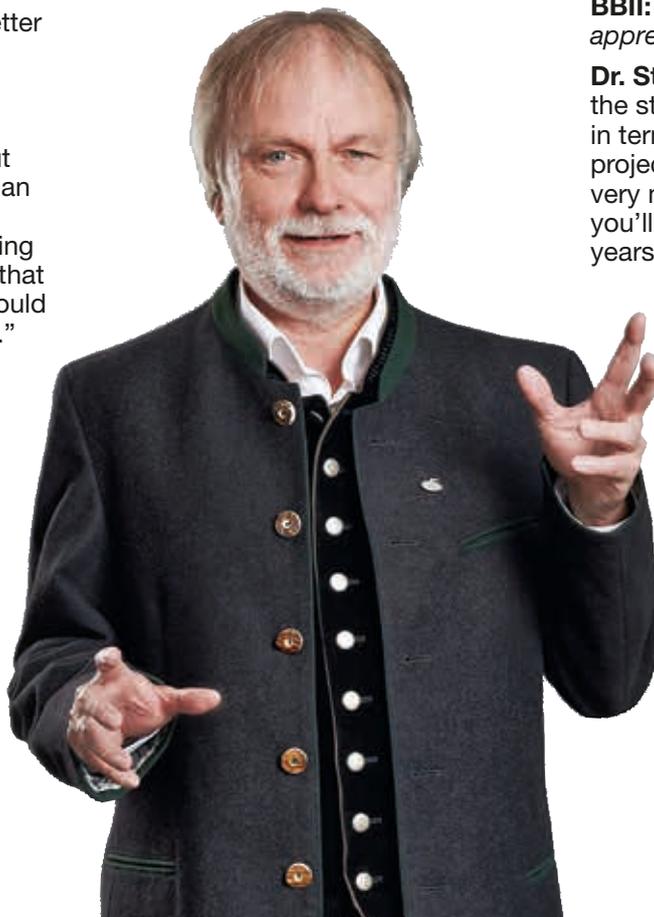
Dr. Stempfll: Indeed I am! We did have some difficult times along the way and had to fight hard for the survival of the academy. When we had finally overcome these obstacles, everything was much easier and success came almost by itself. I am deliberately speaking in the plural, because this can only be done with excellent staff members who bring above-average commitment.

BBII: *What did your staff most appreciate about you?*

Dr. Stempfll: I always tried to give the staff the same "freedoms" in terms of implementing ideas and projects which I myself appreciated very much. Whether they agree, you'll have to ask them. Over the years I have felt we were always a smoothly functioning team, though my own role has merely been that of "primus inter pares."

BBII: *How would you describe Doemens as an institution?*

Dr. Stempfll: Doemens, the institution, is unique. Aligning any training program with the needs of an industry is a constant challenge. Our founder established



Dr. Stempfll, the visionary

Doemens with this in mind, emphasizing its commitment to practical applications in the real world. Doemens, on the one hand, is a training center for young people. On the other hand, it also has a broader commitment as consultant to the beer, beverage and food sector and their suppliers. This is why we are always glad to bring the right people together by matching our graduates with companies where they'll be most appreciated.

BBII: *How would you describe the "Doemens" brand? How important is Doemens to the brewing, beverage and food sector?*

Dr. Stempfl: As I mentioned earlier, Doemens has had and continues to maintain a strong reputation in the industry. As a result, all our education centers and training programs are fully booked, and we are under contract to many companies and organizations which agree that our services are valuable. If you're looking for a slogan to describe Doemens: Open minded, highly competent, internationally recognized yet likable.

” *I'm persistent, especially when I believe in something.*

BBII: *You'll be retiring at the end of August. Will you retain any duties at Doemens?*

Dr. Stempfl: I will continue to be available to Doemens as needed for various projects, especially as regards the "Savour Academy," where Doemens has a bright future in international markets. In addition, I will make myself available to other companies in the industry, as long as their needs for my services do not compete with Doe-



Dr. Stempfl, the epicurean

mens and as far as my (less busy) schedule allows.

BBII: *You are a trained food chemist – how does this background connect with your love for beer and the founding of the so-called Savour Academy, which is already quite successful?*

Dr. Stempfl: Before Doemens, during my time in taste research, I had already learned how pleasing it can be to use all of one's senses. My love for beer grew at Doemens. As a man who appreciates both the technical and consumer experience aspects of taste, it made sense to share my acquired knowledge in this field with others, and so the Savour Academy was born.

BBII: *The Savour Academy is a project very close to your heart. Will you continue to work with the team, now lead by Executive Director Dr. Michael Zepf, and do you plan to continue as the "engine" that continues to establish and develop this line of business?*

Dr. Stempfl: Dr. Michael Zepf is, as you mention, the Executive Director. It is at his discretion as to what extent he keeps me busy on this project. I happen to think we're a great team and we'll hopefully continue to develop an idea or two in the "Savour Academy" together.

” *Doemens is 'open minded, highly competent, internationally recognized yet likable.'*

BBII: *What is your take on some possible directions the Savour Academy might take in the future?*

Dr. Stempfl: For Doemens, the future is bright. Dr. Michael Zepf will accomplish great things for this institution and guiding the Savour Academy toward becoming a global player is most certainly part of the plan. Now he has the human resources necessary to succeed in these endeavors. Dr. Werner



Dr. Stempffl as spiritual father of the beer sommelier movement

Gloßner, in his new role as Managing Director, immediately recognized the potential inherent in these developments. There is still a lot of room for further growth in the development of the “Savour Academy”.

BBII: Doemens has grown up and become a healthy business under your guidance, and now it's time to pass the torch. What advice do you have for your successor, Dr. Werner Gloßner?

Dr. Stempffl: Dr. Werner Gloßner will need to put Doemens on even more solid footing. He has already recognized the need to bring more structure to various processes and areas of shared responsibility. I can take my leave in good conscience,

partly because I know he will lead Doemens to even greater heights. Of course, I wish him and all the staff the best for the future.

BBII: What is your take on the future of the brewing sector? How will the national and international brewing industry adjust as time goes by?

Dr. Stempffl: The brewing industry is undergoing radical changes both nationally and internationally. Industry giants will increasingly dominate the market, but opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises, with the help of beers with character that capture the attention of today's consumer, are also appearing on the horizon. Regionality, the art of brewing

and emotional appeal will become increasingly important in this business. In the long run, it doesn't matter whether one is positioned as a “Craft Brewer” or a traditional company retaining its own character; as long as the consumer remains loyal. Unlike ten years ago, I now see an exciting future in the beer industry – compelling and positive in many ways.

BBII: How is Doemens prepared to meet such a future?

Dr. Stempffl: These positive developments in the industry will also further stimulate Doemens, automatically generating new consulting opportunities as well as other projects. For Doemens, the field is ready for “planting.” Doemens will certainly take full advantage of upcoming opportunities, I am convinced of that!

“ I can take my leave from Doemens in good conscience.”

BBII: You have been working closely with the Doemens Board on plans for a new construction project. In your opinion, how is that coming along?

Dr. Stempffl: I was very relieved when we were able to secure our new home in Gräfelting with the purchase of an adequate property on Lohenstraße. There is a lot of work ahead to actually build this new home. We will need the assistance of the Bavarian state and support from the entire industry in order to see this 20 million euros project through to completion. These tasks are also a lot of fun because you can shape the future with your own achievements. The industry, by the way, will be very pleased to see Doemens grow into its new home.

BBII: Let's peek into the crystal ball. Doemens, 2030: a thriving national and international company? And a healthy and happy Dr. Wolfgang Stempffl, still active in the enterprises he helped create?

Dr. Stempffl: What a pleasant thought! I would love it if your crystal ball was right.

BBII: Dr. Stempffl, sir, thank you very much for this interview and all the best in what sounds like a very active retirement! (mon) □



Dr. Stempffl, the great communicator