

“Paper is my life!” – Hans Müller, a member of the Corporate Board of Management, has retired

In April, a formal ceremony was held in honour of Hans Müller on the occasion of his retirement. He was a member of the Corporate Board of Management of Voith AG for eleven years and Chairman of the Executive Board of Voith Paper and Voith Fabrics. Over 200 guests were present at the event. About a third of them were customers from the paper industry, who had travelled from every corner of the world, from India to North America, to honour and thank “Mr Paper”.

Hans Müller has worked in and influenced the paper industry for over 40 years. With him, the company has lost an experienced specialist and expert in this sector. Paper played a central role in Hans Müller’s professional life. *“Paper cast its spell on me in my early childhood. I was born right next door to a paper mill, my father worked there and sometimes, at the weekend, he would secretly take me with him into the mill”,* recounts Hans Müller. *“Ever since then paper has been my passion, and I have never escaped from its spell.”*

Hans Müller was born in Balsthal, Switzerland, on 6th January 1942. In 1966 he completed his studies in paper technology at the Fachhochschule in Munich as a Diplom-Ingenieur (Masters degree in engineering). During the years that followed, Hans Müller worked as a development engineer at Consolidated Bathurst Ltd in Canada. His next position was production manager of Balsthal’s Niederbipp Paper Mill, Switzerland. In 1971 Hans Müller moved to Sulzer Escher Wyss in Ravensburg, where he worked as a start-up and project engineer. In 1975, Hans Müller

was appointed head of sales in the Paper and Process Technology Division of Sulzer Canada in Montreal. From 1980 to 1992 he first acted as Senior Vice President of Sales and Engineering and later as President at Escher Wyss in Middletown/Ohio, USA. In 1992 Hans Müller returned to Sulzer Escher Wyss in Ravensburg as a member of the Management Board and product manager for paper technology. In 1993 he was elected President of the Management Board. In the course of the joint venture in the paper technology sector together with what





Fig. 1: View of the banquet hall at the "Konzerthaus" in Heidenheim.

Fig. 2: Hans Müller expresses his heartfelt thanks.

was, at that time, J.M. Voith GmbH, Hans Müller became President and CEO of the joint venture in October 1994 with the formation of Voith Sulzer Papiertechnik GmbH. Since 1995 Hans Müller was a member of the Corporate Board of Management of today's Voith AG and was responsible for the Group divisions Voith Paper and, since July 2000, also Voith Fabrics.

During the past decade, Hans Müller has left an indelible mark on Voith Paper and played a decisive role in structuring it. The successful merger of the two companies, Sulzer Escher Wyss and Voith, in the field of paper technology, which was carried out under the presidency of Hans Müller, bears his signature. In 1999, when Voith acquired the paper machine clothing business division of the British company Scapa, and thereby significantly expanded its product range of paper machine clothing, Hans Müller took up yet

another challenge. In addition to his previous responsibilities, he also assumed presidency of the newly formed Group division, Voith Fabrics. Further acquisitions, like Jagenberg and Finckh, followed. Hans Müller's strategic goal was always to be able to offer the customer the complete paper production process from a single source.

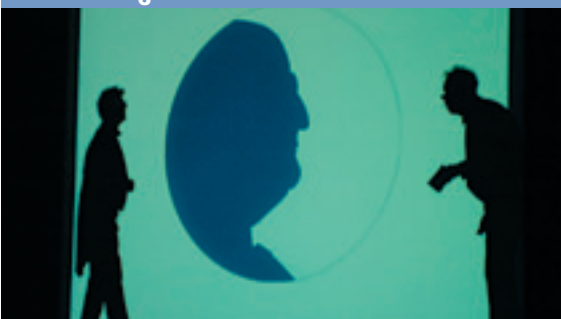
One year ago, Hans Müller launched a final, future-oriented milestone on the company's way to becoming a process supplier, together with his colleague on the board, Dr. Hans-Peter Sollinger: the Paper Technology Center PTC, a unique research and development centre worldwide for which Voith in Heidenheim has invested over EUR 50 million. With this, a foundation stone has been laid for a successful future at Voith Paper.

"I look back on the eleven years at Voith with a feeling of satisfaction. During these



years we have achieved a great deal as a team. Voith, as a family-owned company, cultivates its own culture, which I had the honour of experiencing over the past years and consider to be extremely pleasant. For the future I wish that Voith will continue to remain independent as a family-owned business and that our customers from the paper industry may profit from the innovations that the PTC will produce. I am convinced that at Voith the interests of the customer will be at the forefront of everything that the company does", were the words of Hans Müller.

6



7



Fig. 3: Setting the mood in music for Switzerland, Mr Müller's homeland.

Fig. 4: Dr Rogowski thanks Marianne Müller with a bouquet of flowers.

Fig. 5: Dr Michael Rogowski, Hans Müller, Angela Voith and Dr Hermut Kormann enjoy a walkabout.

Fig. 6: A shadow play recalls Hans Müller's life.

Fig. 7: Going-away present from the Corporate Board of Management of Voith AG: Marianne and Hans Müller immediately take a seat in the cocktail armchairs made of paper.



Extracts from the welcoming speech given by Dr Hermut Kormann, President and CEO of the Corporate Board of Management of Voith AG

“Thank you very much for accepting our invitation to the headquarters of our company in the beautiful Swabian Alps.”

“Don’t get this wrong: the alp horns that have welcomed you here today are certainly not typical instruments of the Eastern Swabian Alps. The welcome was

a first homage, setting the mood for wonderful Switzerland, the homeland of the Voithian to whom we are today saying ‘Thank you’ and ‘Goodbye: Hans Müller, our ‘Mr. Paper’, who, after having worked for more than 40 years in the paper industry, goes into well-earned retirement.”

“When I look around me, I see many well-known and familiar faces from near and far. That fills me with pride. It is a great honour for our company to play host to so many customers and long-

standing business partners. I would almost tend to say: The entire ‘Who is Who’ of the paper sector is here with us today.”

“I am particularly pleased to also be able to welcome a member of the Hanns Voith family here today. It is a sign of the closeness of our shareholders to their company that they do not wish to miss occasions like the one today to be present personally and to thank the persons who have done so much for the Voith company.”



Excerpts from the laudatory speech by Dr Michael Rogowski, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Voith AG and President of the Shareholders' Committee of Voith

“It is a great honour and pleasure for me to give an official speech here for Mr Müller.”

“It is nice to see so many companions here today, many of whom accompanied Mr Müller over decades through his professional life. When I look through the hall, I see so many faces from old Sulzer-

Escher-Wyss times and, of course, many Voithians. And it particularly pleases me that so many of our company’s customers have come here. The presence of so many passionate papermakers is the best evidence of the reputation that our ‘Mr Paper’ has gained in the sector and the standing he enjoys with you all.”

“‘Paper is my life’ – it was with these words that Hans Müller once characterised himself and his relationship to his work. They have long become a standard quotation at Voith.

‘Paper is my life’ – there could not be a better heading for over sixty years of life with paper – more than forty of which spent working in the paper industry.”

“Looking back I can now say: It was a lucky stroke for Voith when Hans Müller joined us in 1994. He knew the sector like the back of his hand far more than

anyone else. He was an expert and entrepreneur. His name stood for reliability and trust.”

“I am quite sure: Much of what Hans Müller has done for Voith will have a lasting effect and he will be given an honourable place in the chronicle of our company.”

“Dear Mr Müller, you were and are a first-class colleague! We all know that the Voith Company would not be where it is today without your service and your commitment. It only remains for me to say a big and heartfelt ‘thank you’ for everything that you have done for Voith. For your commitment, your know-how, and the experience that you have made available in your service to our company.

We wish you and your family all the best, happiness, good health and satisfaction for the years ahead.”

Hans Müller – an institution in the paper industry, and a pillar of strength

Dr Marietta Jass-Teichmann, Executive Managing Partner of the Adolf Jass Paper Mill in Fulda, Hessen, Germany gave a moving thank-you speech – from the customer’s point of view – for Hans Müller’s farewell. A few excerpts follow.

*“Dear guests,
That Voith can today supply a paper mill with all the machinery, equipment and auxiliary materials it needs is the ‘strategic’ face of Hans Müller. How have we as customers, dear Mrs Müller, got to know your husband personally?*

It is not just PM 1 in Schwarza, that went on stream on 12th February this year, that brought us together with Hans Müller. Our first encounter was at the Jass Company in Fulda in 1993, shortly after you, Mr Müller, had taken up chairmanship of the Management Board of Sulzer Escher Wyss GmbH in Ravensburg.

From the point of view of a paper machine manufacturer this was a period that had little to offer at Jass. The last major investment, the fundamental renewal and rebuild of PM 4 together with Sulzer Escher Wyss, was completed successfully in 1991. The time was not yet ripe for another major investment. Nevertheless, you took a whole day of time for us, and we appreciated it very much. I remember with pleasure how we went together with you for a meal after the tour of the mill, with your family and the members of the management.

In 1997, you met our request to implement the fundamental renewal and expansion of PM 3 in 1998, in the old

tradition again under the overall control of Ravensburg.

Dear guests, how does a typical meeting with Hans Müller go? First it should be remembered: We have spoken and you, Mr Müller, have listened. For you are a good listener. A man of few words. You follow the teachings of Laozi: ‘True rulers do not set great store by words.’ Instead, you take note on a sheet of paper of all of the problems that your customers have in order to persistently ensure that one day each item can be crossed off. To achieve this you are prepared to go deeply into detail. In the end you personally check with the customer to see whether the crossing-off, to show that the matter has been settled, is justified.

And another thing has also been noticed by several of your customers. Sparks may fly on a high-speed paper machine, but in a meeting in the presence of Hans Müller there is no dispute. Problems are solved objectively.

And so Hans Müller is not only an institution in the paper industry, but also a pillar of strength. A man who, through sincerity and reliability, can convince others. One man – one word. In important questions you have stood beside us even at weekends and on holiday. This is what I personally very much appreciate about you.



**Dr Marietta Jass-Teichmann,
Papierfabrik Adolf Jass,
Schwarza, Germany**

Today we say – with a little nostalgia – a very hearty thank you. Thank you for what you have achieved for us, for the paper industry. Thank you for your excellent and fruitful cooperation. I know that you are looking forward to the new chapter in your life. We wish you, your wife and your family all the very best for the coming years, good health and God’s blessing. Perhaps now, back home in beautiful Switzerland, you will regain ‘das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust’ (hiking is the miller’s delight). And should you ever have a yearning for the pleasant odour of warm paper, you will always be most welcome to visit us in Fulda and Schwarza!”