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Irmgard Maria Gylstorff

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About the cover

Prof. Dr. Vet. Med. Irmgard Maria Gylstorff 1912–1990. Born in Munich, Germany, Irmgard Gylstorff obtained her veterinary degree in 1935 from Veterinary Faculty of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU) as one of the three female students in a class of 400 male students. Following her graduation, she first worked as a veterinarian in the Munich slaughterhouse until she received her final degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 1936. She became the first female veterinarian to pass the examination for the State Veterinary Service in 1939. In 1952, she successfully submitted a Doctor Habilitatus thesis at the Department of Pathology of LMU.

She started her scientific career at the Institute for Pathology of LMU as a scientific coworker. In 1939 she was appointed acting head and director of the Institute for Pathology. After World War II she worked as a scientific assistant at the Institute for Pathology until 1952. From 1945 until 1960 she was also the head of the “Kleintiergesundheitsdienst” of the Bavarian Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, where she developed a poultry health service. Dr. Gylstorff was appointed a “Privatdozentin” in 1952 and became an Associate Professor in 1958. In 1960 she moved to the Hannover School of Veterinary Medicine, where she became the chair for Poultry Diseases and Animal Hygiene and the first female Professor in Veterinary Medicine in West Germany. In 1965 she returned to the Veterinary Faculty at the LMU where she was appointed as Professor and Chair of the new institute of poultry diseases, ornamental and zoo birds until her retirement in 1981. Dr. Gylstorff served as Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at LMU from 1969–1970 and Associate Dean until 1971. From 1973–1977 she was the first woman to serve as the President of the World Veterinary Poultry Association (WVPA).

Professor Gylstorff’s career focused on the diagnosis and control of avian diseases. She has published over 120 scientific papers, books and book chapters on diseases of birds. She also trained/mentored many veterinarians including international veterinarians in avian medicine. She received numerous awards and honors for her scientific work. In 2013 she was inducted in the WVPA Hall of Honour. The “Irmgard-Gylstorff-Straße” in Munich is named after her. Presently the Munich Veterinary Faculty is in negotiations on naming a street as “Prof.-Gylstorff-Straße” on the new Faculty Campus located at Oberschleissheim. She was a true pioneer in veterinary medicine and especially in poultry disease.

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