

*Gérard Renaud is an "agrégé" in philosophy. He taught French literature and philosophy at the International School of Geneva until he became deputy director general of the IBO from 1967-1977. He was then appointed director general of the IBO until 1983. He played a major part in the development of the MYP during the 1980s as he had done with the diploma some 20 years before. He received the International Schools Association Distinguished Service Award in 1995 "for the highest ideals in international education, excellent teaching, and leadership in curriculum development and research.*

## **Recollections of Gérard Renaud, former DG of the IBO (1977-83)**

Gérard Renaud lives in neighbouring France in a town called Douvaine and still visits the IBO office in Geneva from time to time. His recollections of the development of the IBO will form part of the changing content of these web pages. This is the first instalment concerning the IBO office at Cologny, Geneva.

The IBO office was at 37 route de la Capite, Cologny from 1967 until August 1970 in a charming villa looking across Lake Geneva towards the UN building. The villa was owned by Mr and Mrs Dawint. Mr Dawint lived in another part of Geneva and came to lunch with his wife once a week. Mrs Dawint was an artist and her paintings were exposed around the house. She lived downstairs and the IBO office was upstairs with a separate entrance from the outside. Mrs Dawint had a species of parrot which screeched loudly when the IBO staff arrived and left.

One wing of the IBO office was named by the staff the "Galerie des Glaces", an allusion to the famous gallery of the same name in the Palace of Versailles. In those days the IB diploma examination timetable was worked out by writing down on little pieces of differently coloured cardboard the subject examination for which students were registered. The staff then placed them all over the floor of the Galerie des Glaces in order to create an examination timetable which avoided asking students to sit different subjects at the same time.

Gérard Renaud remembers when a large Xerox copier had to be delivered. It was too large to enter by any door. A wide grid on the ground floor of the villa was used to move it up to the floor above. Mr Dawint happened to be there and was intrigued; he watched the whole, difficult process, seated calmly in his armchair until it was finished.

Alec Peterson lived for 6 months (in 1967) in the upstairs part of a villa owned by Mr and Mrs Hornung in fashionable Cologny about 100 metres from the IB office. The Hornung company was well known as one of the rare and noble firms of "cabinotiers" in the history of Geneva. The word derives from "cabine" ("cabin" or "small box" in English); these were watchmakers whose craft goes back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and they worked at home (their "cabine"). The time pieces were usually surrounded in precious wood with impressive, intricate clockwork. "Cabinotiers" were the backbone of the Geneva watch industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> century – the top of Geneva's watch aristocracy. This specialised craft industry has virtually disappeared today. The Hornung couple were often absent from Geneva and were pleased to rent the upstairs section of their house in Cologny to Alec.

In order to improve his French, Alec frequented the bars of Cologny and down town Geneva to talk with the locals. He acquired an expressive vernacular to add to his own formal knowledge of French vocabulary and grammar.

Between the IB office and Alec Peterson's abode was (and still is) the workshop of a painter and decorator, Mr Schott, who did the first engraving of the IBO logo for the office door in Cologny.

An article appeared in the *IBO Semi-annual Bulletin* of May 1970 entitled "A fly on the office wallpaper." It provides an entertaining account of activity in the Cologny IBO office at the time and will be posted later.

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