



In celebration of Professor Gus Born's life, 29 July 1921 – 16 April 2018

Tim Warner, Gayle Halford & Steve Watson

To cite this article: Tim Warner, Gayle Halford & Steve Watson (2018) In celebration of Professor Gus Born's life, 29 July 1921 – 16 April 2018, Platelets, 29:8, 743-743, DOI: [10.1080/09537104.2018.1535117](https://doi.org/10.1080/09537104.2018.1535117)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09537104.2018.1535117>



Published online: 22 Oct 2018.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 78



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

SPECIAL REVIEW: GUS BORN



In celebration of Professor Gus Born's life, 29 July 1921 – 16 April 2018

Tim Warner¹, Gayle Halford², & Steve Watson ³

¹The Blizard Institute, Queen Mary University of London, Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, London, UK, ²Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK, and ³Institute of Biomedical Research, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

All platelet researchers have heard of Gustav Born. More than 50 years ago he invented light transmission aggregometry which has been a central analytical and diagnostic technique ever since. However, Born's work in the area of platelets and vascular biology was so much more than simply inventing a technique. He made many of the seminal discoveries of the pathways of platelet activation and was one of the first to record platelets activating and responding within the circulation. In doing this work he directly and indirectly inspired generations of platelets researchers. He was still attending conferences at the age of 90, still sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm, still curious and eager for new ideas and discoveries, and still encouraging the new generation. Born's activities in these areas are captured in this Series by people who knew Born at some of the key points of his career. Of course, because Born was active in medicine and research for well over 60 years most of us only knew him in his latter days. To help us look back more completely through Born's career we are particularly grateful to Prof Clive Page and colleagues who have digitized an archive of films, two of which can be seen here (<https://youtu.be/5HOLGLL7IJ4> ; <https://youtu.be/KD-r5rvxclg>). Another two very interesting interviews with Born that can also be easily found; one recorded at his home as a series reflecting on physics at Göttingen (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSc2Lz7vwFk&t=67s>) and one from the British Pharmacological Society in which Born is

interviewed by his long-time colleague and friend Prof Rod Flower (<https://youtu.be/5HOLGLL7IJ4>).

As the development of light transmission aggregometry represents only a small part of Born's contribution to platelet research, platelet research represents only a small part of Born's amazing life. His interest in platelets and bleeding followed from being sent to Hiroshima as a young army doctor after VJ Day where people whose bone marrow had been destroyed by radiation could no longer make platelets. He reflected that his Father's student, Robert Oppenheimer, had led the team that had produced the atomic bomb; his Father was Max Born the Nobel Prize winning physicist. This explains why as a young man living in Germany Born knew Albert Einstein, who he recalled, was a good friend of his Mother, Hedwig, a published poet. Possibly this artistic spirit passed down to Born's niece, Olivia Newton-John. The name dropping and extraordinary anecdotes could continue for a long time. Those of us fortunate enough to have met and talked with Born, or see him speak about his life and career, have memories of the most captivating stories that through one extraordinary life capture the essence of the twentieth century, scientifically, historically and even artistically.

This Series is a small remembrance of a remarkable man.

ORCID

Steve Watson  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7846-7423>