



*Walter J. Westfall, Jr.*

**TO PROFESSOR Dr MINTER JACKSON WESTFALL, Jr  
ON HIS 70th BIRTHDAY**

*Dear Minter,*

*There are small events in human life which appear entirely normal at the moment of their occurrence, but whose significance and far-reaching effects become apparent only with the lapse of time. December 23, 1971 is the day that marks one of the most important milestones in the history of our Society. It is the date you have signed your membership registration form, enclosed the 5.60 dollar draft for the 1971 membership fees, and mailed the lot to Utrecht. Simultaneously with your registration, several other registration forms were received by the Treasurer on December 28, and you have been assigned the membership number 71. As far as I could ascertain, out of almost 800 registration forms hitherto received, yours is the only one written on a typewriter with a red ribbon. And like a red ribbon, your activities and work are interwoven with the Society from the very first year of its existence. . . . The society became unseparable from you, and you are unseparable from the SIO, and much of what the Society has achieved in the first 15 years of its existence is due to your activities, suggestions and encouragement.*

*The celebration of a person's 70th birthday is the moment to look back on the life achievements of the celebree. On the following pages Ken Tennessen did what he could in this field. As he rightly put it, your name is almost a synonym for "dragonfly". We all know that you cannot live without dragonflies, though your relation to them is somewhat of a one-way road: they cannot live with you if they happen to fall into your hands after having passed the nymphal stage! But Ken could also say that your name is largely a synonym for SIO and for everything the Society stands for. During your Presidency, in the past two years, you have achieved more for Odonatology than we could ever dare to hope. The SIO INTERNATIONAL ODONATA RESEARCH INSTITUTE, "The Center", created by you in Gainesville in 1985, will remain a lasting monument to your scientific and organisational genius for generations to come.*

*Dear Minter, having the privilege of knowing you as closely and intimately as is only possible in the SIO family, having the opportunity to talk to you regularly,*

*and being able to stay with you at least at biennial intervals, does not mean only talking and collecting dragonflies at various places throughout the world. To me, and to many of us, it means much more: it is a personal friendship, a source of moral strength and help in our daily lives, and only then also an indispensable source of odonatological inspiration and encouragement in many ways.*

*The present collection of works of our "dragonfly family" has the formal title of a birthday tribute issue. Please understand it as a token of thanks for everything you did and are doing for our science and for many of us personally. But it should also be understood as a small token of welcome and thanks by the odonatological community on your assumption of the Directorship of the SIO Research Institute.*

*Not only do we hope, we are absolutely sure that you will be directing the development of Odonatology from our Institute for many, many more years to come. We need you, the dragonflies need you, and the SIO is unthinkable without your help!*

*Many happy returns of the 28th of January,  
on behalf of all the SIO family!*

*Yours ever,*

*Bastiaan*

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