



## Maj Hultén

Professor Maj Hultén, has been elected as an honorary member of E.C.A. in recognition of her major contribution to meiotic studies and the mechanisms of origin of genetic disease, for many years running a major genetic diagnostic service, as well as being an appreciated member and contributor to E.C.A.

Maj Hultén grew up in Lund, a small university town in the southern part of Sweden. Already as a child she was fascinated by the unusual looking children that lived in a nearby institution, and what could cause such problems. She later decided to study psychology and education at the University of Stockholm, and in addition genetics - which at that time

mainly concerned bacteria, fruit-flies, plants and statistics.

During her final year in 1955, she had to make a special three months project and managed to get Professor Albert Levan as her supervisor. In his lab, beautiful spreads of human chromosomes were made by the visiting scientist Dr Joe-Hin Tjio. Maj was invited to look at them under the microscope and was immediately hooked. She decided to study medicine, hoping that Medical Genetics would one day become a discipline, where the study of chromosomes would be very important. In 1974, she defended her thesis "Cytogenetic aspects of human male meiosis" at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, and soon thereafter moved to Great Britain to fill the post of Clinical Director of the West Midlands Regional Genetics Laboratory and Consultancy Service, where she stayed between 1975 and 1997.

Since 1991, Maj has devoted a lot of time and support as a board member and Chief Medical Advisor for the Rare chromosome disorder support group called UNIQUE, spreading knowledge about the effects of chromosome disorders, not only to the medical and scientific societies, but also to the patients and their families. Her research has been continuously devoted to studies on patterns of meiotic recombination in human males and females, incorporating the novel technology that has developed over the years. She became honorary professor in Medical Genetics/ Reproductive Genetics at the University of Birmingham 1989-1999 and at Warwick in 1996. Maj is also a very enthusiastic chairman of the E.C.A Permanent working group on meiosis, sharing her vast knowledge of the basic principles as well as the latest news on the subject with anyone who wants to participate. She is still very active, working both in Britain and Sweden, and recently became Professor Emerita at Karolinska Institutet in 2010.