

The Dr. Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit: Legacy, Recognition, and Contemporary Perspectives in International Apitherapy

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ABSTRACT

The Dr. Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit represents one of the highest distinctions in the field of international apitherapy. Established to honour the legacy of Dr Bódog Beck Félix (1868–1942), a pioneer of modern apitherapy, the award recognises individuals whose scientific and clinical contributions have significantly advanced the understanding and therapeutic application of bee-derived therapies. This article outlines the historical background and symbolic significance of the medal and documents the presentation of its third award at the Apimondia World Congress in Copenhagen. Particular attention is given to the professional achievements of the 2023 award recipient, Dr Dietrich Klinghardt, whose interdisciplinary work in biological medicine exemplifies the continuity between early apitherapy traditions and contemporary integrative medical approaches.

Keywords: apitherapy; Beck Bódog Félix; Apimondia; biological medicine; bee venom therapy

INTRODUCTION

Apitherapy, defined as the medical use of bee products for disease prevention and treatment, has progressed from empirically based practices to an increasingly structured and scientifically discussed therapeutic discipline. Among the early contributors to this field, Dr Bódog Beck Félix occupies a distinguished position as one of the founders of modern apitherapy. His clinical observations and therapeutic concepts laid important foundations for the systematic application of bee venom therapy and related apitherapeutic modalities [1].

Over recent decades, apitherapy has gained increasing scientific visibility through specialised journals and professional forums, reflecting its gradual integration into complementary and integrative medical discourse [2].

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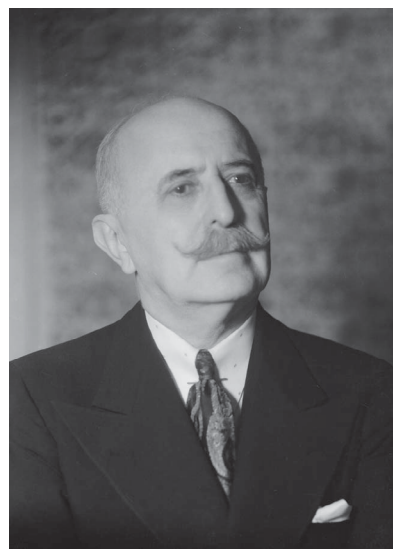


Figure 1: Portrait of Dr Bódog Beck Félix (1868–1942). Hungarian-born physician and one of the founders of modern apitherapy, whose clinical and scientific work laid the foundations of medicinal bee venom therapy.

ESTABLISHMENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEDAL

The Dr Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit was founded more than six years ago by Mihály Simics, a Canadian entrepreneur of Hungarian origin. The medal was designed by the Hungarian sculptor and medallist Mihály Fritz (Szeged, Hungary). Only ten medals were produced, underscoring the exclusivity and symbolic importance of the distinction.

The award is conferred upon individuals whose work demonstrates scientific credibility, clinical relevance, and sustained commitment to advancing apitherapy within an international and interdisciplinary context.



Figure 2: *The Dr Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit.*

Bronze medal designed by Hungarian sculptor and medallist Mihály Fritz. Only ten copies of the medal were produced, highlighting its exclusivity and symbolic importance within the international apitherapy community.

THE THIRD AWARD CEREMONY AT THE APIMONDIA WORLD CONGRESS

The third presentation of the Dr Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit took place during the ceremonial opening of the Apimondia World Congress in Copenhagen. Apimondia plays a central role in fostering international collaboration, scientific exchange, and professional integration within apitherapy and related disciplines [3].

The medal was presented by Dr János Körmeny-Rácz, Chair of the Apimondia Scientific Commission on Apitherapy and head of the Beck Bódog Award Committee.



Figure 3: *Presentation of the Dr Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit.*

Dr János Körmeny-Rácz (on the right), Chair of the Apimondia Scientific Commission on Apitherapy and head of the Beck Bódog Award Committee, presents the third medal to Dr Dietrich Klinghardt at the ceremonial opening of the Apimondia World Congress in Copenhagen.

The official certificate confirming the award was conferred by Dr Jeff Pettis, President of Apimondia. The ceremony was attended by several thousand participants from the international apicultural and medical communities.



Figure 4: *Presentation of the official certificate.*
Dr Jeff Pettis (on the left), President of Apimondia, presents the certificate confirming the award to Dr Dietrich Klinghardt during the formal ceremony.

ACCEPTANCE ADDRESS AND HISTORICAL CONTINUITY

In his acceptance address, Dr Dietrich Klinghardt emphasised the symbolic value of the medal as recognition of medical work that directly impacts human health. He paid tribute to Dr Bódog Beck Félix as a visionary who recognised the therapeutic potential of bees and their products at a time when such approaches were not widely accepted within mainstream medicine.

Dr Klinghardt also acknowledged the influence of Charles Mraz, a pioneer of bee venom therapy in the United States and the first recipient of the Beck Bódog Medal. This personal reference highlighted the continuity of apitherapeutic knowledge across generations and geographical regions.



Figure 5: *Acceptance address by Dr Dietrich Klinghardt.*
The award recipient delivers his ceremonial speech following the presentation of the Dr Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit at the Apimondia World Congress.

Note. Photographs reproduced with permission. Courtesy of the Apimondia Apitherapy Scientific Commission and private archival sources.

PROFILE OF THE AWARD RECIPIENT

Dr Dietrich Klinghardt is a Berlin-born physician who has spent most of his professional career in the United States. He is the founder and Medical Director of the Sophia Health Institute (Washington, USA) and the Klinghardt Neurobiology Institute (Germany). His integrative medical approach combines principles from apitherapy, immunology, endocrinology, toxicology, and neural therapy.

Dr Klinghardt's work focuses on complex chronic conditions, including neurodegenerative disorders, chronic pain syndromes, Lyme disease, and autism spectrum disorders, reflecting the systems-oriented philosophy that characterises contemporary biological medicine.

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION AT THE APIMONDIA CONGRESS

As an invited speaker at the Apimondia World Congress, Dr Klinghardt delivered a lecture entitled "*Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease and Lyme Disease with Apitherapy*." The presentation attracted an audience of approximately two thousand participants and generated considerable professional interest, emphasising the growing relevance of apitherapy within integrative approaches to chronic disease management.

CONCLUSION

The Dr Bódog Beck Félix Medal of Merit symbolises the continuity between the historical foundations of apitherapy and its contemporary scientific and clinical developments. The recognition of Dr Dietrich Klinghardt reflects the award's core values: respect for tradition, commitment to scientific inquiry, and dedication to improving human health through evidence-informed apitherapeutic practice.

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