

Pro memoria

Professor Igors Danilāns
29-07-1928 – 22-09-2007



September 22, 2007 has been a sad day for geologists of Latvia, because our respected colleague Igors Danilāns has passed away. He was a professor of the University of Latvia, Faculty of Geographical and Earth Sciences, long-time experienced director of the Institute of Geology, Doctor Habilitatis of Geology, scientist emeritus of Latvia and honoured member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences.

Igors Danilāns was born in July 29, 1928, in Rēzekne City, in family of teachers. In 1950 he graduated from the Faculty of Geology and Geography at the State University of Latvia. Already as a student he did a lot of scientific studies and organised work of his course mates, but after graduating the young specialist has been assigned to head the Cesvaine secondary school. He went to Riga in 1952, and then started his active scientific work continued for almost 55 years in the Institute of Geology, which changed its name and legal status for several times, but there always

Remained the actuality and succession of geological research of Latvia. Danilāns put a great effort on that, while he started to work as a junior researcher in the Institute of Geology and Mineral Deposits, later he headed a department in the All-Union Scientific Institute of Marine Geology and Geophysics, and retired as the director of the Institute of Geology, University of Latvia. His scientific interest was focused on the Quaternary deposits of Latvia. In 1957 he defended scientific candidate thesis in geology and mineralogy on the freshwater limestones, but in 1975 became a doctor in sciences, based to very wide study on the Quaternary stratigraphy, palaeogeography and morphogenesis. This monograph entitled 'Quaternary deposits of Latvia' written in Russian ('Четвертичные отложения Латвии') is still important as a handbook to many Quaternary researchers. In 1992 Danilāns has received the scientific degree of Doctor Habilitatis in Geology. He represented results of his studies in many scientific conferences and received international recognition. Already at the beginning of 1960s he became a member of the Research Commission on the Quaternary Period, Academy of Sciences of the former USSR and also a member of Standing Commission on the Quaternary at the Committee of Stratigraphy of the former USSR, but at the end of 1960s and in 1970s he was a corresponding member of the International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA), a Commission on Lithology and Genesis.

In 1978 he received a title of Honoured Scientific Researcher of the Latvian SSR, and 1992 the Latvian Academy of Sciences elected him as its Honorary Member. Danilāns has published 106 scientific papers, and his great contribution in creation and editing of various scientific and encyclopaedic issues is very valuable.

New period in the life of Danilāns started with national awakening time in 1988, when he began to renew his studies on geology within the University of Latvia and put a lot of efforts to maintain geological scientific studies in Latvia. Since 1990 he was actively involved in teaching at the University – he compiled the first Bachelor and Master study programmes in geol-

ogy, worked as director of these programmes, prepared and taught several courses, did considerable work to create doctoral programme in geology and supervise doctoral thesis, he headed the Council of Habilitation and Promotion of Geology, the University of Latvia.

In 1991 the Chair of Geology was formed in the Faculty of Geography and Danilāns became its chairman, being elected as professor in 1993. At the same time he continued to lead a work of the Institute of Geology, University of Latvia. Besides the direct tasks he participated in the work of academic scientific commissions, scientific-technical and scientific-methodological councils and editorial boards, he was a member of several societies. More than 30 years, until 1991, he worked in the Society for Protection of Nature and Monuments, Latvian SSR, putting much effort on protection of nature. Danilāns was a compiler, scientific

editor and one of the authors of the manual 'Protection of Nature' issued in Latvian in 1980.

Professor Igors Danilāns have had admirable erudition, ability to work, to find a solution to any problem smoothly, without needless hurry, and to do works in time. He participated in the life of University also when retired – he often visited faculty and institute, was interested in academic activities and always kindly agreed to write references to students' Master and Bachelor theses. Colleagues and students highly respected professor Danilāns. The community of geologists of Latvia will miss professor's encouraging smile and advice.

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