

The Wisdom of the White Elephants *in Honor of* **Gottfried Konecny**



Prof. Gottfried Konecny 90 Years: A Life for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing

On June 17, 2020 Prof. Gottfried Konecny, former ISPRS President, celebrated his 90th birthday. For the most significant living personality in Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing a Special Session had been planned at the ISPRS Congress in Nice, France. Since the Congress was moved to July 2021, it was decided to organize a Webinar as part of the ISPRS Student Consortium Virtual Rooms – The Wisdom of the White Elephants to honor Gottfried's life-long achievements and his relentless service to ISPRS. The ISPRS White Elephant Club (WEC) together with the ISPRS Council and the ISPRS Student Consortium as host organized this special event, which featured some of Gottfried's long-time friends and colleagues with whom he shaped the ISPRS over a long period. Presentations not only covered the past but also opened a window into the future, which was always also part of Gottfried's far-reaching interests and ambitions.



DR. GOTTFRIED KONECNY

Dr. Gottfried Konecny was born in 1930 in Czechoslovakia to German parents and came to Bavaria in 1946. He studied Surveying Engineering at TU Munich from 1950 to 1957. In between he obtained a US Government Fulbright Scholarship to attend The Ohio State University, where in 1955 he became the 11th M.Sc. graduate of the Geodetic Science Program. He obtained a PhD degree, also from TU Munich, in 1959. From 1959 to 1971 he was first Assistant Professor and later Full Professor at the University of New Brunswick in Canada, developing the first Geomatics Program in North America. In 1966/67 he was with NASA in Houston during a sabbatical, mapping about 20 lunar landing sites for the Apollo Program. In 1971 he returned to Germany to take up the Chair of the Institute of Photogrammetry and Engineering Surveys at the (now) Leibniz University Hannover. His major activities comprised the development of remote sensing in Europe, he was the Project Scientist of the

first photogrammetric mapping project from space, the Metric Camera, in 1983. From 1976 – 1992 he served on ISPRS Council and was responsible for the ISP Congress in Hamburg in 1980, before becoming ISPRS president from 1984-88. In 1998 he became Emeritus Professor of Leibniz University Hannover and has continue his activities ever since.

PROGRAM

Christian Heipke	Gottfried Konecny: From Draftsman to Professor Emeritus <i>- 75 Years of Involvement in Photogrammetry</i>
Armin Gruen	Of Elephants and Crocodiles <i>- the Converging of Lifelines</i>
Shunji Murai	Lessons from Gottfried in my Life
Larry Fritz	Over 50 Years in ISPRS – <i>The Ambassador of our Profession</i>
Deren Li	Gottfried in China - <i>his Role in the Development of the Chinese Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing</i>
Lena Halounova	Gottfried and his Scientific Cooperations
Laurent Polidori	From Laussedat to Learning Machines: <i>What can we learn from History?</i>
Jan Dirk Wegner	Quo Vadis Photogrammetry?

SESSION CHAIRS ●
Armin Gruen, *ISPRS White Elephant Club President*
Christian Heipke, *ISPRS President*

VIRTUAL ROOM HOST ●
Sheryl Rose Reyes,
ISPRS Student Consortium President



This program was enriched by music and singing performances of current members of the IPI, Leibniz University Hannover.



Almost 150 people listened to the Webinar

This special event was attended by almost 160 people across the globe and was thus the most attended Virtual Rooms hosted by the Student Consortium. The celebration lasted for about two hours and showed us a timeline of experiences, contributions and achievements of Dr. Konecny as well as his amazing travels, lifelong friendships and continued inspiration to his dear family. While showing that he is a very well-known person in photogrammetry and remote sensing, this celebration also exemplified the importance of friendship and personal relationships in one's career and we are truly humbled to witness and take part in commemorating one of the legends of the ISPRS White Elephant Club.

He is a great colleague in the Society and a true inspiration to the younger generation in ISPRS.

-----Videos of Presentations-----