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WOLF JÜRGEN VON ENGELHARDT (1910–2008)



Prof. Wolf Jürgen Freiherr von Engelhardt died on December 4, 2008, at the age of 98, in Tübingen, Germany. Wolf von Engelhardt was born on February 9, 1910, in Dorpat (Tartu), Estonia. He received his university education at the University of Halle, Germany, and his PhD in 1935 at the University of Göttingen, Germany, under the supervision of the famous geochemist Victor Moritz Goldschmidt, with a dissertation on the geochemistry of barium. Later on, he joined the working group of Prof. Correns, the founder of modern sedimentology in Germany, at the University of Rostock. Back again in

Göttingen, Wolf von Engelhardt completed the "Habilitation" (*venia legendi*) at Correns' institute in 1940, where he became Professor of Mineralogy in 1944. After World War II he joined Gewerkschaft Elwerath, a German oil exploration company. In 1957 he was appointed Professor of Mineralogy and Petrography and Director of the Mineralogisch-Petrographisches Institut of the University of Tübingen, where he remained until he became Professor Emeritus in 1978.

Wolf von Engelhardt was active as a scientist for more than 75 years and published more than 200 articles in journals and 20 books on a wide variety of topics. His fields of interest were extremely broad and often highly interdisciplinary. Starting as a geochemist, he became an expert in sedimentology of international reputation and published a three-volume book on sedimentary petrography in 1967 – a leading book of the time. Motivated by the discovery of coesite and stishovite in the Ries crater, he moved to a new field of interest: impact craters, including shock metamorphism of rocks and minerals, and lunar and planetary science, where he became a leading scientist. Together with his co-workers, he participated very successfully in the study of lunar rocks as Principal Investigator in the Apollo and post-Apollo programs. Most impressive in Wolf von Engelhardt's career was his ability to combine natural science with philosophy and history of science. He was instrumental in the modern analysis of the publications and manuscripts on natural science and geology by Germany's greatest poet, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Among many articles on this topic, he edited more than a dozen books on Goethe's "Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften." Moreover, he published articles on the great revolutions in geology, such as the debate between neptunists and plutonists and the big step from Earth-bound geology to planetary geology, which he called "the Copernican change in geology." Wolf von Engelhardt continued to do research well into his nineties, mainly in the field of impact cratering and specifically on the Ries impact crater and related tektites, and on Goethe's studies of natural science. Among these many contributions are a most impressive article in 2001 on the debate between Goethe and Alexander von Humboldt entitled "Goethe und Alexander von Humboldt: Bau und Geschichte der Erde" ("Constitution and History of the Earth") and a last major paper on impact processes – the formation of moldavite tektites – that appeared in 2005 in *Meteoritics and Planetary Science*.

Wolf von Engelhardt was an extraordinary teacher. His lectures, which covered a broad range of topics including crystallography, petrology, sedimentology, geochemistry, planetary geology, cosmic mineralogy, and philosophy of science, usually attracted very large numbers of students. Many of them received their diploma and PhD under his supervision. Two of his PhD students were also awarded the Barringer Medal. Von Engelhardt was also active in university administration and professional organizations. In 1963–1964 he was Rektor (President) of the University of Tübingen and later President of the Deutsche Mineralogische Gesellschaft (German Mineralogical Association) and President of the Geologische Vereinigung (Geological Association).

On the occasion of his 75th birthday he was awarded the Großes Bundesverdienstkreuz, which is the highest and only honor conferred on individuals by the Federal Republic of Germany. This is only one of many honors he received during his scientific career. One more example is asteroid (4217) 1988 BO2, which was named after him by Carolyn Shoemaker. He also was one of the first "big five" recipients of the Barringer Medal of the Meteoritical Society. In 1980 he was awarded the Abraham-Gottlob-Werner Medal of the German Mineralogical Association.

His students and former students, the whole scientific community in the field of planetary science, and the members of the German Mineralogical Society have lost a great mentor, scholar, and wonderful colleague of the old school. We will keep him firmly in our memory.

Dieter Stöffler and Wolf Uwe Reimold, Berlin

DMG TRAVEL GRANTS TO ATTEND THE MAPT MEETING

The German Mineralogical Society (DMG) encourages students and post-graduates to attend the Micro-Analysis, Processes, Time (MAPT) meeting in Edinburgh from August 31 to September 2, 2009. To help cover travel and conference expenses, the DMG provides approximately 10 travel grants of up to 500 Euros. Applicants for grants must be student members of DMG and must either give a talk or present a poster. An application accompanied by the submitted abstract, a curriculum vitae, and a projected budget should be sent before July 10, 2009, to the president of the DMG, Prof. Dr. F. Langenhorst, Bayerisches Geoinstitut, University of Bayreuth, D-95440 Bayreuth (Falko.Langenhorst@uni-bayreuth.de).



87th annual meeting
of the

German Mineralogical
Association

September 13. - 17. 2009



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