

Markku Poutanen

Greeting speech to Prof. Helmut Moritz on the occasion of his 80th Anniversary by the Finnish Geodetic Institute and the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters

Dear Professor Moritz,

I will bring greetings from Finland to this 80th year anniversary celebration from two organizations: the Finnish Geodetic Institute and the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters. It is a pleasure to be here to give this address to Prof. Moritz who has had a great influence on the generations of geodesists also in Finland. Moreover, there is a special relation between him and the Finnish Geodetic Institute, not least via the celebrated masterwork “Physical Geodesy” by Heiskanen and Moritz. Even during his years in Ohio, Prof. Heiskanen was also Director of the Finnish Geodetic Institute. While traveling between Ohio and Finland, Heiskanen brought all the new ideas and new science also to the Finnish Geodetic Institute.

The connection to Prof. Moritz continued even after Heiskanen’s time. I am too young to remember, but prof. Kakkuri has told me his memories from those days. In 1970’s and 1980’s there was an active discussion on techniques and principles of geoid computation. This is a direct application of theories of physical geodesy, and even more important, because of the advent of the satellite technique in global geodetic research.

At that time there were several schools of opinions which technique is the best for practical computations. During these days, Prof. Moritz also visited the Finnish Geodetic Institute to discuss and perhaps also to convince young researches in Finland in favour of one technique. I think exchange of opinions, sometimes even strong ones, is the way science is advanced, and also is a sign of active and important topic. Often the final outcome, sometimes only after years, will be more than the original ideas alone.

Some time ago I participated a symposium in Vaasa at western coast of Finland, near the Fennoscandian land uplift maximum. The beautiful archi-

pelago there is a World Heritage Site of UNESCO. The shallow shores show the effect of uplift during a human lifetime, and the topic of the symposium was the future and conservation of this site. When speaking there about uplift and the sea level rise, I realized how practical and close to every-day life the work of past generations of geodesists is today. It is difficult to imagine a more important application of geoid computation and isostasy than this. These are now the fruits of theoretical work done decades ago.

The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters invites distinguished foreign scientists who additionally have some specific connection to Finland as their Foreign member. Prof. Moritz was invited in 1970 as a Foreign member of the Academy of Science and Letters. Prof. Olli Martio, Secretary General of the Academy of Science and Letters sent the best greetings of the Academy to Prof. Moritz.

Dear Prof. Moritz, on the behalf of the Finnish Geodetic Institute and the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, and with personal greetings of Prof. Kakkuri and myself, I would like to congratulate You on this occasion of your 80th anniversary and wish all the best for the coming years.