

These proceedings are dedicated to



Professor Dr. LEOPOLD VIETORIS

on the occasion of his 110th birthday.

Professor VIETORIS was born on 4 June, 1891 in Bad Radkersburg (Styria, Austria) during the golden age of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. VIETORIS is the oldest Austrian and one of the very few people on earth who can enjoy having lived in three centuries and in two millennia. Shortly after the end of the First World War he finished his academic education in Vienna, Austria. He then worked as an assistant at the Technische Hochschule (TH) Graz, now Graz University of Technology, until 1927. In 1928 he became Full Professor ("Ordinarius") for mathematics at the TH Vienna, and from 1930 onwards until his retirement in 1960 he was Full Professor at the University in Innsbruck holding a chair in mathematics. VIETORIS wrote some 80 scientific papers on mathematics, e.g. he laid the foundation of general topology, and moreover, several mathematical theorems are named after him.

In 1924 VIETORIS applied for a patent in Vienna which describes a method for photographic differential rectification of aerial photographs for generating orthophotos. The term "father of the orthophoto" can therefore be attributed to him. Professor VIETORIS also worked as a geodesist and scientist in the Austrian Alps, by preference in the Oetztal Alps. He was especially interested in rock glaciers which are creep phenomena of discontinuous permafrost in high mountain environments. Together with late Prof. Dr. W. PILLEWIZER († 2.2.1999), also from Austria, he became a pioneer of rock glacier research in Austria and worldwide. It may also be of interest that VIETORIS also wrote articles about the elasticity of alpine skis and on how to orientate safely in mountainous terrain by means of appropriate slope information.

He wrote his last scientific publication on mathematics at the age of 103. Because of this VIETORIS is also named "Methuselah of mathematics" by the scientific community. Professor VIETORIS has been honored for his life work on many occasions. He was a keen mountaineer and skier up to an advanced age. He stopped skiing at the age of 93 following the urgent advice of his doctors. VIETORIS has five daughters and lives together with his second wife, who has also reached the 100s, in Innsbruck.

P.S. The editors of these proceedings regret for Prof. Leopold VIETORIS, who passed away on 9 April, 2002 peacefully at home, following his wife who died some weeks before. Prof.

VIETORIS will be missed by all who knew and loved him. He is survived by his 6 daughters, 17 grandchildren, and 30 great-grandchildren.

(Photograph by courtesy of Dr. H. SCHNEIDER, Innsbruck.)