



Obituary – Gerd Lüttig (1926–2010)

Michael Kosinowski

With great sadness the editorial team of Newsletters on Stratigraphy recently received the news that Gerd Lüttig, long-standing Editor-in-Chief and founder of the journal passed away on July 16th, 2010. Along with Gerd Lüttig's family, a large community of friends and colleagues attended the funeral service in Celle on August 2nd, 2010. Gerd Lüttig's final resting place is located in a typical north German heathland of the "Lüneburger Heide" region, with solitary junipers, oak trees and conifers, and a small lake in the background.

Gerd Lüttig was born on September 21st, 1926 in Lindenthal near Leipzig. After school, military service (1944–1945) and captivity (1945–1946) he took the final examinations at high school and decided to become a geologist. He enrolled at the University of Freiberg/Sachsen in Geology and Palaeontology, later at the University of Freiburg/Breisgau and finally at the University of Göttingen. He graduated with a diploma degree and a doctorate in 1952.

In early 1953, Gerd Lüttig joined the German Geological Survey. This institution was later split up into the Federal German Geological Survey (Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe) and the Lower Saxony Geological Survey (Niedersächsisches Landesamt für Bodenforschung). In 1970, he was appointed vice-president of both surveys, a position that he held for ten years before joining Erlangen University as a Professor of Applied Geology. Having been an academic teacher from 1963 onwards at the Universities of Braunschweig, Hannover and Göttingen, his enthusiasm for geology and particularly Quaternary geology was infectious and influenced more than one generation of young (and not so young) geoscientists. Gerd Lüttig's work in the Erlangen Department of Geology brought applied geology back to life. His enthusiasm for field work encompassed a large variety of subjects,



including glacial geology, limnology, industrial minerals, and natural resources.

Gerd Lüttig is the founder and long-standing president of the German Peat Society (DGMT); he was vice-president and honorary member of the International Peat Society and member of the board of numerous other scientific bodies such as the Commission for the International Geological Map of Europe (International Geological Congress), the International Geological Map of the World (IUGS), the Stratigraphic Commission of DUGW, and the German Quaternary Society (DEUQUA).

Gerd Lüttig was awarded the Alexander von Humboldt Medal by the French Ministry of Research and Technology (1986), the C.A. Weber Medal of DGMT in combination with an honorary membership (1994), the László Emszt Medal by the Hungarian National Committee of the International Peat Society combined with an honorary membership in the Hungarian Balneological Society (1994), the Leonardo da Vinci Medal of the German Sand- and Gravel-Industry (1995), and the Albrecht Penck medal of DEUQUA (1997).

"Steh gerade oder zerbrich" – Stand upright or break – was the heading of the death notice distributed by Gerd Lüttig's sons. This was the inscription on a piece of rock which Gerd Lüttig was awarded by an Erlangen student many years ago and which had its place on Lüttig's desktop until his late days in Celle to where Lüttig returned after his retirement.

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