



International Organisation of Palaeobotany

IOP NEWSLETTER 104

July 2014

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The views expressed in the newsletter are those of its correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the policy of IOP.

Please send us your contributions for the next edition of our newsletter (October 2014) by September 31st, 2014.

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IOP Logo: The evolution of plant architecture (© by A. R. Hemsley)

FROM THE SECRETARY/TREASURER

Dear International Organisation of
Palaeobotany Members,

Plans for IPC XIV/IOPC X 2016 are well underway and a progress report is given below. Unfortunately, I must also bear the sad news of the passing of Dr. Inna Dobruskina. I would like to thank Dr. Lea Grauvogel-Stamm, Dr. Sid Ash, Dr. Heidi Holmes, and Dr. John Anderson for the Obituary and reminiscences.

As usual, I am happy to report almost anything you, as the membership send me, and I still hope to expand regional coverage. So please send whatever you think might be of interest to the membership.

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Please feel free to contact me with questions, comments, short communications and/or any information you would like passed on to the Membership.

IPC XIV/IOPC X 2016

The 2016 joint meeting of the International Palynological Congress and the International Organization of Palaeobotanists will be held in Salvador, Brazil.

The Organizing Committee has been formed and consists of:

Francisco de Assis Ribeiro dos Santos,
UEFS, President
Francisco Hilder Magalhães e Silva, UNEB
Jaílson Santos de Novais, UFOPA
Luciene Cristina Lima e Lima, UNEB
Marileide Dias Saba, UNEB
Paulino Pereira Oliveira, UEFS
Ricardo Landim Bormann de Borges, UNEB
Rita de Cássia Matos dos Santos Araújo,
UNEB

Tentatively, the meeting will be held during October or November of 2016. However, Brazilian law stipulates that the process of gathering support cannot begin more than two years in advance of an event, so dates and reservations will begin to finalize in early 2015 once the Committee has funding to secure reservations etc..

The Organizing Committee has everything well in hand, and as they proceed I will keep the Membership up-to-date. But please keep thinking about symposia, travel grants, etc.



Map of Brazil showing major cities

OBITUARY

(With personal reminiscences of some western colleagues)



Dr. Inna Dobruskina*
(1933 – 2014)

We are sorry to announce that the well-known Triassic palaeobotanist Dr. Inna Dobruskina passed away on January 4, 2014 at the age of 80. We learnt this sad news from her daughter Ira who lives in Jerusalem and her son Ari who lives in California. The biographical part of the present obituary is based, with his permission, on one written by Ari with the help of Spencer Lucas (New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, Albuquerque) which just appeared in *Albertiana* (41: 44-49) with a complete list of her publications.

Inna was born December 25, 1933 in Moscow, Russia and attended Moscow State

University (MSU) from 1952 to 1957 and received a M.Sc. degree in 1957. She then undertook doctoral study at MSU from 1960 to 1964 and was awarded a Ph.D. in 1964. Later she completed a D.Sc. at the same institution (awarded 1977). Inna's first academic position was at MSU, where she sat on the Faculty of Geology from 1957 to 1964. From 1964 to 1989 she worked at the Geological Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow. The photo reproduced above*, which was taken by Léa Grauvogel-Stamm in 1984, shows Inna standing by her desk in her office in the Laboratory of Palaeobotany of this institute which she shared with the renown Russian palaeobotanist S.V. Meyen. The woman in the picture on the wall behind Inna is the famous Russian paleobotanist Dr. M.F. Neuburg.

Inna's geological studies included practical field work in the Kola Peninsula, Mangush in the Crimea along the Cherek River in the Caucasus, and the Amur River on the border with China. Upon earning her M.Sc. in 1957, Inna remained at MSU and joined the newly-formed Amur Expedition. At that time, there was an urgent project focusing on the building of a joint Sino-Soviet hydroelectric dam on the Amur River, which forms the border between the two countries. Thus detailed geological maps were needed along the river system at and around the dam site. During three years (1957-1959), Inna and the other young graduates on the team spent three to four months in the summer each year mapping the area on both sides of the river. For weeks at a time, each geologist had to lead a party of 10 to 15 men in the wilderness, without any contact with the outside world. The conditions were harsh and the equipment basic.

When the Amur Project was suddenly cancelled in 1960, Inna entered the Ph.D. program at the MSU. Her research there focused on processing material collected by the Amur Expedition, and in 1964 she successfully defended her thesis entitled: “Stratigraphy and flora of the Jurassic and Lower Cretaceous of the Amur River”. As a teaching assistant during her Ph.D. studies, she returned to Mangush in the Crimea for the 1961 field season as an instructor.

After receiving her Ph.D. in 1964, Inna took a position at the Laboratory of Palaeobotany of the Geological Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences (GIN) in Moscow. At GIN, she began a study of the Triassic flora of Eurasia which lasted for the next 25 years and continued to travel widely inside the Soviet Union conducting field work at Issyk Kul, Madygen, Mangyschlak, Pamir, Baskunchak, Bogdo, Rybinsk and at other localities. She received her Dr. Sci. degree in 1977 for her dissertation titled “Triassic floras of Eurasia” which was published in 1982 in Russian. Later Inna prepared an English language version of this comprehensive book in consultation with Dr. Sidney Ash (then at Weber State University, Ogden, Utah) and Drs. Heidi and John Anderson (Botanical Research Institute in Pretoria, South Africa) which was published in 1994. As a consequence, owing to this comprehensive study, the Triassic flora of Eurasia became more accessible to the international scientific community.

In 1965, Inna had married Arnold Krupnikov, a mining safety engineer but they divorced in 1982. For their honeymoon, they had spent four weeks collecting Triassic fossils in Madygen under the direction of Dr. A.G. Sharov. From this union two children

were born: Ira in 1968 and Kostya in 1977 (later changed to Ari). Due to frustrations with the Soviet authorities, Inna emigrated to Israel in 1989 with her two children and settled in Jerusalem. There she became an adjunct professor at the Institute of Earth Sciences in the Hebrew University where she taught undergraduate stratigraphy and continued her research on the Triassic floras of the world. She retired from the Hebrew University in 1999 and devoted her time to studying the history of her family within the context of the Russian Revolution and civil war until suffering a stroke in 2011 and death a few years later.

Later in her career and prior to her immigrating, Inna struck up friendships by mail with several western palaeobotanists who specialized in Triassic palaeobotany. These friendships went beyond the occasional exchange of reprints and eventually, she was able to attend several international conferences and visit these workers who became her friends. In one case Inna arranged for one of them (Lea Grauvogel-Stamm) to visit her twice in Russia. That these friendships could take place during the Cold War and shortly thereafter is noteworthy because tensions were so high at that time between Russia and the West. Factors that undoubtedly helped with these contacts were her reasonably fluency in both written and spoken English.

Reminiscences of Four Triassic Palaeobotanists

Dr. Lea Grauvogel-Stamm, Geological Institute of the University in Strasbourg, France, remembers particularly three events: my first meeting with Dr. Inna Dobruskina

in 1982, my visit with her in Moscow and Novosibirsk in 1989 and a meeting with her and several other specialists of Triassic plants in 1992.

I met Dr. Inna Dobruskina for the first time in May 1982 when Professor Yves Lemoigne (University of Lyon, France) came to Strasbourg with a delegation of Russian palaeobotanists in the frame of a cooperation program between the French National Centre for Scientific Research, Paris (CNRS) and the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Professor V.A. Vakhrameev and Dr. Maya Doludenko were also part of this delegation. It was probably the first time that a Soviet delegation visited Strasbourg because the Director of the French Territory Security (DST) gave them an official interpreter and closely followed their activities, phoning several times to learn where they were located. I also remember that Inna was very excited to be so close to the Rhine, a mystical river for her since it crossed the German Triassic, the foundation of her Ph.D. research project. Thus Inna was absolutely determined to be photographed on the banks of the Rhine, a desire that I helped her fulfill.

Because Inna was an endearing person we stayed in close contact. Thus she invited me to Russia in 1984 for one month with Jeanne Doubinger, the chief of the Palynological Laboratory of the University in Strasbourg, France. There Inna showed us her Triassic plant collection, among which was *Pleuromeia*, a characteristic lower Triassic lycopsid. However, she also arranged for us to visit Moscow (Kremlin, museums, Gum on red Square, etc.) and the famous monastery of Zagorsk, some 70km from Moscow. Moreover she organized a visit to

Leningrad (now St Petersburg) where we met Dr. Natasha Snigirevskaya and to Kiev where we met Dr. F.A. Stanislavsky who showed us his Triassic plant fossil collection from the Donetz Basin. In Moscow Inna introduced me to the palaeontologists Dr. A.P. Rasnitsyn and Dr. A.G. Ponomarenko of the Laboratory of Paleontology of the Geological Institute of Moscow. These contacts were very fruitful since they led into a collaboration permitting them and several other researchers afterwards (A.S. Bashkuev, D.S. Aristov, E.D. Lukashevich, N.D. Sinitshenkova, D.E. Shcherbakov) to study some of the numerous fossil insects from the Triassic Grès à Voltzia Formation (Upper Buntsandstein) of NE France. I also visited Inna twice in Wien (Austria), in 1986 and 1987, where she went for two months in order to examine the Triassic plant collection at the Geologisches Bundesanstalt. In 1988 I invited her to spend two months in France.



The Soviet team in Ringendorf where Louis Grauvogel's Triassic fossil collection is housed. From right to left: Professor V.A. Vakhrameev, Professor Yves Lemoigne, Louis Grauvogel (Lea Grauvogel-Stamm's father), Dr. Jeanne Doubinger (the chief of the Laboratory of Palynology of University of Strasbourg), Dr. Inna Dobruskina, Dr. Maya Doludenko and Dr. Léa Grauvogel-Stamm.



Louis Grauvogel pointing out to the Soviet palaeobotanists a spectacular specimen of his collection (a 7 meters long *Limulus* or horseshoe crab track). From left to right are Dr. Inna Dobruskina, Dr. Maya Doludenko, Louis Grauvogel, the official interpreter, and Professor V.A. Vakhrameev.



Some aspects of our trip to Rybinsk, where we went by train to search for specimens of *Pleuromeia rossica*, but where there were also fish and amphibian remains. The photo at left, below shows the outcrop containing the lycopsid remains, which were very abundant.

In 1989, Inna invited me to Russia where she organized two unforgettable trips for me. The first one was to Rybinsk along the Volga River to search for *Pleuromeia* specimens (see the photos below) and the second one to Akademgorodok, which is an

important but curious scientific city built out of nothing in the middle of a beautiful pine and beech forest, close to Novosibirsk. There I met Dr. Nina Mogutcheva who is another Triassic plant specialist working at the University of Novosibirsk.



Additional aspects of our trip to Rybinsk Inna and her ex-husband Arnold Krupnikov are in the foreground, and Dr. Igor Novikov (an amphibian specialist) is above. At the left, above, are Dr. Alla Minich (a fish specialist) and Kostya (Inna's son). The photo at right, which was taken at lunch time shows Inna at the right with her daughter Ira in the left foreground and Dr. Igor Novikov behind Inna.

In 1992, after the 4th International Conference of Paleobotany which has been held in Paris (France), I hosted a short meeting in Ringendorf, near Strasbourg (NE France), at the place where the Triassic fossil collection of Louis Grauvogel is housed (as shown in the two photos showing the Russian delegation in 1982). The Triassic plant specialists who attended this meeting were: Inna Dobruskina, Nina Mogutcheva, Sidney Ash, Heidi Holmes-Anderson, John Anderson and Lea Grauvogel-Stamm. In fact I have organized this meeting for discussing the project of John and Heidi Anderson called "Global Triassic megaplant genera", of which the aim was to list all the Permo-Triassic megaplant genera of the world and to search

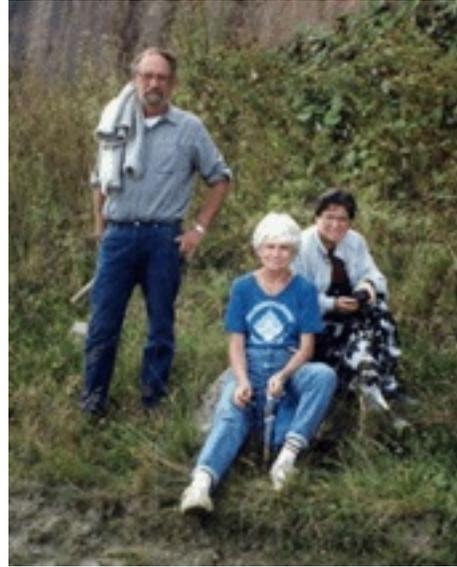
all the literature dealing with them as well as their precise stratigraphic and geographic situations. We were all included in this project. As to me, I had to search all the data for Europe. I remember that I spent much time on this project, which unfortunately was never completed.



Triassic plant specialists during the meeting about the “Global Triassic megaplant genera” project at the entrance to a Voltzia sandstone (Upper Buntsandstein) quarry. From right to left, Dr. John Anderson, Dr. Heidi Holmes-Anderson, Dr. Nina Mogutcheva, Dr. Inna Dobruskina, Dr. Sidney Ash and Dr. Lea Grauvogel-Stamm.



The team sitting around a pile of sandstone slabs from the Voltzia sandstone.



Dr. Inna Dobruskina with Dr. Sidney Ash and Dr. Léa Grauvogel-Stamm at the Global Triassic megaplant genera project



The team sitting around a table discussing the “Global Triassic megaplant genera project” of John Anderson.

Dr. Sidney Ash, Adjunct Professor of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA, first met Inna in 1984 at the Third Latin American Congress of Paleontology in Mexico D. F., Mexico where both of them gave presentations and later participated in a

field trip to the coal mines in the Santa Clara Formation of Late Triassic age in northwestern Mexico which contains a large flora. Although the large flora associated with this coal deposit was discovered in the nineteenth century it was never systematically studied until Dr. Reinhard Weber of the Institute of Geology, National Autonomous University of Mexico began to investigate it in the late twentieth century until his untimely death a few years ago. In 1989 Inna and her son Ari visited me in Utah after she had attended the International Geological Congress in Washington, D.C. During her visit to Ogden I was finally able to show her specimens of the Upper Triassic Chinle flora from the American southwest after telling her about them for so many years. We met again in 1992 at the Fourth Conference of the International Organization of Palaeobotany in Paris, France where we both gave presentations. After the conference was over we travelled to Ringendorf near Strasbourg, France to confer with Lea Grauvogel-Stamm and John and Heidi Anderson about a joint Global Triassic Megaplant Genera Project that John proposed we work on together.

Dr. Heidi Holmes (formerly Anderson), says it was very sad to hear of the passing of Inna Dobruskina although on a happier note it has brought us contact with her daughter and son. I sent her our seasons greetings every December for many years and at some stage because I no longer heard from her I discontinued. So it was quite a surprise to learn she lived to be 80 years old. For a long time her name was familiar to me via her research papers as a Russian palaeobotanist working on Triassic fossils. Then one day in

1990 she came to visit our laboratory to study the Molteno Triassic plants and compare these Gondwana ones with those of Eurasia. She arrived with her 14 year old son and stayed with us in Pretoria from 27th September till 10th November. Her son Kostya (now called Ari) was the same age as my second daughter Hilary. While the parents worked on fossils the children went to school and Kostya was quite a novelty while he attended Pretoria Boys High School for nearly 6 weeks. In a recent email he wrote "I have very fond memories of my experiences in Pretoria and field trips around it. I am grateful to you and your family for your hospitality and the opportunity to see South Africa from a genuine local perspective." They first stayed with John Anderson and his wife Marijke from 27th September till 18th October and then with me and my partner Frank till they left to return to their new home in Israel. John took them on a field trip to the Molteno town area (end of September) and I took them to Little Switzerland, Golden Gate and Senekal (12-14 October). John in particular helped edit the English for her book on the Triassic Plants of Laurasia which was eventually published. She gave a lecture to the staff at the Botanical Research Institute about the difficult and interesting life as a researcher in Moscow during the Russian Soviet Era. Inna was a scientist with an inquiring mind and passionate about Triassic fossil plants. As women, Inna and I shared much in common even though we came from such different cultures in having 2 children and being divorced from an ex that was still a friend (in my case a colleague). For a brief period our lives touched and the pleasant memories of Inna Dobruskina linger on as if they were yesterday.

Dr. John Anderson, Evolutionary Studies Institute (formerly Bernard Price Institute for Palaeontology) Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg, cannot believe that 24 years have passed since Inna stayed with us here in South Africa for those two months in 1990 (27 September to 10 November)! It was a momentous year: Nelson Mandela was released after his 27 years in prison and it saw the reunification of Germany; in science it witnessed the birth of the Human Genome Project as well as the Internet, and the launch of the Hubble Space Telescope. I note this coincidence of timing for two reasons. The first, since before Mandela's release, we lived in relative isolation here, unwelcomed around the world (the tentacles of boycott ranged from sport to business and even into science). So for us, Inna, with her young son Kostya, was indeed most welcome; and she came with that broad warm smile so very evident in the photo of her at the top of this obituary. She was a breath of global air; even more so since she had only recently emigrated from Russia to Israel.

Besides Triassic plants, there was another special preoccupation Inna and I held in common—the second reason for the focus on the year 1990 above. We had both spent a good deal of time and energy through the years drawing up charts of past centuries showing the coincidence of events in world affairs, from governance to the sciences and the arts. We talked a lot around that. Snippets of memory, more local, include Inna's tasty Russian peasants dish of a pie made of bread dough filled with eggs, the Primrose oil we found to doctor her troubled skin; and Kostya eating the greater part of a wedge of Brie cheese in a single sitting. These are the stuff of shared life, no less

than the field trips and the conferences.

Thank you Inna for having been such a distinctive part of our lives; and sorry I haven't (yet) brought to publication that Global Triassic Megaplant Genera project of ours. The set of ring-binders filled with our combined efforts sit prominently in my Little Molteno Room here at home telling me of our times together ranging from southern Africa to the heart of Europe!

Conclusions

The photos shown in this obituary make Inna so alive to all of us that it is difficult to imagine that we will never meet her again. Fortunately, they will help us to keep her in our memory for many years to come. She was an enthusiastic, open-minded and engaging person as well as a tireless researcher having had a great passion for the Triassic and the plants of this period, as well as the correlation of the floras between the different parts of Eurasia. Inna's monograph "Triassic Floras of Eurasia" to which she devoted a great part of her life will remain her most important publication. The book is all the more important since it contains much data on the Triassic floras of Russia which were practically inaccessible to western palaeobotanists and geologists in the past.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Botanical Society of America Annual Meeting

Boise, Idaho, USA July 26-30 2014

Paleobotanical Section of BSA Banquet
Monday 28 July and Annual Business
Meeting Wednesday 30 July.

4th International Palaeontological Congress

The 4th International Palaeontological Congress will be held in Mendoza, Argentina, September 28 - October 3, 2014. the Congress website is already up and running: www.ipc4mendoza2014.org.ar. There you can find preliminary information on the event, with more information to come soon. This website has all of the information about the agenda and program.

9th EPPC 2014 (August 26-31, 2014, University of Padua)

Italian palaeobotanists and palynologists are enthusiastically preparing the next EPPC in Padua, or Padova as the Italian name is. We hope to meet all our European colleagues at this conference.

The present day problems of climate and floristic changes, ecosystem and landscape transformations caused by human activities, force the palaeobotanical and palynological world to study these subjects also in the past, and in this way reinforce the bridge between past and present. These subjects will be among the topics of the 9th EPPC meeting in Padua.

Padova is a charming historic city, located at about 40 km west of Venice, in Northern Italy, with a dense network of arcaded streets, large “piazze” (squares) and many bridges crossing the various branches of the Bacchiglione river. The almost 800 years old

University of Padova is famous for having had Galileo Galilei among its lecturers as well as important 19th century palaeobotanists such as Abramo Massalongo and Barone Achille de Zigno.

All scientific sessions will be held at the new Department of Geoscience. However also the famous Botanical Garden and the Museum of Palaeontology will be involved in this conference.

In order to favor the attendance of young scientists, we hope to offer University residences and special grants. Field-trips are planned in the fascinating landscapes of the Dolomites, Sardinia, Emilia-Romagna, Latium and Tuscany.

Hoping to see you all in Padova,
The EPPC 2014 organizing group

More information will be available at the homepage of the congress:
<http://www.geoscienze.unipd.it/9th-european-palaeobotany-palynology-conference>



CALL FOR NEWS AND NOTICES

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