CZECH ASSOCIATION OF GEOPHYSICISTS

Great Czech Geophysicists

In association with UNESCO, the world's scientific community commemorates this year the 100th anniversary of the death of Roland Eötvös (1848-1919), a pioneer of high precision gravitational physics, founding father of geophysics and innovator of higher education (see https://eotvos100.hu/en/page/eotvos-100).

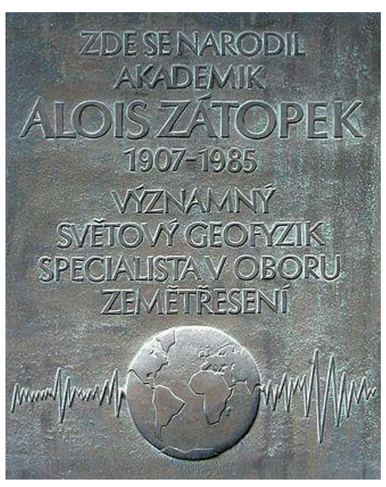
This anniversary inspired us to commemorate also great Czech geophysicists. It is not easy task because significant achievements were obtained in global, but also aplied, engineering and mining geophysics. As example, V. Láska, B. Šalamon, F. Běhounek, R. Běhounek, A. Zátopek, F. Čechura, K. Pěč, J. Gruntorád, S. Mareš, and K. Műller can be mentioned.

Prof. Václav Láska (1862–1943) was a renowned Czech astronomer, geophysicist, and mathematician. He conducted most of his work at Charles University.

Born in 1862 in Prague, graduated in mathematics and astronomy from the German University of Charles-Ferdinand. In 1890 he was appointed as an assistant at the Czech Astronomical Observatory, and from 1896 as a professor of astronomy and higher geodesy at the Higher Polytechnic School in Galicia, Lemberg, and from 1911 as Professor of Applied Mathematics at the Faculty of Arts of the Czech University of Charles-Ferdinand. In 1920 he founded the Geophysical Institute at the Charles University, later the Geophysical State Institute. In 1924 he installed a horizontal Wiechert seismograph in Prague on Charles. He has written over 300 scientific papers He died in 1943 in Černošice near Prague. (According http://geo.mff.cuni.cz/historie.htm).

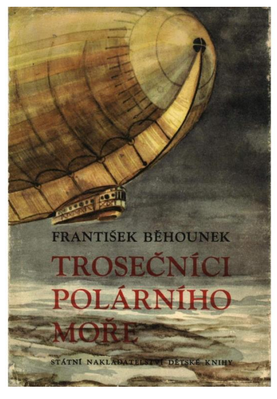
Láska formula (for earthquakes in distance 2–10 megameters): "Epicentral distance in megameters = difference of S and P wave arrival time in minutes - 1".

Prof. Alois Zátopek (1907- 1985) was a Czech geophysicist, founder of modern Czech seismology.



Born 1907 in Zašová in Vsetín, graduate of mathematics and physics at the Faculty of Science, Charles University. From 1934 to 1950, he worked at the State Geophysical Institute, during the war at the Geophysical Institute of the German University. Since 1947, he has been associate professor at the Faculty of Science, since 1952 professor of geophysics at the newly created Faculty of Mathematics and Physics. He led the Department of Geophysics from her independence in 1965 to 1971. In 1953 he was elected a member-correspondent of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, and since 1968 an academician; in the years 1956–1972 he represented the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in the European Seismological Commission, and in 1959–1962 he was its Vice President, 1962–1966 the President. He studied theoretical geophysics, tectonophysics, the mechanism of microseisms, seismicity, observatory seismology and experimental physics. He has published more than 220 scientific papers. He raised a whole generation of Czech geophysicists. As a passionate cellist, he met in the string quartet with J. Horák, J. Jarník and K. Drbohlav. He was a cousin of the Olympian Emil Zátopek. He died in 1985 in Prague. (According http://geo.mff.cuni.cz/historie.htm).

Prof. František Běhounek (1898–1973) was a Czech scientist (radiologist), explorer and writer. The asteroid 3278 Běhounek is named after him.



Běhounek studied physics and mathematics at Charles University, later radiology in France with Marie Curie-Skłodowska. In 1920s, he was one of the founders of State Radiological Institute. In 1926, he took part in an expedition of Roald Amundsen to the North Pole with airship Norge. In 1928, as an expert on cosmic rays, he was a member of crew of airship Italia led by Umberto Nobile. He survived its crash in 1928, and later described it in book *Trosečníci na kře ledové*.
As a scientist, he worked in industrial companies, medical institutions, universities and in the state academy. Since the 1950s, he has participated in work of UNESCO. (According https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franti%C5%A1ek_B%C4%9Bhounek).