

Ryszard Marcinowski (1946-2010)

Memories and personal reminiscences



Ryszard Marcinowski, December, 2009
(photo by Anna Żylińska)

Untimely, untimely – that is the only word that burst into my mind when I first heard the blood-chilling news that Ryszard Marcinowski had died. He passed away unexpectedly on April 4th, 2010. Untimely, because he was only 64 years old. Untimely, because he was able to complete a mere 40 recognized scientific papers, nine of which being faunal (primarily ammonite) monographs, all published since 1970. He left a number of unfinished projects, some of which have been continued by his collaborators and friends, and a vast quantity of undescribed ammonite material. Among the latter, he most valued the rich collection of *Schloenbachia* from Kazakhstan, now described by Jim Kennedy and included in this issue of *Acta Geologica Polonica*. The captivating collection of extraordinarily preserved Kazakh ammonites was a treasure he brought back from his second Mangyshlak expedition. The genus *Schloenbachia* was always one of his favourites, having been collected and studied in various European countries, and first found by him during his M.Sc. fieldwork (1967–1969) in the Polish Jura, east of Częstochowa [paper no. 2, in the list of Ryszard’s scientific papers]. This early fieldwork introduced him to the peculiar facies and lithological diversity of the mid-Cretaceous succession. This soon became the principal subject of his further research in Poland [3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 15, 17, 19, 27, 40] and farther afield, in Germany [14, 34], the Ukraine [9, 10], Central Asia [18, 31, 33], as well as far-distant Madagascar [37]. Of these researches, the most spectacular are the results of investigations over many years of the classic section exposed at Anapolon-Vistula in Central Poland, conducted by himself personally, or co-authored with his teachers [17, 28], friends, and/or students [20]. An important monograph summarizing these studies, co-authored with Jost Wiedmann [28], was widely appreciated and was awarded highly by the Minister of National Education in 1991.

Within the mid-Cretaceous succession, the most intriguing to Ryszard were the heteromorph ammonites, in respect of the question of their phylogenic versus their ecological provenance, as well as the effect of stratigraphic condensations and their bearing upon the diversity of the faunas preserved. I vividly recall his desire to understand an originally enigmatic relationship between a turrilitid heteromorph and a strange serpulid which had entangled the turrilitid whorls with its tube. Was it a post-mortem hitchhiking of the polychaete upon the dead ammonite conch, or was this a mutual growth of commensal character? Anyway, this much discussed prize specimen from Sulu-Kapy [18, twice arrowed in fig. 3E] bore no resemblance to the murderous activity of The Boston Strangler – in this case, the turrilitid survived! His interest in such ammonite/serpulid associations was actually awakened 30 years before an exhaustive English study of this topic [*Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, 122, 34–46] which appeared recently in 2011.

Another hit among Ryszard's finds was his discovery, just east of Częstochowa [6], of peculiarly shaped/coiled serpulid tubes which exhibit an almost ideal evolute planispiral, like many ammonites and, moreover, possess relatively delicate transverse ribs, and quite thick, not infrequent constrictions. These tubes, first recovered in the sands of Mokrzesz, looked just like small ammonites. Subsequently found also at Annopol-on-Vistula [17], they differed from any ancient serpulid species, and they remain up to now an endemic feature of the mid-Cretaceous succession in Poland. Special studies [*Acta Geologica Polonica*, 46, 61–80] allowed them to be classified as an independent species, *Rotularia (Praerotularia) marcinowskii* Radwańska 1996, this being the first non-ammonoid taxon to be named in honour of Ryszard.

Two additional aspects of Ryszard's researches can be mentioned. The first was the mid-Cretaceous age physical (dynamic) events in the Central Polish Uplands [3, 5, 15, 17, and finally 40]. The second was biostratigraphic aspects of the classic Wąwał section, which exposes Valanginian black clays containing small ammonites with mother-of-pearl preservation. The research involved a discussion of the relationship of these ammonites to either the Tethyan or Boreal bioprovince in Europe, one of which, or possibly a mixture of both, they could represent [25, 29, 30].

There is a single exception to the virtually exclusive Cretaceous motif of all of Ryszard's papers and that is a paper on a Jurassic topic. This is actually his first publication [1], always placed by him at the top of the reference list in his *curriculum vitae*. It is worth

mentioning, and this is something I remember well, that Ryszard was always very proud of it, as its Upper Oxfordian slump-to-turbidite topic was very close to that of the investigations at that time of the exciting examples in the Carpathian flysch. In reality, this report represented a milestone in our understanding of the structure of the Late Jurassic basin and its bottom topography in Poland!

Ryszard's mid-Cretaceous 'hobby' continued throughout his University career. His studies, begun in 1964 at the Faculty of Geology, University of Warsaw, were completed by an M.Sc. degree in 1969, and a Ph.D. under my supervision [6] in 1974–75. Further advances, following his second Doctoral degree [habilitation thesis; 14] in 1980–81, took him via the post of assistant professor (1986–1993), first to associate professor (1993–2003), and finally to a full professorship as head of the Department of Historical and Regional Geology in his Alma Mater, the University of Warsaw. Moreover, this promotion was soon crowned by his election to the Polish Academy of Sciences in 2004.

The almost countless memberships of diverse committees, boards, and societies, in this country or abroad, all of which were very time- or work-consuming, regardless of being due either to public election, or to government nomination, obviously resulted in the relatively smaller number of recognized pure science papers (40) published by him than might otherwise have been the case.

In my memory, Ryszard will remain for ever as a very solid, well-organized and enterprising, invariably top-grade student, whose special interest in my own fieldwork in the Holy Cross Mountains I recall ever since his first years as an undergraduate. I could never have imagined then that I would soon be supporting his M.Sc., then be supervisor of his Ph.D., editor of all his papers submitted to *Acta Geologica Polonica*, soon after his collaborator on the Editorial Board and Office of *Acta Geologica Polonica* (on which he succeeded me as Editor-in-Chief in 1999), and soon after again, but untimely – the writer of his Obituary [*Przegląd Geologiczny*, 58 (6), 466–468]. In such a way, this happened to be a taste of the bitterness of injustice in our lives!

And, what more can I say today in memory of my undergraduate student, postgraduate doctoral student, collaborator, successor, and a cordial Friend? The answer is very simple: I will miss you greatly, as will many!

*Andrzej Radwański,
Warszawa,
November, 2013*

Richard (which is what we Anglo-Saxons called him), and I overlapped in time and career development, and, on occasion, in space. Our early contacts were the usual ones before the collapse of Communism: polite exchanges of offprints. Writing to him on 26 January 1981, I see myself saying: ‘I was delighted to receive your recent paper on Cenomanian ammonites from the GDR, Poland and the Soviet Union, especially as your conclusions agree with my own, both published and unpublished! A packet of our recent offprints has been dispatched under separate cover.

In view of our common interests, Jake Hancock of King’s College, London, and C.W. Wright [author of the Cretaceous part of the Ammonoidea Treatise, and the giant in the field, albeit a recently retired senior Civil Servant – a very English phenomenon] who now works in Oxford, and I wonder if you would be able to visit England, to look at our collections here and discuss common interests. We had hoped to see you at the recent M.C.E. [Middle Cretaceous Events] meeting. Is there a possibility, perhaps, to come via the British Council, as did Joseph Kaźmierczak?’

Richard replied on February 24 1981, that he had a Potocki Grant, and would come to the United Kingdom for a month in May and June of that year ‘...it would be excellent if I could acquaint myself with some of the more important exposures of Aptian, Albian and higher Upper Cretaceous exposures in southern England. If your time allows you to meet and guide me at that time, please be so kind to let me immediately know, as a visit to you is the most important item during my intended journey....’

The visit was arranged, with Richard attached to my Oxford College for the duration of his visit, and based in the very eccentric household of Jake Hancock and Ray Parish in London. My memories of the scientific aspect of the visit are slight. When Richard arrived, it was a time of turmoil in Poland, with the attempted suppression of Solidarity (I still have the little lapel *Solidarność* badge he gave me), and he was enormously excited by the thought of a Poland free from Communism. We went to the Isle of Wight with Jake Hancock, and worked through the marvellous sections there, staying at a famously eccentric Country House Hotel, the Peacock Vane, in Bonchurch, built in a vast prehistoric landslip of Upper Albian and Cenomanian rocks, the source of some of the type specimens of a number of classic Cenomanian ammonite species. Richard was greatly impressed when the proprietor announced, half way through dinner one evening, that he would have to leave the staff to attend to our needs as there was a serious riot at the nearby

at Parkhurst Prison, and that as Chairman of the Board of Visitors, his presence was required.

Back in London, we pored over the collections of the Natural History Museum, and he convinced me of the widespread (if not universal) evidence for dimorphism in the ammonites that were our common interest (quite what he would make of my failure to recognise dimorphism in the wonderful collections of *Schloenbachia* from the Mangyschlak Mountains described elsewhere in this volume, I hesitate to imagine).

Thereafter, we corresponded, and met at conferences, until, in 1990, Jake Hancock, Ray Parish and I met up with Richard in Warsaw, and were guided over the Campanian/Mastrichtian outcrops of the Vistula valley by Richard and a very young Irek Walaszczyk. The world had changed, the communist governmental system was being dismantled, and Poland’s transformation into a modern democratic state was under way. My chief memory of the visit was hospitality, together with the discovery in a state tourist hotel, that certain purchases could be made with hard currency, including Four Roses American Bourbon. But that is another story....

Richard and I devoted our early (and late) careers to research on the Mid-Cretaceous, especially the Cenomanian Stage, and we both published our first serious papers on rocks of this age in the same year; 1970. Looking back, it is scarcely believable how neglected this fascinating period of Earth history had been. So far as ammonites were concerned, one still relied on works published by Gideon Mantell in 1822, and James Sowerby between 1812 and 1823 for the only illustrations of the type material of key species such as *Schloenbachia varians* and *Mantelliceras mantelli*. There was also the matter of what constituted a fossil species. In their 1951 synoptic supplement to Daniel Sharpe’s 1853-1857 account of the ammonites of the English Chalk, C.W. and E.V. Wright recognised nineteen species and varieties of *Schloenbachia* in the Lower Chalk of southern England, and Manija (1974) was to recognise 29 in an account of the Cenomanian ammonites from Turkmenistan. Richard recognised 10 species and varieties of *Schloenbachia* in his 1970 paper based on his Master’s Thesis. And then, we all changed from splitters to lumpers, and saw similarity where before we saw difference: *Schloenbachia* is now down to three species.

If I now turn to Richard’s later papers, two are of note in the context of this volume. The first is the 2004 account of the Turonian and Early Coniacian inoceramid/ammonite succession in the Manasoa section on the Onilahy River in Madagascar. At several

levels in the Madagascan Upper Cretaceous, the described succession of faunas is incompatible with, or the reverse of, that elsewhere in the world. As yet unresolved problems in the Cenomanian are referred to below. That in the Coniacian, where Lower and Middle Coniacian faunas appeared to occur in reversed order in Madagascar, compared to those in Europe, Japan, and elsewhere, was resolved through the combination of detailed field study (a young man's game, as I see it these days) by Tomasz Praszker, Krzysztof Dembicz, and Małgorzata Bienkowska, and the taxonomic expertise of Richard (on ammonites), and his pupil, Irek Walaszczyk on inoceramids. The sequence is in fact the same as elsewhere in the world: the fossils got it right all along.

The second is the 1996 account of the Cretaceous succession in the Mangyshlak Mountains of Western Kazakhstan, which Richard had visited in 1991, and to which an enormously successful expedition was mounted in 1992. This region is at the eastern limit of the range of Richard's old friend *Schloenbachia*, three thousand kilometres east of Warsaw. Yet the same detailed sequence of faunas can be recognised in the Mid-Cretaceous: for example, big fat *Schloenbachia*, *Sharpeiceras schlueteri* and lots of big *Inoceramus crippi*, exactly as in the Lower Chalk at Folkestone that Richard and I hammered at 32 years ago. Higher, there is a bed of phosphatised fossils in the Upper Turonian, with exactly the same ammonites (at present sitting next to me, waiting to be described) as occur at the top of the Chalk Rock in the Chiltern Hills of southern England, the nearest outcrop only 20 kilometres from where I am sitting at home writing this, a home where our dear friend and colleague first came through the door bearing gifts in the dark of night, having navigated from Warsaw to Heathrow to Oxford to Islip, kissed my wife's hand, and was late for dinner, all those years ago.

*Jim Kennedy,
Islip, Oxfordshire,
December, 2013*

I think that my most poignant memories of Ryszard was when he came over to England in 1981. We went into the field together to see the then famous pit in the Gault-Lower Greensand Junction beds and the overlying Gault at Squerryes, Westerham and of course to Folkestone. With Jake Hancock, we went to the Sevenoaks Brickworks and to Leighton Buzzard. All of these sections were pertinent to his biostratigraphical and ammonite studies of the Albian of Poland and eventually Mangyshlak, where he

did excellent work. He had a wonderful sense of humour and, coming from Poland at a time of transition, he was utterly amazed by life over here in England. I have memories of him tucking into the food at the Little Chef [a chain of motorway cafés] at Otford with real relish – and Jake and I almost having to drag him physically from the café. He was a great supporter of Solidarity and had brought over with him a fair stock of Solidarity badges which he distributed. It was a great day when at last Poland became free. I think that the photograph of him at Squerryes shows something of his cherubic nature; a great companion to be with and a fine geologist

*Hugh Owen,
London,
November, 2013*

When Ryszard first came to England to work on the Geological Survey and Natural History Museum ammonite collections in London, he was given £50 (an enormous amount of money in those days) by the Polish authorities to pay his expenses. I have a vivid memory of him showing us his £50 banknote when we took him for a drink in the Ennismore Arms in South Kensington, just down the road from the Natural History Museum on the first day of his visit - none of us palaeontologists from either museum had ever seen a British £50 banknote! Somebody had to take it to one of the banks after lunch to get it changed into smaller denominations as otherwise he would not have been able to make us of it!

My other memories were of Ryszard's almost child-like pride in his magnificent Mangyshlak ammonite collections. I remember spending the whole of one afternoon at the University of Warsaw while he pulled out drawer after drawer of these superbly preserved ammonites for my inspection. I also remember his wonderful hospitality one evening at his apartment outside Warsaw and, on another occasion, overnight at his dacha in the country when Irek and I were on our way south to study the famous Slupia Nadbrzezna candidate Coniacian GSSP section in the Vistula river cliff.

*Chris Wood,
Minehead,
November, 2013*

I first met Ryszard in 1976 or shortly before. It was in the Crimea, between Bachtschissarai, Trudoljubvka and Prochladnoe, where we spent almost the whole of June (03-23.06.1976). We stayed in the mapping camp of the students of Moscow State University, located

near Prochladnoe. Ryszard and I were taking part in research on the Cretaceous successions and faunas, led by Prof. Dr. D.P. Naidin from Moscow University. We became close friends then.

The mapping area around Prochladnoe lies within the so called Mountainous Crimea, in the south-western part of the peninsula, with a Triassic through Jurassic basement (Taurian Series with olistoliths of Permian age) overlain by the Cretaceous and Cenozoic, with excellent, fossiliferous successions. Two important disconformities are visible there: the older one between the Taurian Series and the Hauterivian; and the younger one, between the Upper Maastrichtian and Danian. The latter is well seen in the huge Korabelnaja cuesta (Text-figs 1 and 2 show the shape of the landscape around Prochladnoe: the hill in the middle of the picture consists of folded Triassic flysch overlain by Hauterivian, with a visible disconformity). This part of the Crimea is also interesting because of its biological and cultural/historical heritage. Beautiful green lizard (*Lacerta viridis*) and fraxinella (*Dicamnus albus*) are among its biological curiosities. A long list of mountain, river, and other names (such

as the palace of Bachtschissarai) testify to its Tatarian past and to the history of the area. I remember our trips with Ryszard to the Black Sea, visiting the spas of Alushta, Alupta and Jalta, with their interesting botanical gardens.

Ryszard studied especially the boundary succession between the Lower and Upper Cretaceous, focusing on ammonites, and I studied mostly the Upper Cretaceous inoceramid bivalves; we both focused on the uppermost Albian through Middle Turonian. We were a good team and we received a lot of help and support from our Russian colleagues, especially from Prof. Dr. Naidin; there was also a lot of entertainment and socialising in the evenings, with tea, cookies and vodka. Our friendship deepened further in the years which followed. We had an intensive correspondence, especially between 1977 through 2001, concerning our common researches and scientific projects, scientific meetings and, last but not least, our families. I was able to meet Ryszard's parents, his wife Marta and their two children; and also his second wife Tatjana and their son. Ryszard was always asking about the health of my mother.



Ryszard in the Botanical Garden in Jalta, Crimea, June, 1976

Ryszard was several times in Freiberg, the starting point of our scientific trips to the Subhercynian Cretaceous (Sachsen-Anhalt: Lower and Upper Cretaceous, mainly Cenomanian through Lower Campanian) and the Cretaceous of the Elbe Valley in Saxony (Upper Cenomanian through Coniacian). In the latter area we were able to visit the Cenomanian type localities of the Niederschöna (the Peruc Formation of the Czech Cretaceous), Oberhäslich and Dölzchen formations (the Korycany Formation in the Czech Cretaceous), and could study facies differentiation, especially in the Tharandter Wald. We worked closely together, Ryszard determining my Cenomanian ammonite material from Hoppenstedt Deersheim (Sachsen-Anhalt near the Harz Mountains) and ammonites from Erlicht near Freiberg (at the border of the Tharandter Wald, Saxony) in the Geinitz collection, while I studied his Polish inoceramids. Ryszard also reported on the Cretaceous meetings that took place in Western Germany, which the government of Eastern Germany (GDR) did not permit me to attend. Thanks to Ryszard and other friends, like Jost Wiedmann, I was able to maintain constant scientific contacts with the outside world.

I visited Poland several times. I particularly remember two trips, in the late 1970s and late 1990s. The first one, with Ryszard, Prof. Dr. Naidin and his daughter, which took place in 1979, was to the Polish Jura Chains, including visits first to Kraków, then to the Holy Cross Mts, and finally to the Middle Vistula gorge section, between Annopol and Kazimierz Dolny. These were Ryszard's main field study areas in Poland. We had the opportunity of seeing much more than geology alone: the famous church with the Black Madonna in Częstochowa; Wawel, the main old market, and the church with the altar of Veit Stoss in Kraków; and the market place with beautiful Polish renaissance buildings in Kazimierz Dolny. We finished in the old part of Warszawa, with interesting and open discussions about our joint history. Parts of these regions I saw once more during my visit in 1999, together with Ryszard and Irek (now Prof. Dr. I. Walaszczyk): the region between Sandomierz and Kazimierz and the excellent outcrops of the Campanian and Maastrichtian along the River Wisła (Vistula); unfortunately, the water level of the river was very high at that time, which meant that some places we intended to visit were not accessible. After this visit, further joint research between the three of us was planned; sadly, everything was interrupted by Ryszard's untimely death. This collaboration is now continued by Irek and myself.

The University of Warszawa has lost an excellent

scientist, teacher, colleague and friend; and I have lost a good and helpful friend, whom I will never forget. Let me repeat this in German: Lieber Ryszard, ich werde niemals unsere gemeinsam verbrachte Zeit, unsere Zusammenarbeit, unsere Freundschaft und Deine Familien und Ihre Gastfreundschaft vergessen. Die Erde möge Dir leicht sein.

*Karl-Armin Tröger,
Freiberg,
October, 2013*

Recollections of Ryszard are intimately tied to his field trips. He was a great companion in the field; and, whether it was a day trip somewhere nearby, a regular student excursion, or a serious scientific expedition to remote countries, he always devoted his whole soul to it, and was an inspiring and natural leader. He will be always remembered for the student exchange he organized between Tübingen and Warsaw Universities, and for his excursions to eastern Europe, of which his Mangyshlak expeditions are already a part of the history of his mother Faculty of Geology in Warsaw University.

The student exchange between our Faculty and the Geology Faculty of Tübingen University started in 1981; Ryszard was then a Humboldt fellow, staying in Tübingen, hosted by Prof. Jost Wiedmann. At one point, Ryszard proposed to the Tübingen University authorities to organize a Polish-German student exchange. What seems today a simple project, was not that time, deep in the communist period, albeit already at the beginning of the political transition in Poland. Anyway, the initiative was immediately taken up by the Germans and without any hesitation by the University of Warsaw authorities. Very soon a group of German students, under the leadership of Prof. Seilacher, arrived in Poland. Ryszard, the sole organizer and conductor of the exchange, put all the German and Polish students into tents, in which they camped somewhere in the southern part of the Holy Cross Mountains, the main field area for the geology students of Warsaw University. He found this to be the best way for them to make friends. This was one of his goals: to enable these two groups of young people from both sides of the Iron Curtain to play together and become friends. And it worked well. Even the weather helped. It was a hot rainless summer, the nearby river was quite wild and pure, and the fireside evenings at the camp lasted long into the night. Ryszard animated the evenings; he had a phenomenal memory (as opposed to hearing and vocal skills), amusing us with jokes and poems. During the day we introduced our German friends to the geology of the area.



Field camp of German and Polish students in the Holy Cross Mts.; Summer, 1983; from left to right: Andrzej Matyja, Zdzisław Belka and Andrzej Radwański (both hiding), Stanisław Skompski, Ryszard Marcinowski and Adolf Seilacher

The exchange continued for a few more years. We learned about the geology of southern Germany and other groups of German students wandered through various regions of southern Poland, led by Prof. Wiedmann, Prof. Wendt and Prof. Frisch.

Today, it would not be easy to organize a similar trip; the rivers are no longer wild and it is not possible to camp outside designated places, and the students expect at least minimum comfort. But the main reason, would be to find someone as Richard, to lead the group.

*Stanisław Skompski,
Warszawa,
September, 2013*

Professor Ryszard Bogdan Marcinowski was elected to the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS) as a corresponding member in the autumn of 2004. My closer contacts with him dated, however, from a few years earlier, when he served two terms as President of the Committee on Geological Sciences PAN and con-

currently was the Editor-in-Chief of *Acta Geologica Polonica*, a scientific journal of the Committee. Because of these public functions, Ryszard paid visits to me from time to time in my office at the Division VII of the Earth and Mining Sciences, where we had the opportunity of discussing various topics or simply to have some interesting chats. I found then a man of broad knowledge and high competence, and one dedicated to service for the benefit of the scientific community.

Consequently, when I was nominated and elected a President of the Division of Earth and Mining Sciences of PAS in 2003, I offered Ryszard the position of a Deputy President and was very pleased when he kindly accepted. Together with Professor Andrzej Ciołkosz, a geographer and a second Deputy President, we acted as a trio in the Division's presidium. I admired the skilful way in which he combined high standards and an apparently light, indulgent and, whenever appropriate, frivolous approach to affairs that were to be settled by the Division.

Ryszard was responsible for the supervision of several scientific institutions that were statutory parts of Division VII and of all kinds of affairs pertaining to them; coordination of scientific and organizational activities of the affiliated scientific committees; working on the editorial board of *Annual Report*, a journal of PAS; and representing me whenever necessary.

Ryszard also served two terms (1996–2002) as President of the National Committee of Poland for the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and was a member (1996–2002) of the National Committee for the International Council for Science (ICSU) and of the Council of the scientific societies affiliated to the Presidium of PAS (2003–2006).

I knew that Ryszard was an internationally esteemed scientist whose published researches contributed greatly to the knowledge of Cretaceous geology. His innovative approach, dependability and proficiency in his professional life and career were widely appreciated. This is the Ryszard that I keep in my memory, and I am happy that I had the opportunity of meeting and working with such an outstanding person.

*Bogdan Ney,
Warszawa,
November, 2013*

I met Professor Ryszard Marcinowski, ‘Rysiek’, long ago in Poznań, where we both taught geology at the Adam Mickiewicz University. He gave lectures on Historical Geology and I lectured on Tectonics. I knew that he was an outstanding geologist, an expert on the Cretaceous in general and on Cretaceous ammonites in particular. After some longer chats, I soon found that he was a man of deep knowledge, not only of science, and that he had a wonderful sense of humour. Very soon, Rysiek won my affection, when I realized that we shared similar views on many aspects of the surrounding world.

In the mid 90s, we had more activities in common, and it was then that I had the opportunity of getting to know Rysiek better. We were then jointly involved in various activities of the Polish Academy of Sciences, especially the Committee on Geological Sciences. For two terms Rysiek served as President of the Committee, with me as the Deputy President. He was also the Editor-in-Chief of *Acta Geologica Polonica*, an official journal of the Committee. It was at that time that the journal became evaluated, recognized and successfully enrolled by the Institute for Scientific Information in Philadelphia, USA.

Professor Marcinowski was for many years an elected member of the Scientific Council at my parent Institute, the Institute of Geological Sciences PAS.

When Rysiek became a member of the Academy, he chose our council as the one in which he wished to be actively involved. He was always an active, wise and helpful participant in the council meetings, with his sensible opinions and usually well-balanced advice, especially on Academy matters. In the Polish Academy of Sciences, Rysiek later became the Deputy President of Division VII of Earth and Mining Sciences. Among his many responsibilities lay the supervision of several of the Division’s scientific institutes. It was inevitable that Professor Marcinowski, a geologist, would supervise our Institute. In this way he was also our direct superior. Rysiek was often nominated to head commissions that evaluated the Institute every three years. Thus he came to know our Institute and the people working in it very well, and he took great care of the Institute’s image and its success. We found that we could always count on his helpful advice and practical assistance.

Rysiek was a righteous and principled man. His opinions were clearly formulated and staunchly expressed. He never hid his beliefs and was always ready to express them whenever or wherever it became necessary. In the academic community, everybody knew that Professor Marcinowski’s judgements might be severe. However, his verdicts were always soundly based and never unfair. Even when many would prefer to hear only pleasant words, Rysiek would never support tacit consent on items that were unclear, obscure and uncertain, and he was always able to clarify contentious issues so that an acceptable compromise was achieved.

*Andrzej Żelaźniewicz,
Wrocław,
November, 2013*

Serving two terms as the Deputy President of Division VII Earth and Mining Sciences PAS, Professor Ryszard Marcinowski arrived at the Strata Mechanics Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Kraków for the first time in 2003, when he acted as a supervisor of our Institute.

High-principled and matter-of-fact in his approach at first, he soon proved himself to be deeply committed and engaged in the activities of the Institute. Even though the linking factor between us was Earth Science, the Professor, as a geologist, was deeply interested in our field of research, namely the strata mechanics, which is also related to the Earth.

Professor Marcinowski was always an active participant in the life of the Institute, being responsible for the acceptance and approval of statutory research work, taking part in conferences and jubilee events.

His active participation was revealed through his remarks which were always apt and to the point, which proved most useful and as such were duly appreciated afterwards. Rysiek Marcinowski was fair and direct not only in professional matters but also in his contacts with his colleagues and friends.

We all admired him and the time he was with us is remembered with deep gratitude.

*Wacław Dziurzyński,
Kraków,
November, 2013*

Among the scientific field trips, what Ryszard will be remembered for, are inevitably his Kazakhstan expeditions; 3 expeditions to his favorite Mangyshlak Mountains. The first one was in 1991, when he joined his Russian Colleagues, and he immediately fell in love with the area. In 1992 he led his 'life' expedition, with two of his students, Danuta Olszewska (now Olszewska-Nejbert) and me, and with Ludmila Kopaevich, from the State University of Moscow. He was probably one of the first in the Faculty, to use the opportunity, brought with the political transformation in the country. Not only it was possible to get to Kazakhstan without years-long bureaucratic trauma, but it were the first years of the Polish National Science Foundation, with open concourses and financing, which enabled normal scientific expeditions. Again, this seems today a regular procedure, but it was only beginning then.

The 1992 expedition was wonderful and scientifically enormously rich. It must be underlined that it was possible thanks to a great help of Prof. Dimitr P. Naidin, the head of Historical Geology from the State University of Moscow, who worked decades in that area, and to Ludmila F. Kopaevich, who joined the expedition, and was helping throughout not only scientifically, but also with various aspects of this remote and unknown (for us) region. The expedition lasted almost 2 months, with hundreds of kilograms of Cretaceous fossils: ammonites, inoceramids, echinoids and many others, collected. One moment during the expedition was almost a spiritual experience. It was the visit to the Besakty section, in the eastern part of the Mangyshlak Mountains, an area, probably never collected by any geologist or palaeontologist, at least over the last hundred years. What it revealed to the eyes of us, were hundreds of square metres of field covered with ammonites and inoceramids; this was the famous *Schloenbachia* field of the Besakty section. [This material is described and profoundly illustrated in this volume by Jim Kennedy.] It was impossible to collect all; impossible to transport it out. The third expedition, in 1999, by Ryszard and me, was much shorter, and focused on specific topics. It showed, however, how rich the record in that area is. Ryszard started then his study of the older and older strata, going deeper into the Albian. This was what he planned to continue next years.

*Irek Walaszczyk,
Warszawa,
November, 2013*



Ryszard's favorite section: Besakty, eastern Mangyshlak, Kazakhstan

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