

IN MEMORY

Ludwik Kasza

February 19, 1930 – October 25, 2007



On the 30th of October, 2007, at the St. Lawrence Cemetery in Wrocław, a few hundred people attended the last journey of Ludwik Kasza. Kasza was an academic teacher, a well known and respected geologist, a former president of the Society of Geologists Graduated from Wrocław University, a member of the steering board of the Society of Graduates of Wrocław University, and the vice president of the managing board of the Foundation for Wrocław University.

Within the geological world of Wrocław, where he worked all his life, Ludwik Kasza was a colourful and much-liked personality. Gifted in many ways, and having a nature of the “Lvov’er”, he freely shared his skills with the Wrocław geological community.

Ludwik, or “Lunek” to his friends, was born at Rudki, near Lvov, on February 19, 1930. It was there, and partly during World War II, that he finished his elementary schooling. In 1944, he was repatriated, together with his family, and they settled in Krosno, where he attended a gymnasium and passed his “matura” exam. In 1950, he came to Wrocław and started studying geology at Wrocław University. Even before graduating, he became employed in the Department of General Geology, joining the tectonic and mapping team of Prof. Henryk Teisseyre. He graduated in 1955 and then defended his MSc thesis on the geology of the Czarna Góra area (Wilkanów sheet) in the Sudetes. After this, he continued research work and prepared his PhD thesis, “Geology of the Upper Biała Łądecka basin” (published in *Geologia Sudetica*, vol. 1). This research also resulted in the publication of the Geological Map of the Sudetes 1 : 25,000, sheet Nowa Morawa (Map and Memoir). At this time, Ludwik Kasza was also involved in university teaching, giving lectures and practicals on geological mapping and engineering geology (the latter continuously until he retired in 1995).

In 1966, Ludwik Kasza began working in conjunction with the Lower Silesian Office of Mining Projects in Wrocław (DBPG Wrocław) and, subsequently, the newly

founded Research-Project Centre of Open Mining (POLTEGOR) in Wrocław. At Poltegor, he was a key figure in producing engineering and geological reports, mostly for the Bełchatów brown-coal mine in central Poland. And as an employee of Poltegor, he was involved in geological exploration work in the former Yugoslavia and in Libya.

In 1976, Ludwik Kasza came back to Wrocław University to organize the newly formed Department of Applied Geology in the Department of Geological Sciences. This applied geology department worked closely with the brown-coal mines in Bełchatów and Turoszów, the latter in SW Poland. Having a position of “docent”, he also gave regular courses for geology students in mining, geological drilling and engineering geology. Under his direction, six students prepared PhD theses and two scientists completed their habilitations. Ludwik Kasza put significant effort into developing the technical equipment of his department, e.g., installing computers in the 1980s, some of the first at the University.

Ludwik Kasza was a recognized specialist in the field of engineering geology, a member of the Committee of Quaternary Research, and of the Mining Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He was invited, many times, to help organize committees of scientific conferences on the Quaternary, in particular those organized by the Polish Geological Society. He was also on the editorial boards of several journals, e.g., *Open Mining*, and *Brown Coal*.

Lunek was a great personality, and everything he did, he did at a “high level”. He cared very much for details, a trait that was well-known to his co-workers. And although only a few people knew of his “delicate” character, because this was rarely seen, colleagues well remember his discrete questions about those who faced difficulties. He helped many young postgraduates to find their first jobs in geology; a few got a temporary position in his Department of Applied Geology. He also assisted his co-workers when they were going through hard professional times, many finding jobs in the private offices of geological consultancies that he had created (e.g., BEG I, BEG II).

Docent Dr. Ludwik Kasza received numerous awards and medals for his scientific achievements and for his organizational abilities. These included the Medal of 1000 years of the Polish State; Silver and Golden Crosses of Achievements; and Golden Medals of Merit in Geology, in Energetics, and for the Piotrków Voivodship, respectively. On many occasions, he won prizes given by the Rector of the University of Wrocław, and he received many individual and joint prizes given by the Minister of Mining and Energetics. In 1989 he was awarded the Cavalier Cross of the Medal of Resurrection of Poland.

A special “chapter” in Ludwik’s life was with the Society of Geologists Graduated from Wrocław University

(SGWUWr). This is a fellows-type organization of which he was one of the founding members; during his life, he was elected president of the Steering Board no less than eleven times! Lunek loved the society and was its leader for many years. During his presidency, the members of the society always filled up Aula Leopoldinum in Collegium Maius for their meetings. The society acknowledged his immense contributions by awarding him the title Honoured President of SGWUWr in 1996.

Ludwik Kasza also played an important role in the foundation of the Society of Graduates (not only geologists) of Wrocław University (SAUWr) and was twice elected a member of the Steering Board. To his last days, he always tried to stress the mutually interconnecting roles played by both the SGWUWr and the SAUWr.

Despite deteriorating health, Ludwik always showed an interest in the current issue of *Alma Mater Wratislaviensis*. He was inextricably bound to Wrocław University as an academic teacher, a geologist, an organizer, and a scientist. Even when he retired he continued working for the good of the university. To this end, he was active in the Foundation for Wrocław University, a social organization aimed at finding partners and donors for university investments and initiatives. For a few years, he was the vice-President of the Foundation Board.

Ludwik Kasza died in Wrocław on 25th October, 2007. The university and the geological community in Wrocław has lost someone very important. He will be sadly missed.

Czesław August, Ryszard Kryza & Stanisław Staśko
University of Wrocław