



Report

75 years anniversary of the Swiss Society for Photogrammetry, Image Analysis and Remote Sensing (SGPBF)

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75 Years Anniversary of the Swiss Society for Photogrammetry, Image Analysis and Remote Sensing (SGPBF)

By E. Baltasvias, Zurich, 11 November 2003, E-mail: manos@geod.baug.ethz.ch

On September 22nd 2003, the 75 years of SGPBF were celebrated at ETH Zurich, just before the 6th Optical 3D Measurement Techniques Conference. The Swiss Society for Photogrammetry was founded on September 22nd 1928 at ETH Zurich by 58 single and 12 sustaining members, and became immediately a member of the ISP. Since then, it has offered a lot to its members and has contributed significantly to the development of education and training, research and development, hardware and software products, international co-operation and activities within ISPRS and regional organisations like OEEPE and EARSeL. The Society was responsible for the successful organisation of two ISP Congresses (1930 in Zurich and 1968 in Lausanne), its member H. Haerry served as ISP President (1964-1968), while several other members (F. Baeschlin, H. Haerry, W. Bachmann, E. Huber, A. Gruen) served in the ISPRS Council at various positions during the periods 1926-1934, 1948-1952, 1960-1972 and 1992-1996. Switzerland was also responsible for ISPRS Commission V in the period 1988-1992, the chair of the ISPRS Financial Commission (1996-2000), the Chair of the International Scientific Advisory Commission (2000-2004), Associate Editor and Editor-in-Chief positions for the ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing

(1993 to date) and the ISPRS Webmaster position (1994 to date). SGPBF members were active in various other ISPRS or ISPRS-related activities, as WG chairpersons, organisers of scientific events, tutorials etc. The two major academic institutions, ETH Zurich and EPF Lausanne, as well as other ones, like the University of Zurich, have contributed through their education programmes, especially



Prof. S. Murai, President of the Japanese Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and honorary member of ISPRS, gives a present to SGPBF President Prof. A. Gruen.



Prof. G. Danuser, Keynote Speaker of the Optical 3D Measurement Techniques Conference.

at postgraduate level, and their research activities to the advancement of our disciplines, the education of foreign students and the research co-operation at international, regional and bilateral level. The Swiss School for Photogrammetric Operators in St. Gallen (1966-1986) has contributed to the training of operators of analogue and analytical instruments. The contribution of Switzerland in the manufacturing of geodetic and photogrammetric instrumentation is unparalleled world-wide. Names like Wild, Kern, Leica are well known within our profession, and the developments in this field are treated in more detail in an article by Hughes et al. in this issue. Other smaller companies were and are also internationally active (like Swissphoto AG), while during the last period small innovative, internationally-active firms have appeared, especially in Remote Sensing and GIS. All these years, SGPBF has followed and adapted to the new developments, as its name also shows, and with currently 213 members continues to fulfil its original aim as a technical-scientific society, serving its members.



Presentation of the SGPBF honorary membership to Ch. Eidenbenz, A. Flotron and O. Koelbl, all previous SGPBF Presidents (from left to right) by SGPBF President A. Gruen (third from left).

Thus, it was not very surprising but still a great honour that several important representatives have participated to the celebration of the 75 years of SGPBF. ISPRS President J. Trinder, representatives of the German (K.U. Komp), Austrian (G. Muggenhuber), Japanese (Prof. S. Murai), Chinese (Prof. Deren Li) and Turkish (Prof. O. Altan) Sister Societies, the Director of the Swiss Federal Office of Topography and the Swiss Society for Geomatic and Land Management. Before the greeting words of the above colleagues, the Keynote Address for the Optical 3D Measurement Techniques was given. The talk "Photogrammetry in Functional Genomics" by Prof. G. Danuser, Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla CA, USA, an ex student of ETHZ, gave an impressive account of the successful use of geodetic and photogrammetric methods in totally different and very modern scientific disciplines. The celebration continued with the presentation of the honorary membership of the SGPBF to Ch. Eidenbenz, A. Flotron and O. Koelbl, and talks by A. Chapuis and P. Fricker (Leica) on the "Development of Photogrammetry in Switzerland – a (continuous) Success Story" and Ch. Eidenbenz (Federal Office of Topography) on "75 Years of SGPBF – a Retrospective".

A highlight of the event was the panel discussion on the future of Geomatic "Geomatic – Quo Vadis" with representatives from research, development and professional practice. The panel was moderated by the SGPBF President Prof. A. Gruen with participants O. Koelbl (Prof. EPF Lausanne), S. Nebiker (Prof. University of Applied Sciences both Basel), E. Gubler (Director, Federal Office of Topography), J. Kaufmann (President, Swiss Society for Geo-

matic and Land Management), H. Hess (CEO, Leica Geosystems), K.U. Komp (President, DGPF), G. Muggenhuber (Austrian Society for Geoinformation), T. Gruenfelder (President, Swissphoto AG). A very lively discussion, involving also the audience, unfolded on pre-selected topics and showed that in spite of rapid developments,



J. Trinder, ISPRS President brings the wishes of ISPRS to SGPBF.



A snapshot of the panel discussion. From left to right: S. Nebiker, E. Gubler, J. Kaufmann, H. Hess, K.U. Komp, G. Muggenhuber.

changes in the education and the profession, overlap and competition with other disciplines, difficult economic situation and other difficulties, our profession, based on traditional strengths of our education and the continuous technological developments, cannot only survive but also flourish in new application fields.

The celebration concluded with a delightful dinner and jazz/blues music in the Castle Laufen at the Rhine Waterfalls in Schaffhausen, where the members of SGBPF and their guests had once more the opportunity for friendly discussions and strengthening of their relations in a relaxed atmosphere.

The Development of Photogrammetry in Switzerland

By D. Hughes, P. Fricker, A. Chapuis, E. Traversari, P. Schreiber, F. Schapira, Leica Geosystems GIS & Mapping GmbH, Heinrich-Wild-Strasse, CH-9435 Heerbrugg, Switzerland*

In order to follow the first steps of photogrammetry in Switzerland, the book on the history of Photogrammetry in Switzerland "Photogrammetrie in der Schweiz – Geschichte – Entwicklung" [1] is the best starting point. The history of the Swiss Society for Photogrammetry, Image Analysis and Remote Sensing (founded on the 22nd of Sept. 1928) and the two manufacturing companies Kern Aarau and Wild Heerbrugg (both now consolidated into Leica Geosystems AG) are inseparably connected with each other. The following report sets out to explain how technological development, market requirements and infrastructure worked together to favour a small country such as Switzerland establish such a dominant influence on this technology.

Summary

This report discusses the three important stages of analogue, analytical and digital photogrammetry development in relation to terrestrial and airborne applications. The products of the companies Kern Aarau and Wild Heerbrugg are listed in order of their date of market introduction together with important system characteristics [2]. As of 1990 both companies were integrated into the Leica company. Lack of space in this report forces the authors to limit the product illustrations and descriptions to those highlights of major importance and technological breakthrough.
