

CHRONICLE

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VLADIMIR ROMANOVICH ALEKSEEV

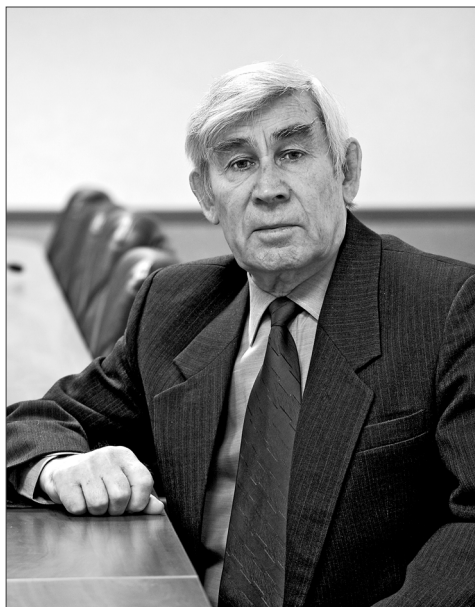
(for the 85th anniversary)

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The milestones in the scientific career of Professor Vladimir Romanovich Alekseev, Principal Researcher at the Melnikov Permafrost Institute, Doctor of Geographical Sciences, Corresponding Member of the Water Management Academy, Honorary Member of the Russian Geographical Society, are described.

Permafrost science, glaciology, geoecology, icing science



On August 17, 2018, Professor Vladimir Romanovich Alekseev, Principal Researcher at the Melnikov Permafrost Institute, Doctor of Geographical Sciences, Corresponding Member of the Water Management Academy, Honorary Member of the Russian Geographical Society, specialist of a wide geological and geographical profile, turned 85 years old.

Vladimir Romanovich Alekseev was born on August 17, 1933 in Omsk. In 1947, he finished the Chulman middle school in the settlement of Chulman, the Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, and in 1950, he finished the Solovyevsk high school in the settlement of Solovyevsk, Amur region. In 1950–1953, he worked as a teacher of mathematics and physical education in the school of the settlement of Chulman. After graduating from the nature and

geography department of the Blagoveshchensk pedagogical institute, Alekseev worked in the Amur regional local lore museum, where he headed the department of funds and the department of nature (1958–1959). In April 1959, he was hired to work at the Aldan research station of the Permafrost Institute, AS of USSR (the settlement of Chulman) first in the position of a senior technician and then as a junior researcher. In 1965, he started to work at the Viluy research station of the Permafrost Institute, AS of USSR (the settlement of Chernyshevsky, Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic). In 1966, Alekseev defended the candidate's thesis "The Geological Conditions of the Aldan Highland and of the Stanovoy Ridge", moved to Irkutsk and occupied the position of a senior researcher in the Institute of Geo-

graphy of Siberia and of the Russian Far East, AS of USSR, in which he headed the laboratory of applied research in the region of the BAM (Baikal–Amur) railway (1975–1983) and later the glaciology department (1983–1993). In 1982, in Moscow, at the Institute of Geography, AS of USSR, Alekseev defended the doctorate thesis “Icings as a Form of Glaciation”. After structural reorganization of the glaciology department, he occupied the position of the principal researcher of the laboratory of comprehensive physical geography. In 2010, Alekseev returned to the Melnikov Permafrost Institute, SB RAS, where he occupied the position of the principal researcher of the permafrost engineering laboratory.

Over 50 years of research, Professor Alekseev has published more than 450 studies, including 20 monographs relating to the issues of physical geography, land hydrology, geobotany, glaciology, permafrost studies, geoecology, periglacial morphology and the history of geographical exploration of Siberia and the Russian Far East. Most of his works are devoted to the phenomena and processes in the cryosphere – snow cover, avalanches, icings, permafrost and seasonal frost. In 1959–1966, when Alekseev was a young man working at the Aldan research station of the Permafrost Institute, AS of USSR (the settlement of Chulman), he investigated the geocryological conditions of the coal and iron ore fields and of the gold deposits of Southern Yakutia. The report he presented at the time and the candidate’s thesis he defended contained more than 30 theme maps of different scales and original cross sections, which remain to be topical now. The various studies carried out by Professor Alekseev always pursued practical goals. At the requests of departmental organizations, he carried out 32 contract works, most of which were related to transport and mining development in Eastern Siberia and the Russian Far East. He is the co-author of the “Instruction for Design, Construction and Maintenance of Winter Motor Roads on Snow and Ice Cover under Conditions of Siberia and the North-east of the USSR” (Mintransstroy, Moscow, 1977), the Methodology for Field Studies of Icings (Hydrometeoizdat, Leningrad, 1980), and Methodological Guidelines for Geocryological Monitoring of Hazardous Geocryological Phenomena in the Railway Transport (Irkutsk, 1999); he is the author of many original approaches to the study of snow, ice, and frozen rocks. In particular, Professor Alekseev developed methods of landscape indication of icing phenomena, he proposed principles and ways of evaluating geometric parameters of the permafrost zone (cryo-geometry) and determined the perspectives for developing the study of negative temperature waters (cryopegs), etc.

Vladimir Alekseev is one of the founders of the icing science, a new science which is a part of the Earth’s cryology. For the first time in the world, he compiled a reference book-dictionary “The Icing Science” (Novosibirsk, 2008), in which the results of

practically all the aspects of studying layer-by-layer water freezing on a solid foundation are presented. He developed the engineering and geographical foundations for the theory of the icing processes (in cooperation with N.F. Savko), revealed the regional regularities of the icing processes, composed the map of the icing hazard in the territory of Russia and of the CIS countries (scale 1:8 000 000), worked out the geographical principles of combatting icings and evaluated the possibilities of using ice in different spheres of the economy. The list of the published works by Professor Alekseev contains original articles and books relating to various aspects of geology and geography: mapping of natural and social and environmental phenomena, cryogenic construction materials, information search materials, geoecology of cold regions, cryo-volcano studies, cryogenic landscapes, packed snow, etc. Vladimir Alekseev is credited with the idea of compiling a Glaciological Definition Dictionary, edited by Academician Kotlyakov in 1984 and translated into English, German, and French (Vladimir Alekseev is one of the leading compilers of this dictionary).

Recognition of the scientist by the scientific community was expressed in his election as a member of many scientific councils and editorial boards of highly rated scientific journals. For many years, Professor Alekseev served as a member of the Scientific Council for Cryology of the Earth of the Academy of Sciences of USSR, a member of the Glaciology Division of the Interdepartmental Geophysics Committee under the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of USSR (and the chairman of the icing division); he headed the working group of MAB-6a under the UNESCO program “Man and the Biosphere”. He served as a member of doctorate thesis councils of the Institute of Geography, SB RAS, of the Institute of the Earth’s Crust, SB RAS, a member of the editorial board of the collected academic works “Materials of Glaciological Studies” (Moscow). Currently Alekseev serves as a member of the doctorate thesis council of the Melnikov Permafrost Institute, SB RAS, a member of the scientific and editorial board of the journal “Holod’OK” (Tyumen), a member of the editorial board of the journal “Ice and Snow”, a member of the editorial board of the journal “Earth’s Cryosphere”, a member of the editorial board of the series of books “The Outstanding Geographers of Siberia” (Irkutsk).

Vladimir Alekseev supervised preparation and holding of seven all-Russia scientific meetings on the issues of icing studies (Chita, 1973; Irkutsk, 1978, 1988), the geographical issues of studying the BAM zone (Irkutsk, 1976), the principles and methods of combatting icings (Zvenigorod, 1981), the issues of using snow and ice in the national economy (Irkutsk, 1984), and the anthropogenic impact on alpine ecosystems (Irkutsk, 1988). He is a participant of numerous international and Russian symposia, seminars,

and conferences. For example, at the Second International Conference in Yakutsk (1973), he made a presentation “On the Principles of Making Geocryological Maps and their Content”, at the Third International Conference on GEWEX in Asia and GAME in South Korea (Cheju, 1997), he made a presentation “Chara as an experimental base for studying water and energy cycles in the permafrost zone”. Vladimir Alekseev is the leader of nine RFBR projects, the initiator and author of the projects “The Ecological Atlas of Yakutia” and “The Dendrological Parking Zone in Irkutsk”. Together with Irina and Vladimir Rongainen, he made a short film “The Mysteries of the Siberian Sphynx”.

Vladimir Romanovich has supervised the defense of 13 candidate’s theses. He continuously serves as an official opponent at the procedures of the defense of doctorate and candidate’s theses – altogether, he has attended about 35 such sessions as the opponent. He developed plans for the courses of lectures for geology and geography departments of the Siberian universities: “Glaciology and Permafrost Studies”, “The Issues of Geoecology and Nature Use in Cold Regions”, and “The Theory of Icing Processes”. Vladimir Alekseev is a recognized popular science writer. He is an old member of the Knowledge society. His popular science articles published in the magazines “Vokrug Sveta” (Around the Globe), “Nauka v Rossii” (Science in Russia), “Priroda” (Nature), “Nauka i Tekhnika v Yakutii” (Science and Technology in Yakutia), “Kholod’OK” (Cold’OK), in the newspapers “Yakutia”. “Nauka v Sibiri” (Science in Siberia), “Istok” (Source) and others are read by people of different occupations and ages with great interest.

The scientist’s monographs, written in a vivid language and an easy style and illustrated with beautiful color and black-and-white photographs, are very popular with the readers. Alekseev’s books “The Cryology of Siberia” (2008), “In the Country of Eternal Cold” (2010), “We Live on Permafrost” (2011), and “The Attraction of the Frozen Land” (2016) have become bibliographic rarities. The fruitful scientific activity of V.R. Alekseev has been well presented in encyclopedias and periodicals of Russia and abroad. Two books have been published about Professor Alekseev in the series “Permafrost Scientists” (Yakutsk, 1999, 2013). Their authors quote the high evaluation of Alekseev’s achievements by the leading Russian specialists.

For the outstanding contribution to development of science, Vladimir Romanovich Alekseev has been awarded with the medals “Veteran of Labor” (1984), “For Construction of the Baikal–Amur Railway” (1984), with the certificates of merit of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (1974), of the Presidium of SB RAS (1982, 1984, 2003, 2007, 2008, 2015), of the Russian Geographic Society (2001), of the Presidium of the Yakut Scientific Center, SB RAS (2014), of the Academy of Sciences of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) (2016, 2017), and with the signs of honor of the SB RAS “Siberian Sigma” (2007) and the “Honored Veteran of the SB RAS”.

We sincerely wish Professor Alekseev health, we wish him to stay active for many years ahead! We wish him implementation of his plans, designs and ideas, we wish him love, warmth and care of his family and friends!