

Bruno Messerli: In Memory of a Dear Friend and a Great Man

17 September 1931 to 4 February
2019

Bruno and I met, courtesy of the late Professor Carl Troll, in 1972, in Calgary and the Canadian Rocky Mountains. It was an occasion of instant friendship and highly productive collaboration that has lasted for the remainder of our lives.

This collaboration accelerated during my 1976–1977 sabbatical leave, when Bruno invited me to serve as guest professor at the University of Bern's Institute of Geography. The

Ives family lived at Appenberg in the Emmental, and we became close friends of the entire Messerli family.

Bruno and I alternated as chairs of the International Geographical Union's Mountain Commission from 1972 until 1996; we were close partners in the Man and the Biosphere Project 6 study of human impacts on mountains, sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and we served as comanagers of the United Nations (UN) University's Project on Highland–Lowland Interactive Systems (to become Mountain Geocology and Sustainable Development). This led to research expeditions, conferences, and adventure in many of the mountain regions of the world: Alps, Himalaya,

Hengduan (in southwest China), northern Thailand, Pamirs, East Africa, Atlas, Andes, Rockies, Australia, and New Zealand. This journal, founded in 1981, was one important project. Another great success occurred at Rio de Janeiro (1992) in spearheading (by now with a growing international team, which some jokingly labelled as the *mountain mafia*) the inclusion of Chapter 13 (Mountains) in the UN's Agenda 21. This led to designation of 2002 as the International Year of Mountains, and 11 December as International Mountain Day.

I am pleased that this memorial is being published in the journal that we both worked hard to develop from 1981 and eventually to transfer across the Atlantic to Bern in 2000, where it will soon complete its fourth decade.

Bruno Messerli (left) and the author. (Photo by N. E. Ives)



However, my message is not merely concerned with academic and political successes and mountain adventures. It is intended as a tribute to a great personality, kind, enthusiastic, inspiring, tireless for “the cause,” and an exemplar for both of our families and all of our colleagues and students. Whether facing formidable international political problems or a tight physical situation in rugged terrain, one could be assured of absolute support and a

ready supply of emergency aid whenever needed.

It is, perhaps, appropriate to conclude with Bruno’s toast proposed in the cellars of the Duke of Bubenberg at the close of my 1976–1977 sabbatical—“To the Mountains!”

Dear Bruno, you will always be remembered.

Jack D. Ives, 9 February 2019

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