

## Aleksis Dreimanis, Recipient of the W. A. Johnston Medal for 1989

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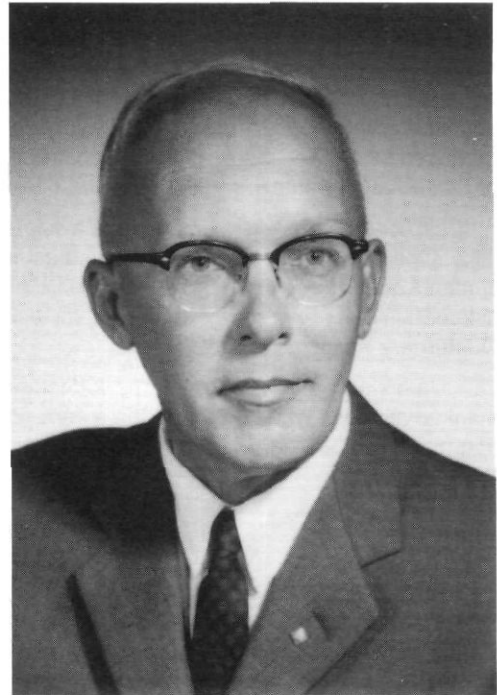
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# ALEKSIS DREIMANIS, RECIPIENT OF THE W. A. JOHNSTON MEDAL FOR 1989

The W. A. Johnston Medal is the highest award of the Canadian Quaternary Association and is given for professional excellence in Quaternary research. Nominations can be made on behalf of anyone with a demonstrated publication record who has contributed to Quaternary research in Canada or abroad. The nominator must be a member of the Canadian Quaternary Association and a nominee may be a researcher residing anywhere in the world. Further information on the background of the W. A. Johnston Medal is outlined in the preamble of the first award (Morgan, 1988).

Dr. Aleksis Dreimanis was born in Latvia and obtained his early geological training at the Institute of Palaeontology at the University of Latvia in Riga. At the start of the Second World War he continued at the University as a lecturer and the equivalent of an Assistant Professor. In the closing years of the War he also acted jointly as a consultant in Quaternary mapping in the Latvian Institute of Mineral Resources. Following the cessation of hostilities Aleksis was appointed as an Associate Professor in the Baltic University at Hamburg and Pinneberg in Germany. In 1948 Aleksis moved to Canada and took up an appointment as a Lecturer at the University of Western Ontario at London.



From 1948 Aleksis played an increasingly important role in the development of Quaternary studies in Canada. In the first few years after his arrival he served as a consultant on indicator tracing, Pleistocene stratigraphy and mapping and in groundwater geology for a variety of agencies including the Geological Survey of Canada, the Ontario Department of Mines, and the Ontario Department of Planning and Development; for the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, the Thames River Conservation Authority and various private companies. In 1956 Aleksis was promoted to Associate Professor and in 1964 to Professor at Western Ontario. From 1980 he has been an Emeritus Professor at the University.

During his four decades at Western, Aleksis has been appointed as delegate to the International Geological Congress (1960), and as one of the Canadian delegates to the INQUA Congresses in 1965, 1969, 1973, 1977 and 1982. He was responsible for co-organising the INQUA Field Excursion in the Great Lakes-Ohio River Valley (1965), and a similar excursion held in conjunction with the Montréal IGC (1972). In other areas he acted as President of the INQUA Commission on genesis and lithology of Quaternary deposits, as President on the Working Group on tills, and in Commission symposia and discussions in various parts of the world. He also acted as leader of the Canadian Working Group of the UNESCO-IUGS, International Geological Correlation Project on Quaternary Glaciations of the Northern Hemisphere between 1974 and 1984. Aleksis was made an Honorary Member of INQUA in 1987 at the XII INQUA Congress.

Aleksis was appointed to the Royal Society of Canada in 1979. Earlier he had helped organise the Royal Society's Conference on Glacial Till in Ottawa in 1975. Between 1974 and 1982 Aleksis was active on the American Quaternary Association, first as Councillor, and then as President (1980-1982). In the same general time frame he was involved with numerous invited lectures ranging from Penrose to local talks. He acted as an international advisor as a guest of the Polish Academy of Sciences, for the Geological Survey of Finland, for the Ministry of Education in Finland, on stratigraphic discussions in the USSR, and on many review committees in Canada. Aleksis served as Associate Editor for *Geoscience Canada* (1976-1978), and as Associate Editor for *Quaternary Science Reviews* (1981-1987).

Aleksis Dreimanis has always maintained close links with Latvia. From 1970 to 1986 he was involved as a correspondent with the Dictionary of Latvian Technical Terminology, and from 1979 as associate editor of the Technical Review Journal (for Geology). From 1973 to 1976 he was Chairman of the Commission on Technical and Natural Sciences at the Latvian Cultural

Foundation. He has made numerous visits as an invited lecturer to Riga, and to Tallin in Estonia. He was made an Honorary Member of the Geographical Society of Latvia in 1990, and, in the same year a Foreign Member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences.

Honours also abound in Canada. He received the Centennial Medal in 1967, the Logan Medal of the Geological Association of Canada in 1978, and two honorary D.Sc.'s: — from the University of Waterloo (1969) and the University of Western Ontario (1980). Elsewhere he has received the Distinguished Career Award of the Geological Society of America in 1987, the Centennial Medal of the Geological Survey of Finland (1987), the Albrecht Penck Medal of the German Quaternary Association (1988) and the University of Helsinki Medal (1990).

The list of students involved with M.Sc. and Ph.D. programmes through Aleksis's laboratory is long and impressive; over a dozen M.Sc. students and 15 Ph.D.'s have studied under him, and when linked together with the names of his post-doctoral students, read like part of an International Who's Who of the Quaternary. Methodologies developed by Dreimanis and co-researchers (Chittick determination of carbonates in particular), have led to considerable advances in Quaternary geology and stratigraphy, especially of glacial events in southernmost Ontario and adjacent regions in the United States. Aleksis has produced over 200 papers, notes and abstracts, a legacy which considerably enriches the field of Quaternary research. Some of these have been cited in the selected bibliography listed below.

In conclusion Aleksis Dreimanis is a quiet but extremely well respected scientist. He is admired by students and associates alike. One of his most outstanding attributes has been the praise for his kindness and understanding given to him by former students and professional colleagues. His list of accomplishments in understanding all types of glacial deposits, but particularly different tills, set standards for us all to aspire to. He is indeed a most worthy recipient of the W. A. Johnston Medal of the Canadian Quaternary Association.

In his acceptance of the W. A. Johnston Medal, and the framed citation from Dr. W. C. Mahaney, Professor Dreimanis thanked all those who had made the award possible. He was honoured and touched by the award, and expressed the view that much of the credit was due to others.

Alan V. MORGAN  
Canadian Quaternary Association

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