

FOREWORD

The second volume of the scientific journal of RTU Research Centre for Engineering History (RCEH) is devoted to the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Latvia. The authors of articles are historians of science, pedagogues and museum workers of Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine. The themes of articles and their main characters are related to the Riga Polytechnicum (RP) / Riga Polytechnic Institute (RPI). These include studies on the performance of the Institute's former students and graduates in engineering, literature, theology and business, their participation in proclamation of the Republic of Latvia, as well as the role of the Riga Latvian Society in the life of the future and graduate engineers. Contemporaries of RP / RPI students studied also in St. Petersburg and the University of Latvia, spending part of their lives outside Latvia. One of the most topical issues is to find out about their accomplishments, as in anticipation of the centenary of the Republic of Latvia – each of these personalities has contributed to both the growth of the country and the promotion of Latvia, as well as to engineering. The studies of lives of engineers of various nationalities are related to the 19th century and the 20th century in Latvia, Australia, the USA, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia and Ukraine.

The volume contains 10 articles. The volume begins with an article by researchers of RTU Associate Professor *Alvars Baldiņš* and Professor *Alīda Zigmunde* on RP / RPI Students and graduates who participated in the Proclamation of the Republic of Latvia on 18 November 1918, at the present premises of the Latvian National Theatre.

Four articles are published on the bases of the reports presented during the RTU 58th International Scientific Conference, on 10 October 2017 (reports by RTU Professor *Alīda Zigmunde*, RPI graduate *Ojēgs Šapovalovs*, doctoral student of RTU *Lāsma Gaitniece*, Associate Professors of University of Latvia *Ērika Lanka* and *Elita Stikute* about former RP/RPI students and the commitment and participation of graduates in the activities of the Riga Latvian Society and the company «Prowodnik», about the literary workers who studied in Riga, and citizens of the *Liepāja* city *Teodors* and *Nikolajs Bredžs-Briedis*). In 2018 anniversaries are not only for the Republic of Latvia. It is not only the Riga Latvian Society that celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. The former factory «Prowodnik» will celebrate its 130th anniversary.

Two articles were written after the scientific practical conference «Scientific, pedagogical and methodological aspects of life and research activities of outstanding personalities of Latvia: Architect *Indriķis Blankenburgs* – 130» held at the Riga State German Grammar School on

7 April 2017. Reporters *Māris Zvaigzne*, *Alīda Zigmunde* and *Indulis Zvirgzdiņš*, together with invited co-authors, prepared the articles.

Architect I. *Blankenburg's* contemporary, Latvian *Karolis Reisonas* worked in Lithuania. *K. Reisonas' life* and creative work in architecture in *Šiauliai* have been studied by the member of the Lithuanian Society for Engineering Graphics and Geometry *Sigitas Vladas Saladžinskas* and doctoral student of Lithuanian philology of Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) and administrator of the VMU Centre of Letonics *Kristina Vaisvalavičienė*. The results of both authors' research were also displayed at the exhibition «Three countries. Three centenaries. Three architects», which was created by the RTU RCEH team and was exhibited in the first half of 2018 in the RCEH Exposition hall, 1 *Kronvalda* Boulevard.

An article by historian *Sergejs Coja* tells about *Jaan Jürjens*, a psalmist born in Estonia, who studied at the Department of Agriculture of RPI. The study by the historian of agriculture, Ukrainian Professor Victor Vergunov reveals interesting and to date little known facts in Latvia about the graduate of RPI agronomist Boris Jenken who was born in Russia 145 years ago.

RTU expects the 156th anniversary with the 59th International Scientific Conference. Its activities in the Section of History of Engineering Sciences and Institutions of Higher Educations are devoted to the 60th anniversary of RPI / RTU renewal and 50 years since the students of RPI started studies on *Ķīpsala* Island.

2017/2018 year brought a mournful message – Professors *Leonīds Novickis*, *Kārlis Rocēns*, *Jānis Rudzītis*, *Andris Strakovs*, *Ivars Strautmanis*; Associate Professor *Augusts Ruplis*; Assistant Professor *Andrejs Strauts*; former Director of the Department of Capital Construction and Maintenance, Vice-rector *Kaspars Rutks* and a member of Editorial Board of RTU RCEH scientific journal, Professor of the University of Latvia *Arnīs Vīksna* passed away. Their curriculum vitae are summarized in chapter «In memoriam».

The volume concludes with a chronology of key events and achievements of academic year 2017/2018 from 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018.

Research in the field of engineering and history of RPI / RTU continues, and the results will be published in future scientific articles.

Editor-in-Chief *Alīda Zigmunde*