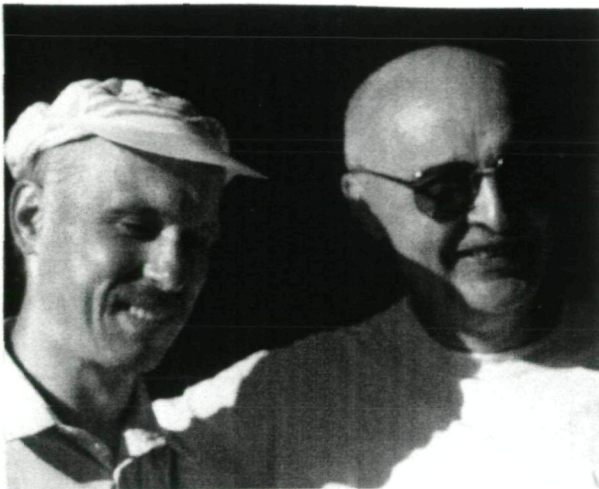


BRAUERIA (Lunz am See, Austria) 31: 5-6

## JÁN LADISLAV SÝKORA

Dr. Sýkora, professor emeritus of the University of Pittsburgh, died at age 71 on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2003. He was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1932 in the former Czechoslovakia and grew up in the town of České Budějovice, where the original Budweiser beer was brewed. Ján told fascinating stories about his experiences of growing up under Nazis and Communist regimes. As a youth, he developed a keen interest in biology which continued throughout his life. At Charles University in Prague, he earned a graduate degree in 1956 and a postgraduate degree in 1964. He studied under Professors J. Hrbáček and J. Lellak; the latter being a midge specialist, attempted to lure him into the study of chironomids. This attempt however was not successful as Ján could not be deterred from his interests in caddisflies.



Jan Sýkora (right, with V.D. Ivanov), Lake Itasca, Minnesota, August 1995

He became the Senior Research Officer of Aquatic Biology in the Institute of Hydrobiological and Limnological Research in Prague in 1966. Later that same year, Ján and his wife, Milena, were granted permits to travel to Paris, in part for a vacation and for Ján to do some research in the Paris Museum. However there was another part in their plans that they did not reveal to the authorities - they had no intentions of returning to Czechoslovakia. Leaving almost all of their possessions behind, except for their diplomas which they had hidden in the linings of their clothes, they escaped. When the couple arrived in Paris, Ján applied for and was awarded a Humboldt Scholarship for a one year postdoc (1966-67) at the Max Plank Institute of Hydrobiology and Limnology in Schlitz, where he studied under Drs. Joachim Illies and Peter Zwick, and also became acquainted with Werner Sattler.

In 1967, Ján immigrated to the United States and soon thereafter was recruited by Maurice Shapiro to become Professor of Aquatic Biology at the University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health, where he worked for 31 years. Ján attended the International Symposia on Trichoptera held in Perugia, Minnesota, and Chiang Mai. He published 37 papers on Trichoptera, most of which were about caddisflies of the Neotropics, Nearctic and western Palearctic. He had made plans to complete a systematic revision of the Trichoptera of Hispaniola, but these were cut short by complications following a stroke.

Ján had many other scientific publications, as he had far-reaching expertise as an Aquatic Biologist and his responsibilities at the University of Pittsburgh included many other issues related to environmental health and public safety. The most notable of these investigations dealt with the fauna and flora of the Ohio River, the effects of acid mine drainage, iron toxicity in brook trout, and problems caused by *Legionella pneumophila* and *Giardia lamblia* in drinking water. He also worked as a consultant for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and was an associate of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

I am indebted to Ján, as his attempt to lure me into the study of Trichoptera was successful. I as well as others will miss his kindness

and his wonderful sense of humor. He is survived by his wife Milena, daughters Caroline and Gabriella, and son Jan.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Ján Sýkora Memorial Fund at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Section of Invertebrate Zoology, 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA; email: rawlinsj@carnegiemnh.org; phone: 412-688-8668.

John Weaver

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Thanking you for your attention to this change, and wishing you a productive autumn, I close,

With warm regards, Brian

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