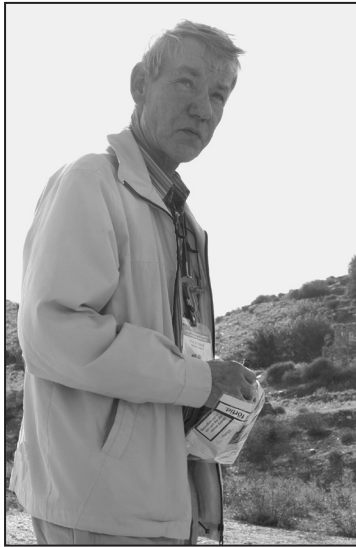


Obituary - Pehr Henrik Enckell



Pehr Henrik Enckell, Mr Oikos, has passed away

Pehr Henrik Enckell, known by all his friends as PH, is no longer with us. He passed away in October at the age of 77 years. He was born in Helsinki, Finland, in the early 1940s. As so many other Finnish children during the war, he was sent to Sweden for safety reasons, a country he later adopted as his foster country.

PH was by many given the title “Mr Oikos”, for very good reasons. Back in the 1960s he and Per Brinck transformed Oikos from a Nordic journal in ecology to the modern and international journal in ecology it is today. He created the Oikos Editorial Office. With PH’s gentle and discrete management, the Office became the home of several international renowned journals such as Oikos, Ecography,

Journal of Avian Biology and Nordic Journal of Botany. The name Ecography was, of course, coined by PH Enckell.

PH was always keen to help and encourage, especially so to less experienced writers. He helped authors to identify the gem hidden in too long texts and to instruct reviewers to write constructive and not impolite reviews.

The skills of PH were certainly noted. He was asked to join numerous international fora, and served as an official for the European Association of Science Editors and the European Ecological Federation (for which he helped launching the journal Web Ecology). He was repeatedly invited to give talks and lectures on publishing and also gave regular courses in scientific writing at several Nordic universities. On those occasions, he always involved the audience to build the lecture as it was given, using the knowledge of everyone attending.

PH always took good care of authors, reviewers, editors and students. He spent hours and hours editing drafts of manuscripts, advising and encouraging authors to write in a clear and concise way. Make it simple was his message. His efforts in educating students in scientific writing was rewarded by Turku University in Finland by making him Honorary Doctor in 2010. “Not necessary” PH commented. But he was proud to arrive back home after the ceremony in Turku (despite some problems trying to get the sharply honed ceremonial sword as carry-on on the flight from Finland).

PH was such an amiable person. His low, quiet profile did sometimes shadow his intelligence and impressive wisdom. Never did he, however, use his smartness to make an impression or to offend his opponent.

We have lost a dear friend and colleague. PH is deeply missed.

Linus Svensson and Petter Oscarson
Oikos Editorial Office

