



Tracing the origin of Geodynamics: The Alfred Wegener Memorial Expedition 2014

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2012 marked the 100st anniversary of the seminal publications on Continental Drift Theory by Alfred Wegener. These publications (and Wegener's book "On the origin of the continents", published three years later) are widely accepted to be the fundamental breakthrough that opened the path to the Theory of Plate Tectonics and ultimately the path to modern Geodynamics some 50 years later. In the same historic year of the 1912 publications, Alfred Wegener set off for what was to become the most dramatic of his three Greenland expeditions. On this expedition Wegener and Koch crossed the entire northern icecap of Greenland. In honour of the hundred anniversary of Wegener's publications, the Austrian Academy of Sciences funded an expedition to trace the footsteps of the 1912 expedition in the spirit of Alfred Wegener, while also conducting modern Earth Science. This expedition that was conducted in summer 2014. For the expedition, a 1952 Cessna 180 was acquired in Alaska, adapted with bush wheels, wing extensions and extra tanks and was flown by the author and one of the world's most renowned bush pilots from Alaska in a 10 day effort to Greenland. There, the entire NE Greenland Caledonides were covered and photographed. Field work for a master's project was conducted and samples were collected from a series of some of the most remote locations in the Caledonides ever visited. Most spectacularly, the original sled of Wegener's 1912 expedition was found some 30 kilometers from its expected location in the Dove Bugt Region of northeastern Greenland.