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Fedor Konyukhov's dream



F. Konyukhov, A. Oboimov, V. Simonov

E-mail: kitttens@yandex.ru

© **Alexander P. Oboimov**, member of the Russian Geographical Society, employee of the Northern GMS; participated in the Arctic expedition in August-September 2014 on the yacht "Apostol Andrey"; in 2015 took part in an international documentary "Oceans and weather" on marine hydro-meteorological camp Khodovarikha as a consultant from Northern Hydrometeorological Service; regular author of the journal "Arctic and North".

Abstract. The article is about the meeting with the famous traveler F.F. Konyukhov, whose ancestors were Russian Pomors, in the White Sea coast, in the place called Letnyaya Zolotitsa. Photos of the meeting are published.

Keywords: *Fedor Konyukhov, Viktor Simonov, Letnyaya Zolotitsa, meeting, cross*

I had a chance to meet many unusual, unique characters and unexpected fates in my life. They were different people. Imperceptible and little-known, who made me understand that their unknownness is completely undeserved misunderstanding and I wanted fix this injustice and write about them. When I have the opportunity to meet with an extraordinary and interesting person, I usually don't miss a chance. I learned that Fyodor Konyukhov and Victor Simonov dog sledding team is going from Petrozavodsk to overcome 800 km and visit our area and then found a way to meet them. Director of the National Park "Onezhskoe Pomorye" Onega **Oleg Prodan**¹ invited me to visit his base — summer ecohotel "Letnyaya Zolotica". The airplane took me to there and a cavalcade of snowmobiles met me. In a few minutes, I was at the base.

It should be noted that the ecohotel— a unique place, good location, near the sea, the rivers Kolisma and Paraninsk creek — the "golden triangle." It is a real museum of geographical zones, established due to its solitary geographical location and its mild climate. Crystal clean air and the silence of untouched nature and pure spring water flows and even snow here have really inexpressible whiteness. Price per plane ticket is high — it is cheaper to fly to Moscow than to Letnyaya Zolotica.

¹ Oleg Leonidovich Prodan died 19.04.2016 near the Belyi Island (Yamal). The helicopter "Robinson" crashed. It was a part of the expedition "Following the steps of two captains" aimed at searching the remains of the G. Sedov's expedition 1914 on board of "St. Anna".

Dog sledding expedition arrived at Letnyaya Zolotica faster and Fyodor Konyukhov met us. First, we went to a local school for a meeting with children. Along the route of the expedition, Fyodor Konyukhov and Victor Simonov had meetings with residents of villages. Members of the expedition talked to many people, but the greatest interest in the stories of travelers had schoolchildren. Oleg Prodan started the official part of the meeting. He spoke about the route and the expedition, their path through two national parks "The Vodlozero" in Karelia and "Onegskoe Pomorye" in Arkhangelsk Region. The expedition is dedicated to the 100 anniversary of the first Russian nature reserve "Barguzinkiy", located on the territory of the Republic of Buryatia.

Then Victor Simonov told about his pets — 16 dogs — members of the expedition.

— My friendship with dogs has started in childhood, but the Huskies have become my friends recently. In 2003 our Club of travelers got an application from the German traveler with a proposal to have an expedition to the North of Yakutia on the two dog sleds. This expedition was very interesting and taught me a lot, it was the time I realized that I wanted to have my own dogs. Now, I have more than 60 dogs of various breeds. The majority are the Chukchi sled dogs who have excellent physical qualities for long work in cold climate. They are unpretentious, extremely functional and have excellent senses, which allow finding the way in the most difficult conditions. Dogs are friendly. They never bite people.

The children listened about our smaller brothers with surprise and started to ask questions:

- How many kilograms of cargo can a team of dogs take?
- What is the speed of running dogs?
- And how much do they eat? How often do they need to be fed?
- Do they get tired?

The most experienced musher of Russia — Victor Simonov gladly answered all the questions and told about a unique Chukotka sledge dog, called Cherk. He is the only dog in the world, who has been through the whole Arctic. He is 12 years old, but he is a real leader. The only place he has not been to is Alaska.

Then it was Fyodor Konyukhov turn to speak. He told about his life, his ancestors - pomors, natives of these places and his first journey. Told about storms in the ocean, meeting the whales. He is the first Russian who managed to complete the "Grand Helmet" program (North Pole, South Pole, Everest) and he is the first traveler in the world, who 5 times reached the poles of our planet: the Northern geographical pole (three times), South geographic pole of inaccessibility, the Arctic Ocean, Everest and Cape Horn.

— I visited 125 countries, has seen a lot, but there is nothing more beautiful than homeland. I could not live abroad, — said F. Konyukhov.

Children have shown drawings they specially painted for the arrival of the famous traveler. The theme of the drawings was F. Konyukhov travelling: rowing boat, dog sledding, skiing ... and he signed every picture. At the end, there was an overall photo. Victor Simonov and Fyodor Konyukhov invited schoolchildren to ride the dogs the next day. In the evening, after dinner, everyone gathered in an informal setting at the ecohotel, watched prepared a slideshow of the expedition. In a personal conversation, I was interested and pleased to know those personality traits of famous people, which are usually no visible from the pages of the official press or TV screens.

— Fyodor Filippovich, well, hot air balloon, once again to the North Pole, bathyscaphe — all these is understandable. But, what is the most treasured dream? — I asked.

— Sasha, I want to build a ship like "Fram", and drift for two or three years.

— Will you take me with you?

— Only for summer and in winter I want to paint in solitude, — said the traveller and laughed.

— No, I won't leave you alone. Somebody should still carry out scientific observations. There should be the benefit of a drift.

— Well, I agree, for the sake of science, you can stay, — said Fedor.

He told us about his and his wife dreams: "in Japan, there lives an old lady who is 90 years old and she has planted a million of cedars. There is a a movement. We also want to plant three hundred appletrees and grow a garden".

In the morning, after breakfast, I was dressed warmly, sat on snowmobiles and went to the Konuhova Guba. In half an hour we reached the abandoned village of Konuhovka — where the ancestors of the famous traveler lived. Near the wood chapel "on four pillars" Fedor read the prayer and than visited the last house of the willage where he was photographed near the window. After some time, when all snowmobiles reached Konuhovka, we went further to the Konuhovd Guba. Path took quite a lot of time.

Here Oleg Prodan and his assistants assembled the Memorial Cross, which had been made by the Karelian hadicrafts msters. A few more minutes, and the Cross was installed. At the base of the Cross, they put the stone from the Kiy Island, specially brought by the expedition. Prayers, photo for the memory and the way back.

As Victor Simonov promised, after dinner were arranged "ridding" on the dogs. Everyone could make a circle along the coast of the White Sea. Children's delight was boundless. We and a

group from the “Arkhangelk television” said goodbye to travelers and went to the airport. The plane "Anushka" took off and after a short flight we got back home, but these unforgettable hours we'd spent together with Fedor Konuhov and Victor Simonov would warm our hearts for a long time.



Figure 1. In the village Konuhovka near the White Sea / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 2. In the forest, at the shores of the Konuhov Guba / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 3. Pray at the wood chapel "on four pillars" / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 4. It is possible to get here only by plane / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 5. Ecohotel "Letnyaya Zolotica" / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 6. Promise is fulfilled / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 7. Installation of the Memorial Cross / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 8. F. Konyukhov, A. Oboimov, V. Simonov



Figure 9. Wharf was left from the village/ photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure10. Anna Katorina and Fedor Konuyhov on their ancestors' land / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 11. Children from the Russian Pomorie / photo by A.P. Oboimov



Figure 12. Meeting at school in the Letnyaya Zolotica / photo by A.P. Oboimov
Top row: V. Simonov, F. Konyukhov, O. Prodan



Figure 13. F. Konyukhov and O. Prodan talk with kids / photo by A. P. Oboimov





Figure 14, 15. Kid's paintings with the autograph of F. Konuykhov / photo by A. P. Oboimov



Figure 16. Faithful friends are waiting for the command / photo by A. P. Oboimov



Figure 17. Children are happy / photo by A. P. Oboimov



Figure 18. O. Prodan. Autographs for memory / photo by A. P. Oboimov