

THE

HISTORY OF GEOLOGY

DIVISION

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JUNE 2005

THINK SALT LAKE CITY - FALL 2005

GSA Annual Meeting - October 16-19, 2005

CALL FOR PAPERS

Resistance is futile – Submit ABSTRACT DEADLINE IS JULY 12

The Division will be sponsoring a session about the development of paleontology and its contribution to our understanding of the geology of North America. We need papers for this session, as well as for the General Session. Ed Rogers will not be able to attend the meeting, but the current organizers, led by Gary Rosenberg and Julie Newell, would like to hear from our members; we need papers to keep our special session alive. Below is the description as shown on the GSA meeting website. Surely this should strike a responsive chord with at least ten or twelve of you out there. WE NEED YOUR HELP - SUBMIT!!!! If you can submit an abstract for either the Special Session, #84, or the General Session, please contact Gary and/or Julie (email addresses are at the end of the newsletter) so they will know what to expect. Gary will be acting Chair for Ed at this meeting. To submit your abstract, go to <<http://www.geosociety.org/meetings/2005/techProg.htm>> and select Topical Sessions or Discipline Sessions to see where your abstract would fit the best. Descriptions of our sessions follow.

T84. Thinking about Fossils: The Emergence and Development of Paleontological Thought in North America from Native American Customs to the End of the Great Western Surveys.

GSA History of Geology Division; History of Earth Sciences Society [HESS]; GSA Archaeological Geology Division; Paleontological Society; Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.

Gary Rosenberg, Patrick Wyse Jackson, Presiding.

This session on the emergence and development of paleontological thought in North America will cover the period from Native American beliefs regarding fossils to ideas developed up to the end of the great government and institutional surveys of the western United States and Canada.

DISCIPLINE SESSION

And, as always, the Division and HESS will hold the more general session with other volunteered papers on any topic in the history of geology. So, please, we need to hear from you on this as well. **Please, now is the time to support your Division.**

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LUNCHEON AND BUSINESS MEETING

We have requested noon Sunday, October 16, for the time of the annual luncheon and awards presentation, though it will be several weeks before Gary knows what time we actually will get. But do check the final schedule for the day, time, and place of the luncheon and awards presentations. There will be, also, a short business meeting at the luncheon.

AWARDS

The selection for the 2005 Mary Rabbitt History of Geology Award will be announced in the next newsletter. This will be the first time our award will be made under the new name (see the report below). Also we will announce the student awardee in the next newsletter.

RECEPTION

Remember to mark your calendar for late Monday afternoon, October 17. That is the time we've requested for our annual Reception for members, students, and friends. And speaking of the Reception, remember to bring along a donation for our door prizes for the students who attend each year. This has become a very popular tradition, and we need your help to make certain it will continue. So please check your bookshelves and filing cabinets and bring along any books, reprints, etc., that you can spare. We have had some very interesting door prizes over the years, and many students have gone home with a big grin on their faces as a result. And believe me, the word about our door prizes has spread among the students so they look forward to our reception each year. Certainly it is our stimulating conversation that keeps them coming back, but the door prizes really get their attention.

REQUEST FOR RECEPTION ITEMS

Please, if you have some items you can donate and bring to the Reception, contact Julie (her email address is at the end of the newsletter) and let her know what you have. That way she will know that we will have some door prizes to give away. **DON'T SEND THE ITEMS TO HER**, unless the items are not very heavy/bulky and you will not be attending the SLC meeting. Just let her know that you will be bringing it on Monday afternoon. Thanks.

BALLOT RESULTS

Two items were put before the membership in the last newsletter. Voting closed March 15, 2005. Both items passed by unanimous vote. There were zero NO votes cast. The actual balloting results can be obtained from the Secretary-Treasurer.

With this vote, the Division membership approved the creation of the new *Distinguished Service Award* for our Division as well as a change in wording for the Rabbitt award so it will not conflict with the new award. It is too late to have this approved by the GSA Council in time for the fall meeting, so it will go before the Council later, and we can call for nominations in the year 2006. So please consider persons you feel should be nominated for this award. Nominations should be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer, Bill Brice (address is at the end of the newsletter). Text of the approved items follows:

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Ballot Results (continued from p. 2)

ITEM ONE: DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award of the Geological Society of America's History of Geology Division may be given from time to time to an individual or individuals, for exceptional service to the advancement of our knowledge of the history of the geological sciences.

Contributions deserving of this award may include but are not limited to the discovery, management and making available of rare source materials; promotion of meetings, symposia and scholarly organizations devoted to the history of geology; establishment and editing of scholarly journals in this field; and exceptional service to the Division or other organizations related to the history of geology.

This new award may be given annually, but it is not the intent of this proposal that it should necessarily be given every year. Consequently, no regular committee will be established to review nominations for the award. The availability of the award will be announced annually in the Division's newsletter. Nominations will be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer. The determination to make one award (or none) in any given year will be made by the current officers of the Division.

ITEM TWO: MARY C. RABBITT HISTORY OF GEOLOGY AWARD

The Mary C. Rabbitt Award is presented annually by the Geological Society of America's History of Geology Division to an individual for exceptional scholarly contributions of fundamental importance to our understanding of the history of the geological sciences. Achievements deserving of the award include, but may not be limited to, publication of papers or books that contribute new and profound insights into the history of geology based on original research or a synthesis of existing knowledge.

NOTE FROM BILL BRICE

I will be teaching in the Pitt Semester-at-Sea program during the fall term and will be at sea, literally, from mid-August until mid-December (nice way to end a 45 year teaching career). So Michele Aldrich and Alan Leviton have volunteered to do the late summer and after-meeting newsletters for me while I am slaving away on the voyage as the ship circumnavigates the globe. Thanks Michele and Alan. So, please contact Michele at: 24 Elm Street, Hatfield, MA 01038; or at: <maldrich@smith.edu>.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM A FRENCH COLLEAGUE

I am a French student who is doing a Doctorate on relations between landscape painting and geology in the late 18 century. For example, I am investigating the relations between the painter Edwin Church (famous American painter who lived in the middle of the Nineteenth century in the USA) and the German naturalist Alexander Humboldt. I am trying to find in Church's landscapes the influence of Alexander Humboldt's book Cosmos, published after the death of the German naturalist (1859). I am interested in landscapes which represent volcanoes, smoke and gas, and cliffs.

I would like to also ask you about the differences between George Cuvier's theory and Abraham Werner's theory. I am investigating American and German painters who were interested in Geology. Regarding "Neptunism" of Abraham Werner and "Catastrophism" of George Cuvier, is there an analogy between these two theories? I ask, because I discovered a book which is dubbed "James Hutton : The Man Who Found Time" from Jack Repchek (2003). This latter, suggests that Werner's followers became Cuvier's followers! The aim was to thwart Hutton's theory. What do others think about that? I would like you to hear from others with regard to this opinion.

Thank you,
Alexis Drahos <alexis.drahos@free.fr>

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

CSPG/AAPG 2005

Description of Proposed Field Trip:

Turner Valley - The Seven Veils of a Giant Hydrocarbon Field

The Turner Valley Oil and Gas Field has played a critical role in Canada's hydrocarbon exploration and development history. It has also been central to the evolution of geological and geophysical interpretation in Western Canada. Since its existence was first suspected in the early 1900's on the basis of gas seepages, the field has undergone a continual metamorphosis through seven stages as our understanding of it has grown from it being a small Cretaceous accumulation into the realization that it is mainly a giant Mississippian hydrocarbon system. Today we can recognize its multi-faceted nature - but it still continues to surprise, and who knows what the future will hold? This evolution is a key learning in terms of our understanding of other fields. The trip leaders will guide participants through each of these visualizations - all of which were believed to represent "Turner Valley" in its time. Leaps in interpretation were generally triggered by new drilling results - often predicated on unconventional ideas and sparse data. The critical role of individual explorationists in advocating and promoting these wells will be highlighted.

Travel will be by bus to and from Calgary. Historical vignettes concerning Western Canadian exploration and production as well as some short videos will form the program on the bus. A walk around the historic Turner Valley Gas Plant site is included with leadership from the local interpretive organization. Weather can be variable so participants should dress accordingly. Lunch and a short guidebook will be provided.

Cost: \$75.00 U.S., limit of 43 participants
Duration: 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Sunday, June 19, 2005
Leaders: Clint Tippett, Aubrey Kerr and Jack Porter (?)
Hosting Organizations: AAPG History of Petroleum Geology Division
CSPG History and Archives Committee
The Petroleum History Society
Information: <<http://www.aapg.org/calgary/index.cfm>>

AAPG HISTORY OF PETROLEUM GEOLOGY COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL FORUM

The Middle East has been and will continue to be crucial for the world's supplies of petroleum and natural gas. This year's Forum focuses on **Lessons from the History of Exploration in the Middle East**. We will learn from John Scott (Petroleum Geological Analysis Pty) how Iraq became second in reserves of the region so rapidly and yet holds the promise of still more giants. Marlan Downey (Consultant) will remind us of the mistakes that were made in Iran that could help avoid repeating them elsewhere. For Saudi Arabia, Mahmoud Abdul-Baqi (Saudi Aramco) will explain the meteoric success of exploration in the Kingdom. And Abdulkader M. Afifi (Saudi Aramco) will outline the special circumstances of source, reservoir and traps that are responsible for the cornucopia of hydrocarbons in the region.

Duration: Sunday, June 18, 1:30- 3:30 Convention Center, Calgary
Presiding: Co-Chairs Robert N. Ginsburg and Robert D. Hatcher Jr.
Contact: AAPG website <<http://www.aapg.org/calgary/index.cfm>> or Bob Ginsburg at <rginsburg@rsmas.miami.edu>.

Meetings of Interest (*continued from p. 4*)

GREAT RIFT SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM - October 6-9, 2005

The Great Rift Science Symposium will be a gathering of scientists, educators, and regional community leaders who share an interest in the unique landforms, biology, and history of the lava desert of Southern Idaho. The meeting will be held at Idaho State University in Pocatello, Idaho. Additional information: <<http://www.georgewright.org/greatrift.html>>.

Contact: Emily Dekker-Fiala, Conference Planner, George Wright Society: <efiala@georgewright.org>.

Proposals and abstracts are welcome for oral and poster/computer demo presentations and for workshops. The deadline is May 15, 2005, but ask about extensions of that deadline.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE HISTORY OF GEOLOGY

There will be a conference on the role of women in the history of geology in November 2005 at the Geological Society of London. Details of the conference are posted on the GSL's website at <<http://www.geolsoc.org.uk>>. This is the first time that the Geological Society has ventured into this area of research, and there are at least 14 papers promised.

The session is being organized by the History of Geology Group of the Geological Society of London (our counterpart in the UK). Convenors: Drs. Cynthia Burek (UK) and Bettie Higgs (Ireland), and Professor John Maher.

MEETINGS PAST

Our Division was one of the co-sponsors for the Petroleum History Institute's Symposium and Field Trips meeting held in Morgantown and Parkersburg, West Virginia, April 6-9, 2005; Larry Woodfork, retired West Virginia State Geologist, was the General Chair. Larry was very well supported in this effort by two Survey colleagues, Kenneth C. Aston and Patricia Johns. David McKain, Founder and Director of the Oil and Gas Museum at Parkersburg, West Virginia, organized and led the wonderful field trips to Sistersville, Petroleum, Volcano, California, Burning Springs, and Parkersburg, all in West Virginia; and yes, there is, or rather was, a town called Volcano, West Virginia. David is to be greatly commended for the very informative commentary he provided at each of our stops.

The Oil and Gas Museum at Parkersburg, founded in 1989, is obviously a labor of love by all the volunteers who work there. It is housed in a large building at 119 Third Street. We were all amazed and delighted by the exhibits, both inside and outside, that David and his staff have created. The highlight of the field trip on Saturday was our stop at the Rathbone Well site near Burning Springs, West Virginia. The original well site and some land around it were donated to the Parkersburg Museum by George C. Grow, a well known local petroleum geologist and historian. The Museum has since added an additional 20 acres to the original five acres and has created a nice information center and exhibit area. The original well has been cleaned and is actively worked with a small electric pump. Today there is little oil, mostly water, but there is a good supply of gas. In fact, our lunch on Saturday, much to the delight of the group of oil historians, was cooked using gas drawn directly from the Rathbone well! The burgers, hot dogs, and steaks tasted all the better as this was pure Rathbone gas!! We are all indebted to David, his wife, and his family for their service as cooks and servers.

- Bill Brice

BOOKS OF INTEREST

Volcanoes in Human History: The Far-Reaching Effects of Major Eruptions

By Jelle Zeilinga de Boer and Donald Theodore Sanders
Princeton University Press, 2004, \$18.95 (paperback).

Earthquakes in Human History: The Far-Reaching Effects of Seismic Disruptions

By Jelle Zeilinga de Boer and Donald Theodore Sanders
Princeton University Press, 2004, \$24.95 (paperback).

Draft of a Physical, Geographical, and Historical Descriptions of Icelandic Ice Mountains on the Basis of a Journey to the Most Prominent of Them in 1792-1794;

with four maps and eight perspective drawings.

By Sveinn Pálsson - Annotated and illustrated English Translation by Richard S. Williams, Jr. (USGS) and Oddur Sigurdsson (National Energy Authority, Iceland)

The Icelandic Literary Society <<http://www.hib.is>>, 2004, 183 p. \$56.00 + \$15.00 shipping.

Order: <hib@islandia.is>.

If this treatise had been published when it was first written in 1795, it would have ranked as one of the premier scientific books of the 18th century, and Pálsson would have been known as one of the first great glaciologists. But it was not published, and that is part of the story. Pálsson worked over four summers between 1791 and 1794 on the natural history of Iceland, and included in his work are more than 50 scientific glaciological concepts. Louis Agassiz's ideas about the cryospheric processes in the Earth's past and present were anticipated 45 years earlier by Pálsson. This is the first English translation of this seminal work in glaciology. Everyone with even a passing interest in the history of glaciology will want to read what Pálsson had to say, and thanks to Richard Williams, Jr. and Oddur Sigurdsson, we now have that opportunity. [Editor's Note - This book should be reviewed in some of our major geology publications. If you are interested in doing such a review, contact the Society at the above address.]

2004-2005 History of Geology Division Officers

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(*Note:* Ed will be on leave for the summer and fall; please contact Gary Rosenberg.)

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(*Note:* Bill will be out of the country from mid-August until mid-December 2005. Please send newsletter material, etc., to Michele Aldrich at <maldrich@smith.edu>.)

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