

# History and Philosophy of Geology Division Newsletter

## Volume 34, Number 4

## November, 2010

**Questions, Comments and so forth are always welcome as are your suggestions for content. Please send to the Newsletter Editor, Jane Davidson**

Please take note of the deadline for submitting nominations for awards for 2011. February 1, 2011. Please send to the Sec/Treas Jane Davidson.

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### **Division Bylaws and Division Name Change**

As you know, the Division name change has been proposed and accepted by the Council and gone into effect. We are now the History and Philosophy of Geology Division. Bylaws changes will be posted on the website shortly for your perusal.

Luncheon and Business Meeting various views:

**AWARDS:** Awards presented at the annual business meeting/luncheon in Denver:

**Announcing the 2010 Mary C. Rabbitt HISTORY OF GEOLOGY AWARD Winner: Gabriel Gohau** (unfortunately Professor Gohau was not able to attend. Ken Bork was citationist and Ken Taylor received the award on behalf of Dr. Gohau, please see below for more on the awards ceremony.)

Professor Bork accepting on behalf of **Professor Gohau**

Through deeply informed research Dr. Gohau has made extensive and important contributions to the literature of the history of geology. His work has illuminated diverse topics and issues such as theories of the earth, the historical framing of inquiry about the earth, concepts of mountain-formation, stratigraphy, metamorphism and the formation of granite, and the philosophical



foundations of geological thinking. Gohau's many papers illuminate the work of historical figures ranging across a long period, from Descartes and Burnet to Élie de Beaumont and Prévost. Among his books are (1) a broad inquiry into the earth sciences' "gestation" during the 17th and 18th centuries, (2) a succinct account of the beginnings of historical geology, and (3) one of the most widely used comprehensive histories of geology of our time. Since 1996 he has presided over the principal French group dedicated to the history of geology, the Comité Français d'Histoire de la Géologie.

**Citation to GABRIEL GOHAU** Monday, 1 November 2010

Kennard B. Bork

We live in an increasingly "Global World," but barriers of language and culture do still exist. It is therefore possible that many members of the Geological Society of America (GSA) will not be familiar with French historians of geology. My pleasant task today is to introduce Dr. Gabriel GOHAU, a French colleague and renowned scholar, as the 2010 recipient of the Geological Society of America's "Mary C. Rabbitt Award." This honor, bestowed by GSA's History of Geology Division, is an excellent example of our recognition of valued work in an international context.

Professor Gohau's insightful writings, and his leadership of COFRHIGEO (Comité français d'histoire de la géologie), are celebrated in France and among Francophone readers around the world. Americans may be familiar with Gabriel's superb book, *Histoire de la géologie* (1987), translated into English (1990) by Albert and Marguerite Carozzi. Also in 1990, Gohau published *Earth Sciences in the 17th and 18th Centuries* (*Les sciences de la Terre aux "Ile et XVIIIe siècle)s*. His important book on *The Birth of Historical Geology* (*Naissance de la géologie historique*) appeared in 2003.

I can tell you that American and British members of COFRIGEO, such as Ken Taylor, Martin Rudwick, Hugh Torrens, and yours truly, have profited immensely from a long line of important articles produced by Dr. Gohau. Hallmarks of his writing are clear explications of major issues and fresh insights into significant historical contexts. Early in his career he illuminated the development of ideas concerned with the origin of mountains. That topic was revisited in his recently published book on the prehistory of tectonics. From the late 1970s to the present, Prof. Gohau also has generated valuable biographic analyses of major figures in the history of the geosciences. Subjects of his informative portraits include Buffon, Prévost, Jean-André De Luc, the de Beaumont, Lamarck, Dolomieu, Lavoisier, Cuvier, and, in Britain, Rev. Thomas Burnet, and James Hutton.

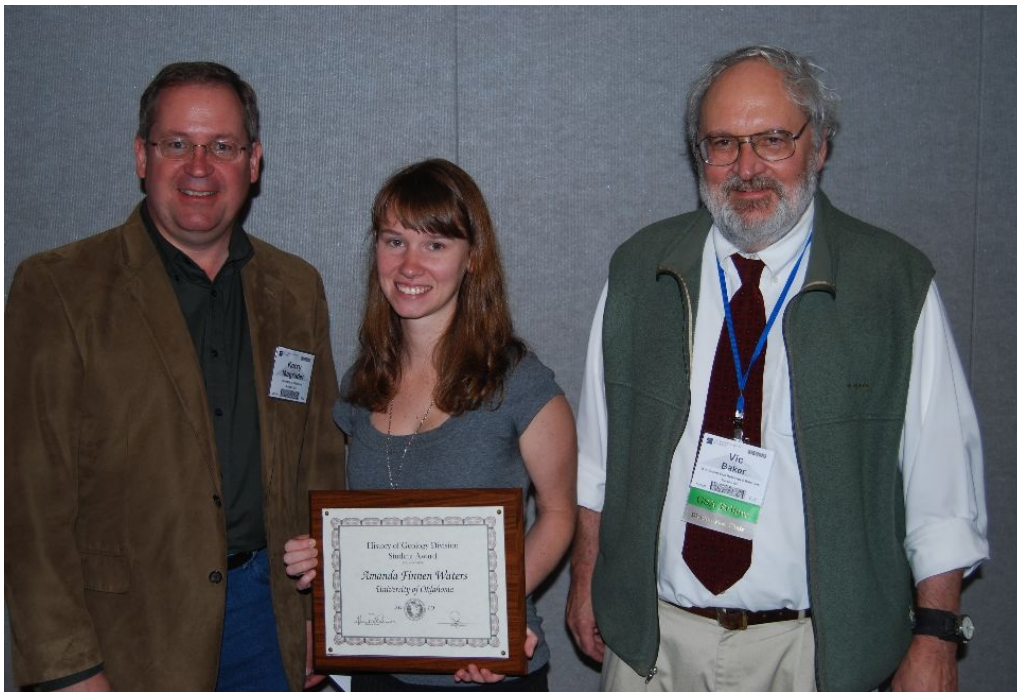
**Announcing the 2010 Gerald M. and Sue T. Friedman DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD  
Winner: Daniel F. Merriam**

Professor Merriam was unable to attend and his award was accepted on his behalf by Vic Baker, who also read a message of thank you from Professor Merriam.

Daniel F. Merriam's services to the history of geology over a period of many decades have been extraordinary. Besides his own extensive service to the Division and its activities, he has made exceptional contributions as an organizer, editor, chronicler, compiler, and author, with a long record of historical publications including departmental and organizational histories, bibliographies, indexes, and obituaries.

**STUDENT AWARD Winner: Amanda Finnen Waters**

Ms Finnen Waters was presented her award by Vic Baker. Her citationist was Professor Kerry Magruder.



Biographies of candidates nominated for Division Board follow:

**Biographies of Candidates for 2010 - 2011 Officers History of Geology Division**

**Chair 2010 – 2011 (1 year term)**

**John A. Diemer.** Sedimentology; stratigraphy. Educ: AB Geol, Oberlin College; MA Geol, PhD Geol, Binghamton University. Prof Exp: UNC Charlotte, Dept Geography & Earth Sciences, Prof, 05-present; Assoc Prof, 94-05; Asst Prof, 88-94; Univ. British Columbia, EOS, Visiting Assoc Prof, 00; Kingston University, Geological Sciences, Visiting Fellow, 94-95; Franklin & Marshall College, Dept Geol, Visiting Asst Prof, 85-88; SUNY-Plattsburgh, CEES, Lecturer, 82-85. Prof Affil: GSA since 82; AGU, Geol Soc London, HESS, IAS, SEPM. GSA Serv: Nomination Committee, History of Geology Division, 03-05; Technical Program Chair, SE GSA, 2008; 2nd Vice Chair HoGD 08-09; 1st Vice Chair HoGD 09-10. Rsrch Int: Sedimentology, facies analysis, depositional environments, basin analysis, tectonics and sedimentation, environmental sedimentology, history of geology.

**First Vice-Chair 2010 – 2011 (1 year term)**

**Kenneth R. Aalto.** Professor Emeritus of Geology, Humboldt State Univ. MA (1968) & PhD (1970) in Geology, Univ. Wisconsin–Madison; BA (1966)-Univ. Pennsylvania. Research interests (with some 50 publications): sedimentary tectonics, stratigraphy, igneous petrology and structural geology of

the Franciscan Complex and Neogene rocks of northern California, Pleistocene geology of the Bahamas Platform, and the history of geology. GSA Fellow (1982), 2nd Vice-Chair-GSA History of Geology Division (2010), HESS.

**Second Vice-Chair 2010 – 2011 (1 year term)**

**James C. 'Jim' Dawson.** Geology; sedimentology. Education: BA Geology (1965) and MS Geology (1967) both at the University of California, Los Angeles; PhD Geology (1970) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Professional Experience: Distinguished Service Professor (1991-Present), Professor of Geology (1981-Present), Associate Professor of Geology (1974-1981), and Assistant Professor of Geology (1970-1974), all at the State University of New York, Plattsburgh, NY. Administrative Experience: Department Chair (1974-1976); Faculty Senate Chair 1974-1976); Director of Environmental Science (1976-1982); New York State Regent (1993-2015 and renewable). Professional Affiliations: GSA, AGU, AAAS, AAPG, SEPM, IAS, AAPG, NAGT, PS, HESS and others locally.

Research Interests: Coal sedimentology and surface mine hydrology issues in Russia, Mongolia and NEChina, Early Paleozoic clastic sedimentology NE US.

Expression of Interest: "Jim Dawson studied the History of Geologic Thought in a course taught by Robert H. Dott, Jr. at the UW-Madison and has continued to read and study this subject area with considerable interest for over forty years. He has served the GSA HoG Division as Chair of the Nominations Committee 1996-1999 and has participated in all HoG events at ten of the last 12 GSA Annual Meetings. He is committed to giving substantial effort to the GSA HoGD, including participation at all GSA Annual Meetings from 2010 through 2014 and beyond as needed."

**Secretary Treasurer 2010 – 2012 (2 year term)**

**Jane P. Davidson.** Professor of History of Art, University of Nevada, Reno. B.A. History, LSU (1969); M. A. United States History, LSU, (1970); M.A. History of Art, Kansas (1973); M.Phil. History of Art, Kansas (1974); PhD. History of Art, Kansas, (1975): Research and teaching interests: History of Paleontology Illustration; History of Dutch and Flemish 17th century painting; History of witchcraft and witchcraft iconography in art, 1400-1800. Biographer of Edward Drinker Cope. Current Secretary Treasurer HoGD.

**This slate of officers has been elected to serve for the terms noted above. We welcome your inputs, your comments, your suggestions and especially your help this coming year. Thanks, your management board.**

**Inhigeo upcoming meeting**

Toyohashi Japan 2-10 August 2011

Interested persons should consult the web page for the meeting for further and much more detailed information. If you are interested, please do so asap as they prefer to have expressions of interest by 30, November, 2010

<http://www.inhigeo-jp.org>

Your board



Vic Baker

Jane Davidson

Ken Aalto

John Diemer