

DPT NEWS, 90

GEOLOGY & PLANETARY SCIENCE NEWSLETTER

Has it really been five years since our last communication? To answer the rhetorical question, yes, it has been five years! Time has a way of passing so quickly, especially when you are having fun!

Our greatest news is that we are now LEGITIMATE!!! The geology major was officially recognized in the fall of 1988. Now our graduates will have their transcripts marked, BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NATURAL SCIENCE (GEOLOGY). The struggle was a long and difficult one, but thanks largely to the success of our graduates, we were able to convince the administration that we really were capable of doing what we had been doing for about 10 years. So to all of our graduates, we send our thanks to you for being the professionals that you are.

Since the last communication, we have started a series of short courses for our students and other interested people. They usually run one or two days, depending upon the topic, and while they, so far, do not carry any college credit, we do give each participant a nice certificate upon completion of the course. Ed Dobson ('80) gave one on engineering geology and we had another one dealing with remote sensing data. We feel they have been quite successful. If any of our graduates would like to share some of their expertise with the students, contact the department and we'll see what can be arranged.

The other big news, which most of you probably already know, is that our department was the host institution for the Field Conference of

Pennsylvania Geologists which met in Johnstown October 5-7 1989. All of the faculty were involved with the field trips and most of the students worked as road guards and safety personnel. Several former students were involved as well, Fred Baldassare ('84), Richard Beam ('84), and Thomas Pongrac (' ?). The cover of the guidebook features a drawing by John Harper of the Pennsylvania Geologic Survey depicting the field work preparing for the meeting with likenesses of himself, Chris Laughrey ('77), also with the Pennsylvania Survey, Dr. Kaktins, and Dr. Brice. [Over 200 geologists attended whom we had to keep from being run over along Route 403.] We split the group for the gorge stops, those who were able went over the side down to the tracks and the rest walked along the road. Everything worked well, everyone saw some good geology and everyone got home safely.

In terms of equipment, our budget was finally increased, at least for about three years, to the point where we could get some good petrographic microscopes, three student model Jenapol made in the GDR, East Germany. Now you don't have to do your thin-section work at midnight, or fight over who gets the good microscope. With the three new ones and the large Vickers, we have four good student microscopes and two others, the AO and small Vickers, that are adequate. We traded in the old black Unitrons, except for the borrowed ones which we still use. Through division grants we were able to get a new thin-section machine and a Spectrex analyzer for doing elemental analysis of minerals. Also, we have another computer in the Department, an ATT PC6300 which has been used for this newsletter. So far we don't have much geology software for it, but Dr. Brice makes use of the word processor program. The Chemistry Department recently replaced their atomic absorption machine and were nice enough to give us the old one which still works. So we are all trying to learn how to use the AA. Everyone here is happy that the division finally replaced the old blue van. Dr. Brice and some students took it to Sudbury in August of 1988, and that was about the last straw for it. However, it wasn't until fall 1989 that the new one was in use. So now we can use a new Ford 15 passenger van with nice seats, and a steering

mechanism that allows you have some control over where the thing goes. Field trips are now not only more comfortable, that are much safer. Speaking of safety, the department now has bright orange hard hats with the department logo on them for our field trips (see the order list elsewhere in the newsletter) and safety vests as well. This way we will look official and be safer when along the side of a highway.

The Geology Club is planning a return trip to the Grand Canyon in April 1990. This is something they are organizing and doing the fund raising, so any assistance will be greatly appreciated. They will go between the end of finals and graduation. It will be a quick trip out and back, but a marvelous experience for them. Some of you will remember the other two trips we took in 1975 and 1976.

FACULTY NEWS

The only change in personnel we have had was the shift of Ms. Sue Brett whom we shared with chemistry as our stockroom/laboratory technician to full-time chemistry laboratory teaching. She was replaced by Ms. Teresa McConnell who has a degree in geology and has been a great help to us. She will be reducing her hours next year, so we hope to be able to get another part-time person just for geology. However, that is a little uncertain at the present time-stay tuned.

Dr. Fry has been very active with the local watershed association and serves as the President. In concert with some other UPJ faculty, he has taken several groups of students to Jamaica to study the coral reefs and beaches there. He is planning a sabbatical leave for fall 1990 to do a water quality study of the Stoneycreek. The proposal is in the review process now.

Hal add whatever else you want to put here. I can't remember all of it.

Dr. Brice received his promotion to Professor in the fall of 1988. The first member of the geology faculty to reach that plateau. Also, the book on the history of the Cornell geology department on which he has been working for "10-these-many-years" was published last June by the Cornell College of Engineering. He is pleased to see his labor of eight summers in print. Dr. Brice has continued his work in the history of geology and has presented several papers at GSA meetings on the subject. After being the program coordinator since 1981, Dr. Brice has decided to step down at the end of the winter term 1990. He feels it is time to bring some fresh ideas to the position. So far no official announcement has been made as to who will replace him as Program Coordinator. Now he will be free to work more on his classes, especially the mineralogy and petrology courses. He is certain there are a few samples he hasn't used yet.

Dr. Kaktins made a trip back to his homeland, Latvia, in 198⁸, just before all of the major changes in eastern Europe began to come to the surface. He and his Mother had a very successful and interesting time there. Dr. Kaktins served as the department coordinator for the Field Conference and also assisted John Harper and Chris Laughrey ('77) in preparing several of the stratigraphic columns that were used in the guidebook. He and Dr. Brice will be presenting a poster session on the Enfield Gorge at Ithaca, New York at the upcoming NE/GSA meeting in Syracuse, New York in March. It appears that after many years of delay, through no fault of his (for sure), Dr. Kaktins' contribution to the publication ~~on~~ Pennsylvania ^{Ge}geology is "in press". The publication of that book is about 5 years behind schedule.

Northeastern
Geology - con. Gorge

Ten - Geom class