

PRESIDENT'S EDITORIAL

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When I assumed the duties of President in January, 2003, I inherited a Society with a membership of nearly 1000, a solid financial base, and two strong scientific journals. The Society has a dynamic membership involved in all aspects of meteoritics, from meteorite recovery to the most sophisticated and detailed analysis of meteorite samples. The Society has grown tremendously over the last few decades, in terms of number of members, the number of nationalities represented, the quality and influence of its publications, and in the range of activities in which it is involved. As we move into the 21st century, the pace of change in the world of meteoritics continues unabated. For example, the internet and electronic publishing are playing an increasingly important role in our lives and work. Meteorites are now being recovered at a rate we could not have imagined as little as a decade ago. For the Meteoritical Society to remain relevant to the needs of its members, it must adapt to these changes. The Council and I are committed to increasing the value (not the cost) of membership in the Meteoritical Society. As I review the events of the past year, I will outline the main areas that are actively being addressed by the Society leadership. The Council and I welcome and request your input. This is, after all, your Society.

Annual Meeting.

As usual, the highlight of the year was the 65th Annual Meeting of the Meteoritical Society, which was held in the Schloß in Münster from July 28th to August 1st 2003 (see report below by Elmar Jessberger). Elmar and the local organizing committee did an outstanding job, and the meeting ran very smoothly. The scientific sessions were rich with interesting talks and posters. The banquet was a great success, with dancing lasting until 4:00 am. Excursions to the Ruhr on Wednesday and to the Ries Crater on the weekend after the meeting provided a nice counterpoint to the sessions. A highlight of the meeting was the presentation of the Society awards. The Leonard Medal was presented to Herbert Palme "for his outstanding experimental, theoretical, and analytical contributions to our understanding of the formation of the Earth, Moon, and chondritic meteorites." The citation address was given by John Wasson. The Barringer Medal was presented posthumously to Graham Ryder, who "conducted petrological, compositional and chronological investigations of lunar crustal rocks and impact melts to investigate the effects of hypervelocity impact processes on lunar stratigraphy and crustal evolution. He also provided authoritative constraints on the cataclysmic bombardment history of the early Moon and Earth, and he envisioned a link between collisional processes and the evolution of terrestrial life." The citation address was given by Paul Spudis and the award was accepted on Graham's behalf by his daughter, Abby. The Nier Prize was presented to Steve Desche "for his theoretical analysis of possible chondrule forming processes in the solar nebula". The citation address was given by Harold Connolly. Congratulations to all of the winners.

Journals

Meteoritics and Planetary Science: This has been a year of transition for MAPS. Tim Jull assumed the Editorship on January 1, 2003, and the production operation has moved to the University of Arizona. Moving the Editorial Office has resulted in publication delays, but the problems have largely

been resolved and you should be receiving your MAPS issues almost on time by the end of the year (see the Editor's report below).

The world of journal publishing is in a period of transition and MAPS will have to adapt to this new world if it is to survive. Currently, MAPS is financed by library subscriptions (~2/3) and member dues (~1/3). However, libraries are under severe financial pressure (as always) and one way to cut costs is to eliminate paper subscriptions in favor of electronic ones. Currently, MAPS does not offer a separate paid electronic subscription. Electronic subscriptions are typically offered to libraries at a lower cost than paper subscriptions. The cost to the publishers is somewhat less, since the printing costs are eliminated, but the editorial and production costs remain. Thus, it is not clear that MAPS could survive a massive shift to electronic subscriptions without doing something to offset the lost revenue. One possible solution is for MAPS to join a journal "aggregate." Under such an arrangement, MAPS would be marketed to libraries as part of a package along with many other journals. The package would provide the journals, electronic indexing, archiving, advertising, and other services, and the cost per journal would be less than if the libraries bought individual subscriptions. If we chose the right aggregate, it is likely that we could significantly increase the number of MAPS subscriptions in libraries, both in the US and overseas. Thus, while each subscription would bring in less revenue, the number of subscriptions would likely be much higher and the revenue might well increase. The shift to electronic publishing is also changing the way journals are used. Although I still like my paper journal, being able to access a wide variety of journals through the computer on my desk is quite nice, and many younger scientists and students use electronic journals almost exclusively. Council, the MAPS publication committee, and the MAPS Editor are currently investigating a number of options to help MAPS survive the journal-publishing revolution, but no decisions have been made. The Council is **not** considering selling MAPS to another publisher. We look on this as an opportunity to both secure the financial future of MAPS and to increase its circulation and impact in the scientific community.

Geochimica et Cosmochemica Acta: Under the leadership of Editor Frank Podosek, GCA has been running smoothly. GCA is sponsored by both the Meteoritical and Geochemical Societies and is published by Elsevier. GCA does not face the same financial issues as MAPS because it is part of the Elsevier aggregate, which markets to libraries all over the world and provides a powerful electronic referencing service, Science Direct.

An issue that is important to both MAPS and GCA concerns meteorite names. It is the policy of both journals to only publish meteorite names that have been approved by the Nomenclature Committee and have been published in the Meteoritical Bulletin (either electronically or in print version) or in the Catalog of Meteorites. While this has not been a serious problem in the past, the large number of meteorites from north Africa are beginning to cause problems (also see below). Publishing unapproved names can lead to major confusion down the road because the name may change, making the original paper hard to track, or the supposed new meteorite might actually be a piece of a previously named meteorite. Please be sure that the meteorite names that you submit for publication have been approved by the Nomenclature Committee.