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Layout: POULIOT GUAY GRAPHISTES

Printer: CARACTÉRA

The opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers.

Elements: Building a New Bridge

It is with great pleasure that we bring you the first issue of *Elements*, a joint publication of the Mineralogical Society of America, the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland, the Mineralogical Association of Canada, the Geochemical Society, and the Clay Minerals Society. We will publish a total of five issues in 2005. As this new enterprise matures, *Elements* will become a bimonthly, and perhaps eventually a monthly magazine. Certainly, we will miss old familiar friends such as *The Lattice*, the *MAC Newsletter*, the *CMS News* and the *Mineralogical Society Bulletin*, which were produced by creative, hard-working, and innovative member scientists. But *Elements* goes well beyond what any of those publications could accomplish given their limited resources. The grand vision of *Elements* is to integrate mineralogy, petrology, and geochemistry, and to showcase them to ourselves and to a much broader community.

During the past fifty years, there has been an impressive expansion of the mineralogical, petrological, and geochemical sciences. This has resulted in a proliferation of new societies, publications, and meetings. Some of these endeavours attempt to bring us together, although in reality this is difficult even though the fundamental science that supports these disciplines is, in many respects, essentially the same. And although individual societies have prospered, most if not all appear to have reached a plateau in their memberships. Such is not the case in the chemical and biological science societies. To us, this is the unfortunate sign that the impact of our disciplines is much less than it should be, especially in the face of the array of important, highly visible scientific issues that confront society today. The fact that we have become stagnant means that we are not attracting the attention of the most talented students or the government agencies that support our research. And we are certainly not attracting the attention of the general public (except via our very best mineral museums), and they are ultimately the most important patrons of all. Are we in danger of becoming fully disconnected?

Elements is meant to be a new bridge – our connection to one another, our connection to other fields (such as environmental science, materials science, solid-state physics, the biosciences, and chemistry). To accomplish this, you will notice many progressive attributes in *Elements*. The most important is that each issue will be thematic, built around major topics of broad and current interest. Upcoming issues will be devoted to topics as diverse as diamond, the geochemistry of the origin of life, toxic metals in the environment, and the relationships between volcanicity and climate change. Each issue will provide the general reader with a broad overview of the field and an introduction to the prominent and active members in that field. The articles will be educational and interdisciplinary, will appeal to students, and will provide material that may be appropriate for lectures in mineralogy, petrology, geochemistry, and other geoscience courses. The guest editors will provide a brief overview of the field in their introduction to each issue. We want each issue to be a clear lesson in why these fields are important, and especially why they are relevant. Of course, we will include regular features, news of the societies, awards, announcements of publications, book reviews, and a calendar of future meetings. This is your magazine – so please advise us on what you want to see.

Finally, this is a collaborative effort of five societies, but others are welcome. We want to grow by being the medium that pulls together our disciplines and national and international societies. Together, and with the help of *Elements*, we can have an impact!

Rod Ewing, Mike Hochella,
Ian Parsons, and Pierrette Tremblay

LAST MINUTE NEWS



As we go to press, the **European Association for Geochemistry** has just announced that it will be participating as full partner in the publication of *Elements*. Welcome to all members of EAG.