ROBERT A. BERNER, 1935–2015

A Giant of Geology Passes Away

Robert Arbuckle Berner, the Alan M. Bateman Professor Emeritus of Geology at Yale University and a pathbreaking researcher, passed away on January 10 after a long illness. Berner, who was 79, joined the Yale faculty in 1965 from the University of Chicago and taught until his retirement in 2007. He was the editor of the *American Journal of Science* from 1980 to 1990 and president of the Geochemical Society in 1983.

Berner was born in Erie, Pennsylvania. He earned a BA (1957) and an MA (1958) from the University of Michigan and was awarded his PhD in geology at Harvard in 1962. In 1959, he married fellow geology graduate student Elizabeth Marshall Kay. They worked together for decades, collaborating on three books about the global water cycle. Berner was also the author or coauthor of hundreds of journal articles and was designated a Most Cited Scientist by the Institute for Science Information.

Berner's many honors included election to the National Academy of Science in 1987 and an honorary doctorate from Aix-Marseille University in 1991. In 2013, the Franklin Institute awarded him the Benjamin Franklin Medal in Earth and Environmental Science. He received various other scientific honors, including a Guggenheim Fellowship (1971) and six other medals: the Huntsman (oceanography, in 1993), the Goldschmidt (1995), the Arthur Day (1996), the Murchison (1996), the Bownocker (2001), and the Vernadsky (2012). He also was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Jay Ague, chair of the Department of Geology and Geophysics at Yale, stated: "Bob was one of the greatest geochemists and, more broadly, geologists who ever lived. It is simply impossible to list all of his accomplishments. Much of his research centered on the quantitative geochemistry of sediments, and it's not an exaggeration to say that he defined the field as we know it. He made seminal contributions to, for example, the geochemistry of sulfides and carbonates in the oceans, diagenesis, weathering, and geochemical cycling. He was a thoughtful teacher and mentor, inspiring a whole generation of geochemists who got their PhDs or did their postdoctoral research in his lab."

Berner is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, his three children, and seven grandchildren.

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT GSA

Vicki S. McConnell became the new executive director of the Geological Society of America (GSA) on 1 April 2015. She replaces Jack Hess, who had held this position since 2001. Vicki was the state geologist of Oregon and executive director of the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, appointments that she has held for the past decade. She was president of the Association of American State Geologists in 2011–2012.

Vicki received her PhD in geology/volcanology from the University of Alaska–Fairbanks in 1995. She has also been a research associate at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and an adjunct professor of geology at Eastern Oregon University. Her scholarly work has focused on understanding volcanic eruptive histories and their impact on magma-generated hydrothermal systems. She applies geologic field mapping and geochemical research to volcanic hazards and renewable geothermal energy systems.

Vicki is a GSA fellow. She has served on numerous boards and councils, including the USGS Scientific Earthquake Studies Advisory Committee and the Federal Advisory Committees for the National Cooperative Geology Map Program and the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program.

AGA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO DONA DIRLAM

The Accredited Gemologists Association presented Dona Mary Dirlam with its Lifetime Achievement Award. This marks only the second time in the association's history that this award has been presented. Dona Dirlam is recognized for incomparable contributions to the gemological community through her enduring commitment to securing and safeguarding the written works of researchers and scholars, both past and present, for the benefit of the global gemological community of today and tomorrow. Under her leadership, which now spans more than three decades, the library of the Gemological Institute of America has expanded from a 2000-book installation to a state-of-the-art facility. The library boasts over 16,000 books and 1800 videos, along with CD-ROMs, audio CDs, and subscriptions to more than 230 periodicals in numerous languages.

Dona has also directed tremendous energy towards exposing more gemology to the geoscience world. Important successes in this area include her shared efforts with Dr. Jim Shigley to advance gemology at meetings of the Geological Society of America and the International Mineralogical Association through special sessions dedicated to promoting gemological research in the 21st century.

GEORGES CALAS INDUCTED AS RSC FOREIGN FELLOW

Georges Calas, of the Institute of Mineralogy, Materials Physics and Cosmochemistry (Pierre and Marie Curie University), was inducted as a foreign fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) last November. Founded in 1882, the Royal Society of Canada comprises the Academies of Arts, Humanities, and Sciences of Canada. Its mission is to recognize scholarly research and artistic excellence, to advise governments and organizations, and to promote a culture of knowledge and innovation in Canada and with other national academies around the world.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Graham Bell, president, Royal Society of Canada (RSC); Georges Calas; and Keith Hipel, president, Academy of Science of the RSC.

The citation reads as follows: "Georges Calas is a pioneer in integrating spectroscopic and structural methods to understand, at a molecular scale, disordered materials, including structure–property relationships in natural minerals and synthetic materials. His work has had major impact on the crystal chemistry of minor elements in minerals, the structure and properties of glasses, radiation damage and radiogenic waste, and environmental mineralogy. He has shown great ingenuity and a command of experimental techniques that is second to none worldwide."

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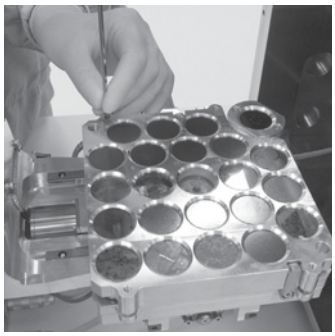

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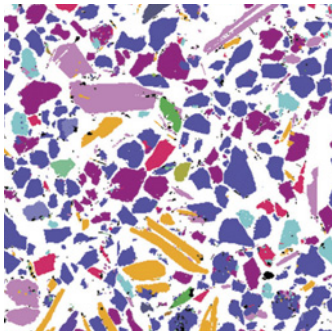

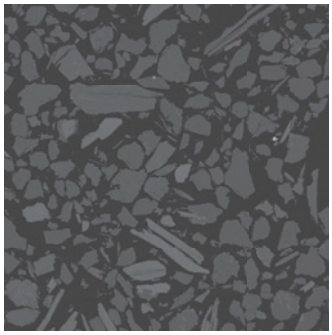

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