

THE LEONARD G. BERRY MEDAL FOR 1998 TO DORIAN G.W. SMITH

The winner of the Leonard G. Berry Medal for 1998 is Dr. Dorian G.W. Smith. The Mineralogical Association of Canada awards the Leonard G. Berry Medal for distinguished service to the Mineralogical Association of Canada. The medal is named after L.G. Berry, a founding member of MAC. Dr. Smith, unfortunately, cannot be at this meeting to receive his medal. I hope these few words do justice to his contributions to Mineralogy and to the Mineralogical Association of Canada.

Dorian Smith received his Ph.D. from Cambridge University in 1963, went to Oxford University for three years, and joined the then Department of Geology at the University of Alberta. There he has had a distinguished career. He is continuing his research on meteoritics and the mineralogy of alkaline rocks, microanalysis of minerals and the development of sophisticated mineral databases and software for mineral identification. For years, Dr. Smith operated and maintained, if not the premier, one of the premier electron microprobe laboratories in Canada. Dr. Smith served the Association for many years in many capacities. He was Vice-President, President and Past-President in the period from 1977 to 1981. Dr. Smith's greatest contribution to the Association, in my opinion, was his inauguration of the Short Course program of MAC. Dr. Smith organized the first MAC Short Course, on Microbeam Techniques, at an annual meeting in Edmonton in 1976. He was also the first MAC President to be Vice-Chairman of the annual meeting, which substantially changed the pattern of MAC involvement thereafter. The notes for this course are no longer available. The second short course in Vancouver in 1977, Application of Thermodynamics to Petrology and Ore Deposits, also has become a classic. Thanks to Dr. Smith's efforts in establishing the short course program, MAC short courses have gained a world-wide reputation.

On behalf of the Mineralogical Association of Canada, it gives me great pleasure to present the Leonard G. Berry Medal to Dorian Smith.

J.M. Nicholls
President, MAC

I thank Jim Nicholls for the kind words that he offered about any contributions that I have been able to make to mineralogy in general, and to the development of the Mineralogical Association of Canada in particular. It is a singular pleasure to receive this medal because Len Berry was a friend and a most important

influence in helping me to establish a career in mineralogy in this country.

In fact, it was nearly a quarter of a century ago that I first became involved with the Mineralogical Association of Canada as anything other than an author. Having emigrated to Canada in the mid-sixties from Oxford, I was unfamiliar with the history and workings of the Association and had to learn "on the job" at the bi-annual council meetings. I found there a rather small group of very dedicated and highly competent scientists, most of them, at that time, with backgrounds in the areas of X-ray crystallography, petrology and descriptive mineralogy. The Association was run on a shoe-string budget, and its primary tasks were the publication of *The Canadian Mineralogist* and the organisation of sessions at the annual meeting, where the MAC was very much the junior partner of GAC. The MAC was, and still is, run very largely by a group of dedicated, unpaid volunteers. It became apparent to us all, I think, that if we were going to survive as a viable organisation during the last quarter of this century, we needed to evolve, to become broader in our base, more ambitious in our annual meetings, more international in our publication, and much better funded. As I look at the MAC today, read *The Canadian Mineralogist*, review the many short courses now published and browse through glossy brochures advertising a wide range of products, I see an Association that has taken amazingly large and successful strides along this path. Hundreds of individuals have given generously of their time to achieve this end.

These changes have been brought about during a time when the discipline of mineralogy has been under attack from many quarters, to the extent that certain other major associations have indulged in much soul-searching about their futures. Mineralogy is an incredibly broad discipline. Apart from the basic and indisputable fact that virtually all of the earth materials with which geologists deal are fundamentally aggregates of minerals (from fossils to FUN-inclusions), much of the research in petrology, geochemistry, economic geology, process mineralogy, environmental mineralogy and so on, involves minerals in a most fundamental way. We also have close ties to other fields such as crystallography, gemmology and soil science. We might expect, then, that mineralogy would command a dominant position in all earth science programs at universities, in natural history museums, government agencies and industry; not so. Over the last quarter century, the subject has instead become marginalized in academic programs. Perhaps this is because aspects of

it are too difficult for the average student taking an undergraduate geology degree today. At the research level, I believe we have not been well represented on granting bodies. Industrially, mineralogy has tended to be hived off into specialised groups or incorporated into and buried within programs and groups with other names. I believe it is high time we reclaimed our territory.

While serving for many years on the council of the International Mineralogical Association and also as a nominee of the MAC on the Canadian National Committee for the Geological Sciences (the adhering body to the International Union of Geological Sciences), I was struck very forcibly by the low profile achieved by the IMA in the IUGS. Indeed, some of our own legitimate areas of interest were separately represented within the IUGS as full Commissions. Many of the IUGS individual commissions had budgets far larger than the entire budget of the IMA, including all its commissions and working groups. Clearly, mineralogy, somehow or other, has missed the boat. Is it not time that we started to try to get back on board? I believe that one way that we may achieve this is for our Association (and others) to work very aggressively to enhance the role of the IMA, perhaps using some of the approaches that have proved so successful for the MAC. With a Canadian as current IMA President, we have a window of opportunity to exert our influence particularly strongly. However, this will require much greater awareness amongst both Council and membership of the various roles and activities of IMA, as well as more active participation of Canadian scientists in many of its commissions and working groups.

The MAC is to be congratulated on its early recognition of the growing importance of the Internet and on being one of the first mineralogical organisations to establish its own Home Page. In academia, one sees the role of distance-learning growing inexorably. For better or for worse, it will, I believe, affect the fundamental nature of many universities. Clearly, it can never really replace field or hands-on experience, nor one-on-one instruction entirely. However, it is a wonderful tool for

providing quick access to information as well as offering curricula and exercises for students. I believe that at this time the MAC should be looking very carefully into the future role of web-based publishing, databases and archiving; maybe Council is already grappling with these opportunities.

Since its formation, the MAC has been a scientific organisation and should certainly remain so. I wonder, however, if the time has not come to consider creating another facet to the Association which might aim at offering professional accreditation in the same way as engineers (and in some provinces geologists) receive official recognition from Engineering Associations. We might also find room to accommodate in some way, and garner more support from, amateur mineralogists and mineral collectors.

As the millennium approaches and we move into the next century, I hope for a waxing of the fortunes of mineralogy, a fascinating and essential part of both science and technology. Thank you so much for the L.G. Berry Medals, which I most humbly and gratefully accept.

Dorian G.W. Smith



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