

EDITORIAL

Welcome to volume 40 of Geoscience Canada, the scientific journal of the Geological Association of Canada. Founding Editor Gerry Middleton articulated the special niche of Geoscience Canada in the very first issue (1974): *“the basic policy... will be to print general-interest articles about the earth sciences in Canada, or about developments in the earth sciences outside Canada, which are likely to be of special interest to Canadians. These articles will be written at a technical level that can be understood not only by specialist research workers but also by non-specialists in other branches of the earth sciences.”*

In 1974, Pierre Trudeau was Prime Minister, the Blue Jays did not exist, and it was only seven years since the Maple Leafs had won the Stanley Cup (as opposed to 46 years by 2013). There has been a lot of water under a lot of bridges, but nearly forty years later, Geoscience Canada still occupies that special niche. Indeed our niche is arguably even more strategic given the need for distillation and synthesis with the volume and rapidity by which new information and data enter the public domain.

Recently, GAC council took the decision to go to an “online-only” format, beginning with volume 39. This ‘new’ format is a fundamental change, and offers a lot more freedom as well as flexibility in what we can publish; colour figures are free and we can now do animations as an integral part of our articles (see De Paor 2012; Boggs et al. 2012). To maintain this momentum, we now need a sustained effort to increase the number of subscriptions so that our science can spread further and wider. To that end, GAC council has decoupled subscription to Geoscience Canada from GAC membership. Previously, to subscribe

to Geoscience Canada, you also had to join the GAC. For many non-Canadian geoscientists, this extra cost was a great disincentive to subscribe. GAC members will get a generous discount to subscribe, but we hope this initiative will result in a significant increase in subscriptions and increase our international visibility.

The content of Geoscience Canada will continue to encompass all aspects of our professional and/or academic lives. We publish research articles on any aspect of the geosciences, some as standalone articles (e.g. Schindler et al. 2012), and others as part of a series. This year, as in the past several years, we have published many successful series of articles on Economic Geology (e.g. Yang 2012), Climate and Energy, Geology and Wine, Great Mining Camps of Canada, Igneous Rock Associations, Remote Sensing (e.g. Behnia et al. 2012) and Great Canadian Lagerstätten (e.g. Young et al. 2012). In addition to research articles in a variety of formats, we publish on student, outreach, and professional issues, with several excellent examples in volume 39 (Johnson and Bonham 2012; Halfkenny 2012; Raeside and Kusters 2012).

Volume 39 had several new series and you will see continued contributions in each of these series in volume 40. The “Canada GEESE” series, coordinated by Assistant Editor Declan De Paor (see De Paor 2012), focuses on the interface between geology and Google Earth. The Boggs et al. (2012) article is an excellent start to this series. Our new series on Modern Analytical Facilities, coordinated by Keith Dewing, Bob Linnen, and Chris McFarlane, kicked off to a great start with an article on *in situ* accessory mineral dating using LA-ICPMS (McFar-

lane and Luo 2012). We had four spell-binding contributions from regular columnist Paul Hoffman (his Tooth of Time column), as well as a series of invited articles in Paul’s honour (St-Onge 2012; Finnegan et al. 2012; Macdonald et al. 2012). The Tooth of Time column is an exceptional read for us all, and especially for students, who will gain insights into how our science has developed through the brilliant insights of some truly extraordinary characters. The Hoffman series articles present exceptionally high quality research; look out for more of these articles in volume 40.

Another initiative is to develop synergies with other cornerstone GAC activities. Hence, in issue 4 of each year we publish summaries of forthcoming field trips at the following year’s GACMAC annual meeting (Fredericton 2014 field trip leaders please note!). Also at each GACMAC, we will sponsor a special session of invited presenters featuring recently published or of forthcoming articles in Geoscience Canada.

Building on the momentum of our on-line status, the first in a series of Geological Debates is presented in this issue. The most widely accepted model for the evolution of the Caribbean plate is the “Pacific Model” in which the Caribbean is interpreted as oceanic lithosphere captured from the Pacific realm (e.g. Pindell et al. 2006). Keppie (2013) and James (2013) present two different and contrarian models. The intent of this series is to debate controversial and important issues in the geosciences. The target readership is the current crop of graduate students, and we hope to stimulate discussions in seminars or over coffee. We also hope that these debates will be of great interest to all. If you have

ideas for topics of such debates, I would be pleased to entertain them.

Later this year, an inaugural series of articles honouring the immense contributions of the late Hank Williams will be published. In addition, the first in a series of papers authored by recent recipients of the 'Hutchinson Medal' and 'Logan Medal' should be in press. The articles by these awardees are intended to reach a broad spectrum of geoscientists, not just specialists in their disciplines.

Geoscience Canada is the only geoscience journal of the Geological Association of Canada. We must aim to further enhance its stature and make it the prime venue for you to consider as an outlet for the various activities of your career. Our articles are listed in the Web of Knowledge (Science) and Google Scholar. Our goal is to publish quality articles on all aspects of the geosciences that are of interest to Canadians. Because geology crosses borders, and our neighbours have changed over the eons of geologic time, our mission is global in scope. There is no reason whatsoever why we cannot produce a journal of the highest international stature. Obviously, we need your support to achieve these goals.

In closing, I would like to thank Chris Pereira for the vast contribution he has made to Geoscience Canada over many years, our busy copy editors, Roger Macqueen, Rob Raeside, Paul Robinson, and Reg Wilson, for their sterling efforts, and the entire editorial board for their support during the past year.

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