Geology Alumni Classroom Opportunity

We are delighted to announce that the Department of Geology has received a generous anonymous gift of $50,000. This gift will go toward the renovation of classroom space in Brown Hall.

To meet the demand of growing class sizes in the Department, we would like to renovate/combine two smaller seminar rooms (Brown 141 & 142) into one large lecture classroom. This new classroom will seat up to 40 students, with tiered seating, writing space from door to door and new technology. Please note this will not affect the wall in Brown 143 that has the painting by Dr. Barbara Tewksbury based on the logo design of former faculty member Dr. William T. Elberty, Jr..

The total cost of the renovation is $140,000. The University has agreed to pay for a portion of the renovation now, but due to other pressing priorities can’t commit to the full renovation this year. If we can raise the additional funds, the classroom will be managed by the department and we would be able to name it the “Geology Alumni Classroom”. This classroom will not only provide the needed space for our core curriculum classes, but also for lectures, meetings, and other formal activities that our growing program needs. We also hope to build in display areas to highlight the best of our mineral, rock, and fossil collections.

Our goal is to formally dedicate the classroom at the SLUGAC 9 scheduled for Fall 2015. Thank you for your consideration of a gift to make the classroom a reality. John Pezdek (jpezdek@stlawu.edu) and Susan Regier (sregier@stlawu.edu) of the Advancement Office can provide information on how to make a donation.

Dr. George Robinson Named Research Associate

The Department of Geology is pleased to announce that Dr. George Robinson will join us in an official capacity as a research associate. Dr. Robinson, a graduate of SUNY Potsdam and Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, is recently retired from the A. E. Seaman Museum at Michigan Technological University. He also worked for the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa from 1982-1996. George and his wife, Susan, have generously volunteered their time to help organize and improve our department’s impressive mineral collection. Mostly recently they have completed several new displays located in the hallway between Madill and Brown Halls. The author of many books and papers on mineralogy, George is particularly interested in the mineralogy of St. Lawrence County. George also gave the Susan Caroline Ferguson Lecture last fall on the “Minerals of Saint Lawrence County and Environs”. We are very pleased to have someone of his stature and knowledge of local mineral occurrences associated with the St. Lawrence Geology Department.

Please join us in welcoming George and Susan.
Recently my interest in minerals has been reignited by association with two eminent mineralogists Dr. George Robinson (recently retired from the A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum of Michigan Tech University) and Dr. Marian Lupulescu (New York State Museum). Both of these fine men are intensely interested in the minerals of St. Lawrence County. Many of you may remember the famous black tourmaline locality in Pierrepoint, New York, known as the Bower Powers Farm from a geology field trip or a clandestine collecting trip. Tourmalines from this locality, among many other St. Lawrence County minerals, are found in major mineral collections from around the world.

A trip to the Arizona Laserchron Center in Tucson this spring provided an opportunity for our students Thomas Lockwood ’14 and Hillary Hagen-Peter ’14 and myself to investigate some of these remaining chronologic questions in our own backyard. Work at laboratories like the ALC provides our students with opportunities to participate in research involving state-of-the-art analytical techniques and preview what graduate studies at a major research university would be like. Part of the funding for this comes from the James S. Street Fund, and we sincerely thank you for the chance to provide our students with these types of opportunities which would be impossible otherwise.

On a personal note, I have fulfilled a life-long goal and have purchased some land to start a small farm and orchard. The home is off the grid and fairly rustic, with hand pumped water and exclusively wood heat. It is built into the side of a bedrock ridge and I can now enjoy Grenville rocks while lounging in my living room! I look forward to returning to my orchard-based roots having spent most of my childhood working at Meadowbrook farm in Myers Corners, New York.

Please help us in congratulating all 25 of our graduates this spring, including William Knoble who passed away unexpectedly and much too soon, last Fall.
This past semester I’ve enjoyed working with my two senior students, both of whom graduated having written excellent senior theses. Thomas Lockwood ’14 studied the facies change along the margin of a deep-marine terminal splay, Neoproterozoic Windermere Supergroup, BC, Canada. Michelle Goldberg ’14 focused on the modern mixed carbonate-siliciclastic depositional environment of the Salem Bay, Jamaica. The spring was also reserved for teaching Oceanography, Carbonate Sedimentology, and running a field course in Jamaica. The latter went very well, with Joe Barns, Eddie Berke, Kalen Griffin, Cullen LaPointe, Thomas Lockwood, John Miller, Cameron Mitiguy, and Lauryn Tannenhauus participating.

The annual AAPG convention this year was in Houston. At the same time St. Lawrence University organized a Geology reception with Dean Val Lehr at the home of Igor ’68 and Betty Effimoff. It was an excellent opportunity to meet with the geology alumni and tell them a bit of what’s going on in the department. Besides Igor ’68, alumni present were Bill Van Wie ’67, Dean Eppler ’74, Doug ’75 and Kathy ’76 O’Brien, Roy Christofferson ’76, and Ben Rendall ’11. Our department is so lucky to have such a group of alumni that cares about SLU Geology and are willing to help.

This summer I will work with two SLU fellows. Joe Barns will focus on the stratigraphy of a 400-feet-thick interval of the Red River Formation, North Dakota. On the other hand, John Miller will analyze carbonate sediment production in a modern, river-influenced tropical lagoon of Little Laughlands Bay, Jamaica. In addition, I will teach my online Dynamic Ocean course in June. Later, I will fly to Croatia to log a section through Jurassic platform carbonates, and also spend some time visiting with family and friends.

Have a great summer,
Antun

Guten Tag.

I am proud to say, I got the first academic year under my belt. There were a lot of firsts for me this year; I saw my first freshman class start and my first seniors graduate, and now I started my first summer in the North Country bringing research, field work, and preparation for the fall semester. I enjoyed all of it.

My lab is transitioning nicely from construction site to usable space and, with a little work over the summer; I should be ready to teach in the Paleontology-Lab in the upcoming fall semester. I want to thank everybody that helped me make this possible, especially our amazing technician Matt and Kelly Hale my Teaching Assistant without those guys this would have never happened.

My Paleontology class has been updating the exhibit cases throughout the department as part of their class projects, and I am happy to say they look great. We used many specimens from SLU’s Paleontology Collection, which, again, has proven to be a great teaching resource.

I am proud to tell you that Kelly Hale ’14 has been accepted into the University of Missouri-Columbia to work with Dr. John Huntley on her maters in Paleontology. She has been my TA for this past year and we worked together on a SYE project studying fresh water mussels, which we hope to wrap up this summer.

Another exciting development this spring was the start of a project in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Vienna. In the context of a larger study, which is assessing the impact of oil drilling in the Persian Gulf, we will be examining death assemblages of clams and snail from the Southern Arabian Gulf to investigate if these reflect recent anthropogenic disturbances. We received a CHS Research Grant from the SLU to send Rudy Bentlage ’16 and Hannah Drummond ’15 to Vienna to collect data for this project over the winter break 14/15. This is a unique opportunity for the students to get involved with an international research group that works on cutting edge issues in Paleoecology.

I am curious to see what the coming semesters have in store for me. I wish you all a great summer.
Judith
Salutations Geology Friends,

I hope this finds you folks well and ready for the season. Summer is fast upon us here in the North Country. At this moment we are only a few days from graduating a group of alumni and hopeful future decision makers. It will also be a time of summer field trips and courses that your Geology Department is involved with. As I type this out Dr. Chiarenzelli is leading a week-long trip with the home base located at John Kelly’s “End of the Road Ranch” and going out on daily trips afield to various places of interested in the Central and Southern Rocky Mountains. While Jeff is enjoying the Rocky Mountains, Dr. Stewart and I are preparing for a nearly 2 week-long trip to Alaska that incorporates Anchorage, Valdes, Cordova, Seward, Chitina and surrounding regions. It is a busy time to be sure… As is my usual habit with my contribution to the newsletter, I will leave the business of the department to my colleagues while I huff you into restful contemplation concerning the little farm that is my shelter from the world.

For those that have read my post in the past, you will already have guessed much of what is on my “to do” list for the summer. I face the usual chores of cutting firewood for our home and cutting a little to sell that will help pay the expense of hay for our 7 horses. We have been busy the past several weeks cleaning the pasture, which has been a bigger job than usual after the ice storm that hit us around the holidays of last December. Fixing fence has also been a larger job than usual due to that same pesky ice storm. At this moment I have the fence in good enough repair where the fence is on to remind the horses that the fence isn’t for leaning… Still have a couple of dozen posts to replace and I hope to rebuild around 200 yards of the fence, but that will have to wait until after I get back From Alaska. As long as we can have the fence on and the electric wire not grounding out, I can breathe a good bit easier. At this point in the year I am looking forward to working with, and riding, our younger horses. Managed to put lots of ground work with the three youngsters last year and believe they will be ready for ground work with a saddle on them this year after a little refresher. Once that is done, it will be time to put weight in the saddle with lessons on the trail to follow. Each year I seem to heal up a little more slowly, so I am going to put plenty of time in with refreshing their ground work lessons in hopes that I don’t get a “ground lesson” while sitting in the saddle.

We did manage to finish installing the new steel on the house roof last fall, to include a nice new gable covering our back piazza. To my dismay, we didn’t finish weathering in that project until the 2nd weekend of November, well into whitetail deer season. I absolutely hated missing that time in the woods but, it was a great joy and relief to have finally got the roof portion of that project complete! We enjoyed the shelter of the porch roof all winter and now that it is near summer, the added shaded space to our living quarters is oh so nice! This summer I will apply the finishing touches to the piazza; framing in a false wall up in the gable to keep critters out of the roof and attic space, and dressing up the porch space a little with a bar-railing on each side for convenient socializing space. Other than that, and maybe some decorative touches, we need only to finish treating the wood both for beauty and for longevity.

Since the piazza is about complete, I plan on beginning work replacing the old siding on our small garage with new. Nothing fancy planned for this project, just simple board and bat siding to keep the weather out and the heat in during winter. This will include a new door and window jams, new corner trim and new fascia and maybe adding soffit. I need to build a new man-door and would like to replace a few of the windows also but that will depend on what used windows I can find cheap at garage and yard sales.

Still have not started my dream of building a maple sugaring business, but hope to at least begin that process this year. I know… you have heard this from me before. My goals for this year are humble; simply hope to get a mainline, or two, hung and add the gathering lines in one portion of our woods. Will need to obtain a couple of large gathering tubs and build small shelters for those tubs. If we can get to the point where we are selling sap, then I will be satisfied for the short term. At least in that way we can begin making a little money to reinvest into the operation, and it will give us a better idea of what we will need for a future sugar house and evaporator.

And no summer would be complete for me without a few hike trips. Not much planned yet but you can bet I will take off for a week or two traveling out of state to visit friends and family after finishing up here for the summer. That time is great to refresh, reconnect, and to enjoy new some scenery. As always, hope to fit in several “day trips” to enjoy our local scene here in the Adirondacks, St. Lawrence Valley, Catskills, and maybe a trip to the Finger Lakes region and Southern Tier if an opportunity allows.

Hope you all have a great summer!

Matt

Hello Everyone,

This past spring semester was a great experience while teaching Petrology with labs and Environmental Geology. I was delighted to be able to go through the SLU collection of rocks and thin sections for the Petro students covering both igneous and metamorphic rocks. We tried something a little new and each student was given the opportunity to make two thin sections as part of Petrology projects. I think they now have more awareness and respect for the time and skill that goes into the effort!

I was further delighted that my paper “Precambrian crustal evolution in the Great Falls tectonic zone: insights from Xenoliths from the Montana alkali province” was accepted for publication to the Journal of Geology and should be coming out later this summer.

Future plans for this summer include a trip to Bancroft Ontario to view a potential field trip location for Structural Geology in the fall semester. Having never been to Ontario, I am quite looking forward to the trip!

Altogether, my first year at SLU has been a fantastic one and I am looking forward to the coming semesters!

Jennifer
Dear Friends,

We are all saying, “I’m glad Winter is finally over,” but is it?? You know there were some Pleistocene geologists who used to suggest that warming climates would trigger new glaciations. I am not sure that Milanovich would agree with that, but it felt like a return to the Little Ice Age this past Winter! I certainly missed Tim and Diana Bouchard and Chris Stevens who often surprised me by shoveling my walks and driveway when they were looking for exercise. I certainly appreciated that! I know that a group of students are presently in Colorado with Dr. Chiarenzelli on an extended field trip and they have had a foot of snow! I hope they brought their skis!

Right now I am trying to get caught up on the gardening that did not get done in April when it should have. I hope to get over to camp this week to see how it is doing in as much as Lake Champlain is again at flood levels and that can put it at peril these days. I hope the fishing is good this year in any case. Last year was not the best.

Professionally, I have kept busy on several papers. It is probably not good practice to work on more than one paper at a time, but that seems to be what goes on in my head these days so I have one submitted on the “Cincinnati Five” predated snails. That was a submission that I somewhat reworked because the first version was a disaster. Then I am coauthor on a paper with a Canadian fellow working on caddis cases and another on fossil fish with a couple of other authors. Then I am doing one on stereotypical trace fossil borings, one on a new gastropod species and the everlasting shark paper with John Hoganson and Bud. Waiting in the wings are Fox Hills echinoids with Ben Rendall, Cannonball snails with Krys Kornecki and Glovers Pond midges with Kate Zulin-Stathopoulos and Maggie Simmons and perhaps carbonate silts with Wade Jones if I get that far!! I try to work a bit on a book as well.

In September, I will teach a short course for the SOAR continuing education program at SUNY Potsdam. It will be based on the ideas I am using in my Cincinnatian paleoecology book. I have too many topics to discuss and too few classes so I will have to make some hard choices. It will be fun to be back in a classroom setting again so I am looking forward to it, but I can wait for September!

People are already beginning to remind me that 2015 will be a SLUGAC year. In April at a reception, I was visiting with President Fox, and he asked if SLUGAC would be this Fall. When I replied it would be in 2015, he asked me to let him know because, “I like that group.” I assured him we would let him know because we appreciated his hospitality as well. Something to look forward to at SLUGAC 9. I have also already had talk topics from several alumni who have things on their minds to convey to students regarding jobs experiences or new techniques. It is an amazingly healthy experience for both or students and or alumni!! … and if you don’t have a topic to talk about, it is still GREAT FUN and we need you to interact with our more than 80 majors!! Think about that! At the Bloomer Lecture and Dinner we will need at least 60 alums present if we are to get close to the normal on-to-one contact that we like to have. Plan ahead to be part of the action..... Well, you can see what I am looking forward to.

I have heard from many of you, too numerous for me to mention all, but I love to hear from you. Andy Fetterman ’94 calls now and then to chat. I had a great call from Peter Connett ’94 just out of the blue; I really enjoyed talking with him after many years. Notes from Tori Kohn ’04 included a photo taken with Chris Stevens ’04 at a conference in AK. Had lunch with Matt Burton-Kelly ’05 in Grand Forks while I was in ND for an alumni celebration. He is working at the EERC and he and his wife have purchased a home in East Grand Forks. Interestingly, at UND they had just put up postcards announcing a talk by some guy named Andrew Fountain ’75! I was pleased to say that I knew him! Had a nice note from Charlie Kerans ’77 who received the AAPG Grover Murry Award in April and since then has been announced as the 2015 winner of the Pettijohn Medal of the SEPM!! Trisha Smrecak ’06 is taking a semester off from her PhD to hike the Appalachian Trail! Krys Kornecki ’12 will complete her MS at Kent State this Summer and begin a PhD program at RPI with Mini Katz ’81 this Fall. Also had a good phone conversation with Scott Carpenter ’85 late in the Winter. Scott lives in Iowa and works for Olympus microscopes. Come to think of it Scott and I have a couple of unfinished manuscripts going as well! Add them to the list. April Abbott ’09 is in a PhD program at Oregon State University based on her Linked in message - I wish I could mention all the Linkedins I get, but thanks to all. A note from Heather Cunningham ’98 said she still likes her work in Chicago. Booth’00 and McKenzie Platt ’01 have a new little Booth named Fischer Booth Platt, born in March, Congratulations!!! I know I missed at least two alums who were visiting campus with their offspring and I regret that greatly. Please call me if you are visiting 315 379-9235 at home if I am not in the office and I will meet you. As usual I can’t recall all who sent me messages or called, but I assure you I have enjoyed hearing from every one.

My fishing will be interrupted in mid-July with a trip to North Dakota for the opening of the new Corridor of Time exhibit at the Heritage Center on the 26th. I expect John Hoganson will visit here first to pick up the part of my fossils and my library that I am donating to the Johnsrud Paleontology Lab in the HC. We will travel west and spend some time working on the shark paper – hopefully finishing it. I am looking forward to getting this all accomplished. After that, I guess I’ll get back to the R&R – maybe some golf too!

Have a great Summer and be sure to get some fishing in! I may see some of you at GSA in Vancouver next Fall; I hope to attend. Meanwhile, if you visit Canton or Highgate Springs VT, please give me a call.

Warmest wishes, Mark
I hope you have been well. I saw your message on facebook and would be happy to let you what has been going on. It has been quite a busy year! I am still working at Golder Associates in Mt. Laurel, NJ as a geologist and living in nearby Medford. My wife Lisa, (SLU '08 as well – Bio and Envi Studies) is also still at Golder. Our company has been very busy and we are involved in a great deal of interesting projects. I have been continuing my work on conceptual site model development and 3D visualization. This year we began an extensive pre-design investigation (PDI) for a bedrock groundwater extraction system at one of my main project sites (large legacy superfund site). The PDI work provided a great opportunity for me to get some bedrock drilling experience and lead a field investigation. We were drilling in the Passaic Formation of the Newark Basin, which provided a great opportunity to see the subsurface of New Jersey. Following the drilling, I helped conduct an extensive hydrogeologic investigation involving several different types of hydro testing methods. We gathered an enormous amount of interesting data and am now working to compile and interpret it all. I have learned a great deal from the experience and have been pleased with my career development so far at Golder. Recently, I began managing a project and am starting to learn the “in & outs” of project management.

Cheers,
Brian Congiu ’08

I am working on my MS at Montreat College. I propose my thesis next month. I will be researching how undergraduate students respond emotionally to field courses, and that if influences their environmental attitudes. So I am in contact with Geology departments at several state schools in North Carolina. I’m enjoying the process so far, though it is keeping me busy. My son is 2 1/2 now and a handful. We live near the beach in North Carolina, so we will be getting out there more and more with the warmer weather. Otherwise, I’m hoping to hear back soon about an Outreach Education position at the NC Aquarium.

Best regards,
Emilee Mroz ’07

CONGRATULATIONS!!!
Camille Partin ’06 on the completion of her Ph.D in geochemistry this Spring.

I started field camp for Idaho State University. It will run for the whole month of June.

Chris Mudge ’13

All has been good down here! Charlie Harman ’09 was in town the other day so we went out for ice cream with Raff ’09. I see Raff pretty often as his office is on the same block as mine. He just had a baby! It is a boy named Arlo Jeremiah Sweeney. Lastly, Estella and I have an extra bedroom so if Y’ALL need a place to stay while you are in town you are more than welcome to crash with us. Tell the SLUGEO’S I say hello! All the best,

Benjamin E. Rendall ‘11

I’m in my 3rd year of a PhD program in the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences at Oregon State University working with Dr. Brian Haley and Dr. James McManus (now at Akron U) on rare earth element cycling in porewaters and its influence on Nd isotopes. Not a lot of “news,” mainly working in the lab and have been a TA the past few terms so even my lab time has been pretty low. I did present our first set of data "Rare Earth Elements in Marine Sedimentary Pore Fluids" at Goldschmidt in Florence, Italy last summer (and managed to catch up with Camille Partin ’06 while there!) and the paper with that data "should" be submitted soon. Then in the fall Hobart and William Smith brought me back to Geneva NY to speak as part of an alumni lecture series. Hoping to have isotope data to present at AGU this winter but we will have to wait and see- rare earths are just too rare!

April Abbott ’09

I am spending the summer in Crested Butte CO. I was out rock climbing with a friend (also a SLU alum) on what he considered limestone. When it was my turn to climb I made it about half way up before I felt comfortable enough to focus on the makeup of the rock. To my surprise, and my friends befuddlement, I realized that the rock was on appeared to be composed primarily of encrusting bryozoans. Back on the ground I realized that this and other local outcroppings resemble a reef. I thought of all people you might perhaps share my excitement about such a realization. I’m working on finding a good geologic map of the area to perhaps confirm my observation. If I go there again I will be sure to take some pictures to send along.

Best, Alex Leich ’13