



Newsletter no. 3, January 2010



Almost all the delegates attending the CFES/FCST semi-annual meeting at the University of Regina, October 24/25. From left to right: Godfrey Nowlan (CGEN president and CFES/FCST outreach director), John Boyd (CNC-International Year of Planet Earth and CSEG), Lynden Penner (CGS), Pat Ryall (CFES/FCST treasurer), Ollie Bonham (CCPG), Ian Young (CFES/FCST past president), Scott Jobin Bevans (PDAC), Lisa Griffith (CSPG), Kevin Ansdell (GAC), Elisabeth Kosters (CFES/FCST managing director), Bill Stiebel (CFES/FCST president-elect), Sandy Cruden (CCCESD), Bill Mercer (CFES/FCST president), Alec Aitken (CanQua). Not in the picture (because he took it): Dan Smith (CAG)

First of all: Happy New Year to all readers. This will be an exciting year for earth sciences in Canada with GeoCanada 2010 taking place less than four months from the day of writing this newsletter. Your abstract is due January 15! www.geocanada2010.ca.

It is also an important year for CFES/FCST, as we intend to turn the corner financially and thus serve you better in the near and more distant future.



Semi-annual Council of Members meeting, Regina

We met with our constituency on the lovely campus of the University of Regina for our semi-annual meeting on October 24-25. We were welcomed by faculty and students of UoR's geology department, especially by Dr. Maria Velez-Caicado, who did a lot of preparation groundwork for our meeting. As a result, we had a successful event with students on the Friday evening prior to our meeting, sponsored by Avalon Rare Metals. One delegate of each job sector talked to about 50 students about the excitement, requirements and challenges of the work as an earth scientist in that sector. We thank Godfrey Nowlan (GSC), Kevin Ansdell (University of Saskatchewan), Lisa Griffith (Griffith Geoconsulting), Bill Mercer (Avalon), Steve Holysh (Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition, Toronto) for their input in this most valuable gathering. The minutes of the meeting are posted on <http://www.geoscience.ca/minutes.html>. Two new board members were elected in Regina: Bill Stiebel of Stantec (formerly Jacques Whitford) was elected as President-elect. He will take over the reins from Bill Mercer in the fall of 2010. Carolyn Relf, director of the Geological Survey of the Yukon, was elected Director for CanGeoRef (see below).

The next semi-annual Council of Members meeting will take place in Calgary, just prior to the start of the GeoCanada 2010 Conference. More information to follow in the next newsletter (April).

Canadian National Committee for the International Year of Planet Earth (CNC-IYPE) **www.earthsciencescanada.com**

Our semi-annual meeting took place just one month prior to the official closing ceremony of the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE). That event took place in Lisbon Nov 20-21 (<http://www.planetearthlisbon2009.org>) and was attended by CNC-IYPE General chairman John Boyd and by CFES International Affairs (and IUGS Secretary General) member Peter Bobrowsky. In addition, Canada was represented officially by two students at the event: Marit Heideman (Simon Fraser Univ) and Caroline Richer (UNB) as well as prof. Jim Teller (member of the IYPE scientific board). Staff from the Canadian embassy in Lisbon attended some of the events. Canada was one of 17 countries to get an award for its IYPE efforts!



The Canadian IYPE efforts were focused on outreach and specifically on creating a legacy and the committee was extremely successful in achieving that goal. See www.earthsciencescanada.com for complete coverage. The Committee raised \$400,000 for the three projects: the **WHERE Challenge**, the **Careers website** and the **Four Billion Years and Counting Book**. The WHERE Challenge ended in the Spring of 2009 and is repeated in '09/'10 school year. The Careers website was launched in January of 2009 and focuses on middle school students. The "Four Billion Years and Counting" Book is in the final stages of editing and will be published in 2010.

In the photograph below, John Boyd and Godfrey Nowlan are symbolically handing over CNC-IYPE to CFES/FCST president Bill Mercer. It is now the responsibility of CFES and its outreach subcommittee CGEN (of which Godfrey is chairman) to keep the legacy alive. In this context, we are also planning to integrate the CFES/FCST and IYPE websites, which we hope will build out to be the main portal for Canadian earth sciences. Financing these efforts remains an ongoing challenge.



John Boyd (left) and Godfrey Nowlan (center) handing over the tasks of CNC-IYPE to CFES President Bill Mercer.



Geoparks

The Geoparks initiative (<http://www.geoscience.ca/geoparks.html>) is speeding ahead! In October, National GeoParks Committee chairman Godfrey Nowlan, together with committee member Jenna Boon of the Joggins Fossil Center (Joggins UNESCO World Heritage site) visited the proposed Stonehammer GeoPark in the Saint John (NB) area. They provided feedback to the Stonehammer team, which submitted the proposal to UNESCO in early December. If approved, Stonehammer will be the first GeoPark in North America. The Canadian National Committee for Geoparks is working closely with the Geological Society of America, which coordinates a comparable national committee in the US to arrive at a common set of guidelines for North American GeoParks, so that we can eventually form a North American Geopark network, comparable to the European GeoParks network.



Godfrey Nowlan at a public event about the Stonehammer Geopark in Saint John, NB. © Photo Noel Chenier, Times Telegraph.



New

Canadian National Stratigraphy Commission

At the semi-annual meeting in Montreal in April of 2009, CCCESD representative **Martin Head** (Chair of the Department of Earth Sciences at Brock University) proposed that CFES/FCST initiate a national stratigraphy commission, as is fitting for any country and certainly for a country this size. This proposal was approved and Martin Head was tasked with chairing the effort and with populating the Canadian Stratigraphy Commission. The Commission's overall purpose is to serve and represent the Canadian Earth science community's (as represented in the CFES/FCST member organizations) interests in stratigraphy. By November, the Commission was populated. A link will be up on our website shortly. One of the first challenges will be to construct a (CFES/FCST authorized) geological time scale poster, i.e. one featuring Canadian content as far as possible. This might include showing earlier stratigraphic schemes used in Canada alongside their currently accepted international equivalents. This would also involve reviewing the geological time scale itself to determine the preferred scheme from a Canadian perspective.

International Union of Geosciences / IUGS (www.iugs.org).

The Permanent Secretariat of the IUGS has moved from Norway to Washington (USGS offices) as of January 1, 2010. The monthly IUGS bulletins can be downloaded from their website. Please visit and bookmark this completely restructured site! Canada is a Category 6 member of IUGS, and the annual the membership dues are currently paid by the National Research Council of Canada. The Canadian National Committee for IUGS rests under the umbrella of CFES/FCST. Peter Bobrowsky, who is also the IUGS Secretary General, is the CFES/FCST International director.

Peter Bobrowsky is chairing an implementation committee that will outline the structure and content for a Canadian IGC committee to submit a proposal in 2012 to host the IGC in Canada in 2020. By that year, it will be nearly 50 years since the IGC took place here (1972). The bid document must be ready in 2012 in order to compete with other competing proposals that will be evaluated at the IGC in Brisbane, Australia (the 2016 IGC will take place in South Africa). **If you are willing to contribute to this effort, let us know!**



CanGeoRef

CanGeoRef will be a subset of GeoRef, the AGI earth science literature database with about 3 million references. AGI approached CFES/FCST two years ago with this idea. About 10 years ago, AGI initiated AusGeoRef, a GeoRef subset with Australian earth science literature and the success of this initiative led them to approach Canada with a similar plan. CFES/FCST had to research the issue carefully. We are very pleased to have received seed money for the start-up phase from the Committee of Provincial and Territorial Geologists (CPTG). Having secured funding, the contract with AGI was signed in Regina. The Provinces and Territories (and their clients) stand to benefit most from CanGeoRef, because it is estimated that less than half of their total references are in GeoRef (and most of these are more than 15 years old). The Provincial and Territorial Geological Surveys have committed not only funding, but also staff time towards data input in this first phase. The four "pilot provinces" are Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba and Newfoundland/Labrador. CanGeoRef is run by a Steering Committee, chaired by newly elected CFES/FCST *Board member for CanGeoRef* Carolyn Relf, Director of the Geological Survey of the Yukon. We are in the process of contracting a contractor for the first part of the pilot. The first data entry phase is expected to take about 18 months, i.e. until the Fall of 2010, when we hope to launch CanGeoRef.

PAGSE (www.pagse.org)

CFES/FCST is a member of PAGSE, the Partnership Group for Science and Engineering, a cooperative association of more than 25 national organizations in Science and Engineering, representing approximately 50,000 individual members from the industry, academia, and government sectors (and since CFES/FCST represents about 18,000 earth science professionals, we are a significant component of PAGSE!). Our representative with PAGSE is Dr. Denis St. Onge, emeritus scientist with the Geological Survey of Canada. Most importantly, PAGSE organizes the 'Bacon and Eggheads' breakfast, a flagship series that brings together Parliamentarians with experts across Science and Engineering, showcasing outstanding Canadian research accomplishments. The purpose of the Bacon and Eggheads breakfast is to provide unbiased insight into topical scientific issues, within a non-partisan forum (in which lobbying is NOT permitted).