

Acceptance of the Dana Medal of the Mineralogical Society of America for 2012

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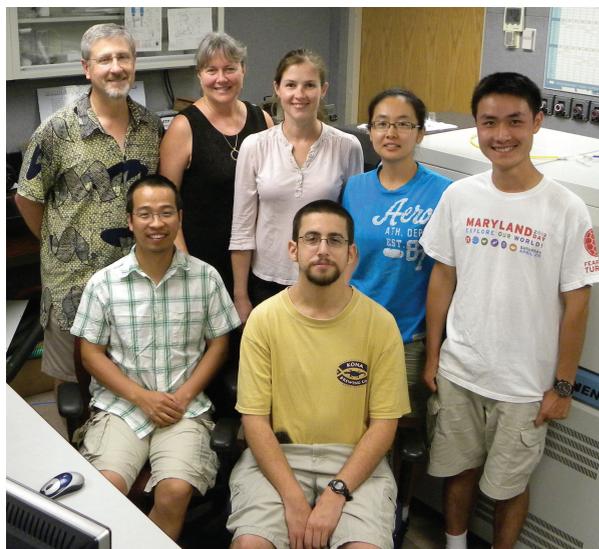
As a graduate student in Australia in the early 1980s, I recall reading the autobiography of A.B. (Bert) Facey, which is entitled *A Fortunate Life*. The book contains a detailed account of the terrible things that befell Mr. Facey during his life—the death of his father when he was only two, being left in the care of his grandmother while his mother crossed the continent to be with his older siblings, entering the work force at the tender age of eight, being gravely injured at Gallipoli during World War I, losing his farm during the Great Depression, and losing one of his sons in World War II. Yet, despite all of these tribulations, Mr. Facey remained positive and felt he had indeed lived a fortunate life.

Unlike Mr. Facey, I have not experienced such hardships, but I truly have lived a fortunate life. I am fortunate to be paid to do the work I love. I'm fortunate to work with incredible people and to work in amazing and beautiful parts of the world. I'm fortunate to live in a society that values science and supports it with taxpayer dollars, including science such as my own, which has no obvious intrinsic benefit to humankind, other than satiating our innate curiosity. I am also fortunate to be a long-standing member of the Mineralogical Society of America, a well-run, beneficent society, administered by the estimable Alex Speer, a group of dedicated staff, and an terrific array of hard-working, dedicated volunteers (and this may be an opportune time to thank the Dana Medal committee for their work!).

Much of my career has focused on understanding continents—the composition of the continental crust and how it got that way, how continents form, and even why we have them. Ross Taylor, at the Australian National University, started me on this path and has supported me throughout my career. The ANU was an extraordinary place to be a graduate student, having some of the world's top scientists, excellent technical staff, and unique equipment (think SHRIMP I). It was exciting and fun. It was here that I began working on xenoliths, work that continues to this day.

As post-docs at the Max-Planck Institute in Mainz, Bill and I joined a family—also with life-long repercussions. I regret that Al Hofmann cannot be here to help celebrate today. We were in Mainz for only two short years, but it left us with another set of life-long friends. Following five more stimulating years at ANU working with Ted Ringwood and six at Harvard, Bill and I were fortunate to land in the Department of Geology at the University of Maryland, a collegial department where people are encouraged to flourish.

Since becoming a faculty member I've had the fortune to work with extraordinarily talented students and post-docs at both Harvard and Maryland. I see several here in the audience today: Fang-zhen Teng (who made fundamental discoveries in the field of Li isotopes, went on to work on Fe and is now blazing new trails in Mg isotopes), Xiaoming Liu (who will soon be complet-



The Rudnick group, seated left to right: Yu Huang, Richard Gaschnig, standing left to right: Bill McDonough, Roberta Rudnick, Kristy Long, Xiaoming Liu, and Ming Tang. Not pictured: Jingao Liu. Photo: R.J. Walker.

ing her Ph.D. on basalt weathering), and Lin Qiu (who studied the behavior of Li during metamorphism and weathering, and is now investigating carbon sequestration as a post-doc at Yale). I regret that Cin-Ty Lee, one of my first students and who helped to organize this session, was unable to be here today. Cin-Ty is one of the most creative and talented people I know.

I have been extremely fortunate to work with Shan Gao of the China University of Geosciences in Wuhan. He invited Bill and I to come to China in 1997 to begin a collaboration that continues to this day. Shan is an inspiration: creative, generous, nurturing of young scientists, and a true leader.

And, of course, my list of fortunes would not be complete without mentioning Bill McDonough, who has been my partner in science and in life. There is always a new adventure with Bill, this time geoneutrinos!

Finally, I'd like to close with some advice to young scientists: Find your passion.

Stay positive—the path will not always be easy, but, as Bert Facey showed, a positive attitude takes one a great distance. Moreover, we generally make the greatest advances when faced with the most significant challenges.

Finally, have fun!

Mine has been both a fortunate and fun career (and, the best part is, I'm apparently only halfway through!).

Thank you very much!