

Acceptance of the Distinguished Public Service Medal for 1993

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When I asked Dave Stewart to be my citationist, his immediate response was, “Sure, if you don’t mind if I lie a little bit.” I replied, “That’s why I asked *you*.” Thanks, David, for your exaggerations, prevarications, and equivocations—you did them well.

On a more serious note, I am extremely grateful to the nominating committee and to the Council of MSA, who advanced my name for this award. It is a great honor to be numbered among the previous recipients whose service truly has been to the public at large—Mac Ross and Cathy Skinner. This medal was intended for the likes of them, and I am almost embarrassed to be awarded it. I’m embarrassed, but I’m very pleased. Thank you.

I was recently struck by the irony of it all. Six weeks ago, we in Geological Sciences at Virginia Tech held our annual faculty banquet and policy meeting. First, our department chairman announced the annual budget cuts. And then he told us that the administration wanted us to teach more and to get more and bigger grants. I think I quote him as saying, “. . . and the thing the administration values least nowadays is public service.” I’m delighted that MSA has not come to the same conclusion.

The odyssey that led to this moment began in the early 1960s, when O. T. Hayward of the American Geological Institute was awarded a two-year NSF grant to fund Geo-Study, a program to help improve undergraduate education in the Earth sciences. In a meeting of AGI’s Council on Education, Hayward had the idea to institute short courses at the annual GSA meetings to bring teachers of undergraduates up to speed in their disciplines. John Snyder, then the education director at AGI, persuaded J. V. Smith to organize a short course to precede the 1965 GSA meeting in Kansas City. Joe asked Dave Stewart and me to join him in presenting a course on feldspars. As I recall, we had 90 participants and met on the campus of Kansas State University in the dry town of Manhattan. We prepared our handouts using the old spirit-fueled ditto-master machines. That was just fine for Joe Smith and me, but Dave managed to break a bottle of whiskey in his briefcase, which dissolved all the ink off his handouts. The precursor to *Reviews in Mineralogy* was off to an inauspicious start.

Between 1966 and 1968 three more mineralogical short courses were held under AGI sponsorship; mimeographed notebooks were prepared for the participants. Then in 1973, Joe Smith, president of MSA, asked me to revive the AGI short-course idea, this time for MSA. Charlie Prewitt helped organize six lecturers to talk about sulfides for the 1974 meeting in Miami. This time the



proceedings were printed in paperback as *Short Course Notes. Sulfide Mineralogy* went through four printings and sold 6700 copies before going out of print in 1993. In 1975 Dick Yund joined the original short-course team to produce *Feldspar Mineralogy*, and five volumes later (in 1980) the proceedings were formally serialized as *Reviews in Mineralogy* and distributed to 1400 libraries around the world as part of their subscriptions to *American Mineralogist*.

To shorten the long history, volume 28, *Health Effects of Mineral Dusts*, was just published. It was our first interdisciplinary venture, edited by George Guthrie and Brooke Mossman. It received endorsement from the U.S. Geological Survey and the American College of Chest Physicians. It was underwritten by a \$12,000 grant from Los Alamos National Laboratory to pay for printing and by a \$10,000 subsidy for the short course from the De-

partment of Energy. Also printed in 1993 was the first in our new *Monograph* series, Frank Spear's heroic 800-page text, *Metamorphic Phase Equilibria: Temperature-Pressure-Time Paths*.

I am excited about the prospect of MSA getting into the textbook business because one of my long-term goals is to give the commercial publishers a run for their money. So if you are in the process of writing a book, be sure to check with MSA for a generous royalty arrangement that will benefit both you and your Society.

They say imitation is the best form of flattery. I know for certain that the Mineralogical Association of Canada copied our short courses with their long and successful publication of *Short Course Handbooks*. And except for the dimensions of its books, *Reviews in Economic Geology* looks exactly like *Reviews in Mineralogy*. *Current Contents* has listed our series for nearly a decade.

Obviously, the *Reviews in Mineralogy* phenomenon did not happen by itself. Over the past 20 years, I have been privileged to work with 33 editors of volumes, 300 au-

thors of chapters, and five authors of monographs. They are the ones who did most of the work. In the editorial office I have had considerable help from many, and in the earlier years I would probably never have met a publication deadline had it not been for one incredible secretary. Margie Strickler, now Margie Sentelle, worked on all but two of the first 14 volumes and sometimes typed 500-page volumes single-handedly. She typed more than 3300 of the 13,200 pages of the *Reviews*, almost flawlessly. And she still helps me. Thank you, Margie.

The silent partner in this effort has been my faithful wife, Elna. She tolerated many aborted vacations as I tried to meet press deadlines volume after volume, year after year. I asked her recently, "What's your worst recollection of this business?" She reminded me that we spent our 25th anniversary in a cabin on the coast of Maine, with me pasting up copy for one of the three volumes that were published that year. I deeply appreciate her tolerance of my obsession with the inanimate thing that has come to be called *Reviews in Mineralogy*.