

# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SEDIMENTOLOGISTS

## NEWSLETTER

N<sup>o</sup> 41-DEC. 1978

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Although I was glad to accept the President's invitation to act as the General Secretary of the I.A.S. I feel somewhat anxious when I consider the amount of work and the quality of the realisations that have been performed by my predecessors, among whom Harold Reading, our Past General Secretary. I do hope that all of you will help me by your ideas, your suggestions, your discussions, your invoice of news. As already suggested long ago by Harold, the newsletters should be a very living way of communication between sedimentologists from all over the world; with the international congresses, this is also their meeting place. Of course it will not always be possible to satisfy everyone's desires as we are an international association of over one thousand five hundred members distributed in more than sixty nationalities.

Such a wide range of nationalities is a wealth for our association by the potential diversity of ideas and concepts that may stem out of it.

That is why we keep on trying to broaden it by looking for close contacts with the Arab and African countries, China, South America etc.

There are however difficulties in being such a wide international grouping. Indeed, beside the language and the currency barriers, some political problems may rise at a moment or another. They should not threaten the life nor the health of our association which is above such problems. We have to be open-minded, respectful of each other thoughts or convictions. We have to consider each of the member of our big family apart from his State politics. Our only role is to communicate between sedimentologists and to promote science, not to discriminate; however if this contact helps bringing up men closer to each other, we shall have reached another wonderful point though it is not our objectives nor responsibilities. Let us keep in touch, in good spirits and solve our eventual problems with a good sense of humour.

#### I.A.S. TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON SEDIMENTOLOGY.

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##### 1) The Congress

The tenth I.A.S. meeting was held in Jerusalem in July 9-14, 1978 and was attended by about 700 scientists among which 500 from overseas. The scope of the Congress was fairly large as it included :

10 themes respectively on 1) Dynamics of Sedimentary processes, 2) Modern environments of deposition, 3) Diagenesis and Lithification, 4) Regional syntheses of sedimentary basins, 5) Methods and techniques in sedimentology, 6) Bioactivity and biological constituents in sediments, 7) Sedimentary aspects of Geomorphology, Paleoclimatology and Hydrogeology, 8) Sedimentary mineral deposits, 9) Geochemical sedimentology and 10) Environmental sedimentology - effect of man on sedimentation.

10 symposia on 1) the environment of deposition of chalk and chert associations, 2) the Nubian Sandstones, 3) the DSDP results from the Mediterranean Sea, the Red and Black Seas (sponsored by the Committee on Marine Geology of the IUGS and the Commission Internationale pour l'exploration Scientifique de la Mer Méditerranée), 4) the origin of fossil fuels (sponsored by the Organic Geochemistry Division of the Geochemical Society), 5) the problem of calcretes, 6) the sedimentological and biological interactions in coral reefs, 7) global tectonics and sedimentation, 8) the effect of human activities on the ecology and sedimentation of lakes and reservoirs (sponsored by the Societas Internationalis Limnologiae and the Israel Oceanographic Limnological Research Ltd.), 9) the problem of phosphorites and that of 10) evaporites.

In several Themes and Symposia, a selection of papers was made to have them published by specialised sedimentological journals or eventually as books.

9 working groups on : 1) Sedimentological interpretation of seismic records and well logs (co-sponsored by the American Geophysical Union, the International Association of Mathematical Geologists, the Institute for Petroleum Research and Geophysics, Israel), 2) Shelf dynamics, 3) Sub-

marine trench sedimentation, 4) Early organic evolution and mineral energy resources (project 157 of the International Geological Correlation Programme), 5) Simulation of sedimentary, hydrological and geomorphological processes (organized by the International Association for Mathematical Geology), 6) Sedimentology and magnetostratigraphy (sponsored by Project 128 of the International Geological Correlation Programme), 7) Quantitative stratigraphic correlation (Project 148 of the International Geological Correlation Programme), 8) Stromatolites through space and time and 9) Geological hazards associated with sedimentation. Also, fascinating poster sessions and projection of scientific films were set up.

Finally, 11 field excursions were organized in Israel, Turkey and Cyprus respectively.

This Congress was a great success thanks to the enthusiasm and the energy of the organizers who gave the very best of themselves to assist every participant and insure a high standard meeting. The fieldtrips were also most fascinating by their presentation and diversity. Once more, thousand thanks to our Israeli colleagues for their performance.

## 2) The General Assembly

The General Assembly was somewhat longer than previously, partly as a result of newly instituted awards that were delivered to well known scientists and brought along citations and replies. The "Sorby Medal" which was instituted this year for "Distinction in the field of Sedimentology" was delivered to Brigadier R.A. Bagnold, a professional soldier who brought so much to professional geologists, and to Dr. F.P. Shepard. Furthermore, the Honorary membership was awarded to Mme Y. Gubler and to Pr. P. Allen in recognition of their numerous services to the International Association of Sedimentologists.

After this ceremony, the New Bureau and Council were elected. They are now composed as follows : President : K.J. Hsü; General Secretary : C.L.V. Monty; Vice-Presidents : G.V. Middleton and E. Mutti; Treasurer : S.D. Nio; Editors : J.D. Hudson and J.D. Collinson; Publication Secretary : F. Ricci-Lucchi.

As far as the next Congress is concerned, the association had received two invitations : one from Switzerland by Dr. K. Hsü and one from Canada by Dr. G. Middleton. After a short discussion, the General Assembly agreed that the 1982 I.A.S. Congress will be held in Canada (Hamilton, Ontario) probably in August. Let us wish all the best to Gerry.

## 3) The Officer's Reports

During the General Assembly several officers gave their reports of which I shall give some extracts below.

### Report of the General Secretary :

The period 1975 to 1978 has been one of consolidation rather than innovation. A very rapid rise of membership in 1975 and 1976 has been

followed by a smaller increase in 1977.

SEDIMENTOLOGY was increased in size in 1976 from 4 issues of 640 pages a year to 6 issues of 864 pages a year. The change has been a great success since it has enabled more papers to be published and publication time to be short. The Newsletter also now appears 6 times a year. Dues have not been increased throughout this period, and, at Dfl. 40 a year, remain the same as they were when the journal changed to Blackwell Scientific Publications in 1973 and are still less than two thirds the dues paid by members prior to 1973.

We have been slow to produce more Special Publications but No. 2 "Modern and Ancient Lake Sediments" (Edited by A. Matter and M. Tucker) will appear in September this year. It stems from the meeting sponsored jointly by I.A.S. and the International Association of Limnology held in Copenhagen in September, 1977, organized by Finn Surlyk and his colleagues. Like No. 1 it will appear within a year of the meeting. Another specialist meeting is planned for September 1979, on the Island of Texel, Holland, on "Holocene marine sedimentation in the North Sea Basin" from which it is expected there will be another Special Publication in 1980. Meanwhile, we have received other manuscripts which may be found suitable for publication in 1979...

... As I hand on the reins to a new General Secretary I should like to thank all those with whom I have worked, as Publications and then General Secretary, over a period of 11 years. It has been a joyful and educational experience to co-operate with scientists of such varied nationalities and backgrounds without ever having any sort of personal disagreement. Discussions and arguments were always resolved through good humour, understanding and a continuing mutual respect for each other, knowing that each of us only had one aim and that was the welfare of the Association. I trust that the Association will continue to thrive as a free association of individuals who happen to reside in particular countries and for whom nationality and national groupings are unimportant. In this way, with a subject as exciting as sedimentology to pursue, an excellent journal and a financially strong and efficiently run Association I have no fear for the future.

#### Report of the Editors :

Seven years have gone by since we were given the responsibility to edit the Journal of our Association. On the whole we have adhered to the policy as we expressed in an editorial that "sedimentology is the science of sediments and sedimentary rocks. We welcome not only articles in the studies of sedimentary structures, textures, and composition, but we will also publish manuscripts of broader scope, relating sedimentation to tectonics, to volcanism, to diagenesis, and to all processes concerning the physical, chemical and biological aspects of sedimentation". Thanks to the response from members of our Association, we have been able to achieve this aim. A perusal of the contents of the last volume of our Journal will reveal that our articles included not only research on modern and ancient sediments, but also investigations of actualistic and by-gone processes. Our contributors seemed to be equally adept with classical tools of hammer and hand lens as in their mastery of computers, mass-spectrometry, and electron microscopy. There have been field studies,

as well as theoretical analyses; isotope geochemistry besides mathematical geology; flume experiments and tectonic syntheses. The geographical coverage of the authorship and of the subject matter is also remarkably broad, embracing all five continents, and justifying our claim as an international journal.

We have processed an even five hundred manuscripts (excluding book reviews), or about three every two weeks. Of those 206 have been accepted as full-length articles and 36 as short contributions; 18 are still pending reviewing, but we regretfully had to decline the rest. Among the accepted manuscripts, 174 articles and all but one short notes have been published, totalling about 3750 printed pages in 3 1/3 volumes.

Returning to a question I posed five years ago concerning the time-lag before a manuscript is accepted and printed in *Sedimentology*. I was surprised to find that we did about as well as we did during the first two years. For most, or more than one third, of the manuscripts 1-2 months had gone by after initial receipt (MGAIR) before we reached an editorial decision. More than half of the manuscripts were processed within 2 months. 90 % of the manuscripts were processed in less than 3 months. We have done our best to strike a balance of thorough reviewing and speedy processing, and our record probably compares more favorably than that of most other scientific journals. About half of the papers accepted required a major revision. This accounts for the fact that an average of 5 1/2 MGAIRs were required before a final manuscript is sent to our publisher, and slightly more than 13 MGAIRs before it is finally published.

The General Assembly of the 1975 Nice Congress approved our plan to enlarge the journal from 4 issues of 640 pages to 6 issues of 880 pages, and the increase was made with no additional subscription costs to the members. We had hoped that the move would enable us to increase the percentage of accepted manuscripts and to speed up the time-lag of publication. We were disappointed, however, to find that we have barely maintained status-quo. The ratio of accepted and rejected manuscripts is almost exactly 1 : 1 just as it was three years ago. The publication time-lag was little more than one year now, when it was slightly less than a year then, even though the editorial processing remained as efficient as ever. We cannot blame the authors, the referees, the editors, the publishers, or the printers for such a development. The fact is that we are receiving increasingly more good manuscripts, and this tendency has begun to assume alarming proportion after the Geological Society of America decided to publish their bulletins in microfiche. Furthermore, our journal is perhaps one of the few earth science periodicals which do not set an arbitrary limit on the length of articles published. The development during the next few years may lead us to face the question if a further expansion of the journal is avoidable.

During the tenure of our co-editorship we were helped by Hugh Jankyns and by Maurice Tucker to put together the first two special publications of our Association. The first volume, *Pelagic Sediments : On Land and Under the Sea*, received excellent reviews. The volume was described as an "impressive collection of wide-ranging papers marks the opening of a door and the beginning of a new era... It embraces the foundation of a new branch of geological science." (Bathurst, 1975). It was considered "required reading for all geologists interested in modern and ancient sediments." (Milliman, 1976), and "an essential purchase" and has been recommended "to all colleagues working or interested in pelagic sediments and their diagenesis". Nevertheless, the Society took a financial loss,

as the book was underpriced for the benefit of the members (488 pp. and 200 illustrations for 13.50 dollars). We expect, however, that this classic will continue to sell for years to come. The second volume on Modern and Ancient Lake Sediments will be published soon. We should again receive good reviews and we hope to come out financially ahead this time. These two volumes are the first of a series of theme-oriented monographs, several others are now under consideration.

We looked back to our seven years of service with fond memories. Everyone was most helpful, and we had few occasions of grief or acrimony. We wish to thank all authors, - your contributions made the journal, and to all members of our Association, - your participation ensured its success. We acknowledge the help from all the officers of our Association, particularly Harold Reading, the General Secretary, Hans Föchtbauer and Hugh Jenkins, former and current Publication Secretary. We are indebted to all those who served on our Editorial Board during the last seven years : John Allen, Robin Bathurst, Alfonso Bosellini, Joe Curray, G. Dunoyer de Segonzac, G. Einsele, Hans Eugster, John Harms, D. Helling, Miriam Kastner, T.V. Khvorova, A.G. Kossovskaya, Yves Lancelot, D. Meischner, Gerry Middleton, John Milliman, Emil Mutti, Ed Purdy, W.A. Read, and Vassil Vuchev. We appreciate the efficiency and cheerful cooperation of our long-time secretary, Miss Caroline Hartendorf. Finally, our most special gratitude goes to hundreds of the referees, too numerous to be singled out here; your help has been indispensable !

#### Report of the Treasurer :

This preliminary report does not contain complete figures for 1977 as many bills and bookings have not yet been recorded. The complete balance for 1977 can be expected in August 1978. The mentioned figures are, however, more or less corrected and will give you a general idea of the financial development of the Association.

The favourable financial situation of the Association has not changed since the 9th Sedimentological Congress in Nice. This is due to the following factors :

1. an increase in active (paying) members,
2. a substantial increase in insertion gifts, which can be credited to the activities of the editors of the Journal.
3. a decrease in administrative costs.

There is, however, a slight increase in the costs of Council Meetings, which we think is inevitable as our activities make contacts between the Bureau Members more necessary.

The figures below show an increase in the exploitation capital of the Association :

Exploitation Capital at 31.12.1975 : Dfl. 143,005.31

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Exploitation Capital at 31.12.1977 : Dfl. 196,704.87

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This is due to the increase in profit from 1975 till 1977.

Balance of Profit 1975 : Dfl. 23,200.89  
 1976 : Dfl. 22,456.37  
 1977 : Dfl. 32,597.30 (corrected amount)  
           Dfl. 47,597.30 (uncorrected amount : we  
                           have not yet received the  
                           bill from the Publishers;  
                           the estimated amount to  
                           be paid f 15,000.-).....

... As already mentioned the financial situation of the Association at this moment is very good, but in view of the rising costs and the printing of more special publications in comparison to the past, it is advisable to consider a slight increase in membership dues.

Meanwhile many members have experienced that the change of the treasurer's office from Leiden to Utrecht did not occur unnoticed. A confusion in the administration caused some delays and irritation among some of the members. We do apologize for causing you troubles and irritation. You understand that we mostly work with volunteers, who do not have a professional skill in handling administrative matters. The reorganisation of the Treasurer's Office will be ended by September 1978 and we hope to have solved all the problems by then.....

Membership State on 18.6.1978 :

Number of members : 1597 of which 208 junior members  
 Number of payments for 1978 : 1023  
 not paid yet for 1978 : 574  
 of the members who are now in file, are member since (cumulative) :

1970 : 300  
 1971 : 365  
 1972 : 399  
 1973 : 581  
 1974 : 779  
 1975 : 1070  
 1976 : 1349  
 1977 : 1537  
 1978 : 1597

ALGERIA : 2  
 ANGOLA : 1  
 ARGENTINA : 2  
 AUSTRALIA : 31  
 AUSTRIA : 11  
 BAHAMAS : 1  
 BELGIUM : 15  
 BENIN : 2  
 BORNEO : 1  
 BOTSWANA : 1  
 BRASIL : 17  
 BURMA : 1

CANADA : 86  
 COLOMBIA : 2  
 COSTA RICA : 1  
 COTE D'IVOIRE : 1  
 CZECHOSLOVAKIA : 3  
 DENMARK : 31  
 DOMINICAN REP. : 1  
 EGYPT : 3  
 FRANCE : 109  
 GERMANY : 78  
 HUNGARY : 2  
 INDIA : 11

INDONESIA	:	1	REP. OF KOREA	:	3
IRAN	:	3	REP. P. CONGO	:	1
IRAQ	:	10	RHODESIA	:	1
IRISH REP.	:	7	ROMANIA	:	1
ISRAEL	:	15	SAUDI ARABIA	:	4
ITALY	:	27	SERAWAK	:	1
JAPAN	:	26	SINGAPORE	:	7
MALAYSIA	:	5	SOEDAN	:	1
MEXICO	:	1	SOUTH AFRICA	:	23
MONACO	:	1	SP LYBIAN AJH	:	5
MOROCCO	:	5	SPAIN	:	57
NETHERLANDS	:	102	STATE OF KUWAIT	:	3
NEW ZEALAND	:	12	SWEDEN	:	18
NIGERIA	:	6	SWITZERLAND	:	34
NORTH BORNEO	:	1	TUNISIA	:	4
NORWAY	:	19	TURKEY	:	15
OMAN	:	2	UK	:	197
PAKISTAN	:	1	USA	:	528
PERU	:	2	USSR	:	13
POLAND	:	3	VENEZUELA	:	6
PORTUGAL	:	3	YUGOSLAVIA	:	9
			ZAMBIA	:	1

#### Regional meetings

Although the idea has been smitted long ago (Newsletter 13/1973), the new bureau has decided to organize Regional Meetings, mostly in Europe, as for the second consecutive time our next International Congress will be held outside of Europe. Such meetings have already been organized, but they concerned one given topic (i.e. Zörich : Pelagic sediments). What we want to set up now, with the help of and at the invitation of National Correspondents, are sort of informal, low cost, mini-congresses open mostly to young sedimentologists (graduates and post graduates). Some senior geologists would participate as invited lecturers. These meetings should include one or two days field trips and be held sometimes in spring. The first of these meetings will be organized in Bochum (Western Germany) in April 1980 at the invitation of Pr. Hans Fuchtbauer, National Correspondent.

#### USEFUL ADDRESSES

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→ your Manuscripts for "Sedimentology"

#### FUTURE MEETINGS

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4-7 September 1979

Ankara (TURKEY)

First geological congress on the Middle East (GEOCOME - I), jointly organized by the Mineral Research and Exploration Institute (M.T.A.) and the Geological Society of Turkey (T.J.K.).

For information : write to GEOCOME - I, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ergüzer Bingöl - M.T.A. Enstitüsü Jeoloji Dairesi, Ankara, Turkey.

CL. MONTY,  
General Secretary