

U of A has some of the best

MORP — Rock collecting in a big way

Meteorites are named after towns

When Dr. Johann Steiner of the department of geology at the University of Alberta says that the department's meteorite collection and its policy of recovery and study of meteorites constitutes an inexpensive space program, he is being only partly humorous.

In fact, a meteorite can be considered as a free spacecraft, providing a natural record of cosmic rays, solar activity, and other conditions of the environment from which it came.

Until the American space program brought back the now famous "moon rocks," meteorites were the only material that had not been extensively worked upon by the earth's environment available to scientists. As such, meteorites still

provide valuable data on questions that range from original planet formation to the composition of the earth's core.

As of this academic year, Dr. Steiner is curator of the meteorite collection and a member of the National Research Council's associate committee on meteorites. He took over this position after the retirement of Dr. Robert Folinsbee in the fall of 1978. According to Dr. Steiner, it was Dr. Folinsbee who was largely responsible for the existence of the meteorite collection (one of the best collections in a Canadian university) as well as the university's active participation in the recovery and study of meteorites.

Meteorite research at the University of Alberta and in Canada as a whole received its initial impetus from the fall of the Bruderheim meteorite near Edmonton in 1960 — meteorites are named after the town nearest the fall. Fragments of the rock

totalling over three hundred kilograms in weight were collected, making the Bruderheim fall the largest in Canada.

Perhaps the most important effect of the Bruderheim fall was the recognition that in other parts of Canada, where there was no active interest in meteorites such as there was at the University of Alberta, the Bruderheim meteorite might have simply been reported in the press and then left unnoticed. This realization led to the creation of the associate committee on meteorites, which in turn led to the establishment of MORP (Meteorite Observation and Recovery Project).

Being able to pinpoint the impact location quickly and efficiently by the use of MORP's prairie-wide camera network allows recovery of the meteorite before it has been completely altered by the environment, thereby allowing certain studies not possible if recovery takes too

long a time. The work that went into the establishment of the camera network was rewarded in February of 1977 when the Innisfree meteorite was photographed and subsequently collected, only the third time such an event had ever taken place in the world.

At the present time Dr. Steiner and his colleagues are engaged in the study of their most recent meteorite 'find' — as opposed to a 'fall', a recorded and subsequently collected meteorite, a 'find' is the recovery of a meteorite for which there is no information regarding its descent. The Skiff meteorite was found by W.L. Nemeth on his farm in southern Alberta and recently purchased by the university.

One of Dr. Steiner's most recent concerns, however, deals not with the Skiff meteorite, or meteorite falls in Alberta generally, but with the possibility of meteorites on the ice fields of northern Canada. According to

Dr. Steiner, the recent discovery by Japanese and American expeditions of nearly one thousand fragments on Antarctic ice fields strongly suggests that the Arctic, specifically the Ellesmere Island Ice fields, could be well worth searching. Concerned that the Americans could well afford to outfit an expedition into the area and thus capitalize on what must be considered an important part of Canada's scientific heritage, Dr. Steiner hopes that at the very least a program be established for scientists in other disciplines and persons on Ellesmere Island for industrial reasons, to educate them on the basic techniques of meteorite identification and recovery.

Dr. Steiner appreciates the assistance of the public in his work; he welcomes calls from people who observe spectacular fireballs — 'spectacular' he defines as being near the size of the disk of the full moon or as bright as the landing lights of an airplane head on.

Future in doubt

52 jobs cut at Ryerson

TORONTO (CUP) — At least 52 full-time teaching positions will be cut next year at Ryerson Polytechnical because the institute cannot afford to keep them.

Academic vice-president Jim Packham, who helped prepare the budget proposal, said that for the second consecutive year Ryerson's revenue will be less than the rate of inflation while enrolment rises.

"Basically we are attempting to serve one and a half per cent more students with 3.8 per cent more dollars," he said.

Part-time instructors might be hit harder, however, according to Debby Littman, president of the Graduate Assistance Association. She said teaching assistants, members of the GAA, could also lose "52... members or three times that."

Also, up to 13 support staff could find themselves out of work next year, said Packham.

Even with those massive cuts Ryerson will see its deficit jump \$400,000 to \$1.5 million next year, Packham said. Another deficit next year would push Ryerson over the "danger limit."

"People can't keep expecting what they have in the past with the money Ryerson is getting."

Ryerson faculty association president Ron Shirliff said the proposed budget would seriously affect the institute's future.

"We won't exist as a polytechnical if cuts continue this for another year," he said. "We won't be able to continue the teaching style, which has been relatively small class sizes and a personal level of teaching."

Varsity Guest (This) Weekend The two-day draw

by Fiona Ross

The U of A opens its doors to the public March 9 for its second annual Varsity Guest Weekend (VGW). This two day event is designed to acquaint visiting high school students with life on the U of A campus, its workings and what it has to offer the student contemplating a post-secondary education.

The weekend is also designed to bring the university and the public into closer contact. At present, Stephen Kushner, students' union vp external, feels that, "we (the university) have a role to play in the public, and we are not fulfilling that role."

VGW was first held in 1952 and was originally initiated by the Intrafraternity Council and the Panhellenic Society. In its first year, over 3,000 visitors attended the special events and viewed the displays put on by each faculty. Visitor attendance snowballed to 55,000 during VGW's four day event in 1970. In 1971, however, lack of funds forced a shutdown of VGW and only last year was it reinstated.

In the years prior to its shutdown, VGW kicked off its weekend with a tea sponsored by The Wauneita Society (a coed group on campus). The U of A's Music Faculty provided concerts from both the U of A Symphony and the Mixed Choir. Dances were held and open-house bashes at the fraternity houses on campus provided ample entertainment for the more actively inclined.

Nearing the 1970's, however, many of these activities died out. The focus of the weekend changed to directly encouraging high school students to consider a university education rather than a direct move into the working world.

Last year's theme for VGW was 'Changing Times.' Approximately 5,500 visitors attended; however, due to a lack of continuity, and late-planning, VGW was not the success it had been in previous years.



This year, Ian Fraser (director for VGW '79) has set up a variety of activities designed to meet the varying interests of the visiting public.

On Saturday at 10 am, the Forestry Students kick off their annual Man of The Klondike Contest. This event includes log rolling, axe throwing, and even women's wood splitting competitions. Finals of all the events will be held on Sunday at Varsity Stadium.

Also included in Saturday's events is a dance marathon put on by the Panhellenic Society. This begins in Dinwoodie Lounge (SUB) at noon and finishes at midnight. Proceeds from the dance go to Women In Need (WIN) House, a shelter for battered wives with children.

At 2 pm in SUB Theatre, guest lecturer Mel Watkins (University of Toronto) will speak on the Canadian Economy. A panel discussion and

question period will follow.

On Sunday, March 11, beginning at 10 am in CAB, a Band Showcase featuring bands such as Headwind, Strait, Good Times, Slat River and Sweetgrass will provide good listening entertainment until 4 pm. These bands are supplied courtesy of different musical agencies in the city.

Organizer Fraser hopes this year's VGW will be more successful than the last. Visits to local high schools by Fraser and his staff, and the VGW supplement sent out to all the schools are the major promotional gimmicks urging visitors to come out and visit the U of A. If visitor attendance is low this weekend, there is a chance VGW will once again be shut down. In years to come Varsity Guest Weekend may only be remembered as Varsity Ghost Weekend.