

Geo department held back

by John Watson

The U of A's reputation as a world leader in sulfide mineral geology is at stake.

The Geology department has two electron microprobes — devices used to determine the chemical composition of mineral ores. According to Garth Milvain, administrative officer of the department, "we are the only department in the world with two probes."

But, to the chagrin of the researchers who need to use the equipment, neither of the probes are operational.

Located in the basement of the half-renovated geology building, the newest probe (purchased about eight years ago) has been plagued with problems.

"It was functional for a little while (after the move) and then it got into this dust problem... this

chain of problems," said Milvain.

This has created problems for the grad students who need to use the machine.

Sandra Fisher, a geology grad student, is frustrated by the broken machine.

"I'm not going to be able to do the thesis I came here to do without it," she said.

This university is one of the world-leading authorities on sulfide minerals said Steve Swalton, another grad student. "The reason a lot of people come here is because we've got a microprobe."

According to Foster, "that reputation is in jeopardy if we can't work with the probe."

Chairman Rutter of the Geology department says the inconveniences should have been anticipated by the students' supervisors. And if there are essential cases, students

may be sent to other universities with probes to do tests.

But that is a concern to the students as well.

"If this university can't provide a facility then, in all justice, they could send us to another university with as good a reputation," said Foster. But she questioned whether such an institution could be found.

According to Rutter, the probe will be out of commission until May, when the renovations to the building will be done. "Students are going to be held up for three or four months," he said.

"There's nobody who's not thinking of the students and the research," said Rutter.

Changes to the Power Plant

by Cameron White

Last Thursday, the official re-opening of the Power Plant was held in the new Graduate Students' Association (G.S.A.) Room.

The reception marks the beginning of a new era in Power Plant management and patronage.

The Power Plant was primarily open to graduate students before this year; since September, however, the restaurant and bar have been open to the public.

The only area which remains exclusively for graduate students is the recently renovated T.V. lounge, now called the G.S.A. Room.

Asked if there was resentment about the opening of the Power Plant to the public, G.S.A. president Annette Richardson replied, "They (the graduate students) are mad because they continue to subsidize the Power Plant."

A portion of G.S.A. fees goes towards the operation of the Power Plant, and many students at the reception were upset that undergraduates were using the facilities without making any financial contribution.

Versa, a food services management company, has signed a contract with the G.S.A. to run the restaurant and bar and it is hoped that the subsidization will be discontinued.

"The decision to open the Power Plant to the public was based purely on financial reasons," said V.P. Services (G.S.A.) Sam Proskin.



The ribbon cutting at the Power Plant photo Miles McCallum

Due to mismanagement, the Power Plant has lost money since it opened in 1978, according to the G.S.A.

Renovations and an expanded menu are expected to draw more people to the restaurant and the bar will feature live bands and "Ethnic Nights".

"The more mature ambience of

the Plant will not be lost. We're aiming at third and fourth year students," said Tony Fleming-Blake, a member of the Power Plant House Committee.

The reception was well-attended by graduate students, as well as university president Myer Horowitz and members of the Board of Governors.

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An east Edmonton support centre for families is providing stimulating programs for young single mothers, but volunteers are badly needed to drive the mothers and children to the centre. Volunteers are also needed to help look after the children while their mothers take part in activities. For more information, call the Volunteer Action Centre at 482-6431.

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