

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Welcome to the rock



Atlantic Geological Conference goes to Newfoundland

BY JENN SABEAN

We went, we saw, we got the t-shirt.

This past weekend, a small group of Dalhousie Earth Science students made the long trek to St. John's, Newfoundland for the 49th annual Atlantic Undergraduate Geological Conference (AUGC), hosted by Memorial University.

The 11 geology students that went to represent Dalhousie — the majority of whom had never been exposed to the wonders of the island — were all literally blown away by the experience. Despite the heavy winds gusting up to 120 km/h, we joined the other hundred or so students from Memorial, St. Mary's, St. Francis Xavier, Mount Allison, Acadia and University of New Brunswick to share a weekend of fun and learning.

Following a pub crawl along the infamous George Street our first night, there was a day of field excursions to several sites of outstanding geology which 'the rock' offers.

Led by the expertise of several of the Memorial University faculty, students observed many unique areas, such as the massive thrust zones at Flat Rock, the Cambrian trilobite fossils along Manuels River and Kelligrews Quarry, and the hydrothermal alteration at and around Oval Pit, the only pyrophyllite mine in Canada.

The third day consisted of the more formal aspect of the AUGC — the presentations. Each year, a select few of the undergraduate honours students from each of the participating universities are invited to present their developing theses, in the form of a speech or a poster. Presentations are evaluated and judged, and

those which are outstanding are acknowledged. This year, two Dalhousie students were among the many students who gave impressive talks.

Of the three awards given, Costain is proud to bring home the trophy to Dalhousie, after winning this year's Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists Award for the best presentation of a paper. The trophy will be displayed in the Earth Sciences department for the next year.

Nicole Dunham, an undergraduate of Acadia University and a member of the AUGC executive Council said the "calibre [of speakers] was excellent this year — to the same level as a masters degree."

The conference closed with a banquet, attended by all the participants and featuring guest speaker Harvey Smith, the President of Hibernia Management and Development Corpora-

tion. Following the presentation of awards and the dinner, we were entertained by a real 'salt of the earth' who 'screeched-in' a few victims from each school, and humoured us all with his jokes.

Memorial University did an outstanding job of making the conference a wonderful experience for everyone involved. Their hard work was greatly appreciated by all.

According to the head of Earth Sciences at Memorial University, Garry Quinlan, the AUGC "brings together students

interested in geology, to make new friends, and to sharpen their presentation skills in competition with the best of their colleagues from the Atlantic Region." For these reasons, it is the responsibility of us all to maintain the interest and support for the conference each year. Dalhousie will be the host of next year's conference, marking its 50th anniversary and the first conference of the new millennium. We look forward to working together as students with the university to make it a spectacular event.



DID YOU KNOW?

— North America has eight percent of the world's population, yet consumes one third of the world's resources and produces almost half of its nonorganic waste.

— Canadians take home over 55 million plastic shopping bags each week.

— Litter can take weeks to thousands of years to decompose. A wool sock degrades in one year, a plastic bag takes 10 to 20 years, while an aluminum can take 200 to 500 years.

— For every tonne of newspapers recycled, three cubic metres of landfill space is saved, as are nineteen trees.

— October 18th to 24th is waste reduction week.

Not that you have to limit your environmentally friendly waste management to just one week, but this is a great time to do all the little things you can to reduce the amount of garbage you send to our burgeoning landfills. To sum it all up — follow the 3 R's.

— Reduce your waste by thinking more critically about what you are buying. Avoid excess packaging. Perhaps you might even consider not fuelling our consumption based society in the first place.

— Re-use rather than dispose. If you have no further use for something, consider giving it away to a thrift store or a friend. A great idea is to put all your unwanted items in a 'free box' and leave it out where people can rummage through it.

— Recycle. This one is easy — just put your recyclables at the curb on the appropriate days

WANTED:

The whereabouts of these environmental activists I have heard so much about. Where are they when an editor desperately needs writers? Is this not the perfect forum to put out your environment message?

If you see anyone who seems to care about the earth, humans and animals, please send them to SUB 312, preferably during *Gazette* meetings on Monday afternoons at 4:30. (Although anytime is acceptable as beggars cannot be choosers!)

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