

Canadian Association of Palynologists
Association Canadienne des Palynologues

NEWSLETTER

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President's Message

It is a great pleasure to report that this year the CAP award subcommittee had a difficult time deciding between four excellent student proposals. The 2017 Student Research Award recipient is Magdalena Sobol, who is a fourth-year Ph.D. student at the University of Toronto with Dr. Sarah Finkelstein. Magdalena's research focusses on high-resolution Holocene paleoenvironmental reconstructions in Southern Africa using pollen, phytoliths, $d^{13}C$ of soil organic matter, and macrocharcoal proxies. The Executive should consider expanding the number of future awards, aiming to award Ph.D. and M.Sc. level students.

CAP is accepting nominations and self-nominations for the position of President Elect for 2018-2019. Individuals interested in contributing to the CAP Executive, should send me (vpospe@uvic.ca) a letter of interest along their CV by the 23rd of September, 2017. The finalized list of candidates will be

posted on our website and circulated by e-mail to CAP members. Electronic ballot elections will close on September 30th, to be ratified at the next AGM in October.

The next Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Association of Palynologists will be held on October 10th (2017) at the University of Victoria, SEOS, Bob Wright Centre - Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Room A440. Please mark your calendars and consider joining us in person, via Skype (or any other Internet media), or by phone from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm (PST). It would make a difference for CAP, if each of us encourages at least one of our graduate or undergraduate students to become a new CAP member and take part in the meeting.

It was suggested, and the Executive supports the idea, that the 2018 CAP AGM is to be held in Calgary during the Palynological Society (AASP) meeting. Please let me know if you have suggestions on special sessions that CAP should propose for the joint meeting.

The 11th International Conference on Modern and Fossil Dinoflagellates (Dino 11) will take place in Bordeaux, July 17- 21 (2017). There are a number of scheduled sessions, workshops, and field trips that would be of interest to palynologists. The complete program will be available in a month, but it looks as CAP will be well represented by our members who are working on modern and fossil dinoflagellate cysts. I hope to see many of you at the meeting.

Vera Pospelova, CAP President
vpospe@uvic.ca

CAP EXECUTIVE 2017

President: Vera Pospelova
President elect: Audrey Limoges
Secretary-Treasurer: Jesse Holst Vincent
Website Editor: Manuel Bringué
Newsletter Editor: Florin Pendea
IFPS Councillor: Simon Goring

Editor's Notes

Thank you to all who contributed material for this edition of the *CAP Newsletter*:

K. Bell, D.R. Braman, M. Bringué, V. Bryant, K. Gajewski, T. Lacourse, K-B. Liu, V. Pospelova, J. Vincent, Q. Yao, and J.M. White.

Deadline for Next CAP Newsletter

Please submit items for the next issue of the *CAP Newsletter* (Volume 40, Number 2, December 2017) by November 10, 2017. Conference reports, announcements, field trip reports, notices of new books, dissertation abstracts, book reviews, news, and essays on topics relevant to Canadian palynology are all welcome. Please send contributions to:

Florin Pendea
CAP Newsletter Editor
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Table of Contents

President's Message.....	1
CAP Executive	1
Editor's notes	2
CAP student award.....	2
Members in the News.....	3
CAP AGM.....	3
New CAP website.....	4
Obituary—Dr. Sweet.....	5
Recent publications.....	18
Membership form.....	20

CAP STUDENT

AWARD

I am happy to inform you that this year we had four very strong applicants, and the CAP Student Prize was awarded to Magdalena Sobol (Ph.D. student, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Toronto, Supervisor: Dr. Sarah A. Finkelstein).

Magdalena's doctoral research focuses on environmental controls on savanna-desert transitions in Southern Africa. The main field site she is working at is a paleo-lake in central South Africa, adjacent to the Kalahari margin (Kathu Pan). This is a site of great significance to Stone Age archaeology for Southern Africa and Magdalena has participated in several seasons of field sampling with multi-disciplinary teams of sedimentologists/geomorphologists, archeologists and geophysicists. She is developing a multi-proxy Holocene record from this site which includes pollen. The pollen work has been challenging due to low concentrations, poor preservation and low taxonomic resolution. Magdalena has responded to these challenges in several ways, firstly by developing a synthesis paper of modern pollen sites. She has gathered all available data (published, and unpublished. through her networks in South Africa) and is adding 20-30 new

sites. She collected these new surface samples on a transect from interior South Africa to Botswana. This paper (in preparation) will be a key contribution to the community as in addition to bringing together the largest dataset yet available for Southern Africa, she also develops random forest classification methodologies to better assign fossil assemblages to savanna vs grassland biomes. Secondly, Magdalena is producing charcoal and phytolith records from the Kathu Pan sediments to support the pollen-derived interpretations. She would like to also include stable isotope measurements and this is what she is proposing for the CAP funds.

Vera Pospelova
Chair of Awards Selection Committee

was recently featured in the April 2017 issue of the popular beekeeping magazine “Bee Culture”.

His article “Searching for pollen in Honey—It’s not as easy as you think” introduces the readers to the fascinating yet daunting task of identifying pollen in honey.

Dr. Bryant was recently awarded the Medal for Scientific Excellence by the American Association of Stratigraphic Palynologists (AASP) for his years of outstanding dedication to teaching, research and service to the community.

Mark your calendars CAP AGM 2017

Our next CAP AGM will be on Tuesday, October 10th, at 11 am PST.

Where: University of Victoria, SEOS, Room A440 (Bob Wright Centre - Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences). Participation is now possible by Skype. Please contact Dr. Vera Pospelova (vpospe@uvic.ca) for details on how to connect to the meeting.

Please encourage students and postdocs to attend!



Dr. Vaughn Bryant from the Department of Anthropology at Texas A& M University

New CAP website now online!

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I joined the CAP Executive as the new Website Editor last October at the AGM in Victoria. I am relieving Alwynne Beaudoin from a post she has occupied since its creation in 1995. Needless to say that Alwynne's contribution to Canadian Palynology is invaluable, having built and maintained CAP's web presentation, written many original articles for the newsletter herself and contributed to the Association in so many other ways over more than two decades!

I am pleased to announce that the new CAP website (capacp.wordpress.com) was released this January. Although it has a fresh new face and is now hosted by WordPress, most of its content comes directly from the original website, at times slightly modified, and therefore all credit goes to Alwynne and the CAP members who contributed to the Newsletter over the years! In addition to information regarding CAP's organisation and structure, you will also find in the new site popular items such as the list of thesis related to Canadian palynology, some of Lou Maher's most prized tips, and links to major palynology labs in Canada. Thankfully, Alwynne kindly accepted to keep a lot of the original content on her personal website (www.scirpus.ca) and I encourage everyone to explore the wealth and breadth of information she hosts.

The website continues to serve mainly as an online repository of Newsletter articles. Although it does not currently provide all content in both official languages, we strongly encourage contributions in French! We hope that this will help better reflect the diversity within the CAP membership.

New contributions are always welcomed for the Newsletter and/or the website. If you feel like sharing a few pictures of your favourite palynomorphs, it may help enhance the appearance of the web presentation while promoting interest for our beloved pollen grains or some more mysterious groups that are gaining attention. Please feel free to email me your pictures, comments or any information you would like to see updated on the website.

I would like to thank Alwynne again for her long service and dedication to the Association, and for her help in ensuring a smooth transition as the website changed hosting platforms. I look forward to serving the Canadian palynological community!

Yours truly,

Manuel Bringué, mbringue@uvic.ca

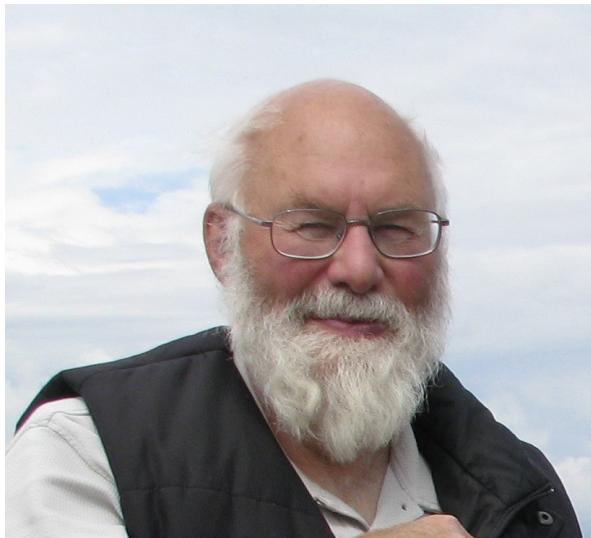


Obituary

Arthur (Art) Richard Sweet

(1942-2017)

By J.M. White and D.R. Braman
23 April 2017



Dr. Arthur (Art) Sweet passed away peacefully at his home on March 5, 2017 at the age of 74. Art was one of Canada's gifted geologists and palynologists and his death is a loss to the country and the scientific community. He will be missed by all of those whose lives he touched.

Art was born in Lloydminster, Sask. in November, 1942. Berry picking, grouse hunting and fishing during his childhood on the family farm by Gull Lake, Alberta, stimulated his active interest in the natural world. Plowed fields yielded interesting rocks, and traditional farming gave him knowledge that informed his future life in urban Calgary.

Art started his education, to Grade 6, in one-room schoolhouse, later earning a B.Sc. from the University of Alberta, Edmonton, in 1963. He worked as a geological assistant and science teacher until completing his Ph.D. in 1972 at the University of Calgary, majoring in palynology under the guidance of Dr. Len Hills. From 1969 to 1971, he was granted the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Award for doctoral students of outstanding caliber, while completing his thesis on *Azolla* and *Azollopsis*. In 1972, Art started as a Research Scientist at the Geological Survey of Canada, for a year in Ottawa and then in Calgary at the Institute of Sedimentary and Petroleum Geology (now GSC-Calgary), where he remained throughout his career. Art married his wife, Alberta, in 1966 and they have three children, David, Patrick and Karilynn and seven grandchildren.

At the GSC, Art first worked on Late Jurassic and Early Cretaceous terrestrial palynofloras for the coal group. He was soon drawn to study the incredible diversification of angiosperms in the Cretaceous, and the post 'K-T' boundary flora of the Paleogene. His objective was to understand angiosperm pollen phylogenies and to develop more refined biostratigraphies for western and northern Canada, often with synergistic collaboration from paleomagnetic studies. Art's encyclopedic memory, for both literature and for pollen and spore specimens that he had seen, made him a scientist well suited to explore this diverse and formative interval of angiosperm development. The 'Cretaceous-Tertiary' boundary and contiguous strata particularly fascinated him. Many end-of-hallway coffee conversations dealt with the perturbations of floras around the world-changing Cretaceous-Paleogene boundary event. The iridium anomaly provided a precise correlation, and Art made detailed investigations of many sections in western and northern Canada, including co-leader of a Canadian Continental Drilling Project, while he meticulously documented palynological evidence of floral transitions preceding, and following the boundary. He

elucidated both stratigraphic and latitudinal changes in flora and vegetation. In later years, his biostratigraphic knowledge was applied to derive a record of now-eroded sedimentary rock that once covered the Slave Craton, evidence being derived from fossiliferous sedimentary clasts within kimberlites. His most recent focus was the Albian through Paleogene strata of Bylot Island and the Yukon and Northwest Territories. From 2002-2008, he served as GSC's Chief Paleontologist and Paleolab Leader.

A contributor of geologically essential age and environmental information, Art authored or co-authored at least 119 professional publications and 127 abstracts and/or posters at scientific meetings. GSC paleontologists support the research of GSC's stratigraphers and mappers by reporting on referred samples. Art authored 390 GSC internal Paleontology Reports on some 4700 samples. These internal reports are substantial research documents in their own right. Art recorded the slide and microscope coordinates of important specimens from his research, leaving a detailed record of evidence for the future. Art personally collected 12,516 outcrop and well samples between 1967 and 2015. The tally of publications, reports and samples documents his contribution to Canadian geology, to 'K-T' boundary studies, and to the research and careers of his collaborators and colleagues, inside and outside the GSC.

Art's office was located opposite the palynology laboratory and he was the principal scientist supervising the palynology lab. Working with lab technicians, he always aimed for the optimum preparation of samples; often having samples reprocessed a number of times.

Art Sweet's scientific career is shown by his bibliography, but this misses the personal side of Art. Clearly, he was immensely dedicated to his discipline of palynology and geology. At the start of the working day, it was routine to find Art already in his office, having arrived at 3 or 4 AM; likewise, if chance had one driving by the GSC in the

evening, one would regularly see his office light on. Evenings at home we often spent writing papers, or reviews for journals. He seemed to pack two careers of dedicated work into one lifetime. He continued to work past formal retirement age until ill-health began to limit him.

In spite of his scientific accomplishments, Art was self-effacing. He was generous to others with his time and expertise, and invariably kind and thoughtful to colleagues, students, and new-comers. He helped many people start their careers. His open office door was pasted with jokes and a sign, "A clean desk is a sign of absolutely nothing else to do". Hospitality was often extended to out of town visitors. Art wanted to make sure that people were comfortable, had a place to stay, a home-cooked meal, perhaps even a pit roasted pig.

Few days went by when Art did not have a colleague or visitor seeking advice from his extensive knowledge of Mesozoic and Cenozoic stratigraphy and palynology, or an application of his expertise. He was gracious and kind through innumerable interruptions, the best sort of mentor students, or junior colleagues, could have. For students, "Art....created a story with every pollen grain and made even a lack of evidence exciting... every student/casual [employee] over 15 years gain[ed] an appreciation for the science....he did this in such a subtle and humble way." (K. Boyce, 27 March 2017).

Art developed particularly long lasting, fruitful relationships in science. He is honoured by the naming of two species: a fungal spore, *Diplodites sweetii*, (Kalgutkar et al., 1993. Review of Palaeobotany and Palynology, v 77, p. 107-118) "in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Tertiary palynology and his significant role in the understanding and interpretation of the K-T boundary"; and the pollen *Parviprojectus sweetii* (White, 2009. Geological Survey of Canada, Bulletin 594), dedicated for his "career-long fascination with triporate pollen".

Art loved making 'flower power' posters

for scientific meetings, and had a strong artistic aptitude in their creation. And he seemed to thrive on the pre-meeting pressure of poster preparation, still sitting at his microscope mere days before departure, interacting with a student doing the computer graphics. Work and discussions were fueled by frequent cups of instant coffee, his drunk from a blackened melamine mug ("one shake or two" he would ask when preparing a visitor's instant coffee).

Self-sufficiency was a core value derived from Art's childhood, and he bought a prairie pioneer knowledge to his food growing and storage. Alberta, Art and children had a rich, productive garden in Calgary - it was more than a hobby. They understood the need to nourish the soil. In the fall Art often had a truckload of leaves, collected by the landscaper from the GSC grounds, delivered to his driveway. Dug into the garden, the leaves produced a deep, friable, fertile soil. And who but Art would think of leaving potatoes out on the ground for a prairie winter, covered only by a blanket and a pile of leaves; lift the blanket and grab a potato. Art and Alberta also had a 30 year-long bee keeping business. Coffee conversation often turned to bees, with a hint of competition between Art and John Utting, over whose bees were most productive, and whose honey was best.

Art said that he would like to think his as a "life of service and a life of science". His children list values that he instilled in them: 'family first, work hard, be self-sufficient, be kind and humble, sit up straight and smile'.

Arthur R. Sweet, Ph.D. Bibliography

This bibliography has been compiled from Dr. Sweet's own bibliography and from records compiled by Dr. Dennis Braman. Abstracts and poster presentations have been omitted.

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