

BUILDING DEDICATION AND ALUMNI REUNION

On May 6-7, 2005, more than 400 alumni, family, friends, and faculty gathered in Madison on a blustery spring weekend to celebrate the dedication of the West Wing Addition to Weeks Hall. This Building Dedication and Alumni Reunion Event was sponsored by the Board of Visitors and the Department of Geology and Geophysics. More than 350 alumni and friends returned to Madison, many for the first time in decades, to renew old friendships and see the wonderful changes that have occurred in the Department and the UW. Construction of the West Wing Addition and remodeling of Weeks Hall were completed in 2005 thanks to the generous contributions of alumni and friends to the Department's Building for the New Millennium Campaign. The outstanding new facilities now house state-of-the-art laboratories for geomicrobiology and nanogeoscience research.

As the skies cleared just in time, the event began in the morning of May 6 with the Building Dedication Ceremony, with presentations focused on visions for the future of the Department from the Deans of the Graduate School and the College of Letters and Science, Department faculty, the UW Foundation and the Board of Visitors. State Representative Spencer Black also spoke. This dedication ceremony was followed by a picnic lunch in the courtyard and tours of the Department to view student posters and visit with students and faculty.

A highlight of the event was the extremely thought-provoking afternoon technical conference focused on "21st Century Challenges for Earth Science." Each of the prestigious, internationally respected speakers had a connection with the UW. Former NASA astronaut, UW Professor and geologist, Dr. Harrison Schmitt discussed future opportunities for resource development in space in the 21st century. Dr. Marjorie Chan (UW PhD 1982), of the University of Utah, presented her exciting research related to Earth analogues to geologic findings from the recent NASA Mars landings. Dr. Richard Alley (UW PhD 1987), of Penn State University, presented disturbing

findings from his ice-core research on rates of global climate change and implications for the next century. Dr. John Eiler (UW PhD 1994), of Caltech, discussed critical issues facing the future of a hydrogen economy. Finally, Dr. Raymond Murray (UW PhD 1955), of the University of Montana, talked about the highly varied applications of forensic geology to criminal investigations.

Following the conference, alumni, family and friends had another opportunity to tour the "new" Weeks Hall or to visit with students and faculty. The day concluded with a brat cookout reception in the courtyard and an evening reconnecting with friends and colleagues.

The next day, Saturday, May 7 was perfect UW field trip weather: cold and windy. Following an alumni breakfast, more than 70 intrepid souls went on an excellent all-day field trip of eastern Wisconsin organized by David Mickelson and Toni Simo, with stops at Horicon Marsh, in the Kettle Moraine, the Ice Age Trail, and in a quarry along the Niagaran Escarpment. The trip was an excellent opportunity for alumni to reminisce and share unforgettable experiences from other field trips going back many years. Those not brave enough to go on the field trip reportedly enjoyed a great day visiting the campus and the Madison area.

Many thanks are due to all those from the Board of Visitors, the Department of Geology and Geophysics and the UW Foundation who participated in planning and organizing this tremendous event. Hundreds of alumni and friends returned to Madison, many for the first time in decades, to reconnect with the Department and with friends and colleagues. The Board of Visitors and the Department hope to maintain and grow these connections that are so vital to the continued growth and success of the UW and the Department of Geology and Geophysics.



Bill Miller talks with Anne Lucke.



Bob Sneider and the Museum's Rich Slaughter.



Herb Wang, left, chats with Robert and Ray Murray during morning registration. Ray Murray was a presenter at the technical session.



Alumni Harry Abendroth, left, and Howard Schoenike, center, talk with a guest.



Alumni, speakers, and guests wait for the building dedication ceremony to begin.



The Friday evening courtyard cookout.



At the cookout: left to right, Jay Nania, Bruce Handley, Cam Craddock, Tom Hanson, Kirk Sherwood, Al Sun, and Bob Hickman.



Above: Jean Morrison and Gordon Medaris at the Saturday Awards Banquet.

Left: Saturday field trip leaders Dave Mickelson and Toni Simo point out features of Horicon Marsh.