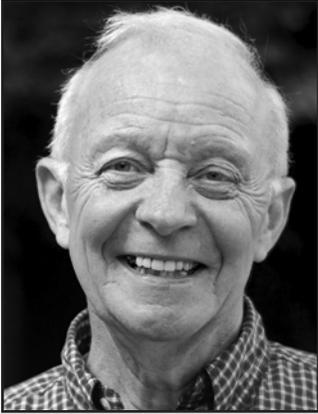
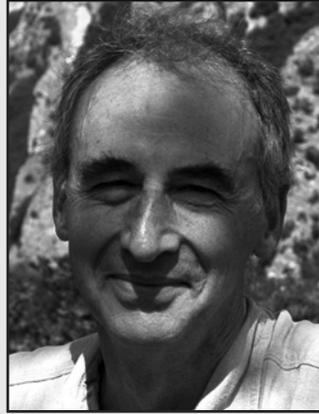


# 2008 MEDALS & AWARDS

## GSA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



Marion E. (Pat) Bickford  
Syracuse University



Hugh C. Jenkyns  
University of Oxford



James M. Robertson  
Wisconsin Geological & Natural History Survey

### ***Citation by W. Randall Van Schmus and James M. McLelland***

Marion E. (Pat) Bickford earned his spurs at Carleton College (B.S.) and U. Illinois (M.S., Ph.D.). During his first job at San Fernando Valley State in 1960, Pat felt the need to develop additional research skills, so from 1961 to 1964, when not teaching, he learned geochronology with George Wetherill at UCLA. In 1964, Pat joined U. Kansas to develop a geochronology program; working with colleagues and students, Pat developed this program into one of the best in the country. As well, Pat's work on the Precambrian of Colorado, SE Missouri, and with Randy Van Schmus on the Midcontinent basement represents multiple milestones in understanding the Proterozoic growth of North America.

Pat began his long service association with GSA in 1973; in 1987 he became editor of *GEOLOGY*, a task performed with style, excellence, and wit. The humorous front cover teasers began with Pat and his love for puns.

Pat left KU in 1990 to accept the Jesse Page Heroy Chair in Geology at Syracuse U. and to become department chair. He set a course that rapidly increased excellence in faculty, staff, and facilities to today's very high level. Simultaneously, while his research in Colorado and Canada continued, he initiated new, collaborative Adirondack research with Jim McLelland. These projects have largely involved SHRIMP geochronology and have served to clarify significant, otherwise intractable, problems.

In addition to his research and academic responsibilities, he continued his long, supportive association with GSA, most

### ***Citation by Tina M. Niemi***

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Hugh Jenkyns, a distinguished stratigrapher at Oxford University who investigates chemical records of paleoenvironmental change during the Mesozoic, for GSA's Distinguished Service Award. For his outstanding service as *GEOLOGY* editor for five years, from 2003–2007, and insightful contribution to GSA's Publications Committee, Hugh is highly deserving of this honor.

Hugh scored a number of firsts at *GEOLOGY*. He was the first editor from Europe. He helped elevate the international stature and impact factor of *GEOLOGY*, which was one of the most heavily cited geoscience journals between 1996–2006. Hugh was the first to start his term as *GEOLOGY* editor completely using the new, all-electronic submission format. He was the much-needed relief editor—the third editor—the one to reduce the individual editorial workload from 500 to only about 350 to 400 manuscripts per year! Hugh ran a highly efficient editorial office. Efficiency is a laudatory trait when manuscripts arrive at an average rate of 3 a day, or as high as 10 a day during semester breaks. Part of his outstanding success was an excellent choice of an editorial assistant, Evelyn Polgreen. Together, the team at Oxford University led *GEOLOGY* and instituted several changes, including increasing the number of solicited reviewers. This is a significant change from the early days when *GEOLOGY* asked authors to provide a review of their own paper with their submission!

Hugh brought his unique set of insightful direction, skills, perception, and humor to

### ***Citation by Marilyn J. Suiter***

Mentor: It is a word we use frequently, perhaps too often without the consideration that exemplary mentors deserve. Only a truly exceptional mentor would so generously share their time and energy as Robertson has to guide hundreds of young, bright geoscientists, eager to know where and how they can best serve their profession and their communities. In addition, Robertson encourages his fellow professionals to share their experiences, broadening the mentoring guidance even farther—that's the kind of breadth, depth, and commitment to leadership and to mentoring demonstrated by Dr. James M. Robertson, whose tireless service is celebrated by the Geological Society of America as a recipient of one of GSA's highest awards: the Distinguished Service Award.

Among his many gifts of service, Jamie has been the guide and primary spokesperson for GSA's Geology in Government Mentor program, which connects geoscience mentors employed by the government to GSA's student members in an informal Q&A luncheon setting supported by the GSA Foundation. Here, nearly 300 students at each GSA Annual Meeting experience the role of the geosciences at all levels of government service through the presence and words of selected mentors. Jamie recruits and coordinates the mentors, works closely with GSA staff, and acts as moderator and as a mentor, leading the activity with wit and candor and a bit of a steel whip. In the eight years Jamie has worked on this effort, more than 2,100 geoscience students have received employment guidance through this program. "His hard work, dedication, and

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## Bickford citation (*continued*)

recently as books editor, guiding authors in both style and content. Pat “retired” in 1997, but still conducts research, writes, publishes, edits, and, occasionally, teaches. His contributions to GSA and the profession are legion and illustrious, and he is most deserving of the GSA’s Distinguished Service Award.

## **Response by Marion E. (Pat) Bickford**

My sincere thanks to my old friends Randy and Jim for their gracious citation. When I think of some of the things they could have said, I am the more thankful! Now, about receiving the Distinguished Service Award from GSA: I am deeply grateful and honored that my colleagues nominated me for this award and that the GSA Council approved it. However, I must ask “Why me?” It does not seem to me that I have done anything more, professionally, than most of you in this room. I have loved geology and for almost 50 years I have had the opportunity to teach it and to carry out numerous research projects. I have been privileged to have fine colleagues with whom to work and I have had the support of NSF and two good universities. Geology has been very good to me!

I have regarded my service to GSA not as a burdensome task, but rather as providing wonderful opportunities to learn more about our science. When I was Editor of *GEOLOGY*, I felt that—although not practicing all aspects of the science—I knew just about everything that was new and exciting. I certainly did have fun with making puns for the “teasers” on the cover, although Executive Director Mike Wahl told me that someone had written to him that I was “degrading” the journal! Currently I am enjoying my work as Science Editor for Books, for the work has me in touch with scientists all over the world and has kept me abreast of many of the large projects that have been organized.

Finally, I would be quite remiss not to give credit to Betsy, my wife of 53 years. Some selective quotes from Proverbs are in order: “A worthy woman who can find? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband trusteth in her and he shall have no lack of gain”. “Strength and dignity are her clothing and she laugheth at the time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom and the law of kindness is on her tongue”. “Her husband is known in the gates when he sitteth among the elders of the land”. “Give her of the fruit of her hands; And let her works praise her in the gates”.

Again, many thanks!

## Jenkyns citation (*continued*)

the editorial tasks. Above all, his great wit was highlighted monthly with the one-line teasers on the cover of *GEOLOGY* that made us all smile. Hugh Jenkyns is without doubt a superior candidate for the GSA Distinguished Service Award.

## **Response by Hugh C. Jenkyns**

I deem it a privilege to have been the first *GEOLOGY* editor from outside North America. My belief in non-commercial scientific publication is total and, as sub-disciplines of the earth sciences evolve from the fashionable to the passé, a generalist journal will always have a place. For good-humoured introduction to the Geology Control and Command Centre, and instructions on taking the flak, I am indebted to David Fastovsky and Ben van der Pluijm. Thanks go also to my former co-editor and citationist, Tina Niemi, and Andy Barth, who ably shared the editorial burden.

As editor of one of the most highly ranked journals in our subject, it often falls to one to reject papers penned by friends and colleagues, many very distinguished, such that I am surprised that so many people are still speaking to me. One learns a lot about people, not only in handling their papers but also in how they respond to requests for reviews, particularly in how they respond to such requests immediately following rejection of one of their own manuscripts. The majority of my correspondents have always been very gracious, although I was once described, in a mis-directed e-mail, as ‘that arrogant new editor who is truly evil’, which did seem a trifle extreme! I would also like to pay tribute to those scientists—and here I name Gerard Bond and Roger Larson—who contributed reviews in their very last months. Contrast this altruistic behaviour with that of those delinquent reviewers who still owe me a review, the non-receipt of which the on-line system faithfully records, as the weeks turn into months and the months into years.

My grateful thanks go to GSA for the gift of this Distinguished Service Award.

## Robertson citation (*continued*)

lively personality have made this mentoring program the most popular student event at the GSA Annual Meeting.”

## **Response by James M. Robertson**

The only other citation I’ve ever received had to do with a parking violation. As far as I know, this one doesn’t involve a fine....

Seriously, I am honored to have been chosen to receive a GSA Distinguished Service Award. I’ll own up to the “service”, but the “distinguished” part is, in my opinion, a bit of a stretch. Talking about work I enjoy doing at a state geological survey and answering questions from interested students are hardly chores. And I’ve had the good fortune over the years to be allowed to recruit my fellow panelists from a wonderful collection of enthusiastic, dedicated colleagues and new acquaintances who represent the opportunities, challenges, and satisfactions of using geology to “make a difference” and to “give back” in a variety of local, state, and federal government contexts.

I would like to acknowledge the GSA Foundation’s generous financial support for Geology in Government Mentor Luncheons over these past eight years. I’d like to think all the valuable wisdom the panelists so freely dispense is a sufficient attraction, but I suspect a free lunch plays some small role in “getting them in the door.” I offer special thanks to two GSA Education Program Officers—Karlton Blythe and Jennifer Nocerino—who have done the lion’s share of the real work each year behind-the-scenes, and who have allowed me to serve as the “front man”. Just another pretty face.

I believe our profession has no more important responsibility than to tend its own food chain—not just by formal training in a university, but also by exposing students to the incredible wealth of opportunities to do geology in a variety of common and not-so-common employment settings that are societally relevant as well as personally rewarding.

Mentoring programs, such as the Geology in Government Mentor Luncheon, are a fundamental way of introducing students to these opportunities. The Geological Society of America is to be commended for recognizing and supporting this broader educational endeavor. And I am privileged to have been allowed to participate.