

### Geoscience education and the GAC

Cyril F. O'Driscoll

*Newfoundland Department of Mines and Energy, St. John's, Newfoundland A1B 4J6, Canada*

Education has always been a concern of the GAC Newfoundland Section. The Education Committee has been active since it was formed and has promoted education in the schools in various ways. These include: essay contests, career days, workshops, scholarships, field trips and, of course, the Newfoundland Journal of Geological Education.

The Journal was first published in the fall of 1975 and has been a very successful project. In 1979 the Northern Miner characterized the Journal as "one of the more successful projects taken on by any branch of the Geological Association of Canada".

In the promotion of earth science education, the members of the GAC Newfoundland Section have benefitted greatly from the co-operation of the university, government and industry. In many cases, requests from schools are made to one of these groups and GAC members are asked to respond.

The most recent endeavour of the Association has been setting up the St. John's -88 fund for the purposes of educational development. Recently, a proposal was made to the GAC Newfoundland Section to provide a two-day geological workshop for teachers on the Burin Peninsula through the St.

John's - 88 fund. Two geologists from the Department of Mines and Energy were asked by the GAC executive to run this workshop; this turned out to be a very satisfying and worthwhile experience. The main part of the workshop was field oriented and provided teachers in various schools with knowledge of geological features in their area. The field trip was video-taped by one of the participants. This will enable teachers to refer back to the tape or the field guide and pass on the knowledge to students for many years to come. The key to reaching as many students as possible is through workshops and local field trips for teachers in many parts of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Education committees exist in various organizations. The Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, the Prospectors and Developers Association and the Geological Association of Canada provide funds for educational purposes. If all these organizations combined their funding, a more serious effort could be made to promote education in the earth sciences. This would allow students to gain an appreciation of our Province's resources and resource potential as well as a fuller understanding of our natural environment.