

“The Last Billion Years”

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The book, “The Last Billion Years” highlights the geological history of the three Maritime Provinces, namely

New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The title is derived from the approximate age of the oldest suite of rocks known from the region, the Blair River Complex of northern Cape Breton. The three main threads in the story of the Maritimes are: plate tectonics, climatic change, and evolution. These are discussed generally in the first three chapters, which serve as an introduction. Chapter 1, *The Dynamic Earth*, focuses on dynamic earth systems including plate tectonics, the rock cycle and changing climates. The Fourth Dimension, Chapter 2, discusses time, the age of rocks and correlation. *Tales of Trails and Ancient Bodies*, Chapter 3, highlights the fascinating evolution of fossil plants and animals. All three chapters emphasize Maritimes examples.

The succeeding chapters relate directly to the regional geology, starting with the Precambrian in Chapter 4, *Into Deepest Time*. Chapter 5, *The Pieces Come Together*, outlines how fragments of crust from as far a field as the Southern Hemisphere came together in the Early Paleozoic to form the geological collage that is the Maritimes. This was also the time of the Iapetus Ocean, precursor of the present day

Atlantic Ocean. Chapter 6, *Basins and Ranges* introduces the Late Paleozoic, which is of vital importance to our economic history because of the wide spread coal deposits. An Ocean is Born, Chapter 7, starts to bring us into the modern world, with formation growth of the Atlantic Ocean.

The saga pauses with Chapter 8, *From Rocks to Riches*, which relates the importance of natural resources in this region. Finally in Chapter 9, *The Ice Age and Beyond*, the book concludes with a discussion of the last million years and a glimpse into the future.

One of the highlights of the book is the series of boxes throughout the text. Topics include the structure of the Earth, minerals, turbidites, soils and coastlines. Throughout the book, there are numerous superb illustrations, both in colour and black and white.

When can you purchase your copy of "The Last Billion Years"? We are planning for publication in 2001, a not unrealistic target in view of the remarkable progress of the last twelve months.