

Meet the Authors



Don L. Anderson is Professor Emeritus in the Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences at Caltech. He received a BS in geology and geophysics and a DSc (Hon) from RPI, and a PhD in geophysics

and mathematics from Caltech. He received the Crafoord Prize at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and the National Medal of Science at the White House. He is past president of the AGU. He is interested in the origin, evolution, structure, and composition of Earth and other planets. His work integrates seismological, solid state physics, geochemical, and petrological data. He was director of the Seismological Laboratory of Caltech from 1967 to 1989. See <http://www.gps.caltech.edu/~dla>



Ian H. Campbell is a Senior Fellow at The Australian National University and is currently visiting the Institute for Study of the Earth's Interior, University of Okayama at Misasa, Japan,

where he is supported by the Centre of Excellence for the 21st Century. He is co-chair of the Commission on Large Igneous Provinces and was a co-convenor of the Great Plume Debate held at Fort William between August 28 and September 1, 2005. His principal research interests are the relationship between igneous processes and ore deposits, and the evolution of the Earth's crust and mantle.



Andrew C. Kerr, a native of Northern Ireland, grew up a few miles from the legendary Giants Causeway columnar basalts. He left Northern Ireland to study geochemistry at the University of

St Andrews, followed by a PhD on the geochemistry of lavas from the Isle of Mull, at Durham University. This was followed by two postdoctoral positions at the University of Leicester: one studying the accreted portions of the Caribbean-Colombian oceanic plateau and the other assessing the environmental impact of large igneous provinces. He is currently a senior lecturer at Cardiff University, treasurer of the Commission on Solid Earth Chemistry and Evolution, and a council member of the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain.



Adrian P. Jones is reader in petrology in the Department of Earth Sciences at University College

London. With connections to Durham, Chicago, Caltech, and Kingston, he has supervised approximately 20 graduate students. His research group explores the mineralogy, geochemistry, and petrology of carbon in the Earth's mantle, including the origin of diamond, and of carbonatite and kimberlite melts. From 2000 to 2003 he was chairman of the ESF Eurocarb Network, which examined solid carbon reservoirs and their contribution to CO₂ in the atmosphere through volcanism. He explained carbonate melts in the Chicxulub crater and since 2000, has worked on large-scale impact melting.



Andrew D. Saunders is professor of geochemistry at the University of Leicester. He has studied large igneous provinces in Madagascar, the North Atlantic, and in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, using

a variety of techniques, but mostly igneous geochemistry. He is currently investigating the role of the Siberian Traps in the end-Permian mass extinction and asking the basic question, how does such volcanism trigger a worldwide extinction event? Andy is a strong advocate for mantle plumes, but is perfectly willing to accept that this amazing planet is sufficiently large and complex to accommodate a variety of LIP-forming mechanisms.



Steve Self is professor of volcanology and head of the Volcano Dynamics Group at the Open University in the UK. He has studied volcanic activity and volcanic rocks in many parts of the world,

concentrating on explosive eruptions, large (flood) lava effusions, and the impact of volcanism on the atmosphere. He has written over 170 articles and reviews in the scientific press, for books, and in other science magazines. He is a fellow of the Geological Society of America and the Geological Society of London, and a member of the American Geophysical Union, the International Association of Volcanology, the Mineralogical Society, and the International Association of Sedimentology. He is currently head of the UK's Volcanic and Magmatic Studies Group.



Thorvaldur (Thor) Thordarson is a senior researcher in volcanology at the University of Iceland and University of Hawaii. He has conducted volcanological research on modern to Archean

successions across the globe, with emphasis on flood basalt and komatiite volcanism, volcano-climate interactions, and lava flow emplacement mechanisms. He has written more than 50 articles in scientific journals and co-authored the book *Iceland* in the series *Classical Geology in Europe*. He is a member of the Geological Society of America, the American Geophysical Union, the International Association of Volcanology, the Geological Society of Iceland, and the Glaciological Society of Iceland. He has been appointed, as of March 1, 2006, to the post of senior lecturer in volcanology at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.



Mike Widdowson is lecturer in volcanology at the Open University, UK. He received his degree in geology and mineralogy at Oxford (1985) where, after studying the uplift history of the Deccan Traps of

India, he also obtained his D Phil (1990). He has over 20 years of experience studying many aspects of the Deccan continental flood basalt province. His broader fields of research include the volcanology, geochemistry and geochronology of large igneous provinces, and the wider role of volcanism upon climate change in the geological record. He has also published papers on the evolution of passive continental margins and the geochemistry of lateritization and tropical weathering processes. He is a fellow of the Geological Society of London and the Geological Society of India.



Paul Wignall is a professor of palaeoenvironments at the School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds. He has been interested in the origin of the end-Permian mass extinction, ever since

he first visited the sections of the western US, in 1989. In recent years he has also become interested in other mass extinctions, notably the end-Triassic and Early Jurassic events. His researches have taken him all over the world to places such as Greenland, China, North America and even his own backyard in Yorkshire. He has published around 70 papers and two books, mostly on mass extinctions, but also on black shales, his other main research interest.