

## BEHIND THE SCENES AT *ELEMENTS*: HOW WE DEVELOP THEMATIC ISSUES

What goes on behind the scenes to produce an issue of *Elements*? Should anyone besides the editors care? Even if you have never considered being a guest editor of an issue of *Elements*, or even if you are not the least bit curious about how all this works, we encourage you to read on. The first thing to remember is that *Elements* belongs to each one of us as individual scientists. Without this simple yet powerful principle, this magazine would simply not work. *Elements* does not belong to principal editors or societies or to the disciplines that they represent. As important as these societies are, and the disciplines represented therein, it is absolutely vital that *Elements* transcend them. What drives *Elements* is the continuous and unending scientific creativity of each and every one of us. Science is what scientists do, and the goal of *Elements* is to represent, indeed to project, what we do as mineralogists, geochemists, and petrologists, for each other and for the rest of the world. With this in mind, the process of creating an issue of *Elements* becomes abundantly clear. We (the three principal editors and the managing editor) are happy to receive proposals for thematic issues at any time. One simply needs to go to [www.elementsmagazine.org](http://www.elementsmagazine.org) and click on "Forms" to get instructions on how to submit a proposal. Once submitted by a potential guest editor, the editors will consider the proposal and often ask for revisions if the proposal has potential. We will also ask for the author list to be firmed up. If the proposal is eventually accepted, it will be slotted in the *Elements* production schedule such that ample time is allowed for proper development of the issue and a balance of subject diversity in the annual line-up is maintained. If the accepted proposal is particularly timely for whatever reason, this can also be

taken into account in the scheduling. The next critical step is for the guest editor, the principal editor assigned to be in charge of that issue, and the managing editor to have an extended conference call, during which the processes of producing the issue are reviewed in detail. Authors are contacted, the writing begins and finishes, and the reviewing, revising, and final production proceeds under the watchful eyes of several of us over the ensuing months. The final result will be another issue that represents all of us well. We could produce nothing less.

### Editorial Meeting

The editors met in Baltimore, USA, on May 26, 2006. The main items on our agenda were choosing the incoming principal editor for 2007 and completing the line-up of thematic content for 2007. We are now in the enviable position of receiving more proposals than we can accommodate. This will ensure the vitality and the relevance of *Elements*. We are now booking issues for 2008 and welcome proposals. Some people have expressed concern that we might run out of topics. We look blankly because we see exactly the opposite happening.

### 2007 Principal Editor

Susan Stipp of the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, has just accepted our invitation to replace Mike Hochella as principal editor for a three-year term, from 2007 through 2009. We are delighted that Susan will join the *Elements* team. An article about Susan and her background will appear in the first issue of 2007.

### Welcome to AIPEA

We welcome the International Association for the Study of Clays (Association internationale pour l'étude des argiles) as an affiliated society, thus joining the International Mineralogical Association and the European Mineralogical Union. President David Bish introduced AIPEA in the last issue (page 188). The affiliated status is reserved for umbrella organizations. In this

case, AIPEA members are the clay societies of the world. We look forward to reading their news.

### New Features

"Publications Forum" was quietly introduced in volume 1, issue 4, with two articles on open access. Since then, we have published on GeoScienceWorld and on copyright issues. Other articles in preparation will deal with impact factors, the Fog index, references, etc. If there is a topic you would like us to discuss, please send us an e-mail.

In this issue, we give a voice to students by launching a "Students Page," and we hope it will become a regular feature of *Elements*. Graduate and undergraduate students: if you want to raise issues of concern or share an important experience, the space is yours. This page will also be the ideal place to advertise grant and scholarship application deadlines.

### Elements is Yours

*Elements* is your magazine. Let us know what else you would like to read in it. We welcome letters to the editors concerning the editorials or any other topic you think would interest the mineralogy-geochemistry-petrology community. We welcome contributions to "Parting Shots," in which we publish spectacular or interesting photographs. And we rely on members to bring to our attention "People in the News."

### Thanks

We thank John Valley, guest editor, and the five authors who contributed papers to this issue; the society news editors of the participating societies; the other contributors to this issue: Alain Baronnet, Dan Kyle, Crystal Mann, Kaspar Mossman, and Anthony J. Naldrett.

**Mike Hochella, Ian Parsons, Bruce Watson, and Pierrette Tremblay**

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### Footnote to Editorial

I was surprised to learn, while researching for this editorial, that slightly before Ussher, in 1644, Dr. John Lightfoot, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, had deduced, by exhaustive study of the Scriptures, that 'heaven and earth, centre and circumference, were created all together, in the same instant, and clouds full of water,' and that 'this work took place and man was created by the Trinity on October 23, 4004 BC, at nine o'clock in the morning.' A remarkable convergence, and what enviable precision! The 9 am is often wrongly ascribed to Ussher.

Ian Parsons

## WANTED

The Hudson Institute of Mineralogy, a not-for-profit organization chartered by the Board of Regents of the State University of New York, is seeking used analytical equipment, thin sections, and mineral specimens for its descriptive mineralogical laboratory and educational programs. We are dedicated to classical mineralogical research, preservation of mineral specimens, and educational outreach to primary and secondary school teachers and students. If your institution is upgrading its analytical equipment, we want your used, working devices. Further, if you are disposing of minerals, thin sections, or similar geological artifacts, let us put them to good use; aesthetics are unimportant, labels are! Please contact:

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