Swiss Society of Mineralogy and Petrology

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9th SWISS GEOSCIENCE MEETING

11–13 November 2011, Zürich

The 9th edition of the Swiss Geoscience Meeting was held in the spectacularly renovated Earth Science building of ETH Zürich. The plenary session on Friday, November 11, was devoted to the topic "Life and Planet Earth." The invited keynote lecturers were A. Halliday (Oxford), L. Kump (Penn State), N. MacLeod (London), A. Boetius (Bremen) and D. Imboden (Bern). These lectures were followed with great interest by an impressive audience that filled the largest lecture hall at ETH. On Saturday, about 700 participants attended 18 symposia (384 oral presentations) covering all aspects of geosciences in Switzerland. As in previous years, our society offered a "Mineralogy-Petrology-Geochemistry" open session, which was characterized by a breadth of topics and a lively audience. A second session, "Perspectives on Batholith Formation and Evolution in 4-D," was convened and chaired by doctoral students of the national Swiss doctoral program "Adamello 4-D"; many outstanding talks and lectures by invited keynote speakers from the USA, France, and the UK attracted a large audience. The poster sessions in both symposia were well attended and fostered lively scientific discussions, which were considerably eased by the available drinks.

Photos: P. Dèzes, Bern

THE 4-D ADAMELLO FIELD CONFERENCE

Bagolino, Italy, September 5–12, 2012

This field conference will summarize the results of the Swiss doctoral program "Adamello 4-D." It will feature a 3-day lecture program in the village of Bagolino (UNESCO world heritage site) and 3 days of excursions into the southern part of the Adamello batholith, with overnight stays in mountain huts. The symposium will benefit from invited keynote lectures by T. Sisson (USGS), B. Schoene (Princeton), D. Coleman (North Carolina), B. Dutrow (Louisiana State), J. Blundy (Bristol) and J. Dufek (Georgia Tech). For details, consult www3.unil.ch/wpmu/adamello2012/.

10th Swiss Geoscience Meeting

16–17 November 2012, University of Bern

"Mountains – Up and Down"

OBITUARY: PROF. EMILIE JÄGER (1926–2011)

During the summer of 2011, we lost one of the pioneers of radioisotopic dating, Prof. Dr. Emilie Jäger. After a degree in chemistry in her hometown of Vienna, she moved to the University of Bern in 1952. She developed a profound interest in mineralogy, chemistry, and the isotope chemistry of minerals during her doctoral studies in the Department of Mineralogy, under the direction of H. Huttenlocher, and later in the Department of Physics, under F. G. Houtermans. The late 1950s witnessed a genuine interest in dating minerals, with the advent of new isotopic methods developed in different laboratories around the world. Emilie Jäger's supervisors therefore decided to send her to the Carnegie Institution in Washington, DC, where she learned the techniques of Rb–Sr dating of minerals; there, she was inspired by the presence of several outstanding isotope geochemists, such as George Tilton and Henry Faul. She returned to the University of Bern and set up an isotopic mineralogy laboratory in 1959–1960. The first Rb–Sr isotope measurements on minerals were carried out in 1959 using the solid-source mass spectrometry laboratory in the Department of Physics, led by J. Geiss, P. Eberhardt and H. Oeschger. By determining mineral and whole-rock Rb–Sr isotope compositions in the Alpine orogen, she developed the hypothesis that the mineral ages had to be interpreted in terms of cooling ages, a theory summarized in her 1962 paper, "Rb–Sr Age Determinations on Micas and Total Rocks from the Alps," and further developed over the following decade. She subsequently became involved in many aspects of isotope geochemistry, such as decay constants (Steiger and Jäger 1977), establishing mineral standards for radioisotopic dating (Jäger et al. 1963), dating mineral deposits and dating petroleum migration in reservoirs, and she participated in the establishment of environmental isotope chemistry in Switzerland and neighbouring countries. Towards the end of her career, she became increasingly interested in low-temperature chronometers, such as fission track dating, and optical luminescence.

She leaves behind a large number of former students, who now work at the national and international levels in environmental management and research, ressources, research infrastructure, life-quality services, construction projects in Switzerland and academia. Emilie Jäger's former students are indebted to her for having shared with them her enthusiasm for science, for her generosity, and for having motivated them to achieve their scientific and professional goals.

Matthias Giger (Thun), **Christian Schlüchter** (Bern) and **Urs Schaltegger** (Geneva)

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Jäger E, Niggli E, Baethge H (1963) Two standard minerals, biotite and muscovite for Rb–Sr and K–Ar age determinations, samples Bern 4 B and Bern 4 M from a gneiss from Brione, Valle Verzasca (Switzerland). Schweizer Mineralogische und Petrographische Mitteilungen 43: 465-470

Steiger RH, Jäger E (1977) Subcomission on geochronology: Convention on the use of decay constants in geo- and cosmochronology. Earth and Planetary Science Letters 36: 359-362