

From the Editors

Returning to our roots

The Meteoritical Society met for the first time at the Field Museum in Chicago, in 1933. There were fifteen participants and the meeting lasted two days. The host, Oliver C. Farrington was ill and could not attend, and died a few months later. The meeting returned to Chicago in 1972 when Ed Anders hosted the Society at the University.

Sixty-seven years after its first meeting, the Meteoritical Society returns once more to Chicago, this time hosted jointly by the Field Museum and the University. The number of abstracts sets a new record for a U.S. meeting, and the expected participation is nearly 400. Every meeting is different, every meeting is fresh, and thus the meeting, the Society and *Meteoritics and Planetary Science*, continue to grow. At the 2000 meeting of the Meteoritical Society there are 4 plenary talks, 11 invited talks, 175 oral presentations, 110 poster presentations and 24 print-only abstracts, for a total of 324 accepted abstracts. Thus about one-third of the presentations at this year's meeting are in poster form, a new record. The Society and our subject are in a very healthy state.

To try to identify interesting new results and significant new trends is difficult because it depends on the interests of the observer, but most of us would agree that we are living in a unique time when sample research—the traditional reserve of the Meteoritical Society—is becoming increasingly involved in space missions. Thus it is significant that the annual meeting again highlights the missions. Every mission involving the Society's very broad interests is represented at the meeting, Shoemaker NEAR, the Mars Global Surveyor, Stardust, Genesis, CONTOUR, MESSENGER and MUSES-C. Of course of all these incredibly exciting missions, the star of the moment is NEAR with the spectacular and apparently unending and diverse series of images of Eros. To a meteorite

researcher who has spent thirty years trying to imagine conditions on the surface of a meteorite parent body, presumably an asteroid, seeing these images is a very moving experience. The information content of the images, and the data from the other spacecraft instruments, cannot fail to produce a fresh, and probably highly productive, reevaluation of our theories for meteorite formation and the information meteorites contain about the early solar system and solar system history.

This meeting also includes a special session on presolar grains that will open with two invited talks that will demonstrate how far we have come and how important presolar grains are to astrophysics.

Each year I thank the many people who bring this supplemental volume of *Meteoritics and Planetary Science* into being. It is a sentiment no less sincere for its repetition. The local organizers have again responded patiently, promptly and professionally to the endless demands of the editorial office. The publication staff at the Lunar and Planetary Institute were as cheerful and hardworking as ever. Mark Penrose, Henry Turner, and Hazel Sears in the production and editorial offices in Fayetteville also worked hard to ensure we met schedules without loss of quality. In contrast to last year, we were blessed with remarkably few over-length abstracts that had to be fixed "on the fly", and I am very grateful to my colleagues for this. It is hard to exaggerate the stress such abstracts cause the LPI and MAPS offices. To everyone responsible for bringing together the material in this volume, and turning it into a publishable supplement to the journal in less than two months, I extend them all my heartfelt thanks.

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Editor