

Transactions of the 16th Caribbean Geological Conference, Barbados

Introduction

The 16th Caribbean Geological Conference was held from 16th to the 21st June, 2002 in Bridgetown, Barbados. This first meeting of the 21st century attracted 99 abstracts for oral and poster presentations. The summaries of all the presentations are available in the abstracts volume distributed to all participants. It was not clear initially how, and if, any transactions volume would be published. Dr. Simon Mitchell, editor of the Caribbean Journal of Earth Sciences (CJES), generously offered CJES to be the vehicle by which we could publish the submitted papers, despite the drain it would mean on his time. This special issue of the CJES is, therefore, dedicated to the publication of ten of the papers presented, and forms a shortened ‘transactions’ of the meeting.

The decision to publish in CJES meant that the editorial standards of the Journal had to be upheld and that this required more detailed reviews of all papers. This in turn caused delays in the final publication of the volume. I also have to confess that there were additional delays due to over-commitment of my time to other projects. I hope the authors will forgive the delay of publication and are mollified, at least slightly, by the fact that their papers appear as a special number in a regularly published refereed journal.

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IN APPRECIATION OF ROBERT C. SPEED 1933-2003

One of the highlights of the 16th Caribbean Geological Conference was the field trip to Barbados Scotland district by Dr. Robert Speed (known to all as 'Bob'). Bob was a superb field geologist and in the late 1970's set about the detailed description of the geology and structure of the intricately deformed rocks exposed in Barbados' Scotland district. Bob was one of the first to realize that the complex structures of the Scotland District's sedimentary rocks were the result of the process of accretion in front of the Lesser Antilles island arc as it subducted the oceanic crust of the Atlantic realm. On that field trip of 16th of June 2002, Bob shared with us the detailed results gathered over 25 years of field research in Barbados. Unfortunately, it was the last Caribbean field trip he was to guide, as he passed away shortly after in September, 2003.

Bob was a prolific author who wrote and edited scores of papers, maps and monographs. While many of us are aware of his many contributions to the geology of Barbados, we should not disregard his numerous contributions to structural geology in other areas of the Caribbean, nor his important work in the Basin and Range Province in the southwestern US.

Bob enlivened many Caribbean Geological Conferences with his penetrating intelligence, rich voice and deadpan humour. He will be sorely missed and the state of structural geology in the Caribbean will be poorer for his absence.

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