MEET OUR EXECUTIVE...

PETER F. HOWARD OF AUSTRALIA

A continuing series of short profiles on the IUGS Executive Committee members

At the 1978 Executive Committee Meeting in Haarlem, Netherlands, Peter Howard chats with Simon van der Heide.

What makes a geologist well-rounded and balanced in his outlook? Equal periods of time spent in university, industry and politics—at least according to IUGS Vice President Professor Peter Felix Howard (who is careful to disclaim originality of thought in this theory and quick to add that he personally has yet to feel the urge to seek political experience!).

Notwithstanding his political nescience, Peter Howard must have been a strong contender for the IUGS Vice Presidential nomination in 1976 during the Council meeting held in Sydney, Australia in conjunction with the 25th International Geological Congress. His scientific background at the time included some sixteen years of varied industrial experience in both Australia and the United States, interspersed with substantial periods of research and teaching at universities in both countries.

His *curriculum vitae* reads like a success story. Peter graduated from the University of Adelaide, South Australia in 1949 with an Honours B.Sc. degree in petrology and mineralogy and the University Medal for the most outstanding Honours thesis of the year. He then spent three years working as a mine geologist in the gold fields of Western Australia. Awarded a series of scholarships from Harvard University starting in 1952, he studied economic geology under the late Professor H.E. McKinstry, receiving his MA and PhD degrees in 1953 and 1957 respectively.

Peter has held a succession of titles that bespeak a continuous rise in authority—Geologist, Chief Geologist, Exploration Manager, General Manager, Vice President, and Director—in both Australian and American mining and subsidiary exploration companies. These include the Western Mining Corporation, Reynolds Metals, Appalachian Sulphides Incorporated, North Broken Hill Ltd., Utah Development Company and the IMC Development Corporation.

"One thing I learned during that time", he laughed during a recent interview, "is that you don't find a new ore deposit like they do in the movies: you don't slip off your horse, crack a rock and there it is! It was only after thirteen years that we succeeded with the discovery of several phosphorite deposits totalling over a billion tons in the Georgian Basin of Northern Australia."

In 1960 Professor Howard returned to Harvard University to pursue an academic career as research fellow and lecturer until 1962. In 1970 he was appointed to the Chair of Geology at Macquarie University in New South Wales, Australia where he was in charge of 28 teaching staff in geology. Between 1974 and 1976 he headed the University's School of Earth Sciences, comprising 650 students, 65 teaching staff and 50 administrative and technical support staff.

Professor Howard's publications include 11 major papers in the fields of economic geology, regional geology and solution chemistry, as well as some 50 unpublished company reports. His current research interests are directed toward geochemistry and the origin of phosphorites, and, in conjunction with work undertaken by his graduate students, fluid inclusion and sulphur isotope studies of porphyry copper deposits in Australia and the Southwest Pacific.

Visiting Professor at the University of Arizona in the U.S.A. during the past academic year, Peter Howard has been writing up the geochemical data on Cambrian phosphorites which he has been accumulating over the last six years: it will form part of a special issue of *Economic Geology*, of which he will be editor. Taking advantage of being "uprooted" from Australia, Peter has also visited fifteen major ore deposits in the U.S.A., Canada, Mexico and Poland.

Throughout his professional career, he has maintained a keen interest in professional associations, serving as a Councillor in the Geological Society of Australia (1975 and 1976), as President of the Geology Section of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Science (1973), as a Regional Vice-President of the Society of Economic Geology (1974 to present), and a member of the National Geological Committee of the Australian Academy of Science (1974 to present).

As one of the Vice Presidents of IUGS, he hopes to contribute to an expanded role of the Union in the worldwide geological fraternity: "I would like to see the responsibilities of the IUGS Vice Presidents broadened to include specific duties in the individual's field of specialization, such as economic geology."

A native of Adelaide, South Australia, Peter Howard, his wife Judy and their two daughters now make their home in Sydney, Australia.

Peter Howard and his wife Judy relax with their daughter Felicity.