

## Abstracts

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[See table of contents](#)

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# 1992 ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES GEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

## ABSTRACTS

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Again this year, abstracts from the annual Atlantic Universities Geological Conference are published in "Atlantic Geology." This provides a permanent record of the abstracts, and also focuses attention on the excellent quality of and interesting and varied science in these presentations.

The Editors

## **Tectonostratigraphic development and economic geology of the Sops Head Complex, western Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland**

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The Sops Head Complex has been previously interpreted as a lower Silurian tectonic/olistrostromal mélangé developed above a coarsening-upwards flysch sequence derived from the emergent Notre Dame Subzone. Detailed mapping coupled with geochemical and palaeontological studies indicate that the Sops Head Complex is actually an imbricate fold and thrust belt developed on the periphery of the Exploits Subzone. Flyschoid greywackes and conglomerates of the Sansom-Goldson type can be shown to be derived from the Exploits Subzone.

The Burnt Creek Fault has been previously thought to be part of the Red Indian Line, an Ordovician fault system marking the boundary of the Exploits and Notre Dame subzones. The Burnt Creek Fault can be demonstrated to be a Silurian, sinistral, strike-slip fault that dissects the imbricate sequence. Displacement along the Burnt Creek Fault is in the order of 4 km.

Facies relationships and palaeontology demonstrate the existence of rocks of Exploits Subzone affinity to the west

side of the Burnt Creek Fault, thus rendering it obsolete as a terrane-bounding fault. Stratigraphic and facies relationships coupled with rare-earth element geochemistry suggest the tholeiitic terrane of the Robert's Arm Group may also represent part of the Exploits Subzone, requiring the Red Indian Line be moved further to the northwest.

Molybdenite-gold-arsenopyrite-stibnite mineralization within the Sops Head Complex is directly related to two small peraluminous granodiorite stocks of presumed Silurian age. Au-As-Sb mineralization is largely restricted to faults and fractures within sedimentary rocks but elevated concentrations also occur within the heavily altered stocks. Rare-earth element geochemistry of fresh, altered and altered/mineralized rocks suggests that mineralization was a result of late-stage, deuteric alteration of the granodiorite. The low-potassium, peraluminous, fluorine-deficient nature of the intrusions precludes the application of an anorogenic, Climax-type model of ore genesis.

## **Geochemical and isotopic constraints on the Avalon Composite Terrane during the Early Silurian**

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The age and nature of the accretion of the Avalon Terrane to North America are pivotal to our understanding of the Appalachian Orogeny. The Lower Silurian to Middle Devonian Arisaig Group, Northumberland Strait, Nova Scotia, provides a continuous Avalonian stratigraphic record during accretionary and post-accretionary events. The Arisaig Group is composed of Lower Silurian, bimodal, basalt-rhyolite volcanic rocks overlain by a thick succession of marine, fossiliferous, siliciclastic rocks. Although the geochemistry of the volcanics indicates a local intracontinental setting, its regional tectonic significance is unclear. Recently, it has been proposed that the geochemical signature of turbidite sediments may help identify tectonic settings. The Lower Silurian Beechill Cove sedimentary rocks, the lowermost shallow marine sequence in the Arisaig Group, were selected for geochemical and isotopic analysis.

The geochemistry of the Beechill Cove Formation can-

not simply be attributed to Avalonian basement, and therefore may have a significant chemical contribution from other adjacent land-masses in the Early Silurian. Major elements reveal elevated  $K_2O/Na_2O$  and  $Al_2O_3/CaO+Na_2O$  and low  $FeO+MgO$ ,  $TiO_2$  and  $Al_2O_3/SiO_2$  relative to Avalonian crust. Trace elements record an increase in Rb/Sr ratios relative to the less differentiated Avalonian material, and samples normalized to chondrite give a distinctive pattern with elevated light rare earth elements over heavy rare earth elements and a pronounced Eu anomaly.

Silurian palaeographic reconstructions suggest many possible sources for the detritus, including the Caledonide Orogenic Belt of western Europe. If the isotopic analysis of Beechill Cove sediments helps constrain the chemical contribution of old continental crust, this has exciting implications for palaeographic reconstructions and the accretionary history of the Appalachian Orogeny.

## **Terrain stability and thermal performance along the Norman Wells pipeline**

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Many of Canada's oil reserves are located in the North, and further exploitation is likely in the future. Hence, it is important to develop safe and efficient ways to transport oil south across permafrost terrain. More than 50% of Canada's

landmass is underlain by permafrost.

The Norman Wells pipeline is owned and operated by Interprovincial Pipeline Limited (IPL). The pipeline is a small diameter pipe (32.4 cm) which transports oil through

869 km of discontinuous permafrost, from Norman Wells, NWT, to Zama, northern Alberta. It is the first completely buried oil pipeline in discontinuous permafrost in northern Canada. The oil is chilled close to ground temperature at the ESSO pump station in Norman Wells, so that it will have less effect on the surrounding terrain. Permafrost terrain can be sensitive to construction and land use, therefore careful monitoring is necessary. A Permafrost and Terrain Research and Monitoring program was developed between IPL and the Government of Canada to monitor changes in the thermal and physical conditions of the terrain, and to identify improvements which could be applied to future northern pipelines. Government scientists and IPL established a series of monitoring sites along the route.

Sloping terrain is particularly sensitive to thaw action. Wood chips are used to insulate thaw-sensitive slopes. Ac-

ording to design, the active freeze/thaw layer should remain within the wood chips, and the base of the wood chips should remain frozen. With only a few exceptions the wood chips have performed well.

Pipe and ground temperatures have increased since pumping began in 1985, likely due to an increased flow rate, and from clearing of the right of way. This heating has caused subsidence and ponding in areas along the pipeline route. Weekly aerial monitoring and monthly ground monitoring are carried out to check erosion or disturbance near the pipe or surrounding terrain.

The terrain along the pipeline route is slowly stabilizing. Most initial soil disturbance has settled, pipe and ground temperatures are leveling out, and the right of way has successfully revegetated. The overall pipeline performance has been for the most part within design expectations.

### **Structure of the Dunamagon Granite, Bale Verte Peninsula, Newfoundland**

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The Dunamagon Granite is a Silurian pluton situated 15 km east of the Baie Verte Line, northwest Newfoundland. The Baie Verte Line is a narrow structural zone that separates continental margin rocks of the Humber Zone and the accreted volcanic arc rocks of the Dunnage Zone. The Dunamagon Granite also separates rocks of the Humber and Dunnage zones (Ming's Bight Group and Pacquet Harbour Group, respectively). The juxtaposition of these groups raises some questions: What is the relationship of the Dunamagon Granite to the surrounding rocks? Is the Dunamagon Granite a stitching pluton or is it a thrust sheet?

Field work in the summer of 1992 involved mapping structures within the Dunamagon Granite and its contacts. Its

southern contact, with the Pacquet Harbour Group, is intrusive but the northern contact, with the Ming's Bight Group, is structurally more complex. The granite is sheared near the contact, and is cut by the Big Brook Shear Zone. Evidence suggests that the contact of the Dunamagon Granite with the Ming's Bight Group is tectonic. Structures within the pluton include a shallowly dipping early foliation, a steeply dipping later foliation, and lineations that plunge obliquely down-dip. Cross-cutting features include deformed aplite dykes, mafic dykes with internal fabrics, several generations of quartz veins, and shear zones. The data indicate that the Dunamagon Granite has been thrust over the Ming's Bight Group.

### **Late Paleozoic volcanic stratigraphy and structurally constrained dyke emplacement, Squally Point, western Cobequid Highlands, Nova Scotia**

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Fieldwork in the Squally Point area (tip of the Chignecto Peninsula) has revealed a complex volcanic stratigraphy composed of late Paleozoic intrusive and extrusive units. The presence of volcanic tuffs, basalt flows, and a pebble conglomerate confirm sub-aerial exposure. Observed hyaloclastites and pillow basalts indicate that some of the extrusions were submarine or sub-lacustrine. Porphyritic-spherulitic-flow banded rhyolites are present at the base of the stratigraphic column.

Substantial deformation of the rhyolite has resulted in a bimodal distribution of pervasive fractures. Several subhorizontal fault planes cut the Squally Point section. To the south at the mouth of the Eatonville estuary, a singular prominent

fault plane was observed. Thrust splays flattening to the fault planes have eastward strikes and southward dips suggesting a northward component of thrusting.

Significant mafic dyke intrusions along the primary fractures in the rhyolite occurred in the (?) late Carboniferous. Some minor dykes (<1 m) have east-west strikes. Shear zones propagate along the margins of most of the dykes, but a few predate their intrusion.

The area has undergone extensive mineralization. Minor fractures are hematized and chloritized. The rhyolites and basalts have patchy areas of silicification and epidotization. The thrust planes have a unique mineralized zone associated with them that weathers a distinctive yellow in outcrop.



**Volume 28, 1992**  
**Year-End Author Index**

- Abid, I. and Harper, J.** Petrography and diagenesis of reservoir sandstones, Hibernia oil field, Jeanne d'Arc Basin, 280.
- Barr, S.M. and Macdonald, A.S.** Devonian plutons in southeastern Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, 101.
- Barr, S.M., Raeside, R.P., and Miller, B.V.** Newfoundland to Cape Breton Island: terrane correlations, 280.
- Barr, S.M., White, C.E., and Graves, M.** Meguma Terrane in southern Cape Breton Island?, 194.
- Barr, S.M.,** see Grammatikopoulos, A.L., 139, 199.
- Bérubé, D. and Thibault, J.J.** Coastal zone mapping in New Brunswick, 194.
- Bevier, M.L.,** see Fyffe, L.R., 198.
- Bourque, P.-A.,** see Lavoie, D., 243.
- Boyce, W.D. and Williams, S.H.** An unusual Early Ordovician (Tremadoc) trilobite fauna of Gondwanan affinity in the Cow Head Group, western Newfoundland, 281.
- Brown, M.,** see van Staal, C.R., 210.
- Burden, E.T. and Languille, A.B.** Stratigraphy and biostratigraphy of Cretaceous and Paleocene strata on the northeast coast of Baffin Island: economic implications for an early and protracted rift history, 281.
- Burgess, J.L.,** see van Staal, C.R., 210.
- Calder, J.H.,** see Reed, B.C., 208.
- Caron, A.** Geology of a mineralized belt along the southeastern contact aureole of the Pokiok Batholith, 194.
- Caron, A.** The use of fold nucleation as a shear sense indicator, 195.
- Carson, J.M.,** see Ford, K.L., 1.
- Cawood, P.A.** The geological development of the Humber and Western Dunnage zones: the Wilson Cycle and much more, 282.
- Cawood, P.A.,** see Szybinski, Z.A., 290.
- Chatterjee, A.K.,** see MacDonald, M.A., 140, 203.
- Clarke, E.J.** Tectonostratigraphic development and economic geology of the Sops Head Complex, western Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland, 294.
- Colman-Sadd, S.P.** Geologic history of the Gander Zone and the Exploits Subzone in Newfoundland during the early Paleozoic: a review, 282.
- Corey, M.C.** The occurrence of primary magmatic layering within the Big Indian Lake pluton, Hants County, Nova Scotia, 138.
- Corey, M.C.** Geological features within the Big Indian Lake pluton, Hants County, Nova Scotia: evidence of igneous layering from recent diamond drilling, 51.
- Corey, M.C.** The occurrence of primary magmatic layering within the Big Indian Lake pluton, Hants County, Nova Scotia, 195.
- Corey, M.C.,** see MacDonald, M.A., 7.
- Corey, M.C.,** see MacDonald, M.A., 140, 203.
- Corey, M.C.,** see Horne, R.J., 29.
- Cude, M.P.** Geochemical and isotopic constraints on the Avalon Composite Terrane during the Early Silurian, 294.
- Currie, K.L., van Breemen, O., Hunt, P.A., and van Berkel, J.T.** Age of high-grade gneisses south of Grand Lake, Newfoundland, 153.
- Davis, L.,** see Emory-Moore, M., 233.
- Deutsch, E.R. and Hodych, J.P.** Paleomagnetic support for a mid-Ordovician wide Iapetus Ocean: a summary of the evidence, 283.
- Dickson, W.L., O'Brien, S.J., and Kerr, A.** Middle Paleozoic granite plutonism in southern Newfoundland, 138, 196.
- Dostal, J.,** see Kontak, D.J., 63.
- Dostal, J.,** see Hon, R., 163.
- Douma, S.L.** Field relationships, mineralogy and structural features of the Port Mouton pluton, southwestern Nova Scotia, 85.
- Doyon, M. and Van Wagoner, N.A.** Geology of the Stirling volcanogenic massive sulphide deposit, southeastern Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, 196.
- Dunning, G.R.,** see O'Brien, S.J., 286.
- Emory-Moore, M., Scott, W.J., Davis, L., and Solomon, S.** Detrital chromite concentrations, nearshore Port au Port Bay, Newfoundland, 233.
- Fitzgerald, J.P.,** see Hon, R., 163.
- Ford, K.L., Holman, P.B., Grant, J.A., and Carson, J.M.** Radioactivity Maps of Nova Scotia, 1.
- Fyffe, L.R.,** see Winchester, J.A., 171.
- Fyffe, L.R.** Re-interpreted contact relationships of the Ordovician Cookson Group, southwestern New Brunswick, 197.
- Fyffe, L.R.** Revised stratigraphy of Early Paleozoic rocks in the Piskahegan Stream-Mount Pleasant area of southwestern New Brunswick, 197.
- Fyffe, L.R. and Bevier, M.L.** A U-Pb date on the Mohannes pluton of southwestern New Brunswick, 198.
- Fyffe, L.R. and Miller, R.F.** A note on reported plant fossils from the Flume Ridge area of southwestern New Brunswick, 215.
- Gardiner, W.W.,** see McCutcheon, S.R., 141, 204.
- Gardiner, W.W.** Metallogeny of the Jacquet River area, northern New Brunswick, 139, 199.
- Goodfellow, W.D.,** see Lentz, D.R., 202.
- Grammatikopoulos, A.L. and Barr, S.M.** Petrogenesis, age and economic potential of gabbroic intrusions in southern New Brunswick and southeastern Cape Breton Island, 139, 199.

- Gardiner, W.W., Walker, J., and McCutcheon, S.R.** Granitoid-related mineral deposits, Antinouri Lake-Nicholas Dénys area, northern New Brunswick, 198.
- Grant, J.A.**, see Ford, K.L., 1.
- Graves, M.**, see Barr, S.M., 194.
- Hall, J. and Quinlan, G.** Continuity of crustal fabric patterns observed in deep seismic reflection profiles across the northern Appalachian/Caledonide mobile belt, 283.
- Ham, L.J.**, see Horne, R.J., 29.
- Ham, L.J.**, see MacDonald, M.A., 7.
- Ham, L.J.**, see MacDonald, M.A., 140, 203.
- Harper, J.**, see Abid, I., 280.
- Harper, J.D. and Moore, H.** Jeanne d'Arc Basin core studies unlock basin development secrets, 283.
- Harper, J.D. and Sinclair, I.K.** Concepts of Paleozoic paleogeography in eastern and central North America, 284.
- Hesse, R. and Sawh, H.** Geology and sedimentology of the Upper Devonian Escuminac Formation, Quebec, and evaluation of its paleoenvironment: lacustrine versus estuarine turbidite sequence, 257.
- Hodych, J.P.**, see Deutsch, E.R., 283.
- Hoffman, P.F.** Rodinia to Gondwanaland to Pangea to Amasia: alternating kinematics of supercontinental fusion, 284.
- Holman, P.B.**, see Ford, K.L., 1.
- Hon, R., Fitzgerald, J.P., Sargent, S.L., Schwartz, W.D., Dostal, J., and Keppie, J.D.** Silurian-Early Devonian mafic rocks of the Piscataquis volcanic belt in northern Maine, 163.
- Horne, R.J.**, see MacDonald, M.A., 7.
- Horne, R.J.**, see MacDonald, M.A., 140, 203.
- Horne, R.J., MacDonald, M.A., Corey, M.C., and Ham, L.J.** Structure and emplacement of the South Mountain Batholith, southwestern Nova Scotia, 29.
- Hunt, P.A.**, see Currie, K.L., 153.
- Irrinki, R.R. and Rennick, M.P.** Current projects of the Geoscience Information System (GSIS), 200.
- Jamieson, R.A.** Exhumation of eclogite, western Baie Verte Peninsula: microprobe meets lithoprobe, 285.
- Jenner, G.A.**, see Szybinski, Z.A., 290.
- Johnson, S.C.**, see McLeod, M.J., 205.
- Juras, S.J.**, see Lentz, D.R., 202.
- Keighley, D.G. and Pickerill, R.K.** Strangely preserved flutes and grooves from the fluvial Port Hood Formation, (Carboniferous) of western Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, 200.
- Keppie, J.D.**, see Murphy, J.B., 143.
- Keppie, J.D.**, see Hon, R., 163.
- Kerr, A.**, see Dickson, W.L., 138, 196.
- Kontak, D.J.** Geological, geochemical, and fluid inclusion studies of the Gays River Pb-Zn deposit, southern Nova Scotia: a carbonate-hosted replacement deposit of Carboniferous age, 140, 201.
- Kontak, D.J. and Dostal, J.** The East Kemptville tin deposit, Yarmouth County, southwestern Nova Scotia: a lithochemical study of the wallrock metasedimentary rocks, 63.
- Krogh, T.E.**, see McLeod, M.J., 181.
- Kumarapeli, S.** Evolution of a plume-generated segment of the rifted margin of Laurentia: early stage of a Wilson Cycle in operation, 285.
- Langdon, G.S.** Carboniferous tectonics, basin development and deformation in the Cabot Strait area, 286.
- Langton, J.P.** Geological studies south of the Brunswick Mines area (21 P/5 west), Bathurst Camp, northern New Brunswick, 201.
- Languille, A.B.**, see Burden, E.T., 281.
- Lavoie, D. and Bourque, P.-A.** Stratigraphy, paleoenvironmental evolution and regional significance of the Silurian Lake Aylmer - Lake Saint-François belt, Eastern Townships, Quebec, 243.
- Lentz, D.R., Goodfellow, W.D., and Juras, S.J.** Re-examination of the origin of quartz-augen schist in light of recent investigations at the Brunswick No. 12 sulphide deposit, Bathurst base-metal camp, Bathurst, New Brunswick, 202.
- Lentz, D.R.**, see McCutcheon, S.R., 141, 204.
- Lin, S. and Williams, P.F.** The geometrical relationship between the stretching lineation and the movement direction of shear zones, 203.
- Loncarevic, B.D.** ECSOOT Lithoprobe Line: some insights from offshore gravity and magnetic surveys, 203.
- Macdonald, A.S.**, see Barr, S.M., 101.
- MacDonald, J.** Terrain stability and thermal performance along the Norman Wells pipeline, 294.
- MacDonald, M.A.**, see Horne, R.J., 29.
- MacDonald, M.A., Corey, M.C., Ham, L.J., Horne, R.J., and Chatterjee, A.K.** New insights into the generation, emplacement, and magmatic evolution of the South Mountain Batholith, Nova Scotia, 140, 203.
- MacDonald, M.A., Horne, R.J., Corey, M.C., and Ham, L.J.** An overview of recent bedrock mapping and follow-up petrological studies of the South Mountain Batholith, southwestern Nova Scotia, Canada, 7.
- Malo, M.**, see Marillier, F., 204.
- Marillier, F., Malo, M., and The MAT Group** The Maritime Appalachian Transect (MAT): a new proposal to Lithoprobe, 204.
- MAT Group**, see Marillier, F., 204.
- McCutcheon, S.R., Lentz, D.R., and Gardiner, W.W.** Endogranitic Sn potential beneath the Nigadoo River base-metal vein/lode deposit, northern New Brunswick, 141, 204.
- McCutcheon, S.R.**, see Gardiner, W.W., 198.
- McDonald, L.** Structure of the Dunamagan Granite, Baie Verte Peninsula, Newfoundland, 295.
- McLeod, M.J., Ruitenberg, A.A., and Johnson, S.C.** Southern New Brunswick compilation and correlation

- project by the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy, 205.
- McLeod, M.J., Ruitenberg, A.A., and Krogh, T.E.** Geology and U-Pb geochronology of the Annidale Group, southern New Brunswick: Lower Ordovician volcanic and sedimentary rocks formed near the southeastern margin of Iapetus Ocean, 181.
- Melchin, M.J.** Evolution and extinction patterns in Late Ordovician-Early Silurian graptolites as revealed by the study of uncompressed specimens from Arctic Canada, 206.
- Miller, B.V.**, see Barr, S.M., 280.
- Miller, H.G. and Thakwalakwa, S.A.M.** A geophysical and geochemical interpretation of the configuration of the Mount Peyton complex, central Newfoundland, 221.
- Miller, H.G.**, see Szybinski, Z.A., 290.
- Miller, R.F.**, see Fyffe, L.R., 215.
- Moore, H.**, see Harper, J.D., 283.
- Murphy, J.B., Pe-Piper, G., Keppie, J.D., and Piper, D.J.W.** Correlation of Neoproterozoic III sequences in the Avalon Composite Terrane of mainland Nova Scotia: tectonic implications, 143.
- Murphy, J.B.**, see Reed, B.C., 208.
- Nance, R.D.**, see Reed, B.C., 208.
- Neale, E.R.W. J.** Tuzo Wilson: On the 25th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Avalon Peninsula's Roots, 278.
- Nickerson, W.A.** Horton basin inversion event in the Moncton Subbasin, New Brunswick, 206.
- Noble, J.P.A.**, see Zheng, Q., 212.
- Noble, J.P.A.** Book Review: East Coast Basin Atlas Series, the Scotian Shelf, 213.
- O'Brien, B.H.**, see O'Brien, S.J., 286.
- O'Brien, S.J., Dunning, G.R., Tucker, R.D., O'Driscoll, C.F., and O'Brien, B.H.** On the nature, timing and relationships of Late Precambrian tectonic events on the southeastern (Gondwanan) margin of the Newfoundland Appalachians, 286.
- O'Brien, S.J.**, see Dickson, W.L., 138, 196.
- O'Driscoll, C.F.**, see O'Brien, S.J., 286.
- Palmer, S., Waldron, J.W.F., and Parkins, W.G.** Lacustrine stromatolites at the base of the Late Carboniferous Merigomish Formation, Pictou County, Nova Scotia, 206.
- Parkhill, M.A.** Applications of regolith mapping and sampling in the California Lake area, northern New Brunswick, 207.
- Parkins, W.G.**, see Palmer, S., 206.
- Pass, D.J.** Late Paleozoic volcanic stratigraphy and structurally constrained dyke emplacement, Squally Point, western Cobequid Highlands, Nova Scotia, 295.
- Pe-Piper, G.**, see Murphy, J.B., 143.
- Pickerill, R.K.**, see Keighley, D.G., 200.
- Pickerill, R.K. and Waldron, J.W.F.** Significance of trace fossils from the Tancook Member of the Goldenville Formation; Meguma Group, Mahone Bay area, Nova Scotia, 207.
- Piper, D.J.W.**, see Murphy, J.B., 143.
- Pronk, A.G.** The use of regional stream sediment data in assessing drinking water quality: an example from southwest New Brunswick, 208.
- Quinlan, G.**, see Hall, J., 283.
- Rabottin, J.L.**, see Rabu, D., 208.
- Rabu, D. and Rabottin, J.L.** Geological mapping program on St Pierre and Miquelon islands, 208.
- Raeseide, R.P.**, see Barr, S.M., 280.
- Rast, N.**, see Skehan, J.W., 288.
- Reed, B.C., Calder, J.H., Murphy, J.B., and Nance, R.D.** Kinematic analysis of Late Paleozoic deformation in the western Cumberland Basin, 208.
- Rennick, M.P.**, see Irrinki, R.R., 200.
- Ruffman, A.** A possible origin of the 1989-1990 Laurentian Channel earthquakes, 209.
- Ruffman, A. and van Hinte, J.E.** Orphan Knoll: a window on the opening of the North Atlantic, 287.
- Ruitenberg, A.A.**, see McLeod, M.J., 181, 205.
- Ryall, P.J.C. and Pearson, E.** Gravity in central Nova Scotia south from the Liscomb Complex, 209.
- Sawh, H.**, see Hesse, R., 257.
- Scott, W.J.**, see Emory-Moore, M., 233.
- Sinclair, I.K.**, see Harper, J.D., 284.
- Sinclair, I.K.** Transpression and transtension in the Jeanne d'Arc Basin, Grand Banks, 287.
- Skehan, J.W. and Rast, N.** Evidence for the role of the Pocologan, New Brunswick and Burlington, Massachusetts shear zones in the Neoproterozoic Wilson Cycle, 288.
- Solomon, S.**, see Emory-Moore, M., 233.
- Stevens, R.K.** Have the remnants of the Proto Atlantic any use as fuel? Some implications for the early history of the earth, early life and other things, 288.
- Stockmal, G.S. and Waldron, J.W.F.** The Appalachian structural front, Port au Port Peninsula, western Newfoundland: balanced cross sections and implications for Humber Zone tectonics, 210.
- Stockmal, G.S. and Waldron, J.W.F.** Structure and tectonic setting of the Port au Port Peninsula, western Newfoundland: implications for Humber Zone tectonics and Acadia versus Taconian overthrust events, 289.
- Stockmal, G.S.**, see Waldron, J.W.F., 291.
- Sargent, S.L.**, see Hon, R., 163.
- Schwartz, W.D.**, see Hon, R., 163.
- Swinden, H.S.** Volcanogenic sulphide metallogeny of the Iapetus Ocean in the Canadian Appalachians: complexities in time, space and tectonic setting, 289.
- Szybinski, Z.A., Cawood, P.A., Miller, H.G., and Jenner, G.A.** Silurian Notre Dame Bay nappe in the Newfoundland Appalachians, 290.
- Thakwalakwa, S.A.M.**, see Miller, H.G., 221.



- Thibault, J.J.**, see Bérubé, D., 194.  
**Tucker, R.D.**, see O'Brien, S.J., 286.
- van Berkel, J.T.**, see Currie, K.L., 153.  
**van Breemen, O.**, see Currie, K.L., 153.  
**van Hinte, J.E.**, see Ruffman, A., 287.  
**van Staal, C.R., Burgess, J.L., Brown, M., and Winchester, J.A.** Preliminary report on the structural and metamorphic history of the Port aux Basques Complex in south-western Newfoundland, 210.  
**van Staal, C. and Williams, H.** Dunnage-Gander relations in the Appalachian-Caledonian Orogen: evidence for an early Ordovician arc-continent collision, 290.  
**van Staal, C.R.**, see Winchester, J.A., 171.  
**Van Wagoner, N.A.**, see Doyon, M., 196.
- Waldron, J.W.F. and Stockmal, G.S.** Post-Taconian history of the Newfoundland Humber Zone, 291.  
**Waldron, J.W.F.**, see Palmer, S., 206.  
**Waldron, J.W.F.**, see Pickerill, R.K., 207.  
**Waldron, J.W.F.**, see Stockmal, G.S., 210, 289.  
**Walker, J.**, see Gardiner, W.W., 198.  
**White, J.C.** Deformation mechanism transitions in the Cobequid fault zone, Nova Scotia, 211.  
**White, C.E.**, see Barr, S.M., 194.  
**Williams, H.** Did the Atlantic close and then re-open?: a commentary, 279.
- Williams, H.** Ideas on the evolution of the Appalachian Orogen before the Wilson Cycle, 291.  
**Williams, H.**, see van Staal, C., 290.  
**Williams, P.F.**, see Lin, S., 203.  
**Williams, S.H.**, see Boyce, W.D., 281.  
**Wilson, J.T.** Two scientific revolutions in the earth sciences, 291.  
**Wilson, R.A.** Petrographic features of Siluro-Devonian felsic volcanic rocks in the Riley Brook area, Tobique Zone, New Brunswick: implications for base metal mineralization at Sewell Brook, 115.  
**Wilson, R.A.** Bedrock geology of the Heath Steele-Halfmile Lake area, Bathurst Camp, northern New Brunswick, 211.  
**Winchester, J.A., van Staal, C.R., and Fyffe, L.R.** Ordovician volcanic and hypabyssal rocks in the central and southern Miramichi Highlands: their tectonic setting and relationship to contemporary volcanic rocks in northern New Brunswick, 171.  
**Winchester, J.A.**, see van Staal, C.R., 210.
- Zheng, Q. and Noble, J.P.A.** Knoll Reef facies and diagenesis of the LaPlante Formation (Late Silurian), northern New Brunswick, 212.