

Inland Geological Society

Newsletter of the Inland Geological Society

Volume 22 No. 7

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July Speaker:

Stephen M. Testa

Executive Officer, California State Mining and Geology Board
801 K Street, Suite 2015, Sacramento, California, 95814, stesta@goldrush.com

CONFLICTS BETWEEN JOSIAH D. WHITNEY AND WILLIAM P. BLAKE IN RELATION TO CALIFORNIA GEOLOGY AND THE FATE OF THE FIRST CALIFORNIA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Josiah D. Whitney is best known as the second State Geologist of California, and the first Director of the California Geological Survey, in which the highest peak in the lower 48 states is named in his honor. In geological circles, William P. Blake is best known for his service as a geologist for the Pacific Railroad Survey (1853-1854), in which he was the first professional geologist to explore the southwest, thus providing the earliest scientific accounts of the region and other areas throughout California. Whitney, Blake's distant cousin, initiated Blake's meeting with Spencer F. Baird, assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, which resulted in Blake's appointment as geologist and mineralogist, to accompany the Williamson party as part of the Pacific Railroad Survey. As part of this survey, Blake made numerous important findings, and felt that ancient Lake Cahuilla was his most important discovery made during this period. Blake also clearly recognized the persistent winds in the upper Coachella Valley as a significant erosional force, made significant observations regarding erosional, depositional and weathering processes, and clearly described gold mining operations in the Mother Lode.

This Meeting:
Thursday
July 6th

Time:

Social: 6:00pm
Dinner: 7:00pm
Lecture:
7:30pm

NEW Location:

LSA Associates
1500 Iowa Ave
Suite 200
Riverside, CA
92507
(Map on Pg.4)

Coming to Dinner?

Please RSVP:
By Tuesday 7/4
(951) 782-3295
food@inlandgeo.org
or
dlass@waterboards.

CONFLICT Continued From Page 1

In 1860, Blake opposed Whitney for director of the first geological survey of California. Despite the lack of prior geologic experience, political connections and an aggressive campaign resulted in Whitney serving as the survey's first director. As Director, Whitney never referenced Blake's earlier pioneering works, nor did Blake cooperate with Whitney after his appointment as Director in April, 1860. The survey was ultimately abandoned in 1874 due in part to an over-emphasis on issues considered by the legislature as too academic and of little practical value in a post-goldrush period, where the development of additional mineral resources was desired.

In 1861, Blake served as a mining consultant and promoter of his uncle's stone- and ore-breaker, and successfully opposed Whitney, either through popularity or actively campaigning, for the position of California's commissioner to the 1862 London International Exhibition ("Vote 42 Blake, 2 Whitney"). Blake did not take this prestigious post however, and was joined by Raphael Pumpelly (at the request of Whitney), where they served as mining consultants to the Japanese government, and organized the first school of science in Japan. From 1864-1867, Blake became the first director and professor in mineralogy, geology, and mining at the College of California (1864-1867), a position viewed by Whitney as an attempt to gain control of the California Geological Survey, although no documentation suggest that this was Blake's intention.

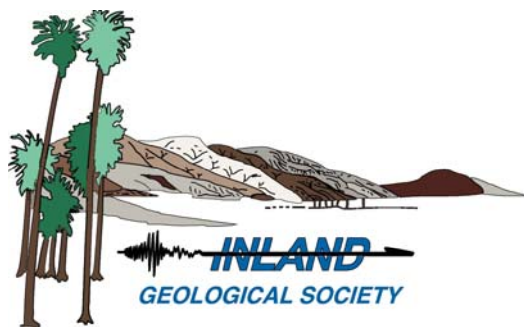
Conflicts between Whitney and Blake extended beyond simply competition over certain positions. Conflicts continued over the course of four decades where Blake disagreed, and rightfully so, with Whitney on several important issues of the times including the economic potential of the Bodie Mines, economic value of gas and oil in California, the glaciated nature of Yosemite Valley, potential for earthquakes, and the origin and significance of the Calaveras Skull. Blake's contributions to the early geological understanding of California were influential, correctly forecasting its growth potential, providing insight into the geology, and mineral, water and agricultural resources of the region, and significantly contributing to its early academic development. It is speculated that the ultimate fate of the first geological survey of California may have been very different if Blake had been selected over Whitney.

HONORARY IGS MEMBER: *Dr. Tien-Chang Lee*

At last month's meeting, IGS honored UCR Professor Tien-Chang Lee, with the Honorary Member Award. Dr. Lee is an active IGS member, and has been a great teacher to many of us. Recently, he has been instrumental in setting up the Geology Continuing Education Series, co-sponsored by the University of California, Riverside Extension, and local professional geology organizations. Dr. Lee's award was presented along with a cake decorated with a Leegram, a water chemistry diagram.



Congratulations Dr. Lee.



Upcoming IGS Talks

Aug 2, 2006 (Wednesday)

Dr. Don Prothero,
Paleontology – Talk TBA

Sept 7, 2006 (Thursday)

Bruce Sibbett, PG, CHG, Shaw
Environmental, "Ascension Island,
in search of equatorial heat, a
Geothermal Adventure"

Oct 4, 2006 (Wednesday)

Arthur R. (Dick) Brown, Consulting
Engineering Geologist/Dibblee
Foundation
"Tom Dibblee, Field Geology's
Grand Master"

Nov 9, 2006 (Thursday)

Maggie Gooding,
LSA Associates, Riverside,
California
GIS – Talk TBA

Dec 6, 2006 (Wednesday)

Dr. Michael McKibben, Professor of
Geology, Department of Earth
Sciences, University of California,
Riverside

Newsbyte:

IGS Member **Tom Sheahan** (Geomatrix Consultants, Inc.) has been appointed to the Technical Advisory Committee of the California Board for Geologists and Geophysicists for the three-year term beginning July 1, 2006. Tom is licensed in everything the Board has to offer:

- Professional Geologist (PG)
- Professional Geophysicist (PGP)
- Certified Engineering Geologist (CEG)
- Certified Hydrogeologist (CHG)

Tom will be a valuable asset to the board.
Congrats Tom!

Other Announcements:

Meeting

AEG Inland Empire Chapter

Wednesday, July 19, 2006:

AEG/GSA 2006 Richard Jahns Distinguished
Lecturer in Engineering Geology

"Rock-fall Analysis and Mitigation"

Jerry D. Higgins, PhD, PG, Associate Professor
of Engineering Geology, Department of Geology
and Engineering Geology, Colorado School of
Mines, Golden, Colorado.

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IGS JULY MEETING LOCATION: LSA Associates, Inc.
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Inland Geological Society

Geomatrix Consultants



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