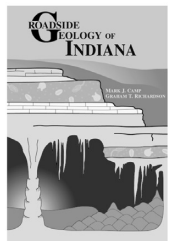


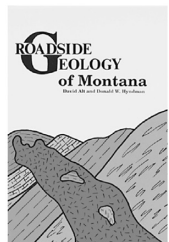
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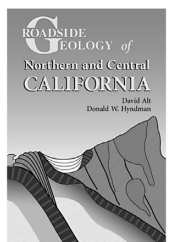
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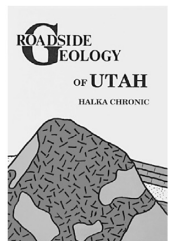
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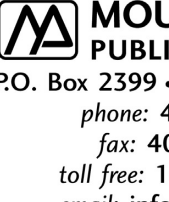
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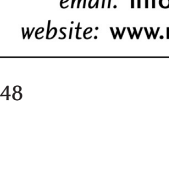
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COMMENTARY

A Solution to the Uncertain Fate of a Geologist's Library

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On reading "The uncertain fate of a geologist's library" in the July 1999 issue of *GEOTIMES*, Deborah Ajakaiye, a Nigerian postdoctoral geophysical researcher at the University of Houston, became concerned that an estimated 10 million geological books, maps, journals, and other reference materials belonging to a large number of retiring U.S.-based geologists likely would be discarded. Because of her firsthand knowledge of critical shortages of geological reference books and journals in African universities, she discussed the situation with Martin Cassidy (retired from Amoco, CASMAR Consulting, Inc., and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Houston). Both discussed ways that some of these reference materials could be collected and distributed to university libraries overseas that could put them to good use.

The biggest stumbling blocks to implementing such a plan were costs for collecting, storing, packing, and shipping these reference materials overseas. Cassidy had already started to collect books and journals from retired and deceased geologists in Texas and surrounding states and storing them in storage lockers at his own expense. He successfully persuaded the University of Houston Geoscience Department to provide, at no cost, student help to catalog and pack the books and journals. Finally, because of his prior work in industry, Cassidy knew that oil companies working overseas often desire to help in the education of nationals in countries where they worked. He approached several companies about the possibility of their shipping books destined for certain universities in their regular container shipments to countries where they operated and arranging for import. One company, Conoco, in association with the Nigerian Association of Petroleum Geologists, agreed to underwrite a shipment of books to be distributed to universities in Nigeria in 2001. Thus the concept of establishing a

"publication pipeline overseas" was born. Even better, a solution to the disposal of private geological libraries emerged.

Cassidy formed a local committee in Houston with geologists who worked for major oil companies, academics, and consultants, including this author. Moreover, Cassidy met with Roby Griesse, American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) president, who appointed Cassidy's existing committee as the AAPG Publication Pipeline Committee. This made the committee eligible for possible financial support from the AAPG Foundation, as well as related support to implement the collection, storage, packing, and shipping of books overseas.

Because the initial focus of the AAPG Publication Pipeline Committee was in Houston, committee members immediately implemented a plan to enlarge the committee membership to fully represent the various sections and interests of the entire profession on an intersociety basis. It is expected that the enlarged membership will provide books from sources nationwide, including those from retired faculty at universities in their region. In fact, at the time of this writing, GSA Council is in the process of appointing a conferee to work with this committee.

I must emphasize that books in ALL areas of geology are being collected so as to provide a broad base of reference materials for overseas university libraries. Thus, publications in areas removed from petroleum, such as mineral deposits, high-temperature geochemistry, and deep-mantle geophysics are also welcome. In fact, such donations are needed.

GSA members and Fellows who wish to donate their books and journals to the AAPG Publication Pipeline Committee, or who know of retiring geologists who may wish to make such donations, are encouraged, indeed, requested to contact Martin Cassidy, Chairman, AAPG Publication Pipeline Committee, c/o Dept. of Geosciences, University of Houston, 312 Science and Research Building 1, Houston, TX 77204-5007, pager 713-616-5853, jo1955mar@aol.com.

George D. Klein taught at the Universities of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Illinois (Champaign-Urbana). In 1993, he left Illinois to become executive director of the NJ Marine Sciences Consortium. In 1996, he opened a consulting firm (SED-STRAT Geoscience Consultants, Inc.) focusing on petroleum geology (domestic and international), advising on clastic reservoirs and facies, sequence stratigraphy, seismic sedimentology, reservoir characterization, and sedimentary basin evaluation.