



## Preface

### 20 years of the *Journal of Structural Geology*

This Special Issue, **Questions in Structural Geology**, celebrates the 20th anniversary of the *Journal of Structural Geology*. We marked the first decade with a collection of invited papers on current topics, but this time we have aimed for something quite different. Billed in advance as a collection of short papers asking topical questions, tackling enigmas, or introducing new hot topics, the idea was to encourage a wide variety of contents, and of styles ranging from short scientific papers to letters or opinions, while also meeting peer review standards. It was an ambitious idea that took longer to realise than we had expected, due to a number of factors, including the change of chief editor, and the complexities of editing such papers.

We write this Preface with mixed emotions: with pride that JSG has continued to grow and achieve a high reputation during its second decade, as marked by the variety of contributions here; but also with regret that the Founding Editor, Paul Hancock, passed away before completion of this Special Issue (see In Memoriam, Vol. 21 No 2). We had hoped that Paul could have contributed to this introduction and to provide a longer historical overview, but his declining health prevented that. We are proud to include a posthumous contribution by Paul, on his unfinished work on ‘travertonics’, and that the Journal will have a special issue in his honour, which will commemorate Paul’s work in a variety of topic areas that Paul studied during his long career.

The *Journal of Structural Geology* has now reached a point where relatively few readers may recall its beginnings. It was conceived in 1978 in Britain, by Paul Hancock (Bristol) and Peter Henn (Pergamon Press). The venture required considerable determination and personal investment by Paul, not least to win over initial reservations in the structural geology community. Reservations soon changed into enthusiasm, associate editor Tony Barber joined Paul, he put together a strong editorial advisory board (some remaining to this day), and from the very first issue, the new JSG demonstrated its ability to attract high quality papers.

In the twenty volumes from 1979 to 1998, JSG has published 166 issues and a total of 21,422 pages (6,887 in the first decade; 14,535 in the second), representing about 1800 articles. From 1978 to the end of 1998, submissions to JSG have exceeded three thousand, some singly authored, and others involving many. These authors amount to an estimated 2500 individuals, of which some have become regulars who have now built up an impressive list of published papers. We pay tribute to all our contributors, whose work has been a principal reason for JSG’s success. Over the years, these many papers have been handled and edited by Chief Editors Paul Hancock (1978–1985), Sue Treagus (1985–1997) or Jim Evans (1998–present), and by Associate Editors Tony Barber (1978–1983), Sue Treagus (1981–1985), Peter Hudleston (1983–1997), John Platt (1983–1991), Dave Sanderson (1985–1992), Gautam Mitra (1986–1990), Carol Simpson (1988–1991), Dave Pollard (1990–1993), Richard Lisle (1990–present), Steve Wojtal (1991–1996), Cees Passchier (1991–present), Jim Evans (1992–1997), Richard Norris (1993–present), Joe White (1996–present), Don Fisher (1997–present) and Tom Blenkinsop (1998–present). The success of JSG is equally owed to the professionalism and hard editorial work of all these people.

In twenty years of structural geology and tectonics, there have been many changes in areas of emphases, while the subject has grown in strength and robustness. A revisit to JSG Vol. 1 No 1 reveals papers by many people who are still active today—if not necessarily working on the same thing. Among these first names, we single out Paul Williams, as he has also published the most papers (18) in JSG, and has served on the editorial advisory board since the beginning. The subjects of these first papers ranged from folds, salt tectonics, shear zones, strain patterns, to crenulation cleavage—topics also represented in early 1999 issues. Despite this, there have been some distinct trends over the twenty years. First was the wave of research in the 1980s, driven by the petroleum industry, which embraced basin modelling and tectonics. Perhaps partly resulting from this, there has been a recent resurgence of studies of brittle processes, and their applications in crustal deformation, landscape, hazard and fluid flow. Another

trend has been in applications of new techniques from other specialities to structural problems. In parallel with all these developments, we have witnessed the rewards of large international collaborations and projects, focusing on the lithosphere, the oceans and in new regions of continental field-based geological exploration. Our many special issues on current topics, such as shear zones, strain patterns thrusts, shear criteria and faults, have punctuated these trends and developments, and act as ‘time markers’. But rather than merely recording and facilitating twenty years of geological research, we think that this *Journal* has actively helped to shape the development of structural geology and tectonics, world-wide, over its twenty years.

We hope that **Questions in Structural Geology** gives a true flavour of where structural geology is, today: not in marking the end of the road, but in pointing us towards a third decade and a new millennium. The contents cover almost every aspect of structure and tectonics. Some point us towards new methods and new interpretations; others identify gaps in knowledge and understanding, which we hope will become filled in years to come. There should be something here for everyone, of use whether for general teaching or for specialised research. Our hope is that some of the papers will make authors pause and think hard on the topic; some papers may annoy, perturb, or cause readers to take exception. If this results in stimulating new research, then the issue will have served its purpose.

A number of people assisted in producing this issue, and thanks go to Peter Hudleston, Steve Wojtal, and Sue Treagus for “coming out of retirement”, and to Cees Passchier and especially to David Ferrill for handling a number of these papers. Finally, and foremost, our thanks go to all who have contributed to this celebration of 20 years of the *Journal of Structural Geology*.

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