

Geology Field Trip

Rockhounds Enjoy Igneous Thrills



Gary Paukert (top left) and his geology students at Glacier National Park in Northern Montana

By Karen Woolsey
of the *Whitworthian*

"Many geology teachers would give their eye and teeth to see all that geology," said Dr. Edwin A. Olson, chairman of the Earth Science Department, "and the students saw it all in one weekend."

This year, 13 Whitworth students traveled to Glacier National Park in Northern Montana on the annual geology field trip. Mr. Gary Paukert, a new geology instructor, and Steve Brown, the teachers aide, guided the students through a series of

geological sites in Idaho and Montana. The group then made their way back to Spokane by way of Canada.

Though Paukert went on the trip as a student of geology in 1978, this was his first time leading students on the mini study tour. He said that he felt confident leading the group on the three-day trek, but it was a challenge.

"Logistically, the excursion went very well," Paukert said. "The students who went understood the basics of the study, and got a big jump ahead of their classmates who didn't go."

The main purpose of the

tour, according to Paukert, was to give the students the advantage of seeing geology in its natural site rather than in a lab. The students made roadside stops and a few short hikes to observe rocks and structures. "We're very fortunate," Paukert said, "to be so close to so much geology." Paukert's favorite site was the combination of scenery and geology on Logan's Pass on the Continental Divide where a hidden lake and many other geological features lie. Also at the site he and a few brave students slid down the face of a glacier.

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Dr. Olson first took his geology students on the field trip about 10 years ago, and has continued the trip every year. The format has been much the same every year, with a few minor changes in site locations.

It has been a loosely structured yet organized field trip in that many sites were optional, depending on the instructor's and student's attitudes. Olson's favorite spot on the trip was the same as Paukert's, the sill outcrop on the Continental Divide in Glacier National Park.

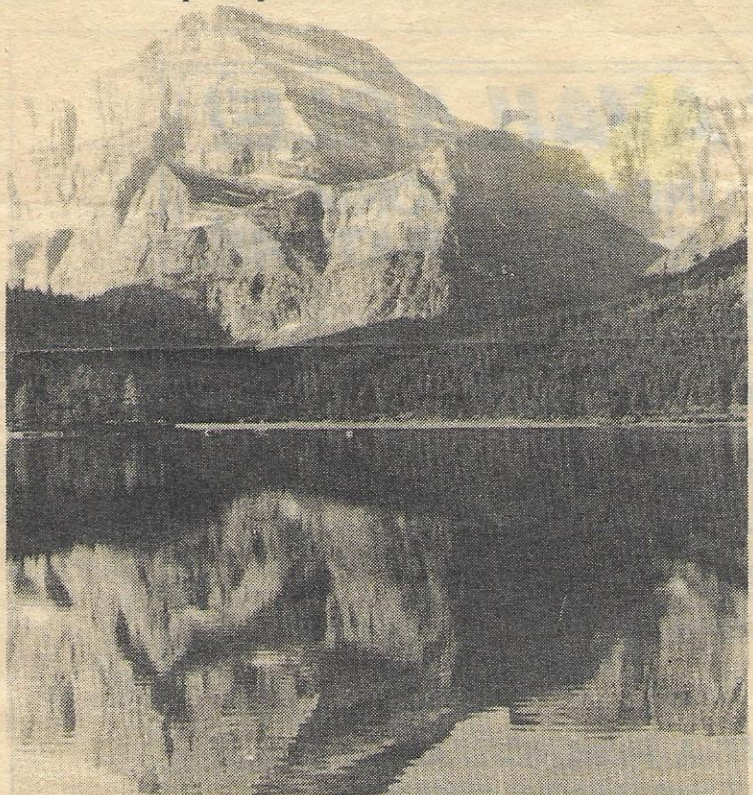
This was also a first for senior Steve Brown, the T.A. "I had a great time on the trip," Brown said, "and it was a good review for me." Brown enjoyed answering questions and being able to explain concepts, and said he liked seeing the students interested in geology.

"A worthwhile trip," according to Skaddi Obele and Eric Peterson, two geology students who participated in

the excursion. The trip seemed to reinforce what was learned in the classroom. Obele liked Chief Mountain, a solitary glacier worn down on all sides by erosion. Peterson's favorite spot was the famous Frank Slide by Crow's Nest, Montana. There in 1903, part of a glacier mountain slid into the valley, almost completely covering the small town set at its base with large boulders and rocks.

Carolyn Champoux, another trip member was especially impressed to know God's relation to nature which she learned more about through the trip. Obele said she understood more fully that Christianity can relate to and be incorporated into science.

The students who went on the trip learned about geology by seeing rocks first hand in their environments and formation. According to Paukert, the students' new knowledge will greatly enhance what they will learn in class.



Mt. Wilbur in Glacier National Park.