SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON ANTARCTIC RESEARCH

PRESIDENT'S MEDAL FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN ANTARCTIC SCIENCE

Peter Barrett

Peter graduated in Geology MSc (Hons) in 1963 at the University of Auckland. He was a Fellow in the Institute of Polar Studies at Ohio State University where he was awarded his PhD degree in 1968. One of his early papers, published in *Science* (1968), recorded his discovery of the first tetrapod remains in Antarctica, a ground-breaking discovery in support of the theory of continental drift, that was also reported in *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines. His early work focused on the Beacon Supergroup of the Transantarctic Mountains but today he is universally recognized as the supremo of the geological drilling community in the Antarctic. In 1973, Peter was on the first cruise of the deep-sea drilling ship *Glomar Challenger* into the Ross Sea, and the cores showed that Antarctic glaciation began more than 20 million years earlier than previously thought. Since that time he has been chief scientist on several drilling projects in McMurdo Sound to study the history of the East Antarctic ice sheet. The CIROS-1 drill hole was the first to show that 20–30 million years ago the Antarctic ice sheet was much warmer and less stable than it is today. This success was followed by the international Cape Roberts Project (1992–99) that he nursed through financial and logistic difficulties to a successful conclusion. The results from this core showed that the ancient Antarctic ice sheet fluctuated on Milankovitch Cycle frequencies. In addition he has also written fundamental papers in sedimentology, one of which concerns the shape of rock particles that is published in one of the most widely cited texts on sedimentology and stratigraphy. He has also done much to bring Antarctic science to a wider public audience, including a BBC programme on the history of the Antarctic ice sheet, and to emphasize its importance in a global context. In SCAR he was the New Zealand Representative to the Working Group on Geology (1977–2002), a member of the Group of Specialists on Environmental Affairs and Conservation (GOSEAC) (1988–2002), and a member of the Antarctic Off-shore Stratigraphy (ANTOSTRAT) Steering Committee (1990–2000). He was instrumental in establishing the international programme on Antarctic Climate Evolution (ACE) that has now been adopted as one of the SCAR Science Research Programmes. He has also served as the national Delegate to SCAR at several meetings. At Antarctic Treaty meetings he has been Head of the New Zealand Delegation to the Committee for Environmental Protection where his knowledge and experience of Antarctic research were invaluable.

Jörn Thiede
SCAR President

XXIX SCAR
July 2006