

Peter Barker's biography

Peter Barker (12 June 1939 - 25 June 2012) led the Antarctic Marine Geoscience Group at Birmingham University from the late 1960s until 1986. During this time he was Principal Scientist on many cruises on RRS Shackleton and RRS Bransfield, and the data collected on these cruises provided the foundations for understanding the structure and tectonic evolution of the Scotia Sea region.

Peter joined the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) in 1986 as Head of Geophysics Division. After the Geology and Geophysics divisions merged in 1992 he continued working at BAS as an Individual Merit scientist until his retirement in 1999. Following his retirement he continued his association with BAS in an emeritus capacity for a further three years, and remained active as a sea-going scientist even beyond his formal retirement. His final research cruise was as an invited participant in a cruise on the RVIB N.B. Palmer in 2008.

Peter was widely respected internationally. He was Co-Chief scientist on four DSDP and ODP drilling legs (# 36, 72, 113 and 178) that made fundamental contributions to knowledge of the tectonic and environmental history of the Southern Ocean. He was a leading figure in the international marine geoscience community working in the Southern Ocean, in particular playing an important role in leadership of the Joint Oceanographic Institutions for Deep Earth Sampling (JOIDES) Southern Ocean Panel in the 1980s, the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) Working Group on Solid Earth Geophysics in the late 1980s to mid 1990s and the SCAR-ANTOSTRAT community in the 1990s.