This is it – my last year of teaching at Middlebury! It has been a pure joy for me to have taught so many great students over the last 37 years. Among many other things, I will miss interacting with 18 to 22 year olds and convincing them that geology and Vermont geology, in particular, is better than sliced bread! But it’s time for the next chapter.

I continued research on detrital zircons from rocks in central Vermont, started by Juliet Ryan-Davis for her senior thesis in 2012-13. Her research, which was published in 2014, showed that the Moretown Formation was exotic to this part of the Ordovician world. It formed on the other (Gondwanan) side of the ancient Iapetus Ocean and cruised across to this side (Laurentian) in time to help build the Appalachians. This past academic year CC Connard ’15 completed a thesis on the Cram Hill Formation, which sits immediately above the Moretown Formation. Her results showed that parts of the Cram Hill were indeed Gondwanan but other parts was near enough to Laurentia to receive its detritus just before plate collision. She also found interesting results in another unit, the Umbrella Hill conglomerate, which is the subject of a thesis this academic year by Patrick Scott ’16.

I did a couple of outreach courses this year. I taught a three-lecture course on Volcanoes: Blood of the Earth at the Elder Services Institute in Middlebury. I also lectured on Vermont Geology: A Tale of Ancient Oceans and Volcanoes to 75 enthusiastic learners at Green Mountain Academy for Lifelong Learners in Manchester, Vermont.

When you make it back to Middlebury next, please be in touch.