



Geologists' Association - South Wales Group **Cymdeithas Y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru**

Registered Charity Number 1054303

50 YEAR ARCHIVES 1960-2010 - NEWSLETTERS

This section includes newsletters issued between 1960 and 2010. In fact the first “newsletter” dates from Spring 1990.

The compilation has been taken from the newsletters donated in 2012 by Lynda Garfield (Secretary 2009-), a few given by Alun J Thomas (Secretary 1966-1989), and a few loaned by Howard Bartlett.

However, it is not known if these comprise every newsletter sent out during 1990 to 2010; cross checking with other records indicates at least one possible missing newsletter, around June 1993.

By March 2008 newsletters were circulated by both post and email.

Note: The Group has tended to include the programme and newsletters up until September in each year in the previous year’s “session”. But in some years, newsletter numbering remained unchanged even in September!!

Session 31 1989-90

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

SPRING 1990 PROGRAMME

First of all, a very Happy New Year to all members. This newsletter contains a reminder of events for the remainder of the 1989/90 session plus notice of an extra field excursion, and more information about the British Association meeting in Swansea in August.

1. Lecture meetings Forthcoming lecture meetings are Dr. M. Benton on "Rhynchosaurs and the origin of dinosaurs" in Swansea on Saturday 20th January at 11.00 a.m., Dr. R. Aldridge on "Conodont colour and the thermal history of Wales" at Cardiff on Saturday 3rd February at 11.00 a.m., and in Swansea on Saturday March 10th, starting at 11.00 a.m., the Annual General Meeting followed by Alan Stephens' President's Address. There was a healthy attendance at each of the Saturday meetings before Christmas, but more would be healthier, particularly young people.
2. Field excursions Spaces remain for the Isle of Wight weekend in May and the Builth Inlier day trip in March.

We need to know numbers for the Isle of Wight weekend very soon and the deadline for registration is Monday 29th January. If you wish to attend, please return the registration slip on the attached sheet, with a deposit of £.15 per person, either in person to any committee member at the 20th January meeting, or by post.

Numbers are limited to 20 for the Builth excursion, but places still remain. The deadline for registration is Thursday 1st March. Further details will be given in early March to those who have registered.

An extra day trip has been arranged, for Saturday 9th June, to complete the itinerary originally planned for the 25th November. This excursion will be led by Tony Ramsay and Geraint Owen and will concentrate on exposures at the head of the Neath Valley.

- 3- Science 90 Further information is enclosed about this meeting in Swansea from 19th to 24th August, including a provisional programme of geology section events and a registration form. Note that members of this Group are exempt from registration fees, which will be covered by the Geologists' Association.

G. Owen,
January, 1990

Session 32 1990-91

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION 1990-1991

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

WELCOME to a new session. Subscriptions are now due for 1990/91 - the 32nd session of this Group. At a Special General Meeting held before the Annual General Meeting in March, it was unanimously agreed to raise subscriptions to £5.00 for Ordinary Members and £1.00 for Student Members from this session. This is the first increase for 8 years and we hope you will still consider your membership good value for money. A renewal form is enclosed - please return this with your payment to the Secretary, or bring it to our display at- the BA meeting (more below) or bring it to the first: meeting of the new session.

The 1990/91 programme is still, being finalised. More details should be available at the BA meeting. Membership cards and the full programme will be circulated in September to those who have renewed their membership. The first- meeting of the session will be on Saturday October 20th at 11.00a.m. at University College Swansea, so put that date in your diaries now! Come along around 10.30 for a cup of coffee and a chat beforehand.

Other dates for your diary include Wednesday November 7th - the Annual Student Lecture at 7.30p.m.in Cardiff; Saturday November 17th - meeting at 11.00a.m. in Cardiff; and Saturday December 8th - meeting at 11.00a.m. in Swansea.

Despite the shocking closure of the Department of Geology at Swansea, which was finally effected this year, lecture meetings will continue to be held in Swansea as well as Cardiff. This arrangement should continue for as long as there remains interest in the Swansea area, thanks to the support of Prof. David Herbert, Head of the Department of Geography at Swansea.

1989-1990 Session

The 1989/90 session was one of change for this Group. Most sadly, the year saw the death of Prof. T.R. (Dick) Owen, after illness. He will be missed by us all.

On a happier note, Alun Thomas was awarded Honorary Membership and, having stepped down as Secretary in 1989 after 23 years, steps back up this year as Chairman for the period 1990-1992, replacing Alan Stevens. After an even longer period - 31 years - as the only Treasurer in the Group's history, Roland Parsons

also steps down, to be replaced by Tom Sharpe. Nigel Roberts has had to resign as Secretary, being replaced by Geraint Owen, who in turn is replaced as Field Secretary by John Cope. Lynda Garfield and Bryn Lewis have retired from the Committee, their places being taken by Jim Chetcuti, Peter Hodges and Mike Lees. I am sure all members will join me in thanking all retiring officers and committee members for their many efforts on behalf of the Group.

During the 1989/90 session we had just 63 paid-up Ordinary Members, plus 2 Honorary Members. 27 of these were new members but 42 members from 1988/89 did not renew their subscriptions! We need a large membership to function as an active Group, so we must improve our membership numbers. In particular, we must encourage more young people to participate, so please try to ensure that any teachers, pupils and students with an interest in geology that you are in contact with join our Group.

There were 7 lecture meetings during the session. In October Professor Chaloner from London spoke in Cardiff to an audience of 20 on Fossil Fire, which included an inflammatory demonstration! The Student Lecture in Swansea in November was given by Bob Owens, who conducted us on a whistle-stop tour of Planetary Geology. 17 students helped to make up an audience of 27 - an improvement in student numbers on the 1988/89 Student Lecture, but one which needs further improvement. Also in November, Tim Druitt reconstructed past volcanic activity on Santorini for an audience of 36 at Swansea. In December Nigel Woodcock applied the principles of sequence stratigraphy to the Lower Palaeozoic geology of Wales before an audience of 25 at Cardiff. Mike Benton started the New Year off with a talk on Rhynchososaurs - the poor relations of the dinosaurs - attended by 39 at Swansea. In February, Dick Aldridge talked on the thermal history of Wales before 20 people in Cardiff. Finally, in March, the Annual General Meeting in Swansea was followed by Alan Stevens' Chairman's Address, attended by 32 - an entertaining account of Black Country geology through an engineer's eyes.

There were 4 field meetings during the session. 12 people attended John Allen's excursion to the Severn Estuary in October, to be rewarded with finds of prehistoric axe-chippings and Romano-British pottery fragments. As far as is known, nobody was left stuck in the mud at Gold Cliff! 24 came to Penwyllt in the Upper Tawe Valley with Tony Ramsay and myself to look at the Carboniferous geology of the North Crop, on a bright but bitterly cold November day. Unfortunately only 5 attended the sequel in June in the Neath Valley. Peter Sheldon led a group of 22 around the Builth-Llandridod inlier on a hot, sunny day in March, which provided excellent conditions for finding trilobites and considering their evolution. It must also be noted that the weekend excursion to the Isle of Wight, planned for May, had to be cancelled for lack of interest.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION SWANSEA 19-24 AUGUST 1990

Now a final reminder about Science 90 - the British Association's Annual Meeting which is taking place at University College Swansea from the 19th to the 24th of August. The week is packed with lectures, excursions, visits, exhibitions, demonstrations and social events covering the entire spectrum of science, and including a full and exciting programme in geology. A summary of the geology programme is enclosed.

Because the South Wales Group of the Geologists' Association is hosting one day of lectures (the so-called 'Mason Conference' on the Wednesday), registration for Science 90 is free to members of this Group. In fact the registration fees are covered by a grant from the parent Geologists' Association in London to the British Association. Anyone wanting to register for the Science 90 meeting now who has not already returned to me a registration sheet should write at once with name, address and telephone number to:-

Late Bookings BAAS
Conference Office
Fulton House
University College of Swansea
Singleton Park
Swansea SA2 8PP

stating that you are a member of this Group and therefore exempt from the registration fee and saying which day(s) you would like to attend.

Many members did return registration forms to me earlier in the year. You will by now have received a pink form from the BA. Due to the mysteries of the administrative process you must complete these forms and return them to the BA office in London in order to be registered for the meeting and to receive the full programme and booking forms. This should be done immediately if you have not already done so. Circle on the form the days you wish to attend (all?) and in the space for payment write something along the lines of "Member of Geologists' Association South Wales Group - exempt from registration fee". I apologise for this cumbersome procedure.

Many of you will already have received from the BA the final programme, which includes booking forms for excursions and social events. For most of these an additional fee must be paid. Don't worry that the 'official' BA programme differs in some parts from the enclosed geology programme - the details on the enclosed programme are likely to be more reliable!

I hope that, having overcome the difficulties of registration, there will be an excellent turn-out of local people for the Science 90 week - tell your friends, neighbours and relatives about it too - it's still not too late to register.

In particular it would be nice to see strong support for the excursions on Sunday and Monday (for which the cost includes transport and packed lunches), our own Mason Conference day on Wednesday which goes under the title of "Nice weather for the fossils?" and includes some 'big names' among the speakers, the Tuesday evening reception amongst the dinosaurs in Cardiff, and the Dinner at Margam Orangery on Thursday, which will be complete with period music.

In addition to the items listed in the enclosed programme, the Geology Museum will be open, and in the lab next to it there will be an exhibition area. This will include displays from the British Geological Survey and the Nature Conservancy Council amongst others, some sales items and a membership/sales/information point for this Group, at which you can pay your membership subscriptions - I may be contacting some of you shortly to ask for help in staffing this.

To coincide with the British Association's visit to Swansea, the Geologists' Association has commissioned a complete revision of its excursion guide to the Swansea area. This will be along the lines of their recently-published guides to Arran and Dorset, in a format much expanded and more attractive compared with the old yellow guides. Excursions include Gower, the Black Mountain, upper Tawe Valley, the Coalfield, Llanstephan, and Quaternary geology. I expect members will be interested to see this guide, and hopefully buy a copy, at Science 90.

All in all, Science 90 is a big event for South Wales, for geology, and for this Group. I hope that the geology part of it will be well supported and look forward to seeing many of you here during the week.

FINALLY

I hope this year will be a full and exciting one for this Group and that we will see increases in our membership numbers, particularly of young people, and in attendances at lectures and field meetings. If anyone has ideas for improvements to the running of the Group - subjects or timings of meetings, other types of meetings and events, field meetings through the summer, etc. - please let any committee member know, either by writing to one of us or by collaring us at a meeting.

Geraint Owen

July 1990

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION 1990-1991

SEPTEMBER 1990

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

WELCOME to the 1990-1991 session of the Geologists' Association South Wales Group and thank-you for renewing your membership. Enclosed is your membership card (complete with the new, re-designed Geologists' Association logo), which contains an outline of the programme for the session. This newsletter contains further information about the session's events, and also enclosed is a booking form for the Barry field excursion and a list of courses and classes which may be of interest to members. A good number of people have already renewed their membership (although some 'regulars' haven't yet got round to it) but we still need more members and an extra membership form is enclosed which you may be able to pass on to friends or neighbours. Of course, anyone who is uncertain about joining us is welcome to come along to a few meetings to test the waters before taking the plunge and joining officially!

SCIENCE 90

The Science 90 week in Swansea in August seemed to be a success, despite a very wet Sunday for field trips. Plenty of members of this Group were in evidence at Geology Section lectures, events and field trips and, no doubt, at those of other sections too. In particular the Mason Conference on Palaeoclimates was a most stimulating and interesting day. Thanks are due to all those who attended, and who helped in the organisation.

1990-1991 PROGRAMME

Seven lecture meetings are planned for the session, covering a range of topics, plus several field excursions. The session gets under way at 11.00 on Saturday 20th October at Swansea with Dr Tim Palmer from Aberystwyth. The title of his talk is **Hard Bottoms!** This could be a reference to the benches in the lecture room at Swansea, but might also have something to do with adaptations made by organisms present and past to living on rocky substrates.

Our first field meeting is an excursion to **Barry** on Saturday 3rd November, guided by our Chairman, Alun Thomas. In addition to looking at fossiliferous Carboniferous Limestone and the

unconformable Triassic sequences, Alun has arranged a visit to the Natural Environment Research Council's research ship, the 'Charles Darwin', which will be in dock. A description of the field day is enclosed. Because numbers must be limited to 25, you are urged to complete the booking slip and return it with a £1.00 fee (from which students are exempt) as soon as possible, and certainly before Monday 29th October.

The Annual Student Lecture will be held at 7.30 on the evening of Wednesday 7th November at Cardiff. Or Peter Styles, formerly on the staff at Swansea but now at Liverpool, will consider whether **Earthquakes are Agents of Devastation or Destruction**. This should be a most revealing talk, and we hope plenty of young people will attend.

On Saturday 17 November at Cardiff we will hear from Dr Bruce Sellwood from PRIS - the Postgraduate Research Institute for Sedimentology at Reading University about the **Stratigraphical Evolution and Petroleum Geology of Southern England**. This is very topical for us in the light of our April field weekend to southern England, to be led by John Cope.

Finally for 1990, Prof Jake Hancock from Imperial College, London, will give us what promises to be a most unusual lecture on the **Geology of Wine Production!** That lecture will be held on Saturday 8th December at Swansea, and seems an appropriate way to herald the festive season.

Another newsletter in January will contain full details of the 1991 part of the programme. It gets under way on Saturday 19th January in Cardiff, when Dr Kevin Pickering from Leicester will describe some of his recent research findings concerning **Plate Tectonics during Lower Palaeozoic** Times in the areas which now border the Atlantic. Don't be put off by the title of this lecture! It will be of great relevance and interest to Welsh geology.

On Saturday 16th February at Swansea, Dr Hailwood from Southampton will talk on **Magnetic Polarity Reversals and Sea-Floor Spreading** - a topic which never fails to fascinate. He too will include some of his recent research.

Our second one-day field excursion is on Saturday 23th February when Dr John Cope and Dr Richard Bevins will guide us around the **Precambrian rocks of the Llangynog Inlier**, north of Llansteffan. In revising a field excursion to this area, John came across new exposures of Precambrian rocks, including interesting igneous sequences, and he and Richard will show us some of these in the field.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be on Saturday 9th March at 11.00 in Cardiff, and we hope for a big turnout. Not least because we hope it will be followed by Prof Steve Sparks of Bristol talking about **Volcanoes of the Andes**. The only

condition is that he will actually have returned from the Andes in time! We hope to have confirmation by January.

On Sunday 14th April I am taking a group from the Open University Geological Society to an as-yet-undecided destination on the shores of Carmarthen Bay. That field day is open to members of this group and as well as seeing some good sedimentary sequences it will be an opportunity to meet with people from another geology group.

Our 1990/91 **Field Weekend** will be from Friday 26th to Sunday 28th April, visiting **Jurassic and Cretaceous Sequences in West Dorset, South-East Devon and the Vale of Marchwood**, led by Dr John Cope. Full details will be available in January and the deadline for booking will be the end of January 1991. Numbers will be limited and places will be filled on a first-come first-served basis, so if you are keen to go, please notify the Field Secretary as soon as possible.

Finally, and not on the membership card (it wouldn't fit), we have invited Dr Eric Robinson of University College London and Librarian of the London Geologists' Association to come on Saturday 1st June to give us a talk and one of his incomparable guided walks. Several members went on one of Eric's two guided walks during the Science 90 week - one to Oystermouth Cemetery and one to the building stones of Swansea city centre - and I am sure, like me, were impressed by his enthusiasm, in-depth and wide-ranging knowledge, and entertaining style. Eric is keen for groups like ours to undertake surveys of local tombstones or building stones and to publish booklets of walking trails. I hope he will be able to visit us for a day to encourage us to do that and to set us off in the right direction.

Venues: Lectures will be held in the Department of Geology, UWC Cardiff, and in the old geology lecture room (the usual venue) at UC Swansea. The rooms will be sign-posted, but if anyone is uncertain how to get there, please contact any of the committee members listed on the membership card. Parking is available on the Swansea campus, but free parking may not be available in the main quadrangle at Cardiff, particularly close to Christmas (shame on them!).

Coffee: As always, everyone is welcome for a cup of coffee before each of the lecture meetings. The coffee rooms will be sign-posted at each venue. Come along up to half an hour before the start of the lecture and meet other members, bring along some specimens or photographs, or discuss changes you would like to see to the Group.

Lunch: It is traditional for some members of the committee to go for lunch with the speaker after each lecture. The speaker's lunch is paid for by the Group as part of his or her expenses. This year the invitation is extended to all members.

So that we can give the restaurant an idea of numbers, please contact the Secretary by the Monday evening before a meeting if you would like to join the speaker for lunch.

PUBLICATIONS

We now have a small stock of publications which can be examined and ordered at each lecture meeting. The publications and their prices are as follows:

Silurian Field Excursions	£10.00
Offshore Wales	£2.00
Dyfed Guide	£5.00
Focus on Wales	£5.00
GA Guide: Arran	£2.00
Dorset	£5.50
Lake District	£8.90
Costa Blanca	£4.50
Mallorca	£5.00
Cloth badge	£0.50
Car sticker	£0.25

Publication of the revised Geologists' Association guide to the Swansea region is now expected towards the end of this year. A pre-publication order form is enclosed for what is surely a 'must' for anyone living within a day's journey of Swansea!

WHAT'S ON

Also enclosed is a guide to 'What's On' in Swansea and Cardiff in the way of courses, classes and field trips. I hope such a listing might become a regular feature of these newsletters, so please let the Secretary know of any events you are aware of in the future.

WELSH GEOLOGY WEEK

The extended week from July 4th to 14th 1991 has been designated Welsh Geology Week, when the entire population of the Principality will be unable to ignore or avoid geology any longer! The main aim is to tell the public 'at large', and particularly school-children, what geology is all about and how exciting it can be, but there will be much of interest to members of this Group. There will be a full programme during the 'week' of lectures, including some from celebrity speakers, guided walks, exhibitions and other events at centres all across Wales. Put the dates in your diary now, and look out for more information in the near future. The programme is now being finalised, so I hope to have more details in the next newsletter in January.

Geraint Owen

WHAT'S ON 1989-1990 (*actually 1990-1991*)

OTHER GEOLOGICAL LECTURES AND FIELD EXCURSIONS IN THIS REGION

A. EVENING CLASS COURSES

1. Department of Adult Continuing Education, U C Swansea,
Hendrefoilan House, Swansea SA2 7NB.

The Geological Evolution of Wales and Ireland (G Owen) - 10
classes (7-9pm) beginning 8 Oct 1990 at UC Swansea.

Minerals and Rocks (G Owen) - 10 classes (7-9pm) beginning 7
Jan 1991 at UC Swansea.

2. Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWC Cardiff, 38 Park Place,
Cardiff CF1 3BB.

Geology and Scenery of South Wales (T Sharpe) - 18 classes (7-
9pm) beginning 16 Oct 1990 at Extra-Mural Centre, Cardiff.

Crystals. Mines and Minerals (S Plant) - 6 classes (7-9pm)
beginning 3 Oct 1990 at Extra-Mural Centre, Cardiff.

Beginning Geology (JCW Cope) - 12 classes (7-9pm) beginning 25
Sep 1990 at Brynteg Lower School, Bridgend.

Volcanic Islands of the Atlantic (JW Perkins) - 6 classes
(7.30-9pm) beginning 11 Oct 1990 at St John's Hall, Hay on Wye.

B. DAY SCHOOLS

1. In Large biology Lecture Theatre, Main Building, UWC Cardiff,
10am-1pm - contact Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWC
Cardiff, 38 Park Place, Cardiff CF1 3BB.

Ammonites (JCW Cope) - 24 Nov 1990

Ocean Floor (S Wakefield) - 13 Jan 1991

Explosive Volcanism (T Druitt) - 9 Feb 1991

2. In Joint Lecture Theatre, UC Swansea, 9.45am - contact
Department of Adult Continuing Education, U C Swansea,
Hendrefoilan House, Swansea SA2 7NB.

Discovering Dinosaurs (M Howgate) - 23 Mar 1991

C. LUNCHTIME MEETINGS - contact Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWC
Cardiff, 38 Park Place, Cardiff CF1 3BB.

Pacific Hotspots (JW Perkins) - 3 meetings (1-2pm) beginning 26
Sep 1990 at Extra-Mural Centre, Cardiff.

Landslides (JW Perkins) - 3 meetings (1-2pm) beginning 7 Nov
1990 at Extra-Mural Centre, Cardiff.

1989 San Francisco Earthquake (JW Perkins) - 2 meetings (1-2pm)
beginning 16 Jan 1991 at Extra-Mural Centre, Cardiff.

Geology of the SW England Coast Path (JW Perkins) - 6 meetings (1-2pm) beginning 30 Jan 1991 at Extra-Mural Centre, Cardiff.

Geological Evolution of Britain and Europe (JW Perkins) - 18 meetings (10am-12 noon) from 27 Sep 1990 at Cowbridge Old Hall.

D. ONE-DAY FIELD TRIPS

The Rocks of South Wales (G Owen & L Cherns) - 4 alternate Sundays - 27 Jan, 10 Feb, 24 Feb, 10 Mar 1991 - departing UC Swansea at 9am - contact Department of Adult Continuing Education, U C Swansea, Hendrefoilan House, Swansea SA2 7NB.

E. WEEKEND FIELD COURSES

Geology of West Purbeck (JCW Cope) - 5-7 Oct 1990 - contact Extra-Mural Department, University of Bristol.

Geology of the Lyme Regis - Charmouth Area (JCW Cope) - 1-3 Mar 1991 - contact Extra-Mural Department, University of Bristol.

Geology of the Harlech Dome (G Owen & L Cherns) - 10-12 May 1991 - contact Department of Adult Continuing Education, U C Swansea, Hendrefoilan House, Swansea SA2 7NB.

Fossil Halls & London Walls (J Perkins & E Robinson) - 17-18 Nov 1990 - contact Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWC Cardiff, 38 Park Place, Cardiff CF1 3BB.

'The French Lieutenant's Woman' and Lyme Regis (J Pikoulis & J Perkins) - 22-24 Mar 1991 - contact Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWC Cardiff, 38 Park Place, Cardiff CF1 3BB.

F. LONGER FIELD COURSES

Geology of Cyprus (JW Perkins) - 25 May - 2 Jun 1991 - contact Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWC Cardiff, 38 Park Place, Cardiff CF1 3BB.

Geology of South and West Ireland (G Owen & L Cherns) - 14-21 July 1991 - contact Department of Adult Continuing Education, U C Swansea, Hendrefoilan House, Swansea SA2 7NB.

Geology of South Wales - part of **Welsh Geology Week** (JW Perkins) - 6-13 July 1991 - contact Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWC Cardiff, 38 Park Place, Cardiff CF1 3BB.



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION 1990-1991

DECEMBER 1990

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

This newsletter comes to you with the season's greetings and all best wishes for the New Year. You might think it comes a bit early for all that, but there are some important announcements to be made now concerning the Group's activities at the end of 1990 and into 1991.

As I write, **membership** for this session approaches the 100 mark, with 81 ordinary members, 2 honorary members and 15 student members. This is a good figure, but one which we should still be able to improve upon, so if you know anyone who is interested in geology, rocks, minerals, fossils or the study and history of the Earth, encourage them to join us. We are only too happy to have complete beginners along as well as the more experienced.

It was delightful to see a lecture room packed with about 80 bodies - many of them youthful - for this year's **Student Lecture** in Cardiff on earthquakes (even though I got the title wrong on the membership card!). Unfortunately, apart from that, **attendances** so far at lecture meetings are down on last year's, despite an increase in membership numbers. Don't forget that **tea, coffee and biscuits** are available (**free!**) for about half an hour before each meeting, providing an opportunity to meet other members. Everyone is also welcome to join the speaker for **lunch** after each lecture meeting. All that I ask is that you try to let me know about a week in advance to help with planning, but if you aren't able to, there is usually room for a few more on the day.

The first important notice concerns the lecture meeting to be held on December 8th at Swansea, when Prof Jake Hancock will talk on the **geological controls on wine production**. This should be an unusual and enjoyable talk. We have decided to follow it with a study of samples! **Wine and snacks** will be available afterwards for a small charge. It will help with planning if we know roughly how many people are likely to turn up, so if you intend to come, please let myself or John Cope know either by phone (Geraint - 0792-295141/472687, John 0222-874327) or by sending back the slip beneath the publications order form overleaf. You will be asked to pay on the day. Further lecture meetings will be held on January 19th in Cardiff, February 16th in Swansea, and March 9th in Cardiff (our Annual General Meeting).

Secondly, thirdly and fourthly, information is included about **field excursions** in the spring. A booking slip is enclosed for the **Llangynog** trip on Saturday 23rd February, to be led by John Cope and Richard Bevins. The topic is the little-known Precambrian inlier which includes volcanic and intrusive igneous rocks and ashy sediments from which late Precambrian fossils have been found. Pre-booking is not essential, but again it does help with planning. The joint field trip with the Open University Geological Society to **Carmarthen Bay** will be on Sunday 14th April. There is no booking slip or fee. If the weather permits I hope we will spend the whole day on the superb section from Pendine and Ragwen Point across Marros Sands and round Telpyn Point to Amroth, which goes from Carboniferous Limestone right through the Millstone Grit to the Coal Measures. Information and booking arrangements are finally included for the weekend trip to **west Dorset and south-east Devon** in April (26th to 28th), which will be led by John Cope. Registrations need to be sent in by Monday 28th January 1991 in order to book accommodation. So think about this weekend over Christmas and let's try to make sure a good number of people book, to restore the Group's tradition of spring field weekends.

Also enclosed is a list of **publications** that we have in stock. The prices quoted are special reduced prices for members of this Group (another reason to encourage people to join!). Display copies can be examined before any lecture meeting, and orders can be placed at any time. The new Geologists' Association guide to the Swansea region is now unlikely to be published before the spring, so don't panic if you have not heard anything after sending off an order form. I'm sure it will still be well worth waiting for!

Planning is continuing for **Welsh Geology Week**. Don't forget the dates - 14th to 21st July 1991. I hope to have more information for the next newsletter, probably around Easter.

Finally, the **1991/92** programme will begin to be put together early in the New Year. If you have any ideas for activities - lecture topics or speakers, field trip venues or leaders, or any other type of activities - please make them known to any committee member. We'd be delighted to hear from you.

Geraint Owen

ORDER FORM

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

SALES ITEMS

	Price	Quantity
1. Silurian Field Excursions	£10.00	
2. Offshore Wales	£2.00	
3. Dyfed Guide	£5.00	
4. Focus on Wales	£5.00	
5. GA Guide: Arran	£2.00	
6. Dorset	£5.50	
7. Lake District	£8.90	
8. Costa Blanca	£4.50	
9. Mallorca	£5.00	
10. Geographical Excursions from Swansea	£4.00	
11. GA (London) cloth badge	£0.50	
12. GA (London) car sticker	£0.25	

Please supply me with the items I have marked.

Name:

Address:

Please make cheques payable to "G A South Wales Group".
Return this form to: G Owen, Dept of Geography, UC Swansea.

WINE SAMPLING - 8th December 1990

I expect to attend the wine sampling after the lecture by Prof Hancock at University College Swansea on 8th December

Name :

Please notify Geraint Owen (tel: 0792-295141/472687) or John Cope (tel 0222-874327) by Tuesday 4th December



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION 1990-1991

FEBRUARY 1991

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

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Editor: Mike Bassett

Annual General Meeting - March 9th

The thirty-second Annual General Meeting of the Group will be held on Saturday 9th March in the Department of Geology, University of Wales College of Cardiff. Proceedings will get under way at 11.00 am and I hope there will be a good turn-out. Formal notice and an agenda for the meeting are included with this newsletter, together with the minutes of last year's AGM and the preceding Special General Meeting, at which it was agreed to raise subscription rates to their present level of £5 for Ordinary Members and £1 for Student Members.

Item 4 on this year's AGM agenda is the election of officers and members of committee for the period 1991-1993. Officers serve for 2 years, and this year it is the turn of the Secretary and the Field Excursions Secretary for election. Both the incumbents - Geraint Owen and John Cope - are pleased to stand for re-election. Two places are available for ordinary members of committee, due to Steve Howe completing his 2 year spell of duty, and to one place presently being unfilled. The committee will be putting forward 2 people to fill these places, but if anyone else wishes to stand please let the Secretary know by return of post with the signatures of the nominee, a proposer and a seconder.

This year the AGM is again to be preceded by a Special General Meeting, this time to lower subscription rates! Since a certain amount of subscriptions goes towards mailing costs, it seems reasonable that if 2 or more members live at the same address they should pay less than 2 full subscriptions. The proposal therefore is to introduce a Family Rate such that second or subsequent members at the same address pay £2.50 each per year.

It is to be hoped that the AGM and SGM will not last too long, so that we can get on with learning about **Volcanoes of the Andes** from our guest speaker, Prof Steve Sparks from Bristol University.

Following the success of the December meeting at Swansea, it has been decided to hold a short reception with wine and snacks after Prof Sparks' lecture, for which there will be a charge of 50p. This seems to be a good way to round off the AGM, and the committee hope it can become a regular feature following December and March meetings each year.

As usual, refreshments will be available from about 10.30, and anyone is welcome to join the speaker and members of the committee for lunch after the lecture. Please let the secretary know of your intention a few days in advance, to help with planning.

Remainder of 1991-1992 session

Our programme of activities doesn't end, however, after the AGM - far from it!

The **Field Weekend to Dorset and South-east Devon** from Friday 26th to Sunday 28th April, led by John Cope, is now definitely going ahead. A few places are left, so if anyone still wants to go and hasn't yet booked, contact John Cope as soon as possible. It is good to see a field weekend going ahead after having had to be cancelled for the last 3 years.

Don't forget either the day trip to Carmarthen Bay on Sunday 14th April, jointly with the Open University Geological Society and led by Geraint Owen. Details of this (and the Dorset weekend) were included with the last newsletter - if you have lost them please contact either myself or John Cope.

An addition to this session's programme will take place on **Saturday June 1st**. Dr Eric Robinson will come to Cardiff to give a lecture at **11.00 am** in the Department of Geology, followed in the afternoon by one of his stones trails. This will probably be in the Llandaff area, including both building stones and a cemetery. There should be a chance to fit in a pub lunch in between the lecture and the trail. Anyone who experienced one of Eric's trails at the BA Science 90 meeting last August will, I am sure, be keen to see him again, and anyone who didn't now has a chance to find out what they missed! Put the date in your diary now - **Saturday June 1st** - and tell your friends - you won't get another reminder!

Welsh Geology Week 4-14 July 1991

Yes, I did give the wrong dates for Welsh Geology Week in the last newsletter. The correct dates are those given above - 4-14th July. The programme is nearly completed and you should soon begin to see and hear more about the walks, talks and exhibitions which will be taking place all across Wales during the 10-day week. In particular, all members should receive a copy of the full programme well in advance.

We hope that this Group will contribute to the activities in sponsoring one or two lectures, leading guided walks and, of course, by supplying audience and participants. In addition there will be a touring exhibition, mainly of industrial exhibits, at which we hope to be represented.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The committee are keen to improve the Group and its activities to create more interest and participation from as many members as possible. To help in this, we need to know what members want from the Group. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire enclosed with this newsletter as fully as possible, then return it to the secretary or any committee member, either by post or at the AGM. This should help us to tailor the Group's activities to members' wishes. Thank-you for your help.

In addition, Peter Hodges is presently trying to design a new Group logo and membership leaflet. We hope to have these ready for Welsh Geology Week. If anyone has any bright ideas, please let Peter know at the AGM.

To fill the rest of this page there is a list of publications available through the Group, many of them at special low prices for Group members. Item 3 is this Group's excursion guide to Dyfed, published in 1982 - get a copy while they last! Items 2 and 4 are special issues of the Proceedings of the Geologists' Association, containing papers presented at two of this Group's symposium meetings.

	Price	Quantity
1. Silurian Field Excursions	£10.00	
2. Offshore Wales	£2.00	
3. Dyfed Guide	£5.00	
4. Focus on Wales	£5.00	
5. GA Guide: Arran	£2.00	
6. Dorset	£5.50	
7. Lake District	£8.90	
8. Costa Blanca	£4.50	
9. Mallorca	£5.00	
10. Geographical Excursions from Swansea	£4.00	
11. GA (London) cloth badge	£0.50	
12. GA (London) car sticker	£0.25	

Please supply me with the items I have marked.

Name:

Address:

Please make cheques payable to "G A South Wales Group".
Return this form to: G Owen, Dept of Geography, UC Swansea

Session 33 1991-92



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-THIRD SESSION 1991-1992

OCTOBER 1991

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

WELCOME to the 1991/92 session of the Geologists' Association South Wales Group - our thirty-third session. Thank-you very much for sending your subscription. Your membership card is enclosed, containing the year's programme - I hope you will think it's a good one and will come along to as many activities as you can. The programme also exists in A3 or AA size poster format, and a simple poster is produced about 10 days in advance of each lecture meeting. If you can display a poster (eg in schools) please contact me and I will be pleased to post one or more on to you.

1991/92 Programme

Our 1991/92 programme got underway on Saturday 19 October with a lecture in Cardiff from Dr Danny McCarroll entitled "The Glaciation in Wales: a return to the flood?" in which Dr McCarroll critically assessed the recent theory that much of the drift around Wales might not be true glacial debris deposited from ice when sea level was much lower than now and ice occupied the Irish Sea area, but represents material washed out into the sea from melting ice during periods of very high sea level. Dr McCarroll studied for his PhD in the Geography Department at Swansea, until recently worked with Dr Wes Gibbons in Cardiff on the Geological Survey mapping project in North Wales and this September began teaching first-year geology at University College Swansea. We are pleased to welcome him back to South Wales.

On the evening of Wednesday 6 November our Annual Student Lecture will be given in Cardiff by Dr Alan Charig, formerly of the Natural History Museum in London and well known for his work on dinosaurs. He will talk on the ever-fascinating topic of **"Dinosaur Extinctions"**. The term "student" applies to all of us, regardless of age, so we hope for a packed lecture theatre on that evening.

During the 1991/92 session the Group will be addressed by both of its Honorary Members. On Saturday 16 November Dr Douglas Bassett will talk in Swansea on **"Wales and Geology"**, a topic of great interest to all of us in this region.

The first field meeting of the session will be on Saturday 30 November, when Duncan Hawley - a member of this Group and known to many members for his enthusiastic geological work with the Brecknock Wildlife Trust - will guide us around the **Old Red Sandstone of the Taigarth area**. The day will start at 10.30 at the Pwll-y-Wrach reserve, south of Talgarth, where the Geology Group of the Brecknock Wildlife Trust has laid out a geological trail. They have also prepared an informative guide which costs 50p and can be

obtained on the day, or post-free from the Brecknock Wildlife Trust, Lion House, Lion Yard, Brecon LD3 7AY, or from newsagents in Talgarth.

Our final meeting of 1991 will be in Cardiff on Saturday 7 December. Dr Bob King of the John Moore Museum in Tewkesbury will talk on the **"Geology and Mineralogy of the Caldbeck Fells"** in Cumbria, an area of varied and interesting mineralogy.

The programme resumes in 1992 with a lecture in Swansea on Saturday 18 January from Dr Pete Brabham of the Cardiff Geology Department, who will talk on **"Exploring the subsurface: the practical application of geophysics to engineering and environmental studies"**. The afternoon of Saturday 15 February will see another field meeting. Dr Bob Owens will guide us around **Cwm Craig Ddu**, a locality for which he produced an informative leaflet during Welsh Geology Week. Our February lecture meeting will be on the evening of Friday 21st, at 7.30, in the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre of the National Museum in Cardiff. Dr Adrian Lister, of the Department of Zoology at the University of Cambridge, will talk on **"The Natural History of the Mammoth"**. His lecture will be followed by a viewing of the Museum's Ice Age Mammoths exhibition, which will be in full swing by then, so make sure you put the date in your diary now and bring as many friends, relatives and neighbours as possible. On Saturday 7 March Dr John Cope will take a field excursion to the ever-popular and interesting area around Ogmore and Seamount in the **Vale of Glamorgan**. We have a new time for our **Annual General Meeting** in March this year - 7.30 in the evening of Wednesday 18 March, in Swansea. The AGM will be followed our Chairman's Address, in which Mr Alun Thomas will talk on **"The South Wales Group: a geological perspective"** - a topic of immediate relevance to us all. Alun is the Group's second Honorary Member, having been Secretary for 23 years. The final event currently planned for the session is a field weekend to the **Llyn Peninsula** in the spring, to be led by Dr Wes Gibbons. Further details of all the 1992 events will be circulated early in the New Year.

There should be something to interest everyone in this very full programme. All it needs now is your support to make it a success!

Dates, times and venues for meetings are summarised on the membership card. If you are uncertain how to find the venues or need help with transport, please give me a ring. There should be clear signs to help you at each of the lecture meetings. If you know anyone who would like to come to one or two meetings before deciding whether or not to join us, they will, of course, be most welcome. Lecture meetings at Swansea and Cardiff universities will be preceded by (free) refreshments from about \ hour beforehand. This is an excellent opportunity to meet other members, bring in unusual specimens, make your opinions known to committee members, or examine a range of field guides which are for sale. The Group is grateful to Prof Mike Brooks at Cardiff and Prof David Herbert in the Department of Geography at Swansea for their support for our activities.

After each lecture meeting the speaker is hosted to **lunch** or dinner by the Group. Several committee members usually join the speaker, but an invitation is again extended to any member to join us. All I ask is that you let me know a few days in advance so that we can book at the restaurant.

1990/91 Session

The 1990/91 session was a successful one for the Group. **Membership** increased from 71 in 1989/90 (excluding student members) to 112 in 1990/91, which included 1 Honorary Members and 17 Student Members. We would still like to see more young people amongst our numbers.

There were 7 **lecture meetings**. Before Christmas Dr Tim Palmer from Aberystwyth talked on "Hard Bottoms", Dr Peter Styles from Liverpool gave the Student Lecture on "Earthquakes: agents of devastation or discovery?", Dr Bruce Sellwood from Reading talked on "The stratigraphical evolution and petroleum geology of southern England" and Prof Jake Hancock from London talked on "The geological controls on the production of wine", which was followed by an examination of samples! In the New Year Dr Kevin Pickering from Leicester talked on "Iapetus in its plate tectonic context", Dr Ernest Hailwood from Southampton talked on "Magnetic polarity reversals and sea-floor spreading" and Prof Steve Sparks from Bristol sat through our Annual General Meeting before addressing us on "Volcanoes of the Andes". There was a massive audience of 80 for the Student Lecture and an average of 29 for each of the others.

The **Annual General Meeting** in March saw a few changes to the Committee. Steve Howe and Alan Thomas ended their terms of service and are thanked for their help and support which, we hope, will continue. Brenda Bruck and Mervyn Howells were elected to the Committee for a 2-year spell.

We **had 4 field days**. On a crisp November day Alun Thomas guided a group around Barry Island, John Cope and Richard Bevins took an enthusiastic group around the Llangynog inlier on a stormy day in February (despite assurances of fine weather from our Chairman), I took a joint group with the Open University Geological Society around the Pendine-Amroth coast in April, and in June Eric Robinson guided some of us around Cathays Cemetery in Cardiff. We were pleased that last year we once again held a **spring field weekend**, with John Cope taking a group of about 20 to Dorset.

An important outcome of 1990/91 was the preparation of a new **information leaflet**, which was sent out to all members for renewals. Another one for you to distribute is enclosed with this newsletter. The leaflet shows our new, eye-catching logo, and by distributing it as widely as possible we hope to increase public awareness of our Group.

An event which will sadden everyone was the death in the spring of Dr **Bev Halstead** in a road accident. Bev was known to many through his work, writings and lectures on palaeontology in general and dinosaurs in particular, his public support and pressure for

geology, and as President of both the Geologists' Association and the Geology Section of the British Association.

Perhaps the highlight of the 1990/91 session for geologists in South Wales was **Welsh Geology Week**, which took place from 4-14 July. Members of this Group were: extremely active in the equally important roles of organising and attending events. There were several noteworthy outcomes from the week. Firstly it resulted in 18 new members to our Group, to all of whom a very warm welcome is extended. Several geological walks during the week were accompanied by illustrated leaflets. The first in what is hoped will become a regular lecture series took place - the "TR Owen Memorial Lecture": this was given by Prof Frank Rhodes, of Cornell University in the USA, on the subject of Charles Darwin, but Prof Rhodes' main theme was preceded by a warm tribute to TR Owen. The week also saw the opening of Brecknock Wildlife Trust's Geology Trail at Pwll-y-Wrach. All in all, Welsh Geology Week can surely be considered a success. Many members have already expressed a hope that it can be perpetuated, is an annual event, perhaps on a smaller scale, such as a yearly geology weekend.

Questionnaire

In March all members were issued with a questionnaire. 16 completed forms were returned and the main points are as follows. Most respondents found the lecture programme interesting, but topics highlighted for more attention include applied geology, minerals, fossils and geomorphology. Six people would prefer lectures to be held in the evening: and there were a few suggestions for venues other than Cardiff and Swansea. Equal numbers preferred field excursions on Saturdays and Sundays. Suggestions for other activities included informal meetings, visits to exhibitions and more field trips. Most people considered the subscription to represent value for money: 2 thought it should be increased. Some of these opinions have been addressed in this year's programme, and they will be taken into account, in planning next year's. The exercise may be repeated in the future, and thank-you to all those who replied.

Data Protection Act

Finally, a legal matter. Names, addresses and membership details are currently held on a computer file. This helps with printing address labels and compiling membership lists. The information is confidential and will not be disclosed outside this Group. Under the terms of the Data Protection Act, you may object to your details being held on computer file. If you do object, please write to me and the information on you will be deleted.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-THIRD SESSION 1991-1992

JANUARY 1992

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Mike Bassett
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

First of all, a very happy New Year to all members. The remainder of this session's programme is outlined below, including several, activities which have been arranged since the last mailing, particularly field excursions on **2nd February** and 21st May. Full details of the field excursions are given on separate leaflets which are enclosed. Another enclosure is the text of Prof FHT Rhodes' tribute to the late Prof TR Owen, which was part of the first TR Owen Memorial Lecture, given in Cardiff by Prof Rhodes in July 1991 as part of Welsh Geology Week. I think many members will be pleased to have this marvellous tribute to Dick Owen.

The programme of lecture and field meetings for the 1992/93 session is being put together at the moment, so if anyone has bright ideas for specific lecture topics, field meeting venues, or other types of meetings, please let me or any member of the committee know as soon as possible.

1991/92 Programme

Our current programme resumed in the New Year on 18th January with a fascinating review of the use of geophysics in engineering and environmental studies from Dr Peter Brabham. Dr Brabham's talk included numerous local examples, which provided added interest.

An addition to the programme is a field trip on the afternoon of **Sunday 2nd February** to the excavation for the new M4 link at **Earlswood**, west of Briton Ferry bridge. This is a spectacular high road cutting through Pennant sandstones, and should be interesting from the point of view of local geology, engineering, sedimentology and plain old curiosity. A leaflet is enclosed, showing where to meet. There is no restriction on numbers, but as always it is helpful to have some idea in advance of how many people might turn up.

On **Saturday 15th February** we have another afternoon field trip, when Dr Bob Owens will repeat one of the walks from Welsh Geology Week, at Cwm Graig Ddu, in the wild countryside on the north side of Mynydd Eppynt. Copies of the walk leaflet will be distributed to those who attend. Again a leaflet and reply slip are enclosed.

We hope for a record attendance at our meeting on the evening of **Friday 21st February**. This will be a lecture at 7.30 in the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre of the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. Dr Adrian Lister from Cambridge will talk on "**The Natural History of the Mammoth**" and his lecture will be followed by a special viewing of the Museum's current exhibition "**Mammoths and the Ice Age**". We will be joined for this lecture by the Cardiff Naturalists, and it will also be open to the general public. The lecture theatre is a large one, however bring the whole family and tell your friends and neighbours too.

There will be another field trip on **Saturday 7th March**. Weather permitting, Dr John Cope will guide us along the Vale of Glamorgan coast from **Ogmore-by-Sea to Seamouth**, a complete section which is rarely visited.

Our Annual General Meeting is on the evening of **Wednesday 18th March**, in Swansea, with refreshments from 7.00. It is important that we have a good attendance at the AGM, but don't let the thought of serious business put you off coming, because the AGM itself should be a fairly short affair and will be followed by the retiring **Chairman's Address**, when Mr Alun Thomas will talk to us on the history of this Group. His talk will be followed by more **refreshments** - wine (or fruit juice) and snacks for the modest price of 50p. This will be an excellent way to round off the session and a good chance to chat to other members.

The session's activities won't actually end with the AGM, however, as we are currently arranging some additional events over the spring and summer period. There will be another mailing prior to the AGM which will contain full details. We don't yet have firm dates for our spring **field weekend to the Llyn Peninsula**. Unfortunately Dr Wes Gibbons will be unable to lead the weekend, as he will be very busy preparing for a sabbatical period in Canada. The trip is likely to be in the capable hands of Dr Tim Young, and may take place in late May or early June. We have another field day planned for **Sunday 21st May**, when Mr Sid Howells will escort us around the **Linney Head** part of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path. Finally, in late June or early July we hope to hold the **second TR Owen Memorial Lecture**, this time probably in Swansea.

All in all, a very full, and we hope interesting, series of geological events with something to please all tastes.

Publications and Sales

We hope shortly to see the publication of another in the successful series of this Group's field excursion guides, with an excursion guide to Powys. In addition the Geologists' Association's guide to the geology of the Swansea region, co-

ordinated by this Group, is still in the pipeline and should make an appearance before too much longer.

We have recently revised the prices we charge for Geologists' Association field guides. Unfortunately prices of GA field guides have been revised upwards, but we are able to offer them to you at roughly 10% off the prices being charged by the Geologists' Association. A new order form is enclosed and most of these publications can be inspected at lecture meetings.

Other Geological Activities

I know a lot of our retired members have plenty of time on their hands, so in case our own programme doesn't provide enough activity for you, here are some other geological events coming up, mainly close to our own region.

We have been invited to help our neighbours in the Geology Group of the Brecknock Wildlife Trust, with a conservation work party at Llangammarch Wells Quarry on Sunday 8th March. Llangammarch Wells Quarry is situated just east of Llangammarch Wells (SN 9374 4720) and is designated a geological site of special scientific interest. It is now badly overgrown and has been used for tipping and is in urgent need of some conservation work. The rocks are rich in fossils, including graptolites, nautiloids, bivalves and brachiopods, and plants have been found. The day's work gets under way at 10.30 am. You are asked to bring lunch and suitable footwear. For further information, ring Duncan Hawley (0874-711002) after 7.00 in the evening. This sounds like a good opportunity to experience "hands-on" geology!

The West of England Group of the Geologists' Association have an active programme and their Secretary is John Toller, 112 Bush Avenue, Little Stoke, Bristol BS12 6NF (tel: 696834). They have a lecture on 11th February in Bath on the topic of reefs. They also have field excursions on 12th April (Trias fissure deposits), 17th May (south Dartmoor), 21st June (New Red Sandstone of Devon) and 19th July (Carmarthen Bay, to be led by myself).

The Geologists' Association's February meeting will be on 7th February at 6.00 pm (tea at 5.30) in Burlington House, Piccadilly, London. The topic is "Cyrenaica and the Marble Trade" and the speaker is Dr Susan Walker, from the British Museum.

The Leicestershire Museum and Art Gallery, New Walk, Leicester, has the exhibition "Dawn of the Dinosaurs" from 29th February to 26th April. Talks and other events are associated with the exhibition and anyone who wants details can get them from me.

Finally, the British Association's Annual Meeting will be held in Southampton from 23rd to 28th August. The theme for geology lectures is "The Oceans" and there will also be local excursions as well as exhibitions, a visit to an oceanographic research ship, as well as equally exciting activities in all other branches of science. As members of this Group you will be exempt from the registration fee, so if you think you might be able to go along for all or part of the week contact me to find out more.

The next mailing will be in only about 1 month's time, when you will be sent details of the business for the Annual General Meeting. Until then, get your diaries out and fill them up with all these geological activities!

Geraint Owen

Secretary



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-THIRD SESSION 1991-1992

MARCH 1992

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Mike Bassett
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

Annual General Meeting - Wednesday March 18th, Swansea

The thirty-third Annual General Meeting of the Group will be held on Wednesday 18th March in the Department of Geography at University College of Swansea. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. This year we are holding the meeting on a Wednesday evening, and proceedings will commence at 7.30 pm. Formal notice and an agenda for the meeting are included with this newsletter, together with minutes of last year's Annual General Meeting and the preceding Special General Meeting, at which it was agreed to introduce a Family Membership subscription rate.

The main business of the AGM, in addition to the Treasurer's, Secretary's and Editor's reports, is the election of committee members for the period 1992 to 1994. Those posts which are up for renewal are shown on the enclosed agenda. The committee has recommended nominations for all of these posts, which we hope members will approve. If anyone else wishes to stand please let the Secretary know by return of post with the signatures of the nominee, a proposer and a seconder.

We hope for a large turn-out for the AGM. Not just for the AGM business, which we hope will be brief, but because the business meeting will be followed immediately by the retiring Chairman's Address. Mr Alun Thomas will speak to us on '**The South Wales Group: a Geological Perspective**'. Alun was Secretary of this Group for a period of 23 years until 1989, and was awarded Honorary Membership when he took over as Chairman in 1990, so his certainly should be a fascinating address.

As is now the pattern with most meetings, free refreshments will be available for the half hour before the AGM begins - that is, from 7.00 pm. In addition there will be a short reception with wine (or fruit juice) and snacks after the retiring Chairman's address, for which a charge of 50p will be made. Alun will be hosted to a meal by the Group after the meeting and again, as always, anyone is welcome to attend. Please let me know beforehand if you wish to come to the meal, so we can let the restaurant know numbers.

Remaining Programme for 1991-1992

This session's programme will not be ending with the AGM.

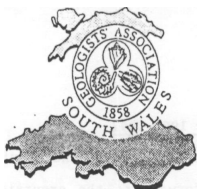
I am already looking forward to the excursion around **Linney Head**, to be led by Sid Howells along the part of the Pembrokeshire coast to which the public are normally denied access. Once again, I gave the wrong date in the last newsletter: the trip will be on **Sunday 21st June** and full details are enclosed. Permission to visit the area is on condition that indemnity forms are signed by all participants. In order to allow for a full day in the field once this has been done, the starting time is 9.30, but I hope you will agree that the early start is worth it for what promises to be a fascinating walk. If anyone wants help with transport or public transport, or information about staying overnight in the area, or wants a copy of the indemnity form in advance, please contact me.

Our **field weekend to the Lleyn Peninsula** will now be going ahead on the weekend of 26th-28th June. The leader will be Dr Tim Young of Cardiff University and the aim will be to conduct a traverse across the northern side of the Welsh Basin. Please contact the Field Excursion Secretary, Dr John Cope (tel: 0222-874327), for further details. This should be a popular weekend, and spaces will be limited, so book your place now.

Finally, don't forget the other activities which were outlined in the January newsletter, including the activities of the West of England Group of the Geologists' Association and the British Association's Annual Meeting in Southampton from 23rd to 28th August.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP
THIRTY-THIRD SESSION 1991-1992

JUNE 1992

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Mike Bassett
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

THIS NEWSLETTER will be the last: of the 1991/92 session. It contains details of a field trip and an important lecture still to come this session and a renewal request for 1992/93. I hope you have made good use of your membership since last September and have managed to attend at least one lecture or field trip, or bought a field guide through us.

JUNE-SEPTEMBER

The 1991/92 session isn't over yet and some activities remain over the summer months. The bad news first - unfortunately the field weekend to the Llyn Peninsula, planned for the 26th to 28th June, has had to be cancelled. Not enough people had expressed an interest to make the weekend viable. John Cope hopes to re-schedule a weekend to Llyn in the future. Over the last 4 years we have succeeded in running only 1 spring field weekend - a disappointing success rate. This is despite the fact that one-day field trips have been very well supported. Please let John Cope or myself know if you have any ideas for improving the success of our spring field weekends, or why you think they have not been popular.

On a brighter note, the field trip to Linney Head on Sunday 21st June is scheduled to go ahead. The day will be led by Sid Howells and the meeting time is 9.30 am at the Stack Rocks car park near Castlemartin (grid ref. SR 926 946). Full details were enclosed with the March newsletter. Please contact John Cope or myself if you have mislaid them or need reminding, or if you want help with transport.

The second T. R. Owen Memorial Lecture is to be held on Thursday 16th July 1992 at 7.00 pm in the Joint Lecture Theatre of the Natural Sciences Building, University College Swansea. The first TR Owen Memorial Lecture was held on Thursday 4th July 1991 as the opening lecture of Welsh Geology Week. It was intended that there should be an annual Memorial Lecture, hosted in turn by the Cardiff geology department in Cardiff, by ourselves in Swansea, and by the Department of Adult Continuing Education of Swansea University, at one of its centres in the valleys. The speaker this year will be Prof Gilbert Kelling and his topic will be "Sixty Years of Welsh Lower Palaeozoic Geology". Prof Kelling was a member of staff of the Department of Geology at Swansea from 1957 to 1976 and was therefore a colleague of both TR Owen and Prof Frank Rhodes, who gave last year's Lecture. Prof Kelling is

well known to us in South Wales for his work on the sedimentology of the Coal Measures and he is therefore a very appropriate speaker for this occasion. Apologies for the rather short notice of this event; - put it in your diaries now and make every effort to attend what should be an excellent lecture!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - MARCH 1992

About 40 members attended the AGM in Swansea on 18th March. After the business meeting we were treated to a fascinating account of this Group's history and development since its inception in 1959 by the outgoing Chairman (and Secretary from 1966 to 1989), Alun Thomas. The main business of the AGM itself was the election of new committee members, for which the committee's own nominations were accepted, so the committee for 1992/93 will be as follows:-

Chairman and Editor: Michael Bassett

Vice-Chairman: Peter Hodges

Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Field Secretary: John Cope

Committee Members:

1991-1993 - Brenda Bruck, Mervyn Howells

1992-1994 - Jim Chetcuti, Sid Howells, Mike Lees

Ex-Officio Vice Chairmen: Tony Ramsay, Alun Thomas,
Alan Stevens.

There will be vacancies for new committee members in March 1993. It's not too early now to get yourself geared up to standing for the committee. If you think that might interest you then talk to any member of the current committee.

PUBLICATIONS

"Geology of England and Wales" and "Geology of Scotland" are 2 new titles published by the Geological Society. "Geology of Scotland" is the 3rd edition of that name, edited by GY Craig, whereas "Geology of England and Wales", edited by P.McL.D. Duff and A.J. Smith, is an authoritative new product. These books have been offered to members of the Geologists' Association at a discount of about £10 and this offer is now extended to members of our own Group. The books are reasonably priced at £24 for "Geology of England and Wales" and £22 for "Geology of Scotland", postage included. They are laid out much along the lines of the Geological Survey's "British Regional Geology" Better, but with more in the way of interpretation, regional syntheses and illustrations. Although these are likely to represent the state of knowledge of British geology for some time to come, they are very accessible to anyone with an interest in the subject, however experienced or otherwise. "Geology of England and Wales" may be of more interest to members of this Group. It contains 651 pages and includes sections by Dr MG Bassett, Prof DV Ager and Prof G Kelling. **To order** your copy or copies of these books,

write directly to:

Michael Collins, Unit 7, Brassmill Enterprise Centre,
Brassmill Lane, Bath BA1 3JN.

Make cheques payable to "Geological Society Publishing House"
and state that you are a member of the Geologists' Association
South Wales Group.

Closer to home, **"Geological Excursions in Powys"** is now with the printers and should be published this summer. This guide is edited jointly by our own Editor, Dr MG Bassett, and Dr NH Woodcock of the University of Cambridge, and is being produced jointly by the South Wales Group, the National Museum of Wales and the University of Wales Press. It is a companion volume to "Geological Excursions in South Wales and the Forest of Dean" (1971) and "Geological Excursions in Dyfed" (1979). We hope it will be as popular as those titles and that all members will want to have a copy.

Several members of this Group have also contributed to the Geologists' Association's **Guide to the Swansea Area**, and we hope that this will appear hot on the heels of the Powys guide.

In addition, don't forget the excellent and ever-expanding series of Geologists' Association guides, which you can buy through us at reduced prices. The latest additions to that series are "Geology of the Manchester Area" (£8.00), "Late Precambrian Geology of the Scottish Highlands and Islands" (£9.00) and "The Onny Valley, Shropshire - Geology Teaching Trail" (£2.25). I also have just 2 copies of the 1969 version of "Geology around the University towns: Swansea, South Wales" edited by TR Owen and FHT Rhodes. These are available for £1.20 each, but you'd better contact me quickly if you want one of them.

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Geological Society of London - the learned body for academic and professional geologists with which the Geologists' Association shares a building - has recently set up regional groups, one of which is its Southern Wales Group. Some concern has been expressed that this new "South Wales Group" might cause some confusion and rivalry detrimental to our own Geologists' Association South Wales Group. Confusion perhaps, but rivalry we hope not. The matter was discussed at our last committee meeting, where it was felt that there is likely to be little overlap of members between the 2 South Wales Groups and that the Groups stand to benefit from each other's existence. Our own Group represents an established pool of interested geologists in the region, and we are likely to be welcomed to most of the Geological Society Group's meetings. We in turn hope to be able to tap that Group's members for speakers and field trip leaders for our own meetings. The inaugural meeting of the Geological Society Southern Wales Group was held on Thursday 28th May at University College of Swansea. Unfortunately there wasn't

time to notify our own membership of that meeting, But I will keep you posted of future activities.

RENEWALS

Your current membership runs until the beginning of September, and formal renewals will be sent out later in the summer. However, a renewal form is enclosed with this mailing and if you use it now it will save a bit of administrative effort and cost. If you renew now you will receive your 1992/93 membership card and full details of the session's programme in early September. The first meeting is planned for Saturday 17th October at 11.00 am in Swansea, on a palaeontological topic. Membership rates for next session remain unchanged, at £1 for Senior Citizens and Students (those in full-time education) and £5 for other adults. There has been some confusion over the Family Rate: the Authorised Version of the wording for that is now "£5 for the first member at any address, then £2.50 for each other member at that address, unless qualifying at a lower rate." We hope that is clear!

DATA PROTECTION ACT

This is a convenient opportunity to remind you that computerised records are kept of names, addresses and membership details. These are only used within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, principally for mailing purposes. The Data Protection Act requires that you are reminded of this and that if you object to your details being kept on a computer record you can write to me to have them removed.

CRAIG-Y-NOS STUDY DAY

Since our weekend to Llyn has been cancelled, some of you might be interested in a natural history study day at Craig-y-nos in the Brecon Beacons National Park. This is a walk in the area of Penwyllt and Ogof Ffynon Ddu, exploring the relationships between the geology and the flora and fauna. I will be there to represent the interests of geology, along with Drs Charles Hlpkin and Michael Isaac of UC Swansea providing expert advice on the flora and fauna, and David Brinn of the National Park. This will be held on Sunday 28th June, starting at 10.00 am from Craig-y-nos. There will be a charge of £5 for adults, with no charge for children. There may be an opportunity at the end of the afternoon to study some materials more closely back at Cralg-y-nos. You can book for this day in advance or get more details by ringing the Craig-y-nos Country Park on Abercraf (0639) 730395.

Geraint Owen

Secretary

Session 34 1992-93



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION 1992-1993

SEPTEMBER 1992

Chairman: Alun Thomas
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Peter Hodges
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

WELCOME to our 1992-1993 session and thank-you very much for renewing your membership. The finishing touches have now been put to the programme and details are on your new membership card. The programme is also available as a poster. If you could display this somewhere prominent, do please contact me for some copies. Also let me know if you would like copies of our membership leaflet to distribute anywhere - we're always keen to attract new members.

1992-1993 PROGRAMME

We have a full and fascinating programme planned for the coming year. It gets underway on Saturday 10th October at University College of Swansea, starting at 11.00. **Please note that this is one week earlier than the date I gave you in June.** The speaker will be our own Dr John Cope, and his title will be '**Britain through The: Palaeogeographical Evolution of the British Isles**'. This talk relates to the recently-published 'Atlas of Palaeogeography and Lithofacies' produced by the Geological Society, for which John was the co-ordinating editor. John's talk will be illustrated with maps from the Atlas and will outline the evolution of the British Isles through the past 1000 million years. This should be an up-to-the-minute account of an ever-changing topic. As always, refreshments are available from 10.30 and if you would like to come to lunch with the speaker afterwards, please give me a ring a few days beforehand: you will be most welcome.

Our first field meeting of the session will be on Saturday 24th October. We will examine the **Silurian rocks of the Uak Inlier**, led by our current Chairman, Dr Mike Bassett, and his colleague from the National Museum of Wales, Dr Bob Owens. The arrangements are to meet at The Square in Usk at 11.00 am, where an attempt will be made to arrange people into as few cars as possible. This promises to be an interesting and enjoyable day, hopefully with fossils for all! If you need any help with directions or transport, contact John Cope, our Field Secretary. His address is on your membership card.

Our **5th Annual Student Lecture** is to be held on Wednesday 4th November, in the Department of Geology at University of Wales College of Cardiff, with the lecture beginning at 7.00 pm. The speaker will be Mr Ewan Thomas, from the Swansea office of Colder Associates, an international company of geotechnical and mining engineers. The subject will be '**Practical**

Engineering Geology', intriguingly sub-titled **'Wise Men Build on Sand as veil as Rock'**. There will be practical demonstrations of engineering geological principles, and those sitting in the front row are advised to bring waterproofs and Wellingtons! Although we hope lots of school and university students will attend our Student Lectures, don't forget that we remain students for all of our lives, so everyone is encouraged to attend!

On Saturday 21st November at Cardiff, Dr Barry Thomas, Keeper of Botany at the National Museum of Wales, will talk to us on **'Coal Measure Forests'**. This is a topic which Alun Thomas, in his retiring Chairman's Address at the AGM in March, picked out as being long overdue in our programme. I hope there will be a good audience to find out more about a subject so relevant to our region. There may possibly be even more difficulty than usual getting into the building at UWC Cardiff on Saturday mornings from now on: the door from the courtyard off Park Place may be locked and the only entrance will be off Museum Avenue. If those names mean as little to you as they do to me, it would be wisest to turn up with a few minutes to spare, and we will try to sign-post the way in.

Finally for 1992, Dr Richard Bevins, also from the National Museum of Wales, will be our speaker at Swansea on the morning of Saturday 12th December. The title of his lecture will be **'Volcanic Rocka of the Lower Palaeozoic Welsh Bavin'** - another topic which should be of great interest to us all. He also intends to include recent work from more exotic areas, including Greenland and Mexico.

We will start off the New Year on Saturday 16th January in Cardiff with a talk from Mr Mike Francis of Christ College, Brecon, on **'The Glaciation of the Brecon Beacons'**. He has also kindly offered to lead a field trip, but suggested that that would be better held during an inter-glacial period, and Sunday 23rd May has been provisionally arranged.

I mentioned in the last newsletter the setting up of the Geological Society's Southern Wales Regional Group, principally composed of professional and academic geologists. We have arranged a joint meeting with this new group, for which they have provided a speaker. This will be in Swansea on Saturday 20th February, when Mr R Connolly of Steffen, Robertson and Kirsten Ltd will talk on **'Aspects of Groundwater in Mining'**.

The Cardiff Naturalists' Society celebrate their 125th Anniversary in 1992/93, and to celebrate they are holding a series of 4 free public lectures at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff on Thursday evenings at 7.30 pm. Our Group has been invited to join with them on Thursday 4th March, when Dr Douglas Bassett, one of our Honorary Members, will talk on **'Geology for the Public - the Work of FJ North'**. Many of us enjoyed Dr Bassett's talk last session on 'Wales and Geology', and are looking forward to the concluding part of that. His

talk to the Cardiff Naturalists may well turn out to be Part 3, so those of us following the series had better make sure we are there! All our members will also be welcomed, of course, to the Cardiff Naturalists' other celebratory lectures. These are 'The Red Kite', to be given by Mr Roger Lovegrove (RSPB Wales Officer) on **Thursday 22nd October 1992**, 'Horrid and Sublime: the Landscapes of South Wales', by Mr Richard Keen (Historic Buildings, National Trust) on Thursday 26th November 1992, and 'The Fifth Dimension of the Celtic World' by Dr Peter Reynolds (Burser Archaeological Farm) on Thursday 28th January 1993. All will begin at 7.30 pm in the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre of the National Museum of Wales.

Our own Annual General Meeting will be held at the National Museum at 7.00 on the evening of Friday 26th March. This year we are trying something new - a Members' Evening. In the New Year I will begin trying to persuade a few members to give a brief presentation on some topic of general interest. This may be a short slide show from your holiday, or perhaps some locality or specimen you would like to describe or find out more about. We're not looking for eloquence and slick presentations, but hope members will be able to share some of their own geological experiences. So don't be shy! Start thinking about your contribution now and be ready to volunteer in the New Year.

We hope there will be good support for our **field weekend to SW Dyfed** in spring 1993. This is an area of outstanding geological interest, of which we can never tire, but which is just a little bit too far for many of us to reach comfortably for a day trip. We hope to have full details for the next newsletter.

Lastly, but not least for the coming session, the **3rd TR Owen Memorial Lecture** will be held on the evening of Thursday 1st July. Prof Howel Francis will speak on '**Mining and Geology**'. Prof Francis is a graduate and an Honorary Fellow of University College Swansea, and worked on Coal Measures rocks for many years with the Geological Survey. The Department of Adult Continuing Education at Swansea are hosts of the TR Owen Memorial Lecture this time, and they have chosen as a venue the newly-refurbished Ystradgynlais Miners' Welfare Hall. Put the date into your 1993 diary as soon as you get one, and make sure there is good support from members of this Group.

Dates, times and venues for meetings are summarised on the membership card. If you are uncertain how to find the venues or need help with transport, please give me a ring. There should be clear signs to help you at each of the lecture meetings. If you know anyone who would like to come to one or two meetings before deciding whether or not to join us, they will, of course, be most welcome. Lecture meetings at Swansea and Cardiff universities will be preceded by free refreshments from about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour beforehand. This is an excellent opportunity to meet other members, bring in unusual specimens,

make your opinions known to committee members, or examine our sales items.

After each lecture meeting the speaker is hosted to lunch or dinner by the Group. Several committee members usually join the speaker, but an invitation is again extended to any member to join us. All I ask is that you let me know a few days in advance so that we can book at the restaurant.

PUBLICATIONS

A list of publications currently available through this Group is enclosed, and you are reminded that many of these are cheaper from us than from elsewhere. Worthy of particular mention are the **geological walk leaflets** produced for Welsh Geology Week in July 1991, covering Penarth to Lavernock, Dunraven Bay at Southerndown, Cwm Graig Ddu, Clydach Gorge and Pontneddfechan, and the excellent range of informative Guides produced by the Geologists' Association. Their most recent titles are the late Precambrian of the Scottish Highlands and Islands, the Manchester area, the Yorkshire Coast, Landforms of West Dorset, and a geological trail through the Ordovician rocks of the Onny Valley in Shropshire. We hope this series will soon be joined by a new version of the Swansea Guide. Finally, if you don't have a copy of the blue Dyfed Guide, produced by our own Group, now is the time to buy one, ready for the spring field weekend. This Guide is shortly to be joined by a Powys Guide, in the same format, so look out for that. All these publications can be examined and bought at the refreshments sessions before our Saturday morning meetings.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

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Geraint Owen

Secretary



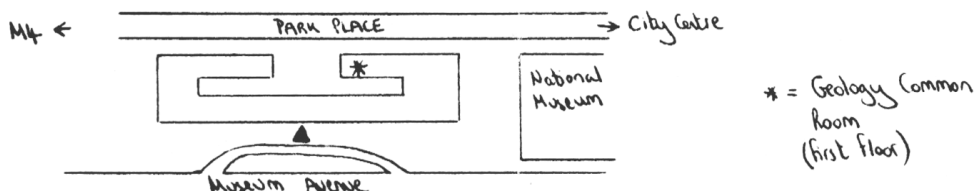
GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP
THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION 1992-1993
DECEMBER 1992

Chairman: Mike Bassett
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Peter Hodges
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Rassett

SEASON'S GREETINGS! This newsletter should be with you before Christmas and includes good news for the New Year in the form of the South Wales Group's programme of activities for the start of 1993, including some extra **field excursions**. The programme gets under way on Saturday 16 January in Cardiff with a lecture on the '**Glaciation of the Brecon Beacons**' to be given by Mike Francis of Christ College, Brecon. This promises to be a fascinating talk, full of local interest.

Those of you who struggled to reach our last meeting in Cardiff will already have discovered that access to the Department of Geology is now even more difficult than ever. My apologies for forgetting to put up notices! Access is now only from the main entrance on Museum Avenue. A map is the easiest way to explain:



We have a joint meeting with the Geological Society's recently-formed Southern Wales Regional Group in Swansea on Saturday 20 February for a lecture on '**Aspects of Groundwater in Mining**' from Mr R Connolly of Steffen, Robertson and Kirsten Ltd. Then on the evening of Thursday 4 March we have been invited to join with Cardiff Naturalists' Society as part of their 125th Anniversary Celebrations, to hear a lecture on '**Geology for the Public - the Work of F J North**' from Dr Douglas Bassett.

We have arranged more **FIELD EXCURSIONS** for the New Year. There will be a visit to an **opencast coal site** above Glynneath for the morning of Saturday 6 February: details are on an enclosed sheet. After an inspiring talk on Coal Measure Forests from Dr Thomas at the end of November, this should be a popular visit. On Saturday 20th March there will be an excursion to the **Forest of Dean area**, led by Drs RA Gayer and JCW Cope. Full details of that excursion will be provided in the next newsletter, but remember to keep the date free. It is hoped to visit a mine and fossiliferous localities in the Severn Valley.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff starting at 7.00 pm on the evening of Friday 26 March. For the first time this year we hope to follow the

AGH - which is usually a short affair - with a **Members' Evening**. For this we need a few members to VOLUNTEER to show photos of places they have visited or rocks they have seen for 5 or 10 minutes. We are not looking for expertise of presentation: rather, we want to find out about people's geologising and to get members actively involved. So if you have a few photographs and/or specimens which might interest others **please, please, please** give me a ring or drop me a line and volunteer to contribute to this our first members' evening. I know some of you have interesting topics to present, so put yourselves forward now before I have to start twisting arms in January or February! Oh yes, and there should be refreshments at the meeting, so it's definitely worth coming along!

Another newsletter should be winging its way to you in late February or early March with details of the remainder of the session's activities. Our **field weekend to SW Dyfed** is scheduled for the weekend of 18-20 June 1993, so keep that weekend free. We hope to visit some classic localities of the region, including Marloes Sands and St Ann's Head. It is hoped to book accommodation in St David's, but to make the starting place and time known for both Saturday and Sunday, so that you can come along for just one of the days if you prefer. And don't forget the 3rd **TR Owen Memorial Lecture** on Thursday 1 July in Ystradgynlais.

OTHER EVENTS

Many of you may be interested to hear of other events in the New Year. Sid Howells will be leading walks in the **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park**. Although not specifically aimed at geologists, these will be full of geological interest. Those of you who missed Sid's walk around the magnificent cliffs of Linney Head in June have a second opportunity on January 1st. Although there is no charge for this all-day walk, it is essential to book a place in advance by contacting the National Park Information Office (0437-764591) before 22 December. They will provide details of meeting place and time. Hopefully January will provide warmer, calmer conditions than June did! Details of other walks in the National Park from May onwards will be in next year's newsletters.

Details of a geological weekend course in south **Shropshire**, based at Ludlow from 14-16 May, can be obtained from the Department of Adult Continuing Education at University College Swansea (0792-295792/295786), quoting course 801RST.

The **British Association** will hold its annual science fair at Keele University in Staffordshire from August 28 to September 3rd. Many members of this Group participated in Science 90 in Swansea and since then meetings have been at Plymouth and Southampton. People may have been put off attending those meetings by the hefty registration fee, but an arrangement has been reached this year that members of the Geologists' Association and its Local Groups can attend any or all of the week's activities for a registration fee of just £10. **That**

includes you! There will of course be additional charges for events such as field excursions and visits, dinners, etc. More information on the programme and arrangements for registration will be in our spring newsletter, but if you think you might attend any or all of the meeting, put the dates in your diary now.

A whole host of geological activities are featured in '**Down to Earth**' - a new newspaper which will be distributed free of charge 3 times a year. Copies will be available at our December lecture meeting in Swansea, but if you can't get one, please let me know.

Geological activities and other news also feature in the **Geologists' Association 'Circular'**, which is distributed 6 times a year to members of the Geologists' Association. Any member of this Group can join the GA for an annual subscription of £16, which entitles you also to the quarterly 'Proceedings of the Geologists' Association', or £8 as an Associate Member if you don't want to receive the 'Proceedings'. As a Local Group of the GA we are sent extra copies of the 'Circular', which you may have seen at meetings. If you want to read through a copy at your leisure at home, please contact me and I will send you one on loan.

Whilst on the subject of the Geologists' Association, I must mention again the excellent **field guides** they produce. As a member of the South Wales Group you can buy these at a reduced price. The full list of titles was sent to you earlier in this session. The most recent additions to the series are the Yorkshire Coast (£7.20), Coastal Landforms of West Dorset (£7.20) and The Onny Valley, Shropshire (£2.25). These guides are an essential addition to your luggage for a weekend or longer trip away. There's just time to order some as Christmas presents!

SWEAT-SHIRTS

We are looking into the possibility of producing sweat-shirts featuring the Group's logo. We hope they will sell for about £17 or less, but we would need to take firm requests before placing an order with a company. Sadly these won't be ready for this Christmas, but bear the possibility in mind and be ready to make an order with one of the next newsletters. In the meantime, if you think you would buy one please let me or any committee member know, so that we have some idea how much interest there is likely to be.

PUBLICITY

This session we have tried to advertise the Group and its activities as widely as possible, with committee members sending notices of events to local newspapers. We're not always sure whether these notices actually appear, or how much effect they have, so if you have seen our events in your local paper, or if you haven't and feel you should have, or if you have any other opinions on the matter, please again let me or any committee member know. AA-sized posters of our lectures

are produced about a month before each meeting, and if you could display one or more of these in a prominent place (eg schools, shops) please ask me for copies.

RIGS

Not oil rigs, but a scheme which has been important in raising the status of geology over much of England in recent years. RIGS are **Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites**. Their aim is to bring together land-owners, local authorities, site users (eg schools, colleges, groups such as ourselves) and conservation groups, so that important geological sites which are widely used but have no statutory protection (ie are not Sites of Special Scientific Interest) can be afforded some level of informal protection. There is no legal status to RIGS, but the hope is that by bringing together site users, owners and potential developers, development schemes which could ruin the geological value of a site can be avoided by mutual consent and discussion.

Wales is poorly served by RIGS groups. One exists in Powys, under the auspices of the Brecknock Wildlife Trust, and Sid Howells, who works for the Countryside Council for Wales, is currently trying to organise a RIGS group in Pembrokeshire. To succeed in this he needs **help** on 2 counts. Firstly he needs **volunteers** who are willing to contribute to a RIGS group. Ideally he would like to hear from someone with the time, ability and interest to act as co-ordinator for all the records which must be compiled, but he will be equally pleased to hear from anyone who can offer help, whatever your contribution might be. Secondly, he wants to hear from people who **use** sites in Dyfed, whether as members of organised groups or as individuals, to advise him which sites are most used and what for. If you think you may be able to help Sid in any way please give him a ring (0646-672538). If you want more general information about RIGS or about groups in other areas, ring or write to Dr Nick Pearce, Senior Geologist with CCW, at CCW, Plas Penrhos, Ffordd Penrhos, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2LQ (0248-372333). Geological conservation is outlined in a series of leaflets which can be obtained from Nick Pearce or consulted at our meetings.

RIGS schemes and the wider field of geological conservation are an important movement in earth science at the moment, and have risen in importance with increasing pressures and demands on land use. The whole field is one to which amateurs and professionals alike, whatever their level of experience, can contribute. A Group like our own should be playing a leading part in the field of geological conservation in South Wales and RIGS schemes are one clear way that people can help, so I do hope that Sid or Nick will hear from you, whatever your level of interest or potential contribution. Look out for more on this topic in future newsletters.

HAVE A GOOD CHRISTMAS BREAK

Geraint Owen (Secretary)

December 1992

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION 1992-1993

MARCH 1993

Chairman: Mike Bassett
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Peter Hodges
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

IMPORTANT NOTICE

I have just heard that University College of Swansea wants to get rid of its Geology Museum. I know that many members of this Group have benefitted greatly from the wonderful displays in that Museum. If that includes you, **please read the enclosed notice and write urgently to the Principal of University College of Swansea, urging him to change his mind.** Ask him for a personal reply. Thank-you.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Friday 26 March 1993

Our 34th Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 26th March in the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Don't be put off by the idea of a business meeting. We have a really attractive package of events scheduled from 7-9 pm, the highlights of which are a visit to the **'Sea Monsters'** exhibition and 3 **Members' Talks**.

The evening starts at 7.00 with a viewing of the **'Sea Monsters'** exhibition, which has moving reconstructions of modern and fossil fish and reptiles. It really is spectacular. Children will love it - bring them along. Entry will be through the South Entrance to the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre, and the doors will be open from 6.30 pm. The Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre is towards the city centre from the University, with the entrance off Park Place (the road with the Students' Union and the University parking quadrangle).

The **Annual General Meeting** starts at 7.30. The Treasurer, Secretary and Editor will present reports and Committee Members will be elected for the period 1993-1995. The vacant posts and the Committee's nominations are shown on the enclosed agenda. Because the Committee is currently involved in several important matters the standing members have all been recommended for re-election. If anyone else wishes to stand, please send nominations in writing to the Secretary by return of post with the signatures of nominee, proposer and seconder. If you would like to put yourself forward for the Committee for a future year, please let me know.

From 8 until 9 two activities will take place. There will be 3 short **Members' Presentations**. Tom Sharpe will talk on hunting dinosaurs in the Wild West, Sid Howells on geological conservation in Wales, and Linda Garfield on geology and mining. There will also be a **Reception** hosted by the Museum, to whom we are of course very grateful for hosting the entire event. This will give members a chance to talk with one another, and everyone is encouraged to bring photographs,

specimens or other material for display or discussion. Field guides and other promotional items will be for sale.

All in all, then, this should be quite an evening - a tour of the 'Sea Monsters' exhibition, our first Members' Evening and a Reception. And, of course, the AGM itself. All members are heartily encouraged to attend and to bring along friends, relatives and neighbours - hopefully they will all be members too before the evening is out!

The Museum will clearly like a good idea of likely numbers, so please return the reply slip attached to your copy of the agenda by Wednesday 24 March. Thank-you.

PROGRAMME

1993 started well, with a bumper audience of over 60 for Mike Francis¹ fascinating talk on the glaciation of the Brecon Beacons, and 36 at Derlwyn Opencast Site in early February. The first joint meeting between ourselves and the Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group was a success, with members of both groups treated to an interesting account from Richard Connelly on groundwater problems in mining. Members of both groups met over lunch afterwards at the near-by Inn on the Lake, and we hope there will be more joint meetings.

Events continue through the spring and summer. The field meeting to the **Forest of Dean** will take place on **Sunday 21st March**. The field meeting to examine features of **glaciation in the Brecon Beacons** on **Sunday 23rd May** will be led by Dr Rick Shakesby. Our field **weekend to Pembrokeshire** (18-20 June) is arranged so that people can come for either or both of the days. If enough people want to stay for Friday or Saturday nights, we will try to make a group booking, probably in St David's. Details of all these events are enclosed.

John Cope has asked me to make a plea for members to return the **attendance slips** for field excursions. We don't want to turn away anyone who decides at the last moment to come along, but it does help with logistics, such as copying handouts and arranging car-sharing, if as many people as possible return them. Thank-you.

The TR **Owen Memorial Lecture** is hosted this year by the Department of Adult Continuing Education at Swansea. It will be held on **Thursday 1st July** at Ystradgynlais Welfare Hall at 7.30. Prof E H Francis will talk on **'The Miner and the Geologist - A History of Alliance and Alienation'**. Prof Francis was brought up in Port Talbot, is a graduate of the Department of Geology at Swansea, and was awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the College in 1989. He was Assistant Director of the Geological Survey for northern England and Wales, before becoming Professor of Earth Sciences at the University of Leeds when I was a student there. I hope there will be a great turnout for this event.

A mountain ash tree will be planted in memory of Dick Owen at Hendrefoilan House on **Tuesday 23rd March** at 3.30 pm. All are welcome to attend, but as tea will be provided afterwards you are asked to let Dr Michael Isaac know in advance on Swansea

295337 or through the Department of Adult Continuing Education at Swansea.

INSURANCE

The Group now has Public Liability Insurance cover of £1 million. This covers claims for damages against the Group or its members by outside bodies or by other members. The premium is £150 for the current year. We hope members will agree this is an essential expense in view of the kinds of damages awarded by courts these days. The £1 fees for field excursions should cover the cost, so there is no need to raise subscriptions. This method of funding is appropriate, since it is on field trips that cover is most needed. So keep turning up for them!

This is not a personal accident insurance. If you break a leg on a field trip you can only make a claim if you think the Group or another member has been negligent or careless - most unlikely! If you want to be insured against accidental injury or theft, you must arrange that yourself. Such cover is often provided by normal household insurance.

OTHER EVENTS

Numerous other events are coming up in and around our region, which you might be interested in. Oh to have the time! A list is enclosed of walks and talks organised by the **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park**. The Department of Adult Continuing Education at Swansea has some **field study days in Gower and the Brecon Beacons**, particularly 22 May (Rhosili), 26 June (Mumbles), 3 July (Cribarth) and 18 July (Llyn y Fan Fawr). Others relate to wildlife, plants and sea shores. Details can be obtained from the Department of Adult Continuing Education, UC Swansea, Singleton Park, Swansea SA2 8PP (tel: 0792-295786). A charge is made for the study days. The same department can provide information about a **geological weekend in South Shropshire** from 14-16 May.

The Geologists' Association arranges regular visits to the **Writhlington Geological Nature Reserve**, east of Radstock in Avon. This old colliery tip has yielded Upper Carboniferous plants and more than 1000 insect specimens. There are strict conditions on the use of the site, and important finds should be made available for scientific study. The next visits are Saturday 17 April, Sunday 13 June and Saturday 9 October. For details please contact Peter Austen on Seaford (0323) 899237 at weekends or after 6.30 pm. The GA is also running a trip to **Iceland** from 26 July to 9 August. The fee is £1400 and further details can be obtained from Michael Bamlett at Birbeck College (University of London), 26 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DQ. The GA produces a calendar of overseas geological field trips, which at the moment extends as far as a visit to New Zealand and Hawaii in February/March 1995. You can examine the list in the GA 'Circular' at one of our meetings or by contacting me.

The 1993 Annual meeting of the **British Association** takes place at the University of Keele, Staffordshire, from Sunday 29 August to Friday 3 September. The geology programme is packed to the brim with talks on topics such as the future of the coal industry, the past, present and future of the petroleum

industry and environmental effects of volcanic eruptions; field excursions to copper mines, the Potteries, the Wrekin and Ironbridge; and social events. And there are equally full programmes in other sections, such as geography, archaeology, chemistry and education. The prime aim of the BA is to bring science to the attention of the public, and all its activities are targetted at the non-specialist. This is everyone's chance to see science in action. And the cost? As members of this Group you can attend the meeting for a registration fee of just £10. There will be additional charges for some field excursions, social events and accommodation. If you want to attend at this special rate, please let me know and I will send you registration details when they are available.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

There was little response to the request in the last newsletter for help in setting up geological conservation groups in south and west Wales. You don't need to be a trained or skilled geologist to help in this work, or to make a massive commitment of your time. What is needed is people who have some local knowledge and interest, who are willing to get together with others from time to time or to visit sites occasionally to report on their condition. Any help will be appreciated and anyone can help. Please re-read the section in the last newsletter and contact Sid Howells if you can help at all. Sid will be talking about geological conservation at the AGM, which will be a chance to find out more about what you can do.

PROFESSOR D V AGER

And finally, to end on a sad note, Prof Derek Ager died on February 8th. Derek was Professor of the Department of Geology at University College of Swansea from 1969 to 1989, Chairman of this Group from 1978 to 1980, President of the Geologists' Association from 1974 to 1976, and received many other honours. He had a kindly, lively, often mischievous mind and was a prolific writer, well-known to many members of this Group, if not in person then through his writings in 'New Scientist', the South Wales Evening Post and his books. Before his death he was able to revise 'The Nature of the Stratigraphical Record', the 3rd edition of which has now been published, and to complete a new book on 'The New Catastrophism', which is eagerly awaited. Although Derek had been seriously ill for some time, as someone who lived for the love of his subject and did so much to promote it, he will be sorely missed. I am sure all members will join me in sending our condolences to his wife, Renee, who is a member of this Group, and their son and daughter.

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)

Session 35 1993-94



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION 1993-1994 OCTOBER 1993

Chairman: Mike Bassett
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Peter Hodges
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

WELCOME to a new session of the Geologists' Association South Wales Group and thank-you for renewing your membership. I am sorry this mailing with your membership card has arrived later than usual, but there is such a range of exciting things to announce that I hope you will agree it has been worth waiting for.

1992-1993 PROGRAMME

First of all, what have we in store in the way of lectures and field meetings? You should already have received details of the first lecture, on Saturday 16 October, on **New Timescales for Geology using Orbital Forcing**. This will be given in Cardiff by Prof Michael House from Southampton.

On 22-24 October Duncan Hawley and myself will be leading a field weekend for the Geologists' Association to the **Black Mountains and the eastern part of the Brecon Beacons National Park**. Details are enclosed. Members of this Group are welcome to attend and either stay in Hay-on-Wye or come for one or both of the days. We will set off from the square in the centre of Hay-on-Wye at 9.30 each morning. We hope to start at Pwll y Wrach, where the Geology Group of the Brecknock Wildlife Trust have developed a geological trail through the Lower Old Red Sandstone with financial aid from the Geologists' Association, then continue by examining Old Red Sandstone sites and Black Mountains scenery. On Sunday we hope to examine the upper part of the Old Red Sandstone and the Lower Carboniferous around Crickhowell and Abergavenney.

The 6th **Annual Student Lecture** will be in Swansea on the evening of Wednesday 3 November, starting at 7.00 pm, with refreshments from 6.30. Dr Michael Simms will talk on **Unsettled Weather in the Late Triassic**. He will show that late Triassic conditions - represented by the Mercia Mudstone Group as seen at Penarth and Barry - were not harshly arid, but there was seasonal rainfall and times of greater humidity, when major rivers and cave systems developed. Climatic changes caused some species to become extinct while others flourished, and may have contributed to the rise of the dinosaurs. Detailed studies of ancient climates and climatic change from the geological record represent one of the most fascinating developments in modern geology, and provide a long-term perspective to concerns over climatic and environmental change. This is an evening not to be missed, by students young and old alike.

On Sunday 7 November Drs Lesley Cherns and Mike Bassett will guide us on a **Field Day in the Builth Area**. This is the first of several

events arranged to promote our new guide to 'Geological Excursions in Powys'. Yes, it has now been published and you can buy yourself a copy - more a bit further on. We meet at Llangammarch Wells at 10.30 to examine Silurian basinal sediments, slumps, graptolites, storm-influenced shelf environments, shelly fossils and early plants. Something for everyone in a classic area of Welsh geology.

Also relevant to Powys, Dr Chris Fletcher, from the British Geological Survey (BGS) at Aberystwyth, will give us a talk on **Recent Advances in the Understanding of the Geology of Central Wales**. This will be on Saturday 20 November at UC Swansea, starting at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30. The BGS has recently completed an extensive survey programme in central Wales, shedding new light on aspects of the Lower Palaeozoic Welsh Basin such as its stratigraphy, sediment sources, basin shape, the evolution of the Tywi lineament and the origins of mineralisation. Two new 1:50,000 geological maps of the area will be displayed. Again, this should be a fascinating talk, shedding new light on a familiar area.

Finally before Christmas, on Saturday 11 December in Cardiff, Dr David Unwin from the University of Bristol will talk on **Pterosaurs: New Views on Some Ancient Fliers**. The book and film of 'Jurassic Park' have surely whetted our appetites to find out more about life in the Mesozoic, so here's our chance. As is usual for our pre-Christmas meeting there will be wine and snacks afterwards for a small charge.

There should be another newsletter around Christmas time, so I will refer briefly now to meetings in the New Year. On 15 January, in Swansea, Dr Richard Lisle will talk on **Origami Tectonics**. Presumably he will show that those geological structures we all thought were complicated beyond understanding can in fact be modelled with a sheet of paper. Bring your own paper! A major highlight of the season will be a visit on Friday 28 January to **The Evolution of Wales** - the major permanent exhibition in the new galleries of the National Museum of Wales, which will be opening in mid-October. On Saturday 19 February, in Swansea, we will have our 2nd joint meeting with the Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group. The speaker will be Mr NiaLl Young from De Beers and the topic will be **The Diamond Industry**. Unfortunately we still haven't been able to confirm the availability of free samples! On Saturday 12 March Dr Michael Simms will lead a field excursion to examine **Mesozoic rocks of the Severn Estuary**. Our **Annual General Meeting** will be in Cardiff on Saturday 19 March and will be followed by an analysis of **Lower Palaeozoic Palaeogeography and Biogeography**, which will include Dr Mike Bassett's retiring Chairman's Address. Also in Cardiff on Saturday 23 April we will hold a **Conservation Forum**, at which speakers will give short talks on geological conservation - the need for it, what is being done and what we should be doing. We hope to follow the talks with a field visit in the afternoon. On Sunday 22 May Sid Howells will give us a guided tour of the geology of **Ramsey Island**, and finally, on 17-19 June we have arranged a **Field Weekend to Central Wales**, led by members of the BGS team from Aberystwyth.

So get your diaries out now - buy yourself a 1994 one if you haven't already - and fill in those dates!

Dates, times and venues are summarised on the membership card. Meetings in Cardiff are in the Department of Geology, on the first floor of the main College building. Meetings in Swansea are in the Natural Sciences Building, where parking is available. If you are uncertain how to find the venues or need help with transport, give me a ring. Lecture meetings are preceded by free **refreshments** from about 1/2 hour beforehand. This is an opportunity to meet other members, bring in unusual specimens, make your opinions known to committee members, or examine our sales items. After each lecture meeting the speaker is hosted to lunch or dinner by the Group. Some committee members usually join the speaker, but any member is welcome to attend. Just contact Dr John Cope a few days in advance so that he can book at the restaurant. Attendance at lectures is free to members, but there is a £1 charge for **field days**, which goes towards the Group's public liability insurance cover. There is no charge for Student Members. Safety helmets will be provided if needed, although you may like to buy your own anyway. Usually you have to make your own way to field meetings, but contact the field Secretary - Dr John Cope - if you need a lift. Finally, A4 sized posters of the session's programme and of individual meetings are available: if you can display any of these please contact me.

GEOLOGICAL EXCURSIONS IN POWYS

I couldn't help letting it slip earlier on - the guide to 'Geological Excursions in Powys', edited by NH Woodcock and MG Bassett and produced by this Group in association with the National Museum of Wales and the University of Wales Press has just been published. In format it is similar to the Dyfed Guide of 1982 and the South Wales and the Forest of Dean Guide of 1971, but it is bigger, has photographs as well as maps and diagrams, and includes an introductory overview of the geology of Powys. The full price is £12.95 but a copy can be yours for the special members' price of £11.00. Complete the enclosed order form and either send it to the National Museum of Wales or, better still, bring it to one of our meetings where you can collect your copy. We hope most members will want a copy, since it is by selling our stock that we can rebuild our publications fund and look forward to more guides. Thanks are due to our Editor - Dr Mike Bassett - for his work in producing this excellent guide.

CLOTHING

As if the Powys Guide wasn't enough excitement for one session, a range of clothing items embroidered with the South Wales Group's emblem is now available, again at bargain prices as detailed on the enclosed order form. As well as sweat-shirts you can have fleecy jackets, tee shirts, polo shirts, pullovers and casual jackets, all in a range of sizes and colours. A small amount from each sale goes towards South Wales Group funds, helping to ensure that we continue to provide a full and varied programme (and keep your subscriptions down). You can examine these items at Group

meetings, and can then place an order which can be posted to you for a small additional charge, or brought to a future meeting. We hope everyone will agree that the clothes are attractive and attractively-priced and will want to kit out yourselves and your families in South Wales Group wear. Enormous thanks are due to Jim Chetcuti, who has been the driving force behind this scheme - he must have had a busy summer with all that embroidering!

OTHER NEWS

Jurassic Park Many members will by now have seen the film and bought the merchandise. Our Carmarthen-based members might even have been at the national premiere! I expect it will be a few years before we can show the video at one of our meetings, but in the meantime we must all be delighted at the boost in public profile it has given to geology. Who knows how our membership might increase! We always welcome new members, however little or large their experience of geology. So if you know of anyone who might be interested in our activities or publications, encourage them to come along to a lecture or field meeting, after which they might decide to join. I can provide anyone with copies of our informative membership leaflet

Geology Museum at University College Swansea Many thanks to all of you who expressed support for the continuance of this facility. It seems that it is no longer threatened with closure. I am wary of saying it is safe, but the immediate threat has been lifted. Thank-you for all the support.

Changes at UWC Cardiff Prof Mike Brooks retired as Head of the Department of Geology at UWC Cardiff at the start of this session. Mike has been a member of this Group for many years. We are most grateful to him for his support of our activities at Cardiff, and wish him well in retirement. He is replaced as Head of Department by Prof David Rickard, who has pledged to continue supporting our activities.

Data Protection Act I must again remind you, especially new members, that computerised records are kept of names, addresses and membership details. These are only used within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, principally for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record you can write to me to have them removed.

Geraint Owen

Secretary

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION 1993-1994

JANUARY 1994

Chairman: Mike Bassett
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Peter Hodges
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

MUSEUM VISIT - FRIDAY 28 JANUARY
THE EVOLUTION OF WALES

You must be wondering by now what the arrangements are for this visit. My apologies for informing you at such short notice. **Please meet at the main entrance to the National Museum of Wales at 7.00 sharp on Friday evening.** We will have 2 hours to view the exhibition and there will be free drinks and snacks. We are indebted to the Museum through Mike Bassett for welcoming us for this event. It would be a help with the arrangements for refreshments if you could possibly manage to telephone me by Thursday afternoon to let me know that you are coming. You should be able to leave a message on 0792-472687 if you can't get hold of me on that number or on 0792-295141. Again, sorry for the very late notice of this event.

The new permanent gallery **The Evolution of Wales** can best be summed up with adjectives like stunning and spectacular - you really must see it, whatever your age or interests. The special effects, graphics and video clips are superb, surpassed only by the wonderful specimens. Highlights for me when I visited recently (twice) were the meteorite, dinosaurs, tropical rain forest and the ammonites, all of which you can handle. I'm sure that after visiting you will want to join me in congratulating the staff of the Geology Department at the Museum for putting on such a tremendous exhibition. I understand it is only planned to be at the Museum for about 15 years: you'll certainly need many visits to appreciate all that is in the Gallery, so you'd better make a start this Friday!

Don't forget, then, this Friday (28 Jan) at 7.00 pm at the main entrance to the National Museum of Wales. And try to leave me a message if you can to say you're coming.

After all that, I hope it's not too late to wish all members **A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR** for 1994. What else do we have in store for you?

Our next lecture meeting will be on **Saturday 19 February**, in Swansea, when we will join with the Geological Society

Southern Wales Regional Group for a talk on **The Diamond Industry** from Mr N Young of De Beers. The talk starts at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30.

The date for the field meeting to examine **Mesozoic rocks of the Severn Estuary** with Dr Mike Simms has been changed to **Sunday 13th March** - full details will be with the next mailing. Our **Annual General Meeting** will be in the University at Cardiff on Saturday 19 March, starting at 10.30, and will be followed by Dr Mike Bassett's retiring Chairman's Address on **The Ordovician System**. Also in Cardiff on Saturday 23 April we will hold a **Conservation Forum**, at which several speakers will give short talks on geological conservation - the need for it, what is being done and what we should be doing. We hope to follow the talks with a field visit in the afternoon. On Sunday 22 May Sid Howells will give us a guided tour of the geology of **Ramsey Island**, and on 17-19 June we have arranged our **Field Weekend** to Central Wales, led by members of the BGS team from Aberystwyth.

This year's **T R Owen Memorial Lecture** will be held on the evening of Tuesday 7 June at the University in Cardiff. The speaker will be Dr Reg Bradshaw, and his topic will be **"Alexander Catcott: Geological Perspectives of a Bristolian in Wales"**.

OTHER EVENTS

The New Year seems to be packed to the brim with geological events in South Wales.

First of all, on Saturday 29 January - this coming Saturday - the Adult Continuing Education Department at University College of Swansea is holding a Day School **All About Volcanoes**. Speakers are from the National Museum of Wales and University College Swansea, with topics from volcanoes in Wales to volcanic hazards to volcanoes in the solar system. The day begins at 10.00 and costs £6.50, with reduced rates of £3.75 and £2.00. A leaflet with full details is enclosed. You can register by sending off the booking slip, or on the day.

Other events from the same Department include a Day School in Banwen on Natural Resources (5 February), a geology weekend to the Peak District (13-15 May), a geology week to Northern Ireland (28 May - 4 June) and guided walks in Gower and the Brecon Beacons. Further details can be obtained from the Department at the address and phone number on the volcanoes leaflet.

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park's series of geological guided walks continues into 1994 with afternoon walks on **"Corals and Crocodiles"** at Skrinkle near Tenby on 14 February

and **"Pembrokeshire's Pompeii"** at Manorbier on 8 April. Both walks are led by Sid Howells and further details can be obtained from the Information Section, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, County Offices, Haverfordwest, Dyfed SA61 1QZ (0437-764591 ext 5133).

Subsequent National Park events include "The Antique Roadshow" around St David's on 2 June and 15 August; "Fiery Island" - Ramsey Island and the St David's Peninsula - on 19 August; "Tree Ferns and Swamps" at Broad Haven on the evening of 27 August; and "Basalts and Brachiopods" on the Marloes Peninsula on 30 August. Why can't we have more days in the week! The full programme includes many more walks and talks covering a wide range of other interests: details can be obtained from the National Park Information Section.

PROMOTIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Just a reminder not to forget our current promotions - the excellent range of jackets, sweat shirts and tee-shirts bearing the Group's logo smartly embroidered on, and the equally excellent guide to 'Geological Excursions in Powys'. You should have received order forms for these already and they can be examined and bought at any of our meetings. Get in touch with me or any committee member if you need another order form.

GEOLOGY ON STAMPS

In 1991 the Royal Mail produced its first stamps featuring dinosaurs to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the introduction of the name dinosaur by Richard Owen at the British Association meeting in Plymouth (as it was in 1991). The Royal Mail was persuaded to celebrate this occasion by many people writing to them to point out its significance. 1997 sees the bicentenaries of the birth of Sir Charles Lyell - who gave us the concept that 'the present is the key to the past', influenced Charles Darwin's thinking and published 'Principles of Geology' - and the death of James Hutton - the 'founder of modern geology' who published the 'Theory of the Earth'. These 2 men were key figures in the development of the science of geology.

Stamp issues have to be planned well in advance and a group of geologists led by Prof D J Blundell hopes that the Royal Mail can be persuaded to celebrate these bicentenaries with a commemorative stamp issue and has asked people to write to Royal Mail to ask them to do so. The person to write to is Mr John Bliss, Room 104, Royal Mail Stamps and Philately, 76 Turnmill Street, London EC1M 5NS. Prof Blundell has asked that if you do write could you also send a copy of your letter

to him at Department of Geology, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW2 OEX.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter should be reaching you in only about a month's time. This will contain notice of the Annual General Meeting on 19 March, together with details of the field meeting on 13 March, Conservation Day on 23 April, Ramsey Island visit on 22 May and central Wales field weekend on 17-19 June.

In the meantime, I hope to see you at the Evolution of Wales on Friday evening.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION 1993-1994

MARCH 1994

Chairman: Mike Bassett
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Mike Bassett
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

OUR NEXT EVENT is this coming Sunday (**13 March**), when Dr Mike Simms will lead a field meeting near Chepstow to examine Triassic and Jurassic rocks. The Triassic red mudstones include palaeosols and rippled horizons and the Lower Lias has yielded fish and insect remains. The boundary between the Penarth Group and the Lower Lias is marked by an interesting conglomerate unit, the significance of which will be considered in the field.

Full details are on the enclosed leaflet. By the time you receive this mailing it will be too late to return the attendance slip, but just turn up on Sunday - the meeting place is given on the leaflet. If you need help with transport, give John Cope a ring. **Please note that this field meeting is now on the Sunday**, not as listed on the membership card. Mike gave us a fascinating talk about Triassic environmental conditions back in November as the Student Lecture, so this is a chance to examine the evidence in the field. Members of the Bristol Naturalists group have also been invited on this field meeting, so please ensure there is a good turnout from our Group.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Saturday 19 March

This year's Annual General Meeting, on Saturday 19 March in Cardiff, will be the occasion of Dr Mike Bassett's retiring **Chairman's Address**. His topic will be **"The Ordovician System"** and again we hope there will be a good turnout.

The retiring Chairman's Address will be preceded by our annual business meeting. This is usually a short affair, and a good attendance by members is very important to the vigour of the Group. This year there will be 2 meetings - a Special General Meeting followed by the 35th Annual General Meeting.

The **Special General Meeting** will consider a proposal from the Committee to make some changes to the structure of the Committee. At present 5 Ordinary Members of Committee each serve for 2 years. The proposal is to increase this number to 6, each serving for 3 years, 2 being elected each year.

Over the last few years a number of important issues have come before the Committee, such as insurance, publicity, promotions and conservation. Moreover, since 1989/90 membership has

increased from about 70 to 130. For these reasons we felt an extra Committee Member would be of great value and that a 3-year term of service would help Committee Members to become familiar with matters of concern and to make a greater contribution to the running of the Group. It is also hoped on a less formal basis to devolve some responsibilities from the Secretary to Committee Members, such as Conservation, Publicity and Programme arrangements.

This change in the number of Committee Members and the length of their term of service requires a change to the rules, which is outlined on the enclosed papers. The rule under review - Rule 5 - also states that the Committee should include 2 University student members, one from University College Cardiff and one from University College of Swansea. In view of the changes to University education in South Wales it was felt that it would be better to amend the rule to read simply 'a student member'¹.

We believe these changes will help the Committee to work better for the membership of the Group and hope they will be approved at the Special General Meeting.

The **Annual General Meeting** will hear reports from the Treasurer, Secretary and Editor, then will approve changes to the Committee for the coming session. Assuming that the Special General Meeting approves the Rule change outlined above, some transitional measures are needed to implement the changes. The Committee's recommendations are outlined in the Agenda and we hope they will be approved. We are recommending that existing Committee Members remain in post because we feel the Committee has worked successfully over the last 2 years, the present Committee Members are willing to continue, and this would give a chance for the changes outlined above - which we have already begun to implement - to take effect. There is **one vacancy for the period 1994-1997**, and proposals for this post, or any of the others, will be welcomed by the Secretary. Please ensure that they reach me by Wednesday 16 March.

Officers' posts due for renewal and the Committee's nominations are also listed on the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting. We are proposing that Peter Hodges - currently Vice-Chairman - serves as Chairman for the period 1994-1996 and are recommending Lynda Garfield as Vice-Chairman. Tom Sharpe and Mike Bassett are willing to be recommended to continue as Treasurer and Editor respectively. Clare Woodley has agreed to serve as Student Member for 1994-1995.

I hope this explanation of the business before the SGM and AGM will not have put everybody off coming and hope to see as many members as possible in Cardiff on the morning of Saturday 19 March. The business meetings will begin at **10.30** - please note the earlier time than usual - and there will be refreshments from 10.00.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION FORUM - Saturday 23 April

Over the last couple of years a lot has appeared in this newsletter and much has been said at our meetings about the topic of geological conservation. We have decided to take the opportunity on 23 April to have a formal meeting on the subject of geological conservation which should be of great interest to all members. The meeting will be in Cardiff, starting at 10.30, with refreshments from 10.00.

The morning will take the form of a series of short talks on the framework for geological conservation in Britain, the status and significance of conservation schemes such as SSSI's (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and RIGS (Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites), the experience of groups elsewhere in Wales in setting up RIGS schemes, and the need for geological conservation in Wales. There should be plenty of opportunity for discussion. In the afternoon we intend to visit Penarth to discuss on site the need for conservation, approaches to conservation and opportunities for providing better geological information to the general public.

This Geological Conservation Forum has 2 main aims. Firstly we want to inform members about what is at present a very important movement within geology. Secondly, RIGS groups already exist over much of England and Wales and the absence of one in South Wales is noticeable. It is hoped that this meeting may help to stimulate the formation of such a group. RIGS groups are made up of ordinary people with an interest in their local geology - not just academics and professionals. They meet with land-owners, planners and other interested groups, to keep track of events which might harm geological sites. Thus they play an important role in protecting sites from unfortunate developments which might lead to the destruction and loss of sites, as well as improving access to sites, for example through clearance programmes, and improving information about sites through leaflets and notice boards.

Clearly the whole topic of geological conservation is one which affects all members of this Group. I know some members have reservations about the need in our region for geological conservation and restrictions which might arise on opportunities to collect material from favorite sites. **All the more reason, then, to come along on 23 April, hear what it's all about, air your own views and, if you do have worries, get involved and influence the way geological conservation develops in our region.** I look forward to seeing you on 23 April.

REMAINDER OF 1993-1994 PROGRAMME

Three events round off our 1993/94 programme. On Sunday 22 May Sid Howells will lead a **field visit to Ramsey Island**. Numbers are limited, so please ensure you return the booking form.

There will be a charge to cover the boat journey and landing fee, so a £3 deposit per person is required. Further details are on the yellow sheet.

The **field weekend to central Wales** led by British Geological Survey staff will take place on 17-19 June. Final details have still to be arranged, but if you might want to attend for one or both days, please return the slip from the yellow sheet and you will be kept informed.

Finally, this year's **T R Owen Memorial Lecture** will be held on the evening of Tuesday 7 June at the University in Cardiff. The speaker will be Dr Reg Bradshaw, and his topic will be "**Alexander Catcott: Geological Perspectives of a Bristolian in Wales**".

OTHER EVENTS

Tom Sharpe is giving a Day School for the Department of Continuing Education at UWC Cardiff on **Saturday 12 March** from 10.00 to 1.00 on "**The Rocks and Scenery of the American South-West**". The venue is the Large Biology Lecture Theatre at UWC Cardiff and the fee is £4.50.

I am taking a field visit on Sunday 24 April for the Open University Geological Society to examine the **Old Red Sandstone at Portishead**. Members of this Group are welcome to attend - meet at 11.00 am at the pull-in by the pub above Kilkenny Bay (ST 4587 7644). Bring stout shoes, boots or wellingtons. Bar meals should be available in the pub, but you may prefer to bring a packed lunch.

A separate sheet has details of the programme of geological walks in the **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park** from April to September. Further details can be obtained from the National Park Office in Haverfordwest.

The GA North Staffordshire Group is visiting the **Mendips for a field weekend on 20-22 May** and has asked if any of our members want to join them. They will be staying at a hotel in Clevedon and examining the Palaeozoic and Mesozoic geology, including sedimentary and volcanic rocks and mineralisation, and geomorphology of the area. There will be an introductory illustrated talk on the Friday evening. The cost is about £53 per person, including 2 nights bed-and-breakfast with ensuite facilities, and Saturday evening dinner. If you want to know more, please contact their Field Meetings Secretary Mr Ken Rout, 34 Old Acre Lane, Brocton, Stafford, Staffs ST17 0TW, tel (0785) 662291.

Geraint Owen

Secretary

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION SOUTH WALES GROUP



Secretary: Dr Geraint Owen, Department of Geography,
University College of Swansea, Singleton Park, Swansea SA2 8PP.
Tel: 0792-295141/472687

September 1994

Dear Member

Yet again things have been quiet over the summer, but yet again we have a full and exciting programme lined up for the coming session. Subscriptions for 1994/95 are now due and a renewal form is attached. I hope you will decide to renew. You will then receive your membership card and newsletter, with full details of the session's lectures and field meetings, publications and other news.

In the meantime, listed below are our forthcoming activities.

Saturday 22 October - "Stonehenge and the Origin of the Bluestones" - Lecture by Dr G Jenkins starting at 11.00 am at University of Wales Swansea.

Wednesday 9 November - "Ancient Biomolecules - Is Jurassic Park a Real Possibility?" - Student Lecture (all welcome) by Prof G Eglinton starting at 7.00 pm at University of Wales Cardiff.

Sunday 13 November - Field Meeting: Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo - practical geological conservation of internationally famous Llandeilo sections with Dr MG Bassett (bring a garden trowel!). Full details with first newsletter.

Saturday 19 November - "Fossil Insects from the Writhlington Geological Reserve" - Lecture by Dr E Jarzembowski starting at 11.00 am at University of Wales Cardiff.

Saturday 10 December - "The Tertiary Evolution of Wales" - Lecture by Dr JCW Cope starting at 11.00 am at University of Wales Swansea, with wine and snacks afterwards.

Please remember that free refreshments are available for half an hour before the times given for lectures to begin. You can examine and buy a range of publications and the Group's clothing during that time. Please contact me if you need any further details.

All this and more can be yours for the amazing cost of just £1. for Senior Citizens and Students/young people, £5 for Ordinary Members, and £2.50 for additional Ordinary Members at the same address - still the same rates as in 1990! How can you resist? Send off your subscription to-day, or else come to one of the meetings and pay there. And bring your friends and relatives along - they may be encouraged to join too.

I look forward to hearing from you. Best Wishes

(Signed) Geraint Owen



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION 1994-1995

OCTOBER 1994

Chairman; Peter Hodges
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Lynda Garfield
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

WELCOME to another session of the Geologists' Association South Wales Group - our thirty-sixth. Thank-you once again for renewing your subscription. Your membership card is enclosed and this newsletter provides more detail of events between now and Christmas.

1994-1995 PROGRAMME

The first lecture of the session will be in Swansea on Saturday 22 October. Dr Graham Jenkins will talk on **Stonehenge and the Origin of the Bluestones**. This promises to be a fascinating talk with appeal beyond the confines of geology. Bring along your friends, relatives and children and get our year off to a good start. I'm sure we'll find room for everybody! As usual the talk will begin at 11.00. From 10.30 there will be free coffee and biscuits and you will be able to examine and buy field guides and our range of sweat-shirts and jackets. The event will be in the Natural Sciences Building at University College Swansea (which is now the University of Wales Swansea). There is plenty of free parking and there will be signs in the building to direct you.

The topic for our 7th **Annual Student Lecture** is also of wide interest. Prof G Eglinton from Bristol will give a talk entitled **Ancient Biomolecules - Is Jurassic Park a Real Possibility?** Very topical, and not to be missed! The talk will be on Wednesday 9 November in the Department of Geology (now re-named Department of Earth Sciences) at University of Wales College of Cardiff (now re-named University of Wales Cardiff). It will begin at 7.00 pm, with refreshments from 6.30. As I say every year, we're all students, so everyone is welcome, but do encourage youngsters to come along too.

The first **Field Meeting** of the session will be on Sunday 13 November at **Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo**. This will involve partly the examination of the famous Llandeilo sections and partly a "hands-on" conservation exercise. The day will give everyone the chance to see why geological conservation is needed and what we all can do to help. A separate sheet gives full details. There will be no charge for this field day.

November looks like being a busy month, with the next Saturday lecture on 19 November at 11.00 in Cardiff. In yet another talk not to be missed, Dr Ed Jarzembowski from Brighton will talk about the **Writhlington Geological Reserve** and its

Fossil Insects. In a classic example of geological conservation, Writhlington is a coal tip saved from reclamation which, through careful and organised collecting has yielded abundant late Carboniferous insect fossils. Perhaps there is a message to be learned there for South Wales. Dates for visits to the Reserve over the coming year are still being arranged. I am sure Dr Jarzembowski will have details, and they will be included in the next newsletter.

The final talk before Christmas will be on Saturday 10 December in Swansea. Dr John Cope has moved further up the stratigraphical column and will talk to us about **The Tertiary Evolution of Wales**. John's talks are always full of interest, so thin again is essential listening. To remind us it's the festive season there will be snacks, fruit juice and even wine (all for a small charge), as well as coffee and biscuits, from 10.00, with the talk at 11.00. And why not get your Christmas shopping done at the same time - "Geological Excursions in Powys" and our colourful sweat-shirts are surely just what your relatives (or yourself) have always wanted!

Your membership card lists the whole session's events, and future newsletters will give more details of field meetings and of additional events. January's lecture, from Dr Peter Crowther on **The Westbury Pliosaur** will be on the evening of Friday 20th, in Cardiff. Sid Howells will guide a field meeting around the exposures of **Treffgarne and Triffleton** on Saturday 11 February. Our February lecture, on Saturday 25th in Swansea will be our joint meeting with the Geological Society Southern Wales Group. Prof Dave Rickard, Head of Earth Sciences at Cardiff, will talk on **Mineral Deposits of Europe**.

The week beginning 17th March is to be the second **National Science Week** and we hope to hold a number of field meetings in our region during the week. Our Annual General Meeting will be on Saturday 25 March, starting at 10.30 in Cardiff. After the business meeting we will hear a talk on the **Geology of the Second Severn Crossing** from Mr Tony Thomas of Halcrow, the engineering company. There will be more field meetings in the spring, hopefully a day in Pembrokeshire in late April, and a trip to the Isle of Wight led by John Cope over the Bank Holiday weekend of 6-8 May. Finally, it is this Group's turn to host the 5th **TB Owen Memorial Lecture**. Prof Brian Williams will be coming from Aberdeen and - how's this for value for money -- will give 2 talks. At 7.00 he will talk on **T.R. Owen - a fond remembrance of South Wales fieldwork**, followed at 7.30 by **Old Red Sandstone basins: Wales and beyond!** That will be on Friday 9 June, at University of Wales Swansea.

As usual, we hope to entertain the speakers to lunch or dinner after each lecture, and the invitation is extended to all members. If you want to come, please ring John Cope (daytime phone number on the membership card) a few days in advance so he can book places. Also, I have posters for each of our events, and one listing them all. If you can display

any or all of these in a prominent place, please get in touch with me and I will be only too pleased to send you copies.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION/R.I.G.S.

We hosted a successful discussion meeting in April on geological conservation. Many issues, some controversial, were raised in a series of short talks in the morning. They demonstrated the need for measures to conserve the geological and mineralogical heritage of Wales, and some of the ways conservation can be effected. In the afternoon we visited Lavernock Point, where a deep excavation could damage important exposures. Since April, Prof Mike Brooks has held an exploratory meeting with interested groups, including planners, to consider setting up a Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group. (RIGS, you will doubtless remember, stands for Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites.) The field meeting in Llandeilo on 13 November will show what we can do to play a part in geological conservation. I hope that there will be a good turn-out. If you want to participate in the RIGS Group, or be kept informed of its activities, please write to Dr J Horak, Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group Secretary, Dept of Geology, National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF1 3NP.

PUBLICATIONS AND PROMOTIONS

Our guide to **"Geological Excursions in Powys"** is selling well. Don't forget that you can buy copies at the reduced price of £11. There are only a few copies left now of the guide to **"Geological Excursions in Dyfed"**, so if you don't have a copy - or if your copy is getting a bit tatty - or if you want a shrewd investment for the future, send an order straight away and you might just be in time! A list is enclosed of publications available through the Croup, many of which are at specially reduced prices. You can examine most of these at lecture meetings or send an order by post.

We have small stocks of items not on the publications list. If you want to buy any of these, please contact me directly. A **Geological Map of the World** has recently been published. It measures 150x100 cm and shows the geology of the continents and ocean floors. Our current stock is selling at £7.50. We have a couple of copies of the **Classic Landform Guide to the Brecon Beacons** for £4, and copies of **The Age of Ice** booklet at £1.

Also selling well is our range of designer **clothing**. The design is the Group's logo, embroidered in fine colours on sweat-shirts, fleecy jackets and casual jackets. Again, you can examine these at meetings, and an order form is enclosed. Don't forget, Christmas is rushing up on us!

A leaflet is enclosed about a new book, **"A Colour Atlas of Rocks and Minerals in Thin Section"** by WS MacKenzie and AE Adams. Some of you may be familiar with the excellent atlases of minerals, igneous rocks and sedimentary rocks, with brief descriptions to accompany superb colour photographs of thin

sections. Although smaller in size, this new book follows the same format, covering minerals and igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks. Copies can be ordered through this Group on the enclosed order form. Each sale from these order forms will bring a small income to the Group, helping to support our activities and keep down subscription rates!

OTHER EVENTS

If you still have space in your busy schedule, you may like to know about other geological activities. **Extra-mural** classes and courses are taking place at Cardiff and Swansea on a range of topics. Apply to the Adult Education Departments for further details. Swansea's Adult Education Department are to follow up last year's successful Day School All About Volcanoes with **All About Earthquakes**, on Saturday 28 January 1995.

The **West of England Geologists' Association** have sent details of their programme, which may be of interest to members in the east of our region. Lectures are held at 7.30 in the Geology Lecture Theatre, Wills Memorial Building, Queens Road, Bristol, and are followed by wine and cheese. They include "Basalts in the North Atlantic Tertiary Province" by Dr KG Cox on 8 November, "Experiments in Fossilisation" by Prof D Briggs on 13 December and "Problems in Engineering Geology" by Dr B Hawkins on 14 March. There are monthly field excursions from April to August, visiting the Mendips, Hock Cliff, the Vale of Pewsey, Wells and Cheshire. For further details of any of these activities, please contact Mr John Toller, 112 Bush Avenue, Little Stoke, Bristol BS12 6NF, or telephone 9696834.

FINALLY

Some runs of **geological journals** are surplus to requirements. There are 3 sets of the "Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society", spanning 1949-1993, 1950's-1980's and 1970's-1980's, and "Proceedings of the Geologists' Association" from 1948-1909. There is also a metal cabinet (4-drawer filing cabinet size) of drawers for 5"x3" record cards. Any or all of these are free to anyone who can carry and collect them from Swansea. If you are interested, please ring me.

Enclosed with this mailing is a copy of the Group's **Rules**, updated after the Special General Meeting in March.

The **Data Protection Act** requires me to remind you, especially new members, that computerised records are kept of names, addresses and membership details. These are only used within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, principally for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record you can write to me to have them removed.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION 1994-1995

JANUARY 1995

Chairman; Peter Hodges
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Lynda Garfield
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

THIS NEWSLETTER brings details of events over the next few months, including the forthcoming field day at Treffgarne and the Annual General Meeting.

GEOLOGY AND SCENERY OF THE TREFFGARNE AREA

LAVA, BREADCRUSTS AND COWPATS sounds like a fascinating day out! This is the title of the field day on **Saturday 11th February**, with Sid Howells. The excursion will include a walk of approximately 2 miles with frequent stops to see Precambrian-Ordovician volcanic and sedimentary rocks, mineralisation and Quaternary landforms. If there is time, nearby sites will be visited by car, to end at about 5 pm. This area is not as frequently visited as some coastal localities, and there is always a chance of discovering something new.

MEET at 10.00 am in the lay-by alongside the A40 Haverfordwest-Fishguard road at Nant-y-coy Mill (SN958252), just beyond the northern end of Treffgarne Gorge, where there is reasonable parking space. We should, however, share transport if possible. There is no booking form, but it will be helpful if you can leave a message with either John Cope or myself (phone, numbers are on your membership card) if you are coming.

You are advised to bring walking boots, warm clothing (including hat and gloves), waterproofs, packed lunch/drink, hammer and chisel, goggles, hand lens, and binoculars. If you have OS 1:50,000 sheet 157, or 1:25,000 sheet SM82/92, please bring them. Background material will be provided.

AN APOLOGY AND A THANK-YOU

Apologies to those who came to Cardiff on 20th January expecting to hear about the Westbury Pliosaur from Dr Peter Crowther. Unfortunately Dr Crowther was unable to come, and we were very grateful to John Cope for stepping in at short notice to give a most interesting talk about ammonite morphology. Dr Crowther had since agreed to give the first talk of our next session, but has just been appointed to a new job. In Belfast! Whilst we congratulate him on this appointment, it seems amazing the lengths people will go to to avoid us!

If you have the **chance** you might like to visit Peter Crowther's Bristol Museum. 'Time Travellers', running from 21

January to 23 April, is an exhibition of illustrations of extinct mammals.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Our next lecture meeting is at University of Wales Swansea on Saturday 25th February. Professor Dave Rickard, head of the Department of Earth Sciences at Cardiff, will talk on **Mineral Deposits of Europe** at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30. This is our annual meeting with the Geological Society's Southern Wales Group.

Our **Annual General Meeting** (more below) is on Saturday 25th March at University of Wales Cardiff. It will begin at 10.30, with refreshments from 10.00, and will be followed by a talk on the **Geology of the Second Severn Crossing** from Mr Tony Thomas of Halcrow, the engineering consultants. Most of us have probably seen the Second Severn Crossing taking shape, and many members have visited sections at Aust Cliff and Beachley, on the line of the present bridge. It should be fascinating to hear about the geology of the new route, how lessons were learned from the construction of the original Severn Bridge, and how geological problems were tackled by the engineers.

The last lecture planned for this session is the **T.R. Owen Memorial Lecture** on Friday 9th June at University of Wales Swansea. Professor Brian Williams, formerly of Bristol University and now at Aberdeen, will give 2 talks - **TR Owen - A Fond Remembrance of South Wales Fieldwork** followed by **Old Red Sandstone Basins: Wales and Beyond**. They will begin at 7.00, with refreshments from 6.30.

Other forthcoming events include field meetings on Sunday 23rd April and a weekend to the Isle of Wight on 6-8 May, Further details will be sent in March. National Science Week takes place from the 17th March - look out in the press for details of science-related activities near you.

CHARITY STATUS AND RULE CHANGES

Recent changes to the Charity Regulations mean we are legally required to apply for Charity Status. The application involves submitting our Rules to the Charity Commissioners for their approval. The Commissioners publish guidelines for acceptable forms of Rules, and it is clear that a major revision of our existing Rules is needed.

To this end, at a meeting in early January, the Committee discussed and largely agreed upon a revised set of Rules drawn up by Lynda Garfield and myself. We are keen for members to be consulted as much as possible, so that objections and queries can be taken into account. Our proposed procedure is as follows. At the next Committee Meeting, in April, the revised Rules will be discussed and, hopefully, agreed upon. These provisional Rules will be circulated to all members for comment. Comments will be considered at a further Committee meeting, and if necessary the process repeated. When the Rules

have been agreed they will be sent to the Charity Commissioners for comment. They may suggest changes - hopefully at that stage only minor - for them to approve the Rules and such changes will be further considered by the Committee. A Special General Meeting will then be called to propose adoption of the new Rules. If they are adopted, a formal application for Charity status will be submitted.

This sounds like an involved process, but if there is little disagreement it should proceed smoothly, and if there is disagreement it will have been necessary. A Special General Meeting to approve new Rules may be called some time in the autumn, and can take place before or after a lecture meeting.

Most of the proposed Rule changes are to bring them into line with forms of wording recommended by the Charity Commissioners. In addition we want the Group to have a Welsh version of its name: **Cymdeithas Daearegwyr - Adran De Cymru** has been proposed. Some changes are likely to be proposed to the Committee structure, including a change of names from Chairman/Vice-Chairman to President/Vice-President, in line with the usage of the national Geologists' Association, and the introduction of posts of Programme Secretary (which would subsume the present post of Field Meetings Secretary) and Membership Secretary. With over 150 members and an expanding range of activities, the present Secretary is finding his workload a bit too much, I'd sorry to say.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Business papers are enclosed. We are asking under agenda 5 for members to endorse the Committee's action in applying for Charity status. No formal application will be made until new Rules have been approved by a Special General Meeting.

The posts of Secretary and Editor are due for renewal. Both myself and Mike Cassett are willing to stand again and have been supported by the Committee. The election of Field Meetings Secretary for 1 year is to get us back in phase with our Rules, which require elections for Secretary and Editor to alternate with those of Treasurer and Field Meetings Secretary.

There are vacancies for 2 Committee Members. Lynfa Lewis has been nominated by the Committee for one post. Further nominations for any posts will be welcomed on the form provided, or a copy of it, and should reach me by 11th March.

Last year we warned of a likely rise in subscriptions. You will be pleased to know that it is not necessary this year, but there is likely to be an increase proposed at the 1996 AGM.

PLANT FOSSILS OF THE BRITISH COAL MEASURES

The Palaeontological Association produces a series of field guides to fossils, covering the London Clay, Chalk, Zechstein reefs and Oxford Clay. The latest addition is of particular relevance to South Wales - **Plant Fossils of the British Coal**

Measures. The book is written for the non-specialist and a short introduction to Coal Measures ecology and fossils is followed by a series of identification keys accompanied by photographs and line drawings. It retails at £12.00, but the Palaeontological Association have agreed to a **special offer**: members of this Group can buy it for just £9.00 before the end of March. An order form is enclosed and copies can be collected at meetings, or posted to you (postage 50p per copy).

OTHER PUBLICATIONS AND PROMOTIONS

Our guide to **Geological Excursions in Dyfed** is nearly sold out, and the companion guide to **Powys** is selling well (at £11 to members). Many other field guides can be ordered and examined at most meetings. And don't forget the **Colour Atlas of Rocks and Minerals in Thin Section** - an excellent and beautifully illustrated guide for £14.95. I also still have copies of the **Geological Map of the World** at £7.50 each.

Clothing with the Group's logo is still available, and again items can be examined at meetings- many being worn by members. Orders can only be processed in batches of 6 - there are. 6 heads on the embroidering machine - and we apologise for any delay in supplying orders. We have now found that woolly hats are available and will make up orders with these.

CONSERVATION

Geological conservation activity in the region was stimulated by our Conservation Forum in Cardiff last April. A successful conservation day was held at Llandeilo in November, with coverage in the Western Mail. A Glamorgan-Gwent R.I.G.S. Group has been set up under the Chairmanship of Prof Hike Brooks. Dr Jana Horak, of the National Museum, is the Secretary, and Lynda Garfield is our official representative. If members want to be individually involved, please contact Jana Horak.

WRITHLINGTON DAYS

At our November lecture, Ed Jarzembowski described the wonderful Coal Measures insects collected from the Writhlington Reserve in Avon. Collecting days are planned for Sunday 9 April (specially for young people, but all. welcome), Saturday 10 June and Saturday 7 October. If you want to take part, please contact Peter Austen (01323-899237) at weekends or after 6.30 pm.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP

THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION 1994-1995

April 1995

Chairman; Peter Hodges
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Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Lynda Garfield
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Our next event is the field day on **Sunday 23 April**. Unfortunately, our scheduled trip to Solva has not proved possible. However, we have arranged an excellent alternative - our **CHAIRMAN'S FIELD DAY to the Vale of Glamorgan**. Peter Hodges will guide us round fossiliferous Jurassic localities in the Ogmore-Southerndown area, including several less commonly visited inland localities.

MEET at 11.00 am at the flagpole in the main car park by the river mouth at Ogmore-by-Sea (grid reference SS 8615 7529), where cars will be left for much of the day. A pub will be visited for lunch. Bring hammers and fossil collecting gear.

Regrettably, we also have to cancel our field weekend to the Isle of Wight, planned for the Bank Holiday weekend of 6-8 May. As an alternative, however, the Open University Geological Society have kindly invited members of our Group to join them in a trip to Minehead on the same weekend. If you want to take part in that weekend, or want more details, please contact Jan Ashton-Jones, Kiddleys Copse, Mordiford, Hereford HR1 4LR, telephone 01432-870827.

And don't forget the **T.R. Owen Memorial Lecture** on Friday 9th June at University of Wales Swansea. Professor Brian Williams, formerly of Bristol University and now at Aberdeen, will give 2 talks - **TR Owen - A Fond Remembrance of South Wales Fieldwork** followed by **Old Red Sandstone Basins: Wales and Beyond**. They will begin at 7.00, with refreshments from 6.30.

Our members are also invited on a field day being led by Dr Mike Simms, who gave our Student Lecture a couple of years back. He will be looking at **Carboniferous Limestone and Landforms of the Llangattock Area** on **Sunday 20 August**. Meet at 10.30 am in the main car park at Crickhowell (on the Abergavenny side of the town). The day will involve a circular walk of about 4 miles over moderately rugged ground. Bring a packed lunch and sensible footwear.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a list of walks with Sid Howfells in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park from April to September. As those who tried to examine the geology of

Treffgarne with Sid in February know. Sid has had his dose of fieldwork rainfall for the rest of the century, so there should be fine weather on these works. Maybe!

Some members may also be interested in a study weekend on the Archaeology of Gower at University of Wales Swansea from 21-23 July. Full details can be obtained from Howard Middleton-Jones, Willow Bank Cottage, Sandy Lane, Parkmill, Swansea SA3 2ER, telephone 01792-232970.

GEOLOGY MAP OF WALES

The British Geological survey have recently published their long-awaited Geology Map of Wales. This sells at £9.50, but we are able to offer it to you at the **bargain price of £7.50**, including postage. An order form is included with this newsletter. Please return this to me by **Friday 12 May** to make sure of your copy. Please note that I will not be able to post flat copies: you will have to collect them from me.

CHARITY STATUS AND RULE CHANGES

The recent Annual General Meeting approved the Committee's decision to apply for Charity status. To this end, a draft version of a revised set of rules is enclosed. These have been agreed by the Committee, and should come close to satisfying the Charity Commissioners.

Please read the draft Rules and let any Committee member have any comments. If possible, jot your comments down in writing and pass them on or send them to me or any other Committee member. Please do this **by the end of August**. Another Committee meeting is planned for mid-September, at which we will discuss members' comments. If these necessitate major revisions to the draft Rules, the consultation exercise will be repeated. If changes in September are minor, the Rules will then be informally submitted to the Charity Commissioners, who may recommend further changes.

Please note that the submission of new Rules to the Charity Commissioners in a formal application for Charity status will not be made until the Rules have been approved by a Special General Meeting. All members will be advised in writing of the date, venue and business of that meeting. We will try to hold it at one of the scheduled lecture meetings of the 1995/6 session.

The main changes involved in the proposed rules are as follows:

1. Title - formal adoption of a bilingual version (which I rendered incorrectly in the last newsletter) - Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru.

3. Powers - most of these are as recommended by the Charity Commissioners.
6. Committee - change of title from Chairman and Vice-Chairman to President and Vice-President; introduction of posts of Membership and Programme Secretary; reduction of past Presidents' sentence to two years.
7. Incorporation of the Committee's standing orders into the Group's Rules.

As was raised at the Annual General Meeting, the application for Charity status does not cost the Group anything. Charity status will render the Group exempt from tax in, for example, the sale of publications, and is required by law for Groups with charitable objectives and an annual turnover which we already exceed.

These are the Rules which govern this Group. Please do read them, and please do comment on any aspect which concerns you or which you think should be improved. Thank-you.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

Lynda Garfield attended the first meeting of the Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group on behalf of the GA South Wales Group. RIGS, you will doubtlessly remember, stands for "Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites" and the Glamorgan-Gwent group was set up under the Chairmanship of Hike Brooks as a direct result of the Conservation day we held last April in Cardiff. Lynda has prepared a summary of the RIGS Group's aims, and we are all invited to comment on these, as indicated on the enclosed sheet. Comments should be sent to Lynda, who will pass them on to the RIGS Group.

Please give some thought to this, as geological conservation is an important movement these days, and geology risks becoming the poor relation to other branches of environmental studies if we don't act quickly and effectively in support of the subject we all enjoy and are fascinated by. For example, it is a pleasure to see more and more display boards appearing around the countryside which describe and explain natural features of the environment and wildlife. But how many of them include mention of the geology? To raise the profile of geology in such situations is one of the aims of RIGS Groups, and they can do that all the better with helpful comments from all of us.

CLOTHING

Summer is coming - so I'm told - so what better time than now to stock up on tee shirts, polo shirts, sweat shirts for those cooler evenings, and perhaps even woolly hats ready for next winter. To this end, an order form is enclosed for the Group's range of attractive clothing. **Woolly hats** are a new line, selling at an attractive £4.40.

In anticipation of the Welsh version of the Group's name being approved, we have introduced an alternative version of the embroidered logo with **Grŵp De Cymru** instead of "South Wales Group". Because the company that supplies us has set up a special sewing head, we are limited in what changes we can make. "Geologists' Association" will remain in English, since that is a part of the parent association's motif. **Please make it clear on your order form whether you want the Welsh or the English version on your clothing.**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

About 40 members attended the Annual General Meeting in March at Cardiff. Lynfa Lewis and Mike Sullivan were approved as Committee members for the period 1995-1998. Alan Stevens (Vice-Chairman), Brenda Bruck and Mervyn Howells (Committee Members), and Clare Woodley (Student Member) came to the end of their terms of service and were warmly thanked. The business meeting was followed by a fascinating talk on the geology of the Second Severn Crossing, given by Mr Tony Thomas of the engineering company Halcrow.

WRITHLINGTON DAYS

Just a reminder of the dates of collecting days at the Writhlington Reserve in Avon, arranged by the Geologists' Association. The reserve comprises colliery waste which has yielded abundant fossil plants and insects. Collecting days are planned for Saturday 10 June and Saturday 7 October. If you want to take part, please contact Peter Austen (01323-899237) at weekends or after 6.30 pm.

1995-1996 PROGRAMME

There is just enough space left for me to invite you now to consider sending in your renewal for 1995/96. Although this is not due until September 1st, we can save on posting separate renewal letters if you complete the enclosed renewal form now. If you do, you will receive your 1995/96 membership card and first newsletter in late September or early October. If you don't renew now, you will be sent a letter and renewal form in August or early September.

The programme for 1995/96 is still being finalised, but the first lecture meeting should be on Saturday 21st October, followed by the Student Lecture in Swansea on the evening of Wednesday 1st November. We have invited speakers to talk on topics including the Quaternary in Wales, marine geology, minerals, geology of the Middle East, and geology of a Jurassic island, so a varied and interesting programme is in prospect.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



Geologists' Association

Grŵp De Cymru

South Wales Group

Thirty-seventh Session 1995-1996

OCTOBER 1995

Chairman: Peter Hodges
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharps

Vice-Chairman: Lynda Garfield
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

HERE IT IS AT L-O-N-G LAST! Your membership card and first newsletter for 1995/96, Welcome back to the Group and many thanks indeed for renewing your membership - particularly the many of you who heeded the call and renewed back in April. We have a varied and interesting programme of lectures and field meetings in the coming session, and more bargain offers. Details of the first are in this newsletter.

1995-1996 PROGRAMME

The session got under way in September with another practical site conservation day, this time at Pen-y-lan Quarry in Cardiff. The first lecture meeting was in Cardiff on Saturday 21 October, when Professor Peter Worsley from Reading gave an excellent talk on the geological context of early human remains from Britain, including those from Paviland and Pont Newydd in Wales.

The 8th **Annual Student Lecture** will be on Wednesday 1st November, in Swansea. Dr Adrian Cramp, from the Marine Geology Group, at University of Wales Cardiff, will talk on **The Palaeoclimatic Record from Ocean Sediments**. This is currently a topic of great interest in geology and in environmental studies generally. Young and old alike will be welcome. The talk starts at 7.00 pm, with refreshments from 6.30.

There will be a **Field Meeting** on Sunday 12 November to examine **Fossil Plants of the Forest of Dean**, led by Mr J Hilton from the University of Wales Cardiff. Numbers are limited, so if you want to go, please return the enclosed slip to John Cope, who will send you further details.

On Saturday 18th November the lecture in Swansea will be given by Dr Jana Horak of the National Museum of Wales, on the

topic of **Granites and their Role in the Early Evolution of North Wales**. Finally for 1995, and most topical in this 50th anniversary year of the ending of World War 2, Dr MS Rosenbaum will talk on **Geology in War** on Saturday 9 December in Cardiff.

Lectures and field meetings continue into 1996. Details are on your membership card and there will be a newsletter with more information early in the New Year. On 20 January, in Cardiff, Dr Spencer Roberts will talk about **The United Arab Emirates: Hot Rocks in the Desert**. Our Joint Meeting with the Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group on an applied geological topic will be on Saturday 17 February, in Swansea, when C Wynne will talk on **Contaminated Land and its Assessment**, a very relevant topic to South Wales. Another field meeting will be held on Saturday 24 February, when John Cope and Sid Howells will guide us around the Precambrian and Lower Palaeozoic Rocks of Haverfordwest.

National Science Week for 1996 will take place from 15 to 25 March - a long week indeed! Our activities during the week will include our **Annual General Meeting** and **Retiring Chairman's Address** - Peter Hodges will talk on the **Geology of a Jurassic Island** on the morning of Saturday 16 March in Swansea. Note please the earlier start for this meeting. We also hope to have several geological guided walks on the weekend afternoons - details will follow in the New Year.

There will be more field meetings in the spring - a visit to **The Big Pit** on Saturday 30 March (there will be an entrance charge, but we will receive preferential group rates) and a weekend trip to the Dorset Coast with John Cope over the weekend 18-19 May. Although not hosted by our Group this year, we will be welcome at the 6th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture**, to be held on the evening of Wednesday 5th June at the Banwen Community Centre in the upper Dulais Valley. Dr Douglas Bassett will talk on **South Wales Geologists**.

Dates, times and venues are summarised on the membership card. Meetings in Cardiff are in the Department of Earth Sciences, on the first floor of the main College building. Meetings in Swansea are in the Natural Sciences Building. Parking is available at both venues, although a charge may sometimes be made by the Universities. If you are uncertain how to find the venues, give me a ring. Lecture meetings are preceded by free **refreshments** from about ½ hour beforehand. This is an opportunity to meet other members, bring in unusual specimens, make your opinions known to committee members, or examine sales items. After each lecture meeting the speaker is hosted to **lunch** or dinner by the Group. Some committee members usually join the speaker, but anyone is welcome to attend. Just contact Dr John Cope a few days in advance so that he can book at the restaurant. Attendance at lectures is free, but there is a £1 charge for most **field days**, which goes towards the Group's public liability insurance cover. There is no

charge for Student Members. Safety helmets will be provided if needed, although you may prefer to buy your own. Usually you have to make your own way to field meetings, but contact the Field Secretary - Dr John Cope - if you need a lift. Finally, A4 sized **posters** of the session's programme and of individual meetings are available: if you can display any of these please contact me.

APPLICATION FOR CHABITY STATUS

The draft revised rules were circulated to all members in the spring. A few comments have been received and were considered by the Committee at a meeting in September. The draft rules have now been submitted to the Charity Commissioners, in the form in which they were circulated in April. The Charity Commissioners may suggest minor changes. The final version of the Rules will be put to the Membership at a Special General Meeting for approval. If they are approved, a formal application for Charity Status will be made to the Charity Commissioners. We hope that the Special General Meeting can be held some time during this 1995/96 session.

WALES FROM SPACE

Following hard on the heels of our bargain offer on the Geological Map of Wales, we have agreed another bargain price with the British Geological Survey - this time on their new publication **Wales from Space**. This is a **stunning full-colour satellite image of Wales and the Welsh Borderland**, which measures 65 x 90 cm and has a title and description in Welsh and English. It retails at £5.50, but we have a limited number available for £4.50. You can buy one at a lecture meeting, where you can see what they look like, or you can order one using the enclosed form. Only flat versions are available, so we cannot post them to you, but we can put a copy aside for you to collect at a lecture meeting or, by arrangement, from University of Wales Swansea or the National Museum in Cardiff.

I know that some people were too late to order a copy of the **Geological Map of Wales** back in June. We have obtained more copies of this, which are of the folded version only, for £8.00 (the retail price is £9.50). These can be kept for you to collect at a lecture meeting, or posted to you for an extra 50p.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS AND PROMOTIONS

In case you hadn't noticed, there have been 2 important developments in our range of **clothing**. Firstly, the logo is now available in alternative Welsh or English versions, the Welsh version saying 'Grŵp De Cymru'. Secondly a new addition

to the range is an excellent woolly hat - just the job for the weather we sometimes experience on our field trips!

The Geologists' Association has revised the marketing of its series of field guides. The new-style guides now all sell at £7.80, including postage and packing. We still have some copies left at the old prices - contact me for further details, or look out for them at lecture meetings. And don't forget our own guides to "**Geological Excursions in Powys**" for £11, and "**Geological Excursions in Dyfed**" for £5.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

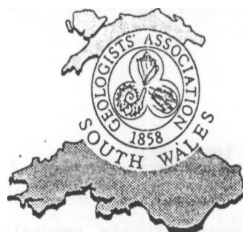
Moves to strengthen geological conservation in Wales are creeping forward, principally through the R.I.G.S. (Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites) framework. There are now RIGS Groups in Dyfed and Glamorgan, and an All-Wales RIGS Forum was held in Llandudno at the end of September, attended by some members of our own GA Group. The Conservation Forum in Cardiff in April 1993 and the Conservation Days at Dynefwr Park and Pen-y-lan Quarry have been positive contributions by our Group to the Conservation movement, and the topic is regularly discussed at length at our Committee meetings to consider further ways we can encourage you all to **make** a contribution. If you have any ideas for how our Group can aid geological conservation, or if you want to know more about what is going on in Wales, please contact me or any Committee member.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

The **Data Protection Act** requires me to remind you, especially new members, that computerised records are kept of names, addresses and membership details. These are only used within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, principally for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record you can write to me to have them removed.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



Geologists' Association

Grŵp De Cymru

South Wales Group

Thirty-seventh Session 1995-1996

FEBRUARY 1996

Chairman: Peter Hodges
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Vice-Chairman: Lynda Garfield
Field Secretary: John Cope
Editor: Mike Bassett

FIELD EXCURSION - SATURDAY 24th FEBRUARY

The geology and scenery of the coastline between Broad Haven and Newgale, Pembrokeshire will be the topic for the field day on Saturday 24th February, under the guidance of Sid Howells and John Cope. The day will be spent examining Ordovician and Carboniferous rocks and fossils, spectacular folding and faulting, glacial features, economic geology and impressive coastal geomorphology - something for everyone! **MEET** at 10.00 am outside the National Park Information Centre at Broad Haven car park (SM 863 140) - this is 7 km WSW of Haverfordwest along the B4341. Walking boots and warm, waterproof clothing are essential: there will be several miles of rough walking on rocky foreshores and cliffs. Bring a packed lunch, or have a bar meal at the Druidston Hotel: if you prefer the latter, please ring Sid on 01646-672538 on or before 22nd February.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SATURDAY 16th MARCH

Papers are enclosed for the annual business meetings, which begin at **10.30** am on Saturday 16th March, in the Department of Geography at University of Wales Swansea. Refreshments will be available from 10.00 - please note the earlier start.

Following the endorsement at last year's Annual General Meeting, the Committee has continued with progress towards applying for registered charity status. As has been explained in Newsletters and at last year's AGM, this requires revision of the Rules, and draft Rules were circulated in April. Minor amendments have been made, and the enclosed Rules have been approved by the Charity Commission as suitable to accompany an application. The Commission did, however, suggest rewording the Group's Objects (new rule 2) as "to advance the education of the public through the promotion and research of geology *with particular reference to the area of South Wales*". The Committee proposes adopting the first part of this rewording, but not the part in italics, and the Charity Commission has indicated that this will be acceptable. **Please read the enclosed Rules carefully**, and bring any objections to the meeting. I do apologise for the pages in the Rules being out of order - the page numbers are correct.

Adoption of new Rules requires the approval of a Special General Meeting, which will precede the Annual General Meeting. Those present at the SGM will be asked to approve the deletion of the old Rules and adoption of the new Rules, and to approve the Committee's formal submission for registered charity status.

The bad news for the AGM is that, as Tom warned at the 1994 AGM, it has become necessary to propose an increase in subscription rates. We hope you will still consider membership good value for money. Elections will take place for the new Committee, and assuming the new Rules are accepted, there will be some changes to the Committee. The post of Chairman should be directly replaced by President, and there will be new posts of Programme Secretary (who will in part do the job of the present Field Excursions Secretary) and Membership Secretary. The new posts have been created to spread the work of running the Group, and we hope their creation will ensure its smooth running in future.

As is customary, the Committee is nominating people for vacant posts, **Lynda Garfield** should replace Peter Hodges and become the Group's first President, while **Gareth Davies** has agreed to stand as Vice-President. **Tom Sharpe** is standing for reappointment as Treasurer, **Lesley Chcrns** has agreed to stand as Programme Secretary, **Mike Lees** as Membership Secretary, and **Eddie Callaway** and **Stephen Plant** as Members of Committee. We hope you will endorse these nominations, but others are invited to stand for the vacant posts, and a nomination form is enclosed. We have no nominee for **Student Member** - volunteers, please? Stepping down from the Committee will be John Cope, who has served a lengthy term in numerous valued capacities, most recently as Field Secretary, and Sid Howells. I am sure they will be thanked formally at the AGM, but I would like to record my personal thanks to them both now.

And after the AGM? We all take a deep breath, and enjoy Peter Hodges' retiring Chairman's Address on the **Geology of a Jurassic Island**. It promises to be a busy morning!

Set96 - SCIENCE WEEK - 15-25 MARCH

The third National Week of Science, Engineering and Technology will take place from the 15th to the 25th March. A leaflet is enclosed giving details of **Landscapes, Rocks and Fossils of South Wales** - a programme of half-day guided walks organised by this Group. There are 6 walks, aimed particularly at newcomers to geology, although existing members will be very welcome at any of them. There is no charge for any of the walks. We hope to produce leaflets outlining the geology of each walk, and have been awarded a grant from the Royal Society's Committee on the Public Understanding of Science, which is very much appreciated.

As well as choices within the guided walks programme, there is a further choice on the afternoon of Saturday 16 March. Those who don't wish to travel east after the AGM and Chairman's Address may be interested in a day of lectures at Swansea University, entitled "**Origins**". Afternoon talks will cover "The Origin of the Earth" at 1.45 (to be given by yours truly), "The Origin of Life" at 2.45 and "The Origin of Mankind" at 4.00. There is no charge for these events, which will be in Lecture Theatre D of the Maths/Physics Building (across the road from where we hold our meetings). There are

likely to be other interesting events in South Wales during set96 - keep an eye and an ear on the media closer to the time.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Please don't forget the other events in our programme. Our annual joint lecture with the Geological Society Southern Wales Group takes place on 17th February, on **Contaminated Land and its Assessment**. An exciting morning is lined up at the **Big Pit mining museum** for Saturday 30th March - a leaflet is enclosed. We have to know numbers in advance, so please return the booking slip by **Friday 22 March**. For details of the **Field Weekend to the Dorset Coast** on 18-19 May, please contact John Cope at the Department of Earth Sciences, UW Cardiff, PC Box 914, Cardiff CF1 3YE. Finally, the 6th TR Owen Memorial Lecture will be hosted by the Swansea Department of Adult Continuing Education on the evening of Wednesday 5th June. Dr Douglas Bassett will talk on **South Wales Geologists** at the DOVE Centre in Banwen, near Seven Sisters at the head of the Dulais valley.

We are already planning activities for the 1996/97 session. One new initiative is a meeting aimed specifically at welcoming new members and helping them to find out more about geology, and meet other members. This is planned for **Saturday 7th September**, in Swansea. We hope to have an informal meeting in the morning, at which people will bring along specimens and photographs to have them identified - or just to show them off! - followed by a field trip on Cower in the afternoon. Put the date in your diary now, and keep your eyes peeled over the summer for good specimens or photos to bring along!

PUBLICATIONS AND CLOTHING

There are still copies left of the spectacular **Satellite Image of Wales** (£4.50) and the **Geological Map of Wales** (£8.00). If you want a copy of either, please contact me. And don't forget **Geological Excursions in Powys** - excellent value at £11. We still have the full range of sweat shirts, tee-shirts, jackets and hats available at very reasonable prices. The colour of your first batch is probably now out of fashion, so contact me or Jim Chetcuti for an order form, or ask at any meeting.

The Geologists' Association have just published a brand new guide to **The Aberystwyth District** (GA Guide No. 54). This is a superb book. An introduction deals with the Aberystwyth Grits and Borth Mudstones, structures, fossils, geomorphology and glacial deposits, and is followed by 19 itineraries covering the Aberystwyth Grits, modern sedimentary environments. Quaternary geology, and the Plynlimon area, including Devil's Bridge and the Cwmystwyth mines. Copies can be ordered for £7.80, including postage, from Geological Society Publishing House, Unit 7, Brassmill Enterprise Centre, Brassmill Lane, Bath BA1 3JN. Make cheques payable to "The Geological Society Publishing House". They accept credit card orders by phone (01225-445046) or fax (01225-442836) and now handle all sales of GA guides. Tell them you are a member of the GA South Wales Group: this will entitle you to the reduced price quoted above.

CONSERVATION AND RIGS (REGIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL SITES)

The Third Welsh RIGS Forum is to be held in Swansea in September 1996. There will be field trips on the Friday afternoon, talks on the Saturday morning and more field visits on the Saturday afternoon and Sunday of the weekend **27th-29th September**. Members of this Group are invited to attend sessions for no charge. The Forum will be based at the University's hall of residence at Clyne Castle, where accommodation and meals can be booked. **HELP** is needed for staffing registration desks, operating visual aids and helping in the organisation of field trips, and a limited number of **free places for accommodation and meals** available for helpers. If you can help - whether or not you want to take advantage of the free accommodation offer - please contact me as soon as possible.

The RIGS Forum is an important event, bringing together people with an interest in conserving geological features from all over Wales. We must ensure the Swansea event is a success. A registration form is enclosed: although there is no fee for attendance, numbers need to be known by September 9th. Please don't think this is some academic meeting: the aim of the RIGS scheme is to involve ordinary people with an interest in geology, but not necessarily any formal training, to participate in the conservation of our geological heritage. **Please think about attending and if possible helping, and return the form or contact me as soon as possible. Thank-you.**

STILL MORE EVENTS!

Other geological groups will welcome our members at their meetings. The **Russell Society** is a national mineralogical organisation with regional groups: a copy of their summer field programme is enclosed. The **Open University Geological Society Severnside Branch** has activities which include Ogmore-by-Sea on Sunday 21 April (with yours truly), Mayday Bank Holiday weekend in west Wales, and a June 1996 trip to the Pyrenees: for further details contact Jan Ashton-Jones, Kiddleys Copse, Mordiford, Hereford HR1 4LR (01432-870827) or David Care (01222-611140): please enclose sae if you write. The **West of England GA** holds talks and field trips in the Bristol area, including "Earthquake damage at archaeological sites" on March 12 and a visit to the Severn mudflats in April: contact John Toller (0117-9696834). The **Bath Geological Society** isn't too far away and has talks on climate change (March 14) and caves (April 11) and field trips to the south Cotswolds (April 21) and Forest of Dean (May 11): contact Lothar Rcspondck (01249-712350). **Finally**, the national GA may still have places on what should be a superb trip to the **Basque-Cantabrian basin of northern Spain** in late September or October: contact Lynn Allen, 32 Elmcroft' Court, Burnet Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 9ES (01442-67525).

Well, there's no more room in my diary now, and there's certainly no more room in this newsletter. I look forward to seeing you at a meeting soon.

Gcraint Owen (Secretary)

Session 38 1996-97

Geologists' Association - South Wales Group

Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru

Registered Charity Number 1054303



Thirty-eighth Session 1996-1997

OCTOBER 1996

President: Lynda Garfield

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Gareth Davies

Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

Welcome to the 1996/97 session of activities for the Geologists' Association South Wales Group. Thank-you very much for renewing your membership, and welcome to all those who have joined over the summer. The last Newsletter was sent out back in February. Plenty has happened since then, and there are plenty of activities in store, but let's begin with what's on offer for the autumn.

1996-1997 PROGRAMME

The first lecture of the session will be on Saturday 19 October in Swansea. Prof Mike Bassett will talk on the latest research concerning **Baltica: the evolution of a Silurian continent**. Our 9th Student Lecture will be in Cardiff on the evening of Wednesday 6 November. Dr Warren Perkins, from the Physics Department at Swansea, will talk on **The origin of the solar system**. He gave this talk at the *Origins* day in Swansea during Science Week, which most of us missed because it clashed with our own AGM. Keeping with the theme of origins and beginnings, Prof Dianne Edwards will give a talk in Swansea on Saturday 16 November on **Early land plants: the Chinese puzzle**. Dianne was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in the spring. As a Group, we congratulate her on this prestigious award, and are delighted that she will be contributing again to our programme.

The first **field meeting** of the session will be on Saturday 23 November. Steve Morris, from the Earth Sciences Department in Cardiff, will guide us around some of the **Silurian deep-sea sedimentary systems** in the Rhayader area. Further details are enclosed. Finally for 1996, Dr Keith Ball from the British Geological Survey will give a talk in Cardiff on Saturday 14 December on **Cave Geology**.

1997 gets under way with a new type of meeting. We've called it a **Holiday Geology** evening. A few members will be showing slides of some geologically interesting places they have visited. At this dreary time of year we hope this will get us thinking about summer holidays. The venue will be the National Museum of Wales, who have kindly offered us a snack buffet, and we will also be able to visit the Evolution of Wales gallery. Make a note of the date now - Friday 10 January.

Other meetings in 1997 include our joint meeting with the Geological Society group in January, when we will hear about **An important new mineral discovery**, a discussion of **Glaciers and climate change** in February and a talk on **Exploring the ocean floor** to follow the **Annual General Meeting** in March. Several **field meetings** are planned for the New Year, to collect plant fossils from an opencast site, Lower Palaeozoic fossils in the Tywi Valley, and a visit to the extraordinary mud springs in Wiltshire. We also hope to hold another programme of guided walks during **set97 Science Week**, in mid-March.

Dates, times and venues are summarised on the membership card. Meetings in Cardiff are in the Department of Earth Sciences, on the first floor of the main University building. Meetings in Swansea are in the Natural Sciences Building. Parking is available at both venues, although there may be a charge. Free refreshments are available for about half an hour before each lecture, when you can also order or buy items from our range of clothing, or some of the field guides we have stock of. Remember too that we take the speaker to lunch after each talk: anyone is welcome to come, although it helps if you can give me a ring a few days in advance. Attendance at lectures is free, but there is a £1 charge for most field days. This covers the premium for the Group's public liability insurance cover. There is no charge for student Members on field days. Finally, if you can display posters of our programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please let me know.

NEWS FROM LAST SESSION

At a Special General Meeting back in March the new **Rules** proposed by the Committee were accepted without revision. Everyone should have received a copy prior to the AGM: if you need another copy, please contact me.

A formal submission was then made to the Charity Commission for **registered charity status** for the Geologists' Association - South Wales Group / Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grwp De Cymru. The submission was accepted and our registered charity number appears on this newsletter. In practice this is unlikely to result in changes to the running of the Group, but it is a legal requirement that we registered. We have no plans at the moment, for example, to introduce a deed of covenant scheme for subscriptions: the current subscription rates would not justify the considerable extra effort that would involve.

During **Science Week set96**, also last March, we organised a programme of guided geological walks. These were very well attended, by a pleasing mix of existing members and new faces, several of whom have since joined. Special thanks must go to Steve Howe, who coped with about 100 people at Penarth! The walks resulted in the publication of new **walk leaflets**, to Ogmore-by-Sea, Porth-yr-ogof to Sgwd Clungwyn, Penwyllt, and Llansteffan, with a fifth - Barry Island - to follow shortly. Copies can be bought for 25p each at meetings, or by writing to me. We are keen to encourage wide distribution of these leaflets - if anyone can arrange for a local retailer to display them, please contact me.

The **TR Owen lecture** in Banwen in June was well attended. Dr Douglas Bassett - one of our Honorary Members - gave a fascinating talk on South Wales

Geologists, and distributed a draft version of an archive he is preparing that includes details of all past committee members of this group.

OTHER EVENTS

Other geological groups hold events within reach of most of our members. It may be possible to include a list of these events for the coming year with this newsletter, but just in case it isn't, some of them are listed here.

10 November Lectures on Triassic footprints, drilling for gold, and old rocks in North Wales - *Open University Geological Society* - 10 am, Chepstow Leisure Centre (contact 01222-611140)

15 November A Mineralogy of Scotland - lecture, *Russell Society* - 7.30, Chemistry Lecture Theatre, Cardiff University (contact 01242-523444 or 01633-440600)

12 December Glacial Lake Teifi and landslipping at St Dogmaels - lecture, *Geological Society* - 5.30, Earth Sciences Department, Cardiff University

Members of the GA South Wales Group will be welcome at any of these events, although there may be a small charge for some.

NEWS

The geological community was saddened by the sudden death in June of Prof Rob Kidd at the age of 48. Rob was the last Professor of Geology at Swansea and moved to Cardiff when the Swansea department was closed. His successes in Cardiff as head of the Marine Geosciences Research Unit included the relocation to Cardiff for 2 years of the scientific office of JOIDES - the deep-sea drilling program. This was the first time the office had located outside the USA. Rob had been a member of this Group, which was represented at his funeral. We extend our sympathies to his family.

On a happier note, John Cope has been appointed Treasurer of the Geological Society in London. We wish him well in that work, which he takes on in addition to his teaching and research at Cardiff.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

Attempts to establish a RIGS Group in South Wales continue. As everyone is probably aware by now, RIGS stands for **Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites**, and is a network of locally-based, voluntary groups, whose aims are to liaise with planners and landowners about the use and development of geological sites, and to promote the awareness and understanding of geology through visits to sites, clearance of overgrown sites, and the development of trails for schools and the general public. RIGS Groups are well established in most English Counties and several regions of Wales. Some groups have completed successful projects, such as saving interesting quarry faces from land-fill operations, clearing rock faces in country parks, and publishing leaflets.

RIGS in South Wales took a leap forward in September when Swansea was the venue for the **Third All-Wales RIGS Forum**. About 60 delegates met to hear

stimulating talks on a variety of topics, visit sites whose educational value could be enhanced, and examine posters and displays (including one from our own Group - thanks to Lynfa Lewis and Mike Lees). The Forum was organised by the Countryside Council for Wales - the statutory conservation body - whose Chief Executive addressed the delegates on Friday evening, underlining the importance placed on this voluntary movement.

The Committee of our own GA Group has made it clear that whilst we will encourage, support and publicise the activities of a RIGS Group, we cannot organise it - our core activities will remain the provision of a stimulating programme of lectures and field trips for our members and the promotion of general geological interest and understanding. A **RIGS Group for Glamorgan-Gwent** is now taking shape, under the Chairmanship of Dr John Conway, a soil scientist based in Cirencester. John would be delighted to hear from any of our members who want to help in RIGS activities - for example, by recommending suitable sites, visiting sites as part of a small group to consider aspects of safety, access and publicity, or helping to establish links between the RIGS Group and local schools. If you want to help, or find out more about what you could do, please contact John directly - Dr JS Conway, 6 The Dawneys, Crudwell, Wiltshire SN16 9HE. John is hoping to organise a preliminary RIGS field day, at which the part people can play would become much clearer: look out for more news in the future.

Also on the conservation front, everyone should have received a copy of ***Cadwyr Creigiau Cymru*** in the spring. This newsletter, produced by the Countryside Council for Wales, provides information about geological sites and research in Wales. Production and distribution costs were not borne by us. We hope to be able to distribute further copies as they are produced.

PROMOTIONS

Christmas isn't too far away now, so bear in mind our excellent range of fine **clothing** bearing the Group's logo. You can order items at lecture meetings, or contact Jim Chetcuti - tel: 01222-708403. Remember too that South Wales Group members can now buy **Geologists' Association Field Guides** directly from the publishers at £7.80 each, including postage - ring the Geological Society Publishing House on 01225-445046. Recent additions to the series include Aberystwyth, Castleton, the Weald, and Cyprus. You can also buy copies of some of them at bargain prices at our lecture meetings.

DATA PROTECTION

Finally, a reminder that computerised records are kept of members' names, addresses and membership record. These are used only within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, mainly for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record, please let me know.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



Thirty-eighth Session 1996-1997

DECEMBER 1996

President: Lynda Garfield
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Gareth Davies
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

MERRY CHRISTMAS everybody! I hope 1997 will be successful and enjoyable for you. To start it on the right track this Newsletter brings you details of geological events and activities for the New Year.

HOLIDAY GEOLOGY

We're hoping for an excellent turnout for our meeting at the National Museum in Cardiff on the evening of **Friday 10 January**. A few members will give short illustrated presentations about the geology of exotic places they have visited. At the moment it looks as though we shall be visiting Africa, America and the West Indies. And the evening has more to offer - the Museum has kindly allowed us to visit the stunning *Evolution of Wales* Gallery, and will provide a snack buffet. So banish those mid-winter blues and turn your mind to summer and exotic, far-away places.

Because we will be visiting after normal Museum hours, we will have to gain admission through the rear entrance. We will have to be let in **as one group at 6.30**, so don't be late. We will need to know numbers a few days in advance, so please ring me (01792-295141 or -472687) or send back the slip on the bottom of the enclosed flier, by lunchtime on **Wednesday 8 January**. That doesn't leave you very long, but it doesn't take much time to decide you can't miss some awe-inspiring slide shows, another astonishing look at the *Evolution of Wales*, and a free buffet! Since part of our aim as a Group is to spread the word of what a fascinating subject geology is, please **bring children, friends and neighbours!**

OTHER EVENTS

Our first lecture meeting of the New Year will be on **Saturday 18th January**, in Swansea. This will be our annual joint lecture with the Geological Society's Regional Group, the organisation of which alternates between us. This year it has been our turn, and we have invited Dr Chris Morrissey, of RTZ, who will speak on **An**

Important New Mineral Discovery. The lecture will begin at 11.00 in the Department of Geography, with free refreshments from 10.30.

The next lecture will be on **Saturday 15th February**, in Cardiff. Prof Julian Dowdeswell from the University of Wales at Aberystwyth will talk on **Glaciers and Climate Change** - a topic of great concern and interest - in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University, starting at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30.

The following Saturday - **22 February** - there will be a field meeting to seek out **Coal Measures Plant Fossils from Tondur**, guided by Dr Chris Cleal and Steve Howe, from the National Museum. Full details are on the enclosed sheet.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be on **Saturday 8th March**. This year it will again be in Swansea - the AGM is held in the same place for 2 years so that the retiring President's Address alternates between Swansea and Cardiff. The AGM begins at 10.30 with refreshments from 10.00 - please note the earlier start. It will be followed by a talk from Dr Chris McLeod of the Department of Earth Sciences at Cardiff, on **Exploring the Ocean Floor** - another meeting not to be missed. Papers for the AGM will be sent out in mid-February.

The 4th National Week of Science, Engineering and Technology (**set97**) will run from 14th to 23rd March. As last year, we will be organising several geological walks, aimed mainly at beginners to geology, and there will be other events in South Wales. Further details will be sent in February.

An event that doesn't appear on the programme with your membership card is the 7th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture**, hosted this year by the Department of Earth Sciences at Cardiff. The provisional arrangement is that Dr Nigel Woodcock from the University of Cambridge will give a talk entitled **Old Faults Never Die** on the evening of **Tuesday 10th June**.

If you have ideas for speakers or topics you would like to see in our programme, please let me or any other Committee member know.

Lectures of the **Russell Society** coming soon, at which we will be welcome, include *The Bere-Alston silver-lead mines* with Peter Claughton on 17 January, and *Zeolites* with Dr Michael Doel on 21 February. Both meetings start at 7.30 in the Chemistry Lecture Theatre at University of Wales Cardiff - contact 01242-523444 or 01633-440600 for more details. The **Geologists' Association** is running a field weekend (9-11 May) to the St Davids area with John Cope and Richard Bevins - contact Lynn Allen for more information (tel: 01442-67525).

COMMITTEE CHANGES

I expect you have noticed in your membership card some changes to Committee posts, as well as personnel, for 1996/97. The changes are enshrined in the new Rules that were circulated in February 1996, approved at the Special General Meeting in March, and submitted in our application for registered Charity status.

The former posts of Chairman and Vice-Chairman have been replaced by a **President** and **Vice-President**, each serving for 2 years. Normally the Vice-President will take over as President after 2 years. Past Presidents remain as Committee members for a further 2 years. Our first President is Lynda Garfield, with Gareth Davies as Vice-President.

New posts have been created for a **Membership Secretary** and a **Programme Secretary** (the latter replacing the Field Excursions Secretary). These have become necessary because of increases in membership (now approaching 200), numbers of mailings to members, and the number and variety of programmed activities. The first Membership Secretary is Mike Lees, and the first Programme Secretary is Dr Lesley Cherns. Membership Secretary, Programme Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary and Editor are elected to 2-year terms of office. Membership and Programme matters were formerly handled by the Secretary, and I have now passed these over to Mike and Lesley respectively. This has coincided with the transfer of membership records from my ageing Amstrad PCW to a "real" computer. Some **errors** might have crept in during the transfer - check your mailing label and let Mike or myself know of any. Contact addresses and phone numbers are on your membership card.

There are 6 **Committee Members**, each serving for 3 years, so 2 are elected each year. We are moving towards some Committee Members having specific responsibilities. For example, Jim Chetcuti, looks after publicity of our events, as well as organising sales of Group clothing.

Fancy a spell on the Committee, helping to organise the Group's events and thinking of new ways in which we can further our aims - *to advance the education of the public through the promotion and research of geology*? If you do, please mention it to any Committee member at any meeting. We're always grateful for help and ideas. The Committee meets 3 or 4 times a year, in the evening, alternating between Swansea and Cardiff. The main items discussed are programme planning, publications and promotions, and the role the Group can play in geological conservation.

CLOTHING

Attractive garments emblazoned with the Group logo are still available in an astonishing range of varieties and colours, and can be ordered through Jim Chetcuti. A new order form is enclosed. A new addition is an embroidered patch that you can sew on to your own clothing or a rucksack, for just £3.50. As a Group, we do make a small surplus on the sales of these items, all of which goes directly to running the Group - visiting speakers' expenses and mailing costs. So in effect you're keeping your subscription down by buying clothing from us!

SAFETY HELMETS

At a recent Committee Meeting we decided we should encourage members who undertake geological fieldwork, whether in a group or on their own, to purchase their own safety helmet. The law requires that helmets must be worn in many situations. The Department of Earth Sciences at Cardiff has agreed that we can buy helmets through them for just £5 each. They can be ordered on the clothing order form, or by asking any Committee member. They will not be mailed, but will be delivered at a meeting. The helmets are white, and do **not** carry the GA logo. Please give serious thought to owning your own safety helmet. Goggles are also available at £5, and ought to be worn if you do any hammering of rocks. Note that we will continue to lend out safety helmets where they are needed on field trips organised by the Group.

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION

Some members may not fully understand our relationship to the Geologists' Association (GA) in London - our "parent body". The GA was founded in 1858 and is based in Burlington House in Piccadilly (as is the Geological Society - the national body for professional and academic geologists). It has over 2000 members. The GA is also a Charity, existing to promote the study of geology, interest in geology, and awareness of our geological heritage. It is run by a Council of volunteers, but has one paid member of staff at the Office in Burlington House. The GA organises a **programme** of lectures and field excursions, and publishes an excellent series of **field guides**, that are available to members at a reduced price. It produces a bi-monthly ***Circular*** full of news relating to the geological world, and a quarterly journal - the ***Proceedings***. Membership costs £21 per year to receive the Proceedings (£33.50 for joint members) or £12.50 per year without the Proceedings, and £10 for Student Members (under 22). **For more details**, contact the GA (0171-434-9298) or ask one of our Committee members, several of whom are also members of the GA.

We are a **Local Group** of the Geologists' Association. Effectively we are an independent organisation with our own rules, committee and subscriptions. We pay no subscription to the GA and they pay us no grant. We are a registered charity in our own right. There are benefits to Local Group status. Our events are listed in the *GA Circular*, our members can purchase GA field guides at reduced prices and borrow field guides from the GA Library (see below), we can call on the "clout" of the GA if we need to in connection with local problems, we can exhibit free of charge at the annual GA Reunion in London, and we can seek advice and support from GA Officers, Council Members and staff.

FIELD GUIDES

GA field guides cover areas as diverse as Iceland, Jamaica, Arran and Aberystwyth. The new guides are informative, well illustrated and easy to use for beginners and "experts" alike. They cost £7.80 each and can be obtained post-free from the Geological Society Publishing House in Bath (tel: 01225-445046) - say you are a member of the South Wales Local Group of the the GA to get the special price. We have a stock of several guides, that we sell for £4.50 each at our own meetings.

The GA also operates a **Library** from which its members can borrow articles, books and maps, for the cost of postage only. The GA has agreed that members of our Group can ask for items from their Library, provided it is done through a member of the GA. So if you're off somewhere for holiday or business, and want to know what is available in the way of geological guides, drop me a note and I will pass on your request to Eric Robinson, the GA's Librarian.

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)



Thirty-eighth Session 1996-1997

FEBRUARY 1997

President: Lynda Garfield
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Gareth Davies
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

I hope 1997 has started well for you. It certainly has for the GA - we've had several very successful meetings already. About 80 people came to the **Holiday Geology** evening at the Museum in early January. They saw photographs of some spectacular geology and scenery from Jamaica, Hawaii, Peru, Northern Ireland and Namibia, had a chance to marvel at the *Evolution of Wales*, and enjoyed a marvellous buffet kindly provided by the Museum - we were all most grateful to Mike Bassett and his staff for their hospitality. The event was a great success for the Group. A number of new members joined, and we hope that recently-joined members who were able to attend will have been made to feel welcome.

We've had 2 fascinating lectures so far this year. On 18th January our annual joint lecture with the Geological Society's South Wales group was attended by about 45 people who heard Dr Chris Morrissey talk about the richness of **mineral deposits in Europe**, some still being discovered. On 15th February Prof Julian Dowdeswell from Aberystwyth gave a stimulating talk about the health of **glaciers in the Arctic region**.

The field afternoon at **Parc Slip Opencast** site on 22 February was a great success. It was fully booked well in advance – we are sorry that some people were not able to go. The plant fossils were so plentiful, however, that we hope to repeat the event in the autumn.

The last formal lecture on our programme for this session will be on the morning of **Saturday 8 March**, in Swansea. This will follow on from our Annual General Meeting – more about that in a moment- Please note the earlier starting time: refreshments from **10.00**, with the meeting starting formally at **10.30**. The speaker will be Dr Chris MacLeod, a marine geologist from the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff. He will talk on the fascinating topic of **Exploring the Ocean Floor**.

We have 2 further field days planned for April and May. Details are not yet finalised, but we hope to have more information at the AGM. If you can't make it to

the AGM but want more information, please contact me on 01792-295141, or the Programme Secretary, Lesley Cherns on 01222-874338.

Details are now confirmed for the 7th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture**. This will be on the evening of **Tuesday 7th June**, starting at 7.00 pm in the Department of Earth Sciences at University of Wales Cardiff. The full title of the lecture is ***“Old Faults Never Die: Palaeozoic Tectonics and Sedimentation in South and Central Wales”***. The speaker is Dr Nigel Woodcock from the University of Cambridge, who has made some impressive advances in our understanding of the geological history of the Palaeozoic rocks of South and Central Wales. If you haven't made it to any of our recent field trips to central Wales, and still think of Central Wales as an area of monotonous grey slates, then attendance at Dr Woodcock's lecture is compulsory! And if you have been on the field trips you'll need no further encouragement to attend.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As mentioned above, the AGM will start at 10.30 on the morning of **Saturday 8th March**, in the Geography Department at University of Wales Swansea. Please do make an effort to attend. Although it doesn't sound a very glamorous event, it is important for the well-being of the Group that there is a healthy turnout for the AGM. Besides which, we hope it won't last too long, and it will be followed by Dr MacLeod's lecture which promises to be fascinating.

The business of the AGM this year will comprise reports from the Secretary, Treasurer and Editor, followed by the elections to vacancies on the Committee. No proposal to increase subscriptions this year! An agenda, together with minutes from last year's meetings and a nomination form, is enclosed. This has been the Group's first session as a registered charity, and the reports presented at the AGM will form the basis of the trustees' (our rules identify the trustees of the charity as the Group's committee members) report to the Charity Commission.

The posts of Secretary, Membership Secretary and Editor come up for the renewal this year. All the incumbents - myself, Mike Lees and Mike Bassett - are willing to stand for election for a further 2 years, and their nominations have been endorsed by the Committee. Jim Chetcuti and Mike Brown come to the end of their 3-year terms on the Committee and are thanked for all their hard work. The Committee is nominating **Jim Chetcuti** for re-election. Jim does tremendous work on behalf of the Group on 2 fronts. Most obviously, he has been responsible for setting up the range of clothing bearing our logo, and handles all the administration and sales associated with that. Less obviously, however, Jim is the one who is responsible for getting our events advertised in newspapers, libraries and on the radio. That publicity has brought us quite a few new members over the last few years, so the Committee were delighted when Jim agreed to stand for re-election. For the other Committee vacancy the Committee is recommending **Margaret Davies**, who lives in Swansea.

Don't forget that any member may **nominate** any other member for any of the vacant posts (Secretary, Membership Secretary, Editor, or Committee Member) using the enclosed nomination form. The only requirements are that the nomination is signed by the nominee and 2 proposers, all of whom must be members of the Group

(student members are not eligible). If there is more than one person nominated for any of the vacancies there will be an election at the AGM. There is also a vacancy on the Committee for a Student Member. We have failed to fill this post for the last few years, so if anyone would like to nominate a Student Member - or if any Student Member would like to volunteer - please contact me.

SCIENCE WEEK

The 4th National Week of Science, Engineering and Technology (**set97**) runs from 14th to 23rd March, and there are events of interest throughout South Wales. Members of our own Group will again be leading several guided geological walks. Full details are on a separate leaflet, a copy of which is enclosed.

An exciting temporary exhibition at the National Museum of Wales will be opening during set97 week. The theme will be **TRACKING DINOSAURS** – an exhibition looking at dinosaurs and how they lived through their tracks and trails, with specimens on loan from North America, and including some skeletons. *Tracking Dinosaurs* will be open from Saturday 15 March to Sunday 31 August. There will be a **Public Lecture** on “*Tracking Dinosaurs*” in the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre of the Museum starting at 7.30 pm on the evening of **Wednesday 19 March**. The speaker will be Dr Martin Lockley, an international expert based at the University of Colorado. Everyone is welcome to his talk, for which there is no charge. Another Public Lecture at the Museum during set97 week which may be of interest is “**A Celtic Murder Mystery - Who Killed Lindow Man?**” at 7.30 on Friday 21 March. The speaker will be Rick Turner, and that event, too, is free.

In Swansea during Science Week there will be an evening of short talks at the University. The theme this year is “**Images**”, ranging from atoms and biomolecules, through satellite images of the Earth to images of the solar system and outer space. The speakers are being urged to make maximum use of the latest computer-based technology for displaying images, so it should be a spectacular evening. **Images** will be on **Wednesday 19 March**, starting at 6.30 pm and running through to about 9.00, with a break for coffee. There is no admission charge, or booking procedure, but if you want to know more, please contact David Dunbar on 01792-205678 ext. 4445 or 295848 (e-mail: d.c.dunbar@swansea.ac.uk). On the same afternoon there will be a programme of activities throughout the Science Faculty at Swansea aimed at school groups. If you want to know more about that part of the day, please get in touch with David Dunbar.

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION (MORE!)

In the last Newsletter I included a brief outline of the activities of the Geologists' Association, of which we are technically a Local Group. Each November the GA holds a **Reunion** - an all-day event held at University College London at which many of the geological organisations in Britain - dozens of them - display a poster, or specimens or photographs or publications. For the last 2 years we have had a presence at the Reunion, in the form of Mike Lees and Lynfa Lewis. In 1996 they prepared a marvellous display, based around a block model of the geological map of

South Wales, ornamented with specimens and photographs: many people saw this when it was put up again at the Holiday Geology meeting. The display attracted a lot of interest and positive comment at the Reunion. The Committee feels it is important for our Group to be represented at the Reunion, if only to remind London-based folks of the wonderful geology in the west of Britain. It does raise the profile of Welsh geology, and Mike and Lynfa have done a wonderful job too of selling our publications there, principally the Powys Guide and the walk leaflets. The 1997 Reunion will be on **Saturday 8 November**. Anyone from this Group can attend, and there is no admission charge, so if you are able to go, do - it's a fascinating day out for anyone with an interest in any aspect of geology.

The Geologists' Association is organising a **field excursion to the St David's area** over the weekend of 9-11 May, to be led by John Cope and Richard Bevins. For more details please contact Lynn Allen at 32 Elmcroft Court, Burnet Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP3 9ES (tel: 01442-67525) by 5th April.

MORE NEWS

Firstly, some sad news - the **deaths** recently of 2 members - Arthur Pinner of Banwen after an accident, and Emlyn Evans, a founder member and past Chairman of the Group.

Also some good news. Prof **Dianne Edwards** is to receive an Honorary Fellowship from University of Wales Swansea - congratulations again, Dianne!

Some people may have seen and enjoyed the Royal Institution **Christmas Lectures** on the television just after Christmas. They were given by Simon Conway-Morris and the topic was "In Our Bones" dealing with fossils and evolution. The 5 lectures are available in full on video along with an illustrated booklet for the very reasonable price of £29 from BBC Education, PO Box 5620, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2YA.

The long-awaited geological TV programme "**Postcards from the Past**" by Anna Grayson is now due to be screened in March.

The fourth **Welsh RIGS Forum** will be held in Llangollen on the 26th and 27th of September, 1997. Lynda Garfield hopes to represent our GA Group there. If anyone else is interested, contact Margaret Wood for more details, at Countryside Council for Wales, Hafod Elfyn, Penrhos Road, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2LQ (tel: 01248-385694/2).

Sid Howells will be leading his usual programme of walks with inevitable geological interest for the **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park** again this summer. Details are enclosed on a separate sheet.

That's all I have room for, I'm afraid. Apologies for the delay in getting this mailing out to you. I hope to see you at the AGM. And at one or more of the Science Week Walks. And the Tracking Dinosaurs talk. And the exhibition. And the Images Evening. And

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)

Session 39 1997-98

Geologists' Association - South Wales Group

Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru

Registered Charity Number 1054303



Thirty-ninth Session 1997-1998

OCTOBER 1997

President: Lynda Garfield
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Gareth Davies
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherno
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

Welcome to the 1997/98 session of the Geologists' Association South Wales Group. Thank-you for renewing your membership, and a warm welcome to those who have joined over the summer. Your membership card is enclosed.

1997-1998 PROGRAMME

The session got under way with a stimulating talk from Professor Alayne Street Perrott on *Holocene Climatic Change in the Sahel*. The next lecture is the 10th **Student Lecture**, to be given by Dr Robert Riding from the Earth Sciences Department in Cardiff, on the evening of Wednesday 29 October. The topic will be the **Origin and Early History of Life on Earth**. Remember that we're all students, old and young alike. On Saturday 15th November, in Cardiff, Robert Symes - President of the Geologists' Association - will talk on **Classic Minerals from the South-west of England**. The final talk of 1997 will be in Swansea on Saturday 6 December, with Dr Simon Kelly of the British Antarctic Survey. His topic will be Antarctic Geology, in a talk entitled **Jurassic and Cretaceous of Alexander Island, Antarctic Peninsula - palaeontology in a fore-arc basin**.

Saturday 8th November sees the **Geologists' Association Annual Reunion** at University College London. Groups like our own from up and down the country take displays, specimens, photographs and sales items in probably the country's biggest geological jamboree. For the past couple of years Mike Lees and Lynfa Lewis have represented us with imaginative and interesting displays - last year's was shown at *Holiday Geology* in January - and they will take a new creation this year. Anyone is welcome at the Reunion, and there is no entrance charge. It gets under way at 12.30 pm and goes on until 4.45 pm. If you want to know more contact Mike Lees, Lynfa Lewis, Lynda Garfield or myself.

We have arranged a visit to the **Earth Galleries** at the Natural History Museum in London, on **Saturday 13th December**. The enclosed flier has details and a booking form. The cost is £20, including transport by coach and admission to the Natural History Museum and Earth Galleries. Concessionary rates are just £17, or if you want the coach only (to South Kensington only) the cost is £15. The Earth Galleries have replaced the Geological Museum, and are well worth a visit. Bring your family and friends, spend some time Christmas shopping, and marvel at the wonders of the natural world. Please return booking slips with payment to Mike Lees by **Monday 17th November** - the trip will have to be cancelled if there are not enough bookings.

Dates, times and venues are on your membership card. Meetings in Cardiff are in the Earth Sciences Department, on the first floor of the main University building. Meetings in Swansea are in the Natural Sciences Building. There is parking at both venues, although there may be a charge. Free refreshments are available for half an hour before each lecture, when you can also buy items from our range of clothing, or field guides. Anyone is welcome to come to lunch with the speaker afterwards. Attendance at lectures is free, and we welcome non-members, so bring your friends and family along - we hope they'll want to join too. Finally, if you can display **posters** of our programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please let me know.

ON INTO 1998

On the evening of Friday 9th January we will repeat last year's **Holiday Geology** evening at the National Museum - a chance to forget mid-winter gloom, think about warmer and sunnier places and times, visit the excellent *Evolution of Wales* gallery, and meet other members. We particularly welcome people who have recently joined. Full details will be sent closer to Christmas. I am looking for **volunteers** to give a short presentation (5 minutes) about somewhere interesting. Geology doesn't need to have been the main reason for your visit, and it doesn't have to be an exotic locality. Don't be shy. I know where some people have been on their travels, so volunteer before I have to prompt you!

The lecture programme continues with *Soft-bodied fossils from a Silurian volcanoclastic deposit* in Cardiff on 24 January, *Bringing dinosaurs to life* in Swansea on 21 February, and our **Annual General Meeting** in Cardiff on 14 March, at which Lynda Garfield will give her retiring address with the intriguing title of *Yahoo! Gold - variations on a theme*. The 8th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture** will be in Swansea on Tuesday 8th June.

National Science Week - set98 - will be from 13-22 March, and we hope to hold some guided walks again. Last year over 400 people came to see the dinosaur footprints at Barry! Many thanks to Steve Howe and Tom Sharpe for coping, and to Jim Chetcuti for tremendous advertising.

The **National Eisteddfod** comes to Bridgend in August 1998. We hope to exhibit a **display** about geology, to try and reach a new audience. If you might like to help, please contact Lynda Garfield, Gareth Davies or myself. One way to help would be to look after a stall for part of a day during the Eisteddfod. You would have free admission for the day. The ability to speak Welsh would be an advantage, but is not

essential - perhaps an ideal role for someone learning Welsh. Also, if anyone knows of any geological material in Welsh, please contact us.

Lastly, the **British Association Annual Festival of Science** will be in Cardiff from 6-11th September. Many members enjoyed the BA's last visit to South Wales, to Swansea in 1990, so look out for more about this in future mailings.

SALES - AND A COMPETITION!

We want to produce and sell a **T-shirt** with a printed design ready for next summer. We're looking for your help to choose an appropriate geological design, and you are invited to enter a **COMPETITION**. The winner will see their design on the 1998 T-shirt, and will receive a free T-shirt. Send your entry or entries, each on an A4 sheet, to arrive before **Wednesday 7th January 1998**, to Lynfa Lewis, 13 Bryn Catwg, Cadoxton, Neath SA10 8BG. Judging will be democratic. We will display the entries at the *Holiday Geology* evening, and everyone there will have a vote for their favourite design. So that judging can be anonymous, please put your name, address and phone number on the back of your entry. You don't have to be a brilliant artist - we hope to have the winning design drawn up professionally. **So get scribbling now and design a T-shirt** - fossils, minerals, cartoons, beautiful or witty - let your imagination run riot!

Our usual extensive and desirable range of clothing is still available at unbelievable prices. See them at meetings, and expect an order form in time for Christmas.

FIELD GUIDES

What do you do if you're visiting an unfamiliar area and want to know a bit about its geology? Lots of guides exist, but they're often not easily available, and many are out of print. Lynda Garfield is willing to co-ordinate a field guide "**loans pool**" for members. Will you lend your field guides to others? If so, please let Lynda have a list of your guides. She will compile a list, so if you want to know what is available for a particular area, you can ring Lynda on 01222-891588 or -855100. Lynda already has about 200 titles covering all parts of Britain, and many other countries. The loans pool could be a really valuable service for members, so all you hoarders of pamphlets and guides, get in touch with Lynda and let's get things started!

We are continuing to extend our series of leaflets covering **Geological Walks in Wales**. New titles in the spring were Porth-yr-Ogof, Llansteffan, Penwyllt and Ogmore-by-Sea. We have received grants from the Geologists' Association's Curry Fund and from Bridgend County Borough Council to produce 3 more leaflets. These should be available soon, covering Porthcawl foreshore, Barry Island, and Cribarth.

The Department of Geography at University of Wales Swansea has revised its guide to **Geographical Excursions from Swansea (physical landscapes)**. This edition has a chapter on the geology of the coalfield and Brecon Beacons, and can be obtained from me for £5. A human landscapes guide is also available.

Remember that you can buy **Geologists' Association** field guides at reduced prices. Recent guides cover the Peak District, the Weald, Aberystwyth, Iceland, Cyprus, Jamaica, Dorset and Tenerife. For details and orders, ring 01225-445046. Say you are member of a GA Group.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

For some years now there have been attempts to launch a geological conservation group in South Wales under the R.I.G.S. scheme - Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites. Several field events have been held, at which our members have played a key role. The Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group has now undertaken a project to produce a booklet that briefly describes and interprets the main geological sites on Gower. The booklet is aimed at teachers and members of the public as well as GA members, and if it is a success other areas may be tackled. The RIGS Group is looking for **help**. Many of you know Gower's geology well, and you are invited to contribute a paragraph to the booklet. A flier is enclosed giving details, including a **field day** on Sunday 16 November.

The 4th Welsh RIGS Forum was in Llangollen at the end of September, following last year's event in Swansea. Lynda Garfield represented our GA Group there, to keep us abreast of developments.

OTHER EVENTS

Our members will be welcomed at events held by other groups in the region. The **Russell Society** (mineralogy) hold lectures on Fridays at 7.30 in Cardiff. Forthcoming topics are discussion and conversazione (12 Dec), mineral identification (16 Jan), and mineralisation in the Pennines (20 Feb). For details contact Steve Plant (01222-869352). The **West of England GA**, based in Bristol, have lectures on lunar geology (11 Nov), Quaternary speleothems (9 Dec) and trilobites (10 Feb). Contact John Toller (0117-969-6834). The **Geologists' Association** has regular lectures in London (tel: 0171-434-9298). In 1998 they have field excursions to Writhlington near Bristol (fossil insects - 4 Apr & 3 Oct), the west of Ireland (May), Cornwall (Sep), USA, Brazil and Tunisia. For information contact Lynn Allen (01442-267525). The **Geological Society's** Southern Wales Group is aimed mainly at professionals, but has meetings on Tanzanian gold (12 Dec) and coal-bed methane (14 Jan). Contact Ray Kenny (01222-382465).

OTHER NEWS

Some academic journals are surplus to requirements at the University in Cardiff - *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association* for 1965-1995, *Journal of the Geological Society* for 1963-1970 and 1988-1989, and *Geophysical Journal* for 1977-1989. If you are interested, please contact Howard Bartlett (daytime 01222-874000 ext 6885).

I am sorry to have to report the deaths recently of members Melvyn Davies and Audrey Lewis.

DATA PROTECTION

Finally, a reminder that computerised records are kept of members' names, addresses and membership status. These are used within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, mainly for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record, please let me know.

Geraint Owen

Secretary



Thirty-ninth Session 1997-1998

DECEMBER 1997

President: Lynda Garfield

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Gareth Davies

Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

First of all, **Season's Greetings to everyone**. This won't reach you in time for Christmas, but you should still be in the midst of festivities. By way of our Christmas present to you, here's news of what's in store over the next couple of months.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tee-shirt competition: don't forget that we all want to be wearing tee-shirts this summer printed with **your** design. There's still time for you to get your entry or entries, each drawn on an A4 sheet of paper, to Lynfa Lewis before Wednesday 7th January (13 Bryn Catwg, Cadoxton, Neath SA10 8BG). It doesn't have to be a work of art - we're looking for **ideas**, that the Geology Department at the Museum has kindly offered to have drawn up for us. Let your imagination run riot - your design can be clever, witty, spectacular, beautiful, artful, abstract or photographic - get designing! Remember that the entries will be **judged by everyone** at the Holiday Geology evening, and the winner will see his or her design made into a tee-shirt, and will receive a free tee-shirt.

And don't forget **Holiday Geology**, either, on **Friday 9th January**, at the National Museum in Cardiff. There will be several short slide or video presentations from interesting (not necessarily exotic) places, a buffet, the judging of the tee-shirt competition, and a visit to the *Evolution of Wales* Gallery. Last year's event was immensely enjoyable, so let's try and get even more people along this year. If you are very keen to show a few slides with some relevance to geology or geography (e.g. scenery), we can still squeeze you in, so give me a ring. We particularly hope that people who have recently joined the Group will come to *Holiday Geology*, as this is an excellent opportunity to meet and talk to others. Please bring along friends and relatives too, whether or not they are members - perhaps some of them will want to join.

Please note that we **must** all be admitted together, at the **rear entrance** of the Museum at **6.30 pm**, so make sure you are there in time. The Museum has kindly offered to host the buffet, so we need to know how many people are coming a few days in advance. If you are coming, please **let me know by Wednesday 7th January**. You can send back the slip on the enclosed flier, or ring me on 01792-295141 or 472687. There is an answering

machine on both numbers, so if I'm not there please leave a short message to say how many people are coming.

The first **lecture** of the New Year will be on Saturday 24 January, in Cardiff University, starting at 11.00 with refreshments from 10.30. Dr Derek Siveter of Oxford University Museum will talk about ***Soft-bodied fossils from a Silurian volcanoclastic deposit***. The preservation of soft-bodied fossils is a fascinating topic with important implications for evolution, so that should be a stimulating talk.

The first bad news of the New Year is that Dr Michael Benton has had to withdraw from the joint meeting with the Geological Society Regional Group, in Swansea on **Saturday 21 February**. The Geological Society Group is trying to arrange an alternative speaker, hopefully on a similar topic, but all I can say at the moment is that there will be a lecture on that day and time, but it won't be *Bringing Dinosaurs to Life*. That will have to wait for another day.

The first **field meeting** of the year will be on the afternoon of **Saturday 7th March**, to an opencast coal site, courtesy of Celtic Energy. Numbers have to be limited, so you **must** return the enclosed booking slip to Lesley Cherns (or to me with your *Holiday Geology* slip) if you want to come. You will then receive further details of where and when to meet. We hope to concentrate on tectonic structures as well as palaeobotany, and of course there will be plenty of opportunity to collect specimens.

Another important date to get your new diaries filled up is **Saturday 14 March**. Our **Annual General Meeting** will be in Cardiff University at 10.30 am (refreshments from 10.00), followed by Lynda Garfield's retiring **President's Address**, intriguingly entitled ***Yahoo! Gold - Variations on a Theme***. I'm not even sure how the title should be read, so I'll certainly be there, if only to find out!

There will be another mailing in February, with the Agenda for the AGM, plus news of activities from March onwards. **Science Week set98** runs from March 13th to 22nd. For the past few years we have run a programme of geological walks on the 2 weekends of Science Week, and we hope to do the same again this year, in addition to the AGM and Lynda's President's Address on the 14th. Full details of venues and times for the walks will be sent in February. We hope to arrange more **field meetings** in the spring, likely venues being the Cotswolds and Amroth. The **TR Owen Memorial Lecture** will be in Swansea on the evening of Tuesday 9th June.

Then there's the summer's "big events". Forget the World Cup! The **Open University Geological Society** will be holding its **Annual Symposium** in Swansea over the weekend 4th-5th July. We hope that our members will be able to attend some of the events for payment of a daily guest fee, and will be sending you further details closer to the time. The **National Eisteddfod** is in Bridgend in August, and we hope to have a geological **display** there. Don't forget the request in the last Newsletter for **volunteers** to look after the display for part of a day - contact Lynda Garfield, Gareth Davies or myself if you might be able to help. The **British Association Annual Festival of Science** will be in Cardiff from 6-11th September. Again there will be a daily guest fee, but we hope there will be some attractive talks and field trips, and to get a programme to you in the spring.

Looking even further ahead, the Committee will be meeting in late January to plan the programme of talks, field trips and other events for the **1998-1999 session**. If you have any **ideas** for speakers, topics or venues, please let someone know, perhaps at *Holiday Geology*.

THE 1997-1998 SESSION SO FAR

The **autumn lectures** were very well attended, with 35 for Alayne Street Perrott's talk on *Holocene Climatic Change in the Sahel*, 50 at the Student Lecture from Rob Riding on the *Origin and Early History of Life on Earth*, 55 for Bob Symes on *Classic Minerals from the South-west of England*, and 45 for Simon Kelly on *Jurassic and Cretaceous of Alexander Island, Antarctic Peninsula*. All the lectures were very interesting and enjoyable, and we are grateful to all the speakers.

Several Group members were at the **Geologists' Association Reunion** in London in early November, and by all accounts it was packed full of interest. Not least because of our own display, prepared by Mike Lees and Lynfa Lewis, about the Lower Palaeozoic Welsh Basin. Mike and Lynfa will be putting the display up again at *Holiday Geology*, so come and see it there!

Unfortunately, the visit to the **Natural History Museum** in early December had to be cancelled. We had costed the trip on at least 35 people coming, but in the end there were only about 20 people interested. It would be helpful to know why people did not want to go. For example, were people not interested, was the cost too high, was it at the wrong time of the year, were the pick-up points unsuitable, did it make for too long a day, or did it not allow enough time at the Museum? Basically, **should we try to offer a similar event again, perhaps at a different time of the year? Please make your views known.** Phone or write to any Committee member, or have a chat at *Holiday Geology* in January. Your views will be welcomed.

PUBLICATIONS

We have recently produced a new leaflet in the **Geological Walks in Wales** series. This one has been written by Steve Howe, and covers Carboniferous Limestone and Triassic rocks along the **foreshore at Porthcawl**. This will be the venue for one of our **Science Week** walks in 1998. The leaflet was produced with the aid of a grant from Bridgend County Borough Council for which we are very grateful. Like the other leaflets, it sells at just 25p, and copies are available at any of our meetings. Leaflets on Cribarth and Barry Island, funded by a grant from the Geologists' Association's Curry Fund, should be published in early 1998. If you have any ideas for outlets that might want to stock copies of the leaflets for sale to the public, please let me know. We will provide them at a discount for resale.

The **Geologists' Association** has added another title to its excellent series of field guides. Guide number 59 deals with the **Geology of Hadrian's Wall**, covering the area from Tynemouth to Bowness-on-Solway, and illustrated with 70 photographs, sketches and maps. Together with the other GA Guides, it can be obtained from the GA Office, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (tel: 0171-434-9298) or the Geological Society Publishing House, Unit 7, Brassmill Enterprise Centre, Brassmill Lane, Bath BA1 3JN (tel: 01225-445046). For members of the GA and its Local Groups (that includes us) the price is **£7.80** including postage (the full price is £9.50). If you want to examine a copy before deciding whether or not to buy one, please contact me, and I can bring a copy along to one of our meetings.

Now that the days are beginning to lengthen again, and thoughts are turning to holidays, don't forget our own **Field Guide Loan Pool**. This is being co-ordinated by Lynda Garfield, and was described in the last Newsletter.

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

The last Newsletter gave notice of a field day to discuss a project aimed jointly at conserving geological sites on Gower and producing an informative booklet about Gower geology. In part this was under the auspices of the RIGS scheme - Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites. I'm pleased to report that the meeting went well. There is now the core of a RIGS Group for the Glamorgan-Gwent area, and the ball is rolling towards producing the booklet. The aim is that this will not be a learned, academic publication, but one to which ordinary people interested in geology - like most of our members - can make a direct contribution. If you weren't able to get to the meeting in Swansea in November, but want to **help** with documenting, recording and writing about geological sites - initially in Gower, but then elsewhere in the region - please contact John Conway, the Chairman of the RIGS Group. His daytime phone number is 01285-652531, extension 2234. Or else get in touch with me.

OTHER EVENTS

Our members will be welcomed at events held by other groups in the region. The **Russell Society** (mineralogy) holds lectures on Fridays at 7.30 in Cardiff. Forthcoming topics are mineral identification (16 Jan), mineralisation in the Pennines (20 Feb) and mineralogy of beryl with Dr R King on 3 March. For more details contact Steve Plant (01222-869352). The **Severnside Branch of the Open University Geological Society** has a field day in the Cotswolds on 8 March, a weekend to Dolgellau in May, and a trip planned to southern Spain in September. Contact Jan Ashton-Jones (01432-870827). The **West of England GA**, based in Bristol, have lectures on trilobites (10 Feb), and carbonatites ("igneous limestones") on 10 March, plus field excursions to the Quantock Hills (12 April), Isle of Wight (8-10 May), Lyme Regis (14 June) and Forest of Dean (5 July). Contact John Toller (0117-969-6834). The **Geological Society's** Southern Wales Group is aimed mainly at professionals, but has meetings on coal-bed methane (14 Jan) and mining (18 March). Contact Ray Kenny (01222-382465). The **Geologists' Association** has regular lectures in London (tel: 0171-434-9298). In 1998 they have field excursions to Writhlington near Bristol (fossil insects - 4 Apr & 3 Oct), the west of Ireland (May), Cornwall (Sep), USA, Brazil and Tunisia. For information contact Lynn Allen (01442-267525).

GEOLOGY AT ABERYSTWYTH

Since the summer there have been developments at University of Wales Aberystwyth that have resulted in the loss of several geological staff and the cessation of single honours geology undergraduate teaching. This may have detrimental effects for a group such as ours, for example in the loss from Wales of potential lecturers and field meeting leaders, particularly when considered together with the recent loss from Aberystwyth of the British Geological Survey. Lynda Garfield wrote several letters on behalf of the Group urging that the provisional decision be reconsidered, but it seems that at a recent meeting the decision to stop teaching Geology as a separate subject to degree level was confirmed.

On a happier note, I hope to see as many people as possible at *Holiday Geology* in the New Year, and at the subsequent lectures and field meetings. In the meantime, enjoy all the festivities!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)



Thirty-ninth Session 1997-1998

FEBRUARY 1998

President: Lynda Garfield
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Gareth Davies
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We hope lots of people will attend our 39th Annual General Meeting on **Saturday 14th March** in the Department of Earth Sciences at University of Wales **Cardiff**, starting at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00. Please note that this is earlier than our lectures usually start. The "carrot" for attending is Lynda Garfield's **Retiring President's Address**, with its puzzling title **Yahoo! Gold - Variations on a Theme**, which will immediately follow the AGM. If you want to solve the puzzle, you'd better be there!

An agenda, and minutes of the 1997 AGM are enclosed, as well as a nomination form for Committee posts. As outlined in the Rules, the Committee is proposing people for places due for replacement, but further nominations will be welcomed. Just fill in the nomination form and return it to me as soon as possible.

Changes to the Committee are shown on the Agenda. Gareth Davies takes over from Lynda Garfield as President, and we are delighted to propose Stephen Howe, from the National Museum, as Vice-President to follow Gareth. Tom Sharpe and Lesley Cherns have agreed to continue as Treasurer and Programme Secretary. Lynfa Lewis and Mike Sullivan end their 3 years as Committee Members. The Committee is proposing that Lynfa Lewis be re-elected - she is heavily involved in the work for the Eisteddfod display (see below). Alan Channing is proposed as a new Committee member, so as to make some changes, and Mike Sullivan is thanked for his support and work on the Committee. Finally, Richard Thomas, an undergraduate student at Cardiff, and from the Cardiff area, has agreed to continue as Student Member for 1998-1999.

MORE FIELD MEETINGS

Before the AGM and Retiring President's Address is the **Opencast site visit** on Saturday 7 March. This is now full, with 40 participants, who should soon receive details of when and where to meet. Opencast visits seem to be constantly popular, so we hope to run a similar trip again some time.

set98 - the 5th National Science Week - takes place from 13-22 March. As in previous years we have arranged a programme of **guided geological walks**. A flier giving venues

and times is enclosed. Please come along, and encourage friends, neighbours and people you meet in the street to join you! This is a chance to introduce new people to the joys of field geology, so we hope to see a mix of new and familiar faces.

On **Sunday 26th April** there will be a field meeting along **the coast between Pendine and Amroth**, led by myself. These cliffs provide a continuous succession from the Carboniferous Limestone, through the Basal Grit, Shale Group and Farewell Rock of the local Millstone Grit, into the base of the Coal Measures, and there are interesting exposures of the Holocene submerged forest. These really are superb sections, and we will see sedimentary features and fossils, and consider some of the new sequence stratigraphy ideas that have recently been applied to the Farewell Rock. If you want to come along, **MEET at 10.30 am in Pendine**, where the road joins/leaves the sea front (i.e. the western end of Pendine Sands - grid ref: SN 234 079) There is parking in Pendine. Please bring a packed lunch. We will arrange transport so that we walk one-way only, but the section is about 4 miles long. It should be an excellent day.

Another field meeting will take place on **Saturday 23rd May**, to examine Triassic plant fossils and marginal marine successions in the **Vallis Vale area of Somerset**. The leader will be Dr Alan Hemsley, from the Earth Sciences Department in Cardiff. This will be an all-day trip, meeting at **11 am**, with a pub lunch. If you are interested, please drop a note to Lesley Cherns (Department of Earth Sciences, University of Wales Cardiff, PO Box 914, Cardiff CF1 3YE - tel: 01222-874338), who will send you further details.

AND ANOTHER LECTURE

Last but not least for our 1997-1998 programme, the 8th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture**, hosted this year by ourselves, will be on **Tuesday 9th June**, starting at 7 pm in the Natural Sciences Building at University of Wales **Swansea**, with refreshments from 6.30. We are pleased to have as this year's speaker Dr Tony Ramsay of the Earth Sciences Department in Cardiff, and formerly of Swansea University - a former Chairman of this Group. His title is ***Ocean deep, mountain high - a story of global climatic change***. Tony will talk about the recognition of tectonic and climatic signals from Tertiary deep ocean sediments, so there should be something to please everyone - ocean sediments, climate change, mountain-building, fossils, all related to topical issues. Tony was Dick Owen's last research student, so he will have fond memories to share with those who remember Dick. Definitely one for the diary!

EVENTS OVER THE SUMMER

The week 22-29 June will see the launch of **Minerals '98**. This is to be "*a major initiative to explain the UK minerals industry to all the audiences which will have a part in shaping its future.*" Events will include open days at minerals sites across the country on Friday 26 and Saturday 27 June, and activities are planned to continue throughout the summer. Look out for more information closer to the time. For those of you connected up to the Internet, **Minerals '98** has a web site at <http://www.minerals98.com/>

Incidentally, while on the topic of the internet, you can latch onto a live video camera on **Etna** at http://www.iiv.ct.cnr.it/files/cam_index_etna.html! The image is refreshed every minute or so. Although the summit is often in fog, there have been some impressive views of gently erupting lava, which is particularly visible around dusk.

As advised in the last Newsletter, the **Open University Geological Society** will be holding its **Annual Symposium** in Swansea over the weekend 4th-5th July. More information can be had from Linda Fowler (01579-350641). The **National Eisteddfod** is in Bridgend in

August, and should have a significant geological dimension - **read more about this below**, and please think about offering your help as a **volunteer**. The **British Association Annual Festival of Science** will be in Cardiff from 6-11th September. I hope to find out more about these events and send another mailing in the spring.

NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD, BRIDGEND, 1-8 AUGUST

GEOLOGICAL DISPLAY AND A PLEA FOR HELP

A special committee has been meeting over the last few months to plan a geological display and programme of activities for the National Eisteddfod in Bridgend. The committee comprises representatives of our own Group (Lynda Garfield, Gareth Davies, Mike Lees, Jim Chetcuti and Lynfa Lewis) and others from the Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group, the Russell Society and the Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group. They have put together an exciting plan, and attracted sponsorship to cover the costs of preparing a display, and exhibiting at the Eisteddfod.

Help is needed, mainly in the form of people willing to staff the display at the Eisteddfod for about half a day. As many as possible should be Welsh speakers, but non-Welsh speakers should not be put off, as their presence will be helpful at busy times, when there would also be a Welsh speaker present. It sounds like a good opportunity for us non-Welsh speakers to improve our grasp of the language. If you think you might be interested, **please return the slip** on the enclosed flier. There's no obligation at present - you will be contacted later to confirm your willingness to help. The "carrot" for agreeing to help is free entry to the Eisteddfod for the day.

This is an exciting and innovative venture. It is "spreading the word" about geology to new audiences, improving our Welsh-language activities, strengthening our links with other groups in the region, raising funds, and getting our Group known by potential sponsors. I hope that a lasting outcome will be an attractive display that can easily be taken to venues in the future, building on the strengths developed through the Eisteddfod.

Please think seriously if you can help, either at the event, or in any other way, to ensure that the hard work put in by the organisers is rewarded with success. Thank-you.

SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

Holiday Geology on the evening of Friday 9th January was a great success, with about 100 people present. A visit to the *Evolution of Wales* was followed by a sumptuous buffet, and mouth-watering talks taking us to the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Patagonia, Arizona and Iceland. Many thanks to those who gave talks, and particularly to Mike Bassett and his staff for generously hosting the event. We've already accepted an offer to repeat the event in 1999 (likely to be Friday January 8th), so start taking pictures now!

The **tee-shirt design competition** was a tense affair with a small number of entries of a very high standard. Voting was by secret ballot at *Holiday Geology*, and the winner was Jim Chetcuti with a wonderful dinosaur design. The National Museum have agreed to reproduce the design in a form that can be printed onto a tee-shirt, although they are having to make some modifications. Look out in the next newsletter for details of how to get a tee-shirt. And very well done to Jim, who will receive a free tee-shirt himself.

There were 50 people at Dr Derek Siveter's superb talk on **soft-bodied fossils** from Silurian rocks in the Welsh Borders, which featured some stunning photographs of tiny, shrimp-like fossils.

OTHER EVENTS

A flier is enclosed for guided geological walks in the **Pembrokeshire Coast** National Park, led by Sid Howells. There seem to be more than ever this year, so there should be something of interest for everyone.

BBC Science and the Natural History Museum are holding **The Fossil Roadshow** at The Natural History Museum in London, on **Friday 27** (10am to 8pm) and **Saturday 28 March** (10am to 6pm). The event will be televised. The idea is to take along specimens for experts to comment on or identify. There will also be a programme of talks, specimens on display, and a reduced entrance fee for the Natural History Museum. **Fancy going along? Entrance is free.** There's no need to register, although it would help the organisers if you ring Sarah Fisher on 0181-752-4915, or write to her at Room 4150, BBC White City, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TS.

The **Geologists' Association** has a meeting at the Writhlington Geological Nature Reserve at Radstock, Avon, on Saturday 4th April; an all-day meeting of field visits and lectures on Ammonites at Oxford on June 6th; and field excursions to Canyonlands, USA (July 25-August 16), Brazil (August 16-30), Tunisia (October 23 - November 6), the west of Ireland (May 8-16), Barton (May 16), Edinburgh (August 21-24), Wiltshire (September 12), and Cornwall (September 20-26). Further information from Lynn Allen, 32 Elmcroft Court, Burnet Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 9ES (01442-67525).

The Adult Education Departments at Swansea and Cardiff continue to offer lecture and field courses related to geology. Swansea is holding a weekend trip to South-East Ireland with myself and Lesley Cherns on June 6-7: further details from me or from DACE (tel: 01792-295768). Cardiff have several field trips, some exotic, and can be contacted at 01222-874832. University of Bristol Study Tours (0117-928-7155) in the coming year are heading for the Lizard peninsula (17-19 April), north Devon (16-17 May), South Devon (13-14 June), the Outer Hebrides (13-19 June), the Isle of Wight (19-21 June), Iceland (12-26 July), Santorini (10-24 September), and Pompeii (2-9 October).

West of England GA have a lecture on Carbonatites ("igneous limestones") on 10 March, and field meetings to the Quantock Hills (12 April), Isle of Wight (8-10 May), Lyme Regis (14 June), Forest of Dean (5 July). Details from John Toller (0117-969-6834).

Well, I've run out of space! I was going to remind you about the Geologists' Association Field Guides and our own Field Guides Loan Pool - see the last Newsletter for details of both. The latest issue of the free newspaper **Down to Earth** has arrived and can be collected at meetings. And the RIGS/conservation project to publish information on sites on Gower is under way - if you want to contribute, contact John Conway on 01285-652531, extension 2234.

I hope to send out another mailing in the spring (May/June) to give you an update on the Eisteddfod and the BA. It will also include a request for early renewals for 1998-1999 (our 40th session) and hopefully preliminary details of our 1998-1999 programme.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)



Thirty-ninth Session 1997-1998

JUNE 1998

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

You don't always get another Newsletter at this time of the year, but there is a terrific amount happening over the next few months and you'll want to know about it!

Firstly, though, I'll take this opportunity to invite **renewals for 1998-1999**, our 40th session. They aren't due until September 1st, and reminders will be sent out then, but it will help if people renew now, on the enclosed form. If you renew now, your next mailing will be a newsletter in late September.

The **1998-1999 programme** will get under way on **Saturday 3 October**, in Swansea. Dr Alan Hemsley, from Cardiff, will talk on ***Bryophytes, Bubbles and Bombs: Spore Structure, Self-assembly and Systematics***, starting at 11.00 with refreshments from 10.30. There will be a field trip on the afternoon of **Saturday 10 October - Pendine to Amroth 2 - the Amroth end!** Full details in the autumn, but meet at the east end of Amroth beach at 2 pm. The Student Lecture will be on **Wednesday 28 October** in Cardiff at 7 pm. Mark Davies (Open University) will talk on ***Montserrat - Continuous Monitoring of the Beauty and the Beast***. Then on **Saturday 14 November**, in Swansea, Prof. Paul Wright from Cardiff will talk on ***Britain's Amazing Shrinking (Fossil) Soils***. It sounds like an excellent programme to me.

RECENT EVENTS

Unfortunately the opencast site visit on 7 March was called off by the site operators after 2 inches of rain fall on the day before the visit. We will try to rearrange a visit.

The **Annual General Meeting** on 14 March was attended by 42 people, and followed by a stimulating talk from retiring President Lynda Garfield on the occurrence of precious minerals. Gareth Davies took over as President and Steve Howe was welcomed as Vice-President. There were no new nominations for the Committee, so the changes detailed on the agenda were approved. Copies of the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports are enclosed. There has been a steady trickle of new members since the AGM, and we are delighted to report that membership has at last reached the threshold of 200!

The **field day** at Pendine on 26 April was attended by 15 people. Despite heavy showers, treacherous rocks underfoot, and a race against the tide, we saw some fascinating geology. We didn't make it round Telpyn Point, however: hence the sequel outlined above. There were also 15 people on the fossil plant field day to northwest Somerset.

Tony Ramsay delivered an excellent **TR Owen Lecture** on the observations marine

geologists make to reconstruct ocean currents, and how the results have implications for the uplift of mountain belts and the origins of ice ages - all under the awesome title of palaeoceanography!

MINERALS '98

So what are all these events over the next few months? The first is **minerals '98**, which was launched from 22 to 27 June with high-level conferences on the importance of the minerals industry, education and safety. Minerals '98 continues all year, however, and we are promised lots of open days at quarries, pits and mines. Keep an eagle eye on the press and media for details. If you have access to the internet, you can find a "comprehensive up-to-date guide" on <http://www.minerals98.com>. So far, the only event in South Wales is tours of the Dolaucothi Gold Mine on **Saturday 27 June** at mid-day, 2pm and 4pm. Events are to be confirmed at quarries in Porthyrhyd, Ammanford, Stormy Down, and Creigiau, but there are no dates yet.

OPEN UNIVERSITY

The Open University Geological Society holds its **Annual Symposium** at University of Wales Swansea from **3-6 July**. (You can also come and see the *Thrust* supersonic car at the University on the Saturday and Sunday!) The theme is "**Uniformitarianism in reverse - the past is the key to the present ... and future**". There will be lectures on Saturday morning on the geology of coal and metal mining in Wales; field trips on Saturday afternoon; and lectures on Sunday on engineering, oil and gas, climate, and offshore geology. You can attend as a day visitor, for a **fee** of £25 per day (which includes a supplement for non-members of OUGS). Anyone interested should contact Jan Ashton-Jones, Kiddleys Copse, Mordiford, Hereford HR1 4LR (01432-870827).

NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

Planning is going well for the stand at the National Eisteddfod near Bridgend from **1-8 August**. This is being mounted by our own Group, the Russell Society, Geological

Society Southern Wales Group and Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group. Many thanks to all involved. It's not too late to offer **help**, which will be much appreciated. Please contact Gareth Davies on 01554-751126.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION

As we all know, the Euro summit in Cardiff was just the trial run for the British Association's Annual **Festival of Science**, from **7-11 September**. The theme is "**The Challenge for Science**" and the packed programme includes "*Alternatives to animals in science*" on Sunday 6th; "*Do we need science*", "*The role of women in science*", and the oceans on Monday; Science in education, the 1999 eclipse, and sustainable environment on Tuesday; genetically modified food (Wednesday); mad cow disease and industry in South Wales on Thursday.

And all that is on top of the programme of the **Geology Section!** This begins on Monday with a session on "**The Local Region**", starting with a talk from Tom Sharpe entitled "*Swamps and seas, deserts and dinosaurs: on the rocks in southeast Wales*", and continuing with talks on archaeology, coal, the learning region and the Dark Ages. Dianne Edwards, as President of the Geology section, has arranged a programme of talks on Wednesday on "**Microbes in planetary history**", including co-evolution of life and environments, astrobiology, black smokers, and fossilization. Thursday sees a session entitled "**Where was Wales? The geological devolution of Wales**", tracing the geological development of Wales back in time from the present. Also on Thursday, the Beverley Halstead Lecture is entitled "**Weather-forecasting for dinosaurs**".

The **registration fee** for the Festival is £20 per day for people with Welsh postcodes, or £80 for the week. The student rate is £5 per day or £20 for the week. For booking information, and a copy of the **programme**, please write to Major Events Dept, BA, FREEPOST 22, WD 1038, 23 Savile Row, London W1E 7EX. **If you're at all interested, do write for a programme.** Even if you don't fancy the fee, there are also many **public events** during the Festival.

OTHER EVENTS

There's more! Geological conservation continues to gather pace through the RIGS movement. There are 2 conferences coming up that will include talks, displays and field trips likely to be of **interest to all members**. The **First UK RIGS Conference** is in Worcester from 1-3 September: contact Peter Oliver, Dept of Geography, University College Worcester, Henwick Grove, Worcester WR2 6AJ (tel: 01905-855184; e-mail: rigs@worc.ac.uk). The **5th Welsh RIGS Forum** is in Machynlleth from 25-27 September, with the theme "*Mines and Mineral RIGS*". Contact Carolyn Davies, CCW, Hafod Elfyn, Penrhos Road, Bangor LL57 2LQ (tel: 01248-385692).

A meeting at Cardiff University on **14-15 October** will consider "***A future for fossils - the sustainable management of our heritage.***" This is organised by English Nature, NMW and Cardiff University. There will be talks and a debate about the protection of Britain's fossil heritage. The registration fee is £10 per day (£15 after 10th July) and anyone interested should contact Mrs Liesbeth Diaz, Dept of Earth Sciences, Cardiff University (tel: 01222-874830; e-mail Diaz@cardiff.ac.uk).

The second of Sid Howells' **Pembrokeshire geology weekends** from Twr-y-Felin Hotel, St Davids will take place from 9-11 October, with visits to Marloes and Strumble. The cost (£135) includes full board, packed lunches, transport, illustrated talks and tuition. Contact the Twr-y-Felin Hotel, 1 High Street, St Davids SA62 6SA (01437-720391).

SCULPTURES BIG AND SMALL

Members in the Swansea area may be interested in a display of stone sculptures at the **Glyn Vivian gallery** until the middle of August. The sculptor, Richard Renshaw, "trained as a geologist before moving into art. His large-scale works echo rock formations, shell fossils and other features of the natural world."

On a smaller scale, have you been to your nearest **Thorntons** toffee shop recently? They presently have chocolate and other confectionery in the form of fossils and

minerals, including a chocolate *T. rex* and ammonites that can be identified to species level! Sounds crunchy!

MEMBER NEWS

I am sorry to report that Alun J Thomas, an Honorary Member of the Group, and Secretary for many years, suffered a minor stroke in late May. He is now at home, and is well apart from some loss of balance. Alun has been sent a card on behalf of the Group, and I am sure we all wish him well.

It is with sadness that we heard of the death of Doug Miller, a loyal member from the Dulais Valley.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Two new ***Geological Walks in Wales*** leaflets were published in May, covering **Cribarth** in the Swansea Valley and Friars Point, **Barry Island**. They were produced with the aid of a grant from the GA Curry Fund, and bring to 12 the number of leaflets in the series. Copies can be purchased for 25p each at lecture meetings, or post-free from myself.

SCIENCE WEEK - GEOLOGICAL WALKS IN SOUTH WALES

About 100 people attended the 6 walks during Science Week this year. Many thanks to the leaders. Whilst there were one or two new faces, the vast majority were GA members already. Clearly we are doing no service to members by concentrating several walks into such a short time. So in 1999 we intend to offer one or two *Geological Walks in Wales* each month from March to September. We will try to have 2 walks during Science Week. These walks will run alongside our usual programme of field meetings.

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION

I have written before that we are a **Local Group of The Geologists' Association**, the national body based in London. Since we receive no funding from the GA, we pay no fee to the GA, membership of the 2 groups is totally separate, and we are a charity in our own right, some of you may wonder what this arrangement means. To address this point, the GA has produced 2 papers, entitled

"Benefits and Responsibilities of Local Groups" and *"Objectives of Local Groups"*. Copies can be obtained from me, but I will summarise their content here.

Amongst the **benefits** of being a Local Group are that we can **advertise** our events free of charge in the *GA Circular*; our **Annual Report** is published in the *Circular*; we exhibit at the **Annual Reunion** without paying a fee; we participate in the public liability **insurance** scheme negotiated by the GA (this costs us £36.40 per year, in contrast to almost £200 that we were paying before we joined it); our members can buy **GA field guides** at discounted prices, and can subscribe to ***Geology Today*** at a 20% discount (this is a bimonthly magazine with news and articles; the discounted subscription rate is about £25); our Group, or individual members, can apply for **grants** from the GA's funds, or recommend candidates for the award of **medals**; and finally, I receive 2 free copies of the GA's bi-monthly ***Circular***. This is packed with interest, but it is difficult to make these copies available to members; they can be consulted at meetings, or borrowed from me. Why not get your own copy, by **joining the GA** yourself? Membership is open to all, and costs £24 per year including the *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, or £14.50 with just the *Circular*. Full details from the GA, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (tel: 0171-434-9298) or see their stand at the BA.

And in return for all those benefits, our **responsibilities** are that we should maintain at least 12 GA members amongst our own membership, and we should hold to the **Objectives** of Local Groups. We discussed these at a recent committee meeting, and were satisfied that we already address most of them, including promotion of the Geologists' Association, extending the understanding of Geology, promoting interest in Geology, and supporting the GA Annual Reunion. Several objectives relate to geological conservation: we do all we can to support and encourage the Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group. Other objectives relate to encouraging young people to take an interest

in Geology. This is one aspect in which we could do better. If anyone has ideas for how, please let me or any Committee member know.

I hope the relationship between our Group and the GA is now clearer, and that you will agree it is well worth maintaining.

The GA will be holding its 3rd **Photographic Competition** this summer. This is open to South Wales Group members. Unfortunately I haven't had details yet, and I don't know when the closing date will be (probably the end of September) but keep your camera at the ready over the summer.

And don't forget the excellent **GA field guides**. Recent titles include *The Isle of Wight* (revised 1998), *Hadrian's Wall*, and *Aberystwyth*. The pricing structure has recently changed: guides are £10 including post & packing (£13 before discount) and are available from the Geological Society Publishing House, Unit 7, Brassmill Enterprise Centre, Brassmill Lane, Bath BA1 3JN (tel: 01225-445046) or from the GA office. We also have a small stock of a few titles available for bargain prices at meetings in Swansea.

There's also our own **Field Guide Loan Pool** co-ordinated by Lynda Garfield. You can borrow guides, or find out what is available, by ringing Lynda on 01222-891588 or -855100.

Well I've run out of space again! I've even had to put things into columns to fit it all in! Have an excellent summer, wherever it takes you. Don't miss out on all the activities and events, and keep your cameras handy, not only for the Photographic Competition, but also for another *Holiday Geology* event in Cardiff in January 1999. I'll be looking for volunteers in the autumn!

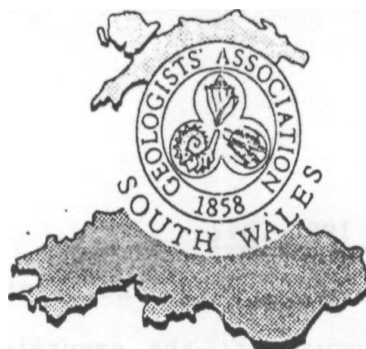
Geraint Owen
(Secretary)

Session 40 1998-99

Geologists' Association - South Wales Group

Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru

Registered Charity Number 1054303



Fortieth Session 1998-1999

OCTOBER 1998

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

WELCOME to this first Newsletter of the Group's 40th session, especially to those who have joined since the spring: I'm sorry you've had to wait so long for your first Newsletter, but hope our offerings over the next few months will more than make up for the waiting. And thank-you to everyone who renewed so promptly for 1998-1999. Membership reached 200 last session and we want to keep it at that level, so if you know of anyone who might be interested in our activities, please encourage them to join or at least to come along to some events. Membership must surely be one of the greatest bargains of the modern era!

PROGRAMME 1998-1999

Details of the session's programme are summarised on your membership card. The first lecture, in Swansea on 3 October, was given by Dr Alan Hemsley from Cardiff University. His topic was *Bryophytes, Bubbles and Bombs: spore structure, self-assembly and systematics*, and I am sure all

who were there will agree it was an excellent start to the session.

You may receive this before the session's first **field meeting**, on the afternoon of **Saturday 10 October**, with myself to Amroth and Telpyn Point. **Meet** at the east (Amroth Castle) end of Amroth beach, near the New Inn, where the road leaves the sea-front, at 2pm (grid ref: SN 1723 0722). The cliffs of Telpyn Point provide superb exposures through the Shale Group and Upper Sandstone Group (Farewell Rock) of the Millstone Grit, into the Lower Coal Measures. We should see the characteristic upward-coarsening delta sequences of the Upper Carboniferous, several marine bands, and have a chance to consider a new interpretation of the Farewell Rock published last year in *Journal of the Geological Society*. Depending on the tide, there may be a small section of clambering over rocks, and the boulders on the foreshore will be slippery. I'll be wearing wellies, but the total walking distance, there and back, is about 3 miles, so some people might prefer boots. Bring your

hammers and, if you have one, a safety helmet. I'll bring plenty extra. See you there?!

The Student Lecture is on the evening of **Wednesday 28 October**, in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University. Mark Davies of the Open University will talk about ***Montserrat - continuous monitoring of the beauty and the beast*** at 7pm, with refreshments from 6.30. I understand that the talking is accompanied by all kinds of interactive visual aids, and the event should fascinate youngsters particularly. So **please** if you know of any youngsters who are interested in volcanoes (aren't they all?), do encourage them to come along. And bring their parents too. Let's make it a full house!

The Geologists' Association's Annual Reunion will be on Saturday 7 November, at University College London from 12.30 to 4.30 pm. As for the last few years, we will take a display, and try to sell some of our publications. The plan is to take a car this year, and there may be spare space, so if anyone is interested in giving a hand, please contact Steve Howe or Tom Sharpe. The Reunion is a great occasion, at which most of the geology groups in Britain have some kind of exhibit. Members of our own Group are welcome to attend, and there is no admission charge. For more information, contact me, or ring the Geologists' Association at Burlington House (0171-434-9298^

Our November lecture will be in Swansea on **Saturday 14th**. The speaker will be Paul Wright who has recently returned to South Wales to take up a British Gas Chair in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff. Paul is known for talks that are full of interest. His topic will be ***Britain's amazing shrinking (fossil) soils***. If you want to know more, come to Swansea on 14 November.

On Saturday 5th December we welcome back Eric Robinson, the Librarian, *Circular* editor and past-President of the Geologists' Association. He will give us a talk at 11.00 (refreshments from 10.30), on ***The Local Character of Building Stones***, followed by a **guided walk** to see some of Cardiff's building stones. If you can't make it to the talk you'll be disappointed, but you can at least get to the walk by meeting on the steps

of the National Museum at 2 pm. Eric's knowledge of building stones is phenomenal, and is always presented with great zeal and humour - try not to miss this one!

Our 3rd ***Holiday Geology*** evening will be on **Friday 8th January** 1999, kindly hosted again by the National Museum of Wales. We've decided not to include the *Evolution of Wales* this year, to allow the slide presentations to be given at a more leisurely pace, and to give people the opportunity to ask questions. As this *Holiday Geology* will be in our 40th session, we hope for a full house. **Please**, if you have any interesting or unusual specimens, do bring them along. And, of course, if you've been anywhere interesting, or have some good slides showing the geology of anywhere, please volunteer to show them for a few minutes. Before I have to volunteer you! As in previous years, we will have to enter the Museum as a group at the back entrance, and the meeting time there will be 6.30 pm.

Dates, times and venues are summarised on the membership card. Meetings in Cardiff are in the Department of Earth Sciences, on the first floor of the main University building. Meetings in Swansea are in the Natural Sciences Building. Parking is available at both venues, although there may be a charge. Free refreshments are available for about half an hour before each lecture, when you can also order or buy field guides or clothing items. Remember too that we take the speaker to lunch after each talk: anyone is welcome to come. Finally, if you can display posters of our programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please let me know.

EISTEDDFOD DISPLAY

As outlined in the June Newsletter, members of this Group co-ordinated a geological display at the National Eisteddfod near Bridgend in August. Other groups involved were the Russell Society, the Geological Society, the RIGS Group and the British Geological Survey. I wasn't able to get to the Eisteddfod, but all the reports I've heard have been extremely complimentary. Many thanks indeed to all those involved in the whole project.

The overall cost of the project was considerable - a fee to the Eisteddfod, hire of stands, preparation of display material and publication of Welsh language items (see below) - and the income from sales at the Eisteddfod was, frankly, disappointing. However, it is a great credit to the organising group that the costs were covered by sponsorship raised for the event from the Geologists' Association Curry Fund, the Geological Society, the British Geological Survey, Bridgend County Council, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Russell Society and the Ernest Cook Trust - we are all most grateful to these organisations.

All in all, the display was extremely successful in taking geology to a public that we don't usually reach. And since one of the Group's objectives is to raise public awareness of geology, this was a worthwhile activity well done. If any members attended the Eisteddfod and have any feedback about the display, please let Gareth Oavies know.

The Eisteddfod returns to South Wales in the year 2000, in Llanelli. Should we mount a similar display there? My own opinion is that we should, and we know that the Geologists' Association in London is extremely enthusiastic and supportive of us doing so (see below). If you have any opinions, or if you'd like to help in the planning for a display at the 2000 Eisteddfod, please let any member of the Committee know.

PUBLICATIONS

Several publications were produced for the Eisteddfod project. The main one was a bilingual illustrated colour booklet of the ***Geology around Bridgend, Daeareg yng Nghyffiniau Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr***, written by Steve Howe. This is available for the bargain price of £1.50 from me, from the National Museum, or at meetings. The **walk leaflet to Southerndown** was revised and reprinted, and Welsh language versions published for ***Southerndown, Aberogwr*** and ***Porth-cawl***: all these sell at the usual 25p each.

The British Cave Research Association publishes guides to karst landforms in Britain, targetted at walkers as well as cavers. Their most recent offering is ***Caves and karst of the Brecon Beacons National Park***, for £2.50 plus 30p postage from BCRA, Village

Farm, Mill Lane, Great Thirkleby, North Yorkshire YO7 2AT. They may also still have copies of the 1989 book *Limestones and caves of Wales* for £18.75 (including postage) instead of £40

OTHER EVENTS

Extra-mural classes in geology have become thin on the ground - a sign of the times, I fear. Tom Sharpe is planning field courses in 1999 to Snowdonia (early May Bank Holiday weekend) and the Rocky Mountains (September), as well as day trips to the Malverns and the Somerset coast; further details from the Adult Education Centre, 51 Park Place, Cardiff CF1 3AT (tel: .01222-874953). Swansea is planning to introduce a Higher Education Certificate in Earth Sciences, with modules beginning in January 1999: for further details, contact OACE, UW Swansea, Singleton Park, Swansea SA2 8PP (tel: 01792-295786).

You should have been mailed separately about the symposium ***A Future For Fossils*** in Cardiff on 14-15 October. A stimulating programme covers the often conflicting demands on fossils of academics, museums, conservation bodies, amateur geologists and professional collectors. This is a forum to which you can make a real contribution. The registration fee includes lunch and tea.

Our members are welcomed at the meetings of other groups in the region. The **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch meets at 7.30 in the Chemistry Lecture Theatre at Cardiff University, and has forthcoming talks on *Minerals and man* (16 October, Dr Gordon Kingston), *Alpine mineralogy* (20 November, Dr Richard Braithwaite) and *Minerals and microbes* (15 January, Prof. Dave Rickard).

The **Open University Geological Society** Severnside Branch has a *Day of Lectures* at Chepstow Leisure Centre on Sunday November 15th, starting at 10 am, including talks on mineralization in the south-west, and the cosmic origin of life.

The **West of England Geologists' Association** holds lectures in the Geology Department at Bristol University, starting at 7.30, including *Lundy geology* (10 November,

Clive Roberts), *Trilobites* (8 December, Dr Bob Owens) and *Geology of northern Greenland* (9 February, Dr Paul Smith).

The **Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group** has a talk on *Old Red Sandstone in the Wye Valley* on 18 November in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, starting at 6 pm. Their AGM on 9 December at the same venue and time will be followed by a talk on *Principal remediation measures adopted to prevent contaminant migration from the Ferry Road landfill site, Cardiff*.

The GA's field programme includes a long weekend to Pembrokeshire (April 2-5) and tours to Alaska and Texas/New Mexico. For details, contact Lynn Allen, 32 Elmcroft Court, Burnet Close, Hemel Hempstead HP3 9ES (tel: 01442-267525)

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION

The Geologists' Association is planning a Millennium celebration in the form of ***Earth Alert***, a Festival of Geology in Brighton from May 26-30, 2000. This will include the Reunion, moved from November, to which we hope to take a display, plus talks from some of today's most influential geologists. I'll keep you informed as I hear more-

The pages of the most recent issue of the ***Circular*** include a tribute to our Eisteddfod effort. Eric Robinson writes that this is the kind of opportunity "*we must grasp if we are to make impact on a Public lukewarm to our kind of Science*" and is particularly complimentary of the Welsh language leaflets, which were funded by the GA's Curry Fund. Other snippets include the details of the GA's geological map supplier - GeoPubs, 4 Glebe Crescent, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5SN (01643-709001; toby@geopubs.co.uk); a list of contact addresses for GA Local Groups (there are 18 of these) and Affiliated Societies (57 of these); and news of the death of Professor Bob Savage.

CONSERVATION AND RIGS

Members of this Group attended the first UK RIGS Forum in Worcester from 1-3 September and the Welsh RIGS Forum in Machynlleth from 25-26 September. The RIGS movement seems to be here to stay, although support in South Wales from the statutory body, CCW, remains inadequate. For more information, contact John Conway, Chairman of the Glamorgan-Gwent RIGS Group (01285-652531, ext. 2234).

OTHER NEWS

I am sorry to report the death of Mr WS Morgan in early September. He was a founder member of the Group, and Assistant Secretary from 1960-1971.

The Earth Galleries at the Natural History Museum have at last been completed. We failed to gather enough support for a Group visit to the galleries last autumn; if anyone would be interested in trying to arrange a visit again, please let any Committee member know of your interest.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Lastly, a reminder that computerised records are kept of members' names, addresses and membership record. These are used only within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, mainly for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record, please let me know.

There should be another Newsletter in December with more about the spring programme, including more lectures, field meetings and geological walks. I hope to see you at some meetings before then.

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)



Fortieth Session 1998-1999

DECEMBER 1998

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

HOLIDAY GEOLOGY is almost upon us - don't forget it! This year's event is again generously hosted by the National Museum in Cardiff, and will begin at **6.30 on the evening of Friday 8th January 1999**. As usual, we will have to enter the Museum at the **back entrance**, as a group, so please meet there in time to enter at 6.30. This year's event will comprise short illustrated talks about the geology of different places, and refreshments, so we hope the slide presentations will be less rushed than they have in the past. We would also like you to bring along any **interesting or unusual specimens or photographs** you have - whether to try and get them identified, or just to show them off. Please just bring them along. I hope there will be talks about the USA, Antarctica and the Himalayas, but there are still a few gaps in the programme, so if you've taken some nice slides that are at least vaguely geological, of anywhere at all, please **volunteer** to show them at *Holiday Geology*. You can let me know

when you ring up to confirm you're coming.

I hope to see lots of people at the Museum on Friday 8th to get the New Year off to a rocking good start. And as always if you have any relatives, neighbours or friends who might have some interest in things geological, please bring them along too.

It is helpful if we know roughly how many people to expect at *Holiday Geology*, so please try and either return the slip on the enclosed flier, or ring one of the phone numbers by **Wednesday 6th January**. Thank-you.

In the meantime, this Newsletter should reach you between Christmas and the New Year. On behalf of everyone on the Committee, I wish all members

*Season's Greetings and Best Wishes
for 1999.*

I hope Father Christmas has been delivering plenty of hammers, hand lenses, *Earth Story* books, chocolate dinosaurs and other excellent geological gifts! If you're still looking for (very) late gift ideas, I think the booklet from *The Essential Guide to Rocks* is excellent (although I wouldn't say the same of the TV programmes). Copies can be obtained by sending a cheque for £4.95 per copy (includes p&p) payable to *BBC Education* to: The Essential Guide to Rocks, PO Box 7, London W12 8UD. Anyone into the latest technology may be interested in *The Geology of the UK*-a 3 CD-ROM pack, which is presently reduced from £125 to £59. I'm not familiar with this, so can't comment on the quality, but for details contact CD Vision, PO Box 14210, London NWS 7WW (tel: 0171-431-4410).

So what is the *GA* bringing for the New Year?

After *Holiday Geology* there will be a lecture meeting in **Cardiff** on **Saturday 30th January**. Dr Peter Skelton of the Open University will talk on ***Baroque bivalves of the Cretaceous 'Greenhouse' world***. That should be a stimulating talk, the title alone combining unusual fossils with climate change. As usual, the talk will begin at **11.00**, in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University, with refreshments available from 10.30. Also as usual, we hope to take the speaker to **lunch** afterwards in the restaurant at the Museum. Everyone is invited to come along - the more people there, the more the speaker will feel it has been worthwhile coming to South Wales, and that there is a great enthusiasm for geology here. The Museum restaurant is very informal, and you can have anything from a hot meal to a cup of tea.

An extra event is a joint meeting between the GA and the Russell Society

on **Saturday 20th February** - a lecture on ***Gold in North Wales: the Carn Dochan gold mine***, given by Dr Bob Symes OBE. This will begin at 11.00 in the usual Geology Lecture Theatre of the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University.

Our annual *joint meeting with the Geological Society's Southern Wales Group* will be in Swansea on **Saturday 27 February**. Dean Maddison, from the engineering company Halcrow, based in Cardiff, will talk on ***The influence of glacial Lake Teifi on landsliding at St Dogmaels***. This should be a fascinating talk, definitely not to be missed. Halcrow's work stems from investigations with the British Geological Survey into the causes of the major landslip that occurred at St Dogmaels, south of Cardigan, a couple of years back. Cores drilled into the sediments there revealed a great thickness of deposits that accumulated in glacial Lake Teifi, and their study has revealed much about the lake and its development during the last glaciation, as well as about the causes of the landslip. Once again, the talk will begin at 11.00, in the Department of Geography at **Swansea**, with refreshments from 10.30, and we hope to be taking the speaker to the *Tavern on the Pond* for lunch afterwards.

Our fortieth **Annual General Meeting** will be on the morning of **Saturday 27th March**. The AGM is held at the same venue for 2 years in a row, so this year it is again to be in **Cardiff**, beginning at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00. After the business meeting, Dr R A Waters of the British Geological Survey will talk on ***The latest Ordovician to early Silurian turbidite systems of central Wales: their architecture and evolution***. We hope for an excellent turnout at this one - the Lower Palaeozoic geology of Central Wales is a source of

endless fascination to all of us interested in geology and living in Wales, not least because the picture that emerges from the study of the rocks gets ever clearer and more detailed. There have been a few field days to Central Wales in recent years, so this is a chance to put some of the field information into a clearer framework and context.

There will be another Newsletter in February, with an Agenda for the AGM, and that will include details of **field events** during the spring, including more *Geological Walks in South Wales*, beginning in **set99 Science Week** between 12 and 21 March. It will also give details of vacancies on the **Committee**. For the good health of the Group we need a steady turnover of people willing to help out on the committee for a couple of years. If you think you might like to help, please get in touch with me for more information, or take the opportunity of **Holiday Geology** in January to find out more from existing Committee members.

The February Newsletter will give details of events from March onwards. One that should be in your diary already is the 9th **T.R. Owen Memorial Lecture**. This year it will be hosted by Swansea's Department of Adult Continuing Education, at the **Brecon Beacons Mountain Centre** in Libanus on **Thursday 17th June**, starting at 7.30 pm. The speaker will be Dr John Cope, talking on **The last 65 million years of Wales**. This is an interval of time for which there isn't much geological record in Wales, but anyone who has heard John talk before, on the Jurassic or Cretaceous of Wales, will know that it was far from a quiet time, and I am sure we will all be amazed to hear just how much information it is now possible to give about those critical 65 million years.

Last autumn's meetings included some really superb lectures, with good audiences. Fourteen people came to Telpyn Point in October, where we saw all we had intended. Steve Howe, Tom Sharpe and Gareth Davies put a lot of effort into taking a display to the GA Reunion in November, and several other members made it to the day. By all accounts it was a worthwhile venture, the only minor disappointment being the rather small amount of sales we managed to make.

MEMBERS' NEWS

I am sorry to have to report the death in early December of Don Wilks, a member from Swansea. The Group was represented at his funeral.

OTHER GROUPS & EVENTS

The Russell Society invites our members to its meetings. Lectures are held in the Chemistry Lecture Theatre at Cardiff University, starting at 7.30 pm, and the next one is **Minerals and microbes** with Dave Rickard on 15th January.

The West of England Geologists' Association is pleased to see members of the South Wales Group at its meetings. Lectures are in the Department of Geology at Bristol University, starting at 7.30pm, and followed by wine and cheese. They will be hearing talks from research students on 19th January, **Geology of northern Greenland** from Paul Smith (Birmingham University) on 9th February, and **Carboniferous insects from Writhlington** from Ed Jarzembowski (Maidstone Museum) on 9th March. They have **field excursions** planned to the Tortworth Inlier on 24th April and east Cornwall on 15/16 May. For further details, contact John Toller on 0117-969-6834.

The **Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group** has a joint meeting with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Minerals Division on Wednesday 20th January, entitled ***Mineral resource information for use in development plans in South Wales***. The speaker will be David Highley, and the talk will be in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, starting with tea and coffee at 5.30. Members of our own Group can attend this talk. If you want more information please contact Ray Kenny on 01222-382465.

University of Wales Swansea begins its Higher Education Certificate in Earth Science with a series of classes on ***The dynamic Earth - mountains and mountain building*** given by Sam Freeth and beginning on Tuesday 12th January from 7 to 9 pm in the Geology Lecture Theatre of the Natural Sciences Building (the usual venue for GA lectures). After Easter Nigel Bateman will give a series of classes on ***Economic minerals*** at the same venue and time, starting on Monday 19th April. For more information there is a **launch evening** for the HE Certificate on Monday January 11th, at 7pm at the same venue - go along if you're interested.

AS WE APPROACH THE MILLENNIUM - EARTH ALERT

The countdown to the Millennium is now really underway, and I have more information about the Geologists' Association's ***Earth Alert Festival of Geology*** to be held in Brighton from **May 26th to 30th 2000**. The **GA Annual Reunion** for 2000 will be on **27th May**. Attendance at this is free, and we hope to take a display on behalf of the South Wales Group (any volunteers or ideas for a display - please let me or any Committee member know). On 28th May there will be talks on ***The Early Earth***

and evolution, on 29th May ***Geohazards and resources***, and on 30th May ***Resource sustainability - pollution and waste: the future***. The speakers include well-known names such as Mike Benton, Simon Conway-Morris, John Dewey, Dianne Edwards and Sir John Knill, and examples of the lectures include *The dawn of animal life*, *Catastrophes to come*, and *Great extinctions*.

I have a few copies of the **registration form**, which has reduced rates for registrations made before 30th November 1999. The reunion on 27th May is free to members of Local Groups (that's you). Attendance at the Conference and Exhibitions is £30, or £11 per day. Attendance at the Exhibitions only is £3, and there are similar charges for a couple of Public Lectures and Local Walks. Please contact me if you would like a copy of this registration form, or else contact the Geologists' Association directly through Sarah Stafford, Geologists' Association, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (tel: 0171-434-9298).

Some news from the latest issue of the **Geologists' Association Circular**. The Association is looking for new offices, having been told that the Geological Society (who currently provide the GA with office space at their Burlington House premises) now need the space the GA occupy for a map store. The GA has been asked to leave Burlington House by May 2001. Some indication of underlying motives is perhaps given by the GA President's words in his piece in the *Circular* where he writes that *"Those present at the October lecture indicated a unanimous support for the Association to remain independent."* Hear, hear."

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)



Fortieth Session 1998-1999

MARCH 1999

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

STOP PRESS! EVENTS COMING UP (VERY!) SOON

You will find enclosed the programme for our series of **Geological Walks in South Wales**. This includes our contributions to Science Week **set99**, in the form of walks on Sunday 14 March and **Saturday 20 March**. I apologise that this Newsletter didn't reach you in time for the first of these, but I hope it won't be too late to produce a good turnout for the walk with Steve Howe on **Saturday 20th March at Ogmores-by-Sea**. Meet at the north end of the main Ogmores-by-Sea car park (SS 861 755) at **1.30pm** for an afternoon walk looking at Carboniferous Limestone with stunning fossils, and unconformably overlying Triassic rocks. Anyone who has been to Ogmores before will be delighted to go back, and if you haven't been you haven't lived!

All the *Geological Walks in South Wales* are suitable for **everybody** - experienced geologists, complete novices, adults, children, members and non-members alike. We hope that by spreading events out instead of concentrating them into Science Week, we will be catering better for what our own members want, and we hope to see lots of people at all the events. They will all involve fairly easy walking, and should prove equally suitable for "old hands" and complete beginners -

so please encourage friends, neighbours and children to come along.

Another flier gives details of forthcoming **field meetings** in our normal programme. The visit to **Parc Slip** opencast site, postponed from last spring because of heavy rain, has been re-scheduled for the morning of Saturday 8th May. Numbers are limited by the site operators, so please contact Lesley by phone or by returning the slip to book a place. Likewise for the **Cotswold fossil hunt** on Saturday 5th June.

Several members came back with glowing reports of a recent **Rock 'n' Gem Show** in Cheltenham. These events are held regularly from March to October, but the next events at **Cheltenham Racecourse** - the only ones near to our area - are on the weekends of **20/21 March and 2/3 October 1999**. Admission is £2.25 for adults (Seniors £1.75, children £1, under-8's free), parking is free, the show is open from 10am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday, and you can get more details (if you need them) by ringing 01628-621697.

On **Tuesday 23 March** the Southern Wales Regional Group of the Geological Society is holding an afternoon meeting on **The Role of the Engineering Geologist in the Decommissioning of Sites**. There is **no charge** for attendance at the meeting which will be held in the

Prince Philip Lecture Theatre (N4.07) of Cardiff University, in Queen's Building North, Newport Road (entrance off West Grove), and is scheduled from 1.30 pm to 6 pm. There will be 7 speakers, dealing with decontamination of industrial buildings, drainage problems at disused colliery sites, minewater pollution, surface emissions of mine gas, and landfill problems. If you want further details, please contact Jeremy Mucker (01222-813386, ESP_Wales@compuserve.com) or Kevin Privett (01222-340524; KPrivett@srk.com).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our fortieth Annual General Meeting will take place on **Saturday 27th March** in **Cardiff**. The AGM itself is usually a fairly short, painless affair, and this year it will be followed by a lecture from Dr R A Waters of the British Geological Survey, entitled ***The latest Ordovician to early Silurian turbidite systems of central Wales: their architecture and evolution.*** Despite its long title, this lecture promises to give us yet more fascinating information about the geology of central Wales, so nobody has any excuse for missing the AGM! The meeting will be in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, and will begin at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00. Please note that this is earlier than our usual lecture meetings. We hope too that plenty of people will come along the Museum for some lunch (or just a cup of coffee) afterwards.

Papers for the AGM are enclosed - an agenda, minutes of last year's AGM, and a nomination form for vacancies on the committee. The main business is **elections to the Committee** (yet again no rise in subscriptions, you'll be pleased to hear!) and a quick glance at the papers will reveal that Tom Sharpe, our **Treasurer**, is standing down. We'll be very sorry to lose Tom as Treasurer, but having done the job since 1990 he feels it is time to hand it on to someone else. I think the infrequency of increases to subscriptions, over a period that has seen

an expansion and diversification of the Group's activities, demonstrates the excellent job that Tom has done for us all.

As is usual, the Committee is recommending people for the vacant Committee posts. **Malcolm Shaw** has agreed to take over from Tom as **Treasurer**, and we are grateful to him for this offer. The posts of **Secretary**, **Membership Secretary** and **Editor** are due for renewal for the period 1999-2001: the **incumbents** - myself, Mike Lees and Mike Bassett - are willing to continue, and are endorsed by the Committee. Eddie Callaway and Steve Plant come to the end of their 3-year terms of office on the **Committee**. **Steve Plant** is being nominated for a further 3-year stint, and **Dave Wellings** is being nominated as a new Committee member. **Eddie Callaway** is to be thanked for his enthusiasm and support on the Committee over the past 3 years. Finally, **Richard Thomas** has provided us with strong support as **Student Member** for a couple of years now, and we are nominating him to continue for the coming year.

We hope members will be satisfied with the Committee's nominations for these posts, but **further nominations** from members will be welcomed. Please send nominations to me on the enclosed form by Friday 26th March. Finally, it is vital to the health and vigour of the Group that we maintain an enthusiastic and representative Committee, with a reasonable turnover of members, so if you would like to do a spell on the Committee, but don't want to be nominated this year, we'd still be delighted to hear from you - just talk to me or any committee member.

OVER THE SUMMER

I don't know yet if there will be another newsletter in the late spring, so here are some more dates for your diaries. The 9th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture** will be given by Dr John Cope on **Thursday 17th June**, in the Brecon Beacons Mountain Centre near **Libanus**, starting at 7.30 pm, and

hosted this year by the Department of Adult Continuing Education at Swansea University. The title will be ***The last 65 million years of Wales*** - well worth the journey.

Sid Howells will be leading some guided walks with a geological bias for the **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park** over the summer. On **Wednesday 25th August** there will be a boat trip and walk to **Skomer Island**; on **Thursday 2nd September** a boat trip and walk to **Ramsey Island**; and on **Sunday 12th September** a walk from **Stack Rocks to Freshwater West**. All these events are bookable, and further **details** can be obtained from the National Park Visitor Centre, The Grove, St David's, Pembrokeshire SA62 6NW (telephone 01437-720392). Sid will also be taking some longer courses to examine the geology of Pembrokeshire. One entitled *Geology and Scenery of Pembrokeshire* will be based at Orierton Field Centre from 18th to 25th August. A non-residents' rate is available. Phone 01646-661225 for information. A second course will be based at Twr-y-Felin Hotel in St Davids for the weekend of 2nd and 3rd October, examining the *geology of north Pembrokeshire*. Phone 01437-721189 or 01437-721678 for more information.

The second **UK RIGS Conference** will be held in Worcester from 2-4 September 1999. For anyone suitably interested in RIGS and the Earth science conservation movement, the *Proceedings of the First UK RIGS Conference*, held in Worcester in September 1998, can be purchased for £7.50 plus £2 postage, from Herefordshire & Worcestershire RIGS Group, Geology Records Centre, University College Worcester, Henwick Grove, Worcester WR2 6AJ (cheques payable to *UK RIGS Conference*).

The 6th Welsh RIGS Forum will be based at the National Museum in **Cardiff** from 10-12 September. Look out for more information closer to the time. For those interested in the RIGS movement, and

connected to the internet, there is a web site for RIGS in Wales, at <http://www.bangor.ac.uk/~iss006/rigs/rigs.htm> and one for UK RIGS at <http://www.worc.ac.uk/departs/envman/RIGS/Index.html>.

MORE BITS OF PAPER

By now you're probably surrounded by pieces of paper that have fallen out of your Newsletter, but there's more! A revised version of the order form for South Wales Group **clothing** is enclosed. Those old sweat-shirts and fleeces must be wearing out now (mine are) so get your cheque books out, and send **orders** off to Jim Chetcuti.

A leaflet is enclosed about the Geologists' Association's millennium jamboree ***Earth Alert***, to be held in Brighton from May 26th to 30th 2000. May 27th will be the **Annual Reunion**: attendance at that is free, and we hope to take some form of display. The 28th to 30th are days of invited lectures on *The early Earth and evolution*, *Geohazards and resources*, and *Resource sustainability*, with several "big name" speakers. Please note that there is a reduced registration fee if you register before 30th November 1999, and that the charges appropriate to members of this group are the Affiliate charges. In fact I've just received a notice that the special offer has been extended: if you register and pay before the end of May 1999, you can have **the whole package for only £32**.

A REQUEST FOR HELP

Peter Brokenshire is a recently-joined member who has begun PhD research at Cardiff University with John Cope. His research topic is ***Devonian and Lower Carboniferous bivalves***, and he would appreciate **help** from any members who know of localities that might be suitable for him to collect material. If you can help Peter, please contact him at 67 Glanmor Park Road, Swansea SA2 0QE. If there are suitable localities, perhaps we can arrange a field meeting to help Peter with his collecting.

SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

Our third Holiday Geology evening seemed to be a great success at the start of January, with about 80 people attending. Those present were taken on a whirlwind tour of many of the world's geologically interesting places, including the Middle East (Mike Bassett), Australia (Lynda Garfield), the Rockies (Mike Lees), Antarctica (Dean James), Brecon Beacons caves (Andy Kendall), coral reefs (Dave Wellings), Yellowstone (Alan Channing) and the Himalayas (myself): many thanks to all the speakers. Several people managed to include photos of other group members in the field, which went down very well. Start now getting your own photos ready for next year's event! There was a sumptuous buffet laid on by the Department of Geology at the National Museum and as before we are most grateful to Mike Bassett and his staff for their support of our activities.

Since then there have been 3 lecture meetings, all very well attended and much enjoyed. Peter Skelton talked about Cretaceous rudist bivalves; in a joint meeting with the Russell Society, Bob Symes talked on gold in North Wales; and in our annual joint meeting with the Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group, Dean Maddison and Howard Siddle talked about glacial Lake Teifi and landsliding at St Dogmaels. We hope to try and arrange a field meeting to the Cardigan area in the autumn.

OTHER GROUPS

As always, there are lots of other meetings going on in our region, and our own members will be welcomed at these. University of Wales Swansea hopes to get its Higher Education Certificate in Earth Science under way with a series of classes on **Economic minerals** to be given by Nigel Bateman starting on Monday 19th April. For more information ring 01792-295786

The **Russell Society** has field meetings to Creigiau Quarry, Mid-Glamorgan (26

April), Blaengwynlais Quarry near Cardiff (16 May), mid-Wales (20-21 June), Ton Mawr Quarry near Cardiff (19 July), Dylife near Llanidloes (23 August) and Pare Slip (19 September). Ring Steve Plant (01222-869352) or Gwyn Billington (01633-440600) for more information.

The West of England Geologists' Association has a lecture meeting on 9th March on Carboniferous Insects from Writhlington, to be given by Dr Ed Jarzembowski, now at Maidstone Museum. The talk will begin at 7.30pm in the First Year Lecture Theatre in the Geology Department, Wills Memorial Building, University of Bristol, and will be followed by wine and cheese. Their subsequent events are field meetings, including Silurian of the Tortworth Inlier (24th April) and minerals in east Cornwall (15/16 May). For further details contact John Toller (0117-969-6834).

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The latest volume in the Geologists' Association's field guide series is Number 61, covering the **Geology of the Western Front, 1914-1918**. This is an unusual title, but as those who attended Mike Rosenbaum's lecture on Geology in War back in 1995 will recall, it is a fascinating topic. This guide considers issues such as why the terrain was difficult for mobile warfare, why underground mining was easier in some areas than others, and the reasons for slight variations in topography that influenced command of the battlefield. The GA has also issued a new edition of Guide No. 26 to the **Peak District** (last edition 1972) by F Wolverson Cope. Copies of all the **GA field guides** can be obtained for the special members' price of £10 inclusive of postage and packing (a discount of £3 off the full price) by contacting the GA Office, (still at) Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (tel: 0171-434-9298; fax: 0171-287-0280).

Geraint Owen (Secretary)



Fortieth Session 1998-1999

JUNE 1999

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

MILLENNIUM SESSION APPROACHES!

This will be the last Newsletter of our 40th session. But you will hardly notice any gap before the start of our 41st session – the "Millennium Session!" Read on for news of summer and autumn activities, and more!

Firstly, though, a request for advance **subscriptions** for that Millennium Session. These are due in September, but if you use the enclosed renewal form it will save our mailing costs. If you renew now, your next mailing will be a Newsletter with your 1999-2000 membership card some time in October, but possibly not until after the first lecture of the session, on October 9th - **so make sure you read your Newsletter carefully now!** If we haven't heard from you, you will receive a renewal reminder in September.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Geological Walks in South Wales continue through the summer: you should have received a programme with

the last Newsletter. On **Sunday 20th June**, Sid Howells will lead a walk of about 9km in the **Preseli Hills** to examine the tors and consider the origins of the Stonehenge Bluestones. **Meet** at 11.00 am at Waldo's Monument (SN 137 304) near Mynachlog ddu, and bring a packed lunch. On the evening of **Thursday 5th August** join Steve Howe for a walk along the sea-front at **Porthcawl**. **Meet** at 6.00 pm at the harbour breakwater, opposite the Lifeboat Station (SS 819 763). Lastly, join me at **Penwyllt** on **Saturday 18th September**: meet at 2.00 pm on the open grassy area near the Cave Rescue Post (SN 856 156). All these walks are free, suitable for anyone from complete beginners to the more experienced, and everyone is welcome.

The RIGS movement for geological and geomorphological conservation continues to develop. The 6th **Welsh RIGS Forum** will be held in Cardiff from 10-12 September. The theme will be communicating geological information. For more details, contact Tony Rogers, RIGS Co-ordinator Wales, CCW, Hafod Elfyn, Penrhos Road, Bangor LL57 2LQ

(01248-385616). Prior to that, the 2nd UK RIGS Conference will be held in Worcester from 2-4 September. For details, contact the Geological Records Centre, University College Worcester, Henwick Grove, Worcester WR2 6AJ (01905-855184).

AUTUMN EVENTS

Our 1999-2000 session will get under way with a lecture at Cardiff University Earth Sciences Department on **Saturday 9th October**. The speaker will be Professor Steve Donovan, recently returned to the UK and the Natural History Museum from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, and his title will be ***Improving our understanding of the fossil record - some successes from the Caribbean region***. As usual, the talk will begin at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30. Put it in your diary now!

A field meeting on **Saturday 23rd October** will examine ***The Quaternary of the Cardigan area: evidence for Lake Teifi***. This will be led by Dr Dick Waters of the British Geological Survey, who gave our March lecture on the turbidite systems of central Wales, and contributed to the discussion at our February lecture on the St Dogmaels landslip. The enigmatic Lake Teifi is a fascinating subject, so look out for details with your autumn newsletter. (Make sure you renew your subscription in case you miss it!)

On Saturday 13th or 20th November Dr Tim Young, a geo-archaeological consultant from Cardiff, will talk on ***The Magor Pill Medieval Boat and early iron-making technology***. The meeting will be held at the Museum of Welsh Life, St Pagans, where Dr Young has reconstructed an Iron Age smelter, and we hope the talk can be accompanied by some demonstrations.

The Geologists' Association's Annual Reunion is scheduled for Saturday 6th November in London. Steve Howe is co-ordinating a display for that event, and if you want to help, please contact him (01222-573363). We hope to arrange a visit to Nant Helen opencast site in the autumn, and the last lecture of the year will be on Saturday 4th December, in Swansea, when Dr Bob Owens from the National Museum will talk on ***Planetary Geology at the Millennium***.

We hope to start the year 2000 with another **Holiday Geology** evening at the National Museum in early January. The Annual **Student Lecture** has been moved to coincide with **Science Week**, which will be from Friday 17 to Sunday 26 March. The **National Eisteddfod** will be back in south Wales (Llanelli) in August, and we again hope to present a display: this is being co-ordinated by Gareth Davies, so contact him if you want to help (01554-751126). Prior to that, the Geologists' Association is celebrating the millennium with its **Earth Alert** meeting in Brighton from 26-30 May. Again, contact Gareth if you want to help with a display.

SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

Just to keep you up to date - in case you've missed anything - our 40th **Annual General Meeting** took place on Saturday 27 March, attended by 36 people. Copies of the Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports are included. It was noted that membership had at last reached the magic figure of 200 - let's hope we can keep it at this level, and if you know of other people who want to join, there's plenty of room for more! Geraint Owen, Mike Lees and Mike Bassett were accepted to continue as Secretary, Membership Secretary and Editor respectively for 1999-2001. Malcolm Shaw was accepted as Treasurer, to replace Tom Sharpe; Steve Plant and Dave Wellings as Committee

members; and Richard Thomas as Student member. President Gareth Davies thanked retiring members Tom Sharpe and Eddie Callaway for all their work on the Group's behalf.

The AGM was followed by a fascinating talk from Dr Dick Waters, of the British Geological Survey, on the early Silurian turbidite systems of central Wales - the rocks of the Elan Valley and the New Quay to Borth coastline. The field trip to Pare Slip opencast site was full, with 17 people, and the field meeting to the Cotswolds was a great success, with 47 people. The first few *Geological Walks in South Wales* have got under way. The 2 walks for set99 were attended by 7 (Langland Bay) and 27 people (Ogmore-by-Sea), Saundersfoot by 13 people, and Llandaff by 58.

PUBLICATIONS

An order form is enclosed for the Geographical Association's **Classic Landform Guides**. These informative, clearly-written booklets explain the origin of the landscape - geological foundations, glacial effects and more recent features. They normally sell at £8.95, but the Geographical Association has allowed us to offer them to you for the Geographical Association members' special rate of just **£6.00 each**. You may recall a similar offer back in March 1993. Some titles were not available in 1993 - *Snowdonia*, the *Lake District* and *Dorset* - and all have been re-written and "re-packaged", with more illustrations, colour photographs and Ordnance Survey map extracts - some people have already seen Mike Bridges' revised edition of *The Gower Coast*. If you want copies of these excellent guides, please make sure your order reaches me by Friday 16th July. There may be some delays over the summer, but I hope guides will be sent out by early September.

A leaflet is enclosed about **Geology Today**, a bi-monthly magazine aimed at

everyone interested in geology. Articles cover volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, fossil finds, new scientific ideas and geological stories in the news, and the leaflet gives an outline of some recent feature articles. If you want to subscribe to *Geology Today*, you are entitled to the special Geologists' Association members' rate of **£26.50** for a year (6 issues). If you want to examine a copy before making your mind up, you can either send off for one or examine copies before lectures at Swansea. The publishers of *Geology Today* - Blackwell Science - have kindly donated us £50 to cover the cost of sending out these leaflets.

The latest offering from the Geologists' Association is a revised edition of Guide No. 26, ***The Peak District***, by F. Wolverson Cope. The price for members of our Group is **£10** inclusive of postage. An order form for all the Geologists' Association Guides is enclosed - please send your order directly to The Geologists' Association.

OTHER GROUPS' ACTIVITIES

As noted in the last Newsletter, Sid Howells will be leading geological walks for the **Pembrokeshire Coast** National Park on Wednesday 25 August (Skomer Island), Thursday 2 September (Ramsey Island) and Sunday 12 September (Stack Rocks to Freshwater West) - contact the National Park Visitor Centre in St David's for more details (01437-720392).

The Russell Society is visiting Creigiau Quarry, Mid-Glamorgan, on Sunday 18th July, and Ton Mawr Quarry, Pentyrch, near Cardiff, on Sunday 22nd August. They have a weekend meeting in North Wales in late June. For more details, contact Steve Plant (01222-869352) or Gwyn Billington (01633-440600).

There will be a Rock 'n' Gem Show at Cheltenham Racecourse on Saturday

and Sunday 2/3 October - ring 01628-621697 for further details.

University of Wales Swansea is re-launching its **Higher Education Certificate** in Earth Sciences - a leaflet is enclosed.

BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

As many of you will recall, the British Geological Survey closed its Welsh office - based in Aberystwyth - back in 1994, whilst retaining regional offices in Scotland, Northern Ireland and south-west England in addition to the headquarters at Keyworth, near Nottingham. One geologist - Dr Jeremy Davies - remained in Wales, attached to the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, but most of the central Wales mapping, the fruits of which we heard about from Dick Waters after the AGM, was carried out by a team based in Nottingham. Under the new climate of devolution and regionalism, BGS is now considering whether to re-open a Welsh office. At the moment they are investigating the demand for a formal BGS presence in Wales, and considering at what level any presence should be - the options seem to be a small team of geologists, with or without maps and records that relate to Welsh geology. To try and gauge demand, Jeremy Davies has prepared a **short questionnaire**. If anyone would like a copy, please contact me as soon as possible (01792-295141). A letter of support for a strengthening of the BGS presence in Wales will also be sent on behalf of the Group.

CLOTHING

An order form for clothing items with the Group logo embroidered on them was issued with the last Newsletter, asking you to state whether you prefer your logo

in English ("*South Wales Group*") or Welsh ("*Grŵp De Cymru*"). Jim Chetcuti has now agreed with the manufacturers a revised logo that incorporates both versions, so from now on all orders will have the same logo. To see what it looks like, turn to the top of this Newsletter.

The new clothing logo differs from our usual logo. When we introduced the range of clothing, there was a significant initial cost for the manufacturer to set up a sewing head with our design, and we had to sell quite a few items before we had recouped this outlay. Sales of clothing have slowed down, and we do not want to pay for a new sewing head, so Jim has managed to get the manufacturers to combine the Welsh and English logos by modifying the existing sewing pattern. We hope everyone finds the revised pattern agreeable.

MEMBER NEWS

And finally, on a happy note, Professor **Dianne Edwards** FRS, a long-standing member of this group, was awarded the CBE in the recent honours list. Congratulations, Dianne!

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)

Session 41 1999-2000

Geologists' Association - South Wales Group

Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru

Registered Charity Number 1054303



Forty-first Session 1999-2000

OCTOBER 1999

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

Another session, another Newsletter. Another millennium! It can surely only be geologists who have such a perspective on time that they can say that! **Welcome to the Group's forty-first session.** And thank-you very much for renewing your subscription. Your membership card is enclosed, listing the programme of events through to summer 2000. We hope there will be something to please everyone, and that everyone will be able to make it to some of our activities.

THE MAKING OF WALES *CREU CYMRU*

Enclosed is a free copy for you of this recent publication from the Countryside Council for Wales. It is a beautifully illustrated booklet, providing a summary of the geological evolution of Wales, and goes some way to plugging a big gap in the available literature. We hope you enjoy reading it and looking at it. More copies are available: if you want copies -

for example for a school, or to inspire a friend to take up an interest - please contact Steve Howe at the National Museum in Cardiff.

1999-2000 PROGRAMME

The session got under way with a lecture in Cardiff on Saturday 9 October from Professor Steve Donovan, Keeper of Palaeontology at the Natural History Museum, on *Improving our understanding of the fossil record: some successes from the Caribbean region*. I was sorry not to be able to get to that one - I'm sure everyone there enjoyed it.

The first field meeting of the session will be the trip to examine the ***Quaternary of the Cardigan area: evidence for glacial Lake Teifi*** on **Saturday 23 October**. This is the trip that was postponed from the spring, and will be led by Dick Waters and Jerry Davies from the British Geological Survey. Many people will remember the

fascinating talk last session about the St Dogmaels landslip. This field meeting will visit the landslip, and other nearby sites to consider new evidence that sheds light on an old idea. Full details, including meeting place and time, are on the enclosed flier. If you know you will be going it will be helpful if you can return the reply slip to Lesley Cherns, so we have at least a rough idea of how many will be there.

The date of the **Geologists' Association Reunion** in London has been **changed to Saturday 13 November**. Once again, we intend to take a display and sales material to the Reunion. This is being co-ordinated by Steve Howe, and if anyone would like to attend the Reunion (attendance is free for all members of the GA and its Local Groups - that's us) or to help out with the display, **please get in touch with Steve**. It may be possible to make some transport-sharing arrangements. This will be the last Reunion at University College London. In 2000 the Reunion will be part of the *Earth Alert* festival in Brighton, but after that its whereabouts are as yet uncertain.

We have altered our autumn programme as a result of the change to the Reunion date. Our November lecture will now be on **Saturday 20 November**, in Swansea. Tom Sharpe, our Treasurer until last March, will give a talk entitled ***Landscapes and Geology of the American West***. We can expect an enjoyable and informative presentation about this beautiful and fascinating area that many members have visited.

Another **opencast site visit** has been arranged for **Saturday 27 November**. Perhaps this time we'll manage to have chosen a dry day! The venue is the Nant Helen site, near Coelbren in the Swansea Valley. As well as looking for plant fossils and mineral specimens, Rod Gayer from Cardiff will be leading the trip and will explain some of the deformation

structures at the site. These are relevant to new ideas in understanding the tectonic development of the South Wales Coalfield. **Numbers are strictly limited** for this visit, so **it is essential that you return the booking slip** to Lesley Cherns if you want to attend.

Our last lecture of 1999 will be in Swansea again, on **Saturday 4 December**. Dr Bob Owens, from the National Museum in Cardiff, will talk on ***Planetary Geology at the Millennium***. Bob will give us an update on this rapidly-changing, and absolutely fascinating topic. No field trips promised!

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Meetings in Cardiff are in the Department of Earth Sciences, on the first floor of the main University building. Meetings in Swansea are in the Natural Sciences Building. Parking is available at both venues, although there may be a charge at Cardiff. **Free refreshments are available for about half an hour before** each lecture, when you can also order or buy field guides or clothing items. Remember too that we take the speaker to **lunch after each talk: anyone is welcome** to come along, either for lunch, or just for a quick drink. Finally, if you can display **posters** of our programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please let me know.

INTO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

We plan to hold another **Holiday Geology** evening at the National Museum on the evening of **Friday 7 January**, to kick off the new millennium. There should be refreshments as usual, and we intend to follow last year's programme of short slide presentations, with plenty of opportunity to chat with one another. So, a request. If you've been anywhere interesting - in Britain or abroad - and have a few slides that you

think would interest others, **please offer to show them at *Holiday Geology*** and let me know. And please also look out any photographs or specimens that you think might interest other members, and bring them along too. With so many geologists in one place, this is an unrivalled opportunity to get that mystery specimen or photo identified!

There should be another Newsletter in December, with details of where and when to meet for *Holiday Geology*, as well as full details of the spring programme. This will include a talk in Cardiff on **22 January** from Professor Joe Cartwright on the “**Geological Hubble**”; a talk and demonstration on **early iron-making** linked to the recently-discovered **Magor Pill Medieval Boat**, to be held at St Fagans Museum of Welsh Life, and given by Dr Tim Young on **19 February**; and our **Annual General Meeting** on **18 March**, followed by Gareth Davies’ Retiring President’s Address. Gareth has decided to follow Lynda Garfield’s title of keeping us guessing throughout the year what on earth his talk will be about by giving it the title ***From Cwm Glas to Morskie Oko***. No clues now (because I haven’t a clue!) - you’ll have to attend to find out what it’s about.

FURTHER AHEAD

You may be wondering what has happened to our **Annual Student Lecture**, formerly held in mid-November. To try and attract more students, we have decided to move it to be part of **set2000 Science Week**, which will last from **Friday 17 to Sunday 26 March**. We also hope to kick off another programme of **Geological Walks in Wales** during Science Week - more details in the New Year.

The Geologists’ Association **Earth Alert** festival will be held in Brighton from **26-30 May**. Fliers giving information about

this event were circulated last year - if you want to know more, please contact me. Some members may have already registered for *Earth Alert*. **If anyone is interested in trying to arrange travel as a group, please drop me a line.**

The **National Eisteddfod** returns to southern Wales in **August 2000**, and is coming to **Llanelli**. We very much hope to mount a display at the Eisteddfod, as we did at the Bridgend Eisteddfod in 1997. This was a major undertaking for the Group, and involved a lot of effort and time from an enthusiastic group of members. Some of the same people have offered to help again, but they will always be pleased to have **more help**. **If you think you can help in any way, please contact Lynfa Lewis**, at 13 Bryn Catwg, Cadoxton, Neath SA10 8BG. You might be able to help in planning or preparing a display, or in staffing a display at the Eisteddfod. You don’t have to be able to speak Welsh, although help from Welsh speakers will be particularly welcome.

GEOLOGY OF POWYS

Geological Excursions in Powys was published in 1993 as the 3rd in this Group’s series of excursion guides, following *Geological Excursions in South Wales and the Forest of Dean* and *Geological Excursions in Dyfed*. *Geological Excursions in Powys* normally sells at £11 to Group members (the full price is £12.95) but for a limited time you can buy copies for **£7.50 each**. The guide is 366 pages long, in the handy A5 pocketable size of the other 2 guides. A very informative introductory chapter is followed by 15 excursion itineraries covering the whole of Powys. If you want a copy (or copies) at this special price, **please complete and return the enclosed order form**. If you want your copy or copies sent to you, please add 75p for postage. Or else you can

arrange to collect it or them at a meeting, and copies will also be available at most lecture meetings. Remember, Christmas is coming! This could be an ideal present for someone else - or yourself.

OTHER EVENTS

The Russell Society has 2 meetings coming up. On Friday November 19 Franz Werner will talk on *Agricola country: travelling in the Erzgebirge*. On Friday December 10 there will be *Conversazione and the AGM* followed by displays of recently collected minerals. Lectures begin at 7.30 in the Chemistry Department lecture theatre at Cardiff University, and our own members will be welcomed at them. For confirmation of the details, contact Steve Plant on 01222-869352 or Gwyn Billington on 01633-440600.

There is to be a **Cardigan Festival of Walking** over the weekend from Friday 22 to Monday 25 October. A number of walks are planned in the Cardigan area, as well as other associated events. We have our field meeting in the Cardigan area on Saturday 23 October, so if you want to make a weekend of it, find out more by contacting Theatr Mwldan, Bath House Road, Cardigan SA43 1JY (tel: 01239-621200).

The Geologists' Association has provisional plans for field excursions abroad to Cappadocia, Turkey in May/June, north-west USA in mid-June, Canada in June or September, Bornholm in late August, and Thailand in October. For more details, contact Lynn Allen, 32 Elmcroft Court, Burnet Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP3 9ES (tel: 01442-267525).

MEMBER NEWS

Membership is still around the 200 mark. There were 197 members at the AGM in March, and there have been a few new members over the summer. This is excellent news - we need a thriving membership to be a successful group. But there is still room for more members - if anyone you know is interested in rocks, minerals, fossils or general geology, please try to get them to come along. And if you want posters or membership leaflets, please let me know. Sadly, a member of many years - Jim May - died in late August: several members of the Group were present at the funeral.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

And finally, my annual reminder that computerised records are kept of members' names, addresses and membership record. These are used only within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, mainly for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record, please let me know.

And if you do want to get in touch with me or any of the committee, contact details are on your membership card.

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)



Forty-first Session 1999-2000

DECEMBER 1999

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

A very Merry Christmas to everyone, and welcome to the last Newsletter of this millennium! Read on for details of *Holiday Geology*, an update on our programme for the New Year, including a superb Student Lecture during Science Week, and other news.

The arrangements for *Holiday Geology* on **Friday 7 January** are as for last year. For those of you who haven't been before, the evening is very informal, giving everyone a chance to meet and talk to other members. There will be about half a dozen short slide presentations of interesting places - not all exotic - some displays to look at, and snacks and drinks. Everyone is welcome, so if you have friends, relatives or neighbours who are even a little bit interested in what it's all about (perhaps after watching *Walking With Dinosaurs*) please bring them along. I've had a couple of **volunteers** to show slides, but there's room for more - just give me a ring. And if you've got any photos or specimens that might interest others, or that you'd like identified, bring them along too. It will be helpful if we have a rough

idea of how many people to expect so if you can, please **return the slip** on the enclosed flier by Wednesday 5th January. The flier has details of when and where to meet - we have to be let in through the back door of the museum and guided through the labyrinthine corridors, so please meet at the back of the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff by 6.30 pm. See you there!

INTO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM

Meetings so far this session have been very well attended, with 26 at the opening lecture on fossils, 16 at the Cardigan field meeting, 52 at Tom Sharpe's USA lecture, 30 at the opencast site visit, and 48 at the lecture on planetary geology. Gareth Davies and Steve Howe took a display on Gower geology to the Geologists' Association Reunion in London, which generated a lot of interest: they hope to put it up again at *Holiday Geology*, so you can have a look at it there.

Details of the programme for early 2000 were in the October Newsletter and on

your membership card. The next lecture meeting is on **Saturday 22 January** in Cardiff University, starting at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30. The speaker will be Professor Joe Cartwright, who will talk about *3-D Seismic: A Geological "Hubble"* - a most interesting topic.

Details of the Joint Meeting with the Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group are now confirmed. This will be on **Saturday 19 February**, NOT at one of our usual venues, but at the **St Fagans Museum of Welsh Life** (the "folk museum"). The speaker will be Dr Tim Young, a geoarchaeologist based in Cardiff. What is a geoarchaeologist? Tim's background is as a geologist, specialising in the geology of sedimentary iron ores, but he has turned that interest towards archaeology and now studies the archaeological record of metal-working with a geologist's eye. Over the past couple of years he has reproduced an iron-age smelter at St Pagans and produced some metallic iron from local ores. He will be talking to us about ***The Magor Pill Medieval Boat and Early Iron-making Technology*** - an unusual subject area for us, but one which should prove fascinating. The talk will be at 11 am and, if all goes according to plan, we will be treated to a **demonstration** of Tim's smelter after lunch. When you arrive at St Pagans, please let **them know at the entrance till that you are there for the Geologists' Association meeting** - you will then be directed to the lecture room, and there should be no admission charge.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be at **10.30 on Saturday 18 March in Swansea**, with refreshments from 10 am. It will be followed by Gareth Davies' retiring President's address - ***From Cwm Glas to Morskie Oko***. And no, it's not a typing error! Another Newsletter in February will have full details of the AGM. We will be looking for a couple of **new faces on the Committee**. Please think

seriously about whether you are willing to help the Group in this way and if you want to know more, talk to someone at *Holiday Geology*, or give me or Gareth or any other Committee member a ring.

National Science Week 2000 begins at the time of our AGM and runs from **17 to 26 March**. We hope to have another programme of *Geological Walks in South Wales* beginning then - details in the next Newsletter. Our **Annual Student Lecture** will take place in Science Week, on Saturday 25 March, in the Department of Earth Sciences at Cardiff University, starting at 11.00 and preceded by refreshments. The topic is very exciting. Dave Martill, from Portsmouth University, was a consultant for the recent TV series *Walking with Dinosaurs*, and has agreed to talk to us on the making of the series: ***"Walking with Dinosaurs: A scientific advisor's dance with fantasy?"*** I'm sure there'll be a bumper turnout for that one!

Arrangements for the 10th **TR Owen Lecture** are in hand. The hosts this year are the Department of Earth Sciences at Cardiff University, and it is hoped to hold the event in May or June: full details in the next Newsletter.

IN THE SUMMER

Earth Alert - the Geologists' Association's millennium jamboree - will take place in Brighton from 26-30 May. The event will incorporate the Reunion for 2000, together with some exciting talks giving an overview of geology at the end of the century from some of the key researchers in the subject, many of whom are also excellent communicators. Several of our own members are planning to attend, and Steve Howe and Gareth Davies are preparing to take a display, based on the one they took to the Reunion. It isn't too late to book for *Earth Alert*. For details, please contact Sarah Stafford at the Geologists' Association, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (tel: 0171-434-9298).

The Geologists' Association is holding another **photographic competition**, to be judged at *Earth Alert*. The deadline for entries is 28 February 2000, and the top prize is a £1000 voucher for travel or photographic equipment. There are separate categories for professional photographers, professional geologists, amateurs, and under-18's. Contact me or the GA for copies of the entry form. Let's see if we can get a Welsh Winner for this competition!

As previously notified, we hope to mount a display at the **Llanelli Eisteddfod** in August 2000. We have discussed this in Committee meetings and are sure that having such a display is consistent with our objective to inform the general public about geology. By having a display at the Eisteddfod we can reach people who would otherwise not hear about geology, and do this in a distinctively Welsh context. We may also enrol some new members, and sell some publications, but even without that our presence at the Eisteddfod is worthwhile.

Lynfa Lewis is co-ordinating a small group to plan the Eisteddfod display. The financial outlay is considerable - the cost of hiring space at the Eisteddfod runs into several hundred pounds. At the Bridgend Eisteddfod, our costs were entirely covered by contributions from other groups who joined with us, and by grants from outside bodies. The Geologists' Association in London, in particular, supported our display, and is extremely enthusiastic for us to repeat the exercise at Llanelli. There hasn't been so much support from other bodies as yet this year, however. The British Geological Survey, for example, who helped us out last time, are likely to be mounting their own display in recognition of their return to Wales, and to date only The Russell Society has joined us. The planning group has applied for a number of grants, and support has been pledged from The Geologists' Association. The final application for display space at the Eisteddfod must be

made around Easter, and if we have not been able to secure sufficient funding by then, we will not go ahead, so you can rest assured that we will not be endangering the "bread-and-butter" activities of the Group in order to take a display to the Eisteddfod.

We really do need as much help as possible from our own members. If you think you can help in any way - with staffing a display at the event, planning or producing a display, providing advice on design or language, or just with moral support - please get in touch with Lynfa Lewis (01639-636689; lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk) or Gareth Davies (01554-751126). Thank-you.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

As ever these days there is plenty going on in addition to our own programme.

Tom Sharpe is hoping to begin 10 weeks of evening classes on the **Geology of Scotland**, on Tuesdays from 7-9 pm, starting on Tuesday 11 January 2000. For more information, contact the Cardiff University extra-mural department (now the *Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning*) at 38 Park Place, Cardiff.

Forthcoming meetings of The Russell Society will be on Saturday January 29 (**The mineralogy of Wapping mine, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire** by Dr Frank Ince), Saturday February 26 (**Parys Mountain copper mine - above and below ground** by Dr David Jenkins - this lecture is **subject to confirmation**) and Saturday 11 March (**A mineralogy of the Shetland Islands** by Roy Starkey). Our members are welcome to attend these lectures, which are now held in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University (Small Lecture Theatre), starting at 11.00 am, with refreshments available in the staff room from 10.30 am. If you want more details, please contact Steve Plant,

Lynda Garfield or Dave Wellings on our own committee.

Geologists' Association field meetings include a visit to **Writhlington** (the "rock store" near Bristol that has yielded some spectacular Upper Carboniferous fossil insects) on **April 8th**, a weekend with the **Shropshire Geological Society (18-20 August)** and an examination of **Sequence stratigraphy in the Chipping Sodbury area** with Paul Wright from Cardiff University (**September 9th**). Overseas trips planned for 2000 are Cappadocia, Turkey (22 May to 5 June), northwest USA (mid June), Canada and northern USA (June/September [!]), Bornholm (August 23-31) and Thailand (October). For more details, please contact Lynn Allen at 32 Elmcroft Court, Burnet Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP3 9ES (phone/fax: 01442-267525).

The Geological Society's Southern Wales Regional Group has a meeting on Thursday 27 January on **An Engineering view of glacial tills**, to be given by Professor B G Clark of Newcastle University. The venue is the Trevithick Building of Cardiff University, Newport Road, and the talk is at 5.30 for 6.15 pm.

The University of Bristol extra-mural department - which now seems to go by the name of "*Public Programmes Office*" - is holding a number of field courses ("study tours") over the summer. The venues are the Grampians and Argyll (1-9 May), Pompeii and Herculaneum (5-12 May), north Pembrokeshire (19-21 May), South Shropshire (3-4 June), Ullapool (17-24 June) and Landrindod (sic.) Wells (24-25 June). For more details of any of those, please contact Sandra Powell, PPO, 8-10 Berkeley Square, Bristol BS8 1HH (tel: 0117-9287-9287155/9287153 or fax:0117-9254975).

The next **Rock 'n' Gem Show** at Cheltenham Racecourse is planned for **1/2 April** 2000, from 10am to 5 pm each

day. There will be stands from all sorts of dealers in rocks, minerals, fossils, lapidary, "healing or any other facet of this wonderful subject." Entrance is £2.25 for adults, £1.75 for Seniors and £1 for children and there is free parking. To check the arrangements before going, you can ring The Exhibition Team on 01628-621697 or fax 01628-680702. Other shows coming up are at Hatfield House (22/23 January), York Racecourse (11/12 March), Kempton Park Racecourse (15/16 April) and Haydock Park Racecourse (6/7 May).

MEMBER NEWS

Sadly, EV Davies, of Kidwelly, died earlier in the autumn. It was also shocking to hear of the death of Adrian Cramp, formerly of the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, at the untimely age of 40. Adrian gave our Student Lecture in 1995, on the topic of palaeoclimate and ocean sediments.

At a recent Committee meeting, it was suggested that we should compile a **register of members who are on e-mail**. It isn't feasible at the moment to circulate Newsletters by this method, but if any members who are on e-mail would like to be able to contact other similarly-connected members (and to be contactable by them), please let me know. You can send me a simple message at **g.owen@swansea.ac.uk** and I will compile a list. Not being totally at home with the new technology myself, I will probably print the list in a future Newsletter!

So here's hoping the Millennium Bug doesn't catch up with you, and sending all members the very best wishes of the season!

Geraint Owen
(Secretary)



Forty-first Session 1999-2000

FEBRUARY 2000

President: Gareth Davies

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Tom Sharpe

Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe

Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

So, the planet has survived the dawn of yet another Millennium, and the only bugs that struck seemed to be sore throats, colds and flu! I hope you enjoyed the celebrations. Meanwhile, we continue with our forty-first session, and there's plenty more to come.

COMING (VERY SOON)

Full details of the AGM on **Saturday 18 March** are given below. It will be followed by Gareth Davies' Retiring President's Address, entitled ***From Cwm Glas to Morskie Oko***. My spies tell me that Gareth is going to tell us about how he got interested in the geology of Poland, and about some of the visits he has made to that country, so it should be a very interesting talk. Events get under way earlier than usual, at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00, in the Department of Geography at University of Wales **Swansea**.

Don't forget one of the session's other highlights - the **Student Lecture**, scheduled for the following **Saturday 25 March**, in the Department of Earth Sciences at **Cardiff University**. Dr Dave

Martill from Portsmouth University will talk to us on ***"Walking with Dinosaurs": A scientific advisor's dance with fantasy?*** Dr Martill was an advisor for the wonderful BBC2 series before Christmas, so this really should be an enlightening talk. Be there! And bring as many others as you can!

The 10th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture** has been arranged for the evening of **Wednesday 17th May** in the Department of Earth Sciences at **Cardiff University**, this year's hosts. The talk will be given by Professor Phil Allen from Trinity College, Dublin, and the title is ***Behind the Veil: the Post-Palaeozoic History of Ireland***. Like Wales, Ireland has little post-Palaeozoic geology preserved, so this promises to be an illuminating talk, of interest whether or not you have been to Ireland. The talk starts at **7 pm**.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will take place in **Swansea** on **Saturday 18th March**, getting under way at **10.30** (refreshments from 10 am). An **agenda** is enclosed, together with **minutes** of the last AGM.

The bad news is that the Committee is proposing an **increase in subscriptions, to £6.50 for "ordinary" members and £2.50 for students and senior citizens.** This unequal increase needs some explanation. Over the past 5 to 10 years we have increased the number and regularity of mailings to members. We hope everyone sees this as a positive development: it ensures that all members get something from their membership, even if they cannot attend lectures or field meetings. And it enables us to let everyone know about events and circulate details of special offers. Each mailing costs about 25p per member - stamp, envelope, label, paper and copying. Over the past few years there have been 5 or 6 mailings each year, so the existing student and senior citizen rate of £1.50 is barely covering the mailing costs, let alone going towards our other activities. We hope the increase will not cause too many members to leave. Indeed, we hope you will agree that even at £2.50, membership still represents outstanding value for money. Particularly when you also take into account the free refreshments before each lecture meeting! Incidentally, the last increases were in 1996 (£5 to £6, £1 to £1.50), 1990 (£3 to £5, 50p to £1) and 1982. As a Group we have done extremely well over this period to increase our membership and activities with so few increases to subscriptions.

The other main item at the AGM will be the **election of new members to the Committee.** As is the tradition, the Committee is nominating people to fill the vacancies as shown on the agenda, but additional nominations will be most welcome and a nomination form is enclosed. We are delighted that **Allan Cuthbertson** has accepted an invitation to be the Group's President for 2002-2004, and Vice-President until 2002. Particular **thanks** are due to retiring

members Jim Chetcuti and Margaret Davies. Jim has served on the committee since 1990 and has handled both publicity of our events and our very successful clothing scheme. Who can forget Jim's amazing advertising of the dinosaur footprint walk in 1997, that brought 450 people to Bendrick Rock!

OVER THE SUMMER

Events continue into the summer. Our programme of **walks** takes a rather different format this year. Steve Howe will be taking 3 evening walks in June and July. On **Wednesday 21 June** there will be a walk at **Llandaff**, starting at 6.30 or 7.00. On **Wednesday 5 or 12 July** there will be a walk at **Cathays Cemetery**. And on **Wednesday 25 July** there will be a walk at **Porthcawl**, starting at 6 pm. There will be another Newsletter in late May with full details, but for now keep the dates clear, and if you want more details now please contact Steve on 01222-573363.

And now another chance for you to help in the **conservation of geological sites.** Not, this time, getting your hands dirty, but visiting parts of Cardiff which have been known in the past for their important geological sites. Steve Howe has been in contact with Cardiff County Council about their survey of sites in the area, and the next step is to visit many of them to record what state they are in today. We think our members can be of great help in this, and Steve has arranged a couple of introductory field sessions. Everyone is welcome. Details are on the enclosed **flier**.

The Geologists' Association's big Millennium celebration **Earth Alert** will take place in **Brighton from 26-30 May**. Saturday 27 May is the **GA Reunion** for the year 2000, with displays from geological groups from all over the country, and attendance is free. Our

display is being co-ordinated by Gareth Davies and Steve Howe on the subject of Gower geology and landscape. The other days of *Earth Alert* comprise a fascinating programme of talks outlining the state of geology at the start of the 21st century. Talks will be given by many people who have been influential in shaping the geology of today, including John Dewey, Richard Fortey, Dianne Edwards, Mike Benton and Sir John Knill, on topics to include extinctions, evolution, minerals, resources and the environment. It's not too late to register for *Earth Alert*. The cost is £18 per day, with a reduced rate for all 3 days. **For more details**, contact The Geologists' Association at Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (tel: 020-7434-9298).

At the start of August the **National Eisteddfod** comes south again, this time to **Llanelli**. As at Bridgend, plans are underway for this Group to host a display to try and spread the word about geology and about our group to a new audience. The display that is going to *Earth Alert* should form the core of what is put on at Llanelli. Sponsorship to cover the charge to the Eisteddfod and other costs is presently being sought. The Geologists' Association in London was very complimentary of our presence at the Bridgend Eisteddfod, and we hope they will make a contribution. Whereas at Bridgend several other groups joined with us, so far only the Russell Society has shown interest in the Llanelli Eisteddfod. The whole operation is being undertaken by a small organising group, co-ordinated by Lynfa Lewis. We hope all our members are supportive of our venture into this forum, and if anyone wants to play a more active role, offers of help will be enthusiastically received. You might be able to help with designing a display, staffing it at the Eisteddfod, translating items such as photograph and specimen captions into Welsh, or in a host of other

ways. If you think you can help, or just want to know a bit more, please contact Lynfa on 01639-636689 or Gareth Davies on 01554-751126.

SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

Just one or two items of information to keep everyone up to date. Attendance at meetings continues to be excellent. The Holiday Geology evening at the National Museum in January attracted over 60 people, who were taken to Bolivia and Argentina, Egypt, the Canary Islands (several of them), Alaska, Turkey and China. All in one short winter's evening! Many thanks to all who contributed and to the Geology Department at the Museum for hosting the event and laying on such a wonderful buffet. Start thinking now about next year's Holiday Geology. Plan ahead! Next year we'd like to see a few presentations from a bit closer to home too. Get in quick - just give me a ring and let me know if you'd like to do a short show (5-10 minutes, about 20 slides). There were 33 people in Cardiff for a stunning lecture from Professor Joe Cartwright about the technique of 3-D seismic, and over 60 found the venue at St Fagans for an eye-opening morning on medieval use of iron ores from Glamorgan.

OTHER GROUPS

The Russell Society has begun its summer programme of visits, and plans to go to Coleman's Quarry near Frome on Sunday April 16th, Rhandirmwyn on Saturday May 20th, Taffs Well or Tonmawr Quarry on Saturday June 24th, Builth Wells Quarry on Sunday July 23rd, Dolyhir Quarry near Kington on Sunday August 20th, and Machen Quarry near Caerphilly on Sunday September 24th. For more information, please contact Steve Plant (02920-869352) or Paul Thompson (01495-217531). You will

need your own safety helmet and boots and high visibility jacket.

The **Open University Geological Society** will be visiting Penarth with Steve Howe on Sunday March 26th, and the upper Swansea Valley with myself on Sunday 9th April. For details, contact Jan Ashton-Jones (01432-870827).

The **Mid Wales Minerals, Fossils and Geology Club** would welcome interest from any of our members. They have a busy programme of activities. A visit to Mortimer's Forest near Ludlow on 5th March, a talk about quartz on 21st March, the Onney Valley on 2nd April, a talk about planetary geology on 18th April, visit to Creigiau Quarry on 30 April, talk about gemstones on 16 May, and a visit to Bryn-y-rafra Mine on 4 June. If you want any more information, please contact Bill Bagley on 01686-411014 (day) or 413967.

The next **Rock 'n' Gem Show** at Cheltenham Racecourse is planned for **1/2 April 2000**, from 10am to 5 pm each day. There will be stands from all sorts of dealers in rocks, minerals, fossils, lapidary, "healing or any other facet of this wonderful subject." Entrance is £2.25 for adults, £1.75 for Seniors and £1 for children and there is free parking. To check the arrangements before going, you can ring The Exhibition Team on 01628-621697 or fax 01628-680702.

Further afield, the **North Wales Geology Association** has lectures coming up on mud (Conwy, Wednesday 19 April), the Lower Carboniferous (Wrexham, Wednesday 17 May) and Hawaii (Conwy, Wednesday 14 June), and field meetings to Blaenau Ffestiniog (Sunday 14 May) and Llandudno (Saturday 20 May). Details from Rob Crossley (01492-623579; PENCROSSLEYS@aol.com).

MEMBER NEWS

Dr Jason Hilton, a post-doctoral researcher in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University and a member of our Group well known to many, has received a President's Award from the Geological Society of London. Well done, Jason.

In the last Newsletter I invited any members who were interested in getting together with other members over e-mail to send me your **e-mail addresses**. Quite a few did - thank-you very much. Unfortunately I'm so much of a technophobe that the only way I can manage to deal with these is to list them here.

Howard Bartlett: BartlettH@Cardiff.ac.uk
HBCARDIFF.@tinyonline.co.uk
 Lesley Cherno: sgllc@cardiff.ac.uk
 Jim Chetcuti: gw3pyx@talk21.com
 Peter Ganesh: peter.ganesh@virgin.net
 Lynda Garfield: lyndagarfield@hotmail.com
 Mike Gregory: m.gregory@tinyonline.co.uk
 Steve Howe: Steve.Howe@nmgw.ac.uk
 Andy Kendall: *(lost your card - sorry!!)*
 LynfaLewis: lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk
 Geraint Owen: g.owen@swansea.ac.uk
 Marnix Roels: marnixroels@tongwynlais.fsnet.co.uk
 Malcolm Shaw: mmshaw@glam.ac.uk

Corrections will be printed in the **next Newsletter! Which should be out in late May or early June**. I hope to see you at the AGM and other meetings before then.

*Geraint Owen
 (Secretary)
 01792-295141/472687*



Forty-first Session 1999-2000

JUNE 2000

President: Gareth Davies
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Tom Sharpe
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Stephen Howe
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

Welcome to your final Newsletter of the 1999-2000 session. It is packed full of events for the summer, so read it carefully and mark them down in your diary now!

The next mailing you receive will be in mid-September, inviting you to renew for the 2000-2001 session, the Group's forty-second. That will contain dates and details of the autumn lecture programme. If you choose to renew (and of course we hope everyone will!) you will then receive the next Newsletter and your new membership card in October, with full details of our 2000-2001 programme of events, including a thrilling lecture programme, another *Holiday Geology* evening at the National Museum, more field meetings, and more offers on books, leaflets and field guides.

FIELD MEETINGS FOR THE SUMMER

An exciting programme of field meetings has been arranged for the summer. We hope the fine weather will keep up over this period! **Full details are on the enclosed flier.**

The first field meeting is coming up very soon, on Saturday 17th June. Sid Howells will lead a walk along the north-

east side of the beautiful and geologically fascinating **Strumble Head**. Steve Howe will be taking 2 evening walks in Cardiff - **Llandaff** on **Wednesday 21st June** and **Cathays Cemetery** on **Wednesday 5th July**. At the Swansea end there will be a trip to examine the enigmatic Quaternary deposits of **south Gower** with Dr Rick Shakesby on **Saturday 1st July**. Steve Howe will be taking another evening walk at **Porthcawl** on **Wednesday 25th July**. On **Sunday 30th July**, Tim Young will follow up his fascinating talk on medieval iron-making at St Fagans in February with a trip to examine some of the **iron ore deposits of Glamorgan**. Finally, on **Saturday 23rd September**, I will be venturing across to England, to have a look at the exposures around **Portishead**.

The first 2 **conservation days** reviewing the status of geological sites in the Cardiff area, organised by Steve Howe, were very successful, despite some rather poor weather! A small but enthusiastic group succeeded in discovering some new places of interest within the city. Two further days have now been arranged, for **Saturday 15th July** and **Saturday 30th September**: a flier is enclosed with full details. Everyone is welcome to come along - many hands make light work!

With this field programme we are trying to

make as much as possible of the summer period with its (perhaps!) good weather and longer hours of daylight. We hope to see **as many members as possible** coming along. And don't stop there - bring friends, neighbours and relatives too, even if it's just for the fresh air: hopefully they'll discover some of the fascination we all share for geology. Undoubtedly some of these events will clash with some other events for some people, but we hope that **all members** will be able to get to something over the summer. **Remember, full details are on the enclosed fliers.**

NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD, LLANELLI, 5-12 AUGUST: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Another flier with this Newsletter concerns the **National Eisteddfod at Llanelli** over the period **5-12 August 2000**. As advised in the last Newsletter, we will be putting on a **display**, which has been put together by a small group including Steve Howe, Gareth Davies, Lynfa Lewis, Mike Lees and representatives of the Russell Society. The display deals with the geology and scenery of Gower, and as I write part of it has been taken to the Geologists' Association's **Earth Alert** festival in Brighton.

Since the last Newsletter the planning group has been awarded several **grants**, from the National Lottery Charities Board, the Michael Sobell Charitable Association, and the Geologists' Association Curry Fund - very well done to them. This will cover all the costs of preparing the display, showing it at Llanelli, the fee payable to the Eisteddfod, and some publicity leaflets to be distributed at the Eisteddfod. At the end of all that we will have a high-quality poster display that can be used at a variety of events to inform the public about geology and publicise the activities of our Group.

Some help is still needed, however, in the form of volunteers to staff the display

at the Eisteddfod. We need to have someone with the display all the time - preferably 2 people. You don't have to be Welsh-speaking (although Welsh speakers would be particularly welcome) and you don't have to know a lot about geology. What matters is that you are willing to help, and are interested and enthusiastic. In return, we will be able to give you **free entry** to the Eisteddfod for the day you help out, and if there are enough volunteers you should have time on that day to tour the rest of the Eisteddfod.

So please do think carefully whether you can offer your time in this way. Not only will you be helping out our group in terms of publicity, but you will be contributing to the overall aim in our constitution of increasing awareness of geology and our geological heritage amongst the population at large. **If you think you might be able to help, please return the slip from the enclosed flier. And if you want to know a bit more, please contact Lynfa Lewis:** her address, telephone number and e-mail address are on the flier. Thank-you.

AT THE AGM

Not everyone could make it to the Annual General Meeting in Swansea on Saturday 18 March (although there was an excellent turnout of 44), so copies of the **Secretary's and Treasurer's reports** are enclosed. The main news was the approval of new committee members and (unfortunately) new subscription rates.

Gareth Davies ended his term as **President** and was succeeded by **Steve Howe** for the period 2000-2002. Gareth's term as President was most successful, marked by continued high attendance at meetings, regular attendance at the Geologists' Association's Reunion and, for the first time, our presence at the National Eisteddfod in Bridgend in 1998. Steve is succeeded as Vice-President by **Allan Cuthbertson**, who we welcome to the Committee.

Jim Chetcuti and **Margaret Davies** ended their terms as Committee members, to be succeeded by **Lynda Garfield** and **Nigel McGaw**: again, many thanks to all four. Jim, in particular, had been a committee member since 1990, and had taken responsibility for publicising our events, the success of which is indicated by steadily increasing attendance figures, and for setting up and administering the clothing with the Group's logo, which is so much in evidence at any of our meetings.

Jim's retirement from the Committee means that we no longer have anyone directly responsible for **publicity**. **If anyone would like to take on this task, do please let me know.** Jim has put together a file of contacts he used to send information about our events, and the job involves sending copies of the year's programme and posters for individual meetings (both provided by myself) to a number of contacts. Postage costs are, of course, reimbursed. **If you think you could help the Group in this way, please let me or any other Committee member know.** Thank-you.

The proposal to increase **subscription rates**, fully outlined in the February Newsletter, was accepted. The new rates are £6.50 for ordinary members, with an optional reduced rate of £2.50 for retired people and students. The family rate becomes £9.50 - that is, £6.50 for the first member and £3 for additional members at the same address who do not qualify for a lower rate. The Committee hopes everyone will agree that these rates still represent excellent value for money, and that you can't wait to renew your membership! Don't forget that for your money you receive an exciting programme of lectures and field meetings, 3 or 4 newsletters a year including information about other geological activities and events in the region, free refreshments before each lecture meeting, special offers on geological booklets and guides, and you are contributing to the spread of

information about geology through publications and displays at events like the Eisteddfod.

Finally, it remains to note that the business at the AGM was followed by a fascinating talk from Gareth Davies covering the **geology of Poland**. It seems that those parts of Poland that are not covered by thick glacial deposits are very small, but very varied, very interesting, and very beautiful, and I think everyone there found it a fascinating and superbly illustrated talk.

OTHER GROUPS

As usual, Sid Howells is taking another series of walks for the **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park** over the summer. Details are enclosed on a separate flier.

Also in Pembrokeshire, and possibly of interest to some members, the **Cardigan Festival of Walking** will take place from Friday 6th to Monday 9th October, with a selection of walks and other events in and around Cardigan: for more information, contact Theatr Mwldan, Bath House Road, Cardigan SA43 1JY or telephone 01239-621200 (fax: 01239-613600).

The Russell Society has several field meetings over the summer. They will be visiting Tonmawr and Taffs Well on 24 June, Builth on 23 July, mid Wales on 20 August and Machen on 24 September. For more details, contact their field secretary Paul Thompson on 01495-217310.

Our parent organisation, **The Geologists' Association** has a field meeting planned in the West Country on September 9th. Professor Paul Wright, from Cardiff, will be visiting the **Chipping Sodbury** area, particularly with respect to the exciting new discipline of sequence stratigraphy, which we should all know more about. Numbers are strictly limited, so book early with Lynn Allen (details below). The GA also has planned a weekend in Shropshire (18-20 August), a trip to Tunisia in October and a trip to New

Zealand in November-December 2001. For more details of any of these, contact Lynn Allen, 32 Elmcroft Court, Burnet Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP3 9ES (tel/fax: 01442-267525).

Rockwatch - the geology club for children - has a fossil hunt planned to Aust Cliff on the afternoon of Sunday 18 June: book a place with Tania McCabe on 0117-932-6885. They will hold a Roadshow near Gloucester on Sunday 2 July: contact Pete Bradshaw on 01453-821108.

The **North Wales Geology Association** has a number of meetings planned in the coming months, which some of our members might have the opportunity to attend. They will have a talk in Conwy on Hawaii volcanoes on 14 June, a field evening at Penmaenmawr on 21 June, a field evening on Anglesey on 5 July, a talk in Wrexham on the African rift valley on 18 October. If you are in the area you will be welcome to join them: for more details please contact Rob Crossley, Maes y Mor, Fernbrook Road, Penmaenmawr LL34 6EL (tel: 01492-623579; e-mail PENCROSSLEYS@aol.com). They also have a new web site at www.ampyx.org.uk.

MEMBER NEWS

And finally, some additions and corrections to the list of members' e-mail addresses printed in the last Newsletter.

Rhian Hicks rhian_hicks@lineone.net

Peter Hodges

dr.p.hodges@geodrome.demon.co.uk

Andy Kendall akendal1@ocdgb.jnj.com

Christine Sheldon

Chris@thesheldons.co.uk

Ken Sheldon Ken@thesheldons.co.uk

People on this list are willing and keen to hear from others via the internet. If you want your e-mail address known, please contact me. Rhian Hicks has very kindly offered to make a web site for our Group: more details next session!

OTHER NEWS

The annual conference of ESTA - the **Earth Science Teachers' Association** - will be held at Swansea University over the weekend of 16-17 September, with the theme ***Earth's Dynamic Surface***. There is a fee for this conference, but if you know anyone who teaches geology, science or geography at any level, please let them know about it: they can get full details from me. Everyone will be welcome to attend lectures on the Sunday morning around the theme ***Perceptions of our planet***, with short lectures on geological time, and geologists in Hollywood, and a main lecture on Earth observation. They will be held in the Joint Lecture Theatre of the Natural Sciences Building, starting at 10 am on **Sunday 17 September**.

The third **UK RIGS Conference** will be held over the weekend 30 August to 2 September, with the theme ***Geoconservation in Action***. This time it will be held in Penrith, Cumbria, and full details can be obtained on 01636-670000, or e-mail rigs@rsnc.cix.co.uk.

Blackwell Science, publishers of ***Geology Today***, have asked me to remind members about that magazine. It is published 6 times a year and is packed with news and very readable articles about geology. Members of this group can subscribe for a reduced annual rate of £28. For further details contact Science marketing, Blackwell Science Ltd, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EL (tel: 01865-206206; fax: 01865-721205; www.blackwell-science.com). For those of you who are well connected, their flier says that "*Geology Today* is also available online through Synergy. Please visit our Web site to register for free and to examine the service for yourself: <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com>

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Forty-second Session 2000-2001

OCTOBER 2000

President: Stephen Howe
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

Thank-you for renewing your subscription, and welcome to your first Newsletter of the 2000-2001 session. Once again, there are lots of interesting and exciting activities coming up for you. Have your diary at the ready!

FIELD MEETING - SOON!

The first **field meeting** of the session has been arranged for **Saturday November 11th, to the Darell opencast site**, Nant y Cafan, in the Dulais valley near Seven Sisters. You will be able to see the mine in operation, and the rocks have yielded some **superb plant fossils**, so this will be worth a visit whatever the weather! A flier is enclosed with details. The meeting time is 10 am, at the road junction marked on the map. Parking is limited, so please do not drive up to the site. Numbers have to be known in advance, so **please contact Lynfa Lewis in advance to book a place**. You can contact Lynfa by sending back the tear-off slip, or by phone or email.

AUTUMN PROGRAMME

Our first meeting of the session was in Cardiff on Saturday 21st October. Dr Peter Burgess from the Earth Sciences department at Cardiff University gave a fascinating talk entitled ***Bits, Bytes, Rocks and Basins: computer modelling in Earth Science***. Together with the talk last year from Prof Joe Cartwright on 3-D

seismics, this has really helped to bring geology into the 21st century for many of us.

On **Saturday 18th November** Prof. Mike Walker from Lampeter will talk to us in Swansea on ***The Ice Age in Britain***. This fascinating topic is full of new and controversial ideas, and brings the geological story right up to the present day. Prof Walker is a leading authority on reconstructing Quaternary environments, so get to Swansea early to book your seat!

The final lecture of this millennium year will be in Cardiff on **Saturday 9 December**. Dr Mark Sutton from Oxford will give a talk entitled ***Walking with ... Worms! Reconstructing the Herefordshire Lagerstätte***. A Lagerstätte is a horizon of 'exceptionally preserved' fossils - unusual in either their abundance or the quality of their preservation. You may remember a talk a few years ago at which we heard about the discovery of the Herefordshire Lagerstätte, with soft-bodied animals preserved in nodules. This talk will bring the story up to date.

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Meetings in **Cardiff** are in the Department of Earth Sciences, on the first floor of the main University building. Meetings in **Swansea** are in the Natural Sciences Building. **Parking** is available at both venues, although there may be a charge. Free **refreshments** are available for about half an hour before each lecture, when you can also order or buy field guides. Everyone is welcome to join the speaker for **lunch**, or just a cup of coffee after each talk. Finally, if you can display **posters** of the programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please contact me or Nigel McGaw. Nigel has kindly agreed to take over the publicity role from Jim Chetcuti, who retired from the Committee in March.

INTO THE NEW YEAR

There will be another newsletter before Christmas, with full details of meetings at the start of 2001. The Department of Geology at the National Museum of Wales has kindly offered to host another **Holiday Geology** evening, on **Friday 12th January**. There will be 2 sessions of slide shows, with each show limited to 20 slides. One session will deal with 'exotic' (overseas) locations, and the other with home ground. **Volunteers for either session are invited - please contact me or Steve Howe.** There will also be a buffet, and a chance to see the displays prepared for the Eisteddfod.

Details of the lecture meetings are on your membership card. The **Annual General Meeting** will be on **Saturday 10th March**, in Swansea. National Science Week is from 16-25 March: our Student Lecture will be that week (remember, we are all students!) on **Wednesday 21 March**, on the topic of **Environmental Geophysics**, and we also hope to arrange one or more field meetings. It is our Group's 'turn' to host the TR Owen Lecture in 2001, and

this will be given by Tom Sharpe on **Wednesday 11 April**, on the intriguing topic of **Geologists, Slaves and a Scarlet Woman!**

In the last session we extended our activities to run throughout the year with monthly field meetings from March to September. Following the success of these meetings, we have decided to continue this pattern - monthly **lectures** through the winter in Cardiff and Swansea, with one or two field meetings; and monthly **field meetings** through the summer, with one or two lectures as well. **More for your money!!** - we hope you like the idea and that even more people will be able to get to more meetings. You wouldn't be able to read the print if I put all these activities onto one membership card, so there will be **2 programme cards** each year. The first is enclosed, and you will receive the second in the New Year. **Lynfa Lewis** has agreed to help our Programme Secretary, Lesley Chems, with the extra planning for these field meetings: if you have any suggestions for meetings, please contact Lesley (details on the membership card) or Lynfa at 13 Bryn Catwg, Cadoxton, Neath SA10 8BG; 01639-769241; lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk.

BENEATH THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

We are pleased to be able to provide you all with a copy of *Beneath the Rocky Mountains and Green Valleys*, courtesy of the Countryside Council for Wales. This is the second in this series of attractive and informative bilingual booklets about Welsh geology and landscape. We distributed copies of the first - *The Making of Wales* - last October. Many of you have collected your copy of *Beneath the Rocky Mountains* at recent lecture meetings, so one is only enclosed if you didn't get one then. If you want more copies, to distribute to schools for example, please contact Steve Howe.

The third in the series - *Our Fragile Heritage - Limestone Pavement in Wales* - has been published. We will send this out next October, but you can collect a copy at meetings between now and then. If you do, please sign the list and it will save us postage in sending out copies. Thank you.

LAST SUMMER: EISTEDDFOD AND MORE

This was a busy summer, with the Group represented at several major events. Displays were taken to the Geologists' Association's **Earth Alert** jamboree in Brighton in May, to the **Kenfig** Nature Reserve Open Day in July, and to the **National Eisteddfod** in Llanelli in August.

These events were a great success. In particular, at the Eisteddfod our display was in **Llan a Lli**, the environment pavilion, organised by *Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru*, the Countryside Council for Wales. Our display was without doubt the most popular and stimulating there. There were several thousand visitors, and in a joint venture with The Russell Society, there were rocks, fossils and minerals galore. The displays were highly interactive, with particular interest from children in the 'fossil bash'!

Putting on a display at events like these takes a tremendous amount of organisation and planning, both in terms of preparation and during the event itself. On everyone's behalf I would like to **thank all the people who helped**, particularly Lynfa Lewis and Lynda Garfield, who took overall charge of the planning.

These activities also cost a lot of money, almost £2000 to hire display space and put on the display at the Eisteddfod! I want to reassure everybody that these events were fully covered by **sponsorship** and are not draining funds from our core activities, which remain putting on a lively programme of lectures, field meetings and other events.

However, our Group's overall aim is to *advance the education of the public through the promotion and research of geology*, and in the Committee we are agreed that by going to events like the National Eisteddfod we are furthering this aim. We hope you agree too. In return we stand to gain improved recognition for geology amongst the public at large, and perhaps a few new members who would not otherwise have come across us.

The **sponsorship** came from a variety of sources, notably almost £1600 from Millennium Festival lottery fund. A very big **THANK-YOU** is due to all the sponsors, and to the organising group who succeeded in winning this sponsorship.

As a result of these summer events, we now have several laminated **display panels**. One deals with the Group and its activities, 2 with the solid and drift geology of Gower, and another with geologists from Llanelli. We can now readily put up a display at all sorts of events, even if we are not able to garnish it with specimens and leaflets, and even if we are unable to staff it. If anyone knows of an event where these panels could be taken, please contact either myself or Steve Howe: one of us will be in possession of the panels.

The next South Wales Eisteddfod is at St Davids in 2002, and such is the enthusiasm of the organising group and the support from the Geologists' Association in London, that we are likely to take a display there too. We are also thinking about the feasibility of going to events like the Royal Welsh Show. If you **want to help** with these kinds of activities, please contact myself, Steve Howe or Lynfa Lewis (contact details on page 2).

So in summary, a very big thank-you to all those who helped and all those who sponsored our activities over the summer.

OTHER GROUPS

The **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch continues its programme of winter lectures, now being held in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University. On Friday 17th November Dr Steve Plant and Emmanuel Bravais will talk on a *Mineral finding visit to Mull and Skye*, starting at 7.30 pm. On Friday 8th December they will hold their AGM, *Conversazione and Christmas Party*: the venue is to be finalised. On Saturday 27th January John Mason will talk on *Mines and mineralogy of the Dolgellau gold belt*, starting at 11.00 am. On Saturday 17th February they have a joint lecture with our own group, and on Saturday 24th March Alan Dyer will talk on *Zeolites*. For more details, please contact Steve Plant (029-2086-9352).

The **West of England Geologists' Association** meets in Bristol on Tuesday evenings and has lectures on *Life of a Carbon Atom* (Reg Bradshaw, 14 November), *Bay of Fundy* (12 December, Brian Williams), and *Oil in Southern England* (13 February, Bob Stoneley). Further details from John Toller (0117-969-6834).

The **National Museum** in Cardiff has a series of lunchtime events on Fridays from September to December, starting at 1.00 pm. Several are on geological themes, including *Trilobites: Kings of the ancient seas* on 3rd November with Bob Owens; *Gemstones - A rough guide* on 10th November with Sarah Chambers; and *Uncovering a forgery - conservation of a fossil sea reptile* on December 8th with Caroline Buttler. Tickets cost £3.50 and include a light lunch, although members, friends of NMGW and visitors with a valid admission ticket may attend free of charge. For further details please contact Sian Edwards at the Events Office (029-2057-3148).

The **Geological Society** Southern Wales Regional Group will have a meeting on 17

January at 5.30 in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University on *Geological auditing of gold projects*: further details from Ben Rees (029-2066-5413; bree@srk.co.uk).

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION

The latest Geologists' Association Field Guide to be published (No. 62) covers **Lanzarote** in the Canary Islands. This is of the usual high standard, and can be bought by our members at the special price of £11 (post free) from the Geologists' Association, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (tel. 020-7434-9298; fax. 020-7287-0280; geol.assoc@btinternet.com).

Overseas field meetings are being planned to the Auvergne, New Zealand, India, Germany, Northern Ireland, Spain, the West Indies and Chile! More information from David Bone (01243-788474; david.bone@on-edie.net).

MEMBER NEWS AND SO ON

Allan Cuthbertson, our Vice-President has his own web site which is full of fascinating information about the geology of South Wales. You can visit it at **www.cuthbertson.org**.

On the renewal form we asked you to sign up to **Gift Aid**. This is the new scheme that makes it easier for charities to reclaim tax on donations from their tax-paying members. We are still checking what constitutes a 'donation', but we are grateful to everyone who has ticked that box: it may be very useful in the future.

And finally, my annual reminder that **computerised records** are kept of members' names, addresses and membership record. These are used only within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, mainly for mailing purposes. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record, please let me know.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
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Forty-second Session 2000-2001

DECEMBER 2000

President: Stephen Howe
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

I hope you're enjoying your Christmas break! As another year draws to a close, it's mid-session for the Geologists' Association, so there's plenty left to come before your subscription runs out! The programme has gone very well since October, with bumper audiences for excellent and fascinating talks, and a full house for the opencast visit - sorry to those of you who were turned away, but we'll try to arrange another visit in the spring. The 2001 part of our programme begins straight away, with another of the ever-popular **Holiday Geology** evenings.

If you haven't been to a *Holiday Geology* evening, then you don't know what you have been missing! And if you have, we're sure you'll want to go again. One of its main functions is to provide an opportunity for members to meet informally and chat about shared interests. That happens around a number of short slide presentations that will take us to all sorts of far-flung (and near-flung) corners of the world. And there's even more. The Geology Department at the museum kindly provides us with food and drink, and there will be displays and posters to look at, including the Eisteddfod display from Llanelli in August.

Holiday Geology

The National Museum of Wales has kindly offered to host another **Holiday Geology** evening, on **Friday 12 January**. Details are on the enclosed flier. We have to be let in through the back door of the Museum and escorted through the building, so please meet at the back entrance, off Museum Avenue, to be let in to the building **at 6.30**. The evening should end at about 9.30. It is helpful to know roughly how many people will be there, so please try to either send back the slip or ring and leave a message before Wednesday 10 January. Thank you.

The slide presentations are being split into 2 sections, one for exotic locations and one for venues closer to home. Steve Howe has had some **volunteers**, but there is room for more, so if you have some interesting pictures, even just one or two, please contact myself, or Steve (tel: 029-2057-3363; or email Steve at steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk). It doesn't matter if you don't fancy speaking in front of lots of people - it's the images that count. And if you have anything else you think people might like to see - specimens or photographs, for example - please do bring them along, there will be room to show them. And there will be a chance to

buy a selection of field guides and booklets.

So don't miss it! We hope to see even more members than ever at Holiday Geology 2001.

Steve has warned that in order to keep things moving and make sure there is plenty of time for eating and drinking, he will have to be rigorous in making sure that slide shows stick to a 10 minute limit, so if you're giving a presentation and it takes a bit longer than you had planned, please don't be offended if Steve hauls you off!

Lecture Programme for the New Year

Details of the lecture programme for early 2001 were given on the membership card sent with your last Newsletter. The first lecture will be in **Swansea on Saturday 20 January**. The title is ***Logan of Swansea - Canada's number one scientist?*** and the speaker will be Prof. Hugh Torrens from Keele University, a highly respected historian of geology. This promises to be a fascinating talk. If you haven't heard of Logan, and don't know why he should be important, there's all the more reason for you to go along and find out all about him!

On **Saturday 17 February, in Cardiff**, we have a joint lecture meeting with The Russell Society. The topic is ***Airborne dust from opencast coal mining in South Wales*** and the speaker will be Dr Tim Jones from Biosciences at Cardiff University. This is a very important topic that affects us all, and it should be a very stimulating talk.

Saturday 10 March sees the return of an old favourite, Dr John Cope, giving us a talk in **Swansea** entitled ***Australian Odyssey***. John spent some time on a field expedition in the Australian Outback last summer, and in this talk he'll tell us a little bit about what he was doing, what the Australian Outback is like, and a bit about

its geology. It sounds great, and even given the erratic heating in Swansea lecture theatres, it should be more pleasant listening to John talking about it than actually being there! John's talk will be preceded by our **Annual General Meeting, starting at 10.30** (refreshments from 10.00). Don't be put off by that: the AGM is one of our most important annual events, and it is important that a large number of members attend. Besides, if you want to hear John's talk you will have to go to the AGM because whenever it finishes we'll go straight into the lecture. And if you have any non-member family or friends planning to come along, don't let them be put off either. We don't expect the AGM to last too long, and we don't mind non-members being there, although they shouldn't vote or contribute to any discussions. Full details with the next Newsletter.

Refreshments will be available for half an hour before each of these 3 lectures, from 10.30 in January and February, and 10.00 in March. We will also take the speaker for **lunch** after each lecture, and anyone is welcome to come along, whether for a full lunch or just a drink. There have been excellent numbers coming to lunch after the talks so far this session, which really does show the speakers what an enthusiastic membership we have.

National Science Week will take place from **16-25 March 2001**, and one of the events we will be holding during the week is our **Annual Student Lecture**. It will be held in **Cardiff** University at 7.00 on the evening of **Wednesday 21 March**. The speaker will be Prof. Peter Styles from Keele University, talking on ***Environmental geophysics: tools for exploring and repairing human impact on the Earth***. Peter used to be on the staff at Swansea, and is an excellent and stimulating speaker - many of you may have attended his day school on earthquakes in Swansea in January 1995. His topic is one of tremendous relevance, monitoring and repairing our damage to

the environment, and is something we should all know more about.

Then on the evening of **Wednesday 11 April, in Swansea**, it is our Group's turn to host the **TR Owen Lecture**. We have chosen our very own Tom Sharpe as a speaker, and he has decided to give a talk with the intriguing title ***Geologists, slaves and a scarlet woman: pioneering geology in Swansea***. No, I haven't much of a clue what it's going to be about, either, although I think it's supposed to be something to do with Sir Henry de la Beche, who was the first Director of the Geological Survey, but I'm not too sure where the red lady and the slaves fit in! Anyway, I have no doubt that Tom will reveal all in an excellent and enjoyable talk. The spirit of the TR Owen Lecture is that it should be **accessible to all**, however slight their interest in or knowledge of geology, so please do encourage friends, relatives and neighbours to come along to that talk.

There will be another Newsletter in mid-February, to remind you about some of these talks. It will also include the agenda for the AGM, and will give you details of our summer programme of field meetings.

Summer Field Meeting Programme

Just a reminder that your February Newsletter will include a second programme card for the session, this time with details of a programme of **summer field meetings**. This programme is still being finalised, but we expect that there will be one or more field meetings during Science Week (16-25 March), then monthly field meetings from April to September.

One or two of these field meetings are already more or less finalised, and you can **pencil them in to your diaries now**. We've arranged a **Joint Field Meeting with the Shropshire Geological Society on Saturday 16 June, to the Old Radnor area**. This is one of the Welsh Border Precambrian inliers, with superb quarry

exposures of Precambrian sedimentary rocks unconformably overlain by fossiliferous Silurian limestones. Further details will be in the next Newsletter.

Also with the Shropshire Geological Society, we have provisionally agreed to hold a **Joint Field Weekend to North Shropshire for the weekend of 15-16 September**. The Shropshire GS will help us to arrange accommodation and will provide field leaders, and their members will join the Saturday and Sunday activities as one-day field meetings. Then in a future year we will return the arrangement and the Shropshire GS will come to South Wales for a weekend. It is some years since we have held a field weekend, so we are a bit unsure what the take-up will be amongst our members. **If you think you would be interested in this field weekend (there is no commitment at this stage), please let myself or any other committee member know before the end of January**: it will really help our planning if we know there will be a few interested people from this end.

Adult Education

The Adult Education departments in the universities at Swansea and Cardiff have some geological field meetings coming up in the spring and summer. Tom Sharpe will be leading a trip to examine the ***Geology and Scenery of the Western Highlands of Scotland*** from 11-20 May 2001. This tour will be staying near Fort William and Ullapool, and the intention is to visit such superb localities as Loch Lomond, Staffa (Fingal's Cave), Assynt (Moine Thrust and famous Lewisian localities), Durness and Torridon. It sounds wonderful! The cost is expected to be around £750 or £800, inclusive of transport, accommodation and some evening meals. For full details please contact Dr Zbig Sobiesierski, Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff CF24 4AG.

(tel: 029-2087-5264; email: semzs@cf.ac.uk).

The Department of Adult Continuing Education at University of Wales Swansea will be holding its usual programme of 'nature walks' through the summer, with a botanist (Dr Charles Hipkin), a zoologist (Dr Michael Isaac) and a geologist (myself). There will be geological input to walks to **Henrhyd Falls** in the Swansea Valley (Sunday 20 May) and **Sgwd yr Eira** in the Hepste Valley (Sunday 10 June). Full details can be obtained from DACE, UWS, Singleton Park, Swansea SA2 8PP (tel: 01792-295786; email: adult.education@swansea.ac.uk).

Other Activities

The Russell Society's spring lecture programme has talks on ***The Mines and mineralogy of the Dolgellau gold belt*** by John Mason on 27 January and ***Zeolites, or how a chemist discovered the Highlands and Islands*** by Alan Dyer on 24 March. For more details, please contact Steve Plant (029-2086-9352).

Field trips from the **Geologists' Association** will be visiting Connemara and South Mayo in western Ireland (2-9 May 2001), Lycia, Southern Turkey (early June 2001), the Auvergne, France (20-30 July 2001), and India and the southern Deccan (Jan/Feb 2002). For more details, please contact David Bone, 4 Kensington Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 2XR (tel: 01243-788474; email: david.bone@on-edie.net).

There will be **Rock 'n' Gem Shows** at Cheltenham Racecourse on 31 March / 1 April and 21/22 July. For more information, please contact The Exhibition Team on 01628-621697 or fax 01628-680702.

Cadwyr Creigiau Cymru

Issue 6 of **Cadwyr Creigiau Cymru**, the newsletter of the network for the promotion of geological conservation in

Wales, has been issued. The information is collated by John Davies, and if you would like your own copy, please contact John at Plyg-y-rhiw, Llandysul, Dyfed, SA44 4RL. Items in Issue 6 include information about GEOSITES, a Europe-wide network of important 'geosites', summaries of geological conferences and meetings held in Wales over the past couple of years, and snippets of information about sites all over Wales.

www.swga.org.uk

Thanks to magnificent efforts by Rhian Hicks, we now have our own web-site!

Rhian and Andy Kendall have managed to obtain for us the address **www.swga.org.uk** (for South Wales Geologists' Association) and all of you who are connected to cyberspace are invited to visit the site now. It contains a programme of events, membership details, recent Newsletters and a discussion page. The site is still in its infancy: please let Rhian or any committee member know of any improvements or additions you think could be made, or any errors you find - at this early stage there are bound to be some. In particular, we would be grateful for people to check the Welsh language parts of the site. We hope this new venture, which comes at negligible cost, will help to promote geology, advertise our activities, and hopefully bring in some new members. **The Group really has now entered the 21st Century!**

That's it for this Newsletter. Have a great time over Christmas and the New Year break. I hope to see lots of people at *Holiday Geology* early in the New Year and at the lectures and field meetings in the spring.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk

**Forty-second Session 2000-2001****FEBRUARY 2001**

President: Stephen Howe
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
Editor: Mike Bassett

Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

This really is a BUMPER ISSUE, so please read on carefully! The important issues are a **change to the next lecture**, on 17 February; details of the **Annual General Meeting** on 10 March; and our new **summer programme**, a summary of which is on your enclosed **programme card** - your second instalment for 2000-2001.

2001 got under way in excellent fashion with a very successful **Holiday Geology** evening at the National Museum of Wales. About 60 people enjoyed an evening of slide shows, buffet, poster presentations, book sales and informal chat. We owe a big **thank-you** to Mike Bassett and the Department of Geology at NMW for hosting this event, and to all who showed slides - Mike Lees (Neath Valley), Dave Wellings (Azores), Lynfa Lewis (Rhodes), Tom Sharpe (north-west Scotland), Alan Channing (Yellowstone), Andy Kendall (New Mexico), Margaret Jago (Grand Teton) and Margaret Davies (Bryce Canyon). It was a breathtaking tour of the world's geological hot spots! We hope to repeat the event next year, so wherever 2001 takes you, think about sharing a few slides with others at next year's **Holiday Geology!**

Our January lecture in Swansea, from Prof Hugh Torrens on the topic of **Sir William Logan's** geological training in Swansea in the 1830s was a most memorable and stimulating occasion, drawing to our attention the major importance of South Wales as both an industrial and a scientific centre in the first half of the nineteenth century.

**STOP PRESS!! LECTURE MEETING
ON 17th FEBRUARY**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Dr Tim Jones is now unable to lecture to us on *Airborne dust from opencast mining*. We are, however, fortunate that **Allan Cuthbertson**, our Vice-President, is willing to step in as a substitute. Allan's talk will be entitled **Recycling of Iron by Fossil Trees?** He will

be looking at the fascinating journey of iron from its formation to the natural recycling by fossil trees, and will include some insights into the formation of the fossils seen by many members recently at the Darell Opencast Site, and featured on TV and local newspapers. The venue (Cardiff University) and time are unchanged.

Steve Howe has arranged more meetings in the series of **Cardiff Conservation Days**, assessing the status of exposures in the Cardiff area. A small group of regulars has developed, but **more volunteers** will be welcome. No special skills are required - just enthusiasm and an interest in finding out what geological delights lie undiscovered in Cardiff. Meetings are planned for Saturdays 31 March, 12 May, 9 June, 7 July, 4 August and 8 September: please come to any or all of them. **Meet** each day at 10 am in the Asda coffee shop off the Coryton M4/A470 interchange in Cardiff. For any more information, contact Steve (029-2057-3363).

Continuing our history of geology theme, we hope to arrange an **extra lecture** in Cardiff University on 19 or 20 June. Prof David Branagan, from Sydney (Australia), is visiting South Wales and has provisionally agreed to a talk entitled **'In great haste'- TW Edgeworth David, the Knight in the Old Brown Hat**. Edgeworth David was born in St Fagans in 1858 and was Professor of Geology at the University of Sydney from 1891-1924, becoming one of the most influential geologists in Australia. He studied coral atolls and explored the Antarctic, and there is a Memorial Museum in Kurri Kurri, New South Wales. We will try to advertise this talk closer to the time, or you can **contact me**.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 10th MARCH

Our March lecture, John Cope's **Australian Odyssey**, will be preceded by our **Annual General Meeting**. An agenda, and minutes from last year's meeting are enclosed. This year sees the end of a term of office for the **Secretary** (Geraint Owen) and **Membership Secretary** (Mike Lees), both of whom are standing for a further 2 year term. The **Editor** (Mike Bassett) also comes to the end of a term of service. **Committee Members** Alan Channing and Lynfa Lewis come to the end of their 3-year term of service. The Committee is delighted to nominate Lynfa for a further 3 years, and to recommend **Rhian Hicks** as a new committee member for the period 2001-2004. Finally, Peter Hodges reaches the end of his 5-year term as our last *ex-officio* Vice-Chairman. We thank Peter and other retiring members of the Committee for all their efforts.

So, as ever, the Committee is making recommendations for the vacant posts, which we hope will be endorsed at the AGM. However, it is open to **any member** to stand for any of the posts that are up for renewal, and a nomination form is enclosed with the AGM papers if anyone wishes to stand.

Remember, this meeting is in **Swansea**, and will begin with **refreshments from 10.00**. The **AGM is at 10.30**, with John Cope's lecture as soon as it is over. In case you are wondering why the AGM has been in Swansea 2 years in a row, this is to ensure that the Retiring President's Address isn't always at the same venue. Since the President serves for 2 years, the AGM is in Swansea for 2 years, then in Cardiff for 2 years.

SUMMER PROGRAMME

As you have been warned, we have planned a **full programme of events through the summer**, and a new **programme card** is enclosed. Many thanks to Lynfa Lewis for putting together this programme.

This year's **National Science Week** is from 16-25 March, and the first events of our summer programme are being run as Science Week events. We have arranged another **Opencast Site Visit** with Allan Cuthbertson on the morning of **Sunday 18 March**. **Numbers are strictly limited** by the site operators, so we are asking everyone who wants to go to **contact Lynfa Lewis**, who will

send out joining instructions (tel:01639-769241; email: lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk).

On **Wednesday 21 March** Professor Peter Styles from Keele University will give our annual **Student Lecture** on **Environmental Geophysics** in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, starting at 7.00, with refreshments from 6.30. This promises to be another fascinating visit to the cutting edge of technology in geology, showing us the kind of detailed images of the subsurface that can be obtained by geophysics, this time in the vital context of monitoring human impacts on the environment.

Also in Science Week, there will be a walk with Tom Sharpe on **Sunday 25 March** to examine the **Coastal geology at Nash Point**. **Meet at 2 pm** in the car park at the end of the Marcross Road (SS 916 683). Tom will be looking at the Jurassic succession, which is full of fossils, and some spectacular coastal scenery. The walk is one of 6 in a **new book** of geological walks along the Glamorgan coast, which Tom, Steve Howe and myself have been producing on behalf of the Group. It should make an appearance in the spring - more in the next Newsletter!

Another lecture about which you have already had notice is the **TR Owen Lecture** in Swansea on **Wednesday 11 April**, starting at 7 pm, with refreshments from 6.30. The speaker is (again!) Tom Sharpe, his topic is **Geologists, Slaves and a Scarlet Woman: pioneering geology in Swansea**. Anyone who enjoyed (or missed) the talk from Hugh Torrens on WE Logan is strongly advised to come to Tom's talk to hear more in the same vein about the role of South Wales in the early development of geology.

On **Saturday 28 April** we venture into England, where Kevin Page from English Nature will lead a trip to examine the **Jurassic geology of the north Somerset coast**. This area makes for a fascinating comparison with the more familiar Vale of Glamorgan, with superb exposures of Triassic and Jurassic rocks **Meet at 10.30** in the car park at **Kilve (ST 144 443)**. There should be a pub or shops for lunch, or bring your own.

On **Saturday 19 May** our past-President Gareth Davies has agreed to show us around the Carboniferous Limestone, Millstone Grit and fascinating karst geomorphology of **Llyn Llech Owain, Carmel Woods and Carreg Cennen**, an area that deserves more attention. **Meet at 11 am** in the Llyn Llech Owain car park, north of Cross Hands (from where it is sign-posted) (SN 567 150). There should be a pub for lunch.

On **Saturday 16 June** we have the first of 2 joint meetings with our near-neighbours in the **Shropshire Geological Society**, a trip to examine the **Precambrian and Lower Palaeozoic Geology of the Old Radnor area**, led by our Programme Secretary, Lesley Cherns. The Old Radnor area of the Welsh Border lies along a continuation of the Church Stretton Fault, separating Precambrian sedimentary and igneous rocks (including the oldest rocks in Wales). The Precambrian rocks are overlain in a spectacular unconformity by richly fossiliferous Silurian limestones. It should be a good day! **Meet at 11 am** at the entrance to Strinds Quarry, which is at the junction of a minor road to Dolyhir and Old Radnor with the B4594 (SO 247 580). Bring a **safety helmet** if you have one. There should be a pub for lunch.

Don't forget the likely extra lecture on 19 or 20 June, by Prof David Branagan: '**In great haste**' - **TW Edgeworth David, the Knight in the Old Brown Hat**.

On Wednesday 11 July we have the first of 2 **evening walks**, making full use of the long, warm summer evenings! I will be looking at the **Geology of the Rhossili area: meet at 7 pm** in the car park at the end of the road through Rhossili village (SS 414 880).

On **Saturday 21 July** we have a follow-up to our November lecture on **The Ice Age in Britain**. Mike Walker, from University of Wales Lampeter, has kindly agreed to lead a field day to examine **Quaternary environmental change in Cardiganshire**. He will look at sediments that provide information about post-glacial climatic changes, and hopes to extract cores of peat and sediments from former lake beds. Mike plans to visit the pingos at Cledlyn (which feature in the 1982 guide to *Geological Excursions in Dyfed*), Tregaron Bog, and a contrasting upland bog in the Teifi Pools area. This sounds like a really fascinating day, quite different from our usual field activities! And waterproof footwear sounds a must! **Meet at 10.30** in the university car park at Lampeter (in the town centre, opposite the Post Office). Lunch will be in a pub, but you will need to bring your own food.

Our second evening walk will be on **Wednesday 15 August**. Steve Howe will take a walk along the coast to examine the **Geology of Penarth**. **Meet at 6.30** on the Esplanade, opposite the lifeboat station at the bottom of Cliff Hill, Penarth (ST 188 711).

FIELD WEEKEND IN SHROPSHIRE - 14-16 September

The second of our joint ventures with the **Shropshire Geological Society** is a **field weekend to examine the Geology of Shropshire** in September (14th-16th). It is many years now since we have held a field weekend, and we hope this will prove popular. The Shropshire Geological Society have put together 2 days of fieldwork, which their own members will join: in a future year we may reciprocate the arrangement in South Wales. The cost is just **£10** plus your accommodation, which is being offered at a generous discount in the *Lion and Pheasant* inn, Shrewsbury. A flier and booking form are enclosed: please try and book as soon as possible (particularly if you want one of the few single rooms) so we can confirm the booking with the hotel.

FIELDWORK SAFETY

Everyone is aware how important it is that safety matters are given the highest priority in organised activities these days. With that in mind, the Committee recently adopted a new **Safety Policy** for the Group. This emphasises that the role of the committee and the field meeting leader is to alert participants to potential hazards: it is then up to **all participants** to pay attention to safety matters. Part of the safety policy is a basic **Fieldwork Safety Code**. Key aspects of this are printed on your summer programme card, and a fuller version will be handed out to all participants at the start of each field meeting.

One innovation of the safety policy is the introduction of a '**field meeting coordinator**' at each field meeting. This person, usually a member of the committee, will start off the field meeting by drawing everyone's attention to the Fieldwork Safety Code, and will introduce the field meeting leader, who may then have further safety advice specific to that field meeting. The field meeting coordinator will also look after the **field meetings attendance book**. Participants will be asked to **sign** this at the start of the field meeting, to record that they have received a copy of the Safety Code, and so that we know who was at the field meeting. Non-members will be asked to give their address. If anyone leaves a field meeting early, they will be asked to sign the book again, because another task of the field meeting coordinator is to act as a 'back marker' and make sure that everyone is accounted for at all times. If there is an accident, or if someone feels an accident could have happened, the

matter should be **reported** to the field meeting coordinator, who will keep a record in the field meetings attendance book.

Through these procedures we hope that safety issues will have **the highest priority** in all our minds at field meetings and that accidents will be avoided. We have tried to keep bureaucratic administration to a minimum, and we sincerely hope that everyone will co-operate with the new procedures.

Another aspect of the safety policy is that **children** under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult, who must be responsible for their behaviour. We see it as the responsibility of the accompanying adult, for example, not the field trip leader (who has plenty else on his or her mind) or the field meeting coordinator, to stop children from climbing cliffs or throwing stones.

We also consider that it is the responsibility of everyone to come **suitably equipped** for field meetings. We will draw attention in the programme card, newsletter or fliers to any particular equipment that is needed, but in general you should come with stout, preferably waterproof **footwear**, and warm, waterproof **clothing**. While we plan to **continue to provide equipment such as safety helmets** when they are required, we would encourage members to purchase their own **safety equipment**. Safety helmets, fluorescent jackets and hard-capped boots are readily available in DIY stores, and perhaps you can ask for them for birthday or Christmas presents. Of course, if you bring a geological hammer you must also bring **safety goggles**, and should wear them whenever hammering.

The Committee will monitor the effectiveness of this safety policy. If you have any feedback or opinions, please let me or any committee member know.

OTHER EVENTS

As if your diary isn't full already, I have as ever received news of other geological events coming up in the next few months. **Russell Society** meetings include Zeolites with Alan Dyer in Cardiff on 24 March, and field meetings to Frome (22 April), Machen (20 May), Dolyhir (24 June), Taffs Well (21 July), Creigiau (20 August) and Wickwar (23 September): details from Steve Plant (tel: 029-2086-9352), Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588) or Paul Thompson (01495-217531). The **West of England GA**, in Bristol, have a

lecture on the *Geology of Anglesey* with Dr. Jana Horak on 13 March, and field meetings to the Welsh Borders (22 April), Anglesey (25-28 May), Weston-Super-Mare (23 June), Quaternary of the Cotswolds (7 July) and south-west Highlands of Scotland (15-22 Sep). For details, contact Graeme Churchard (0117-967-1066, email: secretary@wega.org.uk). There will be **Rock 'n' Gem Shows** at Cheltenham Racecourse on 31 March / 1 April and 21/22 July: details from The Exhibition Team (tel: 01628-621697).

The **Geologists' Association** has arranged an **Earth Science Book Fair** at University College London on 5 May. This will include recent publications and secondhand and antique books. I presume it will be open to the public: for details contact Jonathan Allinson (tel: 01642-896820; email: jonathan@allinson43.freemove.co.uk).

GA field meetings include Connemara (2-9 May), Lycia (June), the Auvergne (20-30 July) and India (Jan/Feb 2002): details from David Bone (tel: 01243-788474). And the GA has a new web site, at www.geologist.demon.co.uk.

Alun Thomas has asked me to notify members that **Aberystwyth geology graduates** will hold a **Reunion** in Bangor, visiting Llŷn and Anglesey, from 18-20 May. Further details can be had from Alun (01446-413153) or from Denis Bates.

Details of Adult Education field events were given in the December Newsletter - **Geology and Scenery of the Western Highlands of Scotland** with Tom Sharpe from 11-20 May 2001 (contact Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning, tel: 029-2087-5264) and **Field Studies in the Brecon Beacons** on Sunday 20 May (*Henrhyd Falls*) and Sunday 10 June (*Sgwd yr Eira*) (contact UW Swansea DACE, tel: 01792-295786). I have also had information about study tours with Bristol University (tel: 0117-9287155/9287153) to **Weymouth** with John Cope (23-25 February), **the Lizard Peninsula** (4-6 May), **South Shropshire** (9-10 June), **Arran** (16-22 June), as well as Pompeii (18-25 May) and Ancient Rome (8-15 September).

I hope to see lots of members and their friends at lectures and field meetings through the spring and summer!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-second Session 2000-2001

JUNE 2001

President: Stephen Howe
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
Editor: Mike Bassett / Bob Owens

Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

This is the last Newsletter of the current session! Several events remain in this session, including an EXTRA LECTURE in Cardiff on Tuesday 19th June. The Newsletter also contains important information about the summer field programme: please look through it carefully and be ready to enter dates into your diary!

EXTRA EVENT - Tuesday June 19th, Cardiff

'In great haste' - TW Edgeworth David, the Knight in the Old Brown Hat

Lectures on personalities in the history of geology and their links with South Wales have been something of a theme in this year's programme. And excellent they have been too! Now we have the opportunity to find out about another important figure, this time born in South Wales. As advised in the last Newsletter, Professor David Branagan is visiting the UK from the School of Geosciences at the University of Sydney, Australia. He has kindly agreed to come to Cardiff and give a lecture jointly to ourselves and the Cardiff Naturalists' Society entitled ***'In great haste' - TW Edgeworth David, the Knight in the Old Brown Hat***. Edgeworth David was born in St Fagans in 1858 and was Professor of Geology at the University of Sydney from 1891 to 1924, becoming one of the most influential geologists in Australia. He also explored the Antarctic and studied coral atolls, and there is a Memorial Museum in Kurri Kurri, New South Wales.

The lecture will be held on the evening of **Tuesday June 19th** in the Department of

Earth Sciences at **Cardiff University**. It will begin at **7.30 pm**, with refreshments from 7.00. We hope for a good turnout, to make Professor Branagan's long journey worthwhile!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS SOME ON, SOME OFF

Since I started writing this Newsletter, we have reluctantly decided to cancel 2 more of the day trips from our summer field programme. These are the ***Precambrian and Lower Palaeozoic geology of the Old Radnor area*** on **Saturday 16th June** with Lesley Cherns, and ***Quaternary environmental change in Cardiganshire*** with Mike Walker on **Saturday 21st July**: **these 2 trips are now CANCELLED**. Unfortunately, both were to sensitive agricultural areas. We will try to re-schedule them into next session's programme.

Unless the foot-and-mouth situation deteriorates, we expect that the 2 **evening geological walks**, planned for **Wednesday 11th July (*Geology of the Rhossili area* with myself)** and **Wednesday 15th August (*Geology of Penarth* with Steve Howe)** **WILL GO AHEAD**. [Note that the date given for the Penarth walk in the last Newsletter was **WRONG**.] If you are at all uncertain,

please ask for advice before turning up: you can contact myself (01792-295141/472687; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk), Lynfa Lewis (01639-769241; lynfa.lewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk) or Steve Howe (02920-573363; steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk) or consult the Group's **web site** (www.swga.org.uk).

The entire programme of **Cardiff Conservation Days** up to and including 8th September has been **CANCELLED**. Steve Howe will put together a new series of dates for the autumn.

We apologise for the disruption to the field programme caused by the foot-and-mouth restrictions and for any disappointment caused, and hope that all members will understand the exceptional nature of these circumstances. We do intend to organise a field meetings programme again in the 2001-2002 session, and will try to re-arrange as many as possible of the events cancelled from this summer.

We hope that the **Shropshire Field Weekend** on 15th-17th September, hosted by the Shropshire Geological Society and based in Shrewsbury, **WILL** be able to go ahead. It is not too late to **book a place** on what should be an excellent weekend's geology: a booking form is enclosed in case you have mislaid the one that came with the last Newsletter. If you do want to come, please return your booking form to me with a £20 per person payment (£10 of which will go towards your hotel bill) **before 30th June**. If you have lost the flier from the last Newsletter, and want more information, please contact me.

Over the summer and autumn, we hope to take display material to the **Open Day at Kenfig Nature Reserve** on 29th July and to the Geologists' Association's **Festival of Geology** over the weekend 2nd - 4th November. If anyone wants to **HELP** at either of those events, please contact Lynfa Lewis (details above), Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588) or Steve Howe (details above).

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE 2001-2002 SESSION

Despite the foot-and-mouth disruption, I hope everyone has enjoyed this year's programme, and been able to get along to some meetings or take advantage of special offers. **Renewals** for our 43rd session, which runs from September 2001 to September 2002, will be sent out in September, but a form is enclosed with this Newsletter just in case you want to renew now! You will notice that the subscription rates are unchanged from 2000-2001, and I hope you will agree that they represent excellent value for money.

We are still putting the finishing touches to the **programme for the 2001-2002 session**, but here is a sneak preview. We hope the first lecture meeting will be on Saturday October 20th, in Cardiff, with subsequent meetings on Saturday November 17th in Swansea, and Saturday December 15th in Cardiff. We hope to have talks on deep sea hydrothermal vents, volcanic hazards, and minerals, amongst other things. You can guess what some of the events in the summer field programme will be, and we also intend to have one field meeting in the autumn and another early in the New Year. There should be another *Holiday Geology* evening in January, this time with the possibility of a viewing of the temporary exhibition at the Museum, and we intend to replace the annual Student Lecture with a special Science Week Lecture. So, foot-and-mouth permitting, this promises to be a bumper session!

FURTHER INTO THE FUTURE

Looking even further ahead, the **National Eisteddfod** returns to southern Wales in August 2002, coming to St David's. Following the success of our displays at the Eisteddfodau in Llanelli in 2000 and

Bridgend in 1998 we hope to take a display to St David's. Once again, it is our intention that all additional costs will be covered by dedicated sponsorship and will not drain resources from our core activities of lectures and field meetings. Being further from our centres of Swansea and Cardiff, this venue presents some logistical difficulties, but I am sure these will be overcome by the enthusiastic group of volunteers that Lynda Garfield hopes to assemble. Lynda plans to hold an initial planning meeting in September, and will be glad of offers of **HELP** from anybody, but particularly Welsh speakers. If you want to help, or just want to know a bit more about our contribution to the event, please contact Lynda (029-2089-1588).

SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

The last few lectures of this session were well attended, with 32 people at the joint meeting with the Russell Society on 17th February in Cardiff, when Allan Cuthbertson stepped in at short notice and gave an enjoyable talk about iron in South Wales, including a discussion of the spectacular fossil forest currently exposed at the Darell opencast site in the Dulais valley; 54 at the AGM in Swansea on March 10th, which was followed by John Cope's fascinating account of the Australian outback; and 30 at the Student Lecture in Cardiff on 21st March, during Science Week, when Peter Styles gave some amazing examples of how geophysics can produce images of the shallow subsurface to help monitor mining operations and deal with subsurface cavities. Our Group hosted the TR Owen Lecture, in Swansea on 11th April, when 53 people came to Tom Sharpe's superb account of Swansea's geological connections with major figures in the history of geology, including William Buckland and Henry De la Beche. The only event from the summer field programme to have survived the foot-and-

mouth outbreak was the trip to north Somerset, led by Kevin Page of English Nature. This was attended by 10 people, who had an excellent day hunting for fossils.

At the **AGM** in March the proposed changes to the Committee that were outlined in the last Newsletter were accepted, so Rhian Hicks is welcomed as a Committee Member with responsibility for the web site, and Lynfa Lewis is welcomed back as a committee Member, with responsibility for field meetings. Bob Owens was co-opted to act as Assistant Editor to Mike Bassett, who intends to stand down in March 2002. Peter Hodges completed a spell of 9 years as Chairman and Vice-Chairman (the last person who will have to serve such a long sentence following the rule changes back in 1996): we all thank him for his considerable contributions in those capacities. Copies of the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports are enclosed so those of you who were not at the AGM can read the summaries of the Group's activities.

SPECIAL OFFER Life of William Smith

Strata is a new book about the life and works of William Smith, the canal engineer who produced what is generally considered the first modern geological map, and became known as the 'father of stratigraphy'. This attractive paperback has 160 pages with plenty of black-and-white illustrations. The author is John L Morton and the book is published by Tempus, who specialise in books about history. The book sells at £9.99, but thanks to a kind offer by the publishers **you can buy it for just £7.50** (plus postage and packing). If you would like a copy, please complete the enclosed order form, and return it to me **by Friday 29th June.**

OTHER EVENTS

The Wales and West Branch of **The Russell Society** have field meetings planned to Taffs Well (21 July), Creigiau (20 August) and Wickwar (23 September). Autumn events provisionally include a presentation of holiday slides on Friday 19 October at 7.30 pm in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, and Behind the Scenes at the National Museum on Friday 16 November. Details of all these meetings can be obtained from Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588) or Steve Plant (029-2086-9352).

The **West of England GA** have field meetings planned to Weston-Super-Mare (23 June), Quaternary of the Cotswolds (7 July) and south-west Highlands of Scotland (15-22 Sep): contact Graeme Churchard (0117-967-1066; secretary@wega.org.uk).

There will be a **Rock 'n' Gem Show** at Cheltenham Racecourse on 21/22 July: details from The Exhibition Team (01628-621697).

The British Association Festival of Science this summer will be in Glasgow from Monday 3rd to Friday 7th September, with the theme **Science and Society**. There are reduced booking charges before 31st July. Full details from The British Association, 23 Savile Row, London W1S 2EZ (020-7973-3500; www.the-ba.net).

The **Southampton International Mineral and Fossil Show** will take place on Saturday 22nd September in - you've guessed it! - Southampton. It is organised by the Southampton Mineral and Fossil Society, who are celebrating their 30th anniversary, and will be held at the Eastpoint Centre, Burgoyne Road (near

junction 8 of the M27) from 10 am to 4.30 pm. There will be illustrated mineral and fossil talks, a lapidary display and sales of minerals, fossils, gems, crystals, books and equipment. Admission is just £1. Further details from Gary Morse, 2 Fountain Court, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 4QF (01489-787300; SMFS@mineral.screaming.net; http://members.tripod.co.uk/SMFS).

Finally, the **Geologists' Association** plans overseas field meetings to India (Jan/Feb 2002) and Rhodes, Greece (October 2002): details from David Bone (01243-788474).

ADULT EDUCATION

The Department of Adult Education at University of Wales Swansea is planning a major expansion of its programme of **geological study tours**. The first will be a weekend trip to **Explore the Geology of North-West Wales** which is scheduled for **mid-September 2001**. If you are interested in this or any other trip which the department might offer, please contact Dr SJ Freeth at DACE (01792-295522; s.j.freeth@swan.ac.uk). There are also provisional plans to develop a **part-time MSc**: anyone with a good honours degree in geology (or equivalent) who might be interested in working (part-time) on a research project, with a view to obtaining a masters degree, should contact Dr Freeth.

MEMBER NEWS

I am sorry to have to report that Eiry Bateman, a member of the Group, died suddenly in May. We extend our sympathies to Nigel, also a member, and the family.

Finally, don't forget our web site, if you have access to the internet. This is expertly maintained by Rhian Hicks, and is constantly being improved and expanded!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-third Session 2001-2002

OCTOBER 2001



President: Stephen Howe
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
Editor: Mike Bassett / Bob Owens

Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

First of all, THANK-YOU very much for renewing your subscription to the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, and WELCOME to our 43rd session. Your membership card is enclosed, with details of the winter programme. Your subscription will take you through to September 2002, and you will receive another programme card early in the New Year with details of spring and summer field meetings, which we hope will be free from the disruption of foot-and-mouth this year. In addition, Newsletters contain details of many other events, activities and special offers, so please read them carefully! To try and save space, I have listed **contact details** at the end.

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AUTUMN PROGRAMME

By the time you read this the first lecture of the session will have taken place. Dr Douglas Bassett will be talking to us in Cardiff on 20th October, leading us ***In search of WD Conybeare: geologist and divine.*** Douglas's talks are always a real treat, and I am sure this will be no exception.

The first **field meeting** of the session will take place on **Sunday 11th November**, to the **Darell opencast site**. Over the past couple of years we have held several visits to this site near Seven Sisters in the Dulais Valley with its spectacular fossil trees and beautiful plant fossils. Previously we have restricted numbers with a booking system, but because of operational changes we do not have to this time. **Meet at the site at 2.00 pm.** **Bring** boots (it is likely to be muddy), hammer and goggles, and hard hat and fluorescent jacket if you have them, and be prepared for a feast of fossils! The visit will be led by Allan Cuthbertson. If you aren't sure where the site is, please **contact** me or Allan.

The next lecture meeting will be on **Saturday 17th November** in the

Geography Department at **Swansea** University, starting at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30. Prof Brian Williams has agreed to talk to the Group while he is visiting Swansea from the far-flung reaches of Aberdeen where, as he keeps reminding me, he is our most distant member. Brian is a leading authority on the Old Red Sandstone of southern Britain and has carried out important research not only in Wales, but also in south-west Ireland and elsewhere. This has yielded exciting new ideas on the significance of the Old Red Sandstone and the kinds of modern environments that existed in South Wales during Devonian times, and Brian will be talking about these ***New views on the Old Red.*** For many years Brian was a lecturer at Bristol, where he took many extra-mural classes and field courses, and he is looking forward to meeting his South Wales GA friends during his visit to Swansea.

The final meeting in 2001 will be on **Saturday 8th December** in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff** University, starting at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30. Prof Jake Hancock, from Imperial College London,

will talk about **Geology and Wine**. Jake is a leading authority on the influence geology exerts on the growth of vines and characteristics of wine. As anyone who remembers Jake's visit in 1990 will recall, his talks are most entertaining, and as an additional attraction we hope to follow the lecture with a tasting of some of the wines he talks about! There will also be mince pies to celebrate the last meeting before Christmas and, for those who are driving, soft drinks too.

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Talks in **Cardiff** are in the Earth Sciences Department in the main University building. The room where we meet before the lecture is on the first floor, immediately to the left of the entrance off Park Place. **Parking** is available in the courtyard, although there may be a charge. Meetings in **Swansea** are in the Geography Department on the first floor of the Natural Sciences Building (Wallace Building). This is on the left at the top of the driveway off Mumbles Road, and **parking** is available outside the building. Free **refreshments** are available for half an hour before lecture meetings. At Swansea meetings, this is an opportunity to buy books and leaflets that are on display. We take the speaker to **lunch** after each talk, and anyone is most welcome to join us. Finally, if you can display **posters** of the programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please **contact** me.

MEETINGS IN 2002

Another Newsletter in December will have full details of events in early 2002, so just a brief summary is given here. As has become our custom, the New Year will begin with a **Holiday Geology** evening at the National Museum in Cardiff on **Friday 11th January**. We hope that half a dozen members will show a few slides of somewhere interesting and/or exotic they have visited - **volunteers please contact** me or Steve Howe!

Our January lecture will be in Swansea on the 26th and will be held jointly with the Wales and West branch of The Russell Society. Prof Adam Schultz, the new head of department at the Earth Sciences Department in Cardiff, will give a personal view of **Seafloor hydrothermal circulation**. On the evening of Friday 15th February there will be a joint lecture with ourselves and the Russell Society, hosted by the Geological Society Southern Wales Regional Group: Dr Rob Bowell will talk about **Mines and minerals of Nevada**. We will have a Saturday morning lecture on 23rd February, at Swansea, when Dr John Grattan from Aberystwyth will give a talk with the intriguing title of **The end is nigh? Armageddon and European volcanic activity!**

National Science Week 2002 will take place between Friday 8th and Sunday 17th March. On Sunday 10th March Dr Peter Hodges will lead a **Field meeting to Aust Cliff and Manor Farm**. This is likely to be an all-day trip, with a meeting time of 11.00 am, although it may be possible to join the group at lunchtime. It will include a visit to new exposures of the Westbury Beds, including the bone bed. On Saturday 16th March we will hold our **Annual General Meeting** in **Cardiff** (10.30 start, with refreshments from 10.00). The AGM will be followed by a talk from **Richard Fortey** from the Natural History Museum in London, on the topic of **Life habits of trilobites**.

FIELD GUIDES TO FOSSILS

Details of the first **Special Offer** of the session are enclosed. The Palaeontological Association has added to its excellent series of **Field Guides to Fossils** with the publication of **Dinosaurs of the Isle of Wight**. This is edited by DM Martill (who gave us a fascinating insight to *The making of Walking with Dinosaurs* in Science Week 2000) and D Naish, with 464 pages, 159 figures and 62 plates, 16 in colour. The cover price is a reasonable

£16, but we are able to offer copies at **just £12**. An order form is enclosed, which includes other titles in the series. Of particular relevance to South Wales are *Plant fossils of the British Coal Measures*, *Fossils of the Rhaetian Penarth Group* (particularly if you plan to attend Peter Hodges' field trip on 10th March!) and *Fossils of the Upper Ordovician*.

The Palaeontological Association has also produced a set of 16 attractive **postcards** featuring, amongst other things, a silicified araucariacean cone from the Jurassic of Argentina, echinoid spines from Portugal, a beautiful *Pecten* from Sicily, a dragonfly wing. We can offer these at just **£2 per set**.

Although it's only October now, **Christmas** will be upon us before we know it, so when people say they are lost for ideas for what to give you, just help them to complete the order form for these guides and cards! Please send your order to me **by Friday 30th November**. **Postage** is £1.50 (no postage charge for postcards), or you can **collect** your order from the University in Swansea or the Museum in Cardiff - just delete the appropriate words on the order form and I will contact you to make arrangements.

Still thinking about Christmas, don't forget that as a member of the South Wales Group you can order **Geologists' Association field guides** at discounted prices. Recent titles include the Isle of Man (£11), Derbyshire (2 titles, £11 each) and Lanzarote (£6). To place an order, **contact** the Geologists' Association.

MORE EVENTS

The **Geologists' Association Annual Reunion** will take place from 2nd-4th November, as part of the **Festival of Geology** in Liverpool. As well as the usual jamboree of displays by groups like our own from all over the country, the weekend will include sales stalls, talks and field trips. Lynfa Lewis, Mike Lees and Steve

Howe have kindly agreed to represent our own Group and will take display and sales material. The event is open to all. You do not have to belong to the national GA; indeed as a member of a Local Group you will be particularly welcomed. For further details about the event, please **contact** Lynfa, Mike or Steve.

A meeting at the Geological Society in London on 14th and 15th March 2002 will discuss the role of **The Amateur in British Geology**. For more information, contact Stuart Baldwin (01376-583502; sbaldwin@fossilbooks.co.uk). As the email address implies, Stuart runs a second-hand bookshop specialising in geology and palaeontology. He is now winding this down and selling off his stock, so if you have any particular wants you might like to contact Stuart.

A flier is enclosed about a major Conference on **Stone in Wales: materials, heritage and conservation / Cerrig yng Nghymru: defnyddiau, treftadaeth a chadwraeth** at the National Museum in Cardiff from 3-5 April 2002. Its aim is to bring together people from all parts of society with an interest in the building materials and techniques of Wales, and the conference is supported by the National Museum, Cadw, the Countryside Council for Wales and the Geologists' Association's Curry Fund. The registration fee for 3 days of papers and excursions is £40, with a further £16 for a Conference Dinner at St Fagans.

After the success of our displays at the Eistoddfodau in Bridgend (1998) and Llanelli (2000) we hope to mount a display at the **Eisteddfod in St David's in August 2002**. We will again collaborate closely with The Russell Society, and our efforts will be co-ordinated by Lynfa Lewis and Lynda Garfield. If you would like to be involved in this event, or in the planning and preparation, please **contact** Lynfa or Lynda - they will be most grateful for any **volunteers**.

The Geologists' Association is planning a second **Earth Alert** event, in Scarborough from 23-26 August 2002. There are **reduced registration rates** if you book before 30th December 2001: contact Dr W French at the GA Office. The GA also intends to hold its 'usual' **Reunion** in November 2002, back at University College London.

OTHER GROUPS

The **Russell Society Wales and West Branch** have meetings on Friday 16th November (*Behind the scenes at NMW*), Friday 7th December (conversazione) and Saturday 19th January (*Mineral curation*). For details please **contact** Lynda Garfield.

The **Open University Geological Society** Severnside Branch has a day of lectures planned at the National Museum on Sunday 25th November from 10.00. Topics will include the *United Arab Emirates*, *Super-volcanoes* and *Glaciation in the Sahara*. They are arranging trips to Brittany in early May 2002 and Norway in July. For further details **contact** Jan Ashton Jones (01432-870827; jashtonjon@aol.com).

Allan Cuthbertson will be busy in the coming months, talking to local groups about Coal Measures geology and the Darell site with its fossil trees. On **24th October** he will talk to Neath Businessmen's Club at the Neath

Constitutional Club at 7.30 on **The Petrified Forest**, and on 4th April 2002 he will address the Cwmdulais Historical Society at the Canolfan Day Centre, Seven Sisters, at 7.30 on **Trees of Rock, Men of Iron**. Please **contact** Allan for more information about either of these, as numbers may be limited.

The **Geologists' Association** is planning field trips to Connemara (May 2002), the Auvergne (July), Tunisia (September), Rhodes (October) and Chile (October/November). For information, **contact** David Bone (01243-788474; david.bone@on-edie.net).

MISCELLANEOUS

The series of **Cardiff Conservation Days** aiming to document the state of geological sites within Cardiff was put on hold over the summer because of the foot-and-mouth restrictions. Steve Howe intends to resume these meetings, and there will be details in the next Newsletter.

Finally, my annual reminder that computerised **records** are kept of members' names, addresses and membership record. These are used within the Geologists' Association South Wales Group, mainly for mailing purposes. If you **object** to your details being kept on a computer record, please let me know.

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CONTACT DETAILS

- Allan Cuthbertson (07712-571860; allan_geologist@yahoo.co.uk)
- Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588)
- Geologists' Association, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 9AG (020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com)
- Steve Howe (029-2057-3363; steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk)
- Mike Lees (Membership Secretary), 23 Blaencwm Road, Llansamlet, Swansea SA7 9TA
- Lynfa Lewis (01639-769241; lynfa.trevor@ntlworld.com)
- Geraint Owen (01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

Geraint Owen (Secretary)



Forty-third Session 2001-2002

DECEMBER 2001



President: Stephen Howe
 Secretary: Geraint Owen
 Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
 Editor: Mike Bassett / Bob Owens

Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
 Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
 Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS to all our members. I hope you have a happy and successful year in 2002 - aren't we racing through this new millennium! I also hope you've been making the most of your membership so far in this 2001-2002 session. There are plenty more exciting geological events coming up between now and September, beginning with another **Holiday Geology** evening at the National Museum of Wales on **Friday 11th January**. More about that later, but first ...

A Christmas Quiz!

Where on Earth can you find Mount Venus, Mount Jupiter, Mount Pluto and Mount Uranus? Where can you find arthurite, bayldonite and cacoxenite? What region is the world's third largest producer of gold, after South Africa and Australia? Where are the closest active volcanoes to South Wales? How likely is Europe to be devastated by volcanic eruptions? What were the most fearsome predators of the Cambrian period? **The answers** to these and many more fascinating questions will be found in the next few lectures in our programme of events!

On **Saturday 26th January**, in a joint meeting with the Russell Society, Professor Adam Schultz will talk on **Seafloor hydrothermal circulation: a personal view**. Professor Schultz has just succeeded Dave Rickard as head of the Department of Earth Sciences at Cardiff University. He has made many visits to the floor of the deep oceans in submersibles, and is therefore expertly placed to talk to us on this topic. Our talk will be at University of Wales **Swansea**, beginning at **11.00**, with the usual refreshments from 10.30.

We will share another meeting with the Russell Society, and also with the local branch of the Geological Society, on the evening of **Friday 15th February**, in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff** University, with the talk starting at **7.00 pm**. Dr Rob Bowell of SRK Consulting will talk about some of the fascinating **Mines and minerals of Nevada**.

On **Saturday 23rd February** Dr John Grattan, from University of Wales Aberystwyth, will give a talk with the fascinating title: **The end is nigh? Armageddon and European volcanic activity!** John specialises in the environmental and human consequences of geohazards, so his talk will be of importance to us all. It will take place in the Geography Department at the university in **Swansea**, beginning at **11.00**, with refreshments from 10.30.

National Science Week for 2002 will take place from 8th-17th March. Our main contribution will be a **field meeting** on **Sunday 10th March** to some new and some familiar exposures at **Aust Cliff and Manor Farm**, led by Dr Peter Hodges, our Chairman from 1994 to 1996. Full details of where and when to meet and what to bring will be with the next Newsletter,

which will be with you some time in February, so put the date into your diaries now to make sure you're free to go!

Our **Annual General Meeting** will take place in **Cardiff** on **Saturday 16th March**. As always, it will begin earlier than the usual Saturday morning meetings, at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00. Full details will be in the next newsletter. The meeting will be followed by the Retiring President's Special Lecture, and we are delighted to be able to welcome **Richard Fortey**, from the Natural History Museum in London. Many of us have delighted in reading Richard's several excellent books, including *Life: an unauthorised biography*, *Trilobite* and *The hidden landscape*. Richard will talk about his research speciality, the ***Life habits of trilobites***. We hope for a big turnout for that lecture - please **bring friends and relatives along**. They can sit through the AGM, which should not last long, and Richard Fortey's talk will begin the moment the AGM ends. **Be there!**

Refreshments will be available for half an hour before each of the Saturday morning meetings, from 10.30 in January and February, and 10.00 in March. We also take our speakers to **lunch** after each lecture, and anyone is welcome to come along, whether for lunch or just a drink. We visit the pub next to the university in Swansea, and the National Museum's cafeteria in Cardiff.

Our programme for 2002 doesn't end with the AGM and Special Lecture. As last year, we are arranging a full programme of **summer field meetings**, with at least one a month through to October, including several of the events that had to be postponed because of foot-and-mouth in 2001. Full details and a second programme card will be in the February newsletter.

Holiday Geology

Now back to **Holiday Geology** on **Friday 11th January**, at the National Museum of Wales in **Cardiff**. Many of you are familiar with *Holiday Geology* evenings by now. There will be about half a dozen short (10-minute maximum) **slide shows** from exotic destinations and from close to home, but all likely to fascinate anyone who enjoys rocks, fossils and scenery. The slide shows will be broken up by **food and drink**, very kindly provided by the Geology department at the museum, courtesy of Mike Bassett, and there will also be some **displays** of rocks, fossils and minerals. The whole event is informal, and is an excellent opportunity to **meet** other like-minded members and chat about geology. And if you've got any specimens or photographs that you'd like to have identified, or just to show off to others, bring them along too. As with the March lecture - and indeed all our meetings - bring along friends and family too. There will be something for everyone at *Holiday Geology*!

There have been a few **volunteers** so far to give slide presentations, but there's room for more. **If you would like** to show a few pictures of somewhere or something you think others will find interesting, please **contact Steve Howe** (029-2057-3363; steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk). As last year, Steve will be ruthless about enforcing a 10-minute time limit on slide presentations to keep things moving and to make sure everyone gets a fair chance to give their show.

We have to be escorted in to the Museum since it is after closing hours. So please

MEET at the rear entrance to the Museum at or just before 6.30.

The rear entrance is between the public car park for the museum (entrance off Museum Avenue) and the museum itself, down a ramp from Museum Avenue or down steps from the car park. The porters' lodge is on the left as you look at the back of the museum.

The session so far

We have already held some very interesting and enjoyable meetings this session. The session got under way in Cardiff on **20th October**, when Dr Doug Bassett, one of our Honorary Members, gave a fascinating talk about WD Conybeare, Dean of Llandaff, and considered the factors that had turned him towards geology in the early 1800s. The first field meeting of the session was on **11th November**, when Allan Cuthbertson yet again guided a group around the Darell opencast site. The turnout was magnificent, with 42 people, and the weather did us proud, with lovely sunshine. It was ideal for finding the wonderful plant fossils that this site has yielded. On **17th November** Prof. Brian Williams from Aberdeen enthralled us with an overview of current understanding of the origin of the Old Red Sandstone of south-west Ireland and Pembrokeshire. Recent developments have changed many of the traditional views of these fascinating rocks, and it is clear that we need some field meetings to examine these new ideas on the Old Red Sandstone. Our last meeting before Christmas, on **8th December**, was on the topic of the Geology of Wine, expertly delivered by Prof. Jake Hancock. The talk was followed by mince pies and a variety of sweeter white wines, assembled by John Cope, who provided us with explanatory notes to round off an enjoyable morning.

Lynfa Lewis, Mike Lees and Steve Howe represented the Group at the Geologists' Association's **Festival of Geology** in Liverpool over the weekend of 2nd-4th November. They took a display about the plant fossils from the Darell opencast site, and gave away pieces of shale with plant fossils on them, which were very well appreciated. The *Festival of Geology* incorporated the Annual Reunion, attended by geology groups from all over the country, many of them with displays.

We are grateful to Lynfa, Mike and Steve for representing us at this event, which is an important occasion for sharing information and ideas with other groups.

Forthcoming events

The Geologists' Association is planning 2 national get-togethers in 2002. They will be reinstating the **Annual Reunion** at University College London in November, and they will be following up the Millennium jamboree of *Earth Alert* with **Earth Alert 2** in Scarborough over August Bank Holiday weekend. Our preliminary plans are to take a display to both of these events. If anyone is interested in helping Lynfa and Mike with this, please contact Lynfa (01639-769241; lynfa.trevor@ntlworld.com). Don't forget that there are **reduced registration rates** for *Earth Alert 2* if you book before 30th December 2001: contact Dr French at the GA (details below).

In July 2002 we hope to take a display again to the **Kenfig Nature Reserve Open Day**, and again if anyone wants to help, please contact Lynfa.

After careful consideration, we have decided not to go ahead with a display at the 2002 **National Eisteddfod** at St David's in August. A small group under the guidance of Lynda Garfield and Lynfa Lewis looked into the practicalities of staffing a display at St Davids, and decided there were too many difficulties and uncertainties, and that the cost to the Group might be considerable, so we reluctantly decided not to participate. Hopefully we will be able to take a display to the Eisteddfod when it next comes to South Wales. Thanks are due to all those who were involved in the planning for the Eisteddfod.

And don't forget 2 meetings that were described in the last Newsletter. A meeting at the Geological Society in London on 14th and 15th March 2002 will discuss the role of **The Amateur in British Geology**. For more information,

contact Stuart Baldwin (01376-583502; sbaldwin@fossilbooks.co.uk). And there will be a major Conference on **Stone in Wales: materials, heritage and conservation / Cerrig yng Nghymru: defnyddiau, treftadaeth a chadwraeth** at the National Museum in Cardiff from 3rd-5th April 2002. Its aim is to bring together people from all parts of society with an interest in the building materials and techniques of Wales. The registration fee for 3 days of papers and excursions is £40, with a further £16 for a Conference Dinner at St Fagans.

Other Groups

In addition to their joint meetings with our own Group, the **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch has lecture meetings on Saturday 19th January on *Mineral curation, or how to give your minerals a long and healthy life* (Dr Monica Price), Saturday 2nd March on *The lead mines of Machen* (Dr Tony Jukes) and Saturday 23rd March on the *Mineralogy of platinum* (Dr Hazel Prichard). The lectures begin at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30, and are held at Cardiff University in the same room as our own lectures there. For further details, contact Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588) or Steve Plant (029-2086-9352).

Allan Cuthbertson will be giving a talk to the Cwmdulais Historical Society on 4th April 2002 at the Canolfan Day Centre, Seven Sisters, at 7.30 on **Trees of Rock, Men of Iron**, including an account of the fossil forests at the Darell opencast site. Please **contact** Allan for more information, as numbers may be limited (07712-571860; allan_geologist@yahoo.co.uk).

Our neighbours in the **West of England Geologists' Association** have meetings on 15th January on the *Post-Tertiary evolution of South Africa and placer diamonds* (Prof. Brian Bluck), 12th February on *Baltica* (Prof. Mike Bassett) and 12th March on *Extreme tectonics - rotations in an eastern Mediterranean*

ophiolite (Dr Antony Morris). Lectures are held in the First Year Lecture Theatre in the Department of Geology, Wills Memorial Building, University of Bristol, starting at 7.30 pm. Further details can be had from John Toller on 0117-969-6834.

Further afield, the **Geologists' Association** holds monthly **lecture meetings** in the Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London W1, starting at 6 pm with refreshments from 5.30 - worth thinking about if you happen to be in London. Forthcoming topics include *Beagle 2: Is there life on Mars?* on January 4th (Prof. Colin Pillinger), *Carry on up the jungle: fieldwork in Belize* on February 1st (Dr Paul Davis), *A look at the Medusa: silicification of plants in hot springs* on March 1st (Dr Alan Channing) and a Special Invitation Lecture on *Response of polar regions to global climate change* on April 5th (Prof. David Drewry). **Field meetings** from the GA include *The Malvern Hills* (May 18th), and weekends to *The East Midlands* (April 26th-27th), *Warwickshire* (June 15th-16th), *Petroleum geology of Dorset* (September 20th-22nd) and *Leiden Museum* (November 29th - December 1st). More exotic field trips are planned to *The volcanoes of the Auvergne* (July 19th-29th), *The Sahara Desert and south-central Tunisia* (September 2002), *Rhodes* (October 2002) and *Chile* (November 2002). For more details on any of these events, contact Sarah Stafford, GA, Burlington House, London W1V 9AG (tel: 020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com; <http://www.geologist.demon.co.uk>).

Finally, don't forget that the **Open University Geological Society** Severnside Branch has plans for trips to Brittany in early May 2002 and Norway in July. For further details **contact** Jan Ashton Jones (01432-870827; jashtonjon@aol.com).

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-third Session 2001-2002

MARCH 2002

President: Stephen Howe
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
Editor: Mike Bassett / Bob Owens

Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

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Explanations and Apologies

First of all, my **apologies** for recent disruptions to the programme and for the late arrival of this Newsletter. As many of you know, Peter Hodges was taken to hospital in February with a brain haemorrhage. Although we tried, we were unable to find a replacement leader for the Aust field meeting on 10th March, but by the time we gave up it was too late to get the Newsletter out in time to inform you of the cancellation. I am pleased to report that Peter is now out of hospital, and on the road to recovery, so we hope he will be able to lead the trip for us in 2003.

Also as many of you are aware, our speaker for the lecture on 23rd February, Dr John Grattan, contacted me just beforehand to say he had been taken ill and would be unable to give his talk. Allan Cuthbertson, our Vice-President, valiantly stepped in at 2 days' notice and gave a superb talk on mineral development in South Wales, but apologies to those who had come hoping to hear about European volcanic activity. Again, I hope John Grattan can be persuaded to give his talk in another session.

I hope that's the last disruption for the time being, and that the remainder of this session's programme will progress as planned. **Read on** for a reminder of the Annual General Meeting, followed by a talk from Richard Fortey, **this coming Saturday, 16th March**, and a bumper programme of **field meetings** between now and the autumn.

Lecture and Annual General Meeting, Saturday 16th March

On **Saturday 16th March** we will hold our **Annual General Meeting** in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff University**, followed by a lecture from **Richard Fortey** from the Natural History Museum on the ***Life habits of trilobites***. The morning's activities begin with **refreshments from 10.00** and the AGM at 10.30, followed immediately by Richard's talk. Richard will be well known to many members through his books such as *Life: an unauthorised biography* and *Trilobite*. This event is definitely one not to be missed. Please bring friends and relatives to find out more about these most Welsh of fossils. We are happy for visitors to sit through the AGM, which should not last long. As always, we will take the speaker to **lunch** after his talk, to the restaurant at the National Museum of Wales, and we hope that as many people as possible can join us there too.

An agenda for the Annual General Meeting is enclosed, with last year's minutes. The main business will be the rolling changes to the Committee, and as usual willing volunteers have been nominated to fill the vacancies. **Steve Howe** ends his term as **President**, and hands over to **Allan Cuthbertson**. Steve has steered the Group skillfully through the last 2 years, which have seen a continued expansion of activities, particularly in the wider community through exhibits and displays, and the Cardiff Conservation Days (see more below). The Committee is recommending **Lynfa Lewis** to step into Allan's place as Vice-President. We are sure Lynfa would lead

the Group with her customary enthusiasm and skill, which those at *Holiday Geology* saw her displaying admirably for the BBC!

Malcolm Shaw and **Lesley Cherns** have agreed to continue for a further 2 years as **Treasurer** and **Programme Secretary** respectively, and as agreed at the last AGM, **Bob Owens** will take over from Mike Bassett as **Editor**. Mike's long term as Editor has seen the publication of our highly respected excursion guides to Dyfed and Powys, and he also found time to serve as Chairman from 1992 to 1994.

Dave Wellings and **Steve Plant** end their terms as **Committee members**. Dave has agreed to remain on the Committee, and Steve will be stepping down; we are very grateful to him for all his efforts over the past 3 years. **Mike Smith** has agreed to stand to replace Steve. There is one more vacancy if Lynfa moves to the post of Vice-President, which **Marie Lewis** has agreed to stand for. Finally, **Gareth Davies** ends his spell as retiring Vice-President, and we all thank Gareth again for all his work.

The Committee hopes members will agree to these proposals at the AGM. **Any other member** is welcome to stand, however, by completing the enclosed **nomination form**.

Summer programme

After the AGM in March, we move on to our summer programme of field meetings. A **programme card** is enclosed with a summary of activities to October. We hope all these events will run, uninterrupted by foot-and-mouth or illness! A summary of our **Safety Code** is on the programme card; please read it carefully. Further details of the **Cardiff Conservation Days**, which are open to all, are given below.

On **Saturday 20th April**, Gareth Davies will lead a trip to look at the Millstone Grit and Carboniferous Limestone of *Llyn Llech Owain, Carmel Woods and Carreg Cennen*. This is re-scheduled from 2002, and will examine the geology and landscape of an

interesting and important, but relatively poorly known area. **Meet** at 10.30 am at Llyn Llech Owain country park. It should be possible to visit a pub for lunch.

On **Sunday 26th May** we are joining with the *Open University Geological Society* for an *opencast site* visit, led by Allan Cuthbertson. **Meet** at 10 am at the Crynant Business Park.

Over the weekend of **15th-16th June**, members of *Shropshire Geological Society* will be coming to South Wales, returning the visit we made to Shropshire last September. Members of our own Group are encouraged to join the visitors for one or both of the days. Saturday will be spent on **Gower**, examining the Carboniferous and Quaternary geology and the origin of the South Gower scenery, and Sunday will be spent at Ogmore, Southerndown and Sully in the *Vale of Glamorgan*. **Meeting** places and times are on the card. Please bring a packed lunch.

On **Sunday 30th June**, Sid Howells will lead a trip to *South Pembrokeshire*, starting at Freshwater East at 10.30 am. The aim is to examine the geology from the Silurian through the Old Red Sandstone to the Carboniferous Limestone, including some of the volcanic ash horizons with spectacular trace fossils mentioned by Brian Williams in his talk last November. Again, bring a packed lunch.

Another Newsletter in the spring or early summer will give full details of the remaining meetings. We hope to arrange the postponed trip to Tregaron and the *Teifi Valley* with Mike Walker to see how evidence for environmental change can be collected from Quaternary deposits, possibly on Saturday 13th July.

Two Wednesday evening walks will start at **6.30 pm**. On **24th July**, Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings will explore the *Building stones of Cardiff Bay*; the meeting place will be advised in the next Newsletter. On **21st August**, Mike Lees will explore the geology of the waterfalls area along the Nedd Fechan at *Pontneddfechan*. **Meet** by the Angel Inn.

After the successful weekend visit to Shropshire last September, we hope to arrange

a weekend to **North Wales**, hosted by the *North Wales Geology Association*. The provisional dates are 21st-22nd September, but confirmation and details will be in the spring Newsletter.

The first lecture meeting of the 2002-2003 session will be on **Saturday 19th October**, when we can once again look forward to an address from Douglas Bassett, this time coming to Swansea to talk about the **life and career of Murchison**, one of the 'giants' of 19th century geology and a key figure in the history of geology in Wales.

We hope there is something for everyone in this programme of field meetings. Bring along friends and family too. You never know, they might enjoy it so much they'll decide to join the Group! Please contact me for any **further information**.

Cardiff Conservation Days

After the hiatus caused by foot-and-mouth, Steve Howe has put together a programme of Cardiff Conservation Days. You may recall that their aim is to find out how many of the geological sites in Cardiff still exist and are accessible. Those who were at *Holiday Geology* will remember Malcolm Shaw's presentation showing some of the 'Lost Worlds' that have been rediscovered on previous days! **Everyone** is welcome - no special geological skills are needed. The **dates** are listed on the programme card - 13th April, 18th May, 22nd June, 20th July, 7th September and 12th October. The **meeting place** each day is the coffee shop at Asdas on the Coryton interchange of the M4 and A470, at **10 am**. There should be a pub for lunch, but bring wet weather gear! For further information, contact Steve (029-2057-3363; steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk).

Events

Stone in Wales will take place at the National Museum from 3rd-5th April. The programme has been published; for copies, or to make a booking, contact Jana Horak, Dept of Geology, NMGW, Cardiff CF10 3NP. Our Group will

be taking displays to the **Kenfig Open Day** (late June), **Earth Alert 2** (23rd-26th August) and the **GA Reunion** (2nd November). If you want to **help**, please contact Lynfa Lewis (01639-769241; lynfa.trevor@ntlworld.com) or Lynda Garfield (02920-891588). *Earth Alert 2* is a geological jamboree in Scarborough, hosted by the GA. Reduced rates apply if more than 11 members book together - contact Lynfa or me for details.

Since the last Newsletter

The year got off to an excellent start with **Holiday Geology** at the National Museum on Friday 11th Jan. 55 people enjoyed an evening of wine, food and slide shows. We are most grateful to Mike Bassett for his hospitality in hosting the event once again, to his staff for arranging it, and to all the people who presented slide shows and brought displays. We had talks from Mike Bassett (Chinese plant fossils); Mary Jones (Hawaii); Andy Kendall (karst and caves in Vietnam); Lynfa Lewis (Dordogne); Mary Salter (stunning photos of an erupting volcano in Costa Rica); Tom Sharpe (Jordan); and Dave Wellings (Australia). Alun Thomas showed some fascinating pictures of field meetings from the Group's early years, and Malcolm Shaw put together a compilation of Group activities from the past year, which brought home just how much goes on these days! Mike Lees and Lynfa Lewis brought a display of plant fossils from the Darell opencast site, Lynfa Lewis brought a video of the BBC's new geological star, and the Russell Society brought an poster of recent events. Thank-you to everyone who helped to make the evening such a success. We hope to hold yet another *Holiday Geology* evening next year, probably on 10th January, so pencil that date in your diary now!

Our first lecture meeting of the year, on 26th January, was given by Adam Schultz, the new head of the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, who treated us to a spectacular presentation about deep-sea **hydrothermal activity** as experienced from deep-diving submersibles. It was the next best

thing to actually being there! In fact, given what we heard about the cramped conditions, it was perhaps even better than being there!

Other Groups

The **Russell Society** Wales & West Branch has a lecture on Saturday 23rd March on the *Mineralogy of platinum* (Dr Hazel Prichard), in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University at 11 am. They have field meetings to Clevedon (28 April), Dolyhir (19 May), mid-Wales (15-16 June), Parc Slip opencast (July 21), Tonmawr & Taffs Well (17 August) and Machen Quarry (22 September). For details, **contact** Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588) or Steve Plant (029-2086-9352).

The **Open University Geological Society** Severnside Branch has field meetings to the Forest of Dean (17 March), Blaen Onneu Quarry (14 April) and the Black Mountain with yours truly (23 June). If you would like to join them, **contact** Jan Ashton Jones (01432-870827; jashtonjon@aol.com).

West of England GA have field meetings to the Forest of Dean (14 April), Charmouth (9 June) and Builth (13 July); **contact** John Toller (0117-969-6834).

The **Geologists' Association** has field meetings to Nottingham (26-27 April), the Malverns (8 May), Warwickshire (15-16 June), Oxfordshire dinosaurs (3 August), Dorset (20-22 September), Leiden (29 Nov - 1 Dec), and Oman (Feb 2003). For details, **contact** Sarah Stafford, GA, Burlington House, London W1V 9AG (tel: 020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com; www.geologist.demon.co.uk).

I have been sent details of study tours with Chris Darmon, who edits the geological newspaper *Down to Earth*, including Mull & Ardnamurchan (14-21 May), Skye (22-29 May), Wicklow (8-15 June), Isle of Wight (27-30 June), Arran (7-14 Sep) and Whitby (27-29 Sep). For details, **contact** Chris at GeoSupplies, 49 Station Road, Chapelton, Sheffield S35 2XE (0114-245-5746; chrisdarmon@geosupplies.co.uk).

Data Protection Act

Your name and address are kept on a computerised database, which means we must comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The information is used only for mailing information to members and producing membership lists, and if anyone does not want their details kept in this way, contact me and ask for your details to be kept separately, although I must warn that this may result in delays in sending Newsletters. You will have recently received a copy of *Cadwyr Creigiau Cymru (CCC)*, an occasional newsletter about geology and geological activities in Wales. This is something we would send to members without hesitation, but the cost and logistics of copying, stuffing envelopes and mailing are prohibitive. However, Countryside Council for Wales and the National Museum of Wales offered to send *Cadwyr* to all our members at no cost to the Group, and I supplied a set of address labels to someone in the National Museum for that purpose. It seems that this may have been a misuse of member information held on computer, and I apologise to any member who feels that receiving *Cadwyr* was an intrusion. We would like to continue to be able to send you *Cadwyr* in the future, however, and will try to do this without passing labels to anyone outside the Committee. Failing that, I will notify you in advance, and anyone who wishes can request not to be included.

Miscellaneous

The GA is holding another **photographic competition**. The closing date is 29 June, and there are big prizes. Contact me or the GA for details. And finally, Dr **John Cope** has been awarded the prestigious Coke Medal of The Geological Society. Well done, John!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-third Session 2001-2002

JUNE 2002

President: Allan Cuthbertson
Secretary: Geraint Owen
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw
Editor: Bob Owens

Vice-President: Lynfa Lewis
Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns
Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

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Coming very soon - extra events!

Two additional lectures have been arranged. All members and friends are welcome. First, the 12th **TR Owen Memorial Lecture** will be held at 7pm on **Thursday 13th June**, at Cwmaman Institute, hosted by the Department of Adult Continuing Education at University of Wales Swansea. The speaker is Prof Peter Styles, formerly of UW Swansea and now head of department at Keele University, and his topic will be ***Earthquakes in Wales and the Welsh Borders: friend or foe?*** A separate flier is enclosed giving full details, including directions to Cwmaman Institute.

Tuesday 18th June will see a welcome return to South Wales by Prof David Branagan from the School of Geosciences at the University of Sydney, Australia. Last year, David gave us an introduction to the life of TW Edgeworth David, who was born in St Fagans in 1858 and as Professor of Geology at the University of Sydney from 1891 to 1924 became one of the most influential geologists in Australia. This year, David has offered to speak at Swansea, on the topic of ***Edgeworth David: Welsh influences and three Antipodean Ice Ages.*** Having studied the products of the Pleistocene glaciation in South Wales, Edgeworth David went on to carry out systematic work on Pleistocene, Palaeozoic and Proterozoic glaciations in New South Wales, Tasmania and Antarctica. This fascinating talk will begin at **7.30 pm**, in the Joint Lecture Theatre of the Natural Sciences (Wallace) Building at UW **Swansea**, and refreshments will be available from 7 pm.

Summer programme

Only a summary is given here: details were in the last Newsletter and the programme card.

Members of **Shropshire Geological Society** will visit South Wales over the weekend **15th-16th June**, staying in Swansea. **Members of our own Group are invited and encouraged to join the Shropshire group for one or both days.** Saturday's itinerary will provide an overview of the Carboniferous and Quaternary geology of **Gower** and the formation of its splendid landscape, visiting Rhossili and Caswell Bay: **meet** at 10 am at Rhossili car park (SS415880). Sunday's itinerary will examine the Carboniferous, Triassic and early Jurassic geology of the **Vale of Glamorgan**, visiting Ogmere-by-Sea, Southerndown and Bendrick Rock, Barry: **meet** at 9.45 am at the car park south of Ogmere-by-Sea (SS869745). Bring a packed lunch both days.

Sid Howells will explore the Palaeozoic rocks of the **South Pembrokeshire** coast on **30th June**: **meet** at 10.30 at Freshwater East car park (SS 015979) and bring a packed lunch. Prof Mike Walker, from Lampeter, will explain the Quaternary development of the **Teifi Valley** on **13th July**: **meet** at 10.30 at University of Wales Lampeter (SN 579482).

Two Wednesday evening walks are planned. On **24th July** Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings will explore the **Building stones of Cardiff Bay**: **meet** at 6.30 at the junction of Bute Street and James Street (*leave M4 at jn. 33; follow Cardiff Bay; turn off to Techniquet; follow road for 400m to traffic lights - Bute St / James St junction; park here or on nearby waste ground*). And on **21st**

August Mike Lees will look at the Farewell Rock and Millstone Grit between the Angel Inn at Pontneddfechan and *Sgwd Gwladus: meet* at the car park near the Angel Inn (SN900076) at 6.30.

A flier is enclosed about the *North Wales weekend* on **14th-15th September**, hosted by the North Wales Geology Association. The aim is to visit coastal sites near Llandudno (eg Great Orme) and on Anglesey, with Llandudno as a base. Please **return the form** to book a place or contact Lynfa or myself for more information.

Finally, please consider joining Steve Howe for *Cardiff Conservation Days* on 22nd June, 20th July, 7th September and 12th October. **Meet** at 10 am each day in the Asda coffee shop, Coryton Interchange (M4/A470).

For **further information** about any of these meetings, please contact Lynfa Lewis (01639-769241; lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk), Steve Howe (Cardiff Conservation Days; 029-2057-3363; steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk) or myself.

Other activities

We will take **displays** to several events over the summer, to raise public awareness of our geological heritage and - of course - to try and attract new members. **Volunteers** are always needed, and if you might be interested, please contact Lynfa Lewis (01639-769241; lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk). As you may remember from the last Newsletter, we have reluctantly decided not to take a display to the National Eisteddfod in St David's because of the practical difficulties of ensuring enough people on the ground to staff a display.

The Open Day at **Kenfig** National Nature Reserve will take place on **Sunday 23rd June**, from 11 am to 5 pm. Lynfa is planning a display on the geology of the Heritage Coast. *Earth Alert 2002* will take place in Scarborough from **23rd-26th August**. This event, which the GA organisers are describing as '*The greatest Festival of Geology ever!*' will include lectures, field trips, an exhibition and displays by local geology groups,

including one from our own Group based around **dinosaurs from Wales**. We have been awarded a grant of £200 towards preparing this display, thanks to Lynfa's efforts. If you are interested in attending Earth Alert, please **contact** the GA at Burlington House, London W1V 9AG (tel. 020-7434-9298; <http://earthalert2002.com>). We also hope to take a display to the **GA Reunion** in London on 2nd November.

Autumn programme

Our **2002-2003 programme** will get under way in Swansea on **Saturday 19th October**, when Dr Douglas Bassett will develop his revelations on the Welsh role in the history of geology with a talk on *Sir Roderick Murchison: King of Siluria*. The November lecture will probably take place on 23rd, in Cardiff, and the December lecture on Saturday 14th, in Swansea, will have a topical theme for the winter months - the *Geology of the Falklands, South Georgia and Antarctica*. Prior to that, on **Saturday 26th October**, a *Palaeobotany Workshop* at the National Museum in Cardiff will be taken by Dr Chris Cleal, from the Biology Department at NMW, from 11 am to 4 pm. This will be an opportunity for the many of us who have now collected plant fossils from the Darrell opencast site to develop our identification skills. More details in the autumn, but **put the dates in your diaries now!**

The National Museum has already kindly offered to host another *Holiday Geology* evening, which will take place on **Friday 10th January** 2003. Bear that in mind if you're going somewhere interesting over the summer - take a few photos and share them with others at *Holiday Geology*.

In the hope that this glimpse into the next session will tempt you to renew your subscription for another year, an early **renewal form** is enclosed. Rates remain unchanged again - what a bargain! Subscriptions are due in September, but if you use the enclosed form it will save us one round of mailing. You will not then receive another mailing until the first Newsletter of the next session, in mid-October,

but remember the details of the first meeting - **Saturday 19th October**, in the Natural Sciences (Wallace) Building at University of Wales **Swansea**, starting at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30. Be there!

Recent events

Our **Annual General Meeting** in Cardiff on 16th March was a great success. The recommendations for new Committee members were approved, so Allan Cuthbertson took over from Steve Howe as President, Lynfa Lewis became Vice-President, Bob Owens Editor, and Marie Lewis and Mike Smith joined as Committee members. The Group owes much to those Committee members who ended terms of service: Steve Howe as President, Mike Bassett as Editor since 1974, Steve Plant as Committee Member, and Gareth Davies as *ex-officio* Vice-President. The Group needs an active Committee, with a regular turnover of members, to continue to be successful: please think about whether you would like to **help** and, if so, talk to someone from the Committee at any meeting or give me a ring. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports from the AGM are enclosed. Over 60 people attended the AGM, and afterwards were treated to a superb account of the *Life habits of trilobites* from Prof Richard Fortey.

The **summer programme** has got off to a good start. The field meeting to **Carmel Woods** with Gareth Davies on 20th April attracted 12, the field meeting to the **Darrell opencast** site on 26th May, held jointly with the Open University Geological Society, was packed out, and the **Cardiff Conservation Days** held so far have attracted 8 and 2.

The first **Stone in Wales** conference, held in early April in Cardiff, was a great success, bringing together geologists, archaeologists, planners, architects and others to look at the importance and value of natural building stones. Over 3 days the 135 delegates, including several from our own Group, heard about the properties of natural stone, its historical use, and its use from a planner's and

architect's point of view, and there were visits to Cardiff city centre and the Vale of Glamorgan. At the closing discussion, attended by Sue Essex AM, it was agreed that the organising committee should set about establishing in Wales a group similar to the Scottish Stone Liaison Group.

Other Groups

The **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch will hold field meetings to Parc Slip opencast site on 21 July (**contact** Wayne Jones, 01639-890857); to Tonmawr and Taffs Well Quarries on 17 August (Paul Thompson, 01495-217531); and Machen Quarry near Caerphilly on 22 September (Gary Davies, 01633-660937). If you attend you must provide your own safety equipment, including safety helmet and boots, high-visibility vest or jacket, and eye protection.

Field meetings organised by The **Geologists' Association** include dinosaurs at Ardley, Oxfordshire, 3 August; petroleum geology of Dorset, 21-22 September; Leiden, The Netherlands, 29 Nov-1 Dec; and trips in 2003 to Oman (Feb), Normandy (April), Shetland (May), Isle of Man (June) the Pyrenees (September) and Tenerife (November). They also hold monthly lecture meetings in central London, and don't forget that you can buy their excellent **field guides** at reduced prices. For details of the GA, including membership, **contact** Sarah Stafford at GA, Burlington House, London W1V 9AG (tel: 020-7434-9298; fax: 020-7287-0280; geol.assoc@btinternet.com; www.geologist.demon.co.uk).

The **Open University** Geological Society, Severnside Branch, has forthcoming meetings to the Black Mountain (with myself) on 23 June; and to Barry and Ogmere on 8 September. For details, **contact** Jan Ashton-Jones (01432-870827; jashtonjon@aol.com) or Philip Clark (01982-560735; chipgc@aol.com).

The **West of England GA** has field excursions to Builth Wells on 13 July and to Northern Ireland in September. For details, **contact** John Toller (0117-969-6834).

Study tours organised by Chris Darmon of **Geosupplies**, the publisher of the *Down to Earth* newspaper, include Arran (7-14 Sep) and Whitby (27-29 Sep). For details, **contact** Chris

at GeoSupplies, 49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE (0114-245-5746; chrisdarmon@geosupplies.co.uk).

The Department of Adult Continuing Education at **University of Wales Swansea** holds a series of half-day guided walks entitled *Field Studies in the Brecon Beacons*. One of these will have some geological input, to **Cribarth and Dan yr Ogof** on 29th June. There is a charge of £5 per person. Further details of this and other geological activities can be obtained from DACE, UWS, Singleton Park, Swansea SA2 8PP (tel: 01792-295786 or -295337).

Tom Sharpe is running 2 dinosaur-related courses for Cardiff University extra-mural department. **Dinosaur Days** comprises 4 Saturday day schools (12 Oct, 26 Oct, 9 Nov & 7 Dec 2002), including visits to the National Museum of Wales, Oxford University Museum and field sites in South Wales and Oxfordshire. **Isle of Wight - Dinosaur Isle** is a residential trip over the weekend 15-17 November 2002, including visits to field sites and the new Dinosaur Isle museum. Details from Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff CF24 4AG (029-2087-4831/2).

Another event that may be of interest is the **Cardigan Festival of Walking** from 4th-6th October. Several walks will take place, in an area full of geological interest. Full details from Theatr Mwldan (tel: 01239-621200; www.CardiganshireCoastandCountry.com/walks ; www.cardiganonline.com).

Safety clothing

It has been our policy to provide safety clothing (helmets, fluorescent jackets) at field meetings where it is needed. At a recent Committee meeting it was felt that we should change the emphasis to encourage members to own and bring their own safety equipment, although we will continue to try to provide a small stock for anyone who is unable to bring it. Therefore we strongly encourage all members who expect to attend field meetings to purchase for themselves a **safety helmet** ('hard hat') and a **high-visibility** (e.g. fluorescent) jacket or waist-coat. These will

not be essential on all field meetings, but you should make a habit of bringing them along just in case. Safety helmets should be worn in working or disused quarries and near coastal cliffs, and high-visibility jackets should be worn in working quarries and near busy roads. These items can be purchased from DIY stores, or contact me if you have any difficulties. You should also provide your own **eye protection** (we do not provide this) if you expect to do any hammering, and you should consider purchasing boots with reinforced toe-caps for visits to working quarries. We hope all members will co-operate with this request. Thank-you.

Geological Trail for Llangollen

Enclosed is a free copy of ***Walking through the past: a geological trail for Llangollen***. This attractive, bilingual leaflet was produced through the RIGS movement and we hope we might be able to produce similar leaflets for parts of South Wales.

The British Geological Survey has recently added to its much-acclaimed series of full-colour information leaflets with bilingual leaflets ***Geology and building stones in Wales (south)*** and ***(north)***. These sell at £1.95 each, and can be obtained from booksellers, including the newly expanded travel section of the Uplands Bookshop in Swansea.

Member news

I am pleased to report from Mike Lees that membership reached 183 at the AGM in March, an increase over 173 at the 2001 AGM, and several new members have joined since then. I am sorry to have to report the deaths recently of Nigel Bateman and DJW Thomas. David Thomas was the Group's 3rd Chairman, from 1964-6, having been a Committee member from 1960-2 and Vice-Chairman from 1962-4.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-fourth Session 2002-2003

October 2002



President: Allan Cuthbertson

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Editor: Bob Owens

Vice-President: Lynfa Lewis

Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees

* * * CHANGE TO PROGRAMME * * *

Unfortunately, due to illness, Douglas Bassett is unable to give his lecture about Murchison on 19th October. We are sorry for the disappointment this will cause, and hope Doug will be well enough to deliver the talk next session. I'm sure I'm speaking for all members in sending Doug our very best wishes. **HOWEVER, . . .**

I'm pleased to be able to report that Dr **John Grattan**, from Aberystwyth, has agreed at very short notice to fill the gap and speak on **Saturday 19th October**. You may remember that John had to cancel his planned talk last February due to illness, so it is good to be able to hear his lecture, although I am sorry for the short notice this gives people. John will talk on ***Aspects of Armageddon: The environmental impact of volcanic eruptions***. It should be an explosive lecture! and it will begin at 11.00 in the Joint Lecture Theatre of the Wallace Building at University of Wales **Swansea**. There will be free refreshments from 10.30, and there is free parking outside the building.

* * * * *

With that important notice, **WELCOME** to a new session, the Group's 44th, and **thank-you** very much for renewing your membership. Once again, a bumper programme of events has been arranged. Your membership card is enclosed, listing events up to next March. A second programme card in the New Year will list summer field meetings. **Read on** for full details of meetings up to Christmas, plus lots of other news and information.

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Talks in **Cardiff** are in the Earth Sciences Department in the main University building. The room where we meet before the lecture is on the first floor, immediately to the left of the entrance off Park Place. **Parking** is available in the courtyard, although there may be a charge. Meetings in **Swansea** are in the Geography Department on the first floor of the Wallace

(Natural Sciences) Building. This is on the left at the top of the driveway off Mumbles Road, and there is **parking** outside the building. Free **refreshments** are available for half an hour before lecture meetings. At Swansea meetings, this is an opportunity to buy books and leaflets that are on display. We take the speaker to **lunch** after each talk, and anyone is welcome to join us. Finally, if you can display **posters** of the programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please **contact** me.

IDENTIFY YOUR PLANT FOSSILS!

Over the past couple of years we have had several field meetings at the Darrell opencast site in the Dulais valley, with its superb plant fossils, and people have come down the rutted

track with cars laden with wonderful fossils! But do you know the **names** of all of them? And do you know **how** to go about naming them accurately? Well here's an opportunity for you to do just that. **Bring your fossils** to the *Palaeobotany Workshop* at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff on **Saturday 26th October**. The Workshop will be taken by Dr Chris Cleal, a Carboniferous palaeobotanist in the Museum's Botany Department, who will guide you through the steps in the identification of Coal Measures plant fossils and help you to understand the important features for identification. Report to the information desk in the Museum foyer at **2.00**; the workshop should go on until about 4 pm. **DON'T FORGET to take your fossils with you!** This is a wonderful opportunity to get more out of recent Darrell visits, or to put names to material you've collected over a longer period from throughout South Wales. Who knows, you may even find you have some real rarities!

UP TO CHRISTMAS

The **November** lecture will be on **Saturday 23rd**, in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff** University, starting at 11.00 with refreshments from 10.30. Dr Jason Hilton, formerly of Cardiff University, but now at the National Museums of Scotland, will talk on ***Fantastic Fossils From China!*** His subject matter will be the Jehol Biota from the Cretaceous of China, which has become famous for its feathered dinosaurs, but is full of other spectacularly preserved fossils too. Don't miss it!

On Saturday **14th December**, appropriate to the run-up to Christmas, we will have 2 presentations, from members Jim Chetcuti and Sid Howells, on the ***Geology of the Falklands, South Georgia and Antarctica***. Both Jim and Sid have had the good fortune to visit these parts recently, and we are assured some spectacular images and fascinating geology. Their talks will be in

Swansea, as usual starting at 11.00 with refreshments from 10.30.

You may remember we had a **wine**-tasting session after a talk on the *Geology of Wine* last year. Well it seems we didn't taste all of the wine, and a few bottles have been discovered. Unopened! These will be **raffled** at the autumn lecture meetings. An added incentive to get along to the meetings!

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION

The *Geologists' Association's Annual Reunion* will take place at University College London on Saturday 2nd November, from 12.30 to 4.30, with displays from Local Groups, booksellers and rock and mineral dealers. We hope to take a South Wales GA display, based around the posters from the *Earth Alert* event in the summer (more below) and if you are interested in going to the *Reunion* and spending a short time at our display, please contact Allan Cuthbertson (tel: 07986-559286; allan@cuthbertson.org), who will be delighted to hear from you.

While on the topic of the GA Annual Reunion, some advance warning - the Reunion is coming to **Cardiff** in November 2004, only the second time in its long history that it will have been outside London, and its first venture outside England! There will be displays, lectures and field trips over a full weekend (the first weekend of November). If you want to play a part in **planning** for the event, please talk to any committee member. There's plenty of time, but doubtless it will be upon us before we know it!

And don't forget that you can buy GA field guides at reduced prices. For details, contact Sarah Stafford, GA, Burlington House, London W1V 9AG (020-7434-9298; fax: 020-7287-0280; geol.assoc@btinternet.com; www.geologist.demon.co.uk).

INTO THE NEW YEAR

Once again, we're delighted to accept the hospitality of the National Museum and begin the New Year by looking forward to sunnier

times with an informal evening of **Holiday Geology**. We're still looking for **volunteers** willing to show a few slides of interesting places you have visited, or to bring along photos or specimens that will interest other members - please contact me. Full details will be in the December Newsletter, but the event will take place on the evening of **Friday 10th January 2003**. Don't miss it!

On Saturday **25th January**, in Swansea, Dr Mark Davies will give a talk on **volcanoes and other geohazards**. Mark, who is from South Wales, has spoken to us before, giving a memorable talk about the eruptions on Montserrat, and has recently appeared on TV. On Saturday **22nd February**, in Cardiff, we will hold our annual joint meeting with the Russell Society Wales and West Branch. The talk is to be given by a **quarry manager**, giving us a different perspective on rocks than we are normally used to.

Science Week in 2003 will take place from 7th-16th March. We hope to hold a field meeting on Saturday 8th or Sunday 9th March; details will be confirmed in the next Newsletter. Look out for lots of other Science Week events around South Wales.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will take place on Saturday **29th March**, in Cardiff, starting at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00. It will be followed by a talk from Prof. Mike Bassett, Keeper of Geology at the National Museum, on **Reconstructing Ancient Continents**, based on the evolution of Wales through the early Palaeozoic. A fascinating topic to round off the session's lecture programme.

LAST SUMMER

Last summer was a busy one for the Group. Our programme of monthly **field meetings** was much more successful than in foot-and-mouth-affected 2001, and included evening walks, joint meetings with the Shropshire Geological Society and a weekend in North Wales hosted by the North Wales Geology

Association, all of which were well attended.

The Group took displays to several events, the most important being the Geologists' Association's **Earth Alert** in Scarborough over August Bank Holiday weekend. Several thousand people attended this extravaganza, which included lectures and field trips as well as displays. Our display centred around **Dinosaur Tracks** and the **Heritage Coast**, and we now have two new posters on these themes, funded by the Geologists' Association's Curry Fund; you can admire them at **Holiday Geology** in January. Enormous **thanks** are due to Lynfa Lewis, Mike Lees and Steve Howe for their hard work and enthusiasm in bringing this about. The display also included an opportunity for people to make their own dinosaur footprints, and it won second **prize** of £50 for the Group in a competition for the most interesting and interactive display at the event! The GA is unlikely to run another **Earth Alert** event. Scarborough was the second, the first having been in Brighton during the millennium year, so the next major event for the GA, apart from its usual annual Reunions in London in 2002 and 2003 will be its visit to **Cardiff** in November 2004.

OTHER EVENTS

For our younger members and their friends, why not go along to a **Fossil Watch** at **Gelli Aur** Country Park, near Llandeilo, on Saturday 2nd November from 10 am to 12.30 pm. Mike Smith will lead a hunt for trilobites and other fossils, there will be a chance to make fossil casts, and to look at folds, faults and volcanoes! For more information, contact Mike on 01558-668885.

Cardiff Conservation Days, co-ordinated by Steve Howe, continued through to this month. The aim of these informal field days has been to assess the state of geological sites in the Cardiff area - some are overgrown, others have been obliterated by buildings or roads, while other new sites are undocumented. The field days are taking a rest through the

autumn, while Steve liaises with Cardiff Council about the next stage in this important work of geological conservation. Look out for more news in future Newsletters.

As well as holding a joint meeting with our Group in February, the **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch welcomes our members at their meetings. These include a **minerals workshop** at the National Museum of Wales on the morning of Sunday 17th November and a talk on *Minerals from the Tiger Pit, Arizona* by Dr RK Howell on Friday evening 6th December. For details, contact Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588).

The Severnside Branch of the **Open University Geological Society** will be examining the *Building Stones of Gloucester* with Eric Robinson on Sunday 20th October, and has a day of lectures at the National Museum in Cardiff on Sunday 10th November. For details, contact Philip Clark (tel: 01982-560735; chipgc@aol.com)

Tom Sharpe will be taking a trip to *Isle of Wight - Dinosaur Isle* from 15th to 17th November. For details, contact Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff CF24 4AG (029-2087-4831/2).

The **Geologists' Association** has field meetings planned to Leiden, The Netherlands (29 Nov-1 Dec), Oman (8-22 Feb), Normandy (April), Shetland (23-29 May), Isle of Man (20-23 June) the Pyrenees (September) and Tenerife (November). Contact the GA for more details - the address has been given above.

The next **Rock 'n' Gem Shows** in this part of the country will take place at Cheltenham Racecourse on 19/20 October, Uttoxeter Racecourse on 23/24 November, Chepstow Racecourse on 25/26 January (provisional) and Cheltenham again on 12/13 February (provisional). There is an admission charge. For details contact The Exhibition Team,

PO Box 72, Maidenhead SL6 7GB (tel: 01628-621697; www.Rockngem.co.uk).

Contact Howard Bartlett, in the Earth Sciences department at Cardiff University (029-2087-6885; bartletth@cardiff.ac.uk), if you're interested in acquiring a set of *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association* from 1947 to about 1990.

Geocourses are running a tour to examine *Geology and scenery on the island of Mallorca* from 18th-25th March 2003. For full details contact Tony Benfield, 24 Gascoigne Avenue, Barwick-in-Elmet, Leeds LS15 4LW (tel: 0113-281-2906).

Geo Supplies, the company that produces the *Down to Earth* newspapers, has a full programme of field trips planned for 2003, including Iceland, Cornwall, central Wales and Scotland. For full details contact Geo Supplies, 49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE (tel: 0114-245-5746).

The Russell Society, English Nature and the Geological Society's Geoconservation Commission are holding a one-day conference at the University of Salford on Wednesday 16th April 2003 on *Mineral collecting and conservation - hammering out a future?* The registration fee is just £25, including car parking, tea and coffee, lunch and conference proceedings. For further details contact Jennifer Yau, Environmental Impacts Team, English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA (tel: 01733-455504).

AND FINALLY

Each year I remind you that we keep **computerised records** of members' names and addresses. These are used only within the GA South Wales Group, mainly for generating mailing labels. If you **object** to your details being kept on a computer record, or want to see what we "have on you", please let me know.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)

(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-fourth Session 2002-2003

December 2002

President: Allan Cuthbertson [allan_geologist@yahoo.co.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Vice-President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfa.lewis@ntlworld.com]

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns

Christmas is just around the corner, so it must be time for another GA Newsletter packed with information about *Holiday Geology*, lectures, field meetings, publications and other events in and around South Wales. Keep your new 2003 diary to hand as you read on!

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Holiday Geology

Once again we start the New Year with an evening of *Holiday Geology* at the National Museum in Cardiff, on **Friday 10th January**. For those of you who haven't been to a *Holiday Geology* before, this is an informal evening of short slide presentations of interesting places members have visited, plus a chance to chat to other members, look at posters and displays, buy field guides, bring along photographs and specimens for others to see and - last but not least - enjoy a buffet courtesy of the National Museum. The whole evening is **free**, so if you haven't been before, come and see what you've missed, and if you have, I'm sure you'll be keen to come along on 10th January.

We have to be escorted in to the Museum since it is after closing hours. Please **MEET at the rear entrance to the Museum at or just before 6.30**. This entrance is between the museum car park (entrance off Museum Avenue) and the museum, down a ramp from Museum Avenue or down steps from the car park. The porters' lodge is on the left as you look at the back of the museum.

Holiday Geology can't take place without **volunteers** to show a few slides of places they have visited that they think will interest other members. It doesn't have to be exotic, you don't have to show many slides (there is a limit of 20 per person), you don't have to say much about them, and they don't have to be too geological - geology is all around us, and

includes scenery and landscape as well as rocks themselves. If you think you've got a few slides that will interest other members - somewhere local or exotic - please contact me or Allan Cuthbertson before Wednesday 8th January and volunteer to contribute. If you have photographs, not slides, it may be possible to convert them into a digital format for projection, so please still get in touch.

Meetings in early 2003

Our lecture programme gets off to a cracking start on **Saturday 25th January**. Dr Mark Davies' talk is now confirmed as **Deep Impact versus Dante's Peak: hazards of volcanoes and meteorites**. Mark is well known for his dynamic and exciting presentations and has featured on TV recently. He has spoken to our Group before, and anyone who was there can tell you this will be a thrilling event. Don't miss it! The talk is in **Swansea**, in the Wallace Building (=Natural Sciences Building) and will begin at 11.00, with refreshments from 10.30.

On **Saturday 22nd February** we hold our annual joint lecture with the Russell Society - an organisation for those interested in minerals. The topic has been changed, and Dr Tony Jukes will now talk on **The Iron Mines of The Garth**, starting at 11.00 in the Department of Earth Sciences at **Cardiff** University, with refreshments from 10.30.

We can confirm that our first **field meeting** of the year will take place on **Sunday 9th March**. Dr Peter Hodges has agreed to lead a trip to examine **The Late Triassic of the Aust area**.

This had to be postponed last March when Peter was rushed into hospital, so we are delighted he is now back to full health. There will be opportunities to collect gypsum and pyrite, and vertebrate bones and teeth in blocks of the famous Rhaetic bone beds, in which a thin layer of meteoric dust and tektites has recently been found, and linked to a meteorite impact event in Canada, 212 million years ago.

MEET at **11.00 am** on 9th March, SW of Aust village and park on the W side of the road just S of Passage Ho. (**ST 563 886**). Lunch will be at the Aust motorway services, where there are toilets. The afternoon will be spent at Manor Farm, which is a conserved site, so hammering of the exposed section is not allowed. **Safety helmets** will be required for this trip. We encourage members to own a safety helmet - they can be purchased at DIY stores - but if you want to go on this trip and do not have a helmet, please contact me.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will take place in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff** University on **Saturday 29th March**, starting at **10.30** with refreshments from 10.00 - please note the earlier start. It is important that lots of members attend the AGM, and I'm sure you will when you find out that it will be followed by a talk from Mike Bassett, former Chairman and Editor of the Group, and Keeper of Geology at the National Museum on ***Reconstructing Ancient Continents***. Mike has fascinated us on many occasions by showing how much our understanding of Wales's place in the early Palaeozoic has developed, so we look forward in eager anticipation to his talk.

Refreshments will be available for half an hour before each of the lecture meetings, from 10.30 in January and February, and 10.00 in March. We also take our speakers to **lunch** after each lecture, and anyone is welcome to come along, whether for lunch or just a drink. We visit the *Inn on the Lake* in Swansea, and the National Museum's cafeteria in Cardiff.

As last year, a full programme of **summer field meetings** is being arranged. Full details

and a second programme card will be in the February newsletter, but events are likely to include a weekend to Suffolk in September, Old Red Sandstone, and more evening walks.

New publications

The **Countryside Council for Wales** produces an attractive series of illustrated, bilingual booklets, free copies of which can be collected at lecture meetings. The two most recent are *Our Fragile Heritage - Limestone Pavement in Wales / Ein Treftadaeth Fregus - Palmentydd Calchfaen yng Nghymru* and *the Mineral Treasures of Wales / Trysorau Mwynol Cymru*.

Steve Howe has obtained the last copies of Doug Bassett's 3 **bibliographies of Welsh geology**, and these are available **free of charge** at lecture meetings. A contribution to GA funds will be welcomed. They provide an unrivalled source of information about geological publications relating to Wales. Two volumes comprise the *Bibliography and Index of Geology and Allied Sciences for Wales and the Welsh Borders* from **1536-1896** and from **1896-1958**, and the third is *A Source-book of Geological, Geomorphological and Soil Maps for Wales and the Welsh Borders (1800-1966)*. Make sure you get copies while you still can!

Christmas presents have probably been bought by now, so why not get yourself some post-Christmas presents. **Terra Publishing** is a new publisher of "good books about Earth and other planets". Their books are produced to a high standard, and are aimed at the interested geologist. They include field guides to areas of wonderful geology in Europe that combine an overview of the geology and geological history with an description of important sites. The publisher, Roger Jones, has offered a **discount** to our members, provided we send off a single order, and **a flier is enclosed**.

The latest issue of *Down to Earth*, the free newspaper published by GeoSupplies, has just appeared - look out for copies at *Holiday Geology*. It includes book reviews and offers, adverts and articles on Nuneaton, kaolin and Roman iron-making. Also details of 2003 study tours and day trips to Iceland, Cornwall,

Llandrindod Wells and Scotland - a brochure is available from GeoSupplies, 49 Station Rd, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE (tel. 0114-245-5746; fax. 0114-240-3405; chrisdarmon@geosupplies.co.uk).

The **British Geological Survey** produces 2 attractive, full-colour leaflets on *Geology and Building Stones in Wales (South and North)*. These folded, A3-size cards are bilingual, and cost £1.95 each. They can be ordered from good bookshops (e.g. Uplands Bookshop in Swansea), from GeoSupplies (details above) or contact the BGS Sales Desk (tel: 0115-936-3241; sales@bgs.ac.uk). No group discount from the BGS, I'm afraid. Also of interest, in the light of last Saturday's lecture, are cards at the same price on *Fossils from the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, and The Falkland Islands*. There is also a map of *Building Stones of Britain* (£6.25), a *Geological Map of Wales* (£9.50) and an excellent *Tourists' Rock, Fossil and Mineral Map* (£3.50).

Last autumn's events

Many of you will know that Doug Bassett was unable to give his planned lecture on Murchison in **October** due to illness. Fortunately, however, Dr John Grattan, from University of Wales Aberystwyth, stepped in at short notice to give the talk he had to postpone back in the spring on the environmental impact of volcanic eruptions, entitled *Aspects of Armageddon*, which was attended by 60 people. The turnout for the *Palaeobotany Workshop* at the National Museum in **October** was surprisingly low (just 8) given the high numbers who have attended field meetings and collected fantastic plant fossils at the Darrell opencast site over the last few years. Anyway, those who did attend had more attention from Dr Chris Cleal, who identified their fossils and ran through methods of identifying Coal Measures plant fossils. Dr Jason Hilton, who recently moved from Cardiff to the National Museums of Scotland in Edinburgh, gave a talk on *Fantastic fossils from China* in Cardiff in **November**, attended by 28 people. And just last weekend we had a spectacular

talk in Swansea from members Sid Howells and Jim Chetcuti on their experiences amongst the *Geology of the Falklands, South Georgia and Antarctica*. With talk of summer temperatures of -20 and -30°C, it made our winter seem positively balmy!

The Geologists' Association's **Annual Reunion** took place in London in early **November**. There were fewer displays than usual, probably because *Earth Alert* took place in Scarborough back in August, but our President Allan Cuthbertson took a display for the Group, comprising the posters on the geology of the Vale of Glamorgan and the dinosaur footprints that were prepared for *Earth Alert* (and funded by a grant from the GA's Curry Fund). You can admire these new posters if you come to *Holiday Geology* in January. The display generated a lot of interest - many thanks to Allan.

And don't forget that in **November 2004** the Reunion is coming to **Cardiff**. If you want to help in planning this prestigious event, please contact me, Lynfa Lewis (Lynfa will be President then) or any Committee member.

Other events

In addition to their joint lecture with us on 22nd February, **The Russell Society** Wales and West Branch have a lecture meeting on 15th March at Taffs Well Village Hall, starting at 11 am, when Steve Plant will talk on *The Mines and Minerals of North-east Portugal*. For details, contact Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588).

West of England GA, based in Bristol, have lectures on *Mines Minerals and Monserrat* by Barrie Johnson (21 Jan), *Our Mineral Heritage* with Jane Plant (11 Feb) and *Global Warming - past, present and future* with Paul Pearson (11 Mar), and **field meetings** to the *Northern Rim of the South Wales Coalfield* with myself (6 April) and *Dartmoor* with David Scrivener (22 June). For more information contact John Toller (0117-969-6834), visit www.wega.org.uk or email sec@wega.org.uk.

The **National Museum** in Cardiff is holding events in conjunction with its *Star Trek - Federation Science* exhibition, some of which

are of interest to geologists (surprisingly, perhaps, given that Star Trek rocks mostly comprised cardboard and polystyrene!). These include lunchtime lectures at 1.05 on *Astrobiology - Life in Space* with Alan Channing (5 Feb), *Moon Rocks* with Jana Horak (12 Feb) and *Meteorites - Messengers from Space* with Bob Owens (2 March), and a Celebrity Lecture with Heather Couper at 7 pm on 13 March, entitled *Mars: The Inside Story* (tickets £2.50/£1.50). Details from the Museum (029-2039-7951; post@nmgw.ac.uk; www.nmgw.ac.uk).

The **Geologists' Association** has replaced its bi-monthly *Circular* with the quarterly *GA Magazine*. The latest issue includes a report with photos of *Earth Alert* at Scarborough, including mention of our second prize in the competition for the best display by a Local Group, information about museums, news of **Rockwatch** activities, and details of forthcoming lectures. These are held monthly in London, and include the *Namib Sand Sea* with Charlie Bristow (3 Jan), the *Herefordshire Lagerstätte* with Mark Sutton (7 Feb), *Geotectonics in the Solomon Islands* with Mike Pettersen (7 March) and *How incomplete is the fossil record?* With Paul Wright (5 April). Field trips are planned to the Somerset Coast (14-16 Feb), Reading (10 May) and the Gloucester area (25 May), and overseas trips to the Normandy D-Day Landing sites (22-27 April), Shetland (23-29 May), Isle of Man (20-23 June), the Himalayas (14-31 August), Jersey (September) and Tenerife (1-8 November).

For details about GA activities or membership, **contact** Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU (tel: 020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com; www.geologist.demon.co.uk). Although we are a Local Group of the GA, we are independent, and we

hope members whose interest in geology has deepened may decide to join the "parent body".

There will be a one-day meeting in Salford on Wednesday 16th April on ***Mineral collecting and conservation - hammering out a future?*** This aims to discuss the thorny problem of collecting, with particular regard to minerals, and is jointly organised by English Nature, The Russell Society and the Geoconservation Commission. The registration fee is a reasonable £25. For details, contact Jennifer Yau, Environmental Impacts Team, English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA (01733-455504).

Rock 'n' Gem Shows are scheduled for 10 am to 5 pm at Chepstow Racecourse on 25/26 January and Cheltenham Racecourse on 12/13 April. There is a £2.50 admission charge. Details from The Exhibition Team, PO Box 72, Maidenhead SL6 7GB (tel: 01628-621697; www.rockngem.co.uk).

Member news

At the last count, membership had reached 184, which is a record number for this time of year, and includes 27 **new members** since the AGM last March. So if you see someone you don't recognise, or who looks a bit lost at a lecture, field meeting, or *Holiday Geology*, please introduce yourself and make them welcome. Our group can only thrive with a healthy membership, so we're delighted to welcome new members, and to see such a healthy number of members.

Sadly, I have to report the death in October of member Brenda Bruck, who was a Committee member from 1991 to 1995. I am also sorry to report that another member, Dr Dyfed Elis-Gruffydd, was seriously injured in a tragic road accident in early December. We all send our very best wishes to Harro Bruck and to Dyfed.

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All that remains is for me to wish all members a very **Merry Christmas**, and best wishes for a successful 2003. I look forward to seeing you at some of the forthcoming meetings.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-fourth Session 2002-2003

March 2003*President:* Allan Cuthbertson [allan_geologist@yahoo.co.uk]*Editor:* Bob Owens*Vice-President:* Lynfa Lewis [lynfa.lewis@ntlworld.com]*Secretary:* Geraint Owen*Membership Secretary:* Mike Lees [01792-774527]*Treasurer:* Malcolm Shaw*Programme Secretary:* Lesley Cherns

Another bumper Newsletter, this one, with full details of the AGM and lecture meeting on **Saturday 29th March** and of the summer programme of **field meetings**, which gets under way on **Sunday 13th April** with a visit to some amazing fossil sites near Oxford. **So read on carefully!**

Lecture and Annual General Meeting, Saturday 29th March

The Group's 44th **Annual General Meeting** will take place before the lecture from Prof Mike Bassett, on the morning of **Saturday 29th March**, in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University. The AGM will begin at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00 - please note that the start time is earlier than usual Saturday morning lectures. Proceedings will pass straight from the AGM into Mike's lecture, so I'm sure there will be an excellent turnout for the AGM. Please feel free to bring along friends who are not members; we are happy for visitors to sit through the AGM. As always, we hope to take the speaker to **lunch** after his talk, at the restaurant in the National Museum of Wales, and we hope that as many people as possible can join us there too.

In addition to the reports and elections, there are two important items on the AGM agenda, a copy of which is enclosed along with the Minutes of last year's meeting.

The first is a proposal to increase **subscription rates** to £8 (£4 for senior citizens and students, £12 family rate) (*from £6.50, £2.50 senior citizens & students, £9.50 family rate*). The Treasurer's Report will show that the Group's finances are healthy, but that subscription income only just covers the costs of speakers' and field meeting leaders' expenses and the costs of producing Newsletters and other members' mailings. The Committee feels that this balance could easily tip the wrong way, and that the time for an increase in subscriptions is now rather than when faced with crisis. Other

factors influencing the decision to propose an increase in subscriptions, and the proposed levels, are: subscriptions were last raised in 2000, and we feel the proposed new levels should be appropriate for another 3 years or so; the expansion in the number and range of the Group's activities in the last few years, including a full summer programme of field meetings and the preparation of displays for public information at various events; a desire to reduce the differential between the full rate and the reduced rate, partly in view of an increase in the number of members paying the retired persons' rate; and a recognition that the new levels still represent **wonderful value for money** compared with other organisations! So we hope you will accept the wisdom of increasing subscriptions now, and vote in favour of the proposal at the AGM.

It gives me great pleasure to report the second unusual item on this year's AGM agenda - the award of **Honorary Life Membership** to Mike Bassett, in recognition of his support for and contributions to the Group over many years. As well as serving as a Committee Member, Mike was Field Excursions Secretary from 1968-1974, Editor from 1974-2002, during which time we saw publication of *Geological Excursions in Dyfed* (1982) and *Geological Excursions in Powys* (1993) (and Mike was also co-editor of *Geological Excursions in South Wales and the Forest of Dean* in 1971), and Chairman from 1992-1994, with spells as Vice-Chairman from 1990-1992 and 1994-1999 - an impressive record. In addition, Mike has given many stimulating and enjoyable lectures to the Group, and in his capacity as Keeper of

Geology at the National Museum of Wales has always been tremendously supportive, allowing us privileged viewings of exhibitions and ensuring the success of *Holiday Geology*. The Group's first Honorary Member was TR Owen, in 1984, and there have only been 3 others, Douglas Bassett (1986), Alun J Thomas (1990) and Roland Parsons (1993), so Mike will be joining a very select group of people to whom the Group owes an enormous debt.

It is fitting that the AGM should be followed by a talk from Mike Bassett, on ***Reconstructing Ancient Continents***. In looking at Wales' place in the world, this promises to be another fascinating lecture - definitely not to be missed!

The agenda shows the changes to **Committee posts** that are due this year. The Committee has endorsed myself, Mike Lees and Bob Owens to stand for re-election as **Secretary, Membership Secretary** and **Editor** respectively for 2003-2005. Lynda Garfield and Nigel McGaw come to the end of a 3-year term of service on the Committee. The Committee is pleased that **Nigel McGaw** is willing to stand for another term of office. Nigel has taken on responsibility for publicising the Group's events, with considerable success. We are delighted to recommend **Diane Davies** as a new Committee Member for 2003-2006. **Lynda Garfield** retires from the Committee after 9 years of continuous membership, as Vice-Chairman (1994-1996), President (the Group's first, from 1996-1998), retiring Vice-President (1998-2000) and Committee Member (2000-2003), as well as having previously been a Committee member from 1988-1990. Her experience of voluntary groups has been invaluable, and it was under Lynda's Presidency and guidance that the Group became a registered charity in April 1996. So thank-you, Lynda, and I expect we will be back to seek more of your wise advice in the future!

The Committee hopes members will agree to these proposals at the AGM. **Any other member** is welcome to stand, however, by completing the enclosed **nomination form**. We are always on the lookout for **new members to serve on the Committee**; if you think you might be interested, please ask myself or any other Committee member for more information about what it entails.

Summer programme

Once again we have a monthly programme of **field meetings** running through the summer; details are on the enclosed programme card. A separate flier is enclosed for the first of these, a visit to **Oxfordshire** on **Sunday 13th April** with Phil Powell and Tom Sharpe, to look for fossils of dinosaurs and other big animals. That is followed by visits to **Dolyhir Quarry; Llansteffan**; the eastern flank of the **Forest of Dean** syncline, providing a section right through from the Old Red Sandstone to the Coal Measures; the **Builth-Llandrindod** area to collect trilobites and graptolites and examine the Murchison-Sedgwick controversy; **Cardiff Bay's** building stones; and an **opencast** visit; with further events subject to confirmation in the next Newsletter.

Meeting times and places are on the programme card and further details will be in the next Newsletter, in June.

The Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University are to host this year's **TR Owen Memorial Lecture**, the 13th in the series. The speaker will be Prof **Paul Wright** from that Department, who will talk about his work on **Lower Carboniferous rocks in South Wales and in Kazakhstan!** The event will take place in the Department, at 7 pm on **Wednesday 21st May** and it should be a fantastic talk. **Everyone is welcome.**

Cardiff Conservation Days are to resume now that winter is (hopefully!) over. Their aim is to visit sites listed on a database by Cardiff Council, in order to assess their present state with regard to access and quality, so that the Council can set about providing suitable protection for those that need it. **Everyone** is welcome - no special geological skills are needed. **Dates** are listed on the programme card - Saturdays 26th April, 17th May, 14th June, 19th July, 30th August, 20th September, 11th October and 8th November. The **meeting place** each day is the coffee shop at Asdas on the Coryton interchange of the M4 and A470, at **10 am**. There should be a pub for **lunch**, although you might like to bring a packed lunch just in case. Strong footwear and waterproof clothing are recommended, and you are advised that some sites are likely to be overgrown, making

for rough going. The aim is for each day to end between 4 and 5 pm. For further information, contact Steve Howe (029-2057-3363; steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk).

The summer programme card includes a summary of **Safety Advice**, and we expect all participants to **read this carefully** and pay heed to it. You are expected to pay attention to the safety of yourself and those around you, which includes coming properly clothed and equipped, and taking care at all times. Certain safety **equipment**, particularly strong boots, safety helmets, and fluorescent jackets or bibs, are becoming ever more essential at some venues, and we **strongly recommend** that all members who intend to participate in fieldwork **provide their own** such equipment. All participants are expected to co-operate in ensuring a safe fieldwork environment for all. Thank-you.

We hope there is something for everyone in this programme of field meetings. Bring along friends and family too; we hope they'll enjoy it so much they'll decide to join the Group! Please contact me for any **further information**.

Recent events

2003 got underway with another enjoyable evening of *Holiday Geology* in early January. Thanks are due to all the contributors and to Mike Bassett for kindly hosting the event at the National Museum of Wales again, and apologies again to Andy Kendall. There was an amazing turnout of 75 for a fantastic lecture on **volcanic eruptions and meteorite impacts** from Mark Davies in Swansea in January. The February lecture, held jointly with the **Russell Society**, attracted 40, and 20 people enjoyed a day in the field with Peter Hodges in the **Aust area** during Science Week earlier this month. There was also an enthusiastic response to the offer on **Terra Books**; 26 were ordered, and should be delivered very soon. We may be able to repeat this offer in the future.

The inaugural meeting of the **Welsh Stone Forum** took place in Cardiff on 8th March. The Forum, which has been set up following the *Stone in Wales* Conference a year ago, aims to promote understanding of the use of natural stone as a sustainable material in the Welsh environment - a worthy aim indeed - and brings together architects, planners and builders as

well as geologists. The Forum will produce a Newsletter and organise a programme of field trips and site visits, and welcomes **members** for a modest annual fee of £5 (electronic mailings) or £8 (postal mailings). **Further details** from Dr Tim Palmer, IGES, University of Wales Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DB (tjp@aber.ac.uk). I hope we will be able to arrange joint activities with the Forum in the future.

Looking to 2004

One of the most important events in the Group's history is coming closer. On the first weekend of November 2004, this Group will host the **Geologists' Association Annual Reunion** in Cardiff. Until 2001, the Reunion, which has been held every year since the beginning of time, had never been held outside London. In 2001 it went to Liverpool, and 2004 will be its first ever venture outside England. We want to make the event a memorable one and to impress visitors from all over the UK and beyond with the riches of South Wales geology and the enthusiasm of its geologists. Some members of the Committee have agreed to form the core of a group to plan for the event, but we are as keen for **as many members as possible** to contribute.

A short **preliminary meeting** to discuss strategy will be held on **Tuesday 29th April**, starting at 7 pm, at the coffee shop of Sainsburys at Sarn, to which **all members are invited**. If you are interested, please go along, or contact me or Steve Howe or Lynfa Lewis, who will be our President for the event. Many hands make light work, and I'm sure there are a multitude of untapped talents amongst our members, so please do consider finding out what you can do to help ensure the 2004 GA Reunion in Cardiff is a big success.

Other events

The Russell Society Wales and West Branch have field meetings to Machen Quarry, Caerphilly (27 April), Dolyhir Quarry (18 May), Parc Slip opencast (21 June), mid Wales (19-20 July), Hamstead Farm quarry (16 Aug) and Taffs Well Quarries (27 Sep). For details, **contact** Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588).

The Mid-Wales Minerals, Fossils and Geology Club meet at 7 pm at Newtown Town

Hall for *Palaeogeography of the Ordovician Ice Age* (David James, 11 April), *The Permo-Trias* (Kevin Voyce, 17 June) and *Geomorphology of the Severn Valley* (Paul Brewer, 16 Sep). Field meetings are planned to Cwmystwyth Mines (27 April), Ystrad Meurig Quarry (11 May), Rheidol Gorge (29 June), Cribarth Quarry (20 July), Nant y Eira and Nantiago (31 Aug) and Trevor Rocks (28 Sep). For details, contact Bill Bagley (01686-412679/3967) or Tony Thorp (016841-628420).

North Wales Geology Association have field trips to Great Orme (27 April), Pant Quarry, Halkyn (10 May) and Dolgellau (15 June). Details from Jonathan Wilkins (01492-583052; www.ampyx.org.uk).

West of England GA, based in Bristol, have **field meetings** to the *Northern Rim of the South Wales Coalfield* with myself (6 April) and *Dartmoor* with David Scrivener (22 June). For details contact John Toller (0117-969-6834), visit www.wega.org.uk or email sec@wega.org.uk.

Rocking All Over the World: from the Algarve to Australia, and from Norway to New Zealand, Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning has a diverse collection of rocks, fossils and shells from many different countries, as well as examples of many of the rocks and minerals that make up the British Isles. As part of **Adult Learners Week** 2003, the rocks, fossils and shells will be on display in the Centre for Lifelong Learning (free access), Senghennydd Road, Cardiff at the following times: Saturday 10 May, 10 am to 1 pm. Monday 12 May, 2-4 pm & 6-8 pm. So whether you're interested in Iceland or the Isle of Wight, there will be something of interest.

A flier is enclosed with details of Sid Howells' summer walks for the **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park** and the Pembrokeshire Darwin Science Festival. Some of these need prior booking; details are on the flier.

Adult Education at **Swansea university** have walks in the Brecon Beacons visiting Abergavenny area (11 May) and Clydach gorge (8 June). Details from 01792 295776/295464.

University of Bristol study tours are visiting Pompeii (9-16 May), Mull (31 May - 6 June), Pembrokeshire (15-17 July) and Cyprus (5-12 Oct). Details from 0117-9287153.

Geologists' Association national activities include lectures on *How incomplete is the fossil record?* (Paul Wright, 5 April) and *dinosaur tracks on the Isle of Purbeck* (Paul Ensom, 6 June). Field trips will visit Reading (10 May), Gloucester (25 May), the Normandy D-Day Landing sites (22-27 April), Isle of Man (20-23 June), Jersey (14-18 Sep), Dorset (4-5 Oct), Tenerife (1-8 Nov) and Dublin (5-7 Dec). For details **contact** Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU (tel: 020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com; www.geologist.demon.co.uk).

The Hertfordshire Geological Society invite members of other groups on a **Geology Tour of Hungary** from 14-28 June. The cost is £699 per person plus return air travel. details from St Albans Travel Service (tel. 01727-866533; fax. 01727-847418; email sales@stalbanstravel.co.uk).

Finally, 2 events listed in the last Newsletter. First, a meeting in Salford on Wed 16th April on ***Mineral collecting and conservation - hammering out a future?*** Details from Jennifer Yau, Environmental Impacts Team, English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA (01733-455504). Secondly, a **Rock 'n' Gem Show** from 10 am to 5 pm at Cheltenham Racecourse on 12/13 April. Details from The Exhibition Team, PO Box 72, Maidenhead SL6 7GB (tel: 01628-621697; www.rockngem.co.uk).

Member news

Mike Lees reported recently that membership has reached the milestone figure of **200**. This is the first time this number has been reached by the time of the AGM in March, and it is excellent news. Many thanks to Mike for keeping tabs on all these members, and for handling the growing mailings. A very **warm welcome** is extended to all **new members**. I am also sorry to report the death earlier in the year of William Jenkins from the Swansea valley.

Well, that's all I have room for! The next Newsletter should be with you in June, and I hope to see lots of members at the AGM and Mike Bassett's lecture on 29th March, and on the summer field meetings.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-fourth Session 2002-2003

June 2003



President: Allan Cuthbertson [allan_geologist@yahoo.co.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Vice-President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfa.lewis@ntlworld.com]

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns

Our summer programme has got off to an excellent start, with good numbers turning out for fascinating field meetings. Read on carefully for a reminder of the remaining events with further details of some and news of **extra events**, as well as preliminary details of the autumn programme plus other news.

Forthcoming events

Steve Howe will take an evening walk for Cardiff Parks to examine ***Building Stones of Llandaff*** on **Wednesday 25th June**. **MEET** at 6.30 at the Preaching Cross on the Cathedral Green, Llandaff.

You already know the details of ***Fossils and structures in the Builth-Llandrindod area*** with John Davies on **Sunday 6th July** (**MEET** 10.30 near Upper Ho., SO 076 571) and ***Building stones of Cardiff Bay*** with Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings on the evening of **Wednesday 16th July** (**MEET** 6.30 at Bute Street-James Street junction, ST 192 746).

On **Saturday 16th August**, our President Allan Cuthbertson will show us around the ***Selar opencast site***, a large, modern site with excellent sections through coal seams and seat earths. **MEET** at **10 am** at the site access junction on the A4061 heading S towards Treherbert, about 1 mile due E of Rhigos (SN 935 053). **Bring** safety helmet and reflective jacket if you have them, as well as your geological hammer.

The ***Field Weekend to Suffolk*** will take place as planned over the weekend of **13-14th September**, led by Roger Dixon. A flier is enclosed with details and a **booking form**; please return these to Lynfa Lewis as soon as possible. This is an opportunity to see some very different geology from what we are used

to in South Wales, including some of the youngest rocks in Britain. The itinerary should include the Coralline Crag, Norwich Crag and Red Crag with rich faunas, and discussion of landscape evolution in East Anglia. This is our third consecutive September field weekend; we hope they have now become a regular and successful part of our activities.

Participants will pay for their own accommodation and a **£5** per person fee will cover mailing costs and leader's expenses. Lynfa has arranged special group rates at the **Holiday Inn in Ipswich**; bed-and-breakfast is extremely reasonable for that area, at £30 per person per night sharing and £45 single. The Holiday Inn does evening meals and there is free use of the pool and fitness centre!

If you want to stay with the group, send **£15 per person** with your booking form; £10 will be sent to the Holiday Inn as a deposit, and deducted from your bill when you pay it. If you prefer to arrange your own accommodation, send the **£5 field meeting fee**.

The visit to the ***Old Red Sandstone of South Pembrokeshire*** will take place as planned on **Saturday 27th September** with Rob Hillier. The venue will be **Marloes Sands**, where Rob and others working with Brian Williams have made absolutely fascinating new interpretations of the conditions under which the Old Red Sandstone accumulated, and the late Silurian / early Devonian environments of South Wales. **MEET** at 10.30 at the car park west of Marloes village (SM 779083) and bring a packed lunch.

Last September's field weekend to North Wales was hosted by **North Wales Geology Association**, and we are delighted that they will return the visit on the weekend of **11-12th October**. We have arranged **extra field days**, with itineraries we hope will interest our own members as well - please come along!

Saturday 11th October will be an exploration of the *Geology of the upper Swansea valley*, including a visit to **Nant Helen opencast site**, which should interest anyone who misses the August opencast visit (plus everyone else of course!) **MEET at 10.00** at **Penwyllt**, on the grassy area just before the Caving Club cottages (SN 856 155). The plan is to visit Penwyllt, Nant Helen opencast site, Henrhyd waterfall and Cribarth with Allan Cuthbertson and myself, to examine Carboniferous Limestone, Millstone Grit, Coal Measures and the Swansea Valley Disturbance. Bring a packed lunch and, once again, safety helmet and reflective jacket if you have them.

We hope to join our North Wales visitors for a **meal** on the Saturday evening. Details have yet to be arranged, and depend on where they stay, so if you want to come along, **please contact me in September**.

Sunday 12th October will be a visit to **Penarth, Lavernock, Sully and Barry** in the Vale of Glamorgan, with Steve Howe, to examine Carboniferous, Triassic and early Jurassic rocks with fossils, trace fossils, unconformities and interesting palaeo-environments. **MEET at 10.30** at the Cliff Parade car park, **Penarth** (ST 185 704).

Cardiff Conservation Days

A dedicated group of intrepid jungle explorers has been continuing the search for uncharted geological sites in the nether reaches of Cardiff, with some astonishing discoveries (come to *Holiday Geology* in January to hear all about it!). Anyone is welcome to join these exploratory days. For various reasons, some **dates have had to be changed**. The meeting on **19th July** has been **cancelled**, and the September, October and November dates

changed. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Cardiff Conservation Days will now take place on 30th August, 13th September, 18th October and 1st November. Meeting arrangements are unchanged - 10 am in the Asda coffee shop at the Coryton M4/A470 interchange. For further details, **contact** Steve Howe at the National Museum (029-2057-3363; steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk).

SINCs in RCT!

Andrew Haycock, an MSc student at Cardiff, has asked for help in identifying "SINCs", Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, in Rhondda Cynon Taf. A **flier** is enclosed which tells you more and includes a tear-off slip for you to recommend sites to Andrew.

Autumn events

The first lecture of our 2003-2004 programme will take place on **Saturday 25th October** in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff University**. **Put the date in your diary now**, because you won't get another Newsletter until close to that date. The speaker and topic are still to be confirmed. Dr Douglas Bassett may be able to give his talk on *Sir Roderick Murchison, King of Siluria*, postponed from October 2003, or else Prof Paul Pearson, a recent appointment to the staff at Cardiff, and the 2003 Bigsby Medallist of the Geological Society, will talk on *Cretaceous and Cenozoic tropical climates: insights from drilling in Tanzania*. Both are well worth hearing and we hope the "other" one will form part of our programme in early 2004. The talk will begin at **11.00**, with free refreshments from 10.30.

On **Saturday 15th November**, Dr Andrew Kerr from Cardiff University will talk on the links between *Flood basalts and mass extinctions*. The talk will be in the Geography Department (Wallace Building) at University of Wales **Swansea**, starting at **11.00** with books for sale and free refreshments from 10.30. On **Saturday 13th December**, Dr Simon Braddy from Bristol University will talk on *Invasion*

Earth: ichnological evidence for the conquest of land. The talk will be at **Cardiff** University, starting at 11.00 with refreshments from 10.30.

Also in the autumn, the *Geologists' Association Annual Reunion* will take place at University College London on **Saturday 8th November**. Allan Cuthbertson will be taking a display on behalf of our Group, and anyone is welcome to attend. This will be our main opportunity to publicise the

2004 GA Reunion

which, you will remember, takes place in **Cardiff** on **6-7 November 2004**. A preliminary planning meeting showed there is an awful lot to do to make sure this event is a success and shows this Group and South Wales geology in the best possible light to visitors from all over the country. There's going to be a need for **help from as many people as possible**, so please **volunteer** your services by contacting Lynfa Lewis or any committee member. There's bound to be a job for you, but we need to know who's available and willing to help first.

Moving into the New Year, we hope to hold another *Holiday Geology* evening at the National Museum in early January, and our lecture programme will comprise the talk that doesn't take place in October (see above), a joint lecture with the Russell Society, and the AGM followed by Allan Cuthbertson's retiring Presidential Address, plus some field meetings. All in all, you must be itching to make sure you renew for 2003-2004! So ...

Renewals

The autumn lectures are part of our 2003-2004 programme. Renewals will be due in September, but a form is enclosed to encourage you to **renew now!** If you do, the next mailing you receive will be a Newsletter in October, so make sure you put the October meeting in your diary now. If you choose not to use the enclosed form for renewal, we'll send you a reminder in September. By renewing now you save the Group some

postage costs, which means more money for more meetings and information!

Annual General Meeting

You will notice from the renewal form that **subscription rates** have increased to £8, with reduced rates of £4 for senior citizens and students, and a family rate of £8 plus £4 for each additional member. The reasons for this proposal were outlined in the last Newsletter, and it was approved at the AGM in Cardiff on 29th March. We hope you will agree that the new rates still represent marvellous **value for money**, providing you with a full, year-round programme of lectures and field meetings, 4 newsletters giving you news and information, and regular offers on books and field guides.

54 members attended the AGM, which is over a quarter of our members - excellent! So that all members are aware of all the Group's activities, copies are enclosed of the **Secretary's Report** and **Treasurer's Report** (which has now been audited). The Secretary's Report lists **members at 29th March**; for some inexplicable reason, the version circulated at the AGM listed last year's members, but everyone was too kind to tell me! **Membership** for 2002-2003 was indeed **202**, a record for the Group and terrific news; many **thanks** to Mike Lees for recruiting members, looking after their details and, far from least, handling the mailings.

The proposed changes to the **Committee** were approved, so I continue as Secretary, Mike Lees as Membership Secretary and Bob Owens as Editor, all to 2005. Nigel McGaw continues as a Committee member, and **Diane Davies** was welcomed as a new Committee member for 2003-2006. Lynda Garfield retired from the Committee and was warmly thanked for all her work on behalf of the Group. **Mike Bassett** was awarded Honorary Life Membership in recognition of his contributions to and support for the Group. He joins Doug Bassett, Alun Thomas and Roland Parsons. Mike was presented with a framed certificate, and the meeting was followed by a fascinating talk from Mike illustrating modern methods for *Reconstructing ancient continents*.

Since the last Newsletter

All the planned events have taken place, with excellent attendance, and even some excellent weather! The field meeting to Oxfordshire was attended by 24, Dolyhir Quarry by 18 and the Llansteffan evening walk by 16. I was recently sent a certificate from the British Association in recognition of our contribution to *Science Week* - many thanks to Peter Hodges for leading the Aust field meeting.

Other Groups

The Russell Society Wales and West Branch have field meetings to mid Wales (19-20 July), Hamstead Farm quarry (16 Aug) and Taffs Well Quarries (27 Sep). Details from Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588).

The **Welsh Stone Forum** will hold a field meeting to St Dogmaels on 20th September. For details, or membership of the Forum, contact Tim Palmer at IGES, UW Aberystwyth, SY23 3DB (tjp@aber.ac.uk).

There's plenty of activity from neighbouring groups, who normally welcome visitors if you ring in advance. **Mid-Wales Minerals, Fossils and Geology Club** visit Cribarth Quarry (20 July), Nant y Eira and Nantiago (31 Aug) and Trevor Rocks (28 Sep); details from Bill Bagley (01686-412679/3967). **West of England GA** have a meeting in the Cotswolds (12 July); details from Graeme Churchard (0117-967-1066) or www.wega.org.uk. **Bath Geological Society** have a talk on meteoritics (3 July) and a tour of Frome quarries with Eric Robinson (12 July); details from Vicki Griffiths (01225-858123). **Cheltenham Mineral and Geological Society** visit Taffs Well Quarry (12 July - a popular day!), Mortimer Forest (17 Aug) and Cassington Pit,

Oxford (30 Aug); details from Alan McKay (01452-547255). And **Shropshire Geological Society** explore the rocks of Wroxeter on 9 Aug; contact David Pannett (01743-850773).

Don't forget Sid Howells' summer walks in **Pembrokeshire**; a flier was sent with the last Newsletter. **GeoSupplies** (publishers of the *Down to Earth* newspaper) have trips to the Wrekin (3 Aug), Cleeve Hill (16 Aug) and Ludlow (25 Aug), plus Skye (9-16 July), Iceland (1-10 Sep) and Edinburgh (28-30 Sep); details from 0114-245-5746. **University of Bristol** study tours visit Pembrokeshire (15-17 July) and Cyprus (5-12 Oct); details from 0117-9287153. There will be **Rock 'n' Gem Shows** at Shepton Mallett (30/31 Aug) and Newton Abbot (6/7 Sep); contact 01628-621697 or www.rockngem.co.uk.

Geologists' Association national activities include field trips to Jersey (14-18 Sep), Dorset (4-5 Oct), Tenerife (1-8 Nov) and Dublin (5-7 Dec). Details from Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU (020-7434-9298; www.geologist.demon.co.uk). GA member Mike Foster invites others to join his **Aust Cliff fossil hunt** on 27 Sep; contact 07762-109573. Remember too that you can buy GA **field guides** at reduced members' prices. Until 1st Sep, many are on special offer, and you can buy 12 for £48 (the normal members' price is £11 each). The most recent titles (not in the special offer package) are Jersey, East Midlands, Tenerife, Normandy D-Day landing sites, and South Shropshire. Contact the GA office to order. And, finally, **Rockwatch** visit the Mendips on 28 Aug; details from Geraldine Marshall at the GA office.

So there are plenty of geological activities to occupy you over the summer! The next mailing will be in October for those who have renewed (get those cheque books out now!) or a renewal reminder in September, with details of the winter lecture programme, a repeat of the *Terra Books* offer in time for Christmas, and lots more news! Have a great summer!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

**Forty-fifth Session 2003-2004****October 2003***President:* Allan Cuthbertson [allan_geologist@yahoo.co.uk]*Editor:* Bob Owens*Vice-President:* Lynfa Lewis [lynfa.lewis@ntlworld.com]*Secretary:* Geraint Owen*Membership Secretary:* Mike Lees [01792-774527]*Treasurer:* Malcolm Shaw*Programme Secretary:* Lesley Cherns

It's the start of another session for the Geologists' Association South Wales Group - our 45th. Thank you very much for renewing your membership for 2003-2004. Your membership card is enclosed, and summarises the Group's activities over the winter months. Further details of the autumn events are given in this Newsletter. I hope to see you at some of the talks or other events.



Extra Renewals

Unfortunately, the renewal reminder I sent with information about the events to mark John Cope's retirement confused some of you, who sent renewal cheques to Mike Lees despite having responded to the request to renew early back in June. Mike has kept careful track of these extra payments, and cheques are being returned with this Newsletter. If anyone is still confused or thinks there has been a mistake, please contact me or Mike.

Autumn lectures

The lecture programme gets under way in Cardiff on **Saturday 25th October**, with a talk from Dr Douglas Bassett on ***Sir Roderick Murchison & Company: King of Siluria***. Douglas, one of our 4 Honorary Members, was unable to give this talk a year ago due to ill health, so we are delighted that he has offered it again this year. Many members will be familiar with Douglas's delvings into the history of geology and the characters who have shaped our understanding of the Earth's past, and this talk on the monumental figure of Sir Roderick Murchison, who did so much to build our understanding of stratigraphy in Wales should be absolutely fascinating. The talk will begin at **11.00** in the Department of Earth Sciences at **Cardiff University** (further details overleaf), and there will be free refreshments from 10.30.

The Geologists' Association's **Annual Reunion** will take place in University College **London** on Saturday 8th November. Our President, Allan Cuthbertson, will take a display on behalf of the Group, the main purpose of which this year will be to let everyone there know about the **2004 Reunion in Cardiff** (more later) and what a wonderful place South Wales is to come to for geology. The Reunion is open to anyone, and admission is free. There will be displays from groups like ours from all over the country, as well as people selling rocks, minerals, fossils, equipment and books. If you're interested in going, and want to know more, please contact me or Allan.

On **Saturday 15th November**, Dr Andrew Kerr from Cardiff University, will give a talk at **Swansea University** on ***Flood basalts and mass extinctions***, once again starting at 11.00 with refreshments from 10.30. This is a fascinating and controversial topic; the consequences of massive outpourings of lava in flood basalt eruptions vie with meteorite impacts as the culprit behind mass extinctions.

The last lecture of 2003 will take place on **Saturday 13th December**, in **Cardiff**. Dr Simon Braddy from Bristol University will talk on ***Invasion Earth: ichnological evidence for the conquest of land***. Fossil remains provide only part of the evidence for reconstructing former life; an equal amount can be learned from trace fossils – the remains of the activity

of animals and plants, including footprints, tracks, trails and excrement! Dr Braddy will discuss how trace fossil evidence adds to our understanding of the colonisation of land by animals.

As has become traditional, the New Year's activities will begin with an evening of short members' talks at the National Museum in Cardiff, and next year's *Holiday Geology* will be on the evening of **Friday 9th January**. This is an excellent chance to meet informally with other members and to think about hot, sunny places in the depths of mid-winter! As ever, we're looking for **VOLUNTEERS** to give a 10-minute show of up to about 20 photographs of somewhere geologically or scenically interesting. It doesn't have to be exotic, and you don't have to be able to explain the geology. If you'd like to find out more, please **contact me**.

Further details of **events in 2004** will be in a **December Newsletter**. Look out for a talk on *Cretaceous palaeoclimates* on 24th January, the joint lecture with the Russell Society on 21st February, a *Palaeozoic Palaeo-biogeography Day* at the National Museum during Science Week, on 13th March, the Annual General Meeting followed by Allan Cuthbertson's Retiring President's Address on the *Kuruman Orefield* on 27th March, and the TR Owen Lecture in June.

Dates, times and venues

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Talks in **Cardiff** are in the Earth Sciences Department in the main University building. Refreshments before the lecture are on the first floor, immediately to the left of the entrance off Park Place. **Parking** is available in the courtyard, although there may be a charge. Meetings in **Swansea** are in the Geography Department on the first floor of the Wallace (Natural Sciences) Building. This is on the left at the top of the driveway off Mumbles Road, and there is **parking** outside the building. Free **refreshments** are available for half an hour before lecture meetings. At Swansea meetings, this is an opportunity to buy books and leaflets that are on display. We take

the speaker to **lunch** after each talk, and anyone is welcome to join us. Finally, if you can display **posters** of the programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please **contact me**.

Cardiff GA Reunion 6-7 November 2004

It's now only just over a year until one of the UK's biggest **festivals of geology**, indeed, probably the biggest - the Annual Reunion of the Geologists' Association - comes to Cardiff, where it will be hosted by our Group. This is a really important event for our Group and for geology in Wales, and the planning process will soon move into top gear. Planning is being coordinated by **Lynfa Lewis**, who will be our President at the time, and she and Steve Howe recently met in Cardiff with representatives of the GA.

The event will take place over the whole weekend, with the traditional **displays** and **stalls** from geology groups from all over the country at the National Museum on Saturday, together with several keynote **lectures** from "big names", and a variety of **field trips** on Sunday.

Please think about whether you are able to offer **HELP** for this event, and **contact Lynfa** if you are. It doesn't matter if you're not sure what you could do; I'm quite sure jobs can be found for as many as volunteer! The main thing is for Lynfa to build up a pool of names of people she knows will be available and are willing to help; then when specific tasks become clearer she can approach people to ask for specific help. So please, do make a quick call (01639-769241) or email to Lynfa to let her know that you're willing to offer help for this event. Thank you.

Cardiff Conservation

Monthly **Cardiff Conservation Days** have continued through the summer, an intrepid band of explorers delving into some of the darker corners of the city, finding veritable lost worlds of unimagined geology. Steve Howe,

who co-ordinates the action, says the initial phase, which involved visiting all the sites on the Council's database of geological sites, is nearing completion, and he hopes to arrange a meeting with Council representatives to discuss what should happen next. The rest of us should be able to appreciate what has been achieved in two ways. First, Steve hopes to bring a photographic display of some of the sites visited to *Holiday Geology* in January. And second, we hope to arrange a **Best of Cardiff Conservation** field day in the summer field programme. Well done to everyone involved.

Christmas ideas: special offers

Christmas is just around the corner. Does your mind go blank when people ask you what you'd like for Christmas? Well, your problems can be solved by filling in the enclosed **order form** for books at discount prices. And why not treat yourself while you're at it!

Westmorland Geological Society and the Manchester Geological Association have produced a second edition of Murray Mitchell's *A lateral key for the identification of the commoner Lower Carboniferous coral genera*. Some members may be familiar with the first edition of this excellent little A5 booklet, which provides a straightforward identification key for some 25 genera of corals from the Carboniferous Limestone; it's so easy that even I can use it! The booklet normally sells at £3 plus p&p, but you can order copies for **just £2.25 each**, post free; simply complete and return the order form.

Earlier this year we were able to offer you the chance to buy some terrific books from **Terra Publishing** at discounted prices. Wonderful news, we're repeating the offer with this mailing. Perhaps you were reluctant to buy the books until you saw them (they are excellent, and well worth the prices) or perhaps you wish you'd bought some of the other titles, or perhaps you just missed the original offer altogether. Well, worry no more, the enclosed order form repeats the same generous offer, and even includes one or two titles.

The **deadline** for orders gives time for you to **collect** your books at the December lecture

meeting, or else you can add £1.50 postage and have them **sent** to you. There is no postage charge for the coral identification booklet alone.

And don't forget that you can buy **GA field guides** at reduced prices. For details, contact Sarah Stafford, GA, Burlington House, London W1V 9AG (020-7434-9298; fax: 020-7287-0280; geol.assoc@btinternet.com; www.geologist.demon.co.uk). Recent titles include *Geology of the East Midlands* (publ. 2003, price £11), *Jersey* (2003, £6) and *South Shropshire* (2002, £11)

Over the summer

We've been making the most of the summer's fine weather by holding 8 **field meetings** since the last Newsletter in June, including several evening meetings in the height of summer. We were also pleased to welcome members of the North Wales Geology Association recently for 2 field days in the Swansea Valley and the Vale of Glamorgan. Attendances have been between 12 and 25, which is great. Many thanks to all the field meeting leaders, and to all members who turned out.

One or two things didn't quite go according to plan. Unfortunately, Rob Hillier, who was due to take the trip to examine the *Old Red Sandstone of the Marloes area*, was laid up with flu at the time, and we are immensely grateful to Sid Howells for stepping in at very short notice. We hope to book Rob again for his sedimentological expertise next year. We were also very sorry to have to cancel the planned *Field Weekend to Suffolk* because only a couple of bookings were received. This cancellation was discussed at a Committee meeting, where we felt the low interest may have been due to a combination of the distance to Suffolk and the "soft" geology of the area being unfamiliar to South Walian, and we intend to try to run a field weekend again next September, the venue to be decided. **Are we right** in that interpretation of the low interest in the Suffolk weekend? Or is there little interest in field weekends? Or is mid September a bad time for some people who would like to have gone? **Please let me or any other Committee**

member know if you have any views on field weekends - your views really would be helpful.

David Bone (01243-788474; david.bone@on-edie.net).

Other events

As always, there are plenty of events being held by other groups in our areas, and most will welcome members of our group, particularly if you make contact with them in advance. The **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch are holding a workshop on the *Minerals of Dolyhir Quarry* at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff on the morning of Sunday 16th November. Many of our members have visited Dolyhir Quarry, and this should be a very worthwhile event, giving you the opportunity to have your minerals from Dolyhir (or elsewhere) identified. Contact Lynda Garfield (029-2089-1588) for further details. The Russell Society are also holding a talk (with the opportunity to have minerals identified), focussing on *Minerals of the South Wales Coalfield*, on the evening of Friday 12th December, and a morning of members' presentations on Saturday 17th January. Details from Lynda again.

The **Welsh Stone Forum / Fforwm Cerrig Cymru** is now up and running. **Membership** costs £8 (postal communications) or £5 (electronic communications); details from the Secretary, Tim Palmer, IGES, Llandinam Building, University of Wales, Aberystwyth SY23 3DB (01970-627107; tjp@aber.ac.uk). They had a successful visit to Whitland and surrounding areas on 20th September, bringing together architects, historians and stoneworkers as well as geologists. A visit is planned to the *Millennium Centre* in Cardiff (29 Nov), there will be a talk and tour on Stone Building in *Aberystwyth* on 27 March, and there are plans to visit Swansea and Brecon later in 2004.

Forthcoming field meetings from the **Geologists' Association** include Tenerife (1-8 Nov) and Dublin Museums (5-7 Dec) and there are plans to visit Bornholm, Belize, Belfast and the Basin of Paris (followed logically, of course, by Cardiff - see above). Details from

Member News

As mentioned above, we were all invited to a series of events in the Earth Sciences at Department Cardiff University on 26th September to mark **John Cope's** retirement after 42 years on the staff at Swansea and Cardiff, and it was good to see several members there. John is a long-standing and supportive member of this group, was Chairman from 1982-1984, has served on the Committee and as Field Excursions Secretary, and has lectured to the Group on several occasions. Many members have developed their interest in Geology through John's extra-mural classes, and the series of mapping classes in the Llansteffan area have gone down in geological history for yielding important scientific results, including the discovery of late Precambrian fossils. But it sounds as though John isn't going to be putting his feet up in retirement; he's simply moved down the road to an office in the National Museum, where he will be putting his newly-earned status of Professor to good use in continuing his research, so I'm sure we'll still be seeing plenty of John in the years to come. We all wish John and Pauline well in John's retirement.

On a sadder note, former Committee member Mike Sullivan died suddenly in June.

Finally, as I do each year, I must remind you that I keep **computerised records** of members' names and addresses. These are used only within the GA South Wales Group, mainly for generating mailing labels. If you object to your details being kept on a computer record, or want to see what we "have on you", please let me know.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

**Forty-fifth Session 2003-2004**

December 2003

President: Allan Cuthbertson [*allan_geologist@yahoo.co.uk*]

Editor: Bob Owens

Vice-President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfa.lewis@ntlworld.com]

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Programme Secretary: Lesley Cherns

As another year draws to a close I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members the very best **Season's Greetings**. One thing you can be sure of is that 2004 will bring many exciting and interesting activities from the South Wales GA - read on for details!

Right at the start, I have an important notice for those members at the December lecture meeting in Cardiff who offered to help in the **2004 Reunion** in Cardiff next November. Apparently the sheet of paper on which you signed your names has gone missing, so **please remind Lynfa** of your kind offers. Further details of this important event (for everyone to read!) are on page 3 of this Newsletter.

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Holiday Geology

As has become our habit, we will get the New Year under way with an evening of members' short talks and slide presentations at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. This year's *Holiday Geology* will take place on **Friday 9th January**. Arrangements will be as previous years.

We must be escorted into the Museum since it is after closing hours. **MEET at the rear entrance at or just before 6.30.** This entrance is between the museum car park (entrance off Museum Avenue) and the museum, down a ramp from Museum Avenue or down steps from the car park. The porters' lodge is on the left as you look at the back of the museum.

As always, we need members to **VOLUNTEER** to give short talks at *Holiday Geology*. We have a few volunteers already, but there is space for a few more. We're looking for people to talk for between 5 and 10 minutes, showing a few pictures (maximum 20 slides) of somewhere you have been that will interest other members on account of its geology or landscape. It doesn't have to be somewhere exotic - it's great to have a variety of places to see and hear about at *Holiday Geology*. And the evening will also be an opportunity to examine some geological displays, buy books and field guides, and chat to other members. Make sure you're there!

January Lecture

Our first lecture meeting of 2004 will take place in **Swansea** on **Saturday 24th January**. Prof Paul Pearson, from the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, will talk on ***James Hutton, Charles Darwin, Geology and the Discovery of Evolution by Natural Selection***. This is a radical change from Paul's original title, as printed on membership cards, and Paul explains his change of topic as follows:

James Hutton (1726-1797) was a gentleman farmer who is chiefly known for his early researches in geology, from which he concluded that there is 'no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end' to time. Charles Darwin, too, published on a wide variety of geological topics in his early years. Darwin was strongly influenced by the Huttonian tradition in which gradual processes, operating over vast periods of time, could account for geological appearances, which has rightly been seen as an important influence on his theory of evolution. Now it has come to light that, unbeknown to Darwin, Hutton articulated the concept of evolution by natural selection, and published it in 1794. To Hutton, however, the mechanism was a divine contrivance for maintaining species in a high state of adaptation to their environment, and he rejected the notion of transformations between species. In this talk I will reveal the remarkable parallel interest of these two great scientists from different

centuries, and discuss why they came to such opposite conclusions about evolution.

So this promises to be a fascinating and stimulating talk that will address some fundamental issues in the philosophy of science that geology is uniquely placed to answer. It will take place in the Joint Lecture Theatre of the Wallace Building at University of Wales **Swansea**, starting at **11.00**, with refreshments from 10.30. There is free parking outside the building. Afterwards, everyone is welcome to come for lunch or a quick drink.

Spring Programme

The remainder of the spring programme will be as printed on your membership card. The **joint meeting with the Russell Society** will take place in Cardiff on **Saturday 21st February**. Dr Alan Channing of Cardiff University will talk on silicification in hot spring environments and its implications for fossil preservation.

National Science Week for 2004 takes place from 12th-21st March. You can find out about events throughout the week from the Science Week web site, www.the-ba.net/nsw. Our contribution will be a one-day symposium on **Palaeozoic Palaeobiogeography** at the National Museum in **Cardiff** on **Saturday 13th March**, with talks from leading researchers in the field. It is some years now since we have held such a day of talks, which provide stimulating and in-depth analysis of significant topics. You will receive more information about this event in the New Year, but be sure to keep the date free.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will take place on **Saturday 27th March** in Swansea. As always, this meeting starts half an hour earlier than others, at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00. After the AGM, retiring President Allan Cuthbertson will talk on **Exploitation of the Kuruman ore field, South Africa**. Allan will share with us his experience of working in remote areas of the world, and describe from first-hand experience how the world's largest mines operate, from exploration to export. And on this special occasion Allan will also give us a **bird's-eye view** of places we've explored over his time as President. He gained his pilot's licence in 1977 and has recently bought an open

cockpit 2-seat microlight aircraft with his eldest son. The aerial pictures we'll see will need to be identified, and the lucky **winner will receive a guided geological aerial tour of South Wales!!**

After Easter our summer **field meetings** programme will begin, and we also look forward to hosting the TR Owen Lecture, probably in early June in Swansea. Details of these events, and of the AGM business, will be in the next Newsletter in February or early March.

History of the Group

The South Wales Group of the Geologists' Association has an impressive history, and is now in its 45th session, having been founded in 1959, with its inaugural meeting in January 1960. From 1966 to 1989 the Secretary was **Alun Thomas**, now an Honorary Member. At his retiring address as Chairman after the AGM in March 1992, Alun gave an outline of the Group's history from 1960 to 1992, and I am delighted to report that, thanks to the efforts of our Editor Bob Owens, this history now appears in print in the form of a 53 page booklet, **Geologists' Association, South Wales Group: a geological perspective, 1960-1992**.

As well as a narrative summary of the Group's activities, Alun has meticulously compiled several appendices, which include a list of early members (several of whom remain members to this day); photographs of past Chairmen; a complete list of meetings from 1960 to 1992; lists of Officers and Committee Members; and a breakdown of speakers and field meeting leaders! The Group's collective **thanks** are due to Alun for getting this historical record into print. This booklet is absolutely fascinating, and I'm sure most members will treasure a copy, so make sure you get hold of one while stocks last! I'm not certain of the cost, but I believe it to be about £5, and copies will be **on sale at meetings**, starting at *Holiday Geology*.

GA Reunion 2004

As you already know, the **Geologists' Association's Annual Reunion** is to be held in Cardiff on **6-7 November 2004**. Once again, I'm asking for **VOLUNTEERS** to help ensure

this major event is a resounding success.

The GA Reunion has been held annually for many years, up until 2 years ago always in London. It is a unique event that sees many of the country's geological groups hosting displays and exchanging ideas and information. Two years ago the Reunion was held in Liverpool, and in 2004 Cardiff will become the first venue outside England and only the second outside London. The programme will include exciting talks and field trips over 2 days. Amateur and professional geologists will come to Cardiff from all over Britain, so we must ensure that the event is lively, successful and well organised. To that end, **we need YOUR HELP!**

What can you do? We will need people closer to the time to help with the organisation of exhibits, displays and events, to staff our own display, and to provide information to visitors. For now, we just ask you to let us know you will be available and willing to help. **Please contact Lynfa Lewis** (email at start of the Newsletter, or tel. 01639-769241), who will be our President at the time, and is co-ordinating our activities for the weekend. She really would love to hear from you!

Autumn Meetings

We were all sorry that Douglas Bassett was unable to deliver his planned talk on Murchison in October due to ill health, and wish him well. We were very grateful to Mike Bassett for standing giving a most interesting talk on Murchison's influence in Europe.

In November Allan Cuthbertson took a display on behalf of the Group to the GA Annual Reunion in London, an event attended by several other members. The main aim of this year's display was to draw attention to the 2004 Cardiff Reunion which you have read about above.

The lecture meetings in November in Swansea (Dr Andrew Kerr on the role of flood basalts in mass extinctions) and in December in Cardiff (Dr Simon Braddy on trace fossil evidence for the conquest of land by animals) were both very successful and well attended.

Other News

The **Welsh Stone Forum** has now got off the ground. It has held a couple of field meetings and published its first Newsletter, edited by Steve Howe. The Forum brings together all people with an interest in stone as a building material - architects, builders, historians and archaeologists as well as geologists. The Newsletter is an excellent production (putting this one to shame!) with colour photographs of stones, buildings, field meetings and old quarries. **Membership** of the Welsh Stone Forum costs £8 as a postal member, or just £5 if you want to receive most communications by email. If you are interested, send a cheque made out to "UWA (Welsh Stone Forum)" to the Secretary, Dr Tim Palmer, IGES, University of Wales Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DB, or the Treasurer, Dr Jana Horak, Dept of Geology, NMGW, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NP. Planned **meetings** include a talk on *Stone Building in Aberystwyth* in Aberystwyth on Sat 27 March, and field meetings in Swansea on Sat 19 June and in Brecon on Sat 21 August.

Another important news item is the creation of the **Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark**, which will be officially launched in April 2004. Geoparks are a European recognition of geological significance, and this, the first in England or Wales, is a tangible outcome of moves in recent years to stimulate geological conservation, such as the RIGS (Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites) scheme. The Geopark has been promoted by a consortium including Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust, English Nature, University College Worcester, the Forestry Commission, Gloucestershire Geoconservation Trust and the Abberley Hills Preservation Society, and is an exciting new development for geology in Britain. Geopark status should lead to the development of new geological trails and field guides for the area, which includes many sites of major geological importance in terms of their value for research, education and in the history of geology and geological ideas. For more **information**, follow the links to the Geopark from the website at www.worc.ac.uk/ehf.

This designation follows on from the award of **World Heritage Site** status for the **Blaenavon** area and for the **Jurassic Coast** of Dorset and East Devon. An informative leaflet to the **Jurassic Coast** can be obtained from The World Heritage Team, Dorset County Council, County Hall, Dorchester DT1 1XJ, and further information is on their web site, www.swgfl.org.uk/jurassic.

Recent Publications

Quite a few members took advantage of the offer with the last Newsletter to buy some books from Terra Publishing and the key for identifying Lower Carboniferous corals at discount prices. News now of other recent publications.

The Geologists' Association has published a new guide to the **Geology of Tenerife**, which is a completely revised, updated and expanded second edition of Guide No. 49, published in 1994. The new guide includes 8 days of visitor-friendly itineraries in 107 pages, with colour diagrams - just right for a visit to this popular destination. As a member of this Group, you can purchase copies at the reduced price of £11 (post free) from the Geologists' Association at Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0GU (tel. 020-7434-9298; www.geologist.demon.co.uk).

Members with connections to Northamptonshire may be interested in **Northamptonshire Stone** by DS Sutherland. This 128-page book can be purchased for £12.95 plus £1.95 p&p from The Dovecote Press, Stanbridge, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 4JD (01258-840549; www.dovecotepress.com).

Earth Heritage is a twice-yearly magazine highlighting geological and landscape conservation in the UK, produced jointly by English Nature, CCW and Scottish Natural Heritage. The latest issue includes articles about RIGS in Scotland, the Burren, the Great Orme, and some spectacular geological photographs by

Stewart Campbell, and you may have seen back copies at recent lecture meetings. If you want to be on the (free) mailing list to receive *Earth Heritage*, contact Stewart Campbell at CCW, Maes-y-Ffynnon, Ffordd Penrhos, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DN (tel. 01248-385693; email s.campbell@ccw.gov.uk).

And don't forget to look out at our own meetings for Alun Thomas's ***Geologists' Association, South Wales Group: a geological perspective, 1960-1992***.

Other events

Geologists' Association field meetings for 2004 include Snowdonia (26-27 June), Dorset (18 Sep), Edinburgh (27-28 Nov) and the North Irish Coast (19-25 July). Full details from David Bone, 4 Kensington Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 7XR (tel. 01243-788474; email david.bone@on-edie.net).

Chris Darmon of **GeoSupplies**, who produce the free *Down to Earth* newspaper, has an extensive programme of field meetings planned for 2004, including day trips to the Malvern and Abberley Hills Geopark (28 Feb, 13 March, 29-31 May), Robinswood Hill, Gloucester (20 March), Aust Cliff (24 April) and Wren's Nest (23 May), and longer trips to Iceland, Northumberland, Mull, Rum & Eigg, N Ireland, Ludlow, Skye and Whitby. Full details from GeoSupplies, 49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE (tel. 0114-245-5746; fax. 0114-240-3405; email chrisdarmon@geosupplies.co.uk).

The **Natural History Museum** has produced a brochure of Special Field Study Tours for 2004 - details from NHM, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD (www.nhm.ac.uk/education). These include Italian Volcanoes (22 May - 6 June) and Northwest England geology (26 June - 3 July) as well as trips focussing on birds and gardens.

Well, that's all there's space for this year! Enjoy the festive season, and I look forward to seeing you at *Holiday Geology* on Friday 9th January.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-fifth Session 2003-2004

May 2004



President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

Vice-President: Tom Sharpe

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

YOUR SUMMER PROGRAMME CARD is enclosed, with outline details of field meetings and lectures up to the end of this session. The first events are coming up **very soon**, so check through it carefully with your diary! This Newsletter contains more details about the events, together with information about what else is going on geologically at the moment.



Wednesday 19th May: *Geoconservation in Llandaff*

The first event of the summer programme is a **Geoconservation Evening** with Steve Howe at Llandaff on **Wednesday 19th May**. **MEET at 7.00 pm** on the Cathedral Green, Llandaff. This event is part of the ongoing Geoconservation programme (more information below), designed to explore the wealth of Cardiff's geological heritage; everyone is more than welcome.

First field meeting: *Coastal geoengineering* Sunday 23rd May

On **Sunday 23rd May** Sid Howells will give an outline of **Geo-engineering and geology along the Amroth-Tenby coastline**. The spectacular Upper Carboniferous geology of this part of the Pembrokeshire coast leads to problems of coastal protection relating to cliff erosion and instability, flooding and beach erosion. Sid will give an outline of the geology and explain some of the measures that have been taken recently to protect the coastline. **MEET at 10.00 am** in the main car park behind the sea front at Amroth (SN 163 071). Sid suggests bringing a packed lunch, although there are facilities along the way. The day will include visiting a number of sites by car.

Wednesday 26th May, T.R. Owen Memorial Lecture: *Limestone in Architecture*

We will host this year's 14th annual TR Owen Memorial Lecture, on **Wednesday 26th May** in Swansea, starting at **7.00 pm**. The speaker will be Dr Tim Palmer from University of Wales Aberystwyth. Tim has spoken to the Group before about his research interests in palaeoecology, but he will speak this time in his role as Secretary of the recently formed Welsh Stone Forum / Fforwm Cerrig Cymru, and his topic is **Good and bad limestone in architecture**. Fforwm Cerrig Cymru, the Welsh Stone Forum, was formed in March 2003 as an outcome of the *Stone in Wales* conference held in Cardiff in April 2002, and it brings people with an interest in geology together with architects, historians, planners and stonemasons. It will be fascinating to hear about this essential aspect of geology. The talk will be held at the usual venue for meetings at Swansea, in the **Wallace Building** (Natural Sciences Building) and there will be free refreshments from 6.30 pm.

More field meetings

On **Wednesday 16th June** Steve Howe will lead the first of three summer evening geological walks, visiting **Ogmore-by-Sea** in

the Vale of Glamorgan. **MEET at 7.00 pm** at the Surf Life Clubhouse in the car park by the river-mouth (SS 862 754) for an evening of Carboniferous Limestone fossils and Triassic desert torrent deposits.

The Malvern Hills are the focus of attention on **Sunday 20th June**, with Lesley Cherns as leader. The place to **MEET** is the Herefordshire Beacon car park (SO 763 403) **at 11.00 am**, and lunch will be at a local pub. The geology of the Malvern Hills packs amazing variety into a small area and, with Precambrian as well as Lower Palaeozoic rocks, the area is important for understanding the geology of southern Britain.

Our second evening walk will be on **Wednesday 14th July**, when I will examine the Carboniferous Limestone at *Threecliff Bay, Gower*. **MEET at 7.00 pm** at the small National Trust car park at the **east** end of Penmaen - turn right off the main road by the bus shelter (SS 531 888).

On **Saturday 24th July**, Dr Bob Owens will lead a field meeting to examine *The Usk Inlier*, another important area of Lower Palaeozoic rocks in south-east Wales. The place to **MEET** is the main car park in Usk, off Maryport Street (SO 376 007), **at 10.00 am**. Bob will try to arrange a suitable pub for lunch, but suggests you may prefer to bring a packed lunch anyway. The day will end at about 5.00 pm.

The final evening walk will be on **Wednesday 11th August**, when Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings will examine the varied and beautiful *Building stones of Cardiff Bay*. **MEET at 6.30 pm** at the old Post Office on the junction of James Street and Bute Street, in Cardiff Bay.

We are planning a **field weekend** this September, to *central Wales*, to examine Lower Palaeozoic rocks in the Aberystwyth-Dolgellau area, including sedimentary and

volcanic rocks and glaciated landscapes. Full details and a booking form will be circulated with the next Newsletter, in June, but put the dates in your diary now - **Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th September**.

The final field meeting of the summer season will be on **Sunday 17th October**. Peter Hodges will explore the *Geology of Lilstock* on the Somerset coast. This is the type area for the Lilstock Formation, the upper unit of the Penarth Group (Rhaetian) and there are exposures of Triassic and Lower Jurassic (Lias) rocks. **MEET** at the beach car park at Lilstock (ST 172 452), **at 11.00 am**.

Finally, one more date for your diary: the first lecture meeting of the 2004-2005 autumn season will take place in Cardiff on **Saturday 23rd October**, when Paul Ensom from the Natural History Museum in London will talk on *Dinosaur tracks in the Purbeck Limestone Group and where they have led*. Once again, full details will be sent with a June Newsletter.

So we hope there is plenty to interest everyone in this summer programme. If you want **further information** about any of these events, please contact me (details at end of Newsletter) or Steve Howe at the National Museum in Cardiff.

Safety

I must remind you about the Group's **safety code**, which is summarised on the enclosed programme card, and which we expect all field meeting participants to adhere to. We expect that you will come suitably dressed for fieldwork (strong footwear, warm and waterproof clothing), that you will listen to and follow any safety advice given at the start of the field meeting, and that you will behave responsibly throughout, paying attention to the safety of yourself and those around you. We have a procedure by which we ask participants to "sign in" for field meetings, to acknowledge that they have

read the full safety advice (available at the start of all field meetings) and to “sign out” if they leave early. Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult who will be responsible for their appropriate behaviour.

We would ask that people try and arrive a few minutes early for field meetings, to allow time for these simple administrative tasks to be carried out and for the field meeting to get under way at the published time. Thank you all for your cooperation.

Geoconservation Days

The **Cardiff Conservation Days** held over the past few years have revealed a wealth of sites of geological interest, as well as showing that some others are no longer in existence or accessible. The initial survey is now virtually complete, and the next phase is to re-visit some of the more significant localities to undertake more detailed surveys and try out methods of site assessment evaluation. As always, **everyone is very welcome** on these events, which are of a more exploratory nature than our usual field meetings. Many hands make light work, and new faces will be warmly welcomed - no special skills are required, other than enthusiasm!

Steve Howe has planned Geoconservation Days over the coming summer on the following dates: Wednesday 19th May and then **Saturdays 12th June, 10th July, 21st August and 2nd October**. Details of the first, Wednesday evening event are given above. For the Saturday events you should **MEET** at **10.00 am** in the car park at the ASDA store off the Coryton roundabout (M4/A470 interchange) in Cardiff. For all the day excursions a local hostelry will be found for lunch, but packed lunches can be brought if preferred.

At the AGM

As you will see from the front of the Newsletter, there were some changes to the Committee at the AGM in March. Allan Cuthbertson's period as President came to an end, and he and Anne were warmly thanked for their hard work, commitment and enthusiasm for the Group. The Committee's nominations for new Committee members were approved, so **Lynfa Lewis** took over the mantle of **President** for 2004-2006, with Tom Sharpe as Vice-President. Steve Howe ended his term of office as *ex-officio* Vice-President, and took on the role of programme planning from Lesley Cherns, who remains as a Committee member. Rhian Hicks was approved to serve a further term of 3 years as Committee member, and Marie Lewis was thanked for her help and support on retiring from the Committee. The AGM was followed by a fascinating talk from Allan Cuthbertson on iron ores from southern Africa, and an enjoyable competition to identify some stunning photographs of places we have visited on recent field meetings - the photographs taken from Allan's microlight!

GA Geofest

As everyone knows by now, the Geologists' Association Annual Reunion is being held in Cardiff this year, over the **weekend of 6-7 November**, a very important occasion for this Group. The event is now being known as **GA Geofest @ Cardiff**.

Lynfa Lewis is co-ordinating the planning of activities for the event. She is very pleased that a good number of people have come forward and volunteered to help, but it's not too late to add your name to the list - **volunteers are still needed and will be most welcome!** If you want to offer to help, or just to find out a bit more about the event, please contact Lynfa. Her email

is at the start of the Newsletter, or you can phone her on 01639-769241.

Lynfa has provided the following update for those who have already offered to volunteer.

- The likely date for a **training day** for the event is Friday November 5th (probably 10 am to midday).
- **Grant** funding has been applied for, and we are still waiting to hear if this has been successful.
- **Duties** on the Saturday of the event will include:
 - ◆ directing people around the event;
 - ◆ helping groups to unload and set up displays;
 - ◆ helping on various stands;
 - ◆ supporting the fossil bash for children;
 - ◆ helping to organise chairs and tables;
 - ◆ a million other duties which will no doubt come to light!

So don't forget, if you're at all interested or able, please contact Lynfa and offer your services to ensure this event is a big success!

Other events

As always, there is plenty of geological activity going on with other groups as well. Our members are usually welcome to attend these meetings, although it is worth ringing the contact phone number to check first.

The **Welsh Stone Forum**, referred to above with regard to the TR Owen Lecture, will be holding a field meeting to examine **Stone Building in Swansea on Saturday 19th June**, led by Dr Dyfed Elis-Gruffydd and Dr Ron Austin. A further trip is planned to the Brecon area in August. **Details** of these events, or of membership of the Forum (£8 for mail communications or £5 by email) from Tim Palmer at IGES, University of Wales Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DB (tjp@aber.ac.uk).

Forthcoming **Geologists' Association** field meetings include Snowdonia (25-27 June),

the North Irish Coast (19-25 July) and Dinosaur tracks in Dorset (18 Sep), and Edinburgh (26-28 Nov). **Details** from David Bone, 4 Kensington Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 7XR (tel. 01243-788474; email david.bone@on-edie.net).

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust produce a newsletter, the latest issue of which reported the official launch of the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark on 12/13 April. Further **details** at www.worc.ac.uk/geopark or 01905-855184 or eht@worc.ac.uk.

Field trips planned by **GeoSupplies**, publishers of the free *Down to Earth* magazine, include the Malvern and Abberley Hills Geopark (29-31 May), Tortworth & May Hill, Gloucestershire (4 July) and Llandrindod Wells (25 September), with longer trips to N Ireland, Ludlow, Skye and Whitby. **Details** from GeoSupplies, 49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE (tel. 0114-245-5746; fax. 0114-240-3405; email chrisdarmon@geosupplies.co.uk).

Member News

I'm very pleased to report that our Editor, **Bob Owens**, has been awarded a DSc from Leicester University for his research on trilobites. Well done, Bob!

I must end, however, on a much sadder note, and report that **Roland Parsons**, one of our Honorary Members, died in April after a spell of illness. Roland was the Group's first Treasurer, from its inaugural meeting in January 1960 for an amazing 30 years until March 1990. He was awarded honorary membership at the Annual General Meeting in March 1993. He will be sadly missed.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-fifth Session 2003-2004

August 2004

President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

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Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Summer is well under way. Indeed, given some of our recent weather, it's been and gone back in April, May and June. I hope you've made the most of the fine weather by attending our summer field meetings - there are several left for you to take advantage of. This Newsletter contains a reminder of those **forthcoming meetings**, together with further details of the **Field Weekend** to Central Wales in September, and the GA Reunion - **Geofest @ Cardiff** - in early November. That's getting into our autumn programme, so you will also find details of the start of the **autumn programme**, together with a request for **early renewals**. Plus a summary of recent meetings, and information about other geological goings-on in the region. **Enjoy it all!**



Forthcoming Events

The next event in our summer programme of field meetings will be the Evening Geological Walk to examine the **Building Stones of Cardiff Bay**, with Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings, on **Wednesday 11th August**. **MEET at 6.30 pm** at the old Post Office on the junction of James Street and Bute Street. Apparently there are thousands of garnets out there, waiting to be found, and this promises to be a fascinating evening. Lynda and Dave have recently produced an addition to our series of *Geological Walks in Wales* leaflets, a colour illustrated guide to Cardiff Bay's building stones. They are certainly many, varied and beautiful, so hear all about it from the horses' mouths (so to speak!) on this evening walk.

The **Geology of Central Wales** is the focus for the field weekend on 25-26 September –

more about that below.

Then on **Sunday 17th October**, Peter Hodges will lead a trip to examine the classic **Mesozoic Geology of Lilstock, Somerset**. **MEET at 11 am** at the beach car park at Lilstock (ST 172 452). Lilstock is the type area for the Lilstock Formation, the upper unit of the Penarth Group (Rhaetian) and there are exposures of Triassic and Lower Jurassic (Lias) rocks, so there should be plenty of interesting geology and fossils to be found.

Field Weekend to Central Wales

As notified in the last Newsletter and on your summer programme card, we've planned a **Field Weekend to Central Wales** over the weekend of **Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th September**. A flier is enclosed with further details and a **booking form**;

please return this before Wednesday 1st September to be sure of a place.

The understanding of the geology of Central Wales has improved greatly in recent years, partly due to our own guide to *Geological excursions in Powys*. The aims of this field weekend will be to examine the Ordovician volcanism of southern Snowdonia, Cambrian and Silurian rocks of the Welsh Basin with their fossils and mineralisation, and the evolution of the area's landscape. Saturday will be a circuit of Cadair Idris, examining Cambrian sedimentary rocks, Ordovician volcanic successions, and glacial landforms. Sunday will comprise a transect of the Central Wales Synclinalorium from the coast north of Aberystwyth to the Rhayader area, looking at Silurian fossiliferous mudstones and turbidite sandstones, mineralisation, and landscape development. The aim will be to finish in the Rhayader area mid to late Sunday afternoon.

Accommodation has been reserved at a guest-house in Aberdyfi for the nights of Friday 24th and Saturday 25th September, or you may prefer to arrange your own accommodation. There will be a **£10 field meeting fee** to cover the costs of the weekend. To reserve a place in the group accommodation, please **return the booking form before Wednesday 1st September**. It would be helpful if you could also ring me as soon as possible to let me know you intend to come, so I can give the guest-house as much notice as possible. Final details will be sent in early September to those who have booked.

Geoconservation Days

The remaining **Cardiff Conservation Days** for this season are as notified in the last Newsletter, on **21st August and 2nd October**. **MEET** at **10.00 am** in the car park at the Asda store off the Coryton roundabout (M4/A470 interchange) in

Cardiff. A local hostelry will be found for lunch, but packed lunches can be brought if preferred. As always, all members are welcome to join in these exploratory days with the aim of documenting all the accessible geological sites in the Cardiff area, many of which have lain forgotten for many years, or are new and unknown. Many hands make light work, and new faces will be warmly welcomed - no special skills are required, other than enthusiasm!

Geofest @ Cardiff

As you all know, the **GA Reunion** will be held in Cardiff, over the weekend of **6th-7th November**, under the title of

Geofest @ Cardiff.

The GA Reunion is the biggest annual event in Britain that brings together all kinds of people interested in geology, and it is a terrific coup to have attracted it to Cardiff in only its second ever venture outside London. Lynfa Lewis has co-ordinated an organising group who have put together a terrific range of activities, and we hope that all members will get along to something over the weekend and join in with like-minded folk who will have come from all over Britain.

The focus for the **Saturday** (6th November) will be the National Museum in Cardiff. There will be **displays** from many geological groups like our own and also **sales** of books, specimens and all things geological, as well as guest **lectures** on dinosaurs and geological catastrophes. On **Sunday** there will be **field excursions** in and around Cardiff, and there will be special activities for **children** throughout.

What a wonderful weekend it promises to be! Make sure you get along to some or all of it, and please let any of your **friends, relatives or neighbours** who might be at all interested know about it - they'll be most welcome. If you want any more copies of

the enclosed **poster**, please let me know and I'll be happy to send them to you.

Finally, there's still room for **volunteers** to help with the organisation on the ground over the weekend - get in touch with Lynfa if you think you might be able to help in any way. And any **donations** towards the cost of putting on the event will be most welcome. We have been careful not to use up mainstream funds in hosting this one-off event, so that they remain available for our core activities of lecture and field meetings, and publishing occasional field guides. But hosting all these activities does cost money and, as I write, it is uncertain whether we will be successful in our application for grant aid from the National Lottery. So if you would like to offer any financial help towards the event, please either send a cheque (payable to *GA South Wales Group*) to the Treasurer, or enclose an additional donation with your 2004-2005 renewal (see below!). **Thank you.**

Autumn Programme

Thinking about the Geofest takes us into the autumn, and the start of our programme for 2004-2005. The first lecture of the autumn programme will be on **Saturday 23rd October**, in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff University**. Paul Ensom, from the Natural History Museum in London, will talk on ***Dinosaur tracks in the Purbeck Limestone Group and where they have led.*** That's a fascinating topic to start off the new session, so write it into your diaries now! As usual, the talk will begin at **11.00**, with refreshments from 10.30.

Subscriptions will be due in September, but as usual we are asking you to consider renewing now, and a form is enclosed. If you renew now it will save us one mailing to you in September, and your next mailing will be an October Newsletter. But you already know about the meeting on 23rd October, so don't miss that!

Gift Aid

We are now ready to take advantage of the Government's **Gift Aid** scheme that allows us to claim back the tax that many of you have already paid on the money you send us for your subscription. The **Gift Aid** scheme is very simple, and I am sure many of you are already familiar with it. It works like this. If you are a UK taxpayer and have paid an amount of income or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount of tax due on your subscription (or any other donations you might make), you just need to sign the **Gift Aid** declaration attached to your renewal form, and your subscription will be worth 28% extra to the GA South Wales Group. That's all there is to it - no complicated forms to fill in and no dealings between you and the tax office, just extra money for nothing, and all in an excellent cause. So please, if the limited conditions apply to you, sign the **Gift Aid** declaration when you renew your subscription. Thank you.

Recent Meetings

The summer programme got under way in late May with Sid Howells' meeting to examine the *Geo-engineering and geology of the Amroth-Tenby coast*, followed a few days later by the TR Owen Memorial Lecture, given by Tim Palmer, on *Good and Bad Limestones in Architecture*. The talk was absolutely fascinating, showing how aspects of limestone diagenesis, normally the preserve of the petroleum geologist, influence the weathering of some of our best known building stones, such as Bath Stone and Portland Stone. Steve Howe took the first of our *Evening Geological Walks*, to *Ogmore-by-Sea*, on Wednesday 16th June, and Lesley Cherns examined the *Geology of the Malvern Hills* on Sunday 10th June. I looked for the geology of *Threecliff Bay, Gower*, in the mist on the evening of Wednesday 14th July and, most recently, Bob Owens examined the *Geology of the Usk*

Inlier on Saturday 24th July. All in all, a busy and successful summer season so far.

AGM Papers

For those of you who didn't make it to the AGM in March, copies of the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports are enclosed. They detail the Group's activities for the year up to last March, and highlight the good health and high level of activity of the Group.

Other Events

The **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch plans to visit Taffs Well quarry on Saturday 18th September. If you would like to join them, please telephone 02920-891588 or 01446-700414 for further **details**. The Russell Society's web site is www.russellsoc.org.

The **Open University Geological Society** Severnside Branch have field meetings coming up to the Vale of Glamorgan and Wenlock Edge. For **details**, contact Jan Ashton Jones (01432-870827; jashtonjon@aol.com).

The **Welsh Stone Forum / Fforwm Cerrig Cymru** will be holding a President's Visit to examine the churches and castles of the Usk Valley around Crickhowell and Abergavenny on Saturday 21st August. They will be meeting at the Brecon Cathedral car park at 11 am, and full **details** of the event, or of membership of the Forum (£8 for mail communications or £5 by email), can be obtained from Tim Palmer at IGES, University of Wales Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DB (tjp@aber.ac.uk).

Forthcoming **Geologists' Association** field meetings include Dinosaur tracks in Dorset (18 Sep) and Edinburgh (26-28 Nov). **Details** from David Bone, 4 Kensington Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 7XR (tel. 01243-788474; email david.bone@on-edie.net).

As many of you know, the free newspaper, **Down to Earth**, has recently gone somewhat up-market, with an attractive new format. Chris Darmon, who produces what must now be called a free magazine, also organises day, weekend and longer field trips. Full details can be found in *Down to Earth*, or by contacting GeoSupplies Ltd, 49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE (tel. 0114-245-5746; fax. 0114-240-3405; chrisdarmon@geosupplies.co.uk). Venues include Severn Valley Railway (16 Aug), Alderley Edge (22 Sep), Llandrindod Wells (25 Sep), Skye and Whitby.

The **Hampshire Mineral & Fossil Show** will take place on Saturday 4th September at The Community Centre, Lyndhurst, from 10.00-4.30, with sales and displays of minerals, crystals, fossils, books and accessories, and admission is a very reasonable £1. For further details, contact Gary Morse (01489-787300; smfs@mineral.screaming.net; <http://members.tripod.co.uk/SMFS>).

Member News

I am sorry to report that Tony Harris, a loyal member of the Open University Geological Society Severnside Branch and of this group, died unexpectedly in the spring, and will be sadly missed.

* * * * *

This is the final Newsletter of the 2003-2004 session. I hope you've enjoyed it, and that you will decide to renew your subscription using the enclosed form, and sign the Gift Aid declaration if it applies to you. If you do, you'll receive the first Newsletter of the next session in mid October, otherwise I'll write to you in September to remind you about subscription renewals. **Enjoy the rest of summer!**

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

**Forty-sixth Session 2004-2005****October 2004**

President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

Vice-President: Tom Sharpe

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

**Don't forget the Geofest@Cardiff,
6th and 7th November - read all about it on page 2!**

WELCOME to a new session - the Group's forty-sixth. If you are reading this Newsletter, it means you have renewed your membership for another year - thank you very much. This Newsletter has details of the winter programme of monthly **lectures**, which is summarised on your membership card; the **Geofest@Cardiff** at the start of November; new **publications**, including one you can buy at a special members' price in time for Christmas; and information about other **geological activities** round and about.



Field Meeting - Sunday 17th October

You may read this Newsletter before the final field meeting of the summer programme. Peter Hodges will be examining the *Mesozoic geology of Lilstock, Somerset* on **Sunday 17th October. MEET** at 11 am at the beach car park at Lilstock (ST 172 452).

First Lecture - Saturday 23rd October - Dinosaur Tracks

The first talk of the new session should prove a popular one. On **Saturday 23rd October** Paul Ensom of the Natural History Museum in London will give a talk on *Dinosaur tracks in the Purbeck Limestone Group - and where they have led*, which sounds intriguing. The talk will be held in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff University**, starting at **11.00**, with refreshments from 10.30. Get there early to make sure you get a seat!

Winter Lecture Programme

The events associated with the GA Reunion - **Geofest@Cardiff** - will dominate early November, taking place over the weekend of the 6th-7th. The Geofest will include lectures as well as field meetings and displays - more information below.

The first lecture at **Swansea** will take place on **Saturday 20th November**, in the Wallace Building at University of Wales Swansea. Our Editor, Bob Owens, will talk to us on his "hobby" speciality of planetary geology, with his topic as *Fire, Ice and Water: aspects of planetary geology*. This will be an excellent opportunity to catch up on the huge advances that have been made recently in understanding the solar system.

The final lecture before Christmas will be on *Glaciation in the Irish Sea: a return to the flood?* given by Danny McCarroll from University of Wales Swansea. The talk will be on **Saturday 11th December**, in the Earth Sciences Department at **Cardiff University**. In recent years the Irish Sea area has been the focus of heated debate about the nature of glaciation in

the Quaternary, and Danny will show how studies of geology and geomorphology have contributed to the debate, and helped us to understand the origin of landscapes in North and West Wales.

More details of meetings in the New year will be in a December Newsletter. Titles, dates, venues and times are on the enclosed membership card. Once again, January will begin with a *Holiday Geology* evening, hosted by the National Museum in Cardiff. Summer holidays are still fresh in people's minds, and if you would like to talk for a few minutes about somewhere you have been, **please contact me** or any other committee member. We can cope with slides or computer-based displays, so if you have photographic prints we can arrange for those to be put onto a CD for you to display.

Lecture meetings in the New Year will cover the early history of bivalves, with John Cope; sulphide minerals and coal rank with Dr Naylor Firth (the joint meeting with the Russell Society); and, after the **AGM on Saturday 19th March**, the search for the earliest mammals, with Pam Gill. Eric Robinson will lead us around the building stones of Newport in early March, and about that time you will receive news of the summer programme of field meetings. Make sure you've entered all these dates in your diaries now!

Dates, times and venues

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Talks in **Cardiff** are in the Earth Sciences Department in the main University building. Refreshments before the lecture are on the first floor, immediately to the left of the entrance off Park Place. **Parking** is usually available in the courtyard, although there may be a charge. Meetings in **Swansea** are in the Geography Department on the first floor of the Wallace Building. This is on the left at the top of the driveway off Mumbles Road, and there is **parking** outside the building. Free **refreshments** are available for half an hour before lecture meetings. At Swansea meetings, there is an opportunity to buy books and leaflets that are on display. We take the speaker to **lunch** after each talk, and anyone is welcome to

join us. Finally, if you can display **posters** of the programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please **contact me**.



Geofest@Cardiff 6th - 7th November



One of the biggest and most important events this Group has ever hosted will take place in Cardiff over the weekend of 6-7 November. This is the national Geologists' Association's Annual Reunion - only the second time it has ever been held outside London, and the first time ever outside England - this year going under the title of **GA Geofest @ Cardiff**.

On the **Friday** evening there is a **reception** at the National Museum. This is free, but it is essential that you **pre-book** using the enclosed booking form.

The **Saturday**, which will be based in the National Museum in Cardiff, will include topical **lectures** and **exhibits** and **displays** from groups like ours from around the country, companies selling geological equipment and books, and organisations like the British Geological Survey. There will also be family-friendly practical activities specially for **children**, so bring the whole family along. **Entry is free**, although you'll need to bring cash or a cheque book to make sure you take advantage of all the sales opportunities there!

On **Sunday** some of the family activities will continue at the Museum, but the main highlight is the **field trips**. Four are on offer, and provide an excellent opportunity to study our local geology with visitors from further afield. **Coach** transport has been arranged for the field trips, leaving from outside the Museum at 9.30, and there will be a charge for this, but local members can attend free of charge if you provide your **own transport**. However, it is essential that

you pre-book, so that we know numbers in advance. Bring a **packed lunch**.

Full details of the field trips and other activities, and a booking form (to be returned to the Geologists' Association in London) are on the enclosed flier. I look forward to seeing you at the Geofest!

New Book: Walking the Rocks

We are pleased to announce the publication of a new guide-book produced by the Group: ***Walking the Rocks. Six walks discovering scenery and geology along the Glamorgan coast.*** The authors are Tom Sharpe, Steve Howe and myself, and the book builds on the successful series of walk leaflets. Three of the walks are new and the others are greatly expanded compared with what the leaflets can cover.

The book is illustrated throughout with maps, diagrams and photographs in full colour, and has 120 pages, including an outline of the geology of South Wales, comprehensive descriptions of six walks - at Rhossili and Caswell Bay on Gower, Ogmore-by-Sea, Nash Point to Llantwit Major, Barry Island to Porthkerry, and Penarth to St Mary's Well Bay - a glossary and a guide to further reading.

And the price? A very modest £7.95 is the full price, but as a member you can buy copies at the **special reduced members' price of just £6.00**, and all proceeds come back to the Group. You can buy copies at lecture meetings or at the *Geofest* in November, or you can send off the enclosed order form (postage free). If you want to buy your copies at a meeting, why not pass the order form onto a friend or neighbour who might be interested! And don't forget, Christmas isn't that far off; *Walking the Rocks* will make an excellent present for someone who wants to add an extra element of interest to some lovely walks.

More New Publications

Two issues have appeared over the summer of ***Down to Earth***, the newsy magazine produced by Chris Darmon of Geosupplies in Sheffield. Look out for copies at the first couple of lecture meetings. They include articles about the new Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark, a discovery of Palaeolithic cave art in the Peak District, building stones in Amsterdam, and making field sketches, plus book reviews, news of geological events and lots of adverts.

Lots of attractive new publications have appeared recently from the **British Geological Survey** (BGS), and there are several ways to buy these. A BGS display will be at the *Geofest*; you can write to BGS Sales Desk, Keyworth, Nottingham NG12 5GG; you can phone 0115-936-3241, fax 0115-936-3488 or email sales@bgs.ac.uk; or look on their recently revamped website, www.bgs.ac.uk.

Geological Sheet Memoirs - the thick green books that used to accompany each 1:50,000 geological map sheet - have now been replaced with **Sheet Explanations**, much slimmer booklets that provide no more than a summary of the geology of the area, although for many uses that is sufficient. Sheet Explanations sell for £9, and 1:50,000 map sheets for £11, but they can be bought together for £18 (and Geosupplies have a 25% discount for a limited period - sales@geosupplies.co.uk). Recent new maps and Sheet Explanations for South Wales and nearby areas include Cardigan and Dinas Island (sheet 193), Talgarth (sheet 214) and Hereford and Ross-on-Wye (sheet 215).

Further afield, BGS have recently produced a new map and guide to the **Assynt** region of north-west Scotland. This explains the fascinating geology and landscape of the area through 8 hill walks, and costs just £12. It is associated with a new web site (accessible to all) that portrays the significance of the area through some magnificent graphics - <http://earth.leeds.ac.uk/assyntgeology/index.htm>.

BGS are also overhauling their venerable **Regional Geology** series. *The Geology of Northern Ireland: our natural foundation* has recently been published, and in contrast to the

old, very factual guides, is a fully illustrated account that brings out all the excitement of modern geological understanding for just £10.

Lastly, BGS have published *Murchison's Wanderings in Russia*, a beautifully produced reproduction of Murchison's notebooks that document his research in Russia for Czar Nicholas in the 1840s. The hardback book includes reproductions of Murchison's maps and cross-sections and sells at £40. It would make an ideal Christmas present for anyone interested in the life and work of Murchison or the history of geology in general.

Geology on TV

Once again, in the run-up to Christmas, geology is getting an airing on prime-time TV. *British Isles: A Natural History* with Alan Titchmarsh on BBC1 on Wednesday evenings and *Iolo's Natural History of Wales* with Iolo Williams on BBC2 Wales on Thursday evenings both give a starring role to geology - and to some faces you may be familiar with. If you've missed the early episodes, the series' are well worth watching.

Last summer

Our summer programme of field meetings went well, with typical turnouts of about 15. Things culminated with the field weekend to central Wales, based in Aberdovey, when 11 intrepid souls braved the rain and cloud to investigate the geology of Cadair Idris and the Plynlimon area.

Geologists' Association News

As a Local Group affiliated to the Geologists' Association, the national body based in London, we encourage all our members to consider joining the Geologists' Association. The GA produces a quarterly journal publishing original research and a quarterly Magazine of news, as well as holding its own programme of meetings and producing a terrific range of field guides. **Membership** costs £37 per year, and you can find out more at their display at the *Geofest*, or by contacting the GA, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU (020-7434-9298;

www.geologist.demon.co.uk).

Recent issues of the GA Magazine have included news of the deaths of Jake Hancock and Austin Lockwood, who will have been known to many members, Jake Hancock perhaps in particular on account of the entertaining lectures he gave us on Geology and Wine.

Other Events and Activities

The **Geologists' Association** has field meetings planned to the Ulster Museum, Belfast (26-28 November), Shetland (June 2005) and South Africa (July/August 2005). Contact the GA office for information (details above).

The **Geological Society** Southern Wales Group has the following meetings planned in the Earth Sciences Dept at Cardiff University - contact Peter Brabham for details (02920-874334): 17 Nov, Metal mine remediation in Wales (Ben Rees); 12 Jan, Using digital terrain and geological mapping to take a new 3D view of South Wales (Peter Brabham); 16 Mar, Arsenic contamination of alluvial aquifers (Darren Shaw).

Finally ...

... my annual reminder that we keep a **computerised database** of members' names and addresses. These are used only within the GA South Wales Group, primarily for generating address labels. Let me know if you do **not** want your details kept in this way (this may result in a delay in you receiving mailings) or if you want to know the full details of the information we keep about you.

And I look forward to seeing everyone at the forthcoming meetings.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-sixth Session 2004-2005



December 2004

President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

Vice-President: Tom Sharpe

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Season's Greetings! I hope you have something geological for Christmas and manage to find something geological to watch on TV! If not, you'll just have to make do with this Newsletter, which has details of meetings over the next few months, starting with **Holiday Geology in Cardiff on Friday 14th January**.



Holiday Geology: Friday 14th January

Once again, to greet the New Year, we will be holding an evening of members' holiday snaps in the informal setting of the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. Everyone will be most welcome, including friends who are interested in geology or scenery. There will be light refreshments, displays and an opportunity to purchase books and field guides as well, of course, as members' *Holiday Geology* presentations.

That means that we need **VOLUNTEERS** to show us a few interesting holiday pictures related to something geological - rocks, fossils, minerals or landscape, for example. If you're willing to share your mementoes of somewhere interesting, please **contact** either myself or Tom Sharpe (email above, or ring 029-2057-3265) by Wednesday 12th January.

We're looking for presentations to last between 5 and 10 minutes, with a maximum of 20 pictures. This year we can cope with prints as well as slides, but if you have prints, please contact Tom as soon as possible.

And the date? A little bit later than previous years, Friday 14th January.

As usual we must be escorted into the Museum since it is after closing hours. **MEET at the Porters' Lodge at the rear entrance to the Museum at or just before 6.30.** This entrance

is between the museum car park (entrance off Museum Avenue) and the museum, down a ramp from Museum Avenue or down steps from the car park. The porters' lodge is on the left as you look at the back of the museum.

Let's try and break all records with a bumper attendance at 2005 Holiday Geology. And don't forget to volunteer to show a few pictures, too!

2005 Lectures

The first Saturday-morning lecture of the New Year will be on **22nd January**, in **Swansea**, starting at **11.00** with refreshments from 10.30, in the Wallace Building at the University. Prof. **John Cope** will talk on *Old Cockles and Old Mussels: the early history of bivalves* and I'm sure will tell us how he's passing his time now that he's retired! The early history of bivalves is surprisingly poorly understood, and studies of Welsh rocks by John have helped to fill gaps in this important area of evolution.

On **Saturday 19th February** we will hold our annual joint lecture with the South Wales group of the **Russell Society**. Dr **Naylor Firth**, from Chepstow, will talk on *Sulphide Minerals and Coal Rank in South Wales* which should help us to understand the distribution of minerals in South Wales. The talk will be in **Cardiff**, in the Earth Sciences Department at the University, again starting at 11.00, refreshments from 10.30.

Our first **field meeting** will be on **Saturday 5th March**, when **Eric Robinson** will lead us on one of his inimitable walks to explore the ***Building Stones of Newport***. Full details of meeting time and place will be in the next Newsletter, which should be with you in mid to late February, so you'd better mark the date in your diary now!

The final talk of the spring lecture season will be in **Swansea** on **Saturday 19th March**. **Pam Gill**, from Bristol University, will talk on ***Morgan's Treasure Island: the search for the first mammals***, another evolutionary issue of vital importance in understanding our own origins, and in which Welsh rocks hold some vital clues. This lecture will be preceded by our **Annual General Meeting**, so there will be an earlier start than usual. The Annual General Meeting will get under way at **10.30** and will lead straight in to the lecture - hopefully after not very long - so refreshments will be available from **10.00**.

We hope for an excellent turnout at all of these events. We usually take speakers to lunch after each lecture, and it is good to have plenty of members coming along too, so please feel free to join us after any or all of the meetings. It's a good opportunity to chat with other members, and to collar the speaker on that burning issue that remains unanswered!

Geofest @ Cardiff

As you all know, the first weekend in November saw much of the British amateur geology world descend on Cardiff for the Geofest, the incarnation of the Geologists' Association's Annual Reunion. The Group's thanks are due to all who helped make the weekend such a success and a positive advertisement for this Group.

After introductory festivities on the Friday evening, the Saturday centred on displays and activities at the National Museum. I managed just two circuits of all the displays in the whole day, but when I got Back to Go I was several tens of pounds poorer than when I started, but enriched by numerous field guides, books and pamphlets that would have been difficult or impossible to get hold of by any other means.

As well as displays by the national Geologists' Association and local geology groups like our own, and sales of specimens, equipment and books, there were behind-the-scenes tours of the Geology Department and a host of activities for young people - from rock-bashing and fossil moulding to gawping at microfossils under microscopes.

As if all that wasn't enough, there were two superb lecture presentations. Dr Stephen Edwards from Greenwich University and Prof Paul Pearson from Cardiff University talked about the role of geology in unravelling past climate change. We were particularly grateful to Paul for stepping in at very short notice. And over lunchtime, Eric Robinson led an enthusiastic band through the assembling rugby fans to introduce them to the building stones of Cardiff city centre.

On the Sunday activities continued in the Museum, while some 100 people took part in field trips to Cardiff Bay, Penarth, Ogmere and Big Pit. Although the day was gloomy, it stayed dry and our visitors were impressed by their introduction to the geological riches of South Wales.

Our Group hosted the Geofest, and the organisation and planning were co-ordinated by our President, Lynfa Lewis. The event was an undoubted success. It showed South Wales geology and geological activity in an excellent light to people from all over the country, as well as providing geological enjoyment for many hundreds of people. The event was made possible through a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and I am sure they will be pleased that the event certainly did much to further the Group's primary aim, to "advance the education of the public through the promotion and research of geology." I'm sure everyone will join me in thanking Lynfa for all her hard work and enthusiasm. Thanks are also due to the National Museum of Wales for holding the event, particularly to Mike Bassett as Keeper of Geology and to Steve Howe and Tom Sharpe for putting in so much work on the ground, as well as to the ensemble of volunteers who responded to pleas for help and did a sterling job both at the event and in getting everything ready for it.

Late Christmas Present!

The guide to *Walking the Rocks* was published in time for the Geofest, and sold extremely well there. It is also selling well in several bookshops across the region. The book gives an outline of South Wales geology and then describes and explains the geology along 6 simple coastal walks - Rhossili and Caswell on Gower, plus Ogmere, Nash Point, Barry and Penarth. It is in full colour throughout, and also includes an introduction to geology, a glossary and advice for further information. It is very reasonably priced at £7.95, but is available to you as a member for the bargain price of **just £6**. A flier and order form was enclosed in the last Newsletter, but if you have mislaid it (or used it already!) you can buy copies at any of our meetings, or else contact me or Tom Sharpe or Steve Howe.

Autumn meetings

We were treated to three superb lectures in the autumn programme. Things got under way in October with Paul Ensom talking on *Dinosaur tracks in the Purbeck Limestone*. It was fascinating to find out how much the understanding of dinosaur footprints and tracks has advanced recently, and to glimpse some of the reasoning - and, yes, at times, speculation - that accompanies their interpretation.

There was a bumper audience for Bob Owens' talk in November on *Fire, ice and water: aspects of planetary geology*, and they were treated to a wonderful tour of some of our neighbours in the solar system. Recent space probes and landers have advanced the understanding of the geology of these bodies enormously. We're currently negotiating with Bob to try and fix up a field trip, but we can't give you a date yet, I'm afraid!

December's lecture in Cardiff was given by Danny McCarroll on *Glaciation in the Irish Sea*. Danny outlined a controversial recent hypothesis that suggested a complete revision of the interpretation and understanding of glacial deposits and the glacial history around the Irish Sea area, then went on to show how good scientific reasoning and clear thinking based on

critical evidence has led to the rejection of the idea, but at the same time has helped to improve the overall understanding of the history of the area. This really was science in action!

Fforest Fawr Geopark: Help, please!

The Fforest Fawr area of the western part of the Brecon Beacons National Park is applying to become a member of the **European Geopark Network**. The area, which covers Abercraf, Penderyn, Brynamman, Llangadog, Carreg Cennen, Trecastle and Sennybridge, has a rich geological succession from the Ordovician to the Holocene, and contains a wealth of important geological exposures and landscape features.

European Geoparks are areas with a rich geological heritage that have a sustainable development plan to promote economic development around that heritage, including education and research as well as a sustainable approach to tourism. The Geopark Network is intended to promote the exchange of experiences and ideas, and to raise the awareness of Europe's geological heritage, ideals that fit well with our own Group's objectives.

Further information on Geoparks can be found on the internet at www.europeangeopark.org (look out for the flying stars!). Existing UK Geoparks are the Malvern and Abberley Hills, the North Pennines and Marble Arch caves in Fermanagh. (I believe Assynt has also recently been accorded Geopark status.) The establishment of a Geopark in South Wales would be hugely significant for the recognition of the international geological significance of the region.

The working group that is coordinating the Fforest Fawr Geopark application is looking to our members to provide **HELP**, particularly in setting up a RIGS Group to promote the active conservation of sites in the area. If you would like to get involved, or just to find out more about the application, particularly if you live in the Brecon Beacons area, please **contact** Jane Davies (Geopark Project Director) at the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (tel. 01874-624437; jane.davies@breconbeacons.org).

Geology Today

Geology Today is a bi-monthly magazine with news about the Earth Sciences and general articles on a variety of topics, published by Blackwells jointly with the Geologists' Association. Recent articles have included minerals and mines of the Kola Peninsula, the search for life beyond Earth, environmental change in deserts, and environmental geophysics. An annual subscription costs £38, which is a special reduced price for members of the Geologists' Association and its Local Groups (us). For more information, contact Blackwell Publishing (01865-776868). You can access *Geology Today* online for a free 30-day trial period; go to www.blackwell-synergy.com, register, then go to *My Synergy*, click *Access*, then enter "GTO postcard trial".

Other Events and Activities

Geology on the edge of a plate:

Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning is organising a study tour to **California** from about 23 September to 9 October 2005. Led by our very own Tom Sharpe, the tour will take in the **San Andreas Fault** near San Francisco and Los Angeles, the volcano of **Lassen Peak** which last erupted in 1915, the sites of the **1849 Gold Rush**, the classic glaciated granites of **Yosemite National Park**, the desert of **Death Valley** and the spectacular coast of the **Big Sur**. It sounds absolutely fantastic! For further details, **contact** Cardiff Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff CF24 4AG (tel. 029-2087-0000; email LEARN@cardiff.ac.uk).

The **Geologists' Association** has field meetings planned to Lincolnshire (7-8 May) and Shropshire (10-12 June), and further afield to Shetland (16-23 June) and the west of Ireland (5-12 September). **Contact** Sarah Stafford at the GA office for information (Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU; tel. 020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com).

Geological courses through the Continuing Education Department of **University of Bristol** include: Vesuvius dayschool (29 Jan); geology of Glastonbury and Wells (26 Feb); geology of western Purbeck with John Cope (4-6 March); Symonds Yat to Mendip (19 March); geology and mining in Gloucestershire (20 March); Jurassic contrasts of the Cotswolds (2 Apr); NE Wales (7-8 May); Pompeii and Herculaneum (13-20 May); Highland Border (15-21 May); Donegal (6-11 June); Hebrides (26 June -1 July) and more! **Contact** Barbara Perks (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk) or through the Bristol University web site (www.bris.ac.uk).

The **Geological Society** Southern Wales Group has meetings planned at Cardiff University on *Using digital terrain and geological mapping to take a new 3D view of South Wales* (Peter Brabham, 12 Jan) and *Arsenic contamination of alluvial aquifers* (Darren Shaw, 16 Mar). For details, **contact** Peter Brabham (02920-874334).

Member News

I am sorry to report the death of David Care, who for many years had been a leading light in the Open University Geological Society's Severnside Branch as well as an active member of our own Group.

New Membership Leaflet

In time for the Geofest we produced an attractive new membership leaflet. A copy is enclosed - see if you can encourage some of your Christmas visitors to join us. We hope you'll agree the leaflet is attractive and informative - many thanks to Rhian Hicks for her design skills. If you can make use of **more** membership leaflets, perhaps in a school or walking group, please let me know and I will send you more.



Have a great time over the Christmas season. I look forward to seeing you at meetings in the New Year, starting with *Holiday Geology* on Friday 14th January.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-sixth Session 2004-2005



March 2005

President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

Vice-President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Two excellent reasons why you should make sure you don't miss our next meeting, **this Saturday in Swansea**. First, it's our Annual General Meeting, but – even more of an attraction - there's a superb talk lined up. And read on for full details of the first field meeting of the summer season, on **Saturday 7th May, to Leckhampton and Crickley Hill** in Gloucestershire. And plenty more besides!



Lecture meeting, 19th March: Earliest mammals

Pam Gill, from the University of Bristol, will be giving the lecture, with the intriguing title of *Morgan's Treasure Island: the search for the first mammals*. Important early mammal fossils have been found from rocks in South Wales and this topic is clearly very relevant to all of us, since it's about some of our earliest ancestors! It should be a fascinating talk - don't miss it!

Pam's talk will begin immediately after the AGM, which will **start at 10.30** - note that this is earlier than our usual starts. Make sure you're there by 10.30 so as not to miss any of Pam's talk. As usual, refreshments will be available for half an hour before the meeting begins, so **from 10.00**. The lecture will be in the Wallace Building of University of Wales **Swansea**, where parking is available.

Annual General Meeting

Immediately preceding Pam's talk, starting at **10.30 am this coming Saturday, 19th March**, in University of Wales **Swansea**, is our Annual General Meeting. We hope as many members as possible will come to this meeting so we can ensure that the activities the committee is proposing and undertaking on your behalf are endorsed by the membership.

We hope the AGM will be a short affair. There are no controversial issues such as subscription increases this year, for example, as I'm sure you will be delighted to hear! The main items will be the reports of the Treasurer, Secretary and Editor, which will be presented in writing, and the election of new committee members.

An **agenda** for the meeting is enclosed, together with the minutes of last year's meeting. You will see on the agenda the committee's nominations for committee posts for the coming year. **Geraint Owen** has offered to continue as Secretary, **Mike Lees** as Membership Secretary and **Bob Owens** as Editor for the period 2005-2007, and we hope the AGM will endorse these recommendations.

Mike Smith and Dave Wellings reach the end of their 3-year terms of service as Committee Members. **Mike Smith** has offered to continue for another term (2005-2008) and **Mike Gregory** has offered to stand as a new Committee Member for 2005-2008. Once again, we hope the AGM will accept these nominations.

Although the rules allow the committee to put forward recommendations for vacant posts, **nominations** from members will be welcome, and a nomination form is attached to the AGM papers. (And nominees don't have to be called Mike!)

The input of **Dave Wellings** and, before him, **Lynda Garfield** as representatives of the **Russell Society** on our Committee has been extremely valuable and has resulted in our two groups working closely together, not only in our annual joint lecture meeting, but also at events like the Geofest, the Kenfig reserve open days and displays at the Eisteddfod. We decided at a recent committee meeting that it would be a mistake to lose this close co-operation, and Dave and Lynda have generously agreed that a Russell Society representative can be **co-opted** onto our committee. We therefore expect that committee meetings will continue to be attended by, and have such valued input from, Russell Society representatives, who may, on most occasions, be Dave or Lynda. Again, we hope the AGM will give its support to this arrangement.

Summer field meeting programme

The finishing touches are being put to the summer programme of field meetings and your **programme card** will be sent to you in a few weeks. In the meantime, here is advance notice of one or two of the summer field meetings, followed by full details of the season's **Cardiff Geoconservation Days**.

The first of the summer's field meetings will be on **Saturday 7th May**, when David Owen of the Gloucestershire Geoconservation Trust will guide us around the classic Jurassic geology of **Leckhampton and Crickley Hill** in Gloucestershire. Leckhampton Hill shows the thickest inland section of the Middle Jurassic Inferior Oolite rocks in the country. Beds from the Whitby Mudstone Formation at the top of the Lias to the Upper Trigon Grit are exposed in a series of old quarries around the hill and escarpment edge, while at the classic section on Crickley Hill the thickest sequence of Pea Grit in the Cotswolds can be seen. The Gloucestershire Geoconservation Trust has recently carried out site clearance on the many SSSIs that make up the sequence and our leader is a member of the team involved in this work. The morning will be spent at Leckhampton and then we will move on to Crickley Hill in the afternoon, where we will have a picnic lunch.

MEET at 10.00 am at the Brownstone Car Park on the top of Leckhampton Hill (SO 950 179). From the Air Balloon roundabout (named after the local pub) on the A417 between Gloucester and Cirencester, head NE on to the A436. Immediately turn left onto the B4070, where you will pass the entrance to Crickley Hill Country Park. Travelling on, you will pass a sign to the 'Star Centre', and then after a sharp left and right-hand bend where there are some houses on your left there is a sharp turn back on yourself on the right, signposted 'gated road'. Follow this lane to the top of the hill where, after levelling out, the car park entrance can be found about 200 m on the left. The car park is marked on OS Explorer sheet 179.

Other events planned for the summer include Old Red Sandstone of the Brecon Beacons, evening walks in June and July, and a field day in the upper Swansea Valley to learn more about the Geopark application for the western part of the Brecon Beacons. This was outlined in the last Newsletter and there is more below.

Cardiff Geoconservation Days

Over the past few years, most of the sites on Cardiff City's database of geological sites have been found and visited by the intrepid explorers of the Geoconservation Team, co-ordinated by Steve Howe and **open to anyone** - enthusiasm for field geology is the only requirement. The next phase is a more detailed assessment of each site known to be extant. This will involve plotting the extent of the site on a map and producing a detailed description of what there is to see. If this progresses well, it should lead to an initial ranking of some of the sites in order of geological merit. In addition, several of the larger working quarries in the area remain to be visited and it is hoped to make time to visit some of these in this year's programme.

Anyone is welcome to join in these Geoconservation Days - all the skill that is required is an enthusiasm to find out more about geology. As in previous years, **MEET on the day at 10.00 am in the car park of Asda at the Coryton interchange, Cardiff (M4 junction 32).** The aim will be to visit a pub for lunch

each day, although you may prefer to bring a packed lunch.

The dates for the Geoconservation Days this year will be:

Saturday 16th April

Saturday 14th May

Saturday 11th June

Saturday 16th July

Saturday 13th August

Saturday 10th September, and

Saturday 22nd October.

If you're interested, turn up on the day; your help will be much appreciated. Or if you want to find out more, contact Steve Howe (steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk).

Geology events in Pembrokeshire

There's plenty of geological activity in Pembrokeshire these days! Sid Howells has sent details.

The Pembrokeshire Darwin Science Festival will include visits to **Caldey Island** on **Saturday 21st May** and the **Preseli Hills** on **Sunday 14th August**. For more information about the Pembrokeshire Darwin Science Festival, phone 01437-764222, email darwin@darwincentre.com or look up www.darwincentre.com.

The **Field Studies Council** will be running a course on **Geology and Scenery in Pembrokeshire**, led by Sid Howells and based at **Orielton Field Centre** from **Wednesday 1st to Wednesday 8th June**. The course will cover the range of rocks and landscapes in the region, from the Precambrian to Quaternary glacial features, taking in the Cambrian, Ordovician and Silurian, and the Old Red Sandstone, Carboniferous Limestone and Coal Measures along the way. More details from Sally at the Field Centre (01646-623920) or contact 0845-330-7372 or www.field-studies-council.org/orielton/.

The **U3A South Wales Geology Group** will be visiting the **Strumble** peninsula on **Monday 13th June**. Details of this and other events with the U3A from Nigel McGaw.

Also at **Orielton Field Centre** - contact details

above - a short course from **Friday 19th to Tuesday 23rd August** on **Forts, Feathers and Folds**, designed to provide a detailed insight into the geology, history and natural history of the area.

And last, but far from least, under the auspices of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park there will be geological visits to **Skomer Island** on **Wednesday 24th August** and to the spectacular **Castlemartin (Range West)** part of the coastline on **Sunday 4th September**. Details from the National Park Authority on 0845-345-7275 (info@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk; www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk).

Geoparks

As you may recall from the last Newsletter, the Fforest Fawr area of the western part of the Brecon Beacons National Park is applying to become a member of the **European Geopark Network**. We are organising a day trip to the upper Swansea Valley, when we can learn more about the proposed Geopark and examine some of the area's superb geology. In the meantime, if you want to know more about the application, or to offer your help to the co-ordinators, please contact Jane Davies at the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (01874-624437; jane.davies@breconbeacons.org).

A Geopark has already been established in the Abberley and Malvern Hills in the Welsh Borderland. The Geopark works closely with the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust (www.worc.ac.uk/ehf), which produces a very informative newsletter packed with news and reports of geoconservation activity in that area.

First, the Trust has put together a **Rock and Fossil Roadshow**, which will be touring the two counties over the summer. You can visit it on 28th March at Bewdley Museum, 27th July at Queenswood Country Park north of Hereford, 15th-19th August at Eastnor Castle, Ledbury, as part of Public Fun Week, or 2nd October at Bodenham Arboretum, Kidderminster.

The Trust has developed several geology and landscape trails in the area, and designated numerous sites as RIGS (Regionally Important

Geological and Geomorphological Sites). Many of the trails are described in attractive **interpretive leaflets**, of which there are now over 15, selling at a very reasonable £1.95 each. Titles include Bredon Hill, Malvern Hills, Symonds Yat, Woolhope Dome, Wye Gorge, and the centres of Bewdley, Hereford and Worcester. The leaflets are available at shops in Hereford, Upton-on Severn, Ross on Wye and Malvern, or they can be ordered through the Trust's website. They can also be obtained through GeoSupplies, the publishers of *Down to Earth*.

Finally, the newsletter tells of **International Geopark Week**, which is a Europe-wide programme of events from 30th May to 6th June. You can find out about activities at the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark from their website (www.worc.ac.uk/geopark) or from Cheryl Jones (c.jones@worc.ac.uk; 01905-855124).

Other Events and Activities

Details were given in the last Newsletter of ***Geology on the edge of a plate***, a study tour to **California** led by Tom Sharpe for Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning from about 23 September to 9 October 2005 and taking in the San Andreas Fault, Lassen Peak volcano, sites from the 1849 Gold Rush, Yosemite National Park, Death Valley and the Big Sur. **Contact** Cardiff Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff CF24 4AG (tel. 029-2087-0000; email learn@cardiff.ac.uk) to find out if there are places left.

The **Geologists' Association** has field meetings planned to Warwickshire roadstone quarries (30th April), Shropshire (10-12 June) and Dorset (1-2 September), and further afield to Shetland (16-23 June), the west of Ireland (5-12 September) and the D-Day Landing sites in Normandy (late September). **Contact** Sarah Stafford at the GA office (Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU; tel. 020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com) for information.

Back in the Welsh Border, the **Woolhope Club Geology Section** (based in Hereford) has a lecture on the *Geology and Geomorphology of*

Bredon Hill (Friday 22nd April) followed by a field trip there the next day, and field trips to Martley, Dudley and the Abberley Hills through the summer. More information from Sue Hay (01432-357138; susan.hay@hhtr.nhs.uk).

Geological courses through the Continuing Education Department of **University of Bristol** include Jurassic contrasts of the Cotswolds (2 Apr); NE Wales (7-8 May); Pompeii and Herculaneum (13-20 May); Highland Border (15-21 May); Donegal (6-11 June); the north Cotswolds (18 June); Hebrides (26 June - 1 July); Swindon area (2 July). **Contact** Barbara Perks (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk) or the Bristol University web site (www.bris.ac.uk).

There's so much going on!

Web site

Rhian Hicks does a sterling job of managing our own web site - **www.swga.org.uk**. Rhian wants to add a section with photographs and reports of our activities. If you have anything you would like to share with others, please contact Rhian (through the web site).

Some help please!

Finally, we're constantly looking to promote geology and our own activities by taking displays to all sorts of **shows and events**. And we can make a big impression with our new membership leaflet, by selling copies of ***Walking the Rocks*** (it's selling quickly - make sure you don't miss out on a copy!) and a range of posters that have been produced for various events. But Committee members only know about a few of these events, and we're sure there must be lots more going on all over South Wales where a bit of geological information wouldn't go amiss. So **if you know of any events, or if you would like to help out at any, please contact President Lynfa**. Many thanks.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-sixth Session 2004-2005



May 2005

President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

Vice-President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Welcome to your final Newsletter of this 2004-2005 session. Enclosed is your **summer programme card**, with details of the field meetings between now and the autumn; further information is given below. A **renewal form** for next session is also enclosed. Remember, it eases our administration if you choose to renew now, but that your renewal is for the session from September 2005 to **September 2006** - if you renew now, don't be tempted to send us more money before at least this time next year! You'll also find a complementary copy of the recently produced **Cardiff Bay building stones** guide (expertly written by Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings) and copies of the **Secretary's Report** and **Treasurer's Report** from the Annual General Meeting in March, so that everyone sees these. I hope it all fitted through your letter-box! and that everyone will find something of interest in the summer programme. I hope to see you at one of the meetings.



Cardiff Geoconservation Days

Don't forget that Cardiff Geoconservation Days will be running monthly throughout the summer. The dates are **Saturdays, 11th June, 16th July, 13th August and 10th September** and their aim is to document all the notable geological sites within the County of Cardiff. Anyone is welcome to join these days; **meeting** arrangements are **10.00 am** in the Asda car park at Coryton interchange (M4/A470), Cardiff. You may like to bring a packed lunch, although every attempt will be made to find a suitable hostelry. If you want more details of the Cardiff geoconservation activities, contact Steve Howe.

Summer field meetings

After the Cardiff Geoconservation Day on Saturday 11th June, the next meeting will be on **Wednesday 15th June**, taking advantage of the long summer days with an evening walk at **Oxwich Head** on Gower. This will investigate the Carboniferous Limestone and the coastal landscape. **Meet at 7.00 pm at the Oxwich Bay car park (SS 501 865).**

Then on **Saturday 25th June**, Tony Ramsay will lead a day in the **upper Swansea Valley**, where he will outline the area's bid for **European Geopark** status and examine the geology of the Cribarth. **Meet** at the Craig-y-Nos Visitor Centre (SN 840 155) at **10.30 am** and remember to bring a packed lunch.

The second of the summer's evening geological walks will be to **Nash Point**, in the Vale of Glamorgan, with Tom Sharpe on **Wednesday 29th June**. Nash Point is one of the walks featured in the best-selling *Walking the Rocks*, and provides excellent exposures of the Lias succession amongst some spectacular coastal scenery. **Meet** at **7.00 pm** at the cliff-top car park at Nash Point (SS 916 683) at the end of the road from Marcross.

The weekend of 9th-10th July sees the **Cardiff Science Festival** taking place, and we have arranged two walks to examine building stones in Cardiff as part of this extravaganza. On **Saturday 9th July**, Eric Robinson will examine the **Building Stones of Cardiff City Centre**. **Meet** at **2.00 pm** on the front steps of the National Museum of Wales. On **Sunday 10th July**, Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings will examine the **Building Stones of Cardiff Bay**; **meet** in front of the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay at **2.00 pm**. A free copy of Lynda and Dave's superb leaflet describing some of the building stones used in Cardiff Bay is enclosed - we hope you're all impressed.

On **Saturday 23rd July** John Davies of CCW will examine some of the **Old Red Sandstone of Carmarthenshire**. The aim is to examine the nature of the oldest Old Red Sandstone in Carmarthenshire. We will start at Cwar Glas to examine exposures in the Sawdde Valley and Cennen Gorge and progress south-westwards along the strike of the basal Old Red Sandstone to Cwm Ffrwd. Here we will examine changes within the sequence and the relationship between the Old Red Sandstone (Silurian Red Beds) and the underlying Silurian and Ordovician. We will drive between sites and there will be some short walks. **Packed lunch** is essential. **Meet** at Cwar Glas, Pont ar Llechau (SN 727 248) in the Sawdde Gorge south of Llangadog at **11.00 am**.

On **Sunday 18th September** Sid Howells will take a walk from **Newgale to Solva, Pembrokeshire**. The view along the south coast of the St David's Peninsula from the hillside above Newgale is one of the finest in Pembrokeshire. The aim of this excursion is to

walk the coast path to Solva (**5 miles rugged walking**) and return to Newgale by public transport about 6.00 pm. Amongst the features to be seen are the barrier beach at Newgale, Precambrian volcanics, Cambrian sediments and Ordovician intrusions, the St Elvis lead mine (surface only), minor folding and the meltwater channels and rias at Solva. The beautiful secluded bay at Porthmynawyd offers an excellent swimming spot so come prepared! Packed lunch essential. **Meet** at **10.30 am** at the first large car park off the main road from Haverfordwest in Newgale (SM 850 218).

The final field meeting for the summer will be on **Saturday 8th October**, when Duncan Hawley will investigate the **Lower Old Red Sandstone of the Black Mountains**. This excursion will follow the eastern fringe of the Black Mountains and visit sites that are providing new findings, ideas and interpretations about Lower Old Red Sandstone environments. **Packed lunch** is essential and hard hats are suggested if possible. **Meet** at **10.00 am** at the car park in Talgarth (SO 153 337). The sites to be visited on this meeting form part of a chapter in the new guide to *Geological Excursions in South-East Wales*, which is currently in preparation and we hope will be published some time in the autumn.

For all field meetings, members are reminded of the Group's **Safety Procedures**, which are summarised on the enclosed programme card and will be reiterated at each field meeting. You must wear strong footwear and bring warm and waterproof clothing. If you have a safety helmet (hard hat) please bring it. We recommend all members who are interested in field meetings to purchase a safety helmet and a high-visibility vest-type jacket; these are available in DIY stores and are now legally required for visits to working quarries. All participants should adhere to the Group's Safety Policy at all times and take note of any safety instructions issued by the leader. Please try and arrive 5 or 10 minutes before the scheduled start of field meetings, to give time for safety procedures to be explained and carried out. Where packed lunches have been recommended

there is no guarantee that other catering facilities will be available at lunch time.

And finally, the first **lecture meeting** of the 2005-2006 winter programme is scheduled for **Saturday 15th October**, at University of Wales **Swansea** (Wallace Building), **starting at 11.00 am, with refreshments from 10.30**. The topic and speaker have still to be finalised, but please put the date in your diary now - if you renew now for 2005/6 your next Newsletter may not reach you until after 15th October. But if you want to know the final details of the meeting, please contact me by phone, email or letter closer to the time.

At the Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held in Swansea on Saturday 19th March, with 41 members present. Copies of the **Secretary's Report** and **Treasurer's Report** are attached, for those of you who weren't able to be there.

The Committee's nominations for the 2005-6 Committee were all accepted, so the **2005-6 Committee** comprises:

President:	Lynfa Lewis
Vice-President:	Tom Sharpe
Secretary:	Geraint Owen
Treasurer:	Malcolm Shaw
Programme Secretary:	Steve Howe
Membership Secretary:	Mike Lees
Editor:	Bob Owens
Committee Members:	Lesley Cherns Diane Davies Mike Gregory Rhian Hicks Nigel McGaw Mike Smith

Ex-officio Vice-President: Allan Cuthbertson
Co-opted Russell Society representatives:
Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings

Please get in touch with any Committee member if you have any comments at all about the Group or its running or its activities.

Other Events and Activities

Our Group will be taking a display to the **Kenfig Nature Reserve Open Day on 12th June** and the **Aberavon Show on 23rd July**. If you would like to attend either of these events and would be willing to look after the display, even just for quarter of an hour or so, please contact Lynfa Lewis (01639-769241 or lynfa.lewis@nantyreos.freeserve.co.uk). We also hope to take a display to the **Geologists' Association Annual Reunion**, which is back in London this year, in early November, and we will try to have a presence at the **National Eisteddfod in Swansea** in August 2006. Once again, please contact Lynfa if you're interested in either of these.

The Russell Society Wales and West Branch has meetings planned to Machen (17 July; 01633-660937) and Taffs Well Quarry (13 August; 02920-573361). **Contact** the phone numbers above if you are interested in attending.

The **Geologists' Association** has field meetings planned to Shropshire (10-12 June), the west of Ireland (5-12 September) and Dorset (1-2 October). Plans for 2006 include Oman (17-29 January), Barbados (early May) and Newfoundland (late July). **Contact** Sarah Stafford at the GA office (Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0DU; tel. 020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com) for information.

The **U3A South Wales Geology Group** will be visiting the **Strumble** peninsula on **Monday 13th June**. **Details** of this and other events with the U3A from Nigel McGaw.

The **Welsh Stone Forum** will be visiting Barmouth, Llanaber Church and Egryn on Saturday 25th June. For details **contact** Tim Palmer (01970-627107; palass@palass.org).

Places remain on some of the geological courses hosted by the **University of Bristol**: Precambrian Geology in the Outer Hebrides with Peter Hardy (26 June - 1 July); A geological transect across the North Cotswolds with David Green (Saturday 18 June); and Geology of the Swindon Area (Saturday 2 July).

For further details, **contact** Barbara Perks (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk) or the Bristol University geology web site (www.gly.bris.ac.uk).

Field meetings run by Chris Darmon, of GeoSupplies and **Down to Earth**, include Aust Cliff (17 July), Severn Valley Railway (8 August), Forest of Dean (24 September), and plenty more further afield. Longer trips will be visiting the Aberdeen area (19-26 June), Raasay and Skye (24-31 August), Ardnamurchan and Mull (5-12 September) and the Jurassic Heritage Coast of Dorset (30 September - 3 October). For further details, **contact** GeoSupplies (0114-245-5746; sales@geosupplies.co.uk).

The **Brecon Beacons Park Society** has a walk with a geological flavour on Friday 22nd July. Tony Ramsay will be leading a walk from Craig-y-nos Country Park into the Mynydd Du, to examine more of the landscape and heritage of the proposed Geopark area. Non-members are welcome (there is a £2 charge): **meet** at Craig-y-nos Country Park (SN 840 155) at 10.00 am. Bring a packed lunch.

The **Rock 'n' Gem Show** will be coming to South Wales on 6-7 August, at Margam Park. There will be about 30 exhibitors, the event will run each day from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm and entry will cost £2.60 (£2 for seniors and £1.25 for children). Further **details** from their web site, www.rockngem.co.uk. Further Rock 'n'

Gem shows will take place at Bath and West Showground (17-18 September) and Cheltenham Racecourse (19-20 November).

The Pembrokeshire Darwin Science Festival will include a visit to the **Preseli Hills** on **Sunday 14th August**. For more information about the Pembrokeshire Darwin Science Festival, phone 01437-764222, email darwin@darwincentre.com or look up www.darwincentre.com.

Orielton Field Centre will be running a short course from **Friday 19th to Tuesday 23rd August** on **Forts, Feathers and Folds**, designed to provide a detailed insight into the geology, history and natural history of the area. More **details** from Sally at the Field Centre (01646-623920) or contact 0845-330-7372 or www.field-studies-council.org/orielton/.

Also in Pembrokeshire, the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park will be running a visits to **Skomer Island** on **Wednesday 24th August** and the spectacular **Castlemartin (Range West)** part of the coastline on **Sunday 4th September**, both with significant geological interest. Details from the National Park Authority on 0845-345-7275 (info@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk; www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk).



So wherever you get to, have a great summer - there are plenty of exciting geological activities to get you out and about!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)

(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - SOUTH WALES GROUP
CYMDEITHAS Y DAEAREGWYR – GRŴP DE CYMRU

Registered Charity Number 1054303



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September 2005

Dear Member

I hope you have had a good summer, with lots of geology. The time of year has come round again when we ask officially for you to renew your membership of the GA South Wales Group. Many of you responded to our request for early renewals in June - thank you. If you did, there will be no renewal form with this letter, and you will receive your first Newsletter of the new session shortly. If a renewal form is enclosed, please fill it in and return it to Mike Lees to ensure that you continue to receive Newsletters and news about lectures, field meetings and other geological activities in the region. Thank you. The good news is that membership rates remain unchanged again, at just £8 for the year, or £4 for senior citizens and students.

I must tell you about a number of events taking place soon. The first of these is overleaf, on this **Sunday, 2nd October**.

As part of our summer field meeting programme, Duncan Hawley will lead us around the ***Lower Old Red Sandstone of the Black Mountains on Saturday 8th October***, and will point out some of the amazing discoveries that are putting new life into the Old Red Sandstone. **Meet at 10.00 am** at the Talgarth car park (SO 153 337) and bring a packed lunch.

The first lecture meeting of the new session will take place in Swansea on **Saturday 15th October**. Jane Davies of the Brecon Beacons National Park and Tony Ramsay will update us on developments in the important application for European Geopark status for the western Beacons and will highlight some of the geological and landscape splendours of the area in a talk intriguingly - and topically - entitled ***Geology and sustainable economic development***. The talk will begin at **11.00 am**, with free refreshments from 10.30, in the Wallace Building (Geography Department) of University of Wales **Swansea**.

The first Cardiff talk of the session will be on **Saturday 19th November**. In a special TR Owen Memorial Lecture, Prof Bill McGuire will talk on ***Surviving Armageddon: solutions for a threatened planet***. Bill McGuire is the author of many books on natural hazards and has made numerous TV appearances. His talk could not be more topical in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and last December's Indian Ocean tsunami disaster. We expect a record turnout for this event, at **11.00 am** in the Earth Sciences Department at Cardiff University, again with refreshments from 10.30.

Later in the session there will be more field meetings, talks on fossils, the history of geology, building stones, a special President's meeting and a *Holiday Geology* evening. To make sure you receive full details, renew your subscription!

Continued overleaf

Programme Secretary Steve Howe is concerned that attendances at summer field meetings have been rather low. He has asked if you would please take a few minutes to fill in the enclosed **questionnaire about field meetings**. You can return it with your renewal form to Mike Lees, bring it to any of our meetings, or return it to Steve, Mike or myself. Please let us know your views - even if you don't feel strongly one way or the other - and return your questionnaire by the end of November, so we can take your views into account in planning next summer's programme. Thank you.

Other important events are coming up, outside our own activities.

All South Wales GA members - that's you - have been kindly invited to a meeting of The **Russell Society** Wales and West Branch on **Sunday 2nd October** at Taffs Well Village Hall, starting at 10.00 am. As many of you know, the Russell Society's purpose is to study and enjoy minerals, so its interests overlap hugely with our own. The meeting on 2nd October is a Social and Workshop with the theme of ***Minerals of the South Wales Coalfield***. You are invited to bring along your own minerals - from anywhere in the world, not just the South Wales Coalfield - to have them expertly identified, or any specimens you want to swap or give away to others. There will be microscopes, ultraviolet light facilities, cameras and displays, and refreshments will be provided. The event will run from 10 am to 4 pm, and will include talks at 10.30 and 2.00. You're invited to bring along partners, families and friends, although it would be helpful if you could give Lynda Garfield or Dave Wellings an idea of how many people will be coming by ringing 02920-891588 or 01446-700414.

I have also been sent information about meetings of the Cardiff Scientific Society. On Wednesday evening **5th October** they will have a talk on ***Tsunamis, earthquakes and explosive volcanoes: the hazards of living on plate boundaries*** from Prof. Julian Pearce of Cardiff University. Full details can be obtained the Membership Secretary, Cardiff Scientific Society, University of Glamorgan, 4 Forest Grove, Treforest CF37 1DL, or from their web site: www.cardiffscientificsociety.org.uk

We are all invited and encouraged to attend the 15th **annual TR Owen Memorial Lecture**. This year's hosts are the Department of Adult Continuing Education, University of Wales Swansea, and the talk will be held at **Swansea Museum** (formerly the Royal Institution Museum) on **Thursday 20th October**, starting at 7.30 pm. Prof. Richard Lisle of Cardiff University will talk on ***South Wales: a natural laboratory for structural geology***. Richard will show how valuable the rocks of South Wales are in testing and developing advances in modern structural geology, surely a fitting legacy to the pioneering work of Dick Owen. I hope as many members as possible will attend this talk.

Also in October, Rick Turner, President of The Russell Society, will give a talk about ***A brief wander through Namibia*** on **Friday 21st October** at the Cardiff University Department of Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, starting at 6.30 pm.

I hope this cross-section of geological events across South Wales in the coming months will make you decide to renew your membership now (if a form is enclosed) to make sure you keep abreast of activities. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Geraint.



Forty-seventh Session 2005-2006



October 2005

President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

Vice-President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Thank you very much for renewing your membership of the South Wales GA for another year. **Welcome** to the new session, our forty-seventh. This mailing contains details of the winter programme and your membership card. One of the highlights will be the talk from TV's 'Mr Disaster', Professor **Bill McGuire**, on **Saturday 19th November**, in **Cardiff**. Make sure you get there early to get a seat! Also enclosed is another in the series of *Geological Walks in Wales*, and details of more publications, events and meetings hosted by our own Group and others. Read on!

Last-minute update! Since writing the Newsletter, I have heard that the bid to have the Fforest Fawr area in the west of the Brecon Beacons awarded European Geopark and UNESCO Global Geopark Network status has been successful. This is excellent news for geology in Wales. Congratulations to all involved in the bid. We look forward to seeing what this means in terms of exciting developments in the area.



Autumn Programme

I hope many of you will have collected your Newsletter and membership card at the first lecture meeting of the season, in Swansea on **Saturday 15th October**, when we will have heard from Jane Davies and Tony Ramsay about developments in the Brecon Beacons National Park's attempts to gain Geopark status for the western part of the Brecon Beacons.

The first **Cardiff** talk will take place on **Saturday 19th November**. We are delighted to host a talk from Professor **Bill McGuire** of the Benfield Hazard Research Centre at University College London, one of the world's foremost experts on geohazards and a well-known face on TV. Bill will talk to us on the morbid, but vitally important topic of ***Surviving Armageddon: solutions for a threatened***

planet, and we hope he will bring copies of his latest book for people to buy. So important is this talk for everyone that we have billed it as an extra **TR Owen Memorial Lecture**, and I'm sure there will be a big audience. The talk will begin at **11.00 am** in the Earth Sciences Department in the main building at Cardiff University, with free refreshments from 10.30.

Our December meeting, on **Saturday 10th**, will be a lecture from **Patrick Wyse Jackson** of Trinity College, Dublin. The title of his talk paints a marvellous picture - ***Chasing bryozoans in Ireland, Estonia and New Zealand: their use as cool-water biological palaeoclimate indicators***. It sounds like a fascinating journey. The talk will be in the Wallace Building (Geography Department) at University of Wales **Swansea**, starting at **11.00** with free refreshments from 10.30.

Arrangements for Meetings

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Talks in **Cardiff** are in the Earth Sciences Department in the main University building. Refreshments before the lecture are on the first floor, immediately to the left of the entrance off Park Place. **Parking** is available in the courtyard, although there may be a charge. Meetings in **Swansea** are in the Geography Department on the first floor of the Wallace (Natural Sciences) Building. This is on the left at the top of the driveway off Mumbles Road, and there is **parking** outside the building. Free **refreshments** are available for half an hour before lecture meetings. At Swansea meetings, this is an opportunity to buy books and leaflets that are on display. We take the speaker to **lunch** after each talk, and anyone is welcome to join us. Finally, if you can display **posters** of the programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please **contact me**.

Geoconservation Days

Monthly field days exploring the geological sites of Cardiff have continued through the summer. The final meeting for this session will take place on **Saturday 29th October** (not 22nd as originally advertised). Anyone is welcome to come along - all that is needed is an interest in finding the unexpected geological splendours of Cardiff. **Meet at 10.00 am** in the Asda car park at Coryton interchange (M4/A470), Cardiff. You may like to bring a packed lunch, although every attempt will be made to find a hostelry.

Other Autumn Events

The 15th Annual **TR Owen Memorial Lecture** will be held on the evening of **Thursday 20th October**, at **Swansea Museum**, starting at **7.30 pm**, hosted this year by the Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education. The speaker will be Prof. **Richard Lisle**, of Cardiff University, who was on the staff of the former Department of Geology at Swansea, and his topic will be *South Wales: a natural laboratory for structural geology*. Richard's

talk will show us how this branch of geology has developed since some of TR Owen's pioneering work in the South Wales Coalfield, and how the rocks of South Wales still provide answers to important problems.

The **Annual Reunion of the Geologists' Association** is to be held back at University College London this year, after its successful outing to Cardiff last year. It will take place on **Saturday 5th November** from 12.00 to 4.30 and all members are welcome to attend. We hope to take a display, and if you are going to the Reunion, please consider offering to look after our display for half an hour or so. If you're able to do that, please **contact** Tom Sharpe.

Holiday Geology

We will kick off the New Year with another *Holiday Geology* evening at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff on **Friday 6th January**. *Holiday Geology* evenings are open to all and are an opportunity to meet other members over a drink and nibbles. As always, we are looking for a few members to show some pictures of somewhere they have been that is unusual or interesting in terms of geology or landscape. You don't have to say much alongside the pictures, and it isn't even vital that you understand the geology you're showing. We want as many members as possible to have the opportunity to share their experiences with others of travels far or near.

As last year contributors will be limited to a **maximum of 20 images**, so it shouldn't be too daunting a task to give a presentation. We will be displaying digital images. If you already have digital images, please bring them on a CD. If you have images as slides or prints, please get them to Tom Sharpe at the National Museum Geology Department before Christmas; Tom will prepare them for displaying through a digital projector. So please, think about **volunteering to do a slot at Holiday Geology** and contact me or Tom to let us know your topic.

The New Year

After *Holiday Geology*, the next lecture meeting will be on Saturday 21st January, in Cardiff, when Dyfed Elis Gruffydd will talk on ***Henry Hicks: the bubble that refused to burst***. Our annual joint meeting with The Russell Society will take place in Swansea on Saturday 18th February when Graham Lott from the British Geological Survey will talk on the **Petrography of the Building Stones of South Wales**. The final lecture of the season will take place in Cardiff on Saturday 18th March, starting with our Annual General Meeting at 10.30 am. Our retiring President, Lynfa Lewis, will follow this with a personal view of her introduction to and experiences of geology in a talk about ***Geology and Me***. This meeting will take place during 2006 **Science Week** (10-19 March), so look out in the next Newsletter for details of other Science Week events, plus spring and summer field meetings.

Field meeting questionnaire

At our last Committee meeting, some concern was expressed at low numbers coming to field meetings over the summer. We want to try and find out the reasons for this. It may be that many people are too busy to make it to field meetings, or perhaps some people - particularly perhaps new members - aren't interested in this kind of event, or that the venues we have chosen seem uninteresting. With these possibilities in mind, Steve Howe, our Programme Secretary, put together a questionnaire which was sent with the September mailing.

Please complete and return your copy of the questionnaire; if you have lost it, please let me know and I will send you another. We would like to have questionnaires back in time to discuss the findings at our next Committee meeting in late November, so you can send the questionnaire back or bring it to a lecture meeting in Swansea or Cardiff.

Fieldwork is a vital part of geology, and for many members it is what interested them in the subject in the first place, so it is important that

we provide what our members want when it comes to field meetings, as well as being fair to people we have asked to lead field meetings to ensure that there is a good turnout on the day. If you have already returned your questionnaire, thank you very much; if not, please do it now!

Swansea Eisteddfod

As many of you know, the **National Eisteddfod** is to be held on the outskirts of **Swansea in August 2006**. At several past Eisteddfodau we have mounted a display, but this is an expensive undertaking. We are aware that most of our members will not benefit directly from us doing this, although raising the profile of geology amongst the public at large is part of our stated charitable aims. At past events we have therefore been careful to ensure that the additional costs of taking a display to the Eisteddfod have been covered by grant aid, which has meant a nail-biting time in the run-up to each event, wondering if we would be successful in receiving funding. Moreover, we have had difficulty in ensuring that we have at least one Welsh-speaker on the stand at all times (although non-Welsh speakers are more than welcome to help out as well) and, inevitably, the burden of planning for the event, organising helpers and attending to the display has fallen on a very few shoulders.

To date, we have not applied for funding for the Swansea Eisteddfod, and at the moment it looks as though we will probably not have a display at the Swansea Eisteddfod. If you have a view on this matter, or if you would like to offer to help - either in planning or in attending - please **contact** Lynfa Lewis or Tom Sharpe (who will be our President in August 2006) as soon as possible. Their contact details are at the start of this Newsletter and on your membership card.

Publications

At the last minute we were invited to participate in the **Cardiff Science Festival** on 9-10 July. Eric Robinson, Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings kindly agreed to lead walks around the building stones of Cardiff Bay, and Eric put

together a leaflet describing his walk, with help from Rhian Hicks, Tom Sharpe and Steve Howe. Eric's leaflet (*Geological Walks in Wales 14*) complements one already produced by Lynda and Dave, and the cost of producing it was covered by a grant from the organisers of the Festival, so we are pleased to be able to enclose a free copy for each member with this Newsletter. I'm sure you'll agree it's an attractive and informative leaflet. If you would like more copies, look out for them at lecture meetings, or contact Steve Howe or Tom Sharpe.

The print-run of 1000 copies of *Walking the Rocks*, produced in time for the Geofest in Cardiff last November, has now sold out! We were so pleased with the rate at which copies sold that we have printed another 1000 copies. So if you want copies for Christmas, they are once again available. You can buy them from bookshops across South Wales, although as a member you can buy copies at our lecture meetings at the special **members' price of just £6** (usual price £7.95).

Other Events

I haven't left much room to tell you about other groups' across South Wales. Members of our Group are welcome at most of these events, although it is advisable to check in advance.

The Russell Society has meetings about Namibia (21 Oct), analytical techniques (27 Nov) and zinc deposits (2 Dec). **Contact** 02920-891588.

The **Welsh Stone Forum** will visit Llandeilo and Dinefwr Park on Sat 29 Oct. **Contact** Tim Palmer - tjp@aber.ac.uk (01970-627107).

The first ever **GA Regional Lecture**, organised by the national GA, will take place on the evening of Thursday 10 Nov at Keele University. Richard Fortey will talk on *The Earth - an intimate history*. Members of our group are welcome, but must apply for a ticket - carol@burnett40.freemove.co.uk or 01782-713227 - before 25 Oct.

Cardiff Scientific Society meets on Wednesday evenings and has talks on crystals

(14 Dec) and the role of fossils in reconstructing continental positions (Bob Owens, 25 Jan).

Contact www.cardiffscientificsociety.org.uk.

Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education has a field class to the Neath Valley (29 Oct) and an introduction to geology at Ammanford in February. **Contact** www.swansea.ac.uk/dace or 01792-295522.

Continuing Education at the **University of Bristol** have a dayschool about Newfoundland geology (Tom Sharpe) in Bristol on 29 Oct. **Contact** www.gly.bris.ac.uk or 0117-954-5438.

Member News

I am sorry to report the deaths of Eddie Jones from Ferndale and Neil Bennett of Llandaff. Kathryn Bennett plans to climb Mt Kilimanjaro to raise funds for Cancer Research UK; if you would like to contribute, please contact Kathryn at Glyn Derwen, 63 Pwll Melin Road, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2NG.

Each year I remind you that we keep a **computerised database** of members' names and addresses. These are used only within the GA South Wales Group, primarily for generating address labels. Please let me know if you do **not** want your details kept in this way (this may result in a delay in you receiving mailings) or if you want to know the full details of the information we keep about you.

Finally, it has been suggested that, since many more people now use email than just a year or two ago, we might keep an **email register** of members willing to be contacted in this way. This won't yet replace the Newsletter, but it can be useful for reminders of meetings or notification of changes to the programme. If you want to be contacted by email, please **send an email** saying this either to me or via the web site to Rhian Hicks. Rhian has also asked if anyone has any **geological news, stories or pictures**, please send them to her and she will be only too pleased to put them up on our web site.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-seventh Session 2005-2006



December 2005

President: Lynfa Lewis [lynfalewis@nantyreos.freemove.co.uk]

Vice-President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Award for SWGA !



At the beginning of December, Steve Howe, Tom Sharpe and myself were delighted to attend a meeting of the Geologists' Association in Burlington House, headquarters of The Geological Society, to receive the **ENI Geological Challenge** on behalf of the Group for our guide to ***Walking the Rocks***. The ENI Geological Challenge rewards success in contributing to public understanding of geology. It is organised through *Down to Earth*, the free geological magazine, and sponsored by ENI, one of the world's leading integrated energy companies. The judges were award-winning geology author Richard Fortey of the Natural History Museum, Chris Darmon of GeoSupplies, who produce *Down to Earth*, and John Bell of ENI. The judges were impressed by 'the professionalism shown, not only in the writing and production of the book, but also the fact that the book has been a success in terms of the number of copies sold.' The three authors each received an engraved glass plaque, and the South Wales Group received a cheque for £250.

The picture shows Steve, Tom and myself receiving the award from judges Richard Fortey (second from left) and John Bell (centre). Chris Darmon took the photograph.



Holiday Geology, Cardiff, Friday 6th January

We are delighted to be able to begin the New Year again with a *Holiday Geology* evening of members' pictures, hosted by the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. Thanks to the volunteers who responded to the call in the last Newsletter, we already have a full programme for the evening, although if you are desperate to share a few images with everyone, please contact me or Tom Sharpe - we may be able to fit you in.

The evening promises to transport us from the Grand Canyon to Yellowstone and the Tetons, via Alaska to China and the Far East, and back via Santorini and Italy to Ireland and the eastern coalfield. What a splendid evening to look forward to! Make sure you don't miss it!

As always, we welcome **all** members at this informal meeting. There will be refreshments, publications for sale, and plenty of opportunity to meet other members. If you have friends or relatives who might be interested in joining the GA, please bring them along too.

We have to be escorted into the Museum since it is after closing hours, so please **MEET at the Porters' Lodge at the rear entrance to the Museum at or just before 6.30**. This entrance is between the museum car park (entrance off Museum Avenue) and the museum, down a ramp from Museum Avenue or down steps from the car park. The porters' lodge is on the left as you look at the back of the museum.

I look forward to seeing you at *Holiday Geology* to get the year off to an excellent start.

2006 lecture meetings

The first lecture meeting of 2006 will take place in Cardiff University (Earth Sciences Department, Main Building) on **Saturday 21st January**, starting at 11.00, with refreshments

from 10.30. Our member, Dr Dyfed Elis Gruffydd will talk on ***Henry Hicks: the bubble that refused to burst***. The history of geology always enthralled, particularly when we hear of the important part played by Wales in the development of the subject. Henry Hicks was born in St David's in 1837 and did much to unravel the geology and stratigraphy of that part of Pembrokeshire, as well as contributing to many of the developments that geology was undergoing in the mid-nineteenth century, so this will be a fascinating talk.

Our annual joint meeting with the mineralogists of the **Russell Society** will take place at University of Wales Swansea (Geography Department, Wallace Building) on **Saturday 18th February**, again starting at 11.00, with refreshments and book sales from 10.30. Dr Graham Lott of the British Geological Survey will talk on the ***Petrography of the Building Stones of South Wales***. We have such a rich diversity of superb building materials in south Wales that as geologists we ought to know more about their origins and properties.

We hope to be able to follow Dr Lott's talk with a **walking tour** of some of Swansea's building stones, but final details are not yet available. If you would like to see in the afternoon what Dr Lott talks about in the morning, please come prepared for an all-day meeting. Arrangements for the afternoon will be announced in the morning.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will take place in Cardiff University on **Saturday 18th March**. Lynfa Lewis comes to the end of her two years as President and will mark the occasion with her **Retiring President's Address** entitled ***Geology and Me***. Nobody can fail to be affected by Lynfa's enthusiasm and aptitude for geology, so make sure you come to Cardiff to find out where that has come from. Lynfa's talk will begin as soon as the AGM ends, and the AGM begins earlier than most lecture meetings, at **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00.

Another Newsletter nearer to the time will include the agenda for the AGM, together with details of our **summer programme of field meetings**. Many thanks to everyone who returned the **field meeting questionnaire**. It seems that a majority of members are satisfied with the kinds of field meetings we are putting on, but that - as is so often the case these days - many people are unable to attend as much as they would like because of the many different demands on their time. The questionnaire responses contained a number of ideas for types of field meetings or venues, and Steve Howe will take those suggestions into account in planning the summer programme.

Autumn meetings

We apologise for the last-minute changes to our planned lecture programme in the autumn. Bill McGuire contacted us a couple of days before his lecture in November to say he was ill, so I stood in with a lecture on our *Perilous Planet*. Then Patrick Wyse Jackson contacted us a couple of days before his lecture in December to say he was struck down with flu and would be unable to come to talk to us, so Tom Sharpe stood in with a lecture on *Santorini*. Apologies to those of you who came hoping to hear Bill McGuire and Patrick Wyse Jackson, but we hope everyone enjoyed the lectures that were given.

October's lecture went as planned, and we heard from Jane Davies and Tony Ramsay about the new **Fforest Fawr Geopark**, the negotiations that led up to its successful designation as a Geopark and the implications of Geopark status for the region and its geology. I hope South Wales GA will be able to work closely with the developing Geopark and that it will bring lots of new opportunities for us to examine the fascinating geology and landscape of the area.

Finally, several members attended the **GA Reunion** and represented the South Wales Group at the annual get-together for so many GA Groups. After last year's successful Geofest in Cardiff, the Reunion returned to

London this year. It will be there again next year, before moving out again in 2007.

Swansea Eisteddfod

Thank you very much to those who volunteered their help towards a GA display at the Swansea Eisteddfod in August 2006. At the most recent Committee meeting, however, it was decided that we would **not** go ahead with this project. It was noted that mounting a display at the Eisteddfod involves a huge amount of effort and a considerable financial outlay. We do not have time to try and cover the costs through grant aid, and most Committee members felt that, for a small organisation like ours, our efforts are better put towards taking displays to more modest local events, particularly those with a scientific or environmental theme, such as the Cardiff Science Festival and the Kenfig Nature Reserve Open Day. We are sorry if this disappoints some members, but hope you will understand.

Down to Earth

The latest issue of the free magazine *Down to Earth* (no. 53, November 2005) has an article about the Kashmir earthquake, an article by Iain Stewart of the BBC's *Journeys from the Centre of the Earth*, information about the European Geopark Network, book reviews, sales, adverts and a competition. If you didn't pick up a copy at our last lecture meeting, they should be available at *Holiday Geology*.

Other Events

Danny McCarroll, one of my colleagues in the Geography Department at Swansea (now part of the School of the Environment and Society) who has spoken to the Group in the past on the glacial history of Wales and the Irish Sea, was recently awarded a personal Chair. Professor McCarroll will present his inaugural lecture on **Wednesday 18th January 2006** in the Wallace (Joint) Lecture Theatre of the Geography Department at University of Wales

Swansea. Danny recently won a major grant towards reconstructing the climate of the past 1000 years using all available sources, and the title of his inaugural lecture will be *Climate change and the new Millennium*. Admission is free and **all are welcome**. The lecture will begin at 5.30, with refreshments from 5.00 pm. I hope Danny will return to talk to our group once the project is under way, but come and hear what it's all about in January.

Cardiff Scientific Society meets on Wednesday evenings. Their programme includes a talk on the role of fossils in reconstructing continental positions from Bob Owens on January 25th. Visit their web site: www.cardiffscientificsociety.org.uk.

Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education has an introductory geology course in Ammanford on 6 Thursday evenings from 16th February and a series of evening lectures, practical classes and day trips on The Cambrian Orogeny in Wales starting on Thursday 27th April. **Contact** 01792-295522 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace or.

Tom Sharpe is planning overseas field trips for Cardiff and Bristol extra-mural departments, to Newfoundland and Santorini. **Contact** Tom directly for more information.

Continuing Education at the **University of Bristol** have many geological events coming up. There are day schools and field trips on Santorini (21 Jan, Bristol), Vesuvius (28 Jan, Bristol), Forest of Dean (25 Feb), Purbeck (John Cope, 3-5 March), Malvern (18

March), Cotswolds (1 April), geology for archaeologists (8 Apr, Bristol), Malvern (22 Apr), South Devon (John Cope, 28-30 Apr), Cotswolds (13 May), SW Scotland (14-20 May), Bristol area (10 June), Builth (24-25 June), and longer tours to Santorini (9-23 May), Pompeii (10-17 May), Newfoundland (Tom Sharpe, 22 June - 5 July) and Brittany (September). For more details, **contact** www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce or 0117-954-5438.

The **Geologists' Association** will be coming to South Wales for a Geology Weekend in early March. Other GA trips of interest include Barbados (3-10 May), Newfoundland (late July) and Frankfurt Museum, including a visit to the Messel World Heritage Site (26-29 Oct). **Details** from Sarah in the GA Office (020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com).

GeoSupplies, publishers of Down to Earth, are organising a number of study tours, led by Chris Darmon. These include Iceland (3-10 April and 9-16 April), Lake District (28 April - 2 May), north and west Cornwall (8-15 May), Anglesey (26-30 May), Rum and Eigg (6-15 June), Shetland (16-24 June), Raasay and Skye (23-30 August), the Welsh Borderland (1-8 September), Isle of Wight (18-22 September) and the Yorkshire Dales (6-8 October). **Details** from GeoSupplies (49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE; tel. 0114-245-5746; www.geosupplies.co.uk).

Finally ...

... all that remains is for me to wish you all a very happy time over the Christmas holiday period. I look forward to seeing you at meetings in the New Year, starting with *Holiday Geology* on the evening of Friday 6th January.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

**Forty-seventh Session 2005-2006****March 2006***President:* Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]*Vice-President:* Nigel McGaw*Membership Secretary:* Mike Lees [01792-774527]*Programme Secretary:* Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]*Editor:* Bob Owens*Secretary:* Geraint Owen*Treasurer:* Malcolm Shaw**Summer Field Meetings**

The last lecture of our 2005-2006 winter programme took place on Saturday 18th March, after our Annual General Meeting - more below. We now move on to our **summer field meetings**. Details are enclosed on a separate flier. I hope you will find them interesting and be able to make it along to some of them - there should be something for everyone.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting for the 47th session (2005-2006) was held in Cardiff on Saturday 18th March. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports will be sent to all members with the next Newsletter.

The Committee's recommendations for nominations to the Committee were approved, so Tom Sharpe takes over from Lynfa Lewis as **President** for 2006-2008, and Nigel McGaw takes on the mantle of **Vice-President**. Malcolm Shaw and Stephen Howe continue as **Treasurer** and **Programme Secretary**, Diane Davies has agreed to serve another term as a **Committee member**, and Allan Cuthbertson, having reached the end of his term as Vice-President, President (2002-2004) and *ex-officio* Vice-President has agreed to take the other **Committee member** post. A **Russell Society** member will continue to be co-opted, a duty that has been shared by Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings.

And I'm sure everyone will be pleased to hear that there is no change in the membership rates for next year!

At the end of the meeting Tom Sharpe took over and thanked Lynfa for her enthusiastic and successful term of office, the highlight of which was the immensely successful **Geofest** in Cardiff in November 2004, the first time ever the GA Reunion moved outside England and only the second time outside London.

The Annual General Meeting was followed by Lynfa's **Retiring President's Address - Geology and Me**. This amused, amazed, entertained and fascinated us for 50 minutes and I'm sure I was not the only one to be quite overawed by Lynfa's boundless enthusiasm and energy, which has seen her becoming not only a fossil expert who has certainly managed to "get her eye in" but also a TV superstar. It was an excellent and entertaining talk. And it was great to have Lynfa's husband, Trevor, there too - a first, but hopefully not a last time!

Summer Field Meetings

Details of summer field meetings are enclosed, and a programme card will be sent in May. As I write this, Steve is putting some final details together, but provisional dates for your diaries

include the second part of Duncan Hawley's investigation of the **Old Red Sandstone of the Black Mountains** on Saturday 15th July; **Strumble Head** with Richard Bevins on Sunday 17th September; and **Gower churches** with John Davies on Saturday 7th October. Also planned are trips to the Mendips and evening walks on Gower and in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Field Meetings Questionnaire

A very big thank you to everyone who returned the field meetings questionnaire in the autumn. An amazing 76 replies were received, which allows us to be sure they give a fair indication of members' views on field meetings.

The answers indicated that, although some field meetings recently have had a rather low turnout, members are happy that we should continue to hold field meetings, at about the frequency we do at present, to the kinds of places we offer at present, and of the type that we have been offering recently. The main obstacle to attending for many people - as with so much else these days - is that they have too many other demands on their time. It is extremely reassuring to know that members feel the field programme is providing what they want and it gives us the mandate to continue to offer the same kinds of events. There was no consensus on what day to hold meetings or whether to offer full-day or half-day meetings, but we will try to hold some meetings on Sundays as well as Saturdays, and consider meetings that people can join for a full or half day. Steve has been given lots of ideas for venues for field meetings, so you can look out for some of those cropping up this summer and next.

Recent meetings

There was an excellent turnout of about 65 members for *Holiday Geology* at the National Museum in Cardiff on the evening of Friday 6th January. Once again we were generously hosted by the Geology Department at the Museum, and are indebted to Mike Bassett for his support. Those present were treated to a fascinating tour of places of geological interest, and all those who gave talks did a superb job - thank you very

much to all of you.

Linda Anderson took us to the Valley of the Kings in Egypt, and Merlys Gavin to the United States of America. Nigel McGaw guided us through the metamorphic rocks of the west of Ireland and Howard Bartlett took us on a cruise through spectacular Guilin karst in China - more below! Gethin Rees took us to the USA and then to the rest of the world, Dave Wellings took us diving off south-west Ireland, Lynda Garfield guided us to some old mine sites in the Italian Dolomites, and Tom Sharpe took us to Santorini. It's making me quite dizzy just to remember it all! In addition, Howard Bartlett, Dave Wellings and Lynda Garfield put on displays of minerals, rocks and fossils. It was an excellent evening - thank you to all those people.

Dyfed Elis Gruffydd's talk on pioneering palaeontologist Henry Hicks, Graham Lott's talk on building stones of South Wales and John Davies's tour of Swansea's building stones went ahead as planned and were very well attended.



"What is that picture?" I hear you ask! Well, Howard Bartlett has asked me to include a follow-up to one or two aspects of his talk and display at *Holiday Geology*. He wants to let those who attended know that "Yes, that really was me on the camel and the horse. They weren't faked and yes, they were very much alive." Howard also says that "The fossil *Keichiosaurus* sp. by consensus was considered real. They are available on eBay as I discovered on my return from China."



Publications

Lynda Garfield, Dave Wellings and Eric Robinson led guided walks to examine the building stones of Cardiff as part of the Cardiff Science Festival last September. A leaflet in the *Geological Walks in Wales* series covering the Building Stones of Cardiff Bay, prepared by Lynda and Dave has already been published, and funding from the Festival has now allowed the publication of two others - English and Welsh versions of a guide to the ***Building Stones of Cardiff: Cathays Park and the Civic Centre*** prepared by Eric Robinson with design by Rhian Hicks. These leaflets are excellent additions to the *Geological Walks in Wales* series.

The British Geological Survey continues to update and improve its **British Regional Geology** series. The latest is the revised guide to ***The Palaeogene [Tertiary] volcanic districts of Scotland***. Despite a considerably increased (more realistic) price of £18, the new guide remains excellent value for money, with full-colour illustrations and maps and very detailed descriptions and interpretations.

Earth Science Education Forum - Cymru

The Earth Science Education Forum Cymru was launched at the National Museum in Cardiff on 24th January. The launch was attended by all sorts of people with an interest in Earth science and Earth science education in Wales, including several members of our own group and of the Russell Society. The initial discussion meeting

was followed by a lecture introduced and attended by Rhodri Morgan.

The Earth Science Education Forum (ESEF) exists to support Earth-science education and has been established in recognition of the lack of a central co-ordinating body for groups interested in promoting Earth-science education. A Forum has already been very successful in England at raising the profile of geology amongst politicians, with regular meetings at the Houses of Parliament. Its aim is to involve all bodies with an interest in Earth-science education, including teachers and teachers' organisations, groups such as our own, the Geological Society, relevant industries such as energy and quarrying companies, the Geological Survey, national parks, planners, local authorities, and local and national politicians. The Forum has been driven forward by Allan Rogers, former MEP and MP for the Rhondda who, as a geologist himself, saw the need to respond to the ignorance of politicians and the public on many vital issues relating to Earth science. The aim of the Welsh arm is to focus on the Assembly rather than Westminster, by bringing together interested parties, holding meetings, and helping groups such as ours.

Look out for more information and news from the Forum in the future.

Fforest Fawr Geopark

The official launch of the Geopark will take place at the Brecon Beacons Mountain Centre in late April. We hope several representatives of our Group will be invited and will be present, and that our Group will also be represented on the Geopark steering group. We look forward to working with the Geopark to develop geological activities and resources.

Other Events

Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) has trips to Cardigan (10 June), Newport Gwent (1 July) and central Wales (9 Sep). **Details** from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk).

The **Geologists' Association** is running a trip to Frankfurt Museum, including a visit to the

Messel World Heritage Site (26-29 Oct). **Details** from Sarah in the GA Office (020-7434-9298; geol.assoc@btinternet.com).

Brecon Beacons National Park have two guided walks in the upper Swansea valley with a geological flavour, led by myself, visiting Cwm Haffes and Cribarth on Wednesday 12 April, and Penwyllt on Wednesday 31 May. **Meet** at Craig-y-nos Country Park at 10.00 am. Both walks will be about 8 miles long and fairly strenuous - bring walking boots and lunch.

Tom Sharpe is planning overseas field trips for Cardiff and Bristol extra-mural departments, to Newfoundland and Santorini. **Contact** Tom directly for more information.

Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education has evening lectures, practical classes and day trips on *The Cambrian Orogeny in Wales* starting on Thursday 27th April. They will be running a series of half-day **Field Studies in the Brecon Beacons**, with a selection each time from a botanist (Charles Hipkin), zoologist (Michael Isaac), geologist (myself) and National Park staff, visiting Nant Llech in the upper Swansea Valley (14 May), Penwyllt (4 June), Gwaun Cefnygarreg near Ystradfellte (18 June), and Henallt Common near Hay Bluff (9 July). **Contact** 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.

Continuing Education at **University of Bristol** have many geological events coming up, with day schools and field trips on the Cotswolds (1 April), geology for archaeologists (8 Apr, Bristol), Malverns (22 Apr), South Devon (John Cope, 28-30 Apr), Cotswolds (13 May), SW Scotland (14-20 May), Bristol area (10 June), Bulth (24-25 June), and longer tours to Santorini (9-23 May), Pompeii (10-17 May), Newfoundland (Tom Sharpe, 22 June - 5 July) and Brittany (September). For details, **contact**

www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce or 0117-954-5438.

Study tours led by Chris Darmon of **GeoSupplies**, publishers of *Down to Earth*, include Lake District (28 April - 2 May), Cornwall (8-15 May) Anglesey (26-30 May), Rum and Eigg (6-15 June), Raasay and Skye (23-30 August), the Welsh Borderland (1-8 September), Isle of Wight (18-22 September) and the Yorkshire Dales (6-8 October). Plus! day trips to Cleeve Hill (7 May), Ogmere (11 June), Portishead (9 July), May Hill (15 July), Forest of Dean by train (26 July) and The Bloreng (29 July), as well as many more further afield. **Details** from GeoSupplies (49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE; tel. 0114-245-5746; www.geosupplies.co.uk).

I have been sent details of a fascinating geological tour through the **Indian Himalayas - The Making of Mountains** from 26 July to 13 August. The guide will be Dr Yani Najman, an expert on Himalayan geology and winner of the European Geosciences Union Outstanding Young Scientist medal in 2003. The tour will begin in the Himalayan foothills and continue through the high Himalayas to the Indus valley in Ladakh, with an optional day-trip to Agra and the Taj Mahal. It sounds wonderful! The cost is £2245 per person sharing, including all meals, accommodation, internal flights and transfers. **Contact** me for an information sheet, or Indus Tours (020-8901-7320; www.industours.co.uk).

Rock 'n' Gem Shows will take place in Bulth Wells (12/13 August), Bath (16/17 September) and Margam Park (28/29 October). For **details** phone 01628-621697.



Well, that's all I have room for this time. Make sure you put the dates of the field meetings in your diaries now, and I hope we have some good weather to enjoy them!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-seventh Session 2005-2006



June 2006

President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Vice-President: Nigel McGaw

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw



Summer Field Meetings

Details of the field meetings programme were included with the last mailing, and are summarised on the enclosed summer programme card. Please read the **safety** advice on the back of the card and the section on safety below carefully. You should bring a **packed lunch** for all the full-day meetings.

There are still places left on the trip to **Flatholm** on the morning of **Sunday 18th June**. If you have lost your booking form, please contact Steve Howe directly, as **pre-booking is essential**. Meet at the Flatholm Project Office, Barry Old Harbour, Barry Island (ST 124 667) at 9.00; if you aren't there in time the boat will leave without you! The boat should return to Barry by about 1.30. The cost will be £15 or less and you can reserve a place with a £10 deposit. Our guide for the trip will be Chris Lee from the University of Glamorgan.

The first of the summer's evening walks will be on **Wednesday 5th July**, with myself, to **Bracelet Bay, Gower**. We will examine structures and fossils in the Carboniferous Limestone of Bracelet and Limeslade Bays. **Meet** at 7.00 pm at the Bracelet Bay car park (SS 628 873).

On **Saturday 15th July** Duncan Hawley will take the second part of the trip he began last

year on the **Old Red Sandstone of the Black Mountains**, concentrating on the eastern section. **Meet** at 10.00 am at Abergavenny Railway Station car park (SO 305 136).

Tom Sharpe will take an evening walk at **Penarth** on **Wednesday 19th July**. **Meet** at the cliff-top car park, at the end of Cliff Parade, Penarth, at 7.00 pm (ST 186 704).

It's Tom again on **Saturday 19th August**, crossing the border to visit **Burrington Combe and Cheddar**. **Meet** at 11.00 am at the car park near Aveline's Hole on the B3134 in Burrington Combe (ST 476 587).

The destination is in the other direction on **Sunday 17th September**, when Richard Bevins will examine the geology of **Strumble Head, Pembrokeshire**. **Meet** at 11.00 am at the Strumble Head car park (SM 895 414).

And finally, as previously notified, on **Saturday 7th October** John Davies will examine the **Geology of some Gower Churches** in a joint meeting with the Welsh Stone Forum. **Meet** at 11.00 am at The Green, Llangennith, Gower (SS 428 914).

Safety

A reminder of our safety procedures is on the back of the programme card - please read it before you come on any field meetings. A

summary will be given at the start of each meeting, and you will be asked to **'sign in'** to confirm you are aware of the advice. If you leave before the end, you should **'sign out'** as well. General safety issues include being aware of your **surroundings**, taking care of your **footing** and being aware of **other people**. Wear **suitable clothing** for the venue and likely weather conditions, such as warm waterproof clothes and sturdy footwear. Bring your own basic first-aid kit if you have one. **Children** under 16 must be accompanied by an adult who will be responsible for them.

For many field trips no specialist **safety equipment** is needed, but if we visit a quarry everyone should wear a safety helmet ('hard hat') and high-visibility jacket. It is becoming increasingly necessary for people to own their own helmets and jackets. They can be bought at builders' merchants and many DIY stores; one local example is Greenham (www.greenham.com), who have a branch at Pontypridd (Gellihirion Industrial Estate) and are linked to WA Blyth in Fforestfach, Swansea. **We urge anyone who comes regularly to field meetings to purchase your own safety equipment and bring it along with you to field meetings.**

Autumn programme

It seems a long way ahead, but you may not receive another mailing before the first meeting of our 2006-2007 lecture programme, so put the date of that meeting in your diary now! It will take place on **Saturday 14th October in Cardiff**. The speaker and topic have still to be arranged.

Recent Events

The official launch of the **Fforest Fawr Geopark** took place in late April and was attended by several of our members, as well as by Neil Kinnock and Rhodri Morgan.

The organisational structure of the Geopark is still being put into place, and we await the first significant activities. The second meeting of the **Earth Science Education Forum, Cymru** took place in Cardiff in early May.

Notable Anniversaries

Our Group's 50th anniversary looms on the horizon! The first meeting was in January 1960, so our 50th anniversary won't be until 2010, but our **50th session will be 2008-2009**, when Nigel McGaw, who has just taken on the role of incoming Vice-President, will be President. In Committee meetings we are starting to think of ways to celebrate this special session, and would **welcome ideas from members**. It seems a long way off, but if we choose to put on any kind of event that involves organisation, that may well take 2 years of planning.

Between now and then there are other celebrations. The **Geological Society of London** will be 200 years old in 2007 and is planning events up and down the country commemorating notable geologists or geological developments in places associated with them ('Local Heroes' - and heroines, I presume). **Do you have any ideas for events we could hold in South Wales?** Let me know. In 2008, **The Geologists' Association**, of which we are a Local Group, celebrates its 150th anniversary, while the latter part of that year will see the start of our own 50th session. 2008 will also be the United Nations **International Year of Planet Earth**, running - somewhat oddly - from 2007-2009. All in all, quite a concentration of notable events.

What should we do to join in the celebrations? Please let me or any committee member know if you have any ideas.

Geoconservation

Geoconservation, geodiversity, geotourism and Earth-heritage conservation, are now important concepts in geology, partly as a development of the RIGS movement of recent years. Local expressions include the Cardiff Geoconservation Days that Steve Howe has coordinated for the last few years, and the creation of the Fforest Fawr Geopark. I receive regular news of geoconservation activities close to our area.

The Spring 2006 Newsletter of the **Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust** (No. 19) explains how this Trust has grown out of a RIGS Group over the past 10 years with funding from many bodies including the Heritage Lottery Fund, the County Councils, the Aggregates Levy Fund, RSNC and English Nature. Notable achievements have included the formation in 2003 of the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark and the formation in 2000 of a “national organisation dealing with geological conservation and awareness - **the Geology Trusts**”. Other items include details of Rock & Fossil Roadshows (Worcester, Aug 15-17; Leominster, 27 Oct) and aspects of the geology of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. **For more information**, contact www.EarthHeritageTrust.org, eht@worc.ac.uk, 01905-855184.

The Spring 2006 “Community Newsletter” of the **Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark** has information about guides to quarry trails funded by the Aggregate Levy Fund, a community liaison project, Lifelong Learning activities, and information about specific sites. Forthcoming activities include a Rock and Fossil Roadshow at Berkley Castle (24/25 June), an Open Day at University of Worcester (25 June) and a session on the Geology of Wine (29/30 June). **For more information** about the Geopark or any of the activities, consult

www.geopark.org.uk, rona.davis@worc.ac.uk or 01905-855185. The Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark was the first to be set up in England and Wales, in 2003; this newsletter and the activities it highlights may be an indication of what we can expect from the Fforest Fawr Geopark in a few years.

Rollo Gillespie (r.gillespie@worc.ac.uk) is in the process of setting up a **Monmouthshire (or Gwent) Geology Trust**. This will promote geoconservation in Monmouthshire and will adjoin the existing Hereford and Worcester Earth Heritage Trust and Gloucester Geo-Conservation Trust. Our Group has offered help to Rollo, such as joint meetings and exchange of news. If you are in the Monmouthshire area and want to get involved, or just to know more, please **contact Rollo** directly - I am sure he will be delighted to hear from you and to build up a pool of interested people.

The Summer 2006 **UKRIGS Newsletter** has just arrived. It includes details of the Second International Conference of Geoparks (Belfast, 17-21 Sep), Earth Science Teachers’ Association Annual Conference (Bristol, 15-17 Sep) and a *Virtual Quarry* web site (www.virtualquarry.co.uk). For more information, contact the Editor, Cynthia Burek (c.burek@chester.ac.uk).

Other Events

The **U3A South Wales Geology Group** holds monthly Monday field meetings. They are due to visit St David’s area with Dyfed Elis Gruffydd (17 July), Merthyr Common with Tom Sharpe (21 August), Abergavenny area with David Mitchell (18 Sep), Cardiff area with Steve Howe (9 October) and Forest of Dean with David Owen (20 November). Quite a few people are already members of both Groups; if you want to know more about the U3A group, please **contact** Nigel McGaw (01656-654439).

The **Russell Society Wales and West Branch** has field meetings planned to Tytherington (2 July), NW Wales (July), Machen (6 Aug), Taffs Well (2 Sep) and Forest of Dean (end Sep). For details, **contact** Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9 pm). For quarry visits you will have to provide your own safety helmet, safety boots and high-visibility jacket, as well as gloves and eye protection.

Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) has trips to Cardigan (10 June), Newport Gwent (1 July) and central Wales (9 Sep). **Details** from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk).

Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education is running a series of afternoon **Field Studies in the Brecon Beacons**, with a selection each time from a botanist (Charles Hipkin), zoologist (Michael Isaac), geologist (myself) and National Park staff, visiting Gwaun Cefnygarreg near Ystradfellte (18 June), and Henallt Common near Hay Bluff (9 July). **Contact** 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.

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Blorengre (29 July), as well as many more further afield. **Details** from GeoSupplies (49 Station Road, Chapeltown, Sheffield S35 2XE; tel. 0114-245-5746; www.geosupplies.co.uk).

Details were given last time of a geological tour through the **Indian Himalayas - The Making of Mountains** from 26 July to 13 August. If you are interested, **contact** Indus Tours (020-8901-7320; www.industours.co.uk) to find out if there are still places.

Rock 'n' Gem Shows will take place in Builth Wells (12/13 August), Bath (16/17 September) and Margam Park (28/29 October). For **details** phone 01628-621697.

Member News

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that one of our Honorary Members, past-Chairman Michael Bassett, has been awarded this year's **Coke Medal** from the Geological Society of London. I am sure you will all join in congratulating Mike on yet another recognition of his achievements, this time not only in scientific research, but also in the wider public promotion of Earth Sciences, including his involvement with our own Group. Well done Mike!

Allan Cuthbertson encourages you all to have a look at his web site, **www.cuthbertson.org**. At Allan's retiring President's Address a couple of years ago, many of us were amazed by his stunning aerial photographs of Wales, taken from his microlight. These can now be seen on the web site, along with lots of fascinating information about the geology of Wales and the history of the iron-making industry.

And last but not least, congratulations from all of us to long-time members Rhian Hicks (who looks after our web site) and Andy Kendall, who celebrated their wedding a few weeks ago.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

**Forty-eighth Session 2006-2007**

October 2006

President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]**Vice-President:** Nigel McGaw**Membership Secretary:** Mike Lees [01792-774527]**Programme Secretary:** Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]**Editor:** Bob Owens**Secretary:** Geraint Owen**Treasurer:** Malcolm Shaw

Welcome to the first Newsletter of this, the Group's 48th session, and thank you very much for renewing your membership for another year. Your membership card is enclosed, with a summary of the lecture meetings between now and the AGM next March. I hope you will find it a varied and exciting programme, and I look forward to seeing you at some of the meetings.



Lecture programme

By the time you read this, the first lecture will have taken place, on Saturday 14th October, in Cardiff, with Howard Bartlett talking about his geological experiences in *China, China!*

On **Saturday 18th November**, in **Swansea**, Prof. John Mather from the University of London will tell us about the ***Geology of bottled water***. Much of today's bottled water comes from underground sources, so geology plays a vital part in the make-up of the water. It will be very interesting to hear what we're actually drinking!

The final lecture of 2006 will be in **Cardiff** on **Saturday 9th December**. Dr Howard Falcon-Lang from the University of Bristol will draw comparisons between Carboniferous Britain and the modern humid tropics in ***Coal, fire and ancient rain forests***. Studies of Carboniferous fossil forests in Canada and elsewhere in recent years have allowed many interpretations to be made about the ecology of these first tropical rainforests, with lessons for the present day.

Lectures continue into 2007 with ***Ice streams: the arteries of the Antarctic ice sheet*** from Prof Tavi Murray in Swansea on Saturday 20th January; ***Minerals and geology in Namibia*** from Rick Turner in Cardiff on Saturday 17th February (joint meeting with the Russell Society); and ***Extraordinary fossils from the Cretaceous of northeast Brazil*** from Dr John Nudds in Swansea on Saturday 17th March, after the AGM. More details of those in a December newsletter.

Arrangments for Meetings

Dates, times and venues are summarised on your membership card. Talks in **Cardiff** are in the Earth Sciences Department in the main University building. Refreshments before the lecture are on the first floor, immediately to the left of the entrance off Park Place. **Parking** is available in the courtyard, although there may be a charge. Meetings in **Swansea** are in the Geography Department on the first floor of the Wallace Building. This is on the left at the top of the driveway off Mumbles Road, and there is **parking** outside the building. Free **refreshments** are available for half an hour before lecture

meetings. At Swansea meetings, this is often an opportunity to buy books and leaflets that are on display. We take the speaker to **lunch** after each talk, and anyone is welcome to join us. Finally, if you can display **posters** of the programme, or of individual events, or if you would like copies of the membership form, please **contact me**.

Invitation to join with The Russell Society

Our good friends in the Russell Society Wales and the West Branch have invited us all to join with them on Sunday 5th November to celebrate **Twenty years of mineralogy with the Russell Society in Wales and the West**. Their celebration will take place in Maisemore Village Hall, NW of Gloucester, from 10 am to 4 pm.

A full day of activities is planned, including talks about what the Russell Society is, what it does and what it has achieved, mineral swaps, refreshments, displays, mineral identification, and more! If you can, please go along and join in the celebrations. To help with catering, please **ring** 02920-891588 or 01446-700414 beforehand, so that they know how many people to expect.

Festival of Geology

The Geologists' Association's Annual Reunion will take place in London (University College, Gower Street) on Saturday 4th November, from 10.00 am to 4.30 pm. This year it has been 're-branded' as a **Festival of Geology** (taking a lead from our *Geofest* in Cardiff), but it will retain the successful mix of displays, sales and activities. Additions to the Festival will be talks on the geology of fireworks, dinosaur evolution, moon rocks, and how to become a geologist, plus walks around London's geology on Sunday. This fantastic event is **free**, and there will be lots of activities for all ages. As the flier says, 'Just turn up and

join in'! If you want more information, contact The Geologists' Association on 020-7434-9298, rockwatchatga@btinternet.com or www.geologist.demon.co.uk

Oh yes, and there will be a display there from the GA South Wales Group – look out for it and call in if you go!

Into the New Year - Important information about *Holiday Geology*

Holiday Geology has become an annual event, and it's certainly a great way to celebrate the new year. Members show pictures of places they have been that have a particular geological or landscape interest, sometimes posing puzzles that they hope somebody will be able to solve. This is the one meeting of the year when there is plenty of time for informal chat and socialising with other members. We have also been indebted to the National Museum who, in addition to providing us with a venue, have also provided a very generous buffet for our enjoyment.

In January 2007 *Holiday Geology* will for the first time take a different format, moving to the Swansea end of our region, and the **National Waterfront Museum** in the Maritime Quarter, **Swansea**. This new venue is very exciting, and we hope it will give some of our western members who haven't been able to make it to Cardiff a chance to come to *Holiday Geology* and - hopefully - to contribute some pictures.

The move means a few major changes, however, to the format of *Holiday Geology* for 2007. First, the event will be held in the daytime instead of the evening, running from **11.00 am to 3.00 pm**; that will leave time to visit the fascinating Waterfront Museum itself as well, which reveals more the more you explore it. Second, the move to daytime means the meeting will be held on a

Saturday, specifically **Saturday 13th January 2007**.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, the lecture room in the National Waterfront Museum has a maximum capacity of 60 people, so we have had to introduce a **booking** system: it is **essential** that you pre-book if you want to come to *Holiday Geology*. Most *Holiday Geology* evenings at Cardiff have attracted close to 60 people, and we're not sure what difference the move to Swansea will make, so we apologise for the bureaucracy of a booking system, but please don't let it put you off returning the form if you want to come. Please return the form to Stephen Howe at the National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NP as soon as possible - places will be reserved on a first-come basis. Please remember to write your contact details on the form so that Steve can contact you if there are any problems.

Other things about *Holiday Geology* will remain unchanged. A buffet will be provided, and we are looking for **volunteers** to show a few pictures and say a few words about what they show or where they are. It doesn't need to be - indeed it should not be - a polished 'lecture'; what we want is a maximum of 20 images that you think will interest others, wherever they are of. We will be displaying digital images; if you already have digital images, please bring them on a CD. If you have images as slides or prints, please get them to Tom Sharpe as soon as possible and he will prepare them for digital display. So please, think about offering to show a few pictures at *Holiday Geology*. **Contact** me or Tom or Steve if you can offer something.

We hope the move to The National Waterfront Museum in Swansea will give a slightly different feel to *Holiday Geology* and enable some people to come who haven't been before. If it's successful, our

plan will be to alternate between Friday evenings in Cardiff and Saturdays in Swansea, so we'll be interested to know what people think of it.

Other events

First of all, an **apology** for the late cancellation of the Strumble Head meeting planned for Sunday 17th September. This was due to unavoidable personal circumstances for the leader, Richard Bevins, and we were unable to arrange an alternative leader in time. Richard has kindly offered to take the trip as part of next summer's programme, however, so we very much hope to take him up on that.

Our other meetings were well attended and we hope everyone enjoyed them. We will be beginning to plan next summer's programme before long, so if you have any **suggestions** for where you would like to see trips arranged, please let me or any other committee member know. One exciting event that we're provisionally planning at the moment is a trip to **Cork**, probably in August, hosted by the Cork Geological Association, so look out for more about that in the next Newsletter.

Geology was kept alive at the National **Eisteddfod** in Swansea in early August. As part of a display in the Science Pavilion organised by the Geography Department at Swansea University, with the theme of climate change through time, former President Lynfa Lewis held several sessions of fossil bashing. These proved to be one of the most popular attractions in the Science Pavilion, and drew interest from - amongst others - Sian Lloyd and the Vice-Chancellor of Swansea University, as well as hundreds of happy children. Well done, Lynfa.

The **2008 Eisteddfod** will be in Cardiff, and Lynfa hopes to put on a geology display there. Although it seems a long way off, if you're interested please let Lynfa know.

Tom Sharpe will be running a residential course to examine the Rocks and landscape of the **Colorado Plateau**, south-west USA in late May / early June 2007 through Bristol University. The wealth of spectacular geology and scenery in this region is truly stupendous and this will undoubtedly be a superb course. Associated with it is a dayschool, being offered at the Earth Sciences Department of Bristol University on Saturday 25th November and at Digby Hall, Sherborne on Saturday 2nd December. Further **details** from Tom, or details of the full programme of classes and field courses run by the Department of Earth Sciences at **Bristol University** on their web site: www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce

You can get details of **Russell Society Wales and West Branch** activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9 pm); **U3A South Wales Geology Group** from Nigel McGaw (01656-654439); **Welsh Stone Forum** (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk); and **Swansea University** Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace. And don't forget the **Rock 'n' Gem Show** due to take place at Margam Park on 28/29 October; for **details** phone 01628-621697.

Member News

I am sorry to have to report the death of Eric Renshaw, a long-time member of the Group.

Each year I remind you that we keep a **computerised database** of members' names and addresses, for use within the GA South Wales Group, primarily for generating address labels. Please let me know if you do **not** want your details kept in this way (this may result in a delay in you receiving mailings) or if you want to know the full details of the information we keep about you.

Don't forget that we celebrate our **50th anniversary** / session / birthday some time

between September 2008 and January 2010. We are still planning to hold some special meetings to celebrate, but details have not yet been finalised, so if you've got any ideas, please let a Committee member know. We have put the Group's prize-winnings from the ENI Geological Challenge awarded to *Walking the Rocks* towards funding events, so we hope to be able to host something special.

A year ago I suggested that we compile an **email register** of members willing to be contacted in this way. So far, in addition to Committee members, most of whom are contactable now by email, the register has one name on it! In part that may be my fault for not rolling over details from previous lists that I had, but I suggest we now wipe the slate clean and that you send me a short email note if you are happy for us to keep your email details and contact you from time to time by that means. A more comprehensive register might have been very helpful, for example, when we had to cancel the Strumble Head field meeting at such short notice.

Rhian Kendall has made some excellent improvements to our **web site** recently. If you haven't visited it recently, it's well worth a look, and Rhian would welcome any comments about the site. She would be pleased to put up members' photographs, but they do need to be accompanied by a simple caption. All of our walk leaflets can now be down-loaded from the web site for free, so if your copies have disintegrated from over-use you can now replace them, even the rare out-of-print titles!

Two issues of the free geology newspaper ***Down to Earth*** have arrived over the summer, so make sure you pick up copies at the first meetings in Cardiff and Swansea.

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)



Forty-eighth Session 2006-2007

December 2006



President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Vice-President: Nigel McGaw

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Editor: Bob Owens

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

Very Best Wishes for the 2006 Christmas season and throughout 2007. We are still only part-way through our 2006-2007 session - read on for news of forthcoming meetings, reports of the autumn meetings, other events, other news, and a special offer on some special books. Our next event is **Holiday Geology**, this year in **Swansea** at the National Waterfront Museum, on **Saturday, 13th January**. Get the New Year off to a good start by coming along to - I look forward to seeing lots of people there!



Holiday Geology

The year begins, as usual with a *Holiday Geology* event, an opportunity for members to share with others some images of places they have been and things they have seen, with interesting rocks, fossils or landscapes. For the first time this year, *Holiday Geology* will take place at the National Waterfront Museum in the Maritime Quarter of **Swansea**, next to the Leisure Centre, on **Saturday 13th January**. Remember that numbers are strictly **limited** by the size of the room available, and all places have now been taken, so if you haven't sent a booking in to Steve I'm afraid there are no more spaces.

Holiday Geology is scheduled to run from **11.00 am** to 3.00 pm, which will

leave plenty of time for meeting other members, enjoying the buffet and seeing the rest of the Waterfront Museum. The "formal" programme will comprise slide shows from members who have volunteered to talk about some fascinating places. There will also be books and field guides for sale, plus a wide selection of geological and topographic maps - bring a big bag and lots of cash!

On arrival at the Museum, go to the main desk, where you will be directed to the Education Room on the first floor. **Parking** is available in the adjacent car park; the charge is £5, but if you get a voucher from the attendant you can get a partial refund in the Museum shop.

So this is a day to look forward to - I hope to see many of you there.

Lecture Programme

The first lecture of 2007 will take place in **Swansea** on **Saturday 20th January**, in the Wallace Building at the University. Professor Tavi Murray will talk on ***Ice Streams: arteries of the Antarctic ice sheet***. Tavi heads a glaciology research group set up recently at Swansea and undertakes fieldwork at both poles investigating how ice sheets behave and are responding to climatic change, using satellite data and geophysical investigations. Her talk should be fascinating and topical. It will begin, as usual, at **11.00**, with refreshments available from 10.30.

Our annual joint meeting with the Wales and West branch of the Russell Society will take place in **Cardiff** University on **Saturday 17th February**, also starting at 11.00 with refreshments from 10.30. We hope that Rick Turner, President of the Russell Society, will talk on ***Minerals and Geology in Namibia***. Having been to Namibia I can vouch that it is a beautiful country with special interest for geologists and mineralogists. The geology includes metamorphic rocks up to 3.6 billion years old, and its mineral resources include diamonds and many other minerals. Rick has been to places in Namibia that are out of bounds to most people, so this will be a special talk. Unfortunately, due to personal circumstances, Rick is at present unable to say for certain whether he will be able to deliver this talk. In the event that he cannot, Dr Jana Horak and Tom Cotterell of the National Museum in Cardiff have kindly offered to stand in at short notice with a tour of the ***Mineralogy of Wales***. The updated compilation of Welsh

minerals will shortly be available to everyone for the first time on the internet; this talk will be an introduction to the Welsh minerals update, the website and the minerals themselves. So we can be certain that there will be a lecture meeting about minerals on 17th February, but we hope you will understand that we cannot at the moment be certain which of these topics it will be. Thank you to Lynda Garfield for negotiating this arrangement.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will take place at **Swansea** University on **Saturday 17th March**. Remember that AGMs begin at the earlier time of **10.30**, with refreshments from 10.00. I'm afraid I have to offer my apologies for the AGM - it's the first one I will have missed since joining the Group, but I shall be on a field course. The AGM should last half an hour or less, and will be followed immediately by a lecture on ***Extraordinary Fossils from the Cretaceous of Northeast Brazil***, given by Dr John Nudds from the University of Manchester. If ever there was a reason to attend an AGM, that surely is it!

Our summer field meeting programme will take over after March. We're likely to put the finishing touches to this programme at a Committee meeting in early February, so if you have any suggestions for venues, please let a Committee member know before then. Another Newsletter in late February or early March will bring you details of the summer programme.

Last Autumn's Programme

We had some superb meetings in the Autumn, kicked off by Howard Bartlett

with a fascinating talk about geology and landscape in China. Steve Howe, Tom Sharpe and Allan Cuthbertson hosted an enthusiastic group of youngsters from Rockwatch for a weekend in late October and showed them not only the geology of South Wales, but also the archetypal weather! The event was so successful that there might be an annual event for Rockwatch, perhaps one day in most years. If you are interested in Rockwatch or in helping on future events, please contact Steve or Lynfa.

We had a stand at the Geologists' Association Festival of Geology in London in early November, which generated a lot of interest in South Wales geology. And a number of our members joined in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Russell Society's Wales and West Branch the next day.

The last two meetings were John Mather talking about the geology and geochemistry of bottled water and Howard Falcon-Lang discussing ancient rainforests. John Mather's talk was very entertaining, and showed that sometimes it's definitely better to drink the tap-water! Howard Falcon-Lang has asked us to point out that a number of his recent publications on Carboniferous rainforests are available as pdf files, and he has passed those on to us. If you would like copies of them, please contact me or Steve Howe and we will email them to you. They are large files, so you will need a fast connection.

Publications

Many of you will remember the old "Geology Explained" series, published by David & Charles in the 1970s - basic, informative guides to the geology of

regions of Britain. These have been out of print for many years now, and apparently copies change hands for princely sums. The good news is that several of the titles have been reprinted by Philip Gray of **Fineleaf Editions** (www.fineleaf.co.uk): **Geology Explained in South Wales** by TR Owen, the **Forest of Dean and Wye Valley** by William Dreghorn, in the **Severn Vale and Cotswolds** by William Dreghorn, and in the **Lake District** by Robert Prosser.

These are reprints, not new editions, and they are in "a redesigned pocket format, with durable sewn binding suitable for field use." The books sell at £12.95 each, but Philip has kindly offered them to us at **£9.95 each**, provided we can put in a bulk order more than 10 copies. Well I'm going to order four, so that's a start!

An **order form** is enclosed; please return it to me, with cheques payable to "GA South Wales Group" **before the end of January**. We will then place one bulk order with Philip, who will deliver the books to me. You can either collect them at a meeting, or have them sent to you for a further charge of £2.00. This is an excellent way to spend that money you have left over from Christmas, or to think about early gifts for next Christmas!

Other Events

There has been a lot of publicity over the past couple of years for the theory that the Bristol Channel was affected by a **tsunami in 1607**. A quick calculation will show that 2007 will be the 400th anniversary of this event, and to mark the occasion there will be a half-day public

conference at University of Wales **Newport** (Rathmell Lecture Theatre) on **Saturday 27th January**, from 1-5 pm, with the aim of exploring and debating the scientific basis for the theory. For more details, **contact** the School of Science and the Environment at Bath Spa University, Newton Park, Bath BA2 9BN (01225-875585; quaternary@bathspa.ac.uk). There is a deadline for **registering** for this event, so make enquiries first thing in the New Year if you are interested.

A course on **Mineral Prospecting** given by Gordon Kingston is to be run by **Cardiff University** Centre for Lifelong Learning on Tuesday evenings from January to March. The course aims to deal with the geology, identification and prospecting of metallic and non-metallic mineral resources. Further **details** from the Centre (www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn).

As usual, **Bristol University** Continuing Education are running a range of courses, dayschools and study tours. These include the evolution of plants with Howard Falcon-Lang at Bristol University (10 meetings on Thursdays from 11.30-1.00 from 18 January); fossil vertebrates with Pam Gill (10 meetings on Monday evenings from 7-8.30 from 15 January); Vesuvius dayschool (Sat 27 Jan, Bristol); geology of Cyprus dayschool (Sat 17 Feb, Cheltenham and Sat 10 March, Bristol);

geology of Frome field dayschool (Sat 24 Feb); geology of Weymouth with John Cope (field weekend, 2-4 March); Chepstow-Usk geology field dayschool (Sat 17 March); geology of South Devon with John Cope (11-14 May), then Forest of Dean, Ballachulish, Bristol, east Ulster, Pompeii, Colorado Plateau (with Tom Sharpe), and Cyprus later in the summer. Further **details** from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce).

Lynfa hopes to put on a geology display at the **2008 Eisteddfod** in Cardiff. If you're interested, please let Lynfa know.

You can get details of **Russell Society Wales and West Branch** activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9 pm); **U3A South Wales Geology Group** from Nigel McGaw (01656-654439); **Welsh Stone Forum** (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk); and **Swansea University** Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace. And don't forget the **Rock 'n' Gem Show** due to take place at Margam Park on 28/29 October; for **details** phone 01628-621697.



Well that's all I have room for once again. So it only remains for me to wish you the Season's Greetings. I look forward to seeing you at meetings in 2007, starting with *Holiday Geology* on Saturday 13th January. Merry Christmas!

Geraint Owen (Secretary)
(01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

President: Tom Sharpe [tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Vice-President: Nigel McGaw

Membership Secretary: Mike Lees [01792-774527]

Programme Secretary: Stephen Howe [steve.howe@nmgw.ac.uk]

Secretary: Geraint Owen

Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw



April 2007

Forty-ninth Session 2007-2008

Happy Easter from your stand-in Newsletter editor, helping out while Geraint is busy with the field season. I only hope that I can maintain his usual high standards. Its been a glorious start to the summer this bank holiday weekend and with the fantastic programme that has put together for us it should be a great summer. Rhian



Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting for the 48th session (2006-2007) was held in Swansea on Saturday 17th March. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports will be sent to all members.

The Committee's recommendations for nominations were approved, so Mike Gregory moves from being a committee member to Membership Secretary replacing Mike Lees who had served on the committee for 15 years. **A big thank you to Mike for all his hard work over the years on our behalf.** John Davies joins as a committee member and Lesley Cherns was re-elected as a committee member. Geraint was re-elected as Secretary. Malcolm Shaw and Stephen Howe continue as Treasurer and Programme Secretary. The Russell Society co-opted member continues to be covered by Dave Wellings

There is no change in the membership rates for next year!

One issue arising from the Treasurer's report was that of the escalating costs of postage. It was suggested that newsletter be distributed by email and a show of hands indicated that many members would be happy to this. If you interested, please let us know via email to Rhian@carreg.org.uk.

The Annual General Meeting was followed a lecture on **Extraordinary Fossils from the Cretaceous of Northeast Brazil**, given by Dr John Nudds from the University of Manchester. This fascinating presentation was illustrated with photos of the exquisitely preserved fossils, including fish and insects. The lecture finished with members presenting our speaker with fossil fish to identify. Unfazed he named the lot. Now that's what I call a guy who knows his stuff!

Summer Programme



Saturday 21st April Clearwell and Tintern Quarries, Forest of Dean.

*Full/Half Day. Leader: David Owen
(Gloucestershire Geological
Conservation Trust)*

*Meet at 10.00 at Clearwell Quarry
(SO 566 067) or 2.00pm at Tintern
Quarry (ST 551 983). **Please pre-
book for the Clearwell Quarry
part of this excursion by Monday
16th April.***

Clearwell Quarry is a working site and high visibility vests and hard hats are required. David can supply these if we let him know in advance. Would anybody booking please state at the time whether or not they require these items.

Participants can join the excursion for the morning and afternoon sections only if they so desire. Clearwell Quarry is working the Lower Limestone Shale for aggregate, building and walling stone. Clear divisions between limestone and shale can be seen and the limestones are often cross-bedded, occasionally fossiliferous and contain traces of red ochre. This part of the day is on relatively flat ground.

After a picnic lunch at Offa's Dyke Car Park (ST 558994) we will move on to Tintern Quarry (ST 551 983) for the afternoon. This huge disused quarry exposes the rest of the Carboniferous Limestone, from the Lower Dolomite, through the Crease Limestone, Whitehead Limestone, Drybrook Sandstone to

the Drybrook Limestone. The quarry itself gives an excellent overview of the sequence and each rock unit is accessible in a forestry track circling the main quarry where features such as ripples, palaeosols and masses of trace fossils can be seen. The area also overlooks the Wye Gorge and shows the incised meanders of the River Wye. This part of the day involves some steep hills and uneven ground.



Saturday 12th May Vulcanicity in the Tywi lineament

*Full Day. Leader: Dr John Davies
(Countryside Council for Wales)*

*Meet at 11.00am at the car park at
Tregeyb School, Ffairfach, Llandeilo
[SN 632215]*

A line of volcanic islands was associated with the Tywi Lineament during the Lower and Upper Llanvirn and Caradoc times. The aim of this excursion is to examine the volcanic sequences exposed from Llandeilo in the southwest to the Builth /Llandrindod area in the northeast. In particular we will be examining how these sequences relate to each other in time and what their environments of deposition were. There will be a fair amount of driving between outcrops and a little walking.



Saturday 2nd June Nant Helen Opencast and Pontneddfechan

*Full Day/Half Day. Leader: Allan
Cuthbertson and Stephen Howe*

*Meet at 10.30am at Nant Helen
Opencast site office [signposted as
Celtic Energy off the A4221], 1km
west of Colebren (SN 82/10) or
2.00pm at the Angel Inn,
Pontneddfechan (SN 910 079).*

**Numbers limited to Nant Helen
so pre-booking essential.**

Participants can join the excursion for the morning and afternoon sections only if they so desire. The morning will be spent looking at the Coal Measures sequence within the Nant Helen Opencast site as well as aspects of how the site is worked. There should be a chance to collect fossils and minerals. Depending upon the weather the site can be very wet, muddy and rough underfoot. There is little walking involved. Nant Helen is a working site and high visibility vests and hard hats are required. Some may be available from Celtic Energy whom operate the site if we let them know in advance. Would anybody booking please state at the time whether or not they require these items.

After lunch at Pontneddfechan, the afternoon will be spent walking up the Pyrddin Valley from the Angel Inn to Scwd Gladys a return distance of about 4 kms. Much of the walk is along a well made, gently inclined track although there are some steeper and muddier sections. The rocks outcropping along the valley range from the Farewell Rock at the base of the Coal Measures down through the Millstone Grit succession to the Basal Grits, including

fossiliferous Marine Band horizons. The glacial and post glacial history of the area will also be examined.



Sunday 1st July

**All features great and small
– revealing the glacial
landforms and history of the
middle Usk valley**

*Full Day. Leader: Duncan Hawley
Meet at 10.30am at the Ffrwdgrech
Industrial Estate just north of Brecon
on the A470 (SO 031 280).*

This excursion will examine the legacy of the last ice age by exploring landscape features that might ordinarily go unnoticed. However, these provide evidence for the advance and retreat of the Usk glacier and reveal the glacial history of the area. This excursion will involve driving between sites and then short walks on level and moderate ground to reach each from the parking points. Some sites may be wet underfoot so stout footwear or wellington boots is advisable.



**Saturday 28th July
Westbury, Wiltshire**

*Full Day. Leader: Simon Carpenter
(Bristol Naturalists' Society)
Meet at 10.30am at the LaFarge
Cement Works, Westbury, Wiltshire
(ST 880 527)*

(Details to follow)



**Saturday 1st September
Ogmore-by-Sea and Nash Point**

Full Day/Half Day. Leader: Huw

*Sheppard (British Geological Survey)
Meet at 10.00 am at the cliff top car
park above Dunraven Bay (SS 882
734) or 2.00pm at Nash Point car park
(SS 916 683).*

Participants can join the excursion for the morning and afternoon sections only if they so desire. In the morning we will walk to Pant y Slade to examine the Jurassic unconformity and coastal section. If the tide has dropped enough the foreshore section will be examined before we walk back over the cliff to the other end of the section in Seamount Bay. The afternoon will be spent at Nash Point where we will examine the omission-surface faunas and diagenetic history of the Liassic sediments.

There will be a fair amount of walking, especially in the morning between Pant y Slade and Seamount Bay. There will be some steep gradients and rough and slippery rock sections of the foreshore. There will be car parking charges at both themorning and afternoon locations.



Saturday 27th October
**The geology and scenery of
the Carboniferous rocks of
the Tenby area**

*Full Day. Leader: Sid Howells
(Countryside Council for Wales).
Meet at 10.30am at the Butts Field
car park, Tenby (SN 132 032)*

This excursion gives us the opportunity to study various aspects of the Carboniferous Limestone and Millstone Grit sequences at Tenby.

Aspects of structural and engineering geology (coastal protection) will also be covered. This is an excursion by foot and will involve a walk of several miles with some moderate gradients on beach, rocky shore and coast path.



FIELD MEETING INSTRUCTIONS

Booking:

Certain field meetings require prebooking. Where this is stipulated all bookings, unless otherwise instructed, should be made to the Programmes Secretary (Stephen Howe) either by telephone during working hours on 029 2057 3363, by email on steve.howe@museumwales.ac.uk or by post to Stephen Howe, National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, Cf10 3NP.

Equipment:

Unless otherwise stated most field meetings are full day events. For all full day events it is advisable to bring a packed lunch unless it states on the meeting details that a lunch stop will be made at a pubic house or café. All participants should come properly equipped with strong/waterproof footwear, warm and waterproof clothing and, if possible, a hard hat, high visibility vest and goggles. The latter are sometimes an essential requirement for visits to working quarries and mines and although every attempt will be made to

provide some of this equipment for those who do not possess it this can not be guaranteed.

Safety:

All participants should have read and agree to the conditions specified in the Group's Fieldwork Safety Code and should abide by its rules at all times. Any site specific safety concerns will be outlined by the leader before the excursion begins. One of the Group's members will have been designated as the Field Meeting Co-ordinator and will ask each participant to sign the attendance sheet prior to the meeting commencing. Any participant wishing to leave the excursion before it finishes must make sure that they have signed out prior to leaving the group.

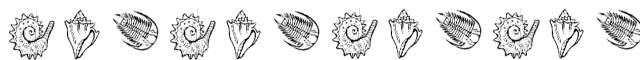
Travel:

A number of members have made arrangements amongst themselves to travel together to field meetings. If anybody has transport difficulties then it may be possible to put them in touch with someone willing to share transport. Any one so wishing is advised to contact a member of the Committee or to put a request on the Group's web site.

Is the field meeting on?

All participants are advised to contact the Programme Secretary in advance of the meeting to confirm that the excursion is still on. From time to time, for reasons beyond the control

of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



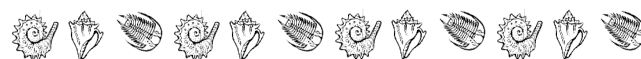
News

Science Weekend at the museum saw the group putting together a stand entitled "Pebbles on the beach" manned by Tom, Lynfa, Mike, Diane, Dave and Lynda. Pebbles were collected on typical cold wet field days but with 1700 people in on Saturday and 1000 visiting the museum on the Sunday it was certainly a warm welcome with lots of interest in the SWGA.

The group has been asked to put together a display for the Bute Park Woodland Fair on the 19th August. Their theme is woodland so we feel that something about Coal Measure Forests would be appropriate.

Lynfa hopes to put on a geology display at the 2008 Eisteddfod in Cardiff.

If you feel that you can help with any of these events; with their preparation or on the day, please don't hesitate to let any member of the committee know.



Website

Our website (www.swga.org.uk) now

has all of our walks leaflets and for current newsletter and programmes you to download free of charge. Keep an eye on the website if you can, for up to date details of our field trips. Another recent addition is a "forum" area where you can add comments and suggestions about the group. If it is well used, it is hoped that the facility will be improved in the future.



Other Events

There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning: www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn.
- Bristol University Continuing Education are running a range of courses, day-schools and study tours. These include the

geology of the Forest of Dean, Ballachulish, Bristol, east Ulster, Pompeii, and Cyprus later in the summer. Further details from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce).

- You can get details of Russell Society Wales and West Branch activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9 pm);
- U3A South Wales Geology Group from Nigel McGaw (01656-654439);
- Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk); and
- Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.



That's all for now. I don't know how Geraint manages to fit all the information in! If you have any news articles or notices for the next newsletter or the website, please send them to either myself or Geraint.

Don't forget to let us know if you would like to attend those field meetings that require booking (forms are attached). Time is short, especially for the first meeting, so please respond as soon as you can. Also, if you would like your newsletter via email, please let us know.

Look forward to seeing you across the summer.

Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk

Geraint Owen (Secretary) (01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk)

Booking Forms

I would like to attend the meeting at:
Clearwell and Tintern Quarries, Forest of Dean.
On Saturday 21st April

For the Full/Half Day. (Please delete as appropriate)

Name _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Names of others in my party are: _____

Clearwell Quarry part of this excursion by Monday 16th April.



I would like to attend the meeting at:
Nant Helen Opencast and Pontneddfechan
On Saturday 2nd June

Name _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Names of others in my party are: _____

Return forms to the Programme Secretary (Stephen Howe) either by telephone during working hours on 029 2057 3363, by email on steve.howe@museumwales.ac.uk or by post to Stephen Howe, National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, Cf10 3NP

Geologists' Association –
South Wales GroupCymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De
Cymru

Registered Charity Number 1054303

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[tomsharpe@nmgw.ac.uk]
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Secretary: 298510]
Secretary: Geraint Owen
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President:
Programme Stephen Howe
Secretary: [Steve.Howe@museumwales.ac.uk]
Treasurer: Malcolm Shaw

September 2007

Forty-ninth Session 2007-2008

Welcome to the Autumn/winter season of our forty-ninth session. We have had a very successful summer programme, despite the weather. We visited Clearwell and Tintern to see Carboniferous limestones, the Tywi Lineament for volcanic landscapes of the Ordovician. Back to the Carboniferous to see the Coal Measures and Millstone Grits at Nant Helen and Pontneddfechan. The Middle Usk Valley trip examined glacial landforms, whilst the Westbury trip had us rummaging, enthusiastically, for vertebrate fossils at this famous site. Sedimentology at Ogmere by Sea and Nash gave a fascinating insight into previously unnoticed features of this familiar site.

This newsletter is packed with events organised for our indoor season. It looks like its going to be a fascinating programme, expect to tempt you to renew your subscriptions! See you there. Rhian



We have one more meeting left of our field programme this will be on **Saturday 27th October 2007**. The geology and scenery of the Carboniferous rocks of the Tenby area. It's a full day, lead by **Sid Howells (Countryside Council for Wales)**

Meet at 10.30am at the Butts Field car park, Tenby (SN 132 032). This excursion gives us the opportunity to study various aspects of the Carboniferous Limestone and Millstone Grit sequences at Tenby. Aspects of structural and engineering geology (coastal protection) will also be covered. This is an excursion by foot and will involve a walk of several miles with some moderate gradients on beach, rocky shore and coast path

Winter Programme

**Saturday 20th October (Cardiff)***The Gash Breccia Problem*

Peter Walsh (University of Silesia)

Joint meeting with the Russell Society

The Gash Breccias contained in the Carboniferous Limestone of the Pembroke Peninsula are a problem because there are serious objections to the interpretations about their mode of origin in the only two extensive previous studies - by Ernest Dixon (1921) and Trevor Thomas (1971). The former thought that they were the products of cave roof collapse, the latter that they were tectonic breccias. Furthermore, while many accept that they

are of Triassic age, on account of the red sediment often present in the breccia interstices, this has never been confirmed and, theoretically, they could be of any age from Mississippian to Pliocene. Previous notions about their age and origins are reconsidered and some new ideas will be discussed.

**Saturday/Sunday 3rd/4th November
Geologists' Association Annual
Reunion (World Museum, Liverpool)**

Members of the group usually attend this annual event and the South Wales Group usually has a stand. It's always a fun couple of days with a chance to catch up with old friends and make some new ones. If you would like to go, you can get details from the Geologists Association website or contact me and I'll put you in touch with people who are going from our group.

**Saturday 17th November (Swansea)
The T.R.Owen Memorial Lecture**

Pterosaurs: Dragons of the air
David Unwin (University of Leicester)
Pterosaurs, flying reptiles, were first discovered in the late 1700's but, until recently, their biology, relationships and history remained only poorly understood. Now, new finds combined with new research techniques have revealed the complex behaviors, remarkable diversity and superb flight ability of these extraordinary creatures that ruled the Mesozoic skies.

**Saturday 15th December (Cardiff)
The Quaternary deposits of the Upper Usk
Basin. Adrian Humpage (British Geological
Survey)**

2008

**Saturday 12th January (National
Museum, Cardiff)
Holiday Geology
11.00am – 4.00pm**

Saturday 26th January (Swansea)

Dorset's Diana, Mary Anning (1799-1847) of Lyme Regis; "the greatest fossilist the world ever knew"? Hugh Torrens (Crewe)
Mary Anning junior was a) female and b) orphaned at the age of 10. She was of working class, uneducated, Devon origins. She was moreover a dissenter who published nothing and traveled little. Her life is thus a) difficult but b) fascinating. The lecture will attempt to explore both these problems and her extraordinary achievements.

Saturday 16th February (Cardiff)

The Fishguard District from the Ordovician to today; new insights from the survey of BGS map sheet 210
Huw Sheppard (British Geological Survey)

**Saturday 15th March (Swansea)
AGM and Presidential Address**

John MacCulloch and William Smith: the men and their maps. Tom Sharpe
The beginnings of geological map-making in Britain 200 years ago were fraught for the men behind them. Smith struggled to make a living as he worked single-handedly to produce his map of the strata of England and Wales. He saw it published and then rapidly overtaken by the corporate venture of the new Geological Society. To cap it all, he found himself sent to prison. MacCulloch, on the other hand, had the advantage of a Government expense account while mapping Scotland, but became embroiled in financial disputes and personal jealousies, and even threatened to shoot himself. His map was not published until after he had died. In this talk we will look at the people, the personalities and the remarkable stories behind these first maps.



Other Events

Forthcoming geology courses and fieldtrips led by Tom Sharpe:

Brecon Beacons Fforest Fawr

Geopark weekend field school organised by the University of Bristol. 29-30 September 2007. For further details contact Barbara Perks, tel 0117 954 5438 email earth-ce@bris.ac.uk

The volcanoes of Lanzarote, Canary Islands study tour 20-27 April 2008 organised by the University of Bristol. For further details contact Barbara Perks, tel 0117 954 5438 email earth-ce@bris.ac.uk

The Lifelong Learning Dept at Bristol have other courses and field trips, including **Field schools:** Geology of the Lulworth Coast, Renewable Energys and Carmarthen to Llansteffan, **Lecture series:** on Geology of the Clevedon Area, Geology and Water, Precambrian Geology at Charnwood Forest and the Evolution of Plants. **Study tours:** to Pompeii and Herculaneum, Tertiary magnetism of E Ulster, Santorini: living with a volcano and Wester Brittany: A view of Deep Crust. Go to www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce for more information.

Geology of Britain's mountains. Six linked dayschools 10am-1pm on Saturdays 13 October, 24 November, 8 December 2007, 19 January 2008, 9 February and 8 March, plus one meeting from 10am-12 noon on Saturday 5 April 2008. Meetings at Cardiff Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff

There is also

Geology of mineral resources by Gordon Kingston, 10 weekly meetings Tuesdays from 7-9pm starting 15 January

2008 at the Cardiff Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff

Contact: Cardiff Centre for Lifelong Learning, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff CF24 4AG tel 029 20 870000
Email LEARN@cardiff.ac.uk
www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn

- You can get details of **Russell Society Wales and West Branch** activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9 pm);
- **U3A South Wales Geology Group** from Nigel McGaw (01656-654439);
- **Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru)** from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk);

- **Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education** from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.

- **Rockwatch** is a nationwide club for young geologists. It is the junior club of the Geologists' Association. You can get more information at www.rockwatch.org.uk

Geoconservation Days

The Geoconservation days are running again. These take the form of a series of field trips looking at the geological sites of interest around Cardiff. Group members, under the leadership of Steve Howe, have been involved in investigating geological exposures such as old quarries, clay pits, railway and road cuttings, and river banks in and around Cardiff. The reason being to try and identify important exposures of rocks, and rock structures, so that these can be positively identified, assessed as to their importance, and possibly made into RIGS sites. We are in the final stages of this study, revisiting the most interesting sites to gather more detailed information.

If you'd like to take part, please contact Steve (Steve.Howe@museumwales.ac.uk) or myself for the latest dates and where we are meeting.



News

Eisteddfod 2008 – Cardiff

Lynfa Lewis hopes to put on a geology display at the 2008 Eisteddfod in Cardiff. If you feel that you can help with any of these events; with their preparation or on the day, please don't hesitate to let any on the committee know, especially if you are a Welsh speaker.

Website

Our website, continues to grow with field trip write ups and photos in the news section and more walks leaflets being added in the last couple of years. There's even a forum where you can upload information that you might like to share. If there is anything that you would like to see added, please let us know.

www.swga.org.uk.

Emailed Newsletters

We have had a good response to our request for people to receive their newsletter by email. With ever increasing postage costs, this obviously helps us a lot. If you would like to receive your newsletter in this way, please email me webmaster@swga.org.uk. The latest version of the newsletter is always available on the website in the "Events" section.

Books wanted

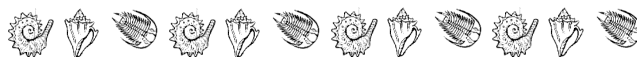
Do you have any geology books or maps you would like to donate to a worthy cause? The SWGA is collecting geology books and maps for sale to raise funds for our forthcoming 50th anniversary events. We had a sale at our holiday geology meeting in Swansea in January this year and plan to do the same in January 2008. We may also take some to sell at the Reunion in Liverpool on 3-4 November 2007, if we can. If you have any books you would like to pass on, then please contact Tom Sharpe on 029 20 573 265 or email tom.sharpe@museumwales.ac.uk



That's all for now. You can take a look at our website for information on our programme and any last minute updates. www.swga.org.uk. If you have anything that you would like to put into the next newsletter or onto our website, please let us know. The committee are also hard at work planning events for our 50 years celebrations. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let us know. Don't forget those subscription renewals!

Look forward to seeing you across at the winter meets.

Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; webmaster@swga.org.uk



Winter Programme 2008



**Saturday 26th January
(Swansea)**

***Dorset's Diana, MaryAnning
(1799-1847) of Lyme Regis;
"the greatest fossilist the world
ever knew"?***
Hugh Torrens (Crewe)

Mary Anning junior was a) female and b) orphaned at the age of 10. She was of working class, uneducated, Devon origins. She was moreover a dissenter who published nothing and traveled little. Her life is thus a) difficult but b) fascinating. The lecture will attempt to explore both these problems and her extraordinary achievements.



**Saturday 16th February
(Cardiff)**

***The Fishguard District from the
Ordovician to today; new
insights from the survey of BGS
map sheet 210***
**Huw Sheppard (British
Geological Survey)**



**Saturday 15th March at
10:30am (From 10am for
coffee). (Swansea)**

***AGM and Presidential Address
John MacCulloch and William
Smith: the men and their maps.***
Tom Sharpe.

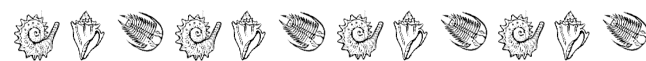
The beginnings of geological map-making in Britain 200 years ago were fraught for the men behind them. Smith struggled to make a living as he worked singlehandedly to produce his map of the strata of England and Wales. He saw it published and then rapidly overtaken by the corporate venture of the new Geological Society. To cap it all, he found himself sent to prison. MacCulloch, on the other hand, had the advantage of a Government expense account while mapping Scotland,

but became embroiled in financial disputes and personal jealousies, and even threatened to shoot himself. His map was not published until after he had died. In this talk we will look at the people, the personalities and the remarkable stories behind these first maps.

INDOOR MEETINGS

Lectures at Cardiff University are held in the Department of Earth Sciences. Lectures at University of Wales Swansea are held in the department of Geography. Free refreshments are available ½ hour before the lecture meetings which start at 11am unless otherwise stated. Exceptions include the AGM and "Holiday Geology" whose details are given in the newsletter. **The Programmes Secretary is Stephen Howe, Contactable either by telephone during working hours on: 029 2057 3363, by email on: steve.howe@museumwales.ac.uk or by post to Stephen Howe, National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NP.**

From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



Future Field Meetings 2008



**Saturday 8th/Sunday 9th
March: The Gash Breccias
of Pembrokeshire**

Following on from the interest shown in Peter Walsh's talk earlier this year he and Sid Howells have offered to lead a field meeting to examine the Gash Breccias of

Pembrokeshire over the weekend of 8th-9th March 2008. Due to the limited accessibility of these outcrops and the tide times Sid has suggested that we turn this into a full weekend meeting. Peter has also suggested that it may be possible to do part of the excursion by boat, which would offer some excellent views of outcrops that it are impossible to reach from the land. Participants would be able to attend both days or for one day only. Before we go ahead with confirming the excursion I would be grateful for an idea of how many people would be interested in attending a full weekend meeting on this subject and how many would prefer just a single day. Could all those who are interested please contact me at the National Museum of Wales (email:- steve.howe@museumwales.ac.uk or tel:- 029 20573363).



Cork Field Meeting

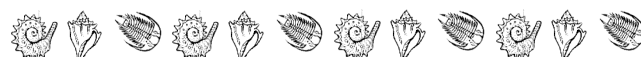
The Cork Geological Society have offered to lead us on a weekend excursion around Cork, Ireland in summer/autumn 2008. Your committee feel that this would make an interesting start to our 50th Anniversary celebrations if enough people are interested. The intention would be to fly to Cork and then arrange local transport and accommodation. Costs are unknown at this stage but would be kept to the minimum. Could any member interested in attending

such an excursion (this does not commit you!) please let me know so that we can ascertain the viability of the idea.



Sunday 31st August: Saundersfoot- Waterwynch, Pembrokeshire

Sid Howells will lead this excursion to 'finish' our traverse of the coastal section that we began at Tenby last October. Full details to follow.



News

As you may have heard at our lecture meetings, plans are afoot for our **50th Anniversary** celebrations. If you have any ideas for speakers or places that you would like to visit or even ideas for a event, please let any of the committee know. Lynfa hopes to put on a geology display at the **2008 Eisteddfod** in Cardiff. If feel that you can help with any of these events, with their preparation or on the day, please don't hesitate to let any member of the committee know.

The National Water Front Museum in Swansea has a new exhibition called **"Frocks from Rocks"**, which has been recommended by a number of our members. It runs until April 6th and shows spectacular images taken from magnified slices of minerals. These have been transferred onto materials and fabrics. The exhibition

also looks at Welsh minerals and rocks, the capture of images and their use in architecture and design.



Advanced Notice: AGM

Starting at 10:30 on Saturday 15th March at Swansea University, we will be holding our AGM. This will be followed by a Presidential Address by Tom Sharpe on John MacCulloch and William Smith: the men and their maps.

This will be followed by a Presidential Address by Tom Sharpe on John MacCulloch and William Smith: the men and their maps.



Website

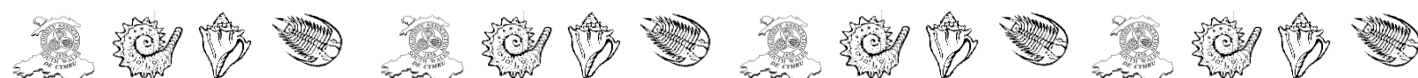
Our website (www.swga.org.uk) now has all of our walks leaflets and current newsletter and programmes for you to download free of charge. Keep an eye on the website if you can, for up to date details of our field trips and lectures.



Other Events

There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning:
www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn, who



That's all for now, except to remind you if you haven't renewed your subs for this year, please send your forms and cheques to our membership Secretary, Mike Gregory, as soon as you can.

Look forward to seeing at the meetings and I hope that you have a Merry Christmas and a very happy new year

Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk

Geraint Owen (Secretary) 01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk

have courses on Mineral Resources and Oceanography starting in the new year.

- Bristol University Continuing Education are running a range of courses, dayschools and study tours. Further details from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce).
- You can get details of Russell Society Wales and West Branch activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9 pm).
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Registered Charity Number 1054303

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Membership Secretary:	Mike Gregory 01792- 298510	membership@swga.org.uk	

March 2008

Forty Ninth Session 2007-2008

2008 is off to a great start with lots of interesting lectures so far. Holiday Geology was, as usual, a great day with many varied presentations from our members. A big thank to the National Museum of Wales for sponsoring the event. Hugh Torrens lecture about Mary Anning was both entertaining and informative. It was certainly a lively lecture. Huw Sheppard spoke to us most recently about his work remapping the Fishguard district. It was a fascinating insight not only into the geology of that area but also the current policies and practice of the BGS. If you missed it, you can read about it on Huws website: www.huwsheppard.net/programme.htm. The last indoor meeting this season will be our AGM and presentation from Tom Sharpe when he will hand over to our new President; Nigel McGaw. **Rhian**



Saturday 15th March at 10:30am
(From 10am for coffee).

(Swansea)

AGM and Presidential Address

John MacCulloch and William

Smith: the men and their maps.

Tom Sharpe.

The beginnings of geological map-making in Britain 200 years ago were fraught for the men behind them. Smith struggled to make a living as he worked singlehandedly to produce his map of the strata of England and Wales. He saw it published and then rapidly overtaken by the corporate venture of the new Geological Society. To cap it all, he found himself sent to prison. MacCulloch, on the other hand, had the advantage of a Government expense account while mapping Scotland, but became embroiled in financial disputes and personal jealousies, and even threatened to shoot himself. His map was not published until after he had died. In this talk we will look at the people, the

personalities and the remarkable stories behind these first maps.



Field Meetings 2008



Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th
March

The Gash Breccias of the
Pembrokeshire

Saturday 8th March

Bullslaughter Bay Syncline

Leaders: Peter Walsh and Sid Howells

Meet at the National Trust Broadhaven Beach car park (SR 976 938) at 10:00am. We will be concentrating on the Gashes at Trevalen, Bullslaughter Bay and Flimston, with incidental references to other aspects of the local geology.

Sunday 9th March

The Gash Breccias of the Pembroke Syncline

Leader: Peter Walsh

Meet at 10:00am at the National Trust car park at Lydstep (SS 088 977)

(Car park is accessed down a rutted narrow lane leading south from Lydstep village about 100 m beyond the Lydstep Tavern as one drives towards Pembroke). No toilet there.

We will be concentrating on the Lydstep Point, Whitesheet Rock and Draught Outliers, with passing reference to other aspects of local geology. Depending on numbers attending, their willingness to participate at a cost not less than £10 per head, the availability of the craft and the total price, Peter will investigate the possibility of doing a rhib run from Tenby Harbour late in the afternoon into Caldey Sound in order to investigate the spectacular Lydstep Point, Valleyfield Top, St. Margaret's Point and Den Point Outliers and the intraformational Asbian palaeokarst at Proud Giltar, none of which can be accessed easily from the mainland (dependant on weather and numbers)

Please bring: Safety gear - we will be working under rock overhangs and in caves. **Packed lunches** - we simply have to make best use of tidal conditions (though we know of all the local pubs and tea=shops in an emergency). **Binoculars** - much important detail inaccessible high up in 50 m high cliffs. 1:50K G.S. Pembroke and Linney Head map and 1:25K O.S. South Pembrokeshire Explorer **maps** if you have them.

It is hoped to make these excursions more like undergraduate field tutorials than Cook's tours - we will point out various puzzling features and ask you to explain them. If you attended Peter's talk in Cardiff in October, you will know what to expect! (Of course, it is not necessary to have done so to attend these field meetings) No two gashes are alike, so it is not necessary to attend both days. The only feature common to both

will be a short introductory chat to explain the fundamental problems associated with the Gashes - no-one knows how old they are and there are 101 hypotheses to explain their origins - and what the Gash Breccia Research Group is trying to do to solve them. The trips will terminate either when the leaders get tired, dusk or if Wales are playing in the 6-Nations on either day, whichever earlier. **SWGA Coordinator for this event is Rhian (07963 732276). If you intend attending either or both of these day, it would be helpful if you let us know.**



Sunday 5th April Fishguard

Leaders: Huw Sheppard.

Meet at 10am at the Harp Inn, Letterston:
31 Haverfordwest Rd
Letterston, Haverfordwest, SA62 5UA
01348 840061 (GR 194800 229200)

Safety kit will not be needed, the walking will be, at maximum, moderate, but it is more likely that we will stick to driveable sites. We will try and incorporate a pub lunch either at Newport or Roebush, people can of course bring a lunch as well!



Sunday 18th May Aust and Portishead

Leaders: Peter Hodges and Geraint Owen

Meet at 10:30 at old Severn Ferry pier, Aust(ST 563 886) and/or
Meet at 2:00pm in the parking area by the Windmill Inn, about 1km west of Portishead(ST 458 766)



Saturday 7th June The Quaternary of Gower

Leader: John Hiemstra

Meet at 10:30 at the King Arthur Hotel, Reynoldstone, Gower.



Sunday 31st August **Saundersfoot - Waterwynch**

Leader: Sid Howells

Meeting details to come.



Saturday 27th September **The Woolhope Inlier**

Leader: Bob Owens

Meeting details to come.



Other diary dates for 2008



Saturday 21st/Sunday 22nd June **Rockwatch weekend**

The year we will be hosting a Rockwatch weekend. One day will be spent at an opencast pit and then Big Pit National Coal Museum at Blaenafon and the other at Lavernock and the Bendricks. Anybody who would like to come along and help is extremely welcome. Full details will appear closer to the weekend.



Saturday 5th/Sunday 6th July **Penarth Festival**

The Group has been invited to take part in the Penarth Festival this year by running a rock, fossil and mineral identification desk on both afternoons from about 2:00-5:00pm. We will be based in the Kymin in Penarth and intend setting up a small display and sales stand as well. Even if you do not wish to help out on the identification desk, why not come along and see what's happening?



Saturday 15th November **GA Regional Meeting day**

National Museum of Wales

As part of the Parent body's 150th anniversary celebrations, the group is hosting a special geological day at the National Museum in Cardiff from 10:00am-

5:00pm. There will be at least two high profile lectures plus display, workshops, a building stones walk and Rockwatch. Full details to follow.

Welsh Stone Forum

The Welsh Stone Forum has produced its summer field meeting programme of which the following locations are within the SWGA region. All members are welcome to attend



Saturday 29th March **Margam and Pyle**

Leaders: Dai Willie, Steve Gray and Ron Austin

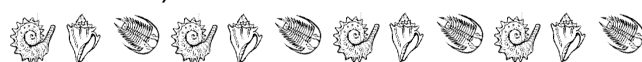
Meet at 11:00am in the first car park at Margam Country Park (SS 801 861). Note this is not the car park by the Orangery



Saturday 6th September **Pontypool and the Shell Grotto**

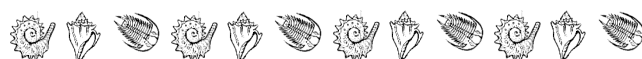
Leader: John Shipton

Meet at 11:00am at Pontypool carpark (SO 2827 0109).



The Programmes Secretary is Stephen Howe. Stephen is now away until 7th of April 2008. For enquires about field meetings during this time, please contact Tom Sharpe or Rhian Kendall.

From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



News

As you may have heard at our lecture meetings, plans are afoot for our **50th Anniversary** celebrations. If you have any ideas for speakers or places that you would like to visit or even ideas for a event, please let any of the committee know. The committee has been considering an **Anniversary Dinner and after dinner**

speaker and would appreciate your feedback as to if this is something that we would like to do and your suggestions for venues and speakers. Please let me know. Lynfa also hopes to put on a geology display at the **2008 Eisteddfod** in Cardiff. If you feel that you can help with the preparation or on the day, please don't hesitate to let Lynfa know.

Wales. Regional Geology Guide by Howells, MF. New Edition from the BGS. "This guide describes the geological history of Wales, the evolution of its structure, its stratigraphy and the nature of the rocks and processes that have shaped the Welsh landscape. The book is fully illustrated with maps and diagrams which help to reveal the complexities of Welsh geology. The book is aimed at geology students and advanced amateurs as well as professionals who need an overview of the geology of Wales. This guide supersedes the earlier guides for north and south Wales. 230pp". (Extract BGS website) The BGS have kindly offered to sell us the new guide at a reduced price if we order a batch from them. **This book is normally £18 and they are offering it at a discounted price of £13:50 to the SWGA.** Please send your cheques for £13:50, payable to SWGA to Rhian who is coordinating this by the end of March. Copies will be brought to the meetings to save on postage. I can personally tell you that this is a great little book as I already have my copy... I ordered it before I knew of the offer!

Cork Field Meeting

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, The Cork Geological Society has offered to



That's all for now, looking forward to seeing you at the meetings this summer.

Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk

Geraint Owen (Secretary) 01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk

lead us on a weekend excursion around Cork, Ireland in summer/autumn 2008. We have already had a good response. If you would like to attend, please let Steve know.



Other Events

There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning:
www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn
- Bristol University Continuing Education are running a range of courses, dayschools and study tours. Further details from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.aly.bris.ac.uk/ce)
- Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.
- You can get details of Russell Society Wales and West Branch activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9 pm).
- U3A South Wales Geology Group from Nigel McGaw (01656-654439).
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Registered Charity Number 1054303

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Membership**Secretary:** Mike Gregory 01792- 298510 membership@swga.org.uk**Vice-President:** Malcolm Shaw**President:****Programme****Secretary:****Treasurer:****Stephen Howe**

Steve.Howe@museumwales.ac.uk

Hazel Trenbith

hazel.trenbith@tiscali.co.uk

June 2008

Fiftieth Session 2008-2009

*Welcome to the June newsletter and the 50th Summer Season. We have had a great start with a walk in Fishguard, lead by Huw Sheppard. The walk to Aust Cliff and Portishead with Peter Hodges and Geraint Owen, which was greatly enjoyed by me as I found a chunk of dinosaur bone at the former and a piece of fish in the afternoon! We have also had a walk to look at the Quaternary of the Gower lead by John Hiemstra – a great start to the summer. Thank you to the organisers for their hard work. **Rhian***



Field Meetings 2008

**Saturday 19th July*****Geology and Conservation of the Clydach Gorge***

Leader: John Davies

Meet 10:45 We meet at the Clydach car park - O.S. SHEET 161 SO 233 136, located on the south side of the A465 just north of Clydach and approximately 1 mile south west of Gilwern.

The field trip will re-examine the classical north-eastern coalfield succession from the Devonian up to the Westphalian at Clydach Gorge National Nature Reserve. The trip will be on foot, moderately strenuous in places, and bring a packed lunch.

**Sunday 31st August*****Waterwynch to Saundersfoot***

Leader: Sid Howells

(other inputs welcomed)

Meeting 10.30 (latest please) at Regency Hall car park, Saundersfoot (situated behind amusement arcade - **not the seafront car park**). Refreshments and toilets before start and at finish of walk. We will then reorganise to take minimum number of cars to start of walk near Monkstone Bay (limited parking).

Walk distance approximately 3 miles, returning to Saundersfoot by about 17.00. Mostly firm sand, but some short stretches of foreshore rock and boulders which cannot be avoided.

*Optional scrambling over intertidal rock to try to reach the extreme SW of the section at Waterwynch – plenty to see and do if you decide not to do this.

Features: Coal Measure sequence, complex folding & faulting, coastal scenery of western Carmarthen Bay

Bring packed lunch, waterproof jacket &

trousers, and safety helmet if you plan to go close under cliffs (limited number available to loan)



Saturday 27th September ***The Woolhope Inlier***

Leader: Bob Owens
Meeting details to come.

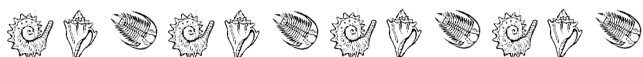
.....Additional field meeting.....



October 24th-26th 2008 ***North Cornwall and North Devon***

It has not proved possible to organise a long weekend excursion to Cork this year but instead we are proposing to visit North Cornwall and Devon under the guidance of Ted Freshney and Richard Scrivener (ex BGS).

The plan is to travel down on the Friday afternoon/evening and have all day Saturday and most of Sunday in the field, aiming to leave by about 4.00pm on the Sunday for the return to Cardiff. Ted suggests that we stay in or near Bude. Could all those interested in please let Stephen Howe know



Other diary dates for 2008

Saturday 5th/Sunday 6th July ***Penarth Festival***

The Group has been invited to take part in the Penarth Festival this year by running a rock, fossil and mineral identification desk on both afternoons from about 2:00-5:00pm. We will be based in the Kymin in Penarth and intend setting up a small display and sales stand as well. Even if you do not wish to help out on the identification desk, why not come along and see what's

happening?

Saturday 15th November ***GA Regional Meeting day*** National Museum of Wales

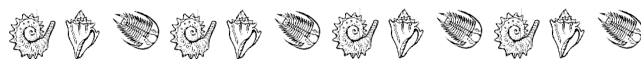
As part of the Parent body's 150th anniversary celebrations, the group is hosting a special geological day at the National Museum in Cardiff from 10:00am-5:00pm. Booked so far are talks by Phil Manning (Manchester) on dinosaurs, and Alison Rust (Bristol) on volcanoes, plus displays, a micro-fossil and fossil sharks' teeth workshop, a building stones walk with Eric Robinson, Rockwatch, behind the scenes tours and other activities. Full details to follow.

Welsh Stone Forum

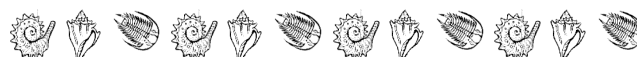
The Welsh stone Forum has produced its summer field meeting programme of which the following locations are within the SWGA region. All members are welcome to attend.

Saturday 6th September ***Pontypool and the Shell Grotto***

Leader: John Shipton
Meet at 11:00am at Pontypool carpark (SO 2827 0109).



From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



News

As you may have heard at our lecture meetings, plans are afoot for our **50th Anniversary** celebrations. If you have any ideas for speakers or places that you would like to visit or even ideas for a event, please let any of the committee know. The committee has been considering an **Anniversary Dinner and after dinner speaker** and would appreciate your feedback as to if this is something that we would like to do and your suggestions for venues and speakers. Please let me know.

Wales. Regional Geology Guide

Copies of this book which were ordered by members have been brought to various meetings. Please let me know if you are going attend one of our meetings and I'll see that your copy will be there.

South Wales RIGS

As of April this year, there is a new RIGS group, covering South Wales. This is a collaborative project, involving the British Geological Survey, The National Museum of Wales, The Geological Society, Fforest Fawr Geopark, Brecon Beacons National Park, Cardiff University and ourselves. This exciting project will involve a review of geological sites to assess their suitability to be designated as a "**Regionally Important Geodiversity Site**".

The project will be running over the next three years and we hope to get as many of our members involved as we can. If you know of a site that shows a particular feature that you think is important, let us know. The SWGA are going to be hosting the website for the new group and providing volunteers to go and assess sites. If you think that you can help, please let myself or Tom Sharpe know.

Even if you are don't confident, please come along. This kind of field work really is the best way to learn. Dates of site visits will appear in our newsletter and website.

Minerals of the Glamorgan coast : Barry Island and adjacent areas

Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings have now finished their report for the Russell Society Wales and West branch on "Minerals of the Glamorgan coast : Barry Island and adjacent areas".

Copies are available, but because of the number of photographs and other illustrations in it, and problems with the printing of these at a suitable quality for an affordable price, the copies are being distributed on DVD as a .pdf file for a small charge.

For further details, please contact Lynda (02920 8915880); lyndagarfield@tesco.net) or Dave (01446 700414).

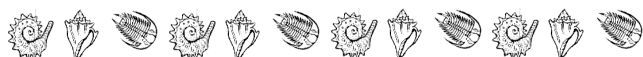
The report gives a comprehensive account of previous mineral finds, plus details of recent finds made since 2004, with photographs. Numerous new finds have been made, rather more mineralisation than previously known about has been identified especially on Bendrick Rock, and comparisons along the outcrop investigated have lead to some interesting conclusions and outstanding questions.

These include:

- The Mississippi Valley Type (MVT) mineralisation is, as a result of careful observation, considered to be of both pre-late Triassic and post-Triassic age, possibly involving some remobilisation. Age dating of the various associations of galena would be interesting.
- A reactivated fault zone orientated 340° close to the Cadoxton River is postulated, to account for significant differences in the geology and mineralisation of the

Carboniferous Limestone either side of this zone.

- The occurrence of celestine in Triassic nodules is more extensive than previously reported.
- Previous small scale mining activity on Bendrick Rock is considered possible. Bendrick Rock is recommended for consideration as a RIGS or SINC designation on account of the level of MVT mineralisation found there.



Other Events

The South Wales Coalfield Geo Heritage Network project are having a **Geological Conservation Day on Sat 11th Oct 10:30am-4pm.**

This involves digging and clearing at Wern Ddu SSSI Caerphilly Grid Ref ST 168 862. There will also be a walk, talk and digging led by project manager Ben Evans.

Bring sturdy shoes, gloves and your favourite tools. Some specialist equipment will be provided. Tea Coffee and Cold drinks provided please bring your own packed lunch.

Car parking available, dogs welcomed.

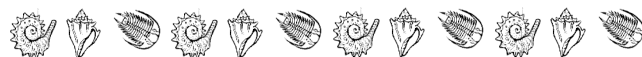
Contact Ben if you would like to get

involved:

Ben.evans@museumwales.ac.uk

Office hours phone number:

029 20573305



There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning:
www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn
- Bristol University Continuing Education (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk;
www.gly.bris.ac.uk/ce).
- Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.
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- U3A South Wales Geology Group from Nigel McGaw (01656-654439).
- Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk)



Some sad news to end on. We have heard that John Perkins has recently passed away. John was a long standing member of the SWGA and a past Chairman. He was also known to many as the Head of Lifelong Learning at Cardiff for many years and leader of many a fascinating and enjoyable geological field excursion in the UK and abroad.

Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk

Geraint Owen (Secretary) 01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk



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hazel.trenbith@tiscali.co.uk

September 2008

Fiftieth Session 2008-2009

*Welcome to the September newsletter. OK. So the summer has been a little disappointing. Liquid Sunshine is a term I've learned this year. The Geology of the Clydach Gorge was ably lead by John Davies and Sid Howells lead use around the next section of the stunning South Pembrokeshire coastline. As Sid said that day. There's no point in putting your coat on; evaporation has yet to exceed precipitation! Role on the lecture season, I say and some nice cosy lecture theatres! **Rhian***



Field Meetings 2008



Saturday 27th September
The Woolhope Inlier

Leader: Bob Owens

Meet at 11.00am at the Haugh Wood car park, on north side of the Mordiford to Woolhope road [SO 5920 3655]



Saturday 11th October
Wern Ddu SSSI, Caerphilly

A Geological Conservation Day led by Ben Evans (BIGC). 10.30am - 4.00pm

Meet at the car park at the entrance to the site (ST 168 862)

Here is your chance to get 'hands-on' with geological conservation. This day's

activity will be to assist with site clearance at this important Coalfield SSSI under the guidance of the South Wales Coalfield Geo Heritage Network Project Manager, Ben Evans. Important exposures of

Westphalian deposits occur at Wern Ddu clay pit, which over time had become overgrown and difficult to access. The Countryside Council for Wales has initiated a big clear up of the site and this is our chance to get involved. There will be a walk, talk and hands-on clearance work during the day so bring gloves, sturdy shoes and your favorite tools although specialist tools will be provided. You can come for the whole day or for as long as you like. Tea, coffee and cold drinks will be provided but bring a packed lunch if staying all day. For further details about the day or the site please contact Ben at Ben.evans@museumwales.ac.uk or telephone (029) 20573305 during working hours.



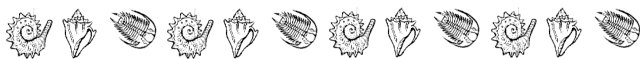
Saturday 25th/Sunday 26th
October

The Variscan stratigraphy and tectonics of North Cornwall and Devon

A weekend field meeting led by Ted

Freshney. A full itinerary is available from the Programme Secretary or the web site.

This weekend field meeting is definitely going ahead. Ted Freshney, the leader, has put together a very interesting set of localities to be visited over the weekend, copies of which are available on the web site or from the Programme Secretary. Overnight accommodation has to be booked individually and it has been suggested that somewhere in the Bude area would be the best option. Could anybody who has not already indicated that they intend attending please let the Programme Secretary know as soon as possible. Car sharing is available and all attendees will be sent a list of who is going, with contact details, so that they can arrange to stay in the same overnight accommodation if desired



Indoor Meetings 2008



Saturday 18th October ***The Geology and Mineralisation*** ***of the Central Wales Ore field*** **David James (Cardiff)**

UC Swansea. 11.00am. Joint meeting with the Russell Society



Saturday 15th November National Museum of Wales, Cardiff 10.00am - 5.00pm

Geofest is the Group's regional contribution to the parent body's 150th Anniversary celebrations. In association with the National Museum in Cardiff we have planned a full day of geological activities, talks and tours that will take place throughout the museum. To date we have two special talks arranged; at 11.00am **Phil Manning from Manchester University will talk on Grave secrets of dinosaurs** where he

will tell us more about the amazing mummified dinosaur found in North Dakota that many of you may have seen on Channel 4 television. At 2.30pm **Alison Rust from Bristol University will deliver a 'mouthwatering' talk entitled Mmmagma: edible demonstrations of volcanic processes** where you will not only be brought up to date with volcanic processes but from the sound of it, can play with them in the kitchen also!

Apart from the talks there will be much more on offer. **Eric Robinson will be leading a building stones walk around Cathays Park; Adrian Rundle and the Kent Group are bringing their excellent microfossil workshop;** there will be a chance to dig for plant fossils in blocks of Coal Measures mudstones and then have them identified by the experts; **Rockwatch** will be present, thus giving you a chance to race trilobites; museum staff will be offering **behind-the-scenes tours of the geology department** and many more gallery activities and the Group and the local branch of the Geological Society will be putting on displays and sales stands. The event takes place throughout the day from 10.00am - 5.00pm. If any of you would be interested in helping out in anyway then please contact the Programme Secretary.



Saturday 13th December ***150 years of the Geologists*** ***Association***

Dr Eric Robinson

UC Swansea. 11.00am



Saturday 10th January 2009 ***Holiday Geology***

National Waterfront Museum, Swansea.
11.00am-4.00pm
Booking essential.

Holiday Geology this year returns to Swansea and will be held once again in the National Waterfront Museum. The

meeting will start at 11.00am and finish by 4.00pm with a group of 4-5 short talks before and again after lunch. Places have to be limited to 60 as the room can not take any more so anybody wishing to come needs to book in advance. As this is very much a 'members day' we also need volunteers to give short talks. Could anybody who wishes to book a place and/or offer a talk (20 slides/images maximum) please contact the Programme Secretary.



Saturday 24th January

The geology and natural hazards of Papua New Guinea

Stephen Edwards (Benfield UCL Hazard Research Centre)

UC Cardiff. 11.00am



Saturday 21st February

Why protect the rocks? - Understanding and protecting the Geo-history of Mid Wales.
Joanne Venus (Leeds)

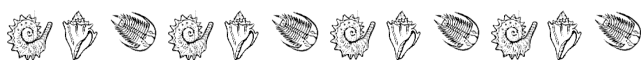
UC Swansea 11.00am. Joint Meeting with the Geological Society, South Wales Group



Saturday 21st March

AGM and The Old Red Sandstone of South Wales
Brian Williams (Aberdeen)

UC Cardiff. 11.00am



Other diary dates for 2008

Saturday 1st November

GA Annual Reunion

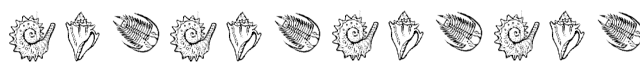
UC London. 10.00am - 4.00pm

The Group will be taking a display and stand to this event. If anybody would like to volunteer to assist could they please let the Programme Secretary know.



From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group,

meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



News

Wales. Regional Geology Guide

Copies of this book which were ordered by members have been brought to various meetings. Please let me know if you are going attend one of our meetings and I'll see that your copy will be there.

Vale John W. Perkins

Members will be saddened to hear of the death of John W. Perkins, Chairman of SWGA from 1982 until 1987, and formerly Director of the Department for Continuing Education (now Lifelong Learning) at Cardiff University. John is widely known throughout South Wales by those who, over many years, have attended his geology lecture courses, fieldtrips and study tours.

John was born in Torquay in 1935 and, while a teenager, his interest in geology was sparked by the Devon marbles in his local parish church at Babbacombe and by the fossils in one of the memorials there. He bought himself the Observer's Book of Geology, and immediately cycled off to view the local folded strata illustrated in the book.

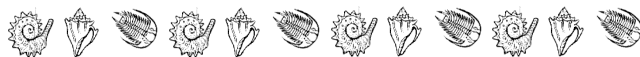
John graduated with a BSc (Hons) in geography from the University of Manchester in 1956 before going on to do a PGCE at the University of Hull. He taught in Barrow-in-Furness from 1958 until 1960 when he moved back to Devon to teach at a school in Plymouth. In 1965 he was appointed Tutor Organiser for the WEA in

West Devon, and in 1971 he moved to Cardiff to take up a post as Staff Tutor for Geology/Geography in the Department of Extra-Mural Studies at the University. He was appointed Head of Department in 1984 and in 1988 he became Director of the Department for Continuing Education.

John ran a full programme of geology courses both in Cardiff and in centres around South Wales, and these continued despite an increased administrative workload as Head of Department. He organised and led numerous overseas geology study tours, most notably to the western United States for which he produced a well-known series of field-guides, still in demand today. He also wrote three books in the David and Charles Geology explained series, as well as contributing the geology chapters to the three volumes on the Taff Valley published by the Merthyr Naturalists' Society. He pioneered the study of the building stones of Cardiff and published a guidebook of building stones trails through Cardiff.

In 1994, John was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and took early retirement. Soon afterwards, his wife, Ruth, was found to be terminally ill with cancer and died in 1997. Despite this tragic double-blow, his great strength of character gave him the determination to fight on to the end, and to remain in his own home.

John died, following a fall, and from the advanced degree of his Parkinson's, on 27 May 2008, just a few weeks short of his 73rd birthday.



Other Events

There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning: www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn where Tom Sharpe is teaching a course called "Making a Geological Map", starting 4th Oct 2008.
- Bristol University Continuing Education are running a range of courses, day-schools and study tours. Further details from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.qly.bris.ac.uk/ce).
- Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.
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- Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk)
- Open University Geological Society Contact: Janet Hiscott. www.ougs.org/severnside



That's all for now, looking forward to seeing you at the meetings this summer.

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Hazel Trenbith

hazel.trenbith@tiscali.co.uk

December 2008

Fiftieth Session 2008-2009

Geofest 2008

Geofest, the Group's contribution to our parent body's 150th Anniversary celebrations, took place at the National Museum, Cardiff, on Saturday 15th November and proved to be a roaring success. Over 1700 visitors came through the museum that day and most appear to have taken part in some of the many activities on offer. Visitors were greeted at the bottom of the main steps with an opportunity to bash away at blocks of Coal Measures mudstone in the search for fossil plants and despite the rather cold and damp weather the activity was busy all day.

On entering the museum's main hall visitors were offered the opportunity to partake in a number of activities organised by Adrian Rundte and the Kent Group including searching for micro-fossils and sharks teeth. Alongside them the Foulkes telescope team showed the remarkable images obtained from this machine.

In the corridor Unking (tie main hall to the Evolution of Wales gallery) were display stands and exhibits from the West of England GA Group, CCW, the Open University Geological Society, The Geological Society, the Russell Society and of course ourselves. We also ran a very lucrative sales stand, the proceeds from which have been added to our 50th Anniversary fund.

In the west wing of the museum Rockwatch were kept busy all day supervising a range of hands-on activities aimed particularly at children while BGS demonstrated their 3-D modelling program in the Glanelly gallery to all and sundry. At intervals during the day members of staff from the Geology Department led guided tours behind the scenes of the department, which proved extremely popular and each trip was fully booked.

During the day two open lectures were delivered in the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre, which attracted over 190 people. In the morning Dr Phil Manning from Manchester University spoke about The Grave Secrets of Dinosaurs during which he brought us up to date on the information being gleaned from the remarkable mummified dinosaur that he had been discovered in Dakota, USA. In the afternoon Dr Alison Rust from the University of Bristol had the children fixated as she demonstrated volcanic processes using items found in your own kitchen in a talk entitled Mmmagma: edible demonstrations of volcanic processes.

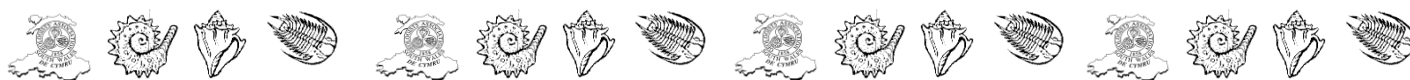
Finally, Dr Eric Robinson led one of his extremely popular building stones walks around Cathays Park at lunch time. All in all it was a very successful day and the museum has received many complimentary comments from visitors including many either asking when we are doing it again or that we should do it every year! It could not have been done without the help of a lot of our own members and the support of the other groups that agreed to take part so a big 'thank you' to you all. And here's to the next time.....!

GA Reunion 2008

The Group once again attended the Annual Reunion of the GA, called The Festival of Geology, at University College, London on 1st November. As well as taking our usual sales items Lynda Garfield and Dave Wellings exhibited their work on the minerals of Barry Island, which proved of great interest to many people. As well as the chance to meet with many other groups and friends, there were many exhibits to be viewed and numerous sales stands offering you the chance to purchase items, especially books and maps, of a geological nature. This year there were four talks on offer during the day but these proved so popular that if you didn't get to the theatre early you couldn't get in!

The night before the meeting the Association held its 150th Anniversary Dinner in the sumptuous Pompadour Room of the Cafe Royal in Regents Street, London. After the meal guests were treated to a speech from the guest of honour, the Earth Science TV star, Iain Stewart, who spoke about re-engaging the public with geology. There was a brief reflection on the GA's achievements of the past from Eric Robinson, who had just celebrated his 80th birthday and was the oldest surviving past President at the dinner, as well as short pieces from Danielle Schreeve, the current President, and Mike Benton. It was a great event and does make you wonder whether members would be interested in a celebratory dinner for our Group's 50th Anniversary?

Stephen Howe



Indoor Meetings 2009



Saturday 10th January 2009

Holiday Geology

National Waterfront Museum,

Swansea. 11.00am - 4.00pm

Booking essential.

We begin the New Year with our annual Holiday Geology meeting, which will be held on Saturday 10th January, at the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea. We have to restrict numbers to 60 so members need to book a place in advance. The meeting is being hosted by the Geology Department of the National Museum and will begin at 11.00am and finish about 4.00pm. A buffet lunch will be provided. As usual the day will consist of a series of short talks both before and after lunch plus the chance to buy a range of books and maps from the Group's sales stock. There are still a number of spaces available for the meeting and also a few slots for anybody who would like to give a short presentation (slide or digital). Would anybody who wishes to attend and/or give a short talk please contact the Programme Secretary.



Saturday 24th January

The geology and natural hazards of Papua New Guinea

Stephen Edwards (Benfield UCL Hazard Research Centre)

UC Cardiff. 11.00am

The first lecture of the New Year will be given by Dr Stephen Edwards of the Benfield Hazard Research Unit, University College London, on The geology and natural hazards of Papua, New Guinea. The talk takes place in Cardiff on Saturday 24th January at 11.00am. Stephen is a work colleague of Bill McGuire and many of you may remember the excellent talk he gave at the GA reunion meeting in Cardiff in 2004 so this will be a great start to the New Year.



Saturday 21st February

Why protect the rocks? -

Understanding and protecting the Geo-history of Mid Wales.

Joanne Venus (Leeds)

UC Swansea 11.00am

February's lecture is a joint meeting with the South Wales branch of the Geological Society and takes place in Swansea on Saturday 21st February. We return to a Mid Wales theme with Joanne Venus from Leeds talking on Why protect the rocks? – Understanding and protecting the Geo-history of Mid Wales. In her talk Joanne will show how the highly diverse geology of the area influenced its economic development from Roman times through to the present and how it is important to protect sites of geological interest not only for scientific research but to educate and increase public awareness of geo-heritage.

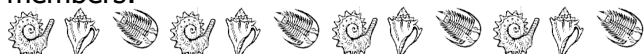


Saturday 21st March AGM and The Old Red Sandstone of South Wales

Brian Williams (Aberdeen)

UC Cardiff. 10.30am

Joint Meeting with the Geological Society, South Wales Group. The final meeting of the Winter programme takes place on Saturday 21st March, in Cardiff, when Prof Brian Williams from Aberdeen University, a long standing member of the group, will give us a review of The Old Red Sandstone of South Wales. Brian is a world authority on the subject and is the joint author of the Old Red Sandstone chapter in the recently revised edition of The Geology of England and Wales published by the Geological Society. The talk begins at 11.00am but the Group's AGM will take place before the lecture at 10.30am. We will as usual be looking for volunteers to join the committee. If you think you'd like to get involved, please contact one of the committee members.



Field Meetings 2009

Preparations for next year's field meeting programme have begun and as in previous years we will be looking to arrange one meeting per month from April - October. The committee have suggested a series of venues but if any members have a desire to see an excursion arranged to a particular area please let the Programmes Secretary know.



From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this Information on the website.

Lectures at Cardiff University are held in the Department of Earth Sciences. Lectures at University of Wales Swansea are held in the Department of Geography.



News

Wales. Regional Geology Guide

Copies of this book which were ordered by members have been brought to various meetings. Please let me know if you are going to attend one of our meetings and I'll see that your copy will be there.

The Geology of South Wales: A Field Guide. Gareth T. George (2008)

The Geology of South Wales is a new book that we have been told about, that our members might be interested in. It provides up-to-date itineraries to five regions noted for their beautiful scenery and outstanding geology: Vale of Glamorgan (6 itineraries), Gower (4 itineraries), Headwaters of the rivers Neath and Tawe (3 itineraries), South Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen Bay (16 itineraries), North Pembrokeshire and Cardigan Bay (9 itineraries). The itineraries are well illustrated with line figures (location/geology maps, cross sections, stratigraphic columns, graphic logs, depositional models) and black & white (56) and colour photographs (21). The guide is user friendly and suitable for a range of Earth Scientists including enthusiastic amateurs, schoolteachers, Open University students and members of the Geologists' Association. Most of the disciplines of geology are covered including stratigraphy, sedimentology, palaeontology, geomorphology, structural geology and igneous geology. The principles and applications of sequence stratigraphy are introduced and explained by reference to many excellent field examples seen in Upper Carboniferous strata. Key stratigraphic surfaces present within these sequences record major changes in sea level, which were driven by both glacio-eustatic and basinal processes.

Gareth has very generously offered our members copies of this book for Price £15.00 (inclusive of postage and packing in UK). If you are interested, please contact him directly by email or post and quote code: SWGA 2008. G.T George, 17 Avimore Gardens, Bearsted, Kent ME14 4BA. gareth@geoserv.co.uk.

Emailed Newsletters

Emailed newsletters have been a great success over the last few years and save the group plenty of stamps! We are finding however that because of changes in email addresses our distribution list needs updating. If you would like to continue or start to receive your newsletter by

email, please email me. Rhian@carreg.org.uk

Rockwatch

Rockwatch Is the nationwide club for young geologists and is the junior club of the Geologists' Association. We have run a number of events for Rockwatch over the years which have been very successful and we would like to try run one Rockwatch event per year and so, we are looking for volunteers. If you think that you can help, please contact Stephen Howe

South Wales RIGS Project

The South Wales RIGS project is now underway and we are looking for volunteers to help. Our literature searches have revealed a large number of potentially Interesting sites across the region and we need help to see if they still exist. Or perhaps you have some spare time to help with more data searches. If you think that you can help with any of this, please get in touch with Tom or myself.

Dinner

We have been thinking of organising a dinner to celebrate our 50* birthday next year. We would like to see this is something that our members would like to take part in. If you are interested, or have any good Ideas for a venue or perhaps a speaker, please let me know.

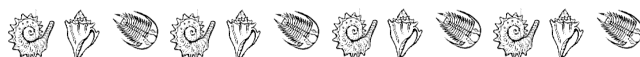
Russell Society

For all our members who are also members of the Russell Society or are interested in joining, they are having a weekend of talks and quarry visits and their AGM on 3rd to the 5th April 2009. Please contact Dave Wellings for more information.

Alan Stevens

We have just heard the sad news that Alan Stevens died a few weeks ago. Alan was a member of this Group from Its very first days. He served as President from 1988-1990, Vice-

President 1986-1988 and was a Committee member from 1962-1967.



Other Events

There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning: www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn where Tom Sharpe is teaching a course called "Making a Geological Map", starting 4th Oct 2008.
- Bristol University Continuing Education are running a range of courses, dayschools and study tours. Further details from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.gly.bns.ac.uk/ce).
- Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.
- You can get details of Russell Society Wales and West Branch activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9pm).
- U3A South Wales Geology Group from Nigel McGaw (01656-654439).
- Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru) from Tim Palmer (tjp@aber.ac.uk)
- Open University Geological Society Contact: Janet Hiscott. www.ougs.org/severnside



All that remains is to wish you a Merry Christmas and a very happy new year. Oh yes and please get your subs in to Mike Gregory if you haven't already done so! See you next year.

Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk

Geraint Owen (Secretary) 01792-295141; g.owen@swansea.ac.uk



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hazel.trenbith@tiscali.co.uk

April 2009

Fiftieth Session 2008-2009

With such a busy newsletter, there's not much space for the usual introductions. Suffice to say that Stephen Howe has organized us a great selection of meetings for our field meeting season. Looking forward to seeing you there!



Field Meetings 2009

**Sunday 26th April****Rudry, near Caerphilly.****Leader: Tom Sharpe (NMW)**

A full day excursion that will entail a circular walk of about 6 miles to examine the Upper Old Red Sandstone–Carboniferous sequence of the area and its effect on the topography. The route includes a few steep sections.

Meet at 10.30am at the public car park on Rudry Common (ST 183 865), which is located just below Mynydd Rudry, near Caerphilly. Lunch can be taken at the Maenllwyd public house for those who wish, although it will probably be busy, otherwise bring a packed lunch.

**Saturday 30th May****North-west Carmarthenshire****Leader: John Davies (CCW)**

Meet at 10.30am at the Focus car park in Carmarthen (SN 412 193). Bring a packed lunch. This full day excursion will follow the Ordovician-Silurian boundary across Carmarthenshire, towards Llangranog, looking specifically at the submarine channel deposits. The excursion will also examine the use of these various sandstones as building stones.

**Saturday 20th June****Chedworth, Gloucestershire****Leader: David Owen****(Gloucestershire Geology Trust)**

Meet at 10.30am at Chedworth Roman Villa car park (SP 053 135), three miles north-west of Fossebridge off the A429 Cirencester to Northleach road. Bring a packed lunch.

The excursion will visit the Chedworth Railway cutting, which exposes a condensed section through the Inferior Oolite, and then Foss Cross Quarry to examine the Great Oolite (White Limestone). Then a short drive to the Stony Furlong cutting and Chedworth Valley to look at further sections in the White Limestone, local building stones and how Quaternary erosion and deposition has affected the landscape. If time permits it may be possible to visit the Chedworth Roman Villa (entrance charge applies).

**Saturday 25th July****Exploring the landforms and deglaciation of the Middle Usk Valley in the Abergavenny area****Leader: Adrian Humpage (BGS)**

Meet at 10.00am outside the Abergavenny Tourist Information Centre in the main car park opposite the bus station (SO 302 140). Bring a packed lunch

This excursion will examine the glacial limits of the Usk glacier and some of the recessional features associated with a retreating ice margin. Evidence associated with the timing of the deglaciation of the area will be considered and how they decoupled from the main ice mass. The deposits and evidence of climatic amelioration and Holocene landscape change will also be examined.



Saturday 22nd August
Burrington Combe, Mendip
Leader: Andy Farrant (BGS)

Meet at 10.30am at the Burrington Coombe Café car park, just below the 'Rock of Ages' (ST 476 587). Bring a packed lunch.

The excursion will be by foot around Burrington Combe and the East and West Twin Valleys examining the Carboniferous Limestone succession, the overlying Triassic and plenty of caves and karstic features. An idea of what we will see can be found in the BGS publication The Walkers Guide to the Geology and Landscape of Western Mendip by Andy Farrant.



Saturday 19th September
St Davids, Pembrokeshire
Leader: Dyfed Elis Gruffydd

Meet at 11.00am at the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park car park near the Bishop's Palace in St Davids (SM 749 254). Bring a packed lunch.

The excursion will begin with an examination of the building stones of the Cathedral and then proceed to Pont y Penyd Quarry, Porth Clais, and if time permits, St Non's Bay. The day will be spent looking at the rocks of the Pebidian Volcanic Complex, the Cambrian Caerfai and Solva Groups and the late Pleistocene.



Saturday 24th October
Cwm Gwrelech and Selar
Opencast, Neath Valley
Leader: Ben Evans (BIGC)

Meet at 10.30am at Cwm Gwrelech, near Pont Walby, Pontneddfechan (SN 891 065). Bring a packed lunch.

The morning will be spent examining the Coal Measures sequence in Cwm Gwrelech and the afternoon that in the Selar Opencast mine. The underfoot conditions may be slippery and muddy especially after heavy rain.



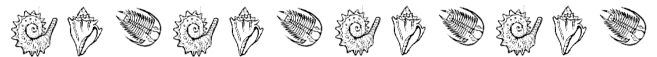
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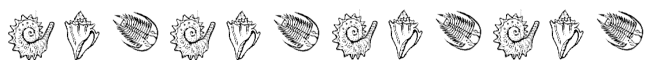
From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



Geoconservation Workdays

Following on from the successful geoconservation day at Wern Ddu that we participated in last October, Ben Evans will be arranging two more such meetings this coming November: Saturday 7th November at Cwm Gwrelech and Saturday 14th November at Wern Ddu. The objective of both days will be to undertake site clearance work that, depending upon your fitness and drive, can range from barrowing away scree to cleaning rock faces of vegetation - 'gardening'! All tools will be provided and although both meetings will be full day events, starting at 10.00am, it is up to you how long you participate. Full meeting details will appear in a later Newsletter but if any of you

are interested in participating in these or any other such activities with the South Wales Coalfield Geo Heritage Project then contact the Project Manager, Ben Evans by email (ben.evans@museumwales.ac.uk).



Summer Events

As you will be aware the Group participated in a number of events last year at which we manned a display/sales stand and also undertook some geological activities. We have already been asked if we will attend the Out of the Woods Festival in Bute Park, Cardiff on Sunday 23rd August. As we have a field meeting on Saturday 22nd August the Parks department are prepared to obtain the rock for our fossil bash but before I commit us to going I would appreciate it if members could let me know whether any of you will be able to help out on the Sunday.

We have also been tentatively asked to attend the Penarth Festival of the Sea again, which last year was over the first weekend in July. As soon as we have confirmation of the date we will let you know but in the meantime, if there are any members who would be willing to help out at anytime over the weekend, could they let me know please.



Fforwm Cerrig Cymru / Welsh Stone Forum programme 2009

Saturday 18th April: AGM and Lecture 11.00am, St Mary's Priory Centre, Monk Street, Abergavenny

The AGM will be followed by a lecture by Dr Maddy Gray on Stone Sepulchral Sculpture. Afternoon study of the church monuments and Abergavenny.

Saturday 16th May: The Abbey Masonry workshop and the area around Cross Hands

Leader: Tim Palmer and John Davies

Meet at 11.00am at the Abbey Masonry works on the Cross Hands Industrial Estate, Cross Hands [SN 568 128]. Packed lunch essential.

Saturday 27th June: Llanddewi Brefi, Strata Florida and Llanbadarn Fawr Leaders: John Davies and Tim Palmer

Meet at 11.00am in the square in front of the church, Llanddewi Brefi [SN 663 553]

Saturday 12th September: Llangollen and Valle Crucis

Leader: Jacqui Malpas and Raymond Roberts

Meet at 11.00am in the central car park, Llangollen [SJ 214 420]



South Wales RIGS Project Workshop Days

The South Wales RIGS project is now underway and we are looking for volunteers to help. Our literature searches have revealed a large number of potentially interesting sites across the region and we need help to see if they still exist. We have put together a short workshop to help us to get started. The workshop is intended as informal day to go through the forms and H&S in insurance paper work, taking no more than an hour or so depending on questions that arise. I also intend to offer people the opportunity to go through describing samples and sites and using a compass on the same day if they would like to although I realise that not everyone will want to do this. We can also talk about the areas that people are interested in working in arrange to get the site visit forms and maps printed out so you can visit some sites.

The workshop will be held in the BGS offices in Tongwynlais, near Cardiff with field work in the Taff Gorge if you'd like to do that, later the same day. In the first instance, we have arranged two dates for people to choose from these being **17th and 18th of April**. One week day and

one weekend day to choose from. I can arrange more dates for people if these aren't convenient.

If you think that you would like to attend, I'd be grateful if you could let me know which date you'd prefer and I'll send on directions and arrangements closer to the day. Similarly, if these dates aren't convenient, let me know and I'll arrange others.

We have sadly lost another member. Braham Jacobs aged 79 died on 10th February. He was a retired manager of M&S in Neath who had been a member for many years. A member of this group for many years he also attended Geraint Owens evening classes in the early 90's

National Museum of Wales Lecture

Special Evening Lecture: William Buckland – The Man Who Ate the Heart of a King, and discovered the Red Lady of Paviland
14 May 6.30pm

This talk is by Professor Jim Kennedy, director of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, on 14 May at National Museum Cardiff.

What's going on in South Wales Geology?

As you probably know, there are lots of geological events going on in South Wales, but the difficulty is finding out about them. To try and address this, we have set up a website on which you can find events. If you know of any events that you think should be added, please send me an email. If you organise regular

meetings, we can set up passwords so that you can add your own events.

www.southwalesgeology.blogspot.com

Other Geological Organisations

There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning: www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn
- Bristol University Continuing Education are running a range of courses, dayschools and study tours. Further details from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.gly.bns.ac.uk/ce).
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Membership Secretary:	Mike Gregory 01792- 298510 579 Gower Road, Upper Killay, Swansea SA2 7DR	membership@swga.org.uk	

June 2009

Fiftieth Session 2008-2009

Welcome to the June newsletter. We've had a great start to the season with fantastic walks led by Tom Sharpe around the Rudry area and John Davies in North-west Carmarthenshire. I'm certainly looking forward to more across the summer. This newsletter is packed with events coming up across the field season as well as a preview of events that are being organised for our Anniversary year. Between activities organised by the SWGA and other organisations in the area it promises to be a busy time! See you there... Rhian



Field Meetings 2009



Saturday 25th July
Exploring the landforms and deglaciation of the Middle Usk Valley in the Abergavenny area
Leader: Adrian Humpage (BGS)

Meet at 10.00am outside the Abergavenny Tourist Information Centre in the main car park opposite the bus station (SO 302 140). Bring a packed lunch.

This excursion will examine the glacial limits of the Usk glacier and some of the recessional features associated with a retreating ice margin. Evidence associated with the timing of the deglaciation of the area will be considered and some of the problems of tributary glaciers and how they decoupled from the main ice mass. The deposits and evidence of climatic amelioration and Holocene landscape change will also be examined.



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Burrington Combe, Mendip
Leader: Andy Farrant (BGS)

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car park, just below the 'Rock of Ages' (ST 476 587). Bring a packed lunch.

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Saturday 26th September
St Davids, Pembrokeshire
Leader: Dyfed Elis Gruffydd

Please note that the date for this field meeting has had to change due to unforeseen circumstances. It will now take place on Saturday 26th September and not on 19th as stated in the Programme Card.

Meet at 11.00am at the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park car park near the Bishop's Palace in St Davids (SM 749 254). Bring a packed lunch.

The excursion will begin with an examination of

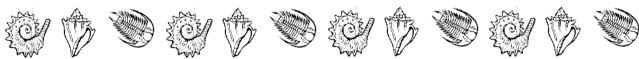
the building stones of the Cathedral and then proceed to Pont y Penyd Quarry, Porth Clais, and if time permits, St Non's Bay. The day will be spent looking at the rocks of the Pebidian Volcanic Complex, the Cambrian Caerfai and Solva Groups and the late Pleistocene.



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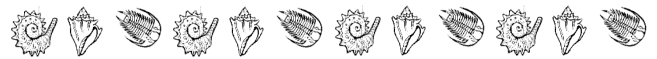
Indoor Meetings 2009 - 2010

A sneak preview of the coming lecture season from our Programme Secretary:

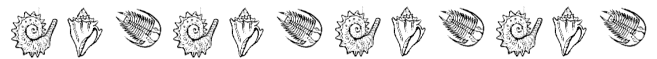
During our next indoor session we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our first ever lecture, which took place on Saturday 23rd January 1960. It just so happens that the 23rd January 2010 is also a Saturday so that we can celebrate on the actual day. I am delighted to say that Dr Iain Stewart of the University of Plymouth has agreed to come and speak to us on that day about his new series How Earth made us, that he is currently filming, so make a note in your dairies. Other talks already booked include; Prof John Cope who will look at how the plate tectonic theory has been accepted and evolved over the last 50 years; Dr Richard Scrivener (ex BGS) on Permian and Triassic mineralisation in the rocks of South-west England; Dr Marc Jones (UCL) on non-mammalian micro-vertebrates; and of course your President who is planning a lecture about Geoconservation.

Our annual social members meeting 'Holiday Geology' will take place on Saturday 9th January 2010 and will be an all-day event at the National Museum, Cardiff so with the summer holidays

coming up now is the time to start taking the photos and planning your talk!

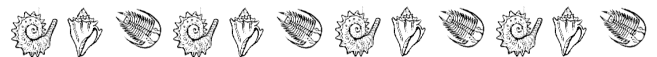


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Summer Events

Out of the Woods Festival

Cardiff County Council have asked the Group to participate once again in their annual Out of the Woods Festival in Bute Park. The event takes place on Sunday 23rd August from 10.00-4.00pm. We will be having our usual stand and the Coal Measures fossil bashing activity. As always we are always grateful for any assistance that you can give to help make this event for as

long or as short as you can manage. If anybody is willing to help out could they please contact Stephen Howe.

Geofest

Following on from the highly successful Geofest day that we ran at the National Museum of Wales last November, as our contribution to the main GA's 150th anniversary celebrations, we have been under a lot of pressure to make this a regular event. After discussions with the museum and other groups we have decided that it should be a biennial event with the next occurring in autumn 2010. Groups interested in coming have already expressed an interest so next time could well be bigger and better than last so pencil it in to your diaries now!

50th Anniversary Dinner

To mark the 50th anniversary of our first lecture we are planning to hold a special lunch after Iain Stewart's talk somewhere in the city centre. We will be looking at all of the options but of course will need to book somewhere in advance as we assume that more people may wish to join us that day than normally come. Because of this we will be asking that members book in advance. More details will appear in the later Newsletter but put the date in your diary now!

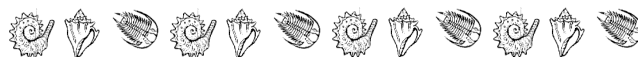
Newport Building Stones

Appearing shortly will be the next in our series of geological walks leaflets, a building stones walk through the centre of Newport. Written by Eric Robinson this walk takes you on a stroll from the central railway station down High Street and up Stow Hill to St Woolo's Cathedral. There are some very interesting things to see, such as borings from the Common Piddock in blocks of Old Red Sandstone in the walls of St Woolo's Cathedral that show that the stone was derived from a tidal locality, probably somewhere alongside the river. Once it has been printed it will be distributed to members with the next mailing.

Cathays Cemetery

Cathays Cemetery in Cardiff celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. This large, Victorian cemetery hosts a wealth of grave memorials both to the famous and not so famous in a large variety of stone, both local and exotic. As part of their celebrations they are in the process of

publishing a book that includes a chapter on the general geology of the cemetery, which will be launched at their centenary open days over the weekend of 11th-12th July this year. As a follow up the Friends group are interested in producing a geological trail which they have asked us to assist them with so watch this space.



Other Events

Fforwm Cerrig Cymru / Welsh Stone Forum programme 2009

Saturday 27th June: Llanddewi Brefi, Strata Florida and Llanbadarn Fawr

Leaders: John Davies and Tim Palmer

Meet at 11.00am in the square in front of the church, Llanddewi Brefi [SN 663 553]

Saturday 12th September: Llangollen and Valle Crucis

Leader: Jacqui Malpas and Raymond Roberts

Meet at 11.00am in the central car park, Llangollen [SJ 214 420]

Severnside Branch of the Open University Geological Society

12th July, Duncan Hawley is leading an excursion which will follow the geology and landscape from the Wye to the Usk up the Llynfi Valley on the western rim of the Black Mountains, exploring the ancient environments of the Old Red Sandstone underlying the area; and the more recent invasion of ice into the Llangorse Basin, examining where it came from and how long it stayed.

(full details on the website
www.ougs.org/severnside)

In addition the Open University Geological Society organises an Annual Symposium - a weekend of Lectures and fieldtrips - at the end of July which this year is in Leeds, theme is 'Yorkshire rocks!' I realise it is a long way for folk in south Wales but if you have particular

interest in that area or are perhaps planning a holiday up that way this summer you might be interested. Everyone is welcome. www.ougs.org/society events.

Cardiff Naturalists' Society

Geology and landforms between Southerndown and Nash Point.

Tom Sharpe

Saturday 4th July Southerndown

Start time 10am Full day, packed lunch

Distance will depend on the weather and what we find but could be 7 miles. Some walking will be on rocks so stout shoes advisable. Meet outside the Glamorgan Heritage Visitor Centre, Dunraven Bay, at 10am. Car park charges apply.

South Wales RIGS Project

The South Wales RIGS project is well underway and we are always looking for volunteers to help. Our literature searches have revealed a large number of potentially interesting sites across the region and we need help to see if they still exist so that we can recommend the very best to become RIGS.

If you would like to get involved with data searches, field work or to tell us about sites that you think should be included, please get in touch. Rhian. Email: rhndl@bgs.ac.uk Tel: 2920 521962

Other Geological Organisations

There are a number of other organisations offering geological courses and trips. These include

- Cardiff University Centre for Lifelong Learning: www.cardiff.ac.uk/learn
- Bristol University Continuing Education are running a range of courses, dayschools and study tours. Further details from Barbara Perks, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol (0117-954-5438; earth-ce@bris.ac.uk; www.gly.bns.ac.uk/ce).
- Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education from 01792-295786 or www.swansea.ac.uk/dace.
- You can get details of Russell Society Wales and West Branch activities from Tom Cotterell (01594-845935, before 9pm).
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- Open University Geological Society Contact: Janet Hiscott. www.ougs.org/severnside
- www.southwalesgeology.blogspot.com for geology events in South Wales



I'd like to end this newsletter with a plea. The SWGA has an archive of paperwork and photographs from through out its existence but we would like to build on the collection with memorabilia from down the years. If you have anything that you think should be added to our archives, please get in touch with myself or Tom Sharpe (Tom.Sharpe@museumwales.ac.uk). We can arrange to copy or scan material and return it if necessary.

Best Wishes. *Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk*



Registered Charity Number 1054303

President: Nigel McGaw

01656-654439

Editor: Rhian Kendall

webmaster@swga.org.uk

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Vice-President: Malcolm Shaw

Programme

Secretary: Stephen Howe

Steve.Howe@museumwales.ac.uk

Treasurer: Hazel Trenbith

hazel.trenbith@tiscali.co.uk

October 2009

Fiftieth Session 2008-2009

Its that time of year again... We've had a great summer of field meetings, the less said about the weather the better I think and we are about to embark on our indoor season. Stephen Howe has organised a fantastic line up of lectures to mark our 50th Anniversary including a lecture that harks back to the science of geology as it was when the group was formed and keynote speaker to celebrate the day its self followed by a dinner. It's also time to renew or subs. I think that you'll agree that with a line up like this it's worth every penny! See you there... Rhian



Indoor Meetings 2009



Saturday 17th October (Swansea)

Ted Nield (Editor Geoscientist,
Geological Society)

*Supercontinent Disunited: why did America
reject Wegener's big idea?*



**Saturday 14th November
(Cardiff)**

Richard Scrivener (Honorary
Research Associate, British
Geological Survey)

*Permian and Triassic mineralisation in the
rocks of South-west England*



**Saturday 12th December
(Swansea)**

John Cope (National Museum of
Wales)

*Reflections on 50 years of geological
change.*

2010



**Saturday 9th January (Cardiff,
National Museum of Wales)**

Holiday Geology



Saturday 23rd January (Cardiff)

Iain Stewart (University of Plymouth)

How Earth made Us



**Saturday 20th February
(Swansea)**

Mark Jones (University College
London)

*The New Zealand Tuatara, its fossil relatives
and the Welsh Dragon*



**Saturday 13th March (Cardiff)
[10.30am start]**

AGM and Presidential Address

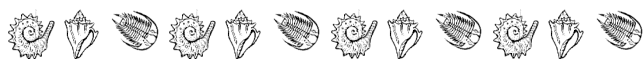
Nigel McGaw

Geoconservation: serious fun!

The Cardiff meetings take place in the

Department of Earth Sciences, the Main Building, Cardiff University and the Swansea meetings in the Wallace Building (Department of Geography), Swansea University. The lectures begin at 11.00am with tea and coffee beforehand from about 10.15am. After the meetings the speaker is taken to lunch at a local hostelry to which all members are welcome to attend. Please note that the AGM begins at 10.30am with tea and coffee beforehand from 10.00am.

This session's *Holiday Geology* meeting will take place in the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Following the pattern of previous years the meeting will consist of morning and afternoon sessions, beginning at 11.00am and finishing by 4.00pm. A buffet lunch will be provided but, due to increasing costs, a 'donation' of £2/head would be appreciated.



Field Meetings 2009

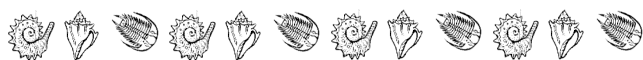
Saturday 7th November Cwm Gwrelech and Selar Opencast, Neath Valley

Leader: Ben Evans (BIGC)

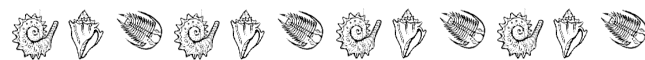
PLEASE NOTE that, due to the Welsh Rally, the date of the Cwm Grwelech / Selar Opencast meeting has been changed from that advertised on the Summer Programme card.

Meet at 10.30am at Cwm Gwrelech, near Pont Walby, Pontneddfechan (SN 891 065). Bring a packed lunch.

The morning will be spent examining the Coal Measures sequence in Cwm Gwrelech and the afternoon that in the Selar Opencast mine. The underfoot conditions may be slippery and muddy especially after heavy rain.



From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



50th Anniversary Lecture and Dinner

We are fortunate that in our 50th Anniversary year our January meeting falls on exactly the same day that the Group's first ever lecture took place in 1960 - Saturday 23rd January. To celebrate the occasion we are very fortunate to have got Prof Iain Stewart from the University of Plymouth and TV fame to come and talk to us about his new television series, *How Earth Made Us*. On such an auspicious occasion your committee felt that we should mark the event in a special way and so we are proposing to have a special celebratory lunch after the talk, probably at the Park Plaza hotel in Cardiff city centre. Full details will appear in the next *Newsletter* but the idea would be to keep the cost to about £15/head, so please put this date in your dairies.

Holiday Geology

As is usual we will be looking for volunteers to give short (10 minute) talks at this year's *Holiday Geology* meeting in January at the national Museum of Wales. As in previous years we will be looking for about 4 - 5 talks each side of lunch and would ask that each talk uses a maximum of about 20 images. Both a 35mm slide projector and digital projector will be available on the day but in order to make the meeting run technically smoothly it would be useful to have copies of each talk in advance so that we can pre-load the digital images on to the computer.

I am sure that there are many of you itching to show us where you have been and what you have seen during the year both near

and far so could all volunteers please let the Programme Secretary know before December the title of their talk and send a copy of their images in advance of the meeting as well please.

Pembrokeshire Weekend 2010

Following on from Brian Williams' superb talk on the Old Red Sandstone last session, he has agreed to run a weekend field meeting to Pembrokeshire over the weekend of Saturday 17th/Sunday 18th April 2010. Based at Tenby the weekend will concentrate on the theme of *New perspectives on the Old Red Sandstone of South Pembrokeshire*. As usual with such an excursion members will be able to attend just one of the days if they can not make the full weekend.

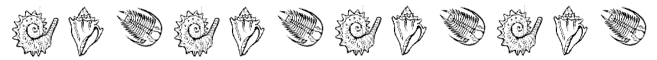
Brian is proposing to stay at the hotel he has used over many years of working in Pembrokeshire – the Fourcroft Hotel, Tenby - that offers B&B for about £45/night. Brian is willing to make a block booking on our behalf but needs to know numbers in order to do so. Could any member wishing to attend the weekend excursion and who is interested in staying at the Fourcroft Hotel please let the Programme Secretary know as soon as possible please.

South Wales RIGS Project

The South Wales RIGS project is well underway and we are always looking for volunteers to help. Our literature searches have revealed a large number of potentially interesting sites across the region and we need help to see if they still exist so that we can recommend the very best to become RIGS.

Rhian will be organising a series of field days to investigate some of the many sites that have been identified. These will be held on: **24th Oct, 28th Nov and 19th Dec**. Please get in touch if you would like to come along. If you would like to get involved with data searches, field work, or to tell us about sites that you think should be included, please get in touch. Rhian.

Email: rhnd1@bgs.ac.uk Tel: 2920 521962



Other Geological Organisations

Severnside Branch of the Open University Geological Society

The Severnside Branch of the Open University is holding a day of lectures on Sunday, 6th December, held in the Icon Suite, Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Museum opens at 10 am and we begin asap after that. Tea and coffee available. Booking essential.

GA members welcome. Please contact us to let us know you are coming: either Janet Hiscott (01633 781557) janethiscott@netscape.net or Jan Ashton Jones (01432 870827) jashtonjon@aol.com

Speakers:

Lorriane Field: 'A PhD in progress', The magmatic evolution of Dabbahu Volcano, Afar, Ethiopia;

Louise Thomas: The Uranium Series

Cath Jex: Dating Speleotherms and investigating past climates

Clare Warren: Geo-speedometry: Dating the Formation and Exhumation of High Pressure Rocks

Lunch at Inncoignitos.

The group is also holding a Symposium which will be held in Swansea University 9 - 11th July 2010. Theme: Cutting edge research from Welsh Universities. Full lecture programme and field trips. Cost to be determined. Keep an eye on website for more details http://ougs.org/society_events Thanks. Janet

Affordable Science

We have recently been contacted by a company which supplies geological equipment based in Caerphilly, called

Affordable Science and Astronomy. Their web address is: www.affordablescience.com. Their prices are very reasonable, including offering deals for sets of geological kit. Please email them directly for more information and don't forget to mention the SWGA.

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- www.southwalesgeology.blogspot.com for geology events in South Wales

- The **Cardiff Naturalists' Society** is a group based which holds lectures and field trips on the general theme of Natural History. This year, there are two lectures that may be of interest to our members: On the 20th October, Alan Channing from Cardiff University will be giving a talk about Hot Spring Ecosystems Through Time.

Another talk on the 2nd of November, Prof Roger Falconer will be speaking about the Severn Barrage and other Options and Opportunities.

GA members are welcome and they are held in lecture theatre D 106 on the Llandaff Campus UWIC at 7:30.



Further to our appeal in the last newsletter, the committee has sent a request for us all to look back through our photographic archives for images of our friends from the GA going back over the years. If you have anything that you think should be added to our archives, please get in touch with myself or Tom Sharpe (Tom.Sharpe@museumwales.ac.uk). We can arrange to copy or scan material and return it if necessary. Please don't forget to send your renewals to Mike Gregory and if you are a tax payer, we would be very grateful if you could sign the gift aid forms as we can then claim the tax back!

Best Wishes. Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk



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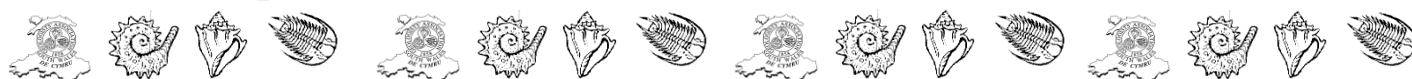
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Steve.Howe@museumwales.ac.uk

Treasurer: Hazel Trenbith

hazel.trenbith@tiscali.co.uk

January 2010

Fifty-first Session 2009-2010

Indoor Meetings 2010



**Saturday 9th January (Cardiff,
National Museum of Wales)**

Holiday Geology

The annual Holiday Geology meeting will take place in the Oriel Suite (the rooms behind the restaurant) at the National Museum of Wales on Saturday 9th January from 11.00am – 4.00pm. Access to the rooms is via the restaurant. The meeting is being hosted by the Museum's Geology Department and there will be a buffet lunch provided. No booking is required to attend the meeting unless you are volunteering to give a short presentation. We currently have had offers of seven presentations and am looking for about 8-10 in total so if there is anybody else willing to give talk could they please let Stephen Howe know before the day. There will be a lap-top and digital projector available as most people seem to be using this form of photographic equipment these days but we do have access to a 35mm slide projector in case anybody wishes to show slides. If anybody is intending using slides could you please let Stephen know before the day as well please.

If anybody has a poster display that they

wish to exhibit please let us know and we will try and arrange to get some display screens. There will also probably be a second-hand book, journal and map sales table.

Due to increasing costs, unlike previous years, we will be asking for a £2/head contribution towards the buffet payable at the door on the day.



**Saturday 23rd January (Cardiff)
50th Anniversary Lecture and
Dinner**

Iain Stewart (University of Plymouth)
How Earth made Us

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(Swansea)**

Mark Jones (University College
London)

*The New Zealand Tuatara, its fossil
relatives and the Welsh Dragon*

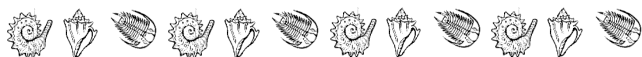


Saturday 13th March (Cardiff) **[10.30am start]**

AGM and Presidential Address

Nigel McGaw

Geoconservation: serious fun!



The Cardiff meetings take place in the Department of Earth Sciences, the Main Building, Cardiff University and the Swansea meetings in the Wallace Building (Department of Geography), Swansea University. The lectures begin at 11.00am with tea and coffee beforehand from about 10.15am. After the meetings the speaker is taken to lunch at a local hostelry to which all members are welcome to attend. Please note that the AGM begins at 10.30am with tea and coffee beforehand from 10.00am.

From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.



50th Anniversary Lecture and Dinner

As you will recall from earlier Newsletters and announcements at the recent meetings we will be having a special lunch after Iain Stewart's talk on Saturday 23rd January 2010 to celebrate our 50th Anniversary on the actual anniversary day of the Group's first meeting in 1960. Lunch will be in the Park Plaza hotel in Greyfriars Road, Cardiff and the menu is below. You may have any of the following combinations:

2 courses only (main plus either a starter or sweet)	£13.50
2 courses as above plus tea and coffee at the end	£16.00
3 courses	£16.50
3 courses plus tea and coffee at the end	£19.00

We have to give the restaurant the full order in advance of the day so it is essential that those who wish to come have sent Stephen Howe their menu options and full payment by Monday 18th January 2010. Please make cheques payable to the Geologists' Association South Wales Group' and send both to Stephen at the National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NP.

Roasted Butternut Squash, Sweet Chilli and Coriander Soup

Chicken Liver Parfait, Grape Chutney, Grilled Ciabatta Bread

LKB Prawn Cocktail, Granary Bread

~ ~ ~

'Gloucester Old Spot Pork' Cumberland Sausage, Caramelized Onion Mash, Roasting Jus

Whole Grilled Plaice, Shrimp and Tomato Butter Sauce, New Potatoes

Sweet Pepper Tarte Tatin, Grilled Goat's Cheese, Wild Rocket

~ ~ ~

Crème Brulee

Caramelized Lemon Tart, Vanilla Mascarpone, Rosemary Syrup

Dark Chocolate Mousse, Amaretto Biscuits

Pembrokeshire Weekend 2010

Following on from Brian Williams' superb talk on the Old Red Sandstone last session, he has agreed to run a weekend field meeting to Pembrokeshire over the weekend of Saturday 17th/Sunday 18th April 2010. Based at Tenby the weekend will concentrate on the theme of *New perspectives on the Old Red Sandstone of South Pembrokeshire*. As usual with such an excursion members will be able to attend just one of the days if they can not make the full weekend.

Brian is proposing to stay at the hotel he has used over many years of working in Pembrokeshire – the Fourcroft Hotel, Tenby. He has provided the following information about the weekend:

"The rate at the Fourcroft Hotel will be £72.00 per person D,B&B on a twin-sharing basis. I intend to stay there on the Fri. and Sat. nights, as the Hotel will act as HQ for the Trip [and all the maps, books, reprints, air photos and much more memorabilia on the ORS Research done in S. Pembs. will be on display in a dedicated room in the Hotel]. My two recent ex-Ph.D. research students on the ORS of S.Pembs – Rob Hillier and Lance Morrissey - will be in charge of this as well as helping me in the field over the two-day trip.

For those coming on the trip for ONE DAY only, below is a cryptic outline of the localities to be visited:-

SAT. 17 APRIL:

- (1) Albion Sands, Marloes
- (2) St. Brides Haven
- (3) Little Castle Head
- (4) Llanstadwell

(Trip will start at 10.00 am from the main car park at Marloes - return to Hotel c.6.30 pm. for 7.30 pm. Dinner in the Fourcroft [Drinks while perusing the Displays after Dinner]. Material will be on display from the Friday evening when Rob, Lance and I will be there).

SUN. 18 APRIL:

- (1) Freshwater West
- (2) Freshwater East
- (3) Manorbier - Old Castle Head traverse.

(Trip will start from main Fresh. West car park at 10.00 am. - trip ends in Manorbier c.6.00 pm)."

Fourcroft Hotel

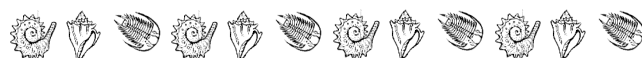
North Beach
Tenby
Pembrokeshire
SA70 8AP

Tel: +44 (0)1 834 842 886

Fax: +44 (0)1 834 842 888

<http://www.fourcroft-hotel.co.uk/>

Could any member wishing to attend the weekend excursion and who is interested in staying at the Fourcroft Hotel please let the Stephen Howe know as soon as possible please.



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Rhian will be organising a series of field days to investigate some of the many sites that have been identified. These days will follow a similar format to our old "conservation days" that we used to hold to investigate sites in Cardiff except that now the area covers the whole of South East Wales! These will be held on: **30th Jan, 27th Feb and 27th March**. Please get in touch if you would like to come along.

Rhian. Email: rhnd1@bgs.ac.uk Tel: 2920 521962 (office hours)

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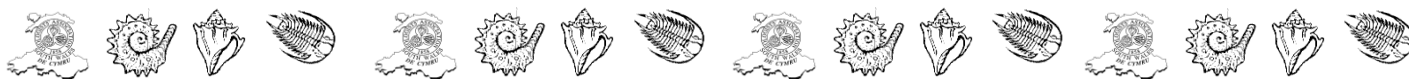
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Please don't forget to send your renewals to Mike Gregory if you haven't already done so and if you are a tax payer, we would be very grateful if you could sign the gift aid forms as we can then claim the tax back!

Best Wishes. Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; Rhian@carreg.org.uk