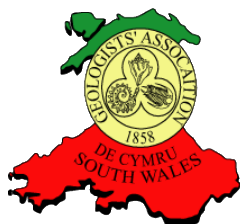


# Geologists' Association - South Wales Group

## Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru



May 2020

Sixty second session

<b>President</b>	Lesley Cherns <a href="mailto:cherns@cardiff.ac.uk">cherns@cardiff.ac.uk</a>	<b>Vice-President</b>	Chris Lee <a href="mailto:chris.w.lee@outlook.com">chris.w.lee@outlook.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Janet Hiscott <a href="mailto:secretary@swga.org.uk">secretary@swga.org.uk</a>	<b>Programme Secretary</b>	Stephen Howe <a href="mailto:Steve.Howe@talktalk.net">Steve.Howe@talktalk.net</a>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Caroline Davies 72 Heritage Park, St Mellons, Cardiff. CF3 0DQ <a href="mailto:membership@swga.org.uk">membership@swga.org.uk</a> 07850 556947	<b>Programme Co-ordinator</b>	Nick Pollock <a href="mailto:programme@swga.org.uk">programme@swga.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:npollock09@gmail.com">npollock09@gmail.com</a>
		<b>Publicity</b>	Marnix Roels <a href="mailto:marnixroels@gmail.com">marnixroels@gmail.com</a>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Janet Hiscott <a href="mailto:secretary@swga.org.uk">secretary@swga.org.uk</a>	<b>Webmaster</b>	Rhian Kendall <a href="mailto:webmaster@swga.org.uk">webmaster@swga.org.uk</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Hazel Trenbirth <a href="mailto:hazel.trenbirth@btinternet.com">hazel.trenbirth@btinternet.com</a>	<b>Editor</b>	Rhian Kendall <a href="mailto:webmaster@swga.org.uk">webmaster@swga.org.uk</a>
<b>Other members of the committee:</b> Nigel McGaw, Cindy Howells, Geraint Owen, John Nudds			



## Editorial

During these strange times, the format of our Newsletter is changing. This edition starts with Stephen's contribution which explains how much of the Programme is still in place (not very much!). He goes on to give some information about the (indoor) activities of 2 long standing members of the Group.

There are other contributions for your information and entertainment: an article from Rhian about her mapping project; a mapping quiz from Lesley; some recommended reading from Chris; and an obituary, written by Lynda, about Alan Thomas who sadly passed away earlier this year, plus a bit about RIGS.

Hopefully you will all have received the location quiz that Stephen compiled and sent out last week? As it is uncertain when life will return to normal, I would be very happy to receive contributions for any of you for future editions – photos, short write-ups of interesting geology you have seen, book reviews/recommendations, anything that you think may be of interest to other members. Please send to me by email at:

[janethiscott@netscape.net](mailto:janethiscott@netscape.net). Thank you. Stay safe and well. Janet

## **Summer Field meetings 2020**

As you will already be aware all of our field trips, up to and including the excursion to Bath on 4th July, have been cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic. At the time of writing it is very unclear when the lock-down may start to be eased, what this will entail and whether those identified as being at higher risk will have to stay in lock-down longer than others. Accordingly, I am afraid that it is very difficult to plan anything with any certainty for the foreseeable future.

However, we were hoping that by September the easing of restrictions may enable us to start to hold field meetings once again which would leave us with the last two meetings from the summer programme; the North Somerset Coast on Saturday 19th September and Big Pit, Blaenafon on Saturday 3rd October. Confirmation as to whether or not these excursions will be run will be given once we know what the timetable and remit of the easing of the current restrictions entails. In the meantime the meeting details are as follows:

### **Saturday 19th September 2020**

#### ***The North Somerset Coast***

*Leader: Lesley Chorns*

Lesley had planned to recce a number of localities before deciding which we would visit on this excursion but, with the current lockdown, has been unable to do this to date.

Therefore, full details will be given in a Newsletter closer to the date.

### **Saturday 3rd October 2020**

#### ***Big Pit, Blaenafon***

*Leader: Chris Lee*

Meet at 10.00am in the car park at Big Pit National Coal Mining Museum, Blaenafon. Please note that there is a £5 P&D parking charge. The meeting will consist of a lecture by Chris on the geology of the area and Big Pit itself followed by a Q&A session with the mine manager. We will either break for lunch - a packed lunch can be eaten on site or there is a cafe serving hot and cold food - and/or then will be taken on an underground tour of the mine. This will include sections of the workings not normally open to members of the public. Please note that some of the underground passageways are quite low and anyone who suffers from claustrophobia may wish to stay on the surface where there is a gallery offering a virtual underground tour as well as a number of other museum displays and galleries. As Big Pit is classed as a working mine those going underground will have to comply with all the mine's H&S conditions.

There will be a limit of 30 people allowed on the underground tour so those wishing to do so will need to book a place in advance at [programmes@swga.org.uk](mailto:programmes@swga.org.uk).Family

### **Family Day, Craig-y-Nos, Forest Fawr Geopark & National Trust, Tredegar House (July 2020)**

We were due to attend Craig-y-Nos at the end of May and Tredegar House in July but both these events have now been cancelled.

## Summer Programme 2021

I am pleased to report that the leaders of all of the excursions that we have had to cancel so far this year have agreed to lead the same excursions for us next year. I am extremely grateful to all of them for agreeing to do this and, as a result, in seventeen years of producing the summer programme I have never had most of it in place almost a year in advance!

## Indoor Programme 2020-2021

Planning for the next indoor session is proceeding in the exceedingly optimistic hope that by October we might be able to hold indoor lectures, but this is looking less likely by the day. If we can then the first meeting of the session will include the AGM that we had to postpone from March, which will be followed by Lesley's retiring President's Address. *Holiday Geology* in January 2021 will follow the same format as this year with a buffet lunch and, as long as the university is willing, it will be held in Swansea. The proposed dates for the indoor meetings are as follows:

**2020:** Saturday 24th October (Swansea), Saturday 21st November (Cardiff), Saturday 12th December (Swansea)

**2021:** Saturday 9th January: *Holiday Geology* (Swansea), Saturday 23rd January (Cardiff), Saturday 20th February (Swansea), Saturday 20th March (Cardiff).

These dates have been planned to avoid clashing with the various rugby internationals, the programme for which was published before coronavirus hit. Recent talk within the rugby hierarchy of playing postponed internationals as well as those already planned means that there is a chance that some of the fixture dates may be changed. This might necessitate us changing the date of a meeting, if they were to clash, so please do not take these dates as fixed at this juncture.

I currently have three speakers tentatively lined up, carried over from the last session, but if anybody has any suggestions (and contact details) of a speaker that they feel would be of interest to the group's membership please let me know.



## Member News

**John Davies.** John has been recovering well after his heart and hip operations and is getting back to full fitness as best he can within the confines of his garden. However, he has used his enforced period of confinement to begin to index all of his notebooks. These go back to the 1950s and contain reports of field trips and field work, including many from the SWGA from the 1960s. His notebooks contain numerous anecdotes about past SWGA activities that John has agreed to put together in a small article for another edition of the Newsletter in the weeks to come.

**Tom Sharpe.** Having returned from taking a trip to Antarctica at the end of January Tom's planned future excursions have been curtailed for the time being by the Coronavirus pandemic. However, he is putting his time to good use writing a book about Mary Anning that was due to be published to coincide with the release of a film about Mary. When we

know the publication details we will let you know. He has also written a chapter for a new book being produced by Thames and Hudson on William Smith, again when we have the details we will let you know, and is also about to submit a paper with an American colleague on Henry de la Beche's *Duria Antiquior* for a Geological Society of America publication.

## **Obituary – Alan Gwyn Thomas**

It is with great sadness that we report the death from heart failure of long standing member and past Chairman Alan Gwyn Thomas, age 93, on 20 March 2020 at Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr. The funeral was held at Glyntaff Crematorium & Cemetery, Pontypridd, on 2 April, sadly under coronavirus restrictions such that members of the Group who would have wished to attend were unable to do so.

Alan (Alan G of Nelson, to distinguish him from Alun J Thomas of Barry, both our longest standing members) was born in Mountain Ash in 1927. He was educated at primary school in Aberfan, then Quakers' Yard Municipal Secondary School at Edwardsville, followed by conscription into the Royal Navy for two years. After coming out of the Navy, he worked for the Public Health Laboratory Service in Cardiff. He then joined the National Coal Board around 1950, working at the NCB (Scientific Department) East Wales Area Laboratory in Tredomen for some years, followed by further years at the NCB Maritime Laboratory in Pontypridd.

Whilst working for the NCB, Alan had to go underground to take samples, and this stimulated his interest in geology. He joined the SWGA in 1965. Later, the NCB offered him the chance to go to the Trefforest School of Mines (to become, with other establishments, the University of South Wales), to study A level geology under Basil Isaac (himself a member and committee member); Roland Parsons (member, committee member, Treasurer, Honorary Member) also helped him with his geology.

Alan was a member of the Group for 55 years. He was a committee member in 1968-70 and 1976-78. He became the Group's 13<sup>th</sup> Chairman for 1984-86. Retiring from employment in July 1985, his retiring Chairman's address on 8 March 1986 at the 27<sup>th</sup> AGM was

"Reflections in coal: thirty five years in the South Wales coal industry". At this meeting he also presented, with a commemorative scroll, the second Honorary Membership of the Group to Doug Bassett; he referred to the guiding role of Dr Bassett in the formation of the Group and as Founder Chairman and first editor. Alan's address and presentation were received with applause. Alan was very proud that he was the first non academic to be Chairman of the Group. He was an ex-officio Vice Chairman from 1986-91.

Alan and his wife Beryl were always very supportive of the Group. Alan attended meetings regularly until the last few years when he regretted not being able to attend as he would have liked to. He was a great raconteur and very down to earth, it is recalled that after one meeting when recent ideas of plate tectonics were described in increasingly complicated detail, he observed after that the speaker could have speaking in Serbo-Croat as he hadn't understood a word!

Alan always enjoyed the lunches after meetings. He was particularly interested in Italy, in its music, food and wine. In the days when it was the Committee that took speakers out to

lunch, often to a local Italian restaurant in Cathays, he enjoyed speaking Italian to the staff, drinking the (red) wine, and eating Dolce latte. In Swansea, it was to La Braseria in Wind Street, which had a good (Spanish) wine list. In later years, Alan continued to enjoy Italian wine, as at the Group's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 2010. Alan and Beryl were very involved in supporting their local history society in Nelson, the Nelson and Llancaiach Civic and Historical Society, twice inviting Doug Bassett to speak.

The Group offers its sincerest condolences to Beryl.

Compiled by Lynda Garfield, with thanks to Beryl Thomas, Steve Howe, John Cope and Chris Lee.



(photo Dave Wellings)

Alan Thomas at the Group's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, 23 January 2010, with 2020 retiring President Lesley Cherns



## **The Geologists' Association**

Those of you who are not members of the main GA may well be unaware of what is accessible to non-members on their web site. Of particular interest may be the *Geology from your sofa* section that has lots of lectures, podcasts and virtual field trips. Why not check it out at <https://geologistsassociation.org.uk/sofageology?>

## **A good read**

Our Vice President, Chris Lee, writes that he has read and enjoyed a couple of books recently by geologist and writer, Sarah Andrews, that he thought might be of interest to members. Sarah gained a Masters in Earth Resources from Colorado State University and her writing won her the Geological Society of America President's Medal and the American Association of Petroleum Geologists' Journalism Award (now the Geosciences Media Award). Eleven of her novels, known as the 'Em Hansen Mysteries', feature the

work of forensic geologist, Em Hansen with titles including *Bone Hunter*, *Fault Line* and *An Eye for Gold*. They are published by St Martin's Minotaur New York.

## Mapping Quiz

Our President, Lesley Cherns, writes that going to <https://what3words.com> allows you to find any address down to a 3m square. Using this facility she has produced this short quiz where all you have to do is just solve the 3 clues in the questions below and type them into the website separated by full stops as, for example, *tribune.grapes.chew* Then select the top match from the answer that you are given. Of course, if you get the clues wrong you end up in a totally different place. The quiz starts with an easy one.....

1. A familiar SWGA venue
  - a. Alloy of copper B - - - - - (6 letters)
  - b. A door is open or S - - - (4 letters)
  - c. We stand on two of these L - - - (4 letters)
2. The end of the Gower peninsula
  - a. For retail therapy you go to the S - - - - (5 letters)
  - b. Pablo Casals is a famous C - - - - player (5 letters)
  - c. A book has a number of these. C - - - - - - - (8 letters)
3. Welsh gold mine
  - a. Lemons have a S - - - taste (4 letters)
  - b. The end of the fight - Out for the C - - - - (5 letters)
  - c. A biro is a B - - - - - - - pen (9 letters)
4. Where dinosaurs roamed
  - a. Fail to find something – draw a B - - - - (5 letters)
  - b. Losing patience - frayed at the E - - - - (5 letters)
  - c. Be quiet! H - - - (4 letters)
5. Venue for an autumn field trip (we hope)
  - a. The sides of faces C - - - - - (6 letters)
  - b. Estimated R - - - - - - (8 letters)
  - c. They work to load and unload ships D - - - - - (7 letters)



### Answers to the mapping quiz

1. Earth & Ocean Sciences. Cardiff University
2. Worm's Head
3. Dolaucothi
4. Bendricks
5. Big Pit

## Rhian's mapping project



At this time of lock down when we can't get out and our normal fieldtrips are cancelled, some of the committee thought that you might like to hear what I get up to at work. As you many know, as part of my work at the British Geological Survey, I lead a mapping project for geological sheet area that we call Knighton. The following is an article that I wrote for Earth Heritage Magazine a year or so ago now. After the article, I've put together some text and photos about some of the practicalities of fieldwork. I hope you enjoy!

Rhian

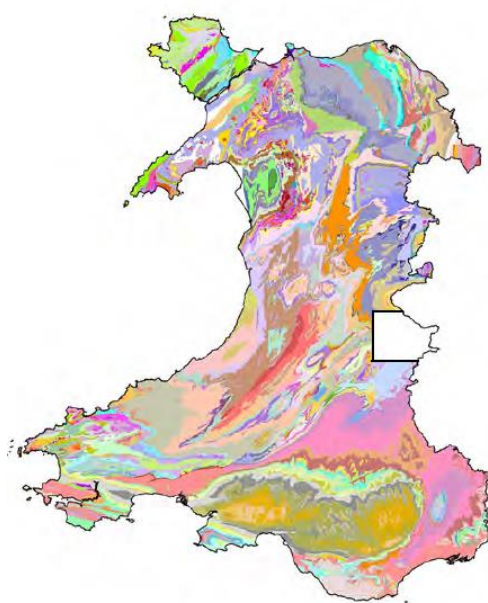
### Mapping the Knighton Sheet – The final piece of the jigsaw

*Rhian Kendall, British Geological Survey and Raymond Roberts, Natural Resources Wales*

*More than 180 years since Sir Henry De la Beche oversaw the original 1" mapping of mid Wales and the Borderlands, the British Geological Survey has begun fieldwork on the final sheet (the Knighton District, Sheet 180) that will complete the 1:50,000 coverage in Wales and England. This work will continue the long history of geological fieldwork in Wales, building on early Survey mapping and numerous academic studies that focussed on the area, utilising modern field mapping techniques to produce a new map for the area.*

The bedrock geology of the Knighton District is principally Silurian in age with lithostratigraphical units from Llandovery through to the Pridoli. The area is also cut by the Welsh Borderland Fault Zone which carries within it fragments of older Ordovician and Precambrian rocks. In the west, the Ludlow and Wenlock strata record slope to basinal depositional environments with periods of variable sea bed oxygenation. To the east of the district, the rocks of the same age are characteristic of deposition in shallower waters, reflecting the shoaling on to the Midlands Platform. Although eustatic controls on deposition are important in the area, the Welsh Borderland Fault Zone imparted its tectonic influence on deposition, affecting base levels, controlling the basin architecture and the transition from platform to basin environments. This complex interaction between eustasy and tectonics results in complex sedimentation across a relatively small region.

The Quaternary geology of the region is only moderately well understood, with little modern work having been undertaken. The Devensian glaciation limit is presently understood to lie to the extreme east of the area and there exist complex assemblages of landforms and deposits in the vicinity of this former ice limit. Indicators for strongly active glaciation are limited, with some evidence for local, cold-based ice caps on the Clun and Radnor Forest massifs. A modern revision of the Quaternary geology will elucidate not only the evolution of the landforms and deposits, but also the extent of resources or reserves of sand and gravel and provide information on slope stability.



*The Knighton sheet straddles the Wales – England border with approximately two thirds in Wales and a third in England. The Welsh name for Knighton, Tref y Clawdd, roughly translates as 'the town on the dyke' and gives a clue to its location near Offa's*

The programme of work in the Knighton District has begun with a review of a wealth of previous work. The Survey is also building collaborations with people with an interest in the region (amateur, academic and commercial) in order to build up a picture of what is already known. Technologies such as GIS and 3D visualisation are being used to interpret landforms which can subsequently be ground truthed in the field. In this way, areas where there is less information can be identified and targeted as a priority for field investigation.

Geology maps are vital for a wide range of statutory, non-governmental and private organisations or individuals who require information on the bedrock and superficial geology. This may be for high-level strategic planning, major infrastructure projects, mineral development, waste and water resources management or the building of your garden shed. However, the importance of understanding the geology has been given added impetus in Wales with the prominence of geodiversity in the definition of natural resources in the Environment (Wales) Act (2016). As defined in the Act, natural resources include minerals, geological features and processes, physiographical features and soil. The main aim of the Act is to promote the sustainable use of natural resources and a key element of this is gathering evidence and data. Data collected during mapping and the publication of the map will be used by wide range of stakeholders, but there is also an important geoconservation slant to the mapping work. BGS staff will use GCR sites and RIGS as key locations to interpret the underlying geology but also, through working with Natural Resources Wales geologists, look at possible improvements to the sites and any gaps in the network. It is hoped that following completion of the Knighton Sheet there will be renewed interest in the geology of the area.

The British Geological Survey website has a range of free resources for you to learn about the geology of the UK. Amongst these resources is the Geology of Britain Viewer which is available through the website <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> which shows you the 1: 625 000 and 1: 50 000 geological maps of Britain (for most areas!) along with any available 3D models, boreholes and even the positions of historical earthquakes!

Many of the BGS maps are also available on the BGS website via the BGS Maps Portal which can be found here: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/maps/>.

There is also the iGeology app which allows you to interrogate geological maps on your smart phone when you are out and about (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/igeology/>).



*The rolling countryside to the east of Llanbister in the west of the Knighton District. The quarry in the centre of the photograph exposes rocks of the Nantglyn Flags Formation.*

This article was written for Earth Heritage magazine which is free to download and read. This article is here: <http://www.earthheritage.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/EH-49-final-draft.pdf>

There are plenty of back issues to read here as well: <http://www.earthheritage.org.uk>

### ***Well, that's the official version...***

I thought I'd share what actually happens when we undertake this kind of work. Its a grand mix of the mundane, and predictable and occasionally ridiculous and occasionally hilarious to run and work on a mapping project for the British Geological Survey.

Most of the mapping that I have done in the UK involves a fairly small core team of mappers (pictured here are four of us from a team of five, taken on our last visit in February this year), with a host of support workers which lend their skills where needed – palaeontologists, isotope geologists, specialists like sedimentologists and structural geologists and IT folks who we call upon as needed. That small team heads out into the field as often as we can afford. For Knighton that has tended to be about 6 weeks each year.



We hire a holiday cottage and after cajoling from me for recipes and requests for favourite snacks for fieldwork (more on that later), most of the team take turns to cook evening meals (others are shamed into doing washing up!). Our little army of geologists are very demanding in terms of lunch time snacks. We seem to march on a diet of hoola hoops, salted caramel cereal bars and malt loaf, along with the usual sandwiches obviously. I don't dare to forget chocolate digestive either 😊.

I'm not sure what Tesco makes of us but the deliveries that arrive on the first Monday evening of fieldwork takes an age to unload from the trucks and our cottages aren't always the easiest places to find which usually results in tales of getting lost from the drivers who are invariably brilliant!



Fieldwork tends to involve a lot of stuff. This is the boot of my car as I set off: clothes, warmer clothes, water proofs, wellies (I live and die in my wellies in the field. You would too if you had to deal with that much farm yard and boggy ground!), hammers in a variety of sizes, augers, hard hats PPE (until recently I thought that this meant hard hats, steel toe capped boots and high vis!), lap tops, ruggedized tablets, books, maps...

I have been working with two of the members of this team for more than ten years now and the Knighton mapping project its self has been running for a few years so we are like a little family and its fun to see everyone arrive and the cottages fill up with outdoor gear dripping from hooks in halls, sandwich boxes and thermos flasks gather in the kitchen, computers get plugged into any available socket and boots pile up near the back door! The collections of rocks also start to accumulate in corners as the weeks go by.



Sights like this one become completely normal... The head has become loose so its soaking in the sink – obviously!

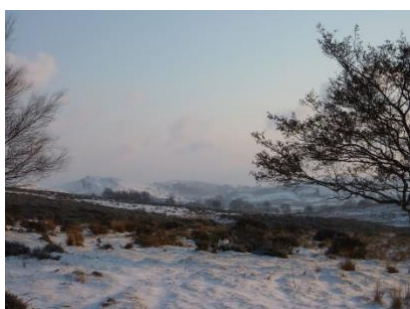
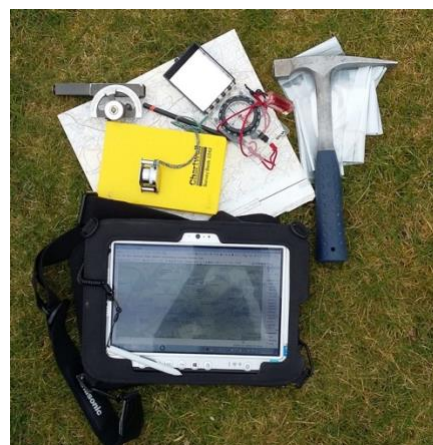
Each morning, after consumption of tumps of porridge followed by frantic thermos and sandwich box stuffing, we usually split up to work in our various areas. For the most part we work alone so we chat about where we are going and when we expect to back before we head out.



A working day normally starts with a wonder about who owns which piece of land and knocking on farmhouse doors. The farmers we meet are normally lovely and apart from quizzical looks (sometimes accompanied by life stories, tales of geologists who visited 30 years ago, the price of sheep etc, the offer of a cuppa and if you are really lucky a Welsh cake ☺) permission is hopefully received and off we go.

Our rather fab South Wales Geologists' Association field trips, being taken to the best outcrops, are fantastic but geological mapping is not much like that. I might only see a few small pieces of outcrop in a day (and by outcrop I mean things about the size of my head!) so for a large part, I'm thinking about what features in the landscape, changes in slope, soil etc might tell me and I might cover as much as 10 miles in a day. There are of course bigger outcrops too. The outcrops are inevitably in dark ditches and muddy streams or full of rubbish and occupied anything living that bites and stings... needless to say, I'm normally stinking by the end of a working day. That reminds me... hoola hoops: you only need one clean finger to eat those...

I make lots of notes on a ruggedized tablet. These have a Geographical Information System (ESRI ARC) installed on them with some BGS tools (free to download by-the-way) which let us draw lines and make notes directly onto a digital base map. These tablets have their pros and cons but the inbuilt GPS is great for locating yourself and you can take detailed digital elevation models, aerial photography and any interpretations that you have made from remoting sensing data back in the office. I've heard it said that they are also great as they keep working even in torrential rain (they do, I've been there, don't that and have the very soggy T-shirt!). Trouble is, I'm not sure that this particular geologist is that effective in those conditions! They are warm though so its rather nice to warm your hands on when its cold which brings me on the weather... We are a hardy bunch and will work though most conditions providing we feel safe to do so. We are very much at the mercy of the weather – the Beast from the East stopped play a few years ago.



I do feel very lucky much of the time when I am doing fieldwork. The scenery in mid Wales is stunning. On a lovely day, sitting on the top of a hill, munching my malt loaf, enjoying quiet time close encounters with wildlife, it's the best.



This photo is taken from one of the highest points in my area; the bleak but very beautiful Radnor Forest area. The pictures that follow are close to Llanfihangle Rhydithon in an area deformed by faulting and folding. Radnor Hill is lost in the clouds in the picture on the right.



This is one the last pictures that we took on our last evening of fieldwork in February 2020. Little did we know that this might be our last trip for a long while.

I hope you enjoyed this light hearted look into our mapping world. If you are interested in hearing more about any aspect of this work, just let me know. I also have a twitter account which is mainly focused on my work in Knighton and the rest of my work in geology @rhian\_kendall. Also have a look at #BGSKnightonMap.

## Virtual Geological Meeting

You should have received a message from Nick, our Programme co-ordinator, with details of a suggestion from Marc Delaney to hold virtual meetings using Zoom as a way to keep in touch. Please contact Marc directly at [marc.a77del@ntlworld.com](mailto:marc.a77del@ntlworld.com) if you are interested.

A few days ago there was an email note, perhaps members had seen something geological on their daily walks? Alas thought I, nothing at all, even though I had found a lovely path, not far from home, fairly quiet, wide, flat, through the woods, above and along the river, the Taff. A few sandstones, nothing to write home about. But then, in trying to make my walk a little bit different every day, I explored various paths. And soon found something of interest, why I had not found it before? Right below the main road into Gwaelod y Garth, not far from the bottom of Penttyrch Hill, is the memorial site to the Lan colliery disaster of 1875 when twelve men and boys were killed. I knew this had been unveiled a few years ago, but never realised it was so near or so accessible. It is a pleasant shady site, well laid out, the old mine adit going under the main road into the hillside. There is a local iron sculpture announcing the site. The memorial is written across the bricked up adit. There is a very informative board, telling you about the site, with the history of the colliery, the disaster, notes on the flora and fauna of the woodland, also old and new maps. And there is a seat, with a dedication to Dr Mary Gillham, a lady known to a number of SWGA members over the years. As for the geology, the mine worked a few coal seams in the upper Lower Coal Measures and lower Middle Coal Measures, on the south edge of the coalfield, the rocks dipping north into the coal basin. Indeed, the description is of a steep incline into the workings.

The area was once a hive of industry. A colliery, other coal workings, an iron works, and a brickworks. Indeed the Group did once visit the brickworks quarry in Georgetown across the road, on October 25 2009, with Tom Sharpe and Rhian Kendall, designating it as a RIGS site on account of its historical relevance and it being the only outcrop of Lower Coal Measures in the County of Cardiff. I have not yet revisited this site. The iron was worked as haemetite and goethite from the Lesser Garth, just up the hill.

Should you wish to have more geology, a little further up the river, close to another old adit and workings, you can cross the river, turn right into Taffs Well Park, and find Ffynon Taf, the thermal spring, which has also been substantially improved in recent years.

Information boards tell you about where the water comes from, and how – the influence of the geology. Alas the Park is closed at the moment, whether because of the current situation, or because of the aftermath of the substantial floods which covered the park in many feet of water earlier this year, I don't know. Hopefully, when we come out of the present lockdown, we can make a lovely circular geological walk. If you want to know more, a quick Google will take you to a few helpful www sites.

And finally, it has now occurred to me why the path is nice and wide and flat. It was presumably once a tram line, or road, leading from the old workings by the foot bridge, along to the iron works.



## RIGS Update from Dilys Harlow

SEWRIGS is confined to paper & emails at present but has managed some work in the background.

Last autumn we wrote to Powys County Council objecting strongly to a planning application for the extraction of aggregate from a RIGS at Tregunter near Talgarth. This work would have completely destroyed a significant Quaternary feature. In February we heard that we had been successful & permission had been comprehensively refused. We are now discussing with NRW the possibility of designation this site as a SSSI.

We have also recently responded to the Brecon Beacons National Park Association on their consultation for the new Brecon Town Plan, pointing out that the Plan makes no mention of the three Brecon RIGS, Fforest Fawr Geopark or the published Brecon Geotrails!

Elen Statham is still working on the trail around the Usk Inlier sites.

The project to re-write the Pwll-y-Wrach Geotrail is in abeyance because landslides in the reserve after the heavy winter rains have blocked some paths so the trail may have to be re-routed.

Sadly not even the most advanced digital technology allows for virtual work-parties, so there will be a lot of catching up & clearing at some point in the future.

Our general meeting at the end of March was 'postponed', whether or not we will be able to hold it and our AGM in the autumn remains to be seen.



## Interesting Websites

Here are some suggestions from Rhian of things on the internet that you may find of interest:

The GA has "geology from your sofa" <https://geologistsassociation.org.uk/sofageology/>

[Gresham.ac.uk](https://www.gresham.ac.uk) - free lectures on lots of topics including geology:

The OU have a range of courses that you can do on line for free: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>

From BGS:

<http://britgeopeople.blogspot.com/2020/04/geo-arts-crafts-by-michelle-ogrady.html>

[http://britgeopeople.blogspot.com/2020/04/top-5-free-online-geology-courses-by.html?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+Geobloggy+%28GeoBloggy%29](http://britgeopeople.blogspot.com/2020/04/top-5-free-online-geology-courses-by.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Geobloggy+%28GeoBloggy%29)

<https://twitter.com/BritGeoSurvey/status/1253972013128880129>

<https://twitter.com/BritGeoSurvey/status/1247584927673188352>

**Linnean Society** have some online resources and lectures. The following are not on geology but are focused on the natural world

<https://www.linnean.org/learning/at-home>

<https://www.linnean.org/learning/media>

## Twitter

You don't have to be a whizz on twitter just type the #tags and @'s into your browser, and it will bring up posts and sites. Geology related fun ones at the moment are:

#stonesathome

@BritGeoSurvey

#BGSfromHome

#BGSKnightonMap



## Data Protection statement

The South Wales Geologists Association holds a minimum amount of information about each member in order to run the Group and contact its members. Security of this data is governed by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2016 (PECR). Data is not shared with any other organisation or person other than appointed committee members. Full Privacy Policy can be found: <http://swga.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/privacy.pdf> or a copy can be obtained on application from the Group's Secretary.



## Other Geological Organisations

- Russell Society, Wales and West Branch: Tom Cotterell. Tel: 01594 845935 before 9 pm
- Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru): Jana Horak  
<https://museum.wales/curatorial/geology/welsh-stone-forum/>
- U3A South Wales Geology Group: Nigel McGaw. Tel: 01656 654439
- Open University Geological Society: Norman Nimmo-Smith [severnside@ougs.org](mailto:severnside@ougs.org)  
[ougs.org](http://ougs.org)
- West Wales Geology Society: [www.westwalesgeolsoc.org.uk](http://www.westwalesgeolsoc.org.uk)
- South East Wales RIGS : <http://sewrigs.wordpress.com/>