

Geologists' Association - South Wales Group

Cymdeithas y Daearegwyr - Grŵp De Cymru



August 2020

Sixty first session

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

Virtual on-line activities

In this exceptional year during which we have been unable to offer very much by way of events, it would be most helpful if those of you who do not normally receive messages from us by email could do so.

We put together a bumper edition of the Newsletter which was circulated in June but we were only able to send it out by email. Most importantly, we will be holding our AGM via Zoom (video conferencing software) on **Saturday 26th September**. The committee hope that as many of you as possible will join us.

If you do not usually have access to a computer or email, perhaps you can consider asking a friend or relative if they are able to assist you on this occasion? If so, we will need an email address to send out the invitation to the meeting. Perhaps they would also be able to pass on occasional messages from us as well? For instance, now that restrictions have been relaxed slightly, we are organising some half day local field trips. However, in the ever changing circumstances, we might need to get in touch at relatively short notice and an email address would be most helpful.

Janet

Field Meeting Programme 2020: Good News!!

Due to the Covid pandemic the remainder of this year's planned field meeting programme has had to be cancelled. However, as the restrictions have been eased it is now possible for us to run field meetings as long as all social distancing protocols in force at the time of the meeting are observed.

Following the very positive response to my query as to whether you would be interested in attending such events I will be organising local field meetings in September and October. One will be to a coastal location in the Vale of Glamorgan and the other to somewhere on Gower. However, in order to comply with social distancing requirements please note that numbers will have to be restricted to a maximum of 20 on each excursion, unless a specific site has enough space to allow us to increase it to 30. Pre-booking will, therefore, be **essential**. This will be done on a first-come basis. As soon as the meetings are fixed the programme will be sent out by email and put on the web site specifying the date, location and leader but the full meeting details (including the time, place etc) will only be sent out to those that are booked onto the excursion.

Hot off the press! I am pleased to say that the first excursion will be on **Saturday 5th September** to the Caswell Bay area in Gower, led by Ian Prothero. Full meeting details will be available on booking via programme@swga.org.uk.

Indoor Meetings 2020/2021

The new indoor session lecture programme will commence in October as usual. However, as we currently have no access to the university lecture theatres **all lectures up until at least Christmas will be on-line**.

These will be delivered by Zoom and for those of you unfamiliar with using Zoom a guide to its use will be distributed with the AGM notices. We are currently unsure whether or not the lecture theatres will be available to us in the New Year so meetings have only been

planned until Christmas, by which time we should know whether we can return to normal in January or continue with on-line presentations. Despite being on-line the programme follows our usual pattern of starting at 11.00am on a Saturday morning and is as follows:

Saturday 17th October: *Cribarth - a view from your desktop*: Alan Bowring

Saturday 21st November: *Devonian treasure hunt – searching for the lost Archaeopteris forest of Svalbard*: Chris Berry

Saturday 12th December: *A Geological Journey through the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*: James Cresswell

In the New Year the meetings are scheduled to be held on: Saturday 9th January: *Holiday Geology*. (Swansea), Saturday 23rd January (Cardiff), Saturday 20th February (Swansea) and Saturday 20th March: *AGM* (Cardiff). Of course, if the lecture theatres remain shut and we have to continue with on-line meetings the venues for each meeting are irrelevant!

Summer Programme 2021

I am pleased to be able to report that the leaders of all of our cancelled field meetings for this year have agreed in principle to lead the same excursion for us next summer. Dates will be agreed in the New Year once we know what the state of play is likely to be with regard to any restrictions related to the Covid pandemic.

GA Festival of Geology, London, 7th November 2020

The annual Festival of Geology will be an on-line meeting this year and the Group will be taking part. The idea is that each Group uploads small presentations/virtual field trips, talks etc onto their web sites, which can then be accessed by people attending the Festival virtually, via the Festival's web site. You will also be able to 'attend' the usual lectures on-line as well. We are currently working on our contributions and full information about the festival will be circulated in due course.

Message from Caroline, our Membership Secretary

Our new membership year starts on 1st September 2020 and we hope that you will want to renew. If you pay by standing order that will go through on that date.

If you would prefer to make a one off payment through the bank, or to set up a standing order, please contact me for the Society's bank details and a reference number. If you pay by cheque please make it payable to 'Geologist's Association South Wales Group' and post it to me – my contact details are in the heading of the Newsletter.



Obituary - Heather Chetcuti 1934-2019

It is with great sadness that we report the loss of another long standing member during the last few months. Heather Chetcuti, born in 1934, wife of Jim and mother of Susan, Julie, Karen and Alyson, all of whom have been members of the Group over the years, sadly passed away, peacefully at home with her family, on 25 September 2019. Her funeral was on 11 October at the crematorium in Barry. Although a note was sent to some members by email, there are those who are not in receipt of email and who would not know of this sad news.

Heather was an avid and active supporter of the Group for almost 50 years. The family attended indoor and field meetings whenever they could; many details of their involvement, and their recollections (and enjoyment), were written up for the Group's 50th anniversary celebrations in 2009; these can be found in the Archives section of the SWGA website. Interestingly, Heather and Jim's wedding was in late 1959, just as the Group was coming into being; over the years the age of their marriage tracked the age of the Group!

They recalled the heady days of plate tectonics in the 1970s, trying to visit as many sites as possible from the Group's first publication *Geological excursions in South Wales and the Forest of Dean* (1971), the field trip taken by Dr. John Baker and Peter Sheldon to the Ordovician Rocks in the Builth and Llandrindod area with trilobites galore in 1982, and much more.

The whole family embraced geology. Jim took an Open University degree in earth sciences in the early 1980s, and two daughters gained

degrees in geology. Heather and Jim were particularly involved in helping the committee throughout the 1990s. Heather had a hand in all the work that Jim did, in the ordering and collecting of the Group's embroidered clothing, in arranging all the furniture for our Eisteddfod displays, and in helping at open days and the Eisteddfod stands, also going up to London to help with the Group's stand at the annual GA meeting at University College.

My own particular recollection is of Heather at the Eisteddfod in Llanelli in 2000. The SWGA and The Russell Society had a joint stand; one of the displays was "Minerals in your shopping basket / Mwynau yn eich basged siopa" Heather immediately grasped the message of the display, she had a natural empathy with the subject and with the visitors, and she just got on with showing, talking and explaining. It was a superb day, we had far more visitors to our stand than any other in the tent! A grand job!

In more recent years, Heather and Jim continued to attend meetings when they could, sometimes a daughter joining them. They enjoyed their annual visit to Malta to see family, and visits to many exciting places around the world (their "wander lust for great geological adventures"). On return they would tell us about these with great enthusiasm, including a mention at Holiday Geology.

Heather will be missed. The Group extends its sincerest condolences to Jim and the Girls.

Compiled by Lynda Garfield, with thanks to Jim Chetcuti



C The Russell Society and SWGA stand in the environment pavilion, Eisteddfod Genedlaethol, Llanelli 2000, with Heather Chetcuti (behind Jim and Dave Wellings, also Mike Lees and Lynfa Lewis) (photo Lynda Garfield)



Other items of interest

Cardiff University talks via Zoom

Cardiff University have organised a series of online GeoTalks using Zoom. They will be held every Wednesday at 17:00, and will run until the middle of November

All of the talks look very interesting and will be given by researchers at the university. Full details can be found using the link below, which also includes details of how to take part.

The programme is available here: <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/earth-ocean-sciences/events>

A podcast that may be of interest to you: geologybites

What moves the continents, creates mountains, swallows up the sea floor, makes volcanoes erupt, triggers earthquakes, and imprints ancient climates into the rocks?

Oliver Strimpel, a former astrophysicist and museum director, asks leading researchers to divulge what they have discovered and how they did it.

Articles and a quiz

In response to my request for items of interest to our Members, I have received two articles and a quiz which may be of interest. As they are both lengthy, they are enclosed as separate items. Thank you to both authors.