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# April 2010



## Outdoor Meetings 2010

 **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Llyswen-Erwood, Powys; 'The first True Silurian : in the footsteps of Murchison'**

Leader: Duncan Hawley

Meet at 10.00am at the lay-by next to Trericket Mill on the A470 between Llyswen and Erwood (SO 113 414).

This excursion retraces Murchison's 'discovery' of the Silurian in the Wye Valley in 1831.

Using Murchison's original sites and original notes the excursion will look at the transition from the ORS down into the Upper Silurian and will include visits to a site with fossils (which played an important part). Stout footwear and a packed lunch is advised although it is intended to stop for lunch at Erwood Railway Station picnic site - where light refreshments are usually available. The anticipated finish time is about 4.30pm.

 **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June**  
**The Quest for Gower's Devensian ice limits.**  
Leader: John Heimstra

Meet at 10.00am at the King Arthur Hotel, Reynoldston (SS 483 899). The excursion will visit a few of the Gower's classic Quaternary sections and will discuss some

## Fifty-first Session 2010-2011



recent research results and work in progress. Bring a packed lunch.

 **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>/Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July**  
**Rockwatch Weekend – Llandrindod Wells**

Once again we are hosting a Rockwatch weekend, this time based at Llandrindod Wells. The Saturday will be spent at fossiliferous localities around Llandrindod Wells and the Sunday on similar localities around Builth Wells. Although aimed at Rockwatch members anybody is welcome to attend. Full meeting details will appear later.

 **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July**

**Climate change clues in the landscape**  
Leader: Sid Howells

Meet at 10.30am at the National Trust car park at Broadhaven Bay [Bosherston], Pembrokeshire (SR 976 937). Bring a picnic lunch. The excursion will focus on the limestone plateau & 'raised' beaches at Broadhaven and Freshwater West (north side) and also frost-shattered scree, solifluction flows, glacial erratics and, hopefully the submerged forest.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August

 **Saturday 21st August**  
**The geology of the Forest of Dean coal and iron ore field**

Leader: Tom Cotterell

Meet at 10.00am at the large lay-by opposite the Cannop Ponds Stone Works (SO 606 099). Bring a packed lunch. Particular emphasis of this excursion will be to look at the source of the mineralisation which, like the south Wales iron mines occurs predominantly within dolomitised carboniferous Limestone surrounding the Coal Measures. There will be some steep uphill walking in places and in others some uneven ground. Please note that iron minerals stain so don't wear white trousers!

#### Future Dates for your diary...

 **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September**

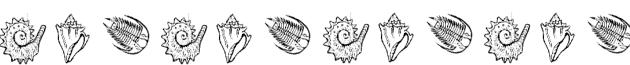
***The Old Red Sandstone in Gower - some interesting questions***

Leader: John Davies

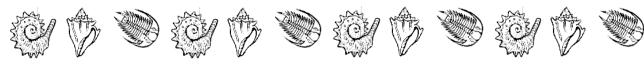
 **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October**

***Life on the Edge in South Wales: The Black Mountain Tuffas***

Leaders: Lesley Cherns and Louis Emery



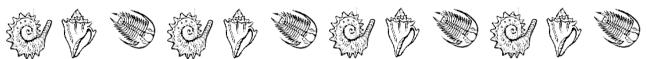
***From time to time, for reasons beyond the control of the Group, meetings do unfortunately have to be cancelled. If such a situation has arisen then every attempt will be made to put this information on the web site.***



#### South Wales RIGS Project

Rhian will be organising a series of field days to investigate some of the many sites that have been identified as part of the ongoing South Wales RIGS project. These will be held on: **29<sup>th</sup> May, 26<sup>th</sup> June, 24<sup>th</sup> July and 28<sup>th</sup> August**. We have tended to meet at 10am at the BGS offices in Tongwynlais but please get in touch to confirm as this is subject to change relating to the areas that

we are visiting and also, weather dependent! If you would like to tell us about sites that you think should be included, please get in touch. All are welcome. Rhian. Email: [rhnd1@bgs.ac.uk](mailto:rhnd1@bgs.ac.uk) Tel: 2920 521962



#### Other Geological Organisations



#### **Severnside Branch of the Open University Geological Society**

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](http://ougs.org/society_events) Thanks. Janet

**Geobiology** The group focuses on Systematic and Phylogenetic Studies, Palaeobotany and Geomicrobiology. Speaker: Dr Alan Channing, University of Wales, Cardiff.

**Geodynamics** Advances in the understanding of fluid flow in sedimentary basins resulting from the interpretation of 3D seismic data. Speaker: Professor Joe Cartwright, University of Wales, Cardiff

**Geoenvironmental** The group focuses on Permafrost Research, Landscape Evolution, Marine and Coastal Research, Hydrology and Applied Geology

Speaker: Dr Peter Brabham, University of Wales, Cardiff

#### **Magmatic and Hydrothermal Processes**

The group focuses on Magmatism and Geodynamics, Sulphide Research and Geochemical Fingerprinting. Speakers: Professor Julian Pearce, University of Wales, Cardiff. Dr Chris Macleod, University of Wales, Cardiff.

**Palaeoclimate** The group focuses on Cenozoic Global Climate Change, Thermohaline Circulation Antarctic Sea Ice and Marine Environments, and Marine

Microfossils. Speaker: Dr Jenny Pike, University of Wales, Cardiff.

**The Severn Barrage** Its potential Hydro-environmental Impact on the Severn Estuary Speaker: Professor Roger Falconer: University of Wales, Cardiff

Millennium Project. MILLENNIUM is an EU-funded palaeoclimate project with the central aim of determining whether the magnitude and rate of 20th Century climate change exceeds the natural variability of European climate over the last millennium. Speaker: Dr Danny MacCarroll, University of Wales, Swansea.

**Tephrochronology** using it to improve our ability to correlate and date different geological archives. Speaker: Dr Siwan Davies, University of Wales, Swansea

Saturday afternoon: field trips to local area. E.g. The Gower. Ogmore, Open Cast coal mine. Penwylt, WWT Llanelli.etc.

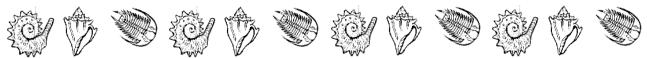
For booking information – contact: Janet Hiscott- 01633781557-severnside@ougs.org

For Lectures and Events – contact: Jan Ashton-Jones- 01432870827-jashtonjon@aol.com

[www.ougs.org](http://www.ougs.org) and click on society events. Day visitors are welcome.

on 'climate change; past present and future' by Prof Paul Pearson of Cardiff University and a couple of walks tracing a foray into the hills and waterfalls of the region by evolutionary biologist Alfred Russel Wallace.

**More information from Geopark Development Officer, Alan Bowring on 01874 620415**



### **Douglas Anthony Bassett**

I am sure that you will all be saddened to hear of the death of one of our founding members, Dr Douglas Bassett, on November 6 2009, at the age of 82. Douglas was born and raised in Llywnhendy, near Llanelli and attended Llanelli Boys Grammer School. He studied geology at Aberystwyth for both his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees before taking up a lectureship at the University of Glasgow. In 1959 he was appointed to succeed Dr F.J. North as Keeper of Geology at the National Museum of Wales, a post that he held until 1977 when he became Director of the Museum until his retirement in 1985.

During his tenure as Keeper of the Geology Department the department flourished; the collections were enhanced, new staff recruited, the geological exhibitions were renewed and extended and the department developed as a centre for research, especially in palaeontology as well as maintaining his own research programme. He vigorously promoted the importance of the museum as an educational establishment and encouraged the staff to 'spread the word' to the wider community via involvement with local societies, extra-mural and WEA courses and public lectures and field excursions, including the extremely popular *Discovering Wales* programme of guided walks that ran for 21 years. Amongst the many things that he did during his tenure as Director of the museum was to initiate the delivery of a series of large-scale 'blockbuster' exhibitions, such as *Dinosaurs from China*.

## **Fforest Fawr Geopark Festival 2010**



Why not explore the western half of the Brecon Beacons National Park in the company of a host of local experts during the Fforest Fawr Geopark Festival 2010? There are walks, talks and exhibitions from Saturday 22nd May through to Sunday 6th June. You will find more details and advice on how to get the most out of this year's events programme on the Geopark website at [www.fforestfawr.org.uk](http://www.fforestfawr.org.uk) or pick up a programme at one of the information centres around the Park. This year's highlights include a mapping exhibition in Brecon (think: first edition Geological Survey), a talk

Douglas was a co-founder of the SWGA and was a driving force for the fledgling group in its early years and a loyal supporter throughout his life. He was a marvellous speaker and lectured to the group on a number of occasions, the last occasion being in 2003 when he delivered a fascinating talk on *Sir Roderick Impey Murchison & Company; King of Siluria*. Douglas's lectures, especially those related to the history of science, were always accompanied by numerous hand-outs full of the most amazing snippets of information and detailed chronologies. You never every left one of his talks empty handed!

Douglas had excellent committee skills and these were in great demand throughout his professional life. He became involved in many organisations outside of the museum including the Nature Conservancy Council of Wales and the Water Resources Board, both of which he chaired, and his knowledge of all aspects of the natural history of Wales was encyclopaedic. This knowledge was put to good use with his huge input into the *Encyclopaedia Wales*. His skills and contributions were recognised by numerous awards including the Wollaston Fund (1976) from the Geological Society of London, the Aberconway Medal (1985) from the Institution of Geologists and the Silver Medal of the Liverpool Geological Society.

Stephen R Howe

### **William Richard Gareth Davies**

It is with sadness that I have to inform you of the death of another of our past Presidents,



Not much room for my usual introductions and summing up this time as the newsletter is packed with lots of news, some sad unfortunately but plenty things to do this summer as well. Something for everyone so see you there.

Best Wishes. Rhian Kendall 07963 732276; [Rhian@carreg.org.uk](mailto:Rhian@carreg.org.uk)

Gareth Davies, on 6th November 2009, at the age of 74. Gareth was born in Cefneithin in 1934 and educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Carmarthen before studying for his degree at the then University College of South Wales, Swansea from 1954-58. Leaving university he lectured at Llanelly Technical College, later the Carmarthen College of Technology and Art until his retirement in 1990.

Gareth was a keen and long-standing member of the SWGA and was President from 1998-2000. He was the driving force behind the Group attending its first National Eisteddfod in Bridgend in 1998 and two years later, when it came to Llanelly, took on the role of local co-ordinator for the Group's activities. He had an enthusiastic and active interest in the geology of his home region and was a keen advocate of the emerging RIGS movement in Wales. During his retirement he was active in reviewing and recommending a number of sites in his region for RIGS consideration and produced the first list of potential RIGS sites in Gower. Gareth was also a keen cinematic photographer and used his skills to record his many field excursions and features of geological interest.

Gareth was always extremely generous with his time and help, always willing to lend a hand wherever he could and provide information and advise from his vast knowledge and experience. Our condolences go out to his family.

Stephen R Howe