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December 2007

Forty-ninth Session 2007-2008

Seasons Greetings! I hope that this newsletter finds you enjoying the Christmas break and perhaps preparing for Holiday Geology? If you haven't attended this annual event before, each year we invite members to show us photos of their geological holidays and trips. It's a great event for getting inspired planning your next trip. If you would like to take part or attend, details are given in this newsletter. Rhian



Winter Programme~ the story so far...

Our Winter programme has had a great start with Peter Walsh challenging us to put forward our interpretations the Gash Breccias, contained within the Carboniferous Limestone of Pembroke.

The T.R Owen Memorial Lecture had us marvelling at the amazing preservation and latest research on the behaviours and flying abilities of Pterosaurs. Thanks to David Unwin for a fascinating lecture.

Most recently, Adrian Humpage (BGS) described the Quaternary Deposits of the Upper Usk Valley, a lecture crammed with detail and fascinating insights to the latest computer techniques for visualising ancient terrains.

And so to our next event:-

Holiday Geology

**Saturday 12th January 2008.
National Museum Cardiff.
11.00am - 4.00pm**

The meeting will take place in the Icons Suite (where we normally hold this event). Entry into the museum is via the main door only and not the porter's lodge. Access into the Icons Suite is through the restaurant and will be signed posted on the day. The meeting will be split into two sessions before and after a buffet lunch, which is being provided courtesy of the Department of Geology.

There will also be a chance to purchase books and maps to generate funds for our 50th Anniversary celebrations.

Both a digital and slide projector will be available and could anybody who would like to give a small presentation - 20 images maximum - please let Steve Howe know beforehand and in what format they wish to give their talk (slide or digital).

The first talk will begin at 11.00am and the meeting should finish by 4.00pm.



Winter Programme 2008

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 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 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.



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

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).
- 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.



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

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