

December 2014



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Other members of the committee:

Lesley Cherns, Tom Sharpe, Nigel McGaw, Cindy Howells, Malcolm Shaw, Christian Baars

**Winter Programme 2014/15**

Stephen Howe

The last talk before Christmas took place in Swansea on Saturday 13th December when Jacob Vintner from Bristol University spoke to us about the fascinating topic of The colour of dinosaurs and other fossils. Being the pre-Christmas meeting there were the usual festive refreshments beforehand.

The first meeting of 2015 is the annual **Holiday Geology** meeting which will be held on **Saturday 10th January** in the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Further important information about this meeting can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter. Two weeks later, on Saturday 24th January, in Cardiff, keeping the dinosaur link, Joe Cain from University College London will talk about Gideon Mantell and Iguanodon: Wrong answers, right questions.

28th February sees us back in Swansea where David Boon from the British Geological Survey will talk about Landslides in the UK – a climate proxy. With climate change currently a hot topic it will be interesting to see what link there may be to landslides. This day coincides with a UCAS Visit Day so we will not be able to park on the University site. Instead we hope to be able to use the 'Pub on the Pond' car park, which, coming from Swansea, is the next turn on the right after the entrance to the university. Directions can also be found on the pub's web site (www.fayre-square.com). There may be a charge but Geraint is unsure. The other option is to park in the Recreation Car Park by the St Helen's sports ground. More details to follow by email.

The final indoor meeting of the session takes place on **Saturday 21st March** in Cardiff when Bob Owens will deliver the DA Bassett Memorial Lecture on 'From Welsh Geosyncline to Welsh Basin'. This meeting also includes the AGM

which will take place before the lecture. Please remember that this meeting starts at 10.30am and not 11.00am as normal.

Winter Programme 2015/16

Believe it or not planning is already underway for the 2015/16 indoor session. Talks have already been promised by Tom Sharpe on William Smith, the bicentenary of whose map is

being celebrated nationwide in 2015, and from the new GA President, Haydon Bailey. If any members have any ideas for speakers or topics then please let me know.

Summer Field Meetings 2015

Planning for next year's is well under way with some trips already booked. So that you can get the dates in your diaries the outline programme is as follows:

Date	Venue	Leader
Saturday 18th April	Martley, Worcestershire	Teme Valley Geological Society
Saturday 16th/Sunday 17th May	The ORS of the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains (this is a joint weekend meeting with the GA Parent body).	John Davies and Geraint Owen
Saturday 21st or Sunday 22nd June	TBC	
Saturday 11th or Sunday 12th July	TBC	
Saturday 18th / Sunday 19th July	Rockwatch Welsh Weekend, Pembrokeshire	
Saturday 15th or Sunday 16th August	TBC	
Saturday 19th or Sunday 20th September	TBC	
Saturday 10th October	Vaynor, Penderyn & Ystradfellte (this is the joint meeting with the Welsh Stone Forum that was postponed last year).	John Davies



Field Work Safety Code

As you should be aware the Group has a Field Work Safety Code that all members should have read before attending any field meeting. You will find an abbreviated version on the reverse of the field meeting programme card and the full version is available on the Group's web site. If you bring a guest to any meeting can you please ensure that they are made aware of, and have read, the Safety Code.

We take safety seriously and Risk Assessments

are completed with our leaders before each field meeting, a copy of which will be available at the start of each excursion for those who wish to read it. Apart from the usual general risks – rough ground, inclement weather etc – site specific risks will be announced at the beginning of each excursion. These should always be noted and observed.

An amended Field Work Safety Policy and Code has adopted and will soon appear on the website.

Holiday Geology, 10th January 2015

Once again this year's Holiday Geology meeting takes place in the Oriel Suite (at the back of the restaurant) in the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. The meeting will run from 11.00am until 4.00pm with the usual format of 4-5 short talks before lunch and the same after. A buffet lunch will be provided so it is essential that if you intend coming to the meeting you book with the Programme Secretary by Friday 2nd January 2015 at the latest.

The cost for the buffet will be £5, which will be collected on the day. Remember, no money, no food!!



News from the Committee

Consultation with members – what are 'seniors'?

At the AGM last March, the possibility of an "Optional Concessionary Rate for the Unwaged" was raised as a new subscription rate. Comments were sought in the June and September newsletters. By the time of the committee meeting in November, there had been three replies, all were supportive. After discussion, the committee now proposes to introduce this "OCR for the unwaged" for the next subscription year beginning next September. A proposal will be put to the membership at the AGM

Stephen has had a few talks offered so far but still needs some more so if any of you would be prepared to give a short presentation please let him know. As usual there will be a book sale, some displays and the chance to buy Dilys Harlow's new book, *The land of the Beacons Way: scenery and geology across the Brecon Beacons National Park*, at a special discounted price.

All lectures start at 11.00am with tea and coffee served from about 45 minutes before the start, except for the AGM which starts at 10.30am. After the lecture we take the speaker to lunch at a local hostelry and you are all welcome to join us.



in March.

The Rules of the Group provide for Honorary, Ordinary and Student members. The subscription levels are determined by the committee. At the moment, the Ordinary category includes two reduced rates, Senior and Family. The proposal is to replace the Senior category with 'Optional Concessionary Rate for the Unwaged', the Family category to remain unchanged. The committee has no wish to be prescriptive; as minuted at the AGM last March, it will be for members themselves to decide if they wish to opt in to the OCR rate.

Other items of interest

Old Red Sandstone Symposium

The ORS Symposium, held in Brecon from 3rd -5th October 2014 at the Elim Church Centre was a great success. Over 107 participants attended the meeting including experts from Australia, Canada and Europe. There were 1 ½ days of talks followed by a public 'Geofest' open afternoon and finally a day of field meetings. The Group was heavily

involved on the coordinating committee organising the meeting and many members attended and helped out on the day. Thanks go to them all. There were numerous requests from participants about "when will the next one be?" so, as there was so much interest and enthusiasm this may well occur in due course (in a few years time at least I hope!).



Other Geological Organisations

- Russell Society, Wales and West Branch,
- Welsh Stone Forum (Ffowr Cerrig Cymru) www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/welshstoneforum
- U3A South Wales Geology Group
- Open University Geological Society.
- West Wales Geology Society
- South East Wales RIGS

Tom Cotterell. Tel: 01594 845935 before 9 pm

Tim Palmer tjp@aber.ac.uk or

Nigel McGaw. Tel: 01656 654439

Contact: Janet Hiscott ougs.org.uk/severnside

www.westwalesgeolsoc.org.uk

<http://sewrigs.wordpress.com/>

Getting to know your committee

Here is the second in the occasional series of profiles about members of the Group's committee. It is an opportunity to learn a little more about the people who work hard to keep the group active and interesting. I hope you enjoy it. This article is about our current President, Rhian Kendall.



Writing about yourself for a newsletter is harder than I thought it would be. What will people be interested in? I think that what interests me in geology will be familiar to most of the readers of this newsletter, especially if you live in this area – our home and the place where I grew up.

I'm from Llanbradach and I grew up discovering fossils on the coal tips in the village. This free treasure had me hooked and I've been interested in fossils, especially fossil plants ever since (Please don't tell my Mother, I was strictly forbidden to play on the tip!). My family moved to Caerphilly and I remember my first encounter with formal geology education very well. It was a

brief presentation in which my (to be) geology teacher talked for 10 minutes about geology and why we should study it at GCSE. I was mesmerised by Mr Lyons tales of great mountains created and destroyed, strange and wonderful creatures, now extinct, volcanoes, earthquakes... you can imagine. I was hooked and determined to study palaeontology or make those beautiful geological maps by the end of those 10 minutes! I studied geology GCSE, A Level, Degree and I was lucky enough to do some part time, post graduate research at Cardiff University too, on what else but palaeobotany.

Getting a job in geology is not easy and I worked in an operating theatre for a while, and then Cardiff County Council. Eventually, after endless 'spec' letters, I joined an oil industry consultancy group called Cambrian Consultants, based in Usk. 12 years later, I was a victim of company buy outs and recession but what a 12 years! I've been lucky enough to learn about the geology of many parts of the world and travel to fantastic places and meet many wonderful people.

I joined the BGS in 2009 on a short contract, my primary role being to coordinate the South Wales RIGS project. Happily I managed to land a permanent job with the Survey, where I work today in our Cardiff Office. Work at BGS is very varied. I've worked in Anglesey, looking at the Quaternary and Devonian geology, done fieldwork in Carmarthen, Chepstow and Ammanford in the last few years. I have also been involved in projects associated with the South Wales Coalfield, alternative fossil fuels, shale gas and mineral resources. The work that we do adds to a body of geological knowledge and helps to inform policy in Wales, both of which I feel very lucky (and quite star struck if I think of the fantastic geologists on whose shoulders I stand) to have had the opportunity to do. The job is often difficult but what a privilege to be paid to feed your interest in a subject that I have been addicted to since childhood!

I'm not sure how long I have been a member of the South Wales Geologists' Association as my membership came and went when I first joined but I would say that it would have been in the mid 1990's – a relative newcomer compared to many. I started on the committee, I think in 2001, in a role to develop a website for the group. I subsequently became the newsletter editor taking over from Geraint Owen and then became the Group's Editor. On my birthday, last year, I was asked if I would like to be the Vice President of this Group. I was very honoured to say yes. I sincerely hope that I can live up to my predecessor's successes and am very much looking forward to seeing the Group continue to go from strength to strength.

