



February 2015

Fifty-sixth Session 2014-2015



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SWGA Summer Field Meetings 2015



Saturday 18th April

Martely, Worcestershire

Leader: John Nickell, Teme Valley

Geological Society

Meet at 10.30am at the Crown public house where vehicles may be left in the car park. This is at the crossing of the B4204 and B4197 in central Martley, [WR6 6PA] or Grid reference (SO 375 260). We will be undertaking the Teme Valley Geological Society Walk No.3 [see <http://www.geo-village.eu/>] which starts opposite the pub by the large maps and leaflet dispensers. Lunch can be taken in the pub if required or bring a packed lunch. The walk is approximately 9-10kms (6 miles) long.



Saturday 16th/Sunday 17th May

Old Red Sandstone of the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains

Leaders: Geraint Owen and John Davies

The purpose of this weekend field excursion (with the GA Parent Society) is to examine the findings of recent research on the distribution and characteristics of the Old Red Sandstone in the central region of the Old Red Sandstone. This area forms an important link between the better-known areas of the Old Red Sandstone in Pembrokeshire to the west and the Welsh Borderland to the east. Recent work has provided additional mapping detail of the outcrop of key horizons and revealed widespread zones of soft-sediment deformation, which may be related to penecontemporaneous fault activity. The excursion will involve walking over rough terrain on high ground, possibly in difficult weather conditions. Bring warm, waterproof clothing and sturdy footwear. Bring a packed lunch for each day.

Saturday 16th May (cont'd)**Leader: Geraint Owen**

Meet at 10.00 am at the large lay-by on the south side of the A470, 500 metres west of the Storey Arms outdoor centre and car park (SN 977 204).

**Sunday 17th May****Leader: John Davies**

Meet at 10.30 at the Craig-y-fro lay-by car park on the A470 (SN 971 209).

The morning will be taken with examination of the Senni Formation – Brownstones Formation 'transition' [Strahan et.al. 1904]. If conditions are suitable, the party will then progress up the sequence in Nant Gardinan, through the lower part of the Brownstones. After lunch, the Plateau Formation and Quartz Grits Formation of the Upper Devonian, will be examined, before descending through the same sequence along a parallel traverse, in the Llia valley further west. There will be a good opportunity to examine the nature of soft sediment deformation in this area.

**Sunday 14th June****Geology of the Mendip hills immediately overlooking Wells****Leader: Doug Robinson**

On this walk all the main rock sequences found in the Mendips will be seen, and used to interpret the geological history of the region. Penn Hill (with the Mendip aerial) overlooking Wells is made up of Devonian, Portishead Formation in the core of a pericline, with an envelope of Carboniferous Limestone. Flanking the south-facing slopes of the hills are sheets of coarse debris forming the Triassic, Dolomitic conglomerate (Draycott Marble), with this conglomeratic facies interdigitating with the fine sand and mud facies of the Mercia Mudstone. The gentler slopes of the Mendip hills directly north of Wells expose a transition from the subaerial Mercia Mudstone into the marine dominated sequences of the White and Blue Lias, representative of the advance of the Jurassic seas onto the islands of the Mendip archipelago.

The route starts in Wookey Hole and is about 8/9 km in length, and follows public footpaths giving generally good going, but in places will be quite rough underfoot, and possibly wet and slippery – a walking pole may be helpful. The overall ascent is ~ 200m, with some undulating sections, and some shorter steep

sections. There are some short sections walking along a narrow lane and there will be three crossings of the A37 road. As the route will take about four/five hours, people should bring some refreshments that can be taken at a suitable place, hopefully with a view over Wells and the Somerset Levels.

PLEASE NOTE: There is a limit of 16 participants on the walk – please book a place on the walk by emailing to Stephen Howe (steve.howe@talktalk.net). The start time will be 10.30am but the full logistical details of the trip will be sent to all those booking some two weeks prior to the day.

**Saturday 11th July****The Cambrian and Silurian rocks of the Malverns - stratigraphy, faunas and palaeogeography.****Leader: Bob Owens**

Meet at 10.30am in the car park on north side of A438 Ledbury to Tewkesbury road at Hollybush, in the southern Malverns, SO 759 369. Bring a packed lunch.

**Sunday 16th August****Recent re-evaluation of the Triassic-Jurassic stratigraphy of the River Severn as seen at Sedbury Cliff and Garden Cliff, Westbury on Severn****Leader: Peter Hodges**

Meet at 10am at Sedbury, on the side of the road off the B4228 at ST 549 926. The morning will be spent at Sedbury Cliff and the afternoon at Westbury-on-Severn. Lunch will be taken at Westbury on Severn. We will park near the Water Gardens at Westbury-on-Severn (SO 718 138) and walk to Garden Cliff as the locality has restricted parking limited to one car.

Both localities are very muddy and slippery in places so wear appropriate footwear. There will be plenty of opportunity to collect fossils.

**Saturday 19th September****Porthcawl and Sker****Leader: Stephen Howe**

This excursion will examine the coastal section between Lockes Common, Porthcawl and Sker Point. This coastal stretch is part of an exhumed Triassic landscape and exposes excellent exposures in the Dinantian Oxwich Head Limestone and the overlying marginal Triassic facies. The walk will be along the low

cliff top path, shingle beaches and generally rock platforms the latter of which are rough and slippery when wet. The total walking distance will be about 6-7 kms.

Meet at 10.30am at the car park in Rest Bay, Porthcawl (SS 804 783) which is a pay-and-display car park. Bring a packed lunch. If time and enthusiasm allows we may walk into the town at the end of the main walk to look at some of the local building stones.

Rockwatch Welsh Weekend 2015

As in previous years we are hosting Rockwatch, the junior branch of the GA, in Wales again this year. The weekend meeting will take place on 18th/19th July and will be centred in the Marloes/Martin's Haven area of Pembrokeshire. If anybody is interested in helping out with this event please let the Programme Secretary know [steve.howe@talktalk.net]

Field Work Safety Code

Although full Risk Assessments are undertaken prior to each field meeting members are reminded that they attend field excursions at their own risk. They are expected to take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of themselves and other participants and to behave in a responsible manner at all times. The Group has a Safety Policy and Safety Fieldwork Code that all participants should have read prior to attending a meeting. Copies can be found on the Group's web site and a resume can be found on the reverse of the Summer Field Meeting card.



Winter Indoor Programme 14/15

By the time that you receive this Newsletter there will only be one indoor meeting of the winter session left. This takes place following the Group's **AGM on Saturday 21st March** when Bob Owens will deliver the 2nd DA Bassett Memorial Lecture entitled From Welsh Geosyncline to Welsh Basin. Please remember the meeting starts at 10.30am in order to accommodate the AGM before the lecture.

Winter Session 2015-16

Although we are only just finishing this session'

indoor programme work has already begun on planning for the next indoor session. The provisional dates for the meetings are; 2015: 24th October, 21st November, 12th December (Tom Sharpe on William Smith); 2016: 9th January (Holiday Geology), 23rd January, 20th February, 19th March (Rhian Kendall, President's Address).

I have a promise from Haydon Bailey the current GA President to come and speak to us and a few other ideas but if members have any please let me know.



News from the Committee

Proposal for the AGM - OCR

As all members are aware, the group has been looking into the introduction of an "Optional Concessionary Rate for the unwaged (OCR)". This was first raised at last year's AGM, and it has been mentioned in all newsletters since.

The suggested introduction of an "OCR" rate is the result of a query as to "how do we define seniors". Although there has

been a "Senior" rate (also referred to over the years as "Senior Citizen" or "Retired") since 1960, recent changes in the state retirement pension age, people not always ceasing to work after reaching pension age, and an appreciation that there are others who may not be "seniors" but may not be in paid work, have all been under consideration. Time moves on, society moves on.

Consultation in the newsletters over the last year has resulted in three responses, all supportive, with the message "keep it simple".

Hence, the proposal for this year's AGM (see agenda). If the proposal is adopted, the new rate will be introduced for the next session's subscription year, due 1 September 2015. There will be no senior rate. Members will be asked to opt into the OCR at that time.

Members may be interested to know that currently, running costs exceed income, and non-seniors subsidise seniors. Although it is not planned to raise subscription rates this year, the committee is looking very carefully at the need to raise subs in the not too distant future.

Please also ask yourselves – do you not get exceedingly good value for your subscription??

Lynda Garfield, Group Secretary



Other events of interest

Geofest 2015

At the end of May and during the first week of June, Fforest Fawr Geopark are organising their annual Geofest with events for all ages and abilities.

<http://www.forestfawrgeopark.org.uk/geofest-2015/> . Of particular interest for SWGA is the 'family fun day' on Wednesday 27th May at Craig-y-nos Country Park in the upper Swansea Valley as we have been asked to attend. At the time of writing, we

are not sure if we will put on a 'fossil bash' or a Diorama. If you think you will be able to help out on the day, please let Janet Hiscott know (janethiscott@netscape.net)

Swansea Walking Festival

This is another event that takes place every year. This year it will be between 6 – 21 June. Details of events will appear on the website:

<http://www.gowerwalkingfestival.org/>



Other Geological Organisations

- Russell Society, Wales and West Branch: Tom Cotterell. Tel: 01594 845935 before 9 pm
- Welsh Stone Forum (Fforwm Cerrig Cymru): Tim Palmer tjp@aber.ac.uk or www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/welshstoneforum
- U3A South Wales Geology Group: Nigel McGaw. Tel: 01656 654439
- Open University Geological Society: Janet Hiscott ougs.org.uk/severnside
- West Wales Geology Society: www.westwalesgeolsoc.org.uk
- South East Wales RIGS : <http://sewrigs.wordpress.com/>