

June 2014**Fifty-Fifth Session 2013-2014**

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Summer Field Meetings 2014

Stephen Howe

The first two field meetings of the year, to Rhiw y Fan Gully, near Talgarth, with Duncan Hawley on 26th April and to the Crychan Forest, near Llandovery, with Christian Baars on 17th May got the summer programme off to a flying start. Both were excellent trips but with contrasting weather. At the first we climbed our way up a steep gully on the western face of the Black Mountains, looking in detail at the Lower Old Red Sandstone, while getting soaked in the heavy showers and frozen in a bitterly cold wind. Needless to say the rain actually improved the visibility of the fine details within the various sediments and it did improve as the day wore on.

The weather on the second trip could not have been a greater contrast; summer arrived and temperatures soared as we examined the Llandovery succession within the Crychan Forest along a series of fairly recently cleaned trackside cuttings. Both were excellent excursions and thanks go to our two leaders.

On the following pages are the details of the remaining excursions. Due to unforeseen circumstances late changes to the arrangements may occur from time to time so please remember to check the web site in advance.



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 was adopted last month (see page 3 for details).



Sunday 22nd June: Barry to Cardiff

The evolution of the Early Dinantian ramp carbonates in the eastern Vale of

Glamorgan

Leader: Dick Waters

Meet at 9.30 am at The Knap car park (ST 0975 0655) on the western side of The Knap, Barry. Participants should bring a packed lunch, hard hat and sturdy walking boots (not trainers) suitable for visiting quarries with H & S constraints. The coastal sections involve scrambling over shore-zone reefs.

Leader: Christian Baars

Meet at 11:00am at the Lifeboat Station, at the west end of the Promenade, Penarth. This is a gentle fossil-collecting walk along the beach to Lavernock Point and back along the cliff top footpath. It is specifically aimed at families and children but all members are encouraged to attend and help out. As it is quite a long walk for smaller children we would like to be able to offer that some of us only walk half way and take people back along the beach for those who don't want to go all the way to Lavernock. Please bring a packed lunch.



Saturday 28th/Sunday 29th June Rockwatch Weekend, Gower.

Saturday 28th June: Rhossili, Gower.

Leader: Stephen Howe

Meet at 11.00am at Rhossili car park (SS 415 880).

Sunday 29th June: Bracelet Bay – Langland Bay, Gower

Leaders: John Davies and Hazel Trenbith

Meet at 10.30am at Bracelet Bay car park (SS 627 872)



Saturday 16th August: Mumbles and Bracelet Bay, Gower

Leader: Hazel Trenbith

Meet at Bracelet Bay at 10.30am.

This is a half-day excursion and involves a walk around Bracelet Bay and Mumbles. From Bracelet Bay we will proceed along Mumbles front looking at the landscape and how the geology has influenced the current geomorphology of Swansea Bay. We will then take a steep path behind the George Pub to the top of Mumbles hill for panoramic views of the South Wales Coalfield and from here will walk down to Limeslade Bay. The total walking length is about 2 miles.



Saturday 19th July

The Quaternary of the Black Mountains:

Leader: Adrian Humpage

Meet at 10.00am opposite the Skirrid Inn in Llanvihangel Crucorney (SO 326 207). Packed lunch required.



Saturday 13th September: The eastern expression of the Neath Disturbance

Leader: Larry Thomas

Meet at 10.30am at Blaen Dyffryn Crawnon quarries (SO 1000 1502). These lie north of Trefil,



Sunday 27th July:

Fossils of Penarth, Family Excursion

which is north of the Heads of the Valleys road near Tredegar.

This excursion will look at the eastern expression of the Neath Disturbance. If it rains there is little cover so please make sure that you come prepared for all weather conditions and have strong footwear. A packed lunch is required.



Saturday 11th October Pontsticyllte, Vaynor and Abercriban

Leader: John Davies

Meet at 11.00am at Vaynor Church, Vaynor, north of Merthyr Tydfil (SO 049 103). This is a joint meeting with the Welsh Stone Forum. During the day we will look at the local building stones of the area and some of their sources. Bring a packed lunch.

Winter Programme 2014/15

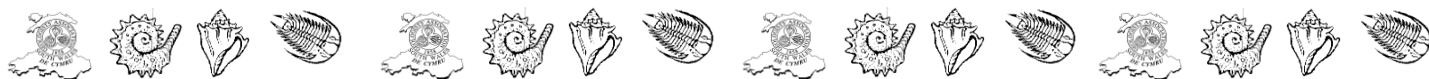
The indoor lecture programme for the coming winter is taking shape with only one date left to fill. The talks will cover topics as diverse as the South Wales Coalfield, landslides, Gideon Mantell and late Quaternary climate change. The dates for your diary are:

2014

Saturday **18th October** (Swansea); Saturday **22nd November** (Cardiff); Saturday **13th December** (Swansea).

2015

Saturday **10th January** (National Museum Cardiff) - Holiday Geology; Saturday **24th January** (Cardiff); Saturday **28th February** (Swansea); Saturday **21st March** (Cardiff) - AGM and D.A.Bassett Memorial Lecture.



News from the Committee

SWGA Safety Policy and Code

On 19 May, after long discussion, the committee adopted an amended SWGA Field Safety Policy and Code.

Last year, when the committee carried out its annual review of Health and Safety procedures, it was considered that some of the clauses in the Policy and Code had not proved very feasible (eg the back marker, the first aider), or involved unnecessary duplication (eg specific safety issues), or needed highlighting more (eg the wearing of appropriate clothing and footwear, the need to mention risk assessments which are now carried out). So, the Policy and Code have been updated and, hopefully, improved.

A copy of the amended Policy and Code can be seen on the website (swga.org.uk). A copy is included with this newsletter, either as an attachment for those who receive it by email, or as a paper copy for those who receive it by post. Copies will be taken on future field visits. A summary of the main points is given on the back of the summer programme card, which is sent to all members. Obviously a slightly amended version will be needed next year,

this in no way detracts from the Safety Information on this year's card.

Then, not content with amending the Safety Policy and Code, the committee carried out its 2014 review of Health and Safety procedures. We looked closely at all the clauses in the Policy and Code, and felt that we do follow all of them as best we can: the Committee will continue to endeavour to ensure that the guidelines are followed for all field meetings organised by the Group.

Consultation with members – what are 'seniors'?

During the 2013-14 session, a query was raised as to how we define "seniors"?

The Rules allow for Ordinary, Student and Honorary members; the committee to determine the subscription rate. For some years we have had a "Senior" Ordinary (reduced) rate. With the recent increase in state retirement age, the question raised was - does this need looking at? After discussion, the committee has agreed to keep the definition open, perhaps to have an "Optional Concessionary Rate" to replace the Senior rate, to cover also the unwaged, with members themselves to decide if they wish to

opt into this. The committee will be looking into this possibility over the next year, particularly given that running costs exceed membership income and the Group may need to revise membership structure and subscriptions in the light of this.

The membership was informed about this at the last AGM in March. An assurance was given that members would be consulted over the proposals – hence this note in the newsletter.

To date, the main point of discussion is whether an "Optional Concessionary Rate" should be just "for the unwaged", or wider. The committee is keen to keep things simple, and not be too definitive.

Please send any comments and replies to the secretary by the end of October, so the committee can discuss these at its November committee meeting. Thank you. Lynda (Secretary)



Other items of interest

Out of the Woods Festival, Cardiff

Cardiff Parks Department are once again holding their popular Out of the Woods Festival in Sophia Gardens, Cardiff on Sunday 17th August. The Group has agreed to take part and will be taking along a geological activity and small display. The event runs from 10.00am - 4.30pm and any volunteers to help on the stand for any length of time will be extremely welcome. If you can offer any assistance please contact Lynda Garfield.

3rd – 5th October 2014: The Old Red Sandstone: is it Old, is it Red and is it all Sandstone?

This three day symposium will take place at the Elim Church Centre in Brecon. The Friday and Saturday morning will be composed of talks, the Saturday afternoon is a public open day with displays, activities and events and on Sunday there is a choice of two field trips to see the local ORS. The cost will be £15 for one day, £30 for two days and £45 for three days which includes lunch and refreshments. There will be a separate conference dinner in Brecon on the Friday night. Details and a booking form can be obtained from Hazel Trenbirth or by looking on the Group's web site.

South East Wales RIGS

The South East Wales RIGS Group made significant progress recently when the 2 final places on the Committee were filled by Tom Sharpe, who volunteered to be Treasurer, and Ben Evans. The Group will soon be inviting people to become members and it is hoped

that many SWGA members will take this opportunity to get involved. The Group has already done some preliminary work in clearing the important Ruperra Limestone in the Old Red Sandstone on a site near Draethen, Caerphilly, in conjunction with the site owners, The Ruperra Conservation Trust. With your help we can continue this work and also get involved in geoconservation projects at other sites throughout the South East Wales area.

A recent meeting was held on Tuesday 10th June at the Ffos Y Fran opencast site, Merthyr, where the operators Miller Argent very kindly offered us accommodation again. For further information please contact Nigel McGaw – tel 01656 654439 or email

nimar@nmcgaw.freemove.co.uk

The South East Wales RIGS are pleased to acknowledge the support of

miller argent



John Baker - it is with sadness that we have heard that Dr John Baker, a past Chairman of the South Wales Group, passed away In March. An obituary will appear in the next edition of the Newsletter.