

September 2014



Fifty-Sixth Session 2014-2015



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Other members of the committee:

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



Meeting details 2014

Stephen Howe

Field Meetings:

This summer's field meetings have generally been well attended and been blessed with generally good weather. In June, Dick Waters gave a review and update of the local Early Dinantian sediments between Barry and Cardiff, a subject area that we have not covered for many years. A week later we hosted the Rockwatch Welsh Weekend in Gower, the first time that most of the participants had ever been to Gower. They were most impressed! The excursion was attended by families from across the UK and my thanks go to John Davies and Hazel Trenbirth for leading the Sunday's excursion for me.

July saw us examining the Quaternary of the Black Mountains with Adrian Humpage. The weather was far better than forecast although the low cloud did restrict the 360° view point at

the first locality to 20m in all directions. We spent a fascinating day in and around the Honddu valley looking at the latest interpretation of its Quaternary history. Later that month saw us undertake our first specifically family orientated field trip to Penarth and Lavernock led by Christian Baars. Although the turn-out from families was poor we had a very informative excursion on a beautiful, hot summer's day with Peter Hodges explaining some of the latest research and interpretation on the succession.

August saw us undertake a half day excursion to the Mumbles led by Hazel Trenbirth. Again we were blessed by lovely weather and had a fascinating tour around Mumbles to Bracelet and Limeslade bays and the good planning to have a cafe with a view over the sea for lunch. Due to the absence of a certain member there were less questions meaning that we had

an earlier finish!

Out of the Woods Festival

The Group undertook its very successful fossil bash activity at the Out of the Woods Festival in Sophia Gardens on 17th August. We spent a very busy day helping the young and old break open large lumps of Coal Measures mudstone and identifying the plant fossils that they uncovered. It was very rewarding but tiring day and thanks to Brian Drew's free fossil box we received over £18 in donations. My thanks go to Lynda and Dave, Brian Drew, Christine Banning, Kathryn Bennet and Malcolm Nugent for their help on the day and to Miller Argent for letting us have the rock once again.

Holiday Geology

Holiday Geology will once again take place at the National Museum, Cardiff on Saturday 10th January from 11.00am – 4.00pm. As you will know this event is very much dependent upon our members' volunteering to give short talks on their holidays or something that they think may be of interest. Each needs to be no more than 10-15 minutes long and the day will follow



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.



Summer Field Meetings

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, which is north of the Heads of the Valleys road

the usual format with 4-5 talks either side of a buffet lunch (£5). Booking will be necessary by 20th December if you wish to attend the meeting as we will need to order the food in advance. Please send your bookings to Hazel Trenbirth.

Field Meetings 2015

It may seem strange but I begin to sort out next year's field meeting programme during the preceding autumn so will soon begin to look for venues and leaders. If anybody has an idea of somewhere that they would like to visit and a suggested leader then please let me know

Change of email address: I am retiring from the museum in October after which my museum email account will be disconnected. From the 7th October please contact me on steve.howe@talktalk.net Please note that any emails sent to my museum email address after this date are unlikely ever to be received!

Stephen



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 winter programme for 2014/15 is as follows. I hope that you find something of interest.

Saturday 18th October (Swansea): Jenny Sandford (Swansea): *Slides in the Deep – Tales from 74 degrees north.*

Saturday 22nd November (Cardiff): Peter Brabham (Cardiff): *The South Wales Coalfield and future ground energy sources – the SEREN Project.*

Saturday 13th December (Swansea): Jacob



News from the Committee

Consultation with members – what are 'seniors'?

In the last Newsletter, a question was raised about the definition of 'Seniors' and whether this should be more about an optional concessionary rate that could apply to a wider group of members, including the unwaged. As membership rates need to be reviewed in the near future, your views are still sought on this



topic. Our secretary, Lynda Garfield would be pleased to hear from you with your opinion. She can be emailed on secretary@swga.org.uk

Membership renewal – Its that time of year again. If you have not yet set up a standing order to pay your subs, don't forget to send a cheque to Mike, our Membership Secretary.



Other items of interest

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

Old Red Sandstone Symposium

As you will be aware from the emails that I have been circulating, this major symposium on the Old Red Sandstone, that we are jointly organising, takes place in Brecon from 3rd - 5th October. On the afternoon of Saturday, 4th October, we are running a public Geofest event at the Elim Church Centre, Brecon. Many other organisations

will be bringing displays and posters; both the main GA and BGS will be there. We will have our own stand and sales outlet and will be running activities, including a 'Geology Roadshow' where people can bring their specimens for identification, and an activity for children to create a large ORS mural. We could do with some volunteers to help with these events so if you are not able to come to the meeting but would be willing to help out on the Saturday afternoon then please let me know.

GA Festival of Geology

The Group will once again be attending the GA's Festival of Geology at University College London on **Saturday 1st November**. If anybody is interested in attending and helping with our stall please contact our secretary, Lynda Garfield.

Cardiff University Lectures – *Earth's Natural Resources: Here today, gone tomorrow?* The 2014-15 monthly series of lectures in the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences considers the diversity and limits of Earth's mineral and energy resources and developments in renewable energy technologies. Lectures will be held in the Wallace Theatre, Main Building, Cardiff University. CF10 3AT. All members of the general public are welcome to attend these free lectures which start at 6.30. No booking required. www.cardiff.ac.uk/earth/seminars-and-lectures/

Open University Geology Society – Day of Lectures

All members of SWGA are invited to join in this annual event which is taking place on

**Obituary - Dr John CW Baker**

Members will have been saddened to hear of the death of former Chairman, Dr John Christian Wellstood Baker, on 24 March in Wokingham, age 87. His funeral was on 16 April in Rhiwbina and Thornhill.

John was one of our longest standing members. He was first involved with the Group in 1963, when he led a field visit to Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire. He was Chairman from 1968-1970, and Vice Chairman 1970-75. His retiring Chairman's address in 1970 was "In Wales before the Cambrian".

John was a member for 25 years. He gave

Saturday, 29th November, in the Icons Suite, National Museum of Wales, from 10.00. There are 3 speakers: Dr Jenny Pike: Holocene Antarctic diatoms, isotopes and icebergs; Dr Ted Nield: Underlands - a journey through the lost landscapes of Britain; Prof. Tom Blenkinsop: Archean Tectonics: Plates, Plumes or Paradoxes? There is a token charge of £2.00 to cover Speaker's expenses.

Red Cross – First Aid Courses

Trying to raise awareness of the importance of first aid in the community, the Red Cross are organising FREE first aid sessions in local centres to give people the basic first aid skills they may need in order to save a life. Visit <http://www.stjohnwales.co.uk/support-us/save-a-life-september/> to book a place which are offered on a first come basis. The courses are suitable for everyone aged 7+ and, when you register, you will be in with a chance of winning £100 worth of Primark Vouchers.



two talks, led five field excursions, wrote one of the contributions to the first SWGA guide book Geological Excursions in South Wales and the Forest of Dean (1971), and to the Glamorgan Heritage Coast guide later in the 1970s. His topics, relating to South Wales and the Welsh borders, were very varied. He supported many of our talks during the last two decades, including the "Wales in Miniature" conference in memory of Douglas A Bassett in May 2011 at St Fagan's. He was a long standing member of the staff at Cardiff University Geology Department. Our sincere condolences go to his family, friends and colleagues.

**Other Geological Organisations**

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