

WARWICKSHIRE GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION GROUP

Chairman - Martyn Bradley Tel: 01926 428835
Secretary - Moyra Butterworth

NEWSLETTER Issue Number 6: Autumn 2003

Editorial

This is a very exciting issue of our Newsletter. W.G.C.G. is thriving, thanks to the hard work and commitment of the committee. You will read of plans for making our organisation more professional by means of a Development Plan and of proposed changes to the Constitution. However, we are very sorry to have said goodbye to Maureen Newrick who has moved to the north west. Although she is one of the newer committee members she has achieved a lot in a short time and we thank her very much for her dedication and hard work. Bill Stokes will be leaving to retire to Cyprus shortly so if you would like to serve on the committee, please contact Martyn.

Julia Williams

Development Plan

You will see from this and previous newsletters that WGCG has been expanding the range of its activities and in particular has received grants to carry out conservation and educational work. We hope to be in a position to do more in the future. So the committee decided we needed to produce a Development Plan to guide our planning for the future and also to rethink the way we organise and administer the Group to cope with the new work we are taking on.

This has led to a draft Development Plan and an amended draft Constitution which you will receive with this Newsletter and which will be considered at the October AGM. It would help us enormously if you could find the time to read it and if you have any comments send them straight away to our secretary - Moyra Butterworth, 35 De Montfort Road, Kenilworth, CV8 1DE - so that we can consider any changes before the AGM. We hope the changes will also give more members a chance to be actively involved with the Group's work and to influence its future, especially through the work of the Conservation and Education Sub-Committees. If you are interested please let the Secretary know. We look forward to hearing from you.

Brian Ellis

Geological Interpretation of RIGS Sites

First of all let me say thank you to every one at WGCG for making me feel so welcome. I have been working on the Aggregates Levy Project since the start of the year and I'm glad to say I have made good progress. The project is intended to produce holistic geodiversity management plans for four aggregate sites in the county. A bit of a mouthful I know. Basically the plans are our wishlist for geoconservation at the sites whilst considering the effects of this on wildlife and archaeology etc. As I am writing this (June 2003) I am putting the finishing touches to the first plan for Edgehill Quarry. (I'm taking a five minute break from faffing with scanned pictures!!). Edgehill Quarry is not only important for its geology but as a site where much of the Hornton stone has been quarried for buildings such as Canterbury Cathedral and the Oxbridge Universities. It is also the quarry from which Henry Moore the famous sculptor took stone for several of his pieces in the 1920's.

For the rest of the summer I will be working on the next site which is Pagets Lane Pit. This is a Quaternary gravel pit at Ryton Pools Country Park. The deadline for this site is the end of September. From then until Christmas I will be working on Purley Quarry which is an important Cambrian trilobite locality. Negotiations with Tarmac are going well and it looks as though a good chunk of the exposures will be retained. I will be involved with the field trip to Scarborough in September. This is where I did my MSc research and I'm looking forward to seeing my beloved trace fossils again!

Jane Worrall

Launch of New Umbrella Organisation for Local Geoconservation !!

The New "GEOLOGY TRUSTS"

On May 1st the "Geology Trusts" was launched in England and Wales. This new county based organisation works in a similar way to its wildlife equivalent It currently comprises six (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire) of the leading county based Geoconservation and Earth Heritage Trusts in England. These county groups operated previously as the "Western Association". The new collective organisation is constituted and will shortly be registered as a charity.

The Geology Trusts via their partnership record over the last 3 years developed an impressive record of work, achievements and development. They are currently involved in their second collaborative project of producing detailed Geoconservation site management plans on a large number of key sites over the region. Previously they were working on a 1 year recording project where some 300 new sites were recorded in 12 months.

This success has been supported by even more significant gains by the individual trust members in their own organisations, all groups being now involved in a collective total of 20 separate funded projects.

Financial Success

Fund raising has been the key to triggering this project work. Over the last 3 years the Geology Trusts (under their old name “Western Association”) have initiated total project funding of some £260,000 for joint projects and individually the members, with the support and encouragement of the umbrella organisation, have raised a massive further £480,000. This would not have been achieved without the well coordinated efforts of several groups working together and deciding on clear objectives.

W.G.C.G. Main Aims and Strategy

So what is the purpose and future drive of the organisation? The answer here lies in the benefits of partnership working. Two significant projects have already been approved. There are even more ambitious ones in the pipeline both in their scope of work and budget. There is a massive gap in the present perception of Earth Heritage and what the Geology Trusts aims to achieve. The onus is on local groups and partnerships and so far there is tangible progress. Future new projects will need to pick up on what benefits and educates non geologists whilst allowing the more mundane functions of group work to continue. The days of simply being funded to go and record sites for databases are now gone and new and more imaginative projects will now have to be produced. Again the lead should come from the wildlife sector where for some time they have been steering their work towards public benefit and widespread promotion of the whole span of nature conservation.

Bill Stokes

Book without a name

A WGCG sub-committee is currently discussing the possibility of a book on Warwickshire's landscape and geology with Scenesetters, a Shropshire publishing company. It seems likely that an agreement will be formalised soon, with a view to compiling the book over the next couple of years.

The sub-committee's original concept was of a publication based largely or wholly on County geology and landscape, stemming from the series of talks on Warwickshire geology given over last winter.

Plans for chapters may include:

- A general introduction
- The Ancient Rocks of North Warwickshire
- The Warwickshire Coalfield
- Desert Rocks of the Permo-Trias
- Our Jurassic Marine Park
- The Ice Age

2002-2003 speakers have all been contacted and are willing to take the plan forward.

Scenesetters' marketing experience suggests that we do not use the word 'geology' in the title. Please send any bright ideas to me here at the Museum!

Jon Radley, Keeper of Geology, Warwickshire Museum

Earth Heritage

If you don't receive a copy of this magazine and would like to receive a copy free of charge twice yearly, tel: 01733 455207 and speak to David Evans.

Obituary

It is with a feeling of sadness that I have to announce the death of Arthur Henley in July. He had been a member for many years and we will miss his attendance at our indoor meetings.

Parkridge Centre, Brueton Park, Solihull

The project to install an interpretative display of Warwickshire geology at the Parkridge Centre has now passed a major milestone. The Countryside Agency has confirmed a grant of up to £25,000 to WGCG to fund the work. The grant has been awarded under the Local Heritage Initiative, since we intend the display to emphasise the links between the geology of the county and its architectural, economic and social history. In addition, the project will also include setting up pages on the Countryside Agency's website, and organising a formal 'launch event' at the Parkridge Centre. It is hoped that this will take place during May 2004 and will be an opportunity for the WGCG to present our activities to a wider audience of local people.

Now that we have the grant, we must start work in earnest. Maurice Cooke will be coordinating the design of the interpretation panels, with artwork by Adam Stuart Smith, but effort will also be needed to lay out the site, erect the display boards and to prepare the launch event.

So, if anyone has some time to spare over the coming months and would like to be involved in these activities, please make yourselves known. Maurice would be happy to have any more ideas, information or

photos for the interpretative panels. Additional display material will be needed for the launch event: one suggestion has been to have a selection of Warwickshire fossils for members of the public to handle.

Does anyone have anything they can contribute?

Please contact Maurice at: maurice@gefni.co.uk

The grant gives the Group a wonderful opportunity to promote a wider interest in geology and to contribute to the community. However, funding is conditional on us providing a high level of voluntary effort and 'in-kind' contributions, so we must work together to produce a good result.

David Coates

Field Weekend to the Lake District, May 2003

The minute we left the pub on Friday afternoon it began to rain! Despite this we set off to find the Skiddaw granite contact. It soon degenerated into a game of hunt the rock. Cries of "I've got a spotty one" and "those spots wipe off", soon rang out across the Lakeland hills. The tutors were their usual enthusiastic selves despite the rain and even encouraged a torrent-leaping contest to look for any interesting minerals on a spoil heap. Why are the interesting rocks on the other side of the river?

Saturday saw the group at Carrock Fell searching again for metamorphic rocks only at some height! A spectacular view of Bowscale Tarn, a truecombe contained tarn, was the reward for the effort and gave a new slant on "High Tea". Walking down to the River Caldew we found some splendid hornfels. The U shaped valley and Iron Age hill fort built from gabbro were also visible.

Sunday and back to Carrock Fell to check out the gabbro as its composition changes from light coloured leucogabbro to dark melanogabbro. We also saw some stunning onion peeling weathering of lava xenoliths. Then back up the hill to "have lunch sitting on a distorted trilobite" at an impressive quartz vein. Then up again to Brandy Gill and the remnants of the old mineral workings as well as some picturesque waterfalls. Back to the hostel for the last debrief of the weekend and bed (yes it did rain on the way back from the pub again). The final morning had to be a walk round Derwentwater then up to Castle Rock before heading home tired and a little rock blind but ready for the next visit to Scarborough in September. Many thanks to all the organisers and tutors for such an interesting trip.

Debbie Kelsall

Leicester Literary & Philosophical Society Section C (Geology) Programme of indoor meetings 2003/2004

All held at 7:30 in Lecture Theatre 10 (LT10) in the Geology Department, Leicester University, except where stated.
Details: Chairman: Andrew Swift, 0116 2523646, as48@le.ac.uk

Wednesday, October 8th

Dr Neville Hollingworth (NERC), Swindon 'Hunting mammoths in a Co-op creamery.'

Wednesday, October 22nd

Dr Mark Maslin (Department of Geography, University College, London)
'Tectonics, ice ages and human evolution.'

Wednesday, November 5th

Professor Michael Collie (Barkerstone Nottingham) 'Geology by canoe:
Roderick Murchison's mapping of the Ural mountains.'

Wednesday, November 19th

Dr Jenni Barclay (School of Environmental Science, University of East Anglia)
title TBA, theme - Volcanoes.

Wednesday, December 3rd

Dr Jan Zalasiewicz (Department of Geology, University of Leicester) 'Sliding
into the deep freeze: the Plio Pleistocene geology of East Anglia.'

Wednesday, December 17th

Christmas meeting to be held at the New Walk Museum, Leicester.

2004

Monday, January 12th

Parent Body Lecture, to be held at New Walk Museum, Leicester. Dr Jane A
Evans (NERC Isotope Geosciences Lab., British Geological Survey, Key-
worth)

'You are what you eat: isotope studies and migration.'

Wednesday, January 14th

Dr Graham Weedon (Department of Environment, Geography and Geology,
University of Luton) 'From climate change to time scales: examples from the
Jurassic in England.'

Wednesday, January 28th

Dr Diane Sutherland (Mears Ashby, Northampton). Title TBA, theme - 'The
building stones of Northamptonshire.'

Wednesday, February 11th

Members evening, to be held at the New Walk Museum, Leicester.

Wednesday, February 25th

Dr Jane Francis (Department of Earth Sciences, University of Leeds) 'From
greenhouse to ice house, from forests to frost. Using fossil plants to track
climate change in Antarctica.'

Saturday February 21 st (whole day)

Saturday School, Vaughan College, Leicester. 9:30am - 5:00pm. Theme - The
marine and flying reptiles of the Mesozoic.

Wednesday, March 10th

Professor Simon Conway-Morris (Department of Earth Sciences, University of
Cambridge) 'Meeting the extra-terrestrials: clues from evolution on Planet
Earth.'

Wednesday, March 24th

AGM and Chairman's address - Andrew Swift (Department of Geology,
Leicester University) - Geological highlights of the Midlands, II - Southam (Long
Itchington) Quarry, Warwickshire.

**Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group
Autumn and Winter Programme 2003 - 2004**

**All meetings are at St John's Museum, Warwick
at 7.15 pm for tea or coffee with a 7.30 pm start**

Wednesday, 17th September 2003

Members Evening

The People who made Warwickshire Geology: Dr Tony Elgar

Wednesday, 15th October 2003

Members Evening - AGM followed by

R.I.G.S.: a walk in the countryside: Bill Stokes and Jon Radley

Wednesday, 12th November 2003

Visiting Speaker

Montserrat: What to do with the Volcano? Dr Tom Dijkstra, Loughborough University (formerly Coventry University, Disaster Management Research Centre.)

Wednesday, 10th December 2003

Members Evening

The Geology and Scenery of New Zealand: Kathy Turrell and Jean Sutton followed by Christmas refreshments.

Wednesday, 21st January 2004

Visiting speaker

Permo-Triassic Extinction:

Dr Roz White, Department of Geology, Leicester University

Wednesday, 18th February 2004

Visiting speaker

Soft-bodied sensations from the Silurian of the Welsh Borderland:

Professor David Siveter, Department of Geology, University of Leicester

Wednesday, 17th March 2004

Members Evening

Conserving the Geology of Warwickshire Quarries: Why and How?

Jane Worrail, Aggregates Levy Project