



THE BLACK COUNTRY GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

CHAIRMAN	A. CUTLER, B.Sc.
CHAIRMAN	P. G. OLIVER, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.G.S.
VICE CHAIRMAN	D. J. WRAIGHT
HON. SECRETARY	Mrs. E. BAKEWELL
HON. TREASURER	

NEWSLETTER NO. 3 - FEBRUARY 1976.

The Thick Coal.

Mr. Basil Poole lectured to the Society on January 22nd 1976 at Dudley Museum, the topic - a pet subject of his - The South Staffordshire Thick Coal.

There are a number of divisions of the thick coal, upto a maximum of 16', and the greatest concentration of coal (with least dirt) is 31' at Parkhead. There is a well-defined parting - The Hardstone - 2" in the south increasing to the north where it is known as the Hob and Jack.

The job of collecting this type of information has involved examination of a large number of sections but the accuracy of some of these is doubtful and thus the task proves very difficult. One important aid to the interpretation of the thick coal is the plexographic model of King. Much information can be gained from this; the influence of the Wetherton Anticline; the stable area of Wednesbury; the active fault zones ect. Mr. Poole's isopachyte map shows a remarkable correlation with the pre-coal measures base. Even on a smaller scale there are significant increases in thickness over short distances - obviously a reflection of changes in the stability of the basins of deposition.

In discussion the complex but highly significant changes in thickness associated with the western boundary fault were emphasised. This information together with deep borehole evidence from the M.C.B. indicate

the comparatively rapid subsidence of the basin linked with the western boundary fault and the area to the west of it.

Wednesday December 10th.

Wine, Cheese, and rocks was the somewhat salubrious title of the December meeting. Remembering the dictum that the society should be a meeting place for geologists on a social as well as scientific basis the committee felt the pre-christmas meeting was the appropriate time for such an event.

Six wines were on sample, three red and three white which provided a cross section of varieties and styles so that everyone found at least one wine that they could drink all night! It was interesting to compare the differences in taste resulting of course from differing grapes, and methods of viniculture but also on the varying types of soil (A Ph. D waiting here "The effect of geology on wine"?).

"Cheese" was a very modest way of describing the truly magnificent buffet organised by Margaret Oliver. There were many varieties of English and French cheeses, meats and pates, sausage rolls and also mincepies prepared by several of our lady members.

And in case anyone should have forgotten that we are a geological society five or six members arranged displays of some of their favourite rocks and fossils.

Altogether it was a most enjoyable evening and everyone P.T.O.

present expressed their appreciation. The only disappointment was that more members did not attend but perhaps the timing of the meeting was unsuitable. Nevertheless it was clear that a social event should remain part of the society's calendar and we thank everyone who so willingly gave of their time to organise the meeting.

Next Meeting.

February 19th.

'The Documentation of Geological Sites'.

Doug Redson and Pete Oliver will attempt to set the foundations for what must be one of the Society's major roles. It is hoped that following this meeting all members will be able to begin the important and enormous task of recording exposures.

Dudley Museum 7.45 p.m.
Tea & Biscuits 7.15 p.m.

Members' Night.

Despite very short notice Sheila Pitts, Dave Wraight and Terry Bond produced excellent short talks on November 20th.

The Geology of the Faeroe Islands by Sheila Pitts:

The Faeroe Islands are situated between Iceland, Norway and Scotland and are part of the North Atlantic Basalt province. They are an extinct area of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge with basalts of Palaeocene and Eocene age. Most of the lava flows are separated by tuffs and there are coal horizons also. These features are used for purposes of correlation.

The Separation of Minerals in rocks by Terry Bond:

Rocks are made up of minerals each with distinct physical and chemical properties. As a homogeneous igneous magma cools atoms of the elements present (e.g. Silicon, Oxygen, Aluminium, Magnesium) are in a random

arrangement but as solidification temperature is approached changes occur. The elements take up positions relative to each other, depending upon their chemical affinity and valency, to form a stable solid crystal nucleus. The removal of these elements results in a concentration of the others in the remaining melt.

Coastal Scenery by Dave Wraight:

Britain's coastline has been etched out by the work of rivers, sea, ice and earth movements over the last million years. The variety of rocks provides the differences in resistance, dip, strike and the rate of undercutting. These differences have given the stacks and chalk cliffs of South England, the granite cliffs of S.W. Cornwall and the low, rapidly retreating cliffs of East Anglia.

Coastal Fieldwork allows the geologist to get a very broad view of geological features but it must be remembered that although some areas suffer rapid erosion, careless removal of material by the geologist will further aid the work of the sea.

Forth-coming Programme.

February 19th:

See above for details.

March 14th:

Field trip; morning Telford opencast site. Leader; a geologist from N.C.B. Afternoon Ironbridge and industrial archaeology. Meet at Dudley Museum at 9.30 a.m. (Private transport). Bring a packed lunch. Numbers at opencast site restricted so please contact Dave Wraight (Bilston 46717).

April 29th:

Annual General Meeting. Dudley Museum. 7.45 p.m.
Tea & Biscuits 7.15 p.m.

May 20th:

Dr. George Bennison of Birmingham University will speak on 'The Cretaceous Coal of New Mexico'. Dr. Bennison gave the 'Proto-BCGS' much encouragement and his acceptance of the invitation

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to lecture means that the Society will begin its second year in excellent fashion. Dudley Museum 7.45 p.m. Tea & Biscuits 7.15 p.m.

June 26th & 27th:

Provisional weekend field trip to the Mendips and South Cotswolds. Accomodation can be arranged.

Halesowen Beds, A458 Roadworks, Halesowen.

Unfortunately the success stated in the November 1975 Newsletter was short-lived. The councils concerned decided that the slope was too easily eroded and has therefore been seeded. A few bands of sandstone remain exposed, with an indication of some of the cross-bedding that exists.

Book Review.

Terry Bend is again 'Book Critic'

At one time or another, I suppose most of us have stood looking at a freshly hewn hand sample of 'terra firma' and let our minds wander among some of the better known, or best remembered, names of geological materials. If more than one person is involved in this exercise then the ensuing moments often develop into a cross between "Twenty Questions"

and the office christmas lottery.

There are various ways of off-setting the above trauma, including literary works of reference to help the softly swearing students, one of the better ones being:-

"The Hamlyn Guide to Minerals, Rocks & Fossils" by Hamilton, Woolley & Bishop published by Hamlyn at £1.95. Half of the book, the right hand pages, is made up of first class colour photographs of the specimens listed, namely- "220 minerals, 90 rocks and almost 300 fossils"- each page with a dimensional scale super-imposed. The left hand pages contain an abundance of detailed information about the specimens including such items as density, hardness, colour, streak, texture, geological data where relevant. The whole liberally supplemented by clear and concise margin notes and sketches.

Even if you are an armchair geologist you will find yourself drawn time and again by the glossy seduction of the pages into the world of complete and detailed collections.

Inspite of all this range and depth of treatment the book will still go into the average sized jacket pocket and possible some handbags also where its addi-

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APPLICATION OR RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Individual Membership 50p entrance fee and £3.00 per annum

tional attribute as balast will be greatly appreciated.

The Midland Soil Mechanics & Foundation Engineering Society.

On Monday 1st March 1976 HSM & FES has a meeting which may be of interest: Dr. R.J.O. Hamblin of the Institute of Geological Sciences will talk on: 'The Geology of Telford New Town'. Room A. Dept of Civil Eng. University of Birmingham. 7.00 p.m.

The Geological Curators Group.

The group are holding a meeting at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery on March 12th 1976 entitled, 'Replication of Fossil Vertebrates'. The programme included a talk on the reconstruction of Tyrannosaurus, mould making and casting. Anyone wishing to attend as a representative of B.C.G.S. should contact M.D. Jones, Hon. Sec. (GCG), Leicestershire Museums, 96 New Walk, Leicesters LE1 6TD.

Correction.

Dave Wraight (Hon Sec.) lives at 569, Parkfield Rd. Wolverhampton

Book List.

More Suggestions from Doug Bedson

The Geological History of the British Isles-Bennison & Wright £3.25. Structure of the Earth-Spencer £3.90. Introduction to

Sedimentology- Selby £5.90. Continents adrift (Scientific American) £2.80. Understanding the Earth (Open University) £3.75.

The Geology of the Northern Lake District.

There are still vacancies on this field trip organised by Birmingham University Extramural Dept. The leader is Mrs. M. Joachin M. A., and the dates are 26th & 28th March 1976. Doug Bedson has room in his car for anyone requiring transport.

Pouk Hill.

West Midlands County Council has decided to go ahead with the use of the site as a domestic refuse tip. The Society wrote two letters and made a personal appeal to the County, stressing the need to conserve this site. It is a considerable loss, especially to the schools of the Walsall Area. In conjunction with the County and other interested parties it is now proposed that detailed recording and collection should soon begin. A request has been made that a new section is created. It is likely that a number of visits will be required and also the help of as many members as possible.

Advertisement.

Cottage to let, Staithes North Yorkshire Coast Nr. Whitby, in a fine village with outlet to sea. Sleeps 4: See G.A. Guide p. 10. Big Stourbridge 3543 (Malcolm Ormerod) for further details.

BLACK COUNTRY GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURSDAY 29TH APRIL 1976

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of Inaugural Meeting
3. Statement of Accounts
4. Annual Report
5. Election of Officers
 - A. Chairman
 - B. Vice-Chairman
 - C. Hon. Secretary
 - D. Hon. Treasurer
 - E. Three Committee Members
 - F. Hon. Auditor
6. Secretary's Communications
7. Any Other Business

Nominations for Officers and Committee Members should be forwarded to the Hon. Secretary, 569 Parkfield Road, Wolverhampton.

The present Officers and Committee who all offer themselves for re-election are as follows:

Chairman	-	A. Cutler B.Sc.
Vice-Chairman-		P. G. Oliver Ph.D. F.G.S.
Hon.Secretary-		D. J. Wraight
Hon.Treasurer-		Mrs. E. Bakewell
Committee Members	-	Mrs. M. Oliver
		T. Bond
		D. Bedson