



NEWSLETTER No. 33 - JUNE 1982.

The Black Country Geological Society

Editorial.

Geological Warfare.

The present tragic quarrel in the south Atlantic will remind many of us of how often we have heard the comment that most wars are based on competition for geological resources. Over the centuries there has been a shift from theological wars to geological wars, from supernatural to natural resources, in keeping with the more materialistic philosophy of the present day. One of the constant things in life is probably the range of heights and depths of human conduct.

Although I feel thoroughly English, and have greatly enjoyed visits to many other European countries, I have never experienced such consistent friendliness and kindness as I did during three months in southern Argentina. It is a disorientating thought. It is so sad that our two countries could not jointly develop and conserve the mineral and maritime resources of the south Atlantic.

Next Meeting.

Monday June 7th. Evening field trip to Saltwells.
Meet at 7.30pm. at Saltwells Inn.

This trip will be different from the trip to same area which the BCGS organises for the Countryside Commission and should appeal to the more advanced geologist.

Monday June 21st. Evening field trip to Kinver.
Meet at 7.30pm. in the car park in Mill Lane. This is near the junction of Mill Lane and Kinver High Street. Mill Lane is on the main route from the Stewpony pub to Kinver. This trip has a dual purpose. We will see the Triassic sandstone of Kinver Edge, which is soft and easily worked. Rock houses have been lived in for 300 years until 1955. We will be shown round by Mr. D.M. Bills, co-author of the booklet "Kinver Rock Houses" published by Elda Publications, 26 High Street, Kinver.

Meetings are held in the Allied Centre, Green Man Entry, Tower Street, Dudley, behind the Malt Shovel pub. Indoor meetings will commence at 8pm. with coffee and biscuits from 7.15pm. Field meetings will commence from outside the Allied Centre. Non-members welcome.

The society does not provide personal accident cover for members or visitors on field trips. You are strongly advised to take out your own personal accident cover to the level which you feel appropriate. Schools and other bodies attending field trips should arrange their own insurance as a matter of course.

Chairman
A. Cutler B.Sc., M.C.A.M.,
Dip.M., M.Inst.M.

Vice Chairman
P. G. Oliver B.Sc., Ph.D.,
F.G.S.

Hon. Treasurer
M. J. Woods B.Sc., M.Sc.,
M.I.Geol., F.G.S.

Hon. Secretary
P. D. Shilston M.A., C.Eng.,
F.I.E.E., M.I. Mech.E.

Field Secretary
Anne Harrison B.Sc., M.B.,
Ch. B., F.F.A.R.C.S.

Programme.

July 12th.

July 18th.

These two meetings have been cancelled because unfortunately Peter Whitehead cannot now lead the Pennine field trip on that day. It is postponed until September.

September 13th. "Meteorites, building blocks for planets."
Lecture by Dr. John Ashworth of Aston University.

September 20th. Informal meeting.

September 26th. Field trip to see the Central Pennine Basin. Leader Peter Whitehead. Meet 11am. in Edale village car park.

October 4th. Informal meeting.

October 10th. Joint field trip with Shropshire Geological Society to sites of interest in Shropshire.

November. To be arranged.

December 6th. "Glacial deposits!"
Lecture by Mr. Edward Francis of Keele University.

Committee Dates.

<u>General.</u>	<u>Conservation.</u>
June 28.	July 19.
September 6.	September 27.
November 8.	November 22.

Welcome to new members:-

Mr. K.W.Hatfield and family,
of Aldridge.
Neil Hopkins, Netherton.
Pat Walker, Quarry Bank.
Jennifer Doherty, Northfield.
Peter Redgrave, Barnt Green.

Annual General Meeting and
the 'Drifting Continents.'

March 22nd. 1982.

The most obvious conclusion to be gained from this year's A.G.M. and film night is that geologists are attracted by good sherry, shortbread and chocolate biscuits, since the meeting was very well attended.

After apologies, the minutes of the A.G.M. on 16th. March 1981 were accepted, as were the statement of accounts and the Treasurer's report. Those who did not attend will be glad to know that there is no proposal to increase the annual subscription. This gratifying position is due to income from field trips run for the Countryside Commission, support from Johnson, Poole and Bloomer and from other firms and individuals who gave assistance in one way or another and thus save the society money. This we are all grateful for. Subscriptions remain:- Individual, £5.00
Family, £7.00
Student, £2.50
Associate, £10.00

The Chairman's annual report was fairly detailed. To summarise in the past year there has been a 10% increase in membership, 19 meetings of the society including six guest speakers, two successful evening field trips, a first rate weekend field trip to Anglesey, various day field trips and a joint field trip with the Shropshire Society to classic Black Country sites.

The Society's advice has been sought by Local Authorities, walks have been organised for the public, and the newsletter has been maintained. Many favourable reviews have been received for the Journal launched last August - however there is a need for YOU to buy more copies for your own use and that of your friends. The Christmas card has been a success.

All the officers were re-elected and the vacant seat on the committee was filled by Peter Knight. The appointment of Conservation Secretary remains vacant. The officers and the committee have done a first rate job and I for one am grateful to them for their many hours of work behind the scenes, and of course for the knowledge and time given by our speakers and field trip leaders. Here is a list of officers and committee:-

Chairman - Alan Cutler.
Vice-Chairman- Peter Oliver.
Treasurer- Maitland Woods.
Secretary- Paul Shilston.
Programme Secretary- Anne Harrison.
Committee Members- John Easter.
Michael Coles.
Nigel Bradley.
Peter Knight.
Auditor- Mr. F. R. Grimes.

The committee are anxious to receive your suggestions for talks and field trips - Here's your chance!

There followed the Horizon film "The Drifting Continents". This provided in a non-technical manner, a history of the development of the "New Geology of Plate Tectonics". Whilst I suspect that most of us have seen it before and that some of us are vain enough to think we know its contents, it is salutary to remember that many of the mistakes made in the sciences - whether applied or pure - arise from neglect of one or other of the basic concepts. It does none of us any harm to go back to first principles. This was a very successful meeting.

Douglas Warren.

Field Trip to Whitwell Dolomite Plant and Creswell Crags.

April 18th. 1982.

Near junction 30 of the M1 motorway, seventeen members

were met by Mr. Gerald Plant of Steetley Refractories Ltd. From this vantage point the salient features were demonstrated. The edge of the Zechstein Sea area was clearly visible by the outcrop ridge of magnesian limestone. To the east lies the Permian limestone and to the west Carboniferous Coal Measures. Major faulting took place after the Coal Measures were laid down, and reactivation of the faults took place after the limestone deposition. These faults are responsible for the geological features which were to be seen later in the afternoon.

From the meeting place we drove to Steetley's Whitwell plant for a short talk on the methods of extracting and processing the magnesian limestone. Virtually all the material extracted from the quarry is used, and the products cover a very wide range. These include dead burnt dolomite for use in refractories; flux for slag; dust to contain colliery fires; agricultural and livestock products; roadstone; etc. At the end of the talk coffee and biscuits were provided by the plant manager Mr. Fuller.

In the quarry it was explained that the strata consist of Upper and Lower Magnesian Limestone. The upper is used for metallurgical purposes because of its high purity (98%) and the lower for constructional work since it has a high silica content. The Park Hall Fault passing through the quarry was clearly visible, since there was massive dolomite on one side and shattered rocks on the other. There are no fossils but minerals such as lead and manganese are present. The quarry covers 350 acres and produces one million tons per year.

After the quarry visit we ate our picnics in the pleasant grounds at the Creswell Crags Visitors' Centre. The resident warden Mr. Rogan Jenkinson led our tour in the afternoon. He explained that the centre is sponsored by Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils. The limestone gorge contains many ancient caves and shelters which have been excavated during the last century. These show signs of occupation

from about 120,000 years ago.

Victorian excavators removed many remains, but their records and accounts leave much to be desired. Evidence of human occupation comes from Neanderthal man's use of Bunter Pebbles. Later tools consist of flints, but as these are not local it is assumed that they were taken by hunters following reindeer.

Animal remains include hyena, hippopotamus, birds, bats, tigers leopard and wolf, together with other reptiles and fish including molluscs. These act as indicators of the glacial and interglacial periods. A major difficulty in determining ages is to distinguish between what is in situ and what has been washed in. The site is famous for its remains and the last period of 10,000 years ago is referred to as the Creswellian.

Research continues into the site, with projects programmed for the next twenty years. There remain unexplored caves but the cost of a full scientific research project would be in the region of £250,000.

On completion of the walk there was a slide show and exhibition at the Creswell Crags Visitors' Centre.

Finally members were invited to Mr. Plant's house for tea and cakes baked by his wife. We saw from photographs Mr. Plant's wide range of interests, including geology, botany and zoology.

Mr. Plant was thanked by members of the Black "Watch" Geological Society for a very enjoyable and interesting day. As there are many sites as yet unvisited it was agreed that a further visit could be made to this area.

John Easter.

Geological Guided Walks,

run by the B.C.G.S. for the Countryside Commission.

Doulton's Claypit;-

Sundays June 6, July 4, August 1, and September 5. Meet at the Chainshop Mushroom Green, 3pm. Because these are the first Sundays in the month, visitors can see the chainshop in operation.

Cotwall End Valley, Sedgley:-

Sundays June 13, July 11, August 1, September 5. Meet in car park of Nature Centre at corner of Cotwall End Road and Catholic Lane, 3pm.

Wrens Nest:-

Sundays June 20, July 18, August 15, September 19, at 3pm. Meet at King Arthur Public House, Priory Road.

All walks - adults 50pence, children 20pence.

Society members prepared to assist as marshalls or money collectors would be very welcome. Please contact Anne Harrison.

Wenlock Edge Guided Walk:-

June 20th, 10.30am. Sunday, 6 hours. Meet by Guilhall, Much Wenlock, on A 458. Theme geology. Six miles walking plus car travel. £2,50. Car, picnic lunch, advance booking essential. WEA, 9 Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6BH.

Shropshire Geological Society.

Mapping project.

The Shropshire Society invites any interested members of the BCGS to join them on mapping trips.

Dates:- June 9, 23, 30. 7-7.30pm. start, for about 2 hours, then on to a local pub.

Venue:- Ercall Quarry. O.S. sheet 127 643 095.

Aims:- To produce a booklet which can be used as a teaching aid.

Advance notice for winter.

An evening class will be run by Dr. R. Ixer of Aston University on minerals and petrology. It will be held in the Geological Department of Aston University and will use their microscopes and specimens. More details will be given in the August newsletter.

Field courses at Dolgellau Youth Hostel.

Our recent weekend field trip took place from this hostel, and there is also pleasant accommodation at the village hotel.

June 11-13. O-level geomorphology

June 25-27. Mountain Ecology.

July 2-4. Mountain and documentary photography.

July 9-11. Soil science.

July 16-18. A-level geomorphology

July 31-August 7. Geology in North Wales. Beginners and O-level.

Aug. 13-15. A-level geomorphology

Aug. 20-22. A-level geology.

Aug. 27-29. Old Mines of Mid-Wales

Sept. 3-5. Mountain Ecology.

Sept. 17-19. Industrial archaeology

Sept. 24-26. Soil Science.

Oct. 1-3. Welsh Mines Conference.

Oct. 15-17. Estuarine Biology.

Oct. 22-24. A-level geology.

Oct. 29-31. O-level geomorphology

Snowdonia National Park Study Centre.

Plas tan y bwlch, Maentwrog, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd, LL41 3YW

June 13-19. Metal Mining (lead, copper and gold) £75.

June 27-July 2. Advanced geology. Identify specimens, use microscopes and map in the field. £63.55.

Aug. 14-21. Introduction to geology in Snowdonia. £103.50.

Fifth Meeting of Geological

Societies of the British Isles.

Sept. 23-26. Very wide programme.

Details from:-

Dr. W.E. Tremlett, Dept. of Geology, The University, Glasgow, G12 8QQ.

Hon. Secretary:-

Paul Shilston, 15 St. Nicolas Gardens, Kings Norton, Birmingham B38 8TW. 021-549-3603.

Programme Secretary:-

Anne Harrison, 15 Duncombe Grove, Harborne, Birmingham B16. 021-454-6416 or 021-429-1818.

Editor, Sheila Pitts, 17 The Pear Orchard, Northway Farm, Tewkesbury, Glos. GL20 8RG.

John Easter, 27 Fairlawn Drive, Kingswinford, West Midlands, DY6 9PG.

Publication:- "Geology of the Harlech Dome." £1.60 plus 50p. postage.

Kings Youth Hostel, Dolgellau, Gwynedd, LL40 1TB. Tel. 0341-422392.

Keen aren't we - paying our Sub "in absentia"!
No he's just affluent! Does this mean
his parents can attend free by proxy?