

Secretary's Report 1971-72

The eighth year of the Society commenced in the limbo of the postal strike and ended in the gloom of the coal strike. Nevertheless, yet another successful year of activities was added to its record.

It was not possible to send out a circular in January, and it was greatly to the credit of our Members that without a reminder they attended the Presidential Address in February in such force. The postal strike continued throughout February, and again a circular could not be sent out to give notice of the Annual General Meeting which had been arranged for March 13th. The meeting was held, however, and it was agreed that the geological films should be shown but that the business should be adjourned until May 8th. Mr. J.E. Metcalfe had undertaken to arrange the film show, and succeeded in presenting an excellent series of films in spite of being restricted to communication by telephone, of being obliged to arrange transport by rail, and at the last having to travel to London himself to collect the remainder of the reels in time for the meeting. Mr. Metcalfe is to be thanked for his efforts and congratulated on his efficiency.

In April Dr. A. Woodland had agreed to speak to the Society on the work of the Institute of Geological Sciences. However, at the time of the meeting he was engaged in a removal to London to take up duties as Deputy Director, and he asked if his lecture might be postponed until later in the year. At very short notice indeed, Mr. D.M. Taylor, research student, Nottingham University, was invited to take his place. We are exceedingly grateful to Mr. Taylor for accepting the invitation and for sharing with us the results of his research on Andesites.

The first field excursion of the season was led by the President and dealt with the area around Nottingham. The day was fine and sunny and the large party in high spirits to be in the field again. A contribution was made by Mr. A. Houldsworth who demonstrated a previously unrecorded exposure of the unconformity between Coal Measures and Lower Mottled Sandstone.

On May 8th the Annual General Meeting was held. An amendment was made to the Constitution whereby the annual subscription for Ordinary Members was increased to £2.00 for Joint Members to £2.25 beginning with the 1972 subscription. Five Council Members retired from office, and five new Members were elected in their place. The same Officers were re-elected to serve for a further year. The business was followed by a show of geological films again arranged by Mr. J.E. Metcalfe, but with something less of self sacrifice than before.

At one point during the postal strike it had seemed almost as if it would be impossible to plan a weekend meeting in June. Communication was virtually impossible and delay followed delay until at least the Treasurer succeeded in establishing personal contact with Dr. P.L. Hancock of Bristol University. Dr. Hancock at once agreed with enthusiasm to lead a party to the Wye Valley, Herefordshire. It was then found that all available accommodation in that area had been taken over by salmon fishermen, but at the eleventh hour a hotel was found in Gloucester where a provisional booking was accepted by telephone. The excursion began on Saturday morning and ended on Sunday evening. Dr. Hancock, who is an old friend of Nottingham Members and an early Member of the Society himself, met the party near Gloucester and spent the day in the Forest of Dean. On Sunday the party visited the Wye Valley and a locality on the Severn estuary, and the excursion finished with the spectacular climax of Aust Cliff. It was a splendid excursion geologically and socially.

The July excursion to Ashover was led by Mr. A.M. Honeyman of Nottingham University. A large party travelled by coach from Nottingham, and Members from other areas joined in at Ashover. The complete sequence of rocks was followed, the structure of the area described, and the day ended briskly with a scramble up the slope of the escarpment.

In September Dr. R. Neves of Sheffield University led a large party to the area North and West of Sheffield. The morning was dull and the coach travelled from Nottingham through thick patches of fog, but upon emerging to the level of the moors the sky was cloudless, the sun

brilliant and the air warm. The peerless day which followed showed the sunlit purple moors at their best, and a highly appreciative party was conducted along narrow winding roads from one locality to another. The excursion, grossly over-running time, ended at the classic base locality of the British Westphalian in the grounds of the Sheffield water-works at Langsett.

Earlier in the year, Dr. T.D. Ford of Leicester University had agreed to lead a small party - it must, he said, of necessity be a small party - to see the underground drainage of the Castleton area. This was finally planned for October, and a limited party arranged. When 48 members were found to have assembled at Castleton, to the dismay of the Secretary and the displeasure of the leader, it had to be admitted that the Society displayed an unexpectedly keen interest in the underworld which would have to be rebuked. It was greatly to the credit of Dr. Ford that he coped magnificently with twice the number he had expected, and that he provided a most memorable and exciting excursion, leaving out nothing that he had planned, and indeed including an extra cavern.

The following Sunday, Dr. P.E. Kent, Chief Geologist, B.P. Ltd., led an excursion to the Scunthorpe area. A coach ran from Nottingham and Dr. Kent described the geology as the party travelled. A convoy of cars joined in at Kirton-in-Lindsey, and at the first locality some 60 people were present. The afternoon was fine and breezy and the party were delighted with the wealth of fossils awaiting collection in the ironstone quarries.

There were in all six eminently successful excursions during 1971, attendance averaged 50 and indeed rose to 60 at the end. The Society is greatly indebted to the six leaders, Dr. F.M. Taylor, Dr. P.L. Hancock, Mr. A.M. Honeyman, Dr. R. Neves, Dr. T.D. Ford, and Dr. P.E. Kent who provided such a magnificent excursion season.

The first indoor meeting was held in the Dept. of Geology, Nottingham University, early in November when Dr. A.W. Woodland, Deputy Director of the Institute of Geological Sciences gave his deferred lecture on the work of the I.G.S. Members were surprised at the vast scope of the Institute and the wide range of its activities, and questioned Dr. Woodland closely at the end of his lecture.

In December, Dr. I.D. Sutton of the University of Nottingham Adult Education Dept. gave a lecture entitled 'Siluria'. He first marked the centenary of Sir Roderick Murchison by describing his work among the Silurian rocks of Wales, and followed by a general survey of Silurian fauna, particularly of tabulate corals. He showed splendid slides and arranged an exhibition of Silurian fossils and microscope slides to be seen after his lecture.

The January meeting was held in Matlock jointly with the Matlock Field Club. On this occasion Dr. R.H. Johnson of Manchester University gave a most interesting lecture which described some of the glacial problems in the Southern Pennines. A large audience of about 100 were present.

The Society's Seventh Annual Dinner was also held in January, again in the Nottingham University Staff Club. Dr. and Mrs. W.A.S. Sarjeant were invited to be the Society's Guests of Honour. Dr. Sarjeant was shortly to leave Nottingham University to take up an appointment as Associate Professor at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, and the Society wished to show appreciation of the great contribution he had made to the founding of the Society and of the "Mercian Geologist". After dinner, an illustrated book of minerals was presented to him by the President as a memento.

As on previous occasions Members provided slides illustrating some of the high spots of the year's excursions.

In February the Presidential Address marked the anniversary of the foundation of the Society. The President gave an account of some of his own researches and introduced some original and controversial suggestions which the meeting found very stimulating and thought provoking. The Presidential Address will be published in the "Mercian Geologist" in due course.

The indoor meetings were well attended and the Society is grateful to Dr. Woodland, Dr. Sutton, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Taylor and the President for such interesting and varied lectures.

Early in the year the Society was again invited by the South of England Building Society to arrange a display in their office window. Mr. R.J.A. Travis agreed to do this, and the exhibition he produced gave the Society very successful publicity. Mr. Travis is to be congratulated.

The Editor was this year unfortunate in having to contend with difficulties in the printing of the Journal, and it was not possible to publish Vol.4. No.1. before September 1971. Happily, circumstances improved and Vol.4. No.2. was published in February 1972.

Eleven circulars were produced during 1971. During the year a service of "postmen" was initiated, who kindly deliver circulars by hand to Members who live nearby. By this means there is a considerable saving in postage, and gratitude is due to Miss E. Colthorpe, and Messrs. J.E. Sykes, W.S. Moffat, H.M. Hickling, A.E.G. Allsop, J.E. Metcalfe, J.S. Cargill, N. Leiter, D. Manning.

Membership of the Society has continued to increase steadily. During the year 33 Ordinary Members, 9 Joint Members, 10 Juniors and 4 Institutions have been elected. There have been a certain number of resignations and some lapsed memberships through non-payment of subscriptions, but there has been an overall gain of 37 Members, and the present state of membership is as follows:

Honorary	Ordinary	Joint	Junior	Institutional	Total
2	243	88	25	127	485

The Society continues to be grateful to Professor Lord Energlyn and the University of Nottingham for providing a comfortable home base, and for making available any facilities which may be required.

Finally, may I thank the many Members who have been helpful to me during the year, and particularly Dr. F.M. Taylor, our President, who is always ready with advice and support.

D.M. Morrow.