

## Secretary's Report for 1979

In this its 16th year, the Society seemed to remain on an even keel with a membership of just under 500; the programme of meetings and excursions being well supported, and leaders and speakers congratulating us on the enthusiasm of our members.

Fourteen meetings were held during the year, 8 of which were indoor - 6 were lectures, the others being the Annual General Meeting and lecture and the Foundation Lecture. The Annual Dinner was also held. The 6 meetings in the field consisted of 4 day, one week-end and one week excursions.

The Annual General Meeting on 3 March was attended by about 60 members. Professor the Lord Energlyn had retired the previous year and the Society was able to welcome Professor P.E. Baker as the new Head of Department, as his lecture followed the meeting. He, along with the University, had continued to allow many of our activities to take place in the Department. This facility is of great benefit as no charge has been made for the use of the rooms, so allowing all our funds to be used in other directions.

On the election of Officers, according to the Constitution, Dr. W.A. Cummins, having served 3 years as President, retired and became Vice-President. Following the national trend Council chose Mrs. D.M. Morrow as the new President. She had already done much for the Society as unofficial and official Secretary through much of its existence, and Council meetings were held in her home for many years. The Presidency would enable her to become involved again but without too much onerous work, and to enjoy a well earned rest. Mr. E.H. Marriott had also given sterling service throughout his 6 years as Treasurer, and Mr. H.G. Fryer was chosen to replace him. As no other nominations had been received for the Secretary and Editor, these four officers were duly elected. A vote of thanks was proposed to the retiring President, Treasurer and Members of Council for the valuable work done during their term with Council. Five Members of Council were due to retire and one had resigned, 6 new Members were elected to replace them. Professor Baker then gave his lecture to a packed hall, describing the dramatic changes in views on the origin of oceanic islands and illustrated his talk with some awe-inspiring slides.

The 17 March was a day the President, Secretary and the speaker, Dr. D.J. Fettes of the Institute of Geological Sciences, Edinburgh, will remember only too well. Blizzard conditions had delayed Dr. Fettes' journey from Edinburgh and he had arrived by train 2 hours later than planned. The lecture, starting only 10 minutes late but to a rather smaller audience than usual, described his work in the Outer Hebrides. During his stay in Nottingham the outline for the week's excursion in July was planned.

The April meeting was given by Mr. J.M. Hodgson of the Soil Survey of England and Wales, and his subject "Soil Survey and Quaternary Geology". His work was mainly for agricultural use, but it did have some interesting geological 'spin-off' for the understanding of superficial deposits.

In mid-May about 40 members attended the week-end excursion based at Whitby. Dr. P.J. Hill and Mr. P.F. Jones led the party to Jurassic and some Quaternary locations in the Whitby, Robin Hood's Bay and Flamborough area.

The first day excursion was held in the Stoke-on-Trent area in June. Mr. D.B. Thompson met the coach at Parkhall Country Park which had been most successfully landscaped to provide an amenity for the general public and geologists alike. A day was happily spent amongst the Bunter Pebble Beds of the area.

Dr. R. J. Aldridge of the University of Nottingham led some 30 members to Wren's Nest, Dudley in early July. Unfortunately, over the years, the whole area has been so abused by collectors, that specimens must only be removed if required for serious work. Nevertheless still a very worthwhile visit and one enjoyed by all who attended.

At the end of July, 20 members travelled to the Notre Dame College of Education, Bearsden, Glasgow, HQ. for the week's excursion. Dr. Fettes had organised the different day's excursions, and after a problem of contacting him, due to out-of-order pay-phones at the college, it was arranged that he meet the party at Aberfoyle on Sunday to examine the Dalradian Grits and slates, then on to Balmaha, to retrace some of the ground covered in 1978 and to see Loch Lomond in sunshine, not torrential rain. On Monday Mr. W. Henderson covered the Kilcreggan Coast section, Mr. I. Patterson led from Largs to Gourrock on Tuesday. During the afternoon rocks of Lower Carboniferous age were traversed, intruded by a volcanic vent, into which the President intruded herself, resulting in a chipped wrist bone and her arm in a sling for the rest of the week. The free day on Wednesday was used by most people to visit the Fossil Grove and various museums in Glasgow. Loch Fyne and Arrochar were visited on Thursday, led by Dr. G. Smith and the party returned to the college via the Hunter's Quay to Gourrock ferry. The last day's excursion was led by Dr. J. McDonald to the Campsie Fells, complete with microscope to enable the rocks to be examined in thin section at the appropriate location. A most interesting week and enabling the party to renew its acquaintance with Dr. Fettes, Mr. Henderson and Dr. Smith, and to meet for the first time Mr. Patterson and Dr. McDonald. We owe them our sincere thanks, especially Dr. Fettes for making it all possible. Dr. Fettes, Dr. Smith, Mr. Henderson and Mr. Patterson are all from the Institute of Geological Sciences, Edinburgh. Dr. McDonald is at the Adult Education Department, University of Glasgow.

In September we made one of the shortest journeys to the first location in the Society's history. Dr. F.M. Taylor stopped the coach half a mile away at Nottingham Castle Rock before continuing an excursion in the Nottingham area. The final excursion of 1979 was to Wirksworth and Crich when Dr. P.H. Bridges of Derby Lonsdale College of Higher Education led the party to the Lower Carboniferous Limestone of the area. He had prepared polished specimens and photographs of thin sections of the different rocks encountered.

Dr. B.F. Windley, University of Leicester, discussed in his lecture in November, the apparently more vigorous growth of the Earth's crust during the Precambrian period. In December the Society welcomed Dr. A.J. Charig, Natural History Museum, when he delighted the full Lecture Hall with his talk on whether Dinosaurs were warm blooded or not - it remained unresolved. Metalliferous Mining in the North Pennines was the subject for January, Mr. D.G. Elford talked of his work with the British Steel Corporation and brought along some most interesting books logging the daily work of miners during the 19th Century.

The Fifteenth Annual Dinner was attended by only 17 members, but in spite of the low numbers, a very pleasant evening spent at the George Hotel, Nottingham.

It was envisaged when the Society was in its infancy, that a President may one day be elected who was unable to give the annual Presidential Address on a geological subject; the Foundation Lecture was provided as a substitute. Mrs. Morrow asked Professor Janet Watson, Imperial College London, to give the Foundation Lecture in February. Professor Watson kindly agreed to this request and spoke to a packed hall on "Flaws in the Continental Crust". She was besieged with questions right up until the time she was prised away from her enthusiastic audience.

So the year ended with a lecture which appealed to a wide group of members and finished a very successful season of lectures and field excursions. Our sincere thanks are due to the leaders: Dr. P.J. Hill, Mr. P.F. Jones, Mr. D.B. Thompson, Dr. R.J. Aldridge, Dr. D.J. Fettes, Mr. W. Henderson, Mr. I. Patterson, Dr. G. Smith, Dr. J. McDonald, Dr. F.M. Taylor and Dr. P.H. Bridges, and to the speakers: Professor P.E. Baker, Dr. D.J. Fettes, Mr. J.M. Hodgson, Dr. B.F. Windley, Dr. A.J. Charig, Mr. D.G. Elford and Professor Janet Watson.

There were eleven monthly circulars publicising the meetings and excursions of the Society, also information received from other bodies who wish to reach a wider public. The postage had increased twice during the year making this an even more expensive item. The Society is as usual most grateful to those members who hand deliver circulars in their own area.

Council met 6 times during the year discussing the Society's affairs and arranging meetings and excursions, some from ideas submitted by members which are always very welcome.

The membership seems to be remaining steady, and we now had:

Honorary	Ordinary	Joint	Junior	Institutional	Total
2	239	106	8	115	470

One of the Honorary Members, Professor L.J. Wills had died in December 1979, his obituary being published in the last Journal, Vol.8, No.2.

There had been 2 issues of the Mercian Geologist during 1979, Vol.7, No.2, containing a long article which had received considerable attention and resulted in a number of enquiries regarding membership of the Society. New machinery at the printers had also made it possible and economical to return to the use of glossy art paper for the plates. For the first time in Vol.7, No.3, several papers had been processed by the Associate Editors, Dr. P.G. Baker, Dr. P.H. Bridges and Mr. P.F. Jones all of Derby Lonsdale College of Higher Education. It must be stressed that without the voluntary labour involved in collating, packing and distributing, the Journal would cost considerably more to produce, and the Society is most appreciative of the help given so willingly by members on these occasions.

The Society Exhibit had been on display at the Natural History Museum at Wollaton Park, the University of Nottingham and the recently opened headquarters of the Institute of Geological Sciences at Keyworth, where it had resulted in several new members joining the Society. We are grateful to Mr. B.R.P. Playle for arranging the various locations and its transport to them.

I wish again to express our thanks to both the University of Nottingham and Professor Baker for allowing us to use the Lecture Hall and Swinnerton Laboratory for our meetings, and the use of one of the teaching laboratories for collating week-ends. With these facilities readily available and the hard work of many of the members, we are now a thriving and very successful Society.

In conclusion, my own personal thanks to everyone who has helped me throughout the year and made the task of Secretary that much easier.

W.M. Wright