

EAST MIDLANDS GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1981

Now in its 18th year the membership of the Society remained at around 500, with Ordinary members from as far afield as Canada, France and Norway, and Institutional members spanning the globe. The programme of both indoor meetings and field excursions, attracted good attendances with speakers and leaders continuing to give excellent service on every occasion.

There had been 15 meetings consisting of 9 indoor, 5 field and one Joint meeting with the Matlock Field Club.

The first of each season being the Annual General Meeting, on 7th March, was attended by 50 members. Comments from the floor had been made regarding delivery and frequency of circulars, whether one every two months might not be sufficient, but it was felt that many people preferred their memories to be jogged before each meeting. Increasing postage costs were now an annual event, but kept lower by the group of members who accepted responsibility for delivering material in their own area. Both the Editor, with the Journal, and the Secretary, with the circular, greatly appreciated their zeal.

Following the AGM, Steve Penn of the Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham, talked of the Geology of Iceland with numerous photographs, and discussed the ways in which geysers and hot springs were being utilised with the resulting difficulties of corrosion of the equipment.

The Joint meeting with the Matlock Field Club at the Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock, started as it meant to go on, in pouring rain. In the morning Dr. Lyn Willies lectured on Mines of the Peak District to about 50 people, and then those that had fortified themselves with a hot lunch at the Fishponds Hotel across the road, faced the rigours of Magpie Mine and Meerbrook Smelting Works, 15 souls persevering to the bitter end.

The April meeting was held on Saturday 4th when Dr. G.C. Brown of the Open University lectured on the Origin of Granite (with particular reference to Great Britain) the previous Autumn having led the party on the Lake District week-end.

As the Annual Dinner had had little support recently, a Social Evening at a local hall was suggested, but this too suffered the same fate. Luckily it was realised in time and the 16 people who had shown interest, were invited to Nancy Mulholland's house on 11th April, and she, Mrs. Moss and the Secretary provided the collation. It was a pleasant and enjoyable evening in good company.

The University of Nottingham celebrated its Centenary, and to mark the occasion, opened its doors to the general public, but on a day when members would be away on the week-end excursion. Professor Baker most kindly allowed the Society the privilege of looking around the Department of Geology on Thursday 14th May instead. About 30 members took advantage and after a lightening tour to show what was where, everyone wandered at will throughout the various sections, but finding that as usual, there was insufficient time to do justice to the hard work involved in mounting such an exhibition.

The week-end excursion was spent on Anglesey from the 15th-17th May, being led by Dr. A.M. Evans, Department of Geology, University of Leicester. The Holborn Private Hotel in Holyhead was used as base. Twenty two members joined the excursion, Saturday being spent on Holy Island and Sunday, North Anglesey, Parys Mountain and by special request, the exposure of glaucophane schist.

The first day excursion of the summer was led by Dr. John Moseley to look at the Precambrian and Lower Palaeozoic geology of Church Stretton and Shelve area of South Shropshire. A longer distance than usual, the party of 28 met the leader at 11.40 am at Hope Bowdler, and finishing the day at the Stiperstones for a superb view of the surrounding countryside, the coach arriving back in Nottingham for 9.00 pm exactly.

On 5th July the Ashover Grit of the Stanton Syncline, Derbyshire, was led by Mr J.I. Chisholm of the Institute of Geological Sciences, Leeds, 27 people travelling to meet him and joined by several cars. Starting from the vantage point of dolomitised limestone near Winster, the party were able to see the area to be visited. At Birchover, 3 quarries at different levels and later the massive sandstone at Rowtor Rocks.

Dr. F.M. Taylor was kept to the promise he had made to lead a week's excursion based at St. Andrews. On 1st August a party of 26 including Dr. Taylor, met at St. Andrews, the main party staying in Lindsey House, David Russell Hall, University of St. Andrews, a self-contained wing ideal for our purpose. The previous evening to each excursion, a briefing session was held to make sure the drivers knew where and at what time the first location should be reached.

Sunday 2nd August, the shore section from Petty Cur north towards Kirkaldy with an almost continuous sequence of Lower Carboniferous rocks visible, especially as the tides had been forecast correctly. Following lunch, eaten when and where convenient, the Lomond Hills, inland from St. Andrews. The view from the top could have been clearer, but an added bonus of a hang-glider provided a diversion. Monday 3rd August was spent on the East Coastal section of St. Andrews. First a walk along the cliff top, where synclines and anticlines were plainly visible from above, unfortunately in rain, then dropping to the shore to examine them more closely. One or two reluctant seaweed rock-hoppers were again provided with a diversion as an Air Sea Rescue helicopter deposited and 'rescued' a 'casualty' from the Rock and Spindle.

Tuesday 4th August—a longer journey, visiting Arbroath for the unconformity between the Upper and Lower Old Red Sandstone. Northwards to Crawton Bay where the Boulder Beds were most impressive. From Stonehaven a 'quick' walk over the Devonian Sandstones to see the Highland Boundary Fault, a marvellous view from the cliff top at Craigeven Bay, and all in glorious sunshine.

Wednesday 5th August—a morning spent inland at Drumcarrow displaying the Olivine-Dolerite Sill, then to Ladeddie Hill with its volcanic vent and view over the site of glacial lakes at Pitscottie and Ceres. On to Dura Den valley for rocks of Upper Old Red Sandstone and Lower Carboniferous before a short lunch stop south at Elie car park. The party then walked along the cliff path to Ardross Cottages, the return being along the shore to examine the 4 volcanic necks, complicated not only by the Ardross fault but also the abundant seaweed.

Thursday 6th August—the Wormit Gap with quarrying in Devonian Volcanics, sandpit in Pleistocene deposits and from where the line of the esker could be seen. The party were fascinated by the variety, size and distance travelled by the boulders. After lunch eaten at the top of Newton Hill overlooking Wormit Gap and the Tay Bridge, the shore of the Tay was traversed examining the Devonian igneous rocks.

Friday 7th August the party travelled to Edzell where the leader for the day, Dr. N.F.C. Hudson, was camped nearby. The walk along part of Glen Esk was spectacular both for scenery and the rocks the river had exposed, the gorge cut into the Jasper and Greenrock Series, the Garnet and Biotite zones and finally an enormous boulder of mica-schist found in a stream bed, from which numerous specimens were taken. Unfortunately Dr. Hudson was unable to return to St. Andrews, but after dinner the rest adjourned to the 'local', Rufflets Hotel, for a drink together on the last evening.

A memorable week's geology in georgeous sunshine.

A morning was spent on Sunday 13th September at the Carsington Reservoir Scheme, meeting the Project Manager, Mr. P.G. Davey, who first outlined the reason for its being built and the manner in which it would function. The geologist, Mr. Rick Rogers, then escorted the party of 30 to the various areas of progress, and the cores which had been taken before work began, were examined. After lunch no other excursion had been arranged, but the coach party spent a pleasant hour at Harborough Rocks, where the view was much appreciated.

An excursion to South Leicestershire was organised for Sunday 27th September led by Dr. J. Rice, Department of Geology, University of Leicester. Only 15 plus 4 from Leicester University joined the excursion, which was an excellent day looking at the Pleistocene deposits of the Avon/Soar drainage areas.

The first indoor meeting of the winter session was held on Saturday 7th November when Mr. J. E. Matthews of the Department of Civil Engineering at Derby Lonsdale College, talked about Limestone Extraction in Derbyshire, a lecture on the development of the industry up to the present day. It was followed by a lively discussion especially its encroachment onto the Peak National Park.

The Centenary of the Natural History Museum was celebrated by a day excursion to London on Wednesday 18th November. Societies had been invited for a 'behind the scenes' look, 14 people taking advantage of this. The basement of the Musuem was opened to visitors and nearly every room had mounted a display. The staff proved to be extremely helpful, keen and went to a great deal of trouble to explain their exhibits to all who showed interest. It was agreed on the coach returning to Nottingham that it had been a very well worthwhile visit, but unfortunately, could only be a unique occasion.

At the end of November—the 28th—Professor A. Hallam, Department of Geological Sciences, University of Birmingham, visited Nottingham to lecture on the 'Growth of the Atlantic'. A large gathering listened as he discussed the accuracy with which the continents would fit together, taking the 1,000ft depth as the point of juncture and by numerous diagrams was able to postulate that pole reversal and its effect could account for the expected presence or absence of fossils in certain areas.

The last meeting in 1981 combined a lecture and most enjoyable social occasion. Dr. G. Tresise from the County Museum in Liverpool, gave members a memorable talk on the 'Geology and Wine'. Unfortunately icy conditions prevented all but 50 people attending, but they sampled with gusto the 6 different wines and various cheeses, which were set out in the Swinnerton Laboratory.

1982 started with a lecture on 'Glaciation of the Midland Valley in Scotland' by Mr. J. Rose of Birbeck College, University of London, an appropriate subject as the temperature had only risen above freezing that day after a long period of glacial conditions. This area of Scotland had been covered by 4 Society Week Excursions since 1976 and was well known to those who had attended and a recap of the times in Scotland.

The last meeting of the Society year was the Foundation Lecture on 6th February, when Dr. Jane Plant of the Institute of Geological Sciences, London, spoke on 'Regional Geochemical Mapping in Britain: some economic and environmental applications'. Again as at the January meeting, the rail strike necessitated a change of plan at the last minute, but Dr. Plant arrived on time and gave an excellent talk on the use of computers to build pictures of chemical element distribution and the relevance to disease in both man and animals.

Dr. Plant's enthusiastic lecture ended the year in grand style. Our thanks to her and all the lecturers, Mr. S. Penn, Dr. L. Willies, Dr. G.C. Brown, Mr. J. E. Matthews, Professor A. Hallam, Dr. G. Tresise and Mr. J. Rose. Also the leaders of field excursions, Dr. A.M. Evans, Dr. J. Moseley, Mr. J.I. Chisholm, Dr. F.M. Taylor, Dr. N.F.C. Hudson, Mr. R. Rogers and Dr. J. Rice. The Society benefits from their knowledge and we are always grateful for the time and trouble they take in providing us with excellent meetings and field excursions.

Ten circulars had been sent during the year providing information and news. This was one less than usual as the 2 September excursions were published together. The coloured duplicating paper had still been in use and was considered an asset as its colour was readily distinguishable from other papers.

During 1981 Council had met 5 times to discuss and arrange the Society's affairs. I will continue to remind members that all suggestions will be welcome, for the year's programme, the *Mercian Geologist* or anything relating to the Society, and should be sent to the Secretary. This will be put on the agenda for the following Council Meeting which is always notified in the circular.

The membership of the Society remained steady and was as follows:

Honorary	Ordinary	Joint	Junior	Institutional	Total
2	260	120	3	111	496

The *Mercian Geologist* had been published twice, Vol. 8 Numbers 2 and 3, as usual the Editor had been ably assisted by his band of helpers, both in collating and distribution of the Journal.

The Society Exhibit had just completed a tour of the North Nottinghamshire Branch Libraries, bringing the existence of the Society, its activities and publications to the notice of many more people. It would then be ready for up-dating and refurbishing, having been 'on the road' for 10 years.

Both the University of Nottingham and Professor P.E. Baker had, as always, allowed the Society free use of facilities in the Department of Geology for which we are continually grateful. Our thanks, although repeated many times, are nevertheless sincere.

In conclusion, appreciation of the support given to me, especially from Members of Council, their fund of knowledge and accessibility as such a help on all occasions, as is the tolerance of the general membership.

W. M. Wright