

EAST MIDLANDS GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1985/86

The Society had now celebrated its 22nd year having put on a programme of 12 meetings consisting of 7 indoor, 4 day field excursions, and 1 week-end excursion. The speakers and leaders provided a variety of subjects making this another successful year.

The Annual General Meeting, always held in early March, took place in the Lecture Hall at Nottingham University with the Officers on Council reporting on the previous year's business, and outlining future plans. Dr Firman had taken over as Editor from Dr Bryant, and Council had decided that Full-time Students should be eligible for concessionary subscription of half the Ordinary Membership rate—at this time £3.00—and would be entitled to receive all publications including the *Mercian Geologist*.

After the meeting Dr A J Wadge of the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, talked on the "Geology of the Lake District" demonstrating his work in that area, and putting forward an accretionary prism model with repeated sequences of old/young rocks at around 30kms intervals.

The following week Mr Jim Rose, Department of Geography, Birkbeck College, London, gave a preview of his forthcoming week-end in southern East Anglia, thus whetting the appetite of those members who intended joining the excursion.

During April Mr A M Clark, originally of the National Coal Board in London, talked of the economics involved in National Coal Resources.

In early May Jim Rose led about 25 members to the southern East Anglia area for the week-end staying at Graham Court Hotel in Ipswich. He proved an excellent leader and in spite of cold, windy and damp conditions, held the party's interest throughout the whole week-end.

The first day field trip was led by Dr Lloyd Boardman of the National Coal Board, Chatterley Whitfield, Tunstall, to the North Staffordshire Coalfield. Mow Cop Folly gave a marvellous vantage point from which he mapped out the area we were to visit and explained their significance. Evidence of faulting was found there and the Red Rock Fault has a throw of certainly 1500ft and possibly 9000ft. The Bateswood Opencast Site exhibited nearly vertical seams, fine for exposing a considerable part of the North Staffordshire succession, but making it difficult to extract the coal.

The Vice-President, Dr T D Ford, took a party to the classic Castleton area in July. He gave a brief history of the geology and mining at Odin lead vein before walking up the road to Mam Tor. The very obvious landslip seemed to have worsened since the previous visit in 1982. The weather in Nottingham had been fine, warm and sunny, but on reaching Castleton proved to be rather chillier, especially for those optimists wearing shorts as they found to their cost.

September's field excursion was to the Quaternary of the Cheshire/Shropshire Plain and led by Professor P Worsley, Geography Department at Nottingham University. He had kindly organized 2 mini-buses for the 21 members of the party to minimise the cost of hiring a coach. From a point above Congleton the area to be visited was plainly seen giving a splendid view, and enabling Professor Worsley to describe the sequence of events which had created the Plain. But it was not a plain sailing day—at Ellesmere a car had inadvisably entered the gate to the quarry and on returning found it firmly closed. Luckily an emergency telephone number was found and ½hr later the released family gave a sigh of relief. It was a very full day and we were found to be running late, one member hoping to catch a train to Sheffield from Nottingham decided to stay again overnight with the Secretary. Also one of the mini-buses was running short of fuel, and Sunday is not a good evening to find petrol stations open. Luckily one was found eventually but by this time the other vehicle had disappeared completely. Party and vehicle did re-emerge at last, the arrival back in Nottingham was at 9.00 pm. A thoroughly enjoyable if eventful day.

Mr J Kerr of Nene College, Northampton led the last field trip of 1985 on a fossil hunting foray to Ketton Quarry, Stamford and Buntings Lane Pit, Peterborough. The 28 members and friends coming happily away with ammonites, belemnites and bivalves.

The November meeting was an amusing and entertaining talk given by Dr G R Coope, Department of Geological Sciences, Birmingham University. His subject was the "Giant Deer of Ireland, not fabulous but make-believe". The antlers of this deer are some 4ft across and can weigh 100lbs but designed to be finely balanced, they are shed and regrown every year.

The Geology of Derbyshire Country Houses was the subject of the December lecture given by Mr M F Stanley, Deputy County Museum Officer at Matlock. He described the stone, most of it quarried locally, used in building many of Derbyshire's famous houses, starting with Haddon Hall. The number, many now demolished, was much greater than we realised. Afterwards at the Social Occasion 2 books written by Maxwell Craven and Mr Stanley were available for sale. The fare for the occasion was in the Derbyshire tradition, the centrepiece being a splendid cake made into Chatsworth House by Dawn Marriott - she excels herself every year.

Before the January meeting began an Extra-ordinary General Meeting was held, as with the death of the Lord Energlyn it was necessary to appoint another Trustee to administer the Society Trust Fund, 3 being the minimum number required. It had therefore been decided by Council that 4 would be a more realistic number, and it was proposed and agreed that both Professors Baker and Worsley should join Sir P E Kent and Dr F M Taylor as Trustees.

Dr C A Boulter, Department of Geology, Nottingham University then gave a lecture on the "Pilbara of Western Australia". The area is only a small part of the country but is, nevertheless, almost the size of England. It is made up of extremely old spectacular volcanics and sediments and has a wealth of flora and fauna equally exotic.

The indoor meetings have been so very well supported with a full Lecture Hall on all but one occasion, and the Presidential Address in February was no exception. So much so that the Secretary was unable to get in the door or hear much of Dr Sutton's Address on "Recent Volcanic Activity in the Bay of Naples", this being almost constant during the last 50,000 years. The AD 79 eruption which destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the tectonic activity at present around the port of Pozzuoli were discussed.

So ended the Society year with this splendid response from members. We also wish to thank the speakers, Dr A J Wadge, Mr J Rose, Mr A M Clark, Dr G R Coope, Mr M F Stanley, Dr C A Boulter and the President, and the leaders, Mr J Rose again, Dr Lloyd Boardman, Dr T D Ford, Professor P Worsley and Mr J Kerr. All had willingly given their time to provide the society with a very varied programme.

During 1985, 6 Council Meetings were held to arrange Society business. Donations to the Society Trust Fund had been discussed and ways to use it to the best advantage for everyone. Council had decided that excursion coaches should be subsidised where necessary keeping the fares low. A concessionary rate for Full-time students already mentioned at the AGM, an Annual Merit Award, and money available for Geological Conservation work. To this end a donation of £200 had been given to the Staffordshire Conservation Trust towards the purchase of Brown End Quarry at Waterhouses.

Eleven circulars were produced during 1985 with announcements of the Society programme, new members, items of geological interest and news. As in other years we express our gratitude to members who kindly deliver circulars and also the Mercian Geologist to those in their vicinity. A few stalwarts made a great contribution by checking, enveloping and helping in the distribution of the Journal and it was hoped that eventually a Distribution Team could be organised, with a supervisor to co-ordinate the task.

Warning was given of the Data Protection Act which would be coming into force the following Spring 1986. We would be able to claim exemption from registration if all members were asked by notice if they objected to having their name, address and postcode on computer file. Assurance was given that this information was all we held on file, and that only officials of the Society had access to that file.

Although membership had dropped slightly to 450, several full-time students had taken advantage of the Concessionary rate which had been encouraging. All who worked and taught students were urged to bring this to their notice. Membership was as follows:-

Honorary	Ordinary	Joint	Junior	Institutional
2	227	116	1	104

One of our eldest members, Mr N Leiter, had become blind and regretfully resigned from the Society, but had generously donated polished pebbles of every hue, specimens and copies of the Mercian Geologist, the money from the sale being put into the Trust Fund.

Finally, your help and support in running the Society throughout the year was very much appreciated, as were the facilities allowed us by Professor Baker and the University of Nottingham. The President, Dr Sutton, the Vice-President Dr Ford and the Treasurer, Mr Fryer were always available for advise and information when needed, so making my task an easier and certainly an enjoyable one. My thanks to you all for making this another memorable year in the Society's history.

W. Madge Wright

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1986/87

The Society, now in its 23rd year, continued to be a great success with its publications and activities. The Indoor Meetings, of which there were 8, were held to capacity audiences, whereas the 8 Field Events had attracted less support on most occasions, in spite of excellent leaders and attractive programmes.

The first meeting of the Society year in March is the Annual General Meeting, attended this time by the Officers and 40 members. There were no problems at the meeting which went very smoothly. This occasion was the first on which the Society Merit Award was given. The Awards Committee had selected Dr Chris Salisbury for his paper on "Flandrian courses of the River Trent at Colwick, Nottingham" which had been published in the Mercian Geologist in 1985.

Following the AGM, Norman Lewis, Conservation Officer for the Notts Trust for Nature Conservation, and a Society Member, gave an insight into the work of the Trust and its relevance to Geology entitled "Just Scratching the Surface".

Preceding the April Meeting, Dr Chris Salisbury was presented with his Annual Merit Award which he said he had been surprised and honoured to receive. Peter F Jones then presented his lecture on Ice Age Derbyshire south of the Peak District talking on the river systems, which had developed during the Ice Age, and which seemed contrary to the movement of the ice.

On a Saturday in May Mick F Stanley escorted a group of members to various Derbyshire Country Houses to look at the stone used in their construction, just 9 were either visited or talked of in passing, and these and many more appear in two Volumes of Derbyshire Country Houses written by Mick Stanley and Maxwell Craven.

The June Excursion visited Shropshire and was led by the President, Dr Ian D Sutton. The promise of a hot day was fulfilled the excursion being made in brilliant sunshine. It was to be a long day and therefore the Mortimer Forest Trail was visited first. During the day some excellent examples of fossils were found here and later at Shadwell Quarry as steps were retraced to Nottingham.

In July a visit was made to British Gypsum workings at Newark in the morning with Ed Moczarski of British Gypsum, explaining the method of extracting the different levels of gypsum at Banticock Pit, the party being fully conscious of the larger dumper trucks constantly on the move and ready to mow down the unwary. The Rhaetic is exposed at a higher level and the bone bed yielded the vertebra and adjacent parts of a Plesiosaur. After lunch Mr Moczarski left the party and Alan Dawn took the coach up the succession. Past Ironstone extraction was easily seen as many roads stood proud of the fields either side. The quarry at Great Ponton was the last stop before returning to Nottingham.

Dr Eric Robinson, editor of the Geological Association Newsletter, had suggested we look at the Church (Rock) Cemetery on Mansfield Road, Nottingham as this contained a wealth of different rocks used for headstones. Dr Robinson joined us at 7pm—this was the first evening walk to be held—numerous granites, marble, limestone and a very good imitation limestone was noted, but with the cemetery closing at 7.45 pm, it was rather a hurried look—noone relished being locked in for the night! This generated a project to identify the rocks involved and the fashions of the various periods.

Cornwall was the venue for the week excursion in August led by Dr Alan Bromley of Camborne School of Mines. Only 8 members attended Dr Bromley's cross section of the geology of the area, but found the small number had its compensations—the ground was covered much more quickly. The headquarters hotel was the Grove in Falmouth.

In early September Dr Neil Aitkenhead, Dr N J Riley, both of the British Geological Survey, and Mr J Tilsley led a party to Carsington for a 20 minute stop to review the geological features and the failure of the dam in 1984. The Tissington Trail was walked to Crake Low Quarry to assess the evidence for a Carboniferous submarine volcano followed later by a walk over Wetton Hill to study the knoll-reef limestones.

A week-end was spent in North Lincolnshire and Flamborough at the end of September. David N Robinson led a geological and scenic traverse of North Lincolnshire adjacent to the Humber Bank on the Saturday. The party then crossed the Humber Bridge and stayed overnight at the Monarch Hotel in Bridlington. Mrs Roz Grum then led the group on Sunday visiting classical coastal landforms and inland for typical chalk scenery.

The British Geological Survey at Keyworth opened its doors in mid-October and 20 members joined numerous other Societies and groups on the Friday. There is never enough time on these occasions and a few departments only could be visited and those superficially. The Sunday was even more crowded we were told.

The first winter session indoor meeting was in mid-October—a very topical subject especially at that time. Dr N Chapman of British Geological Survey, Keyworth spoke on “Geological Disposal of Radioactive Waste”. He discussed the Survey's involvement with the nuclear industry and NIREX in particular. A model of the type of glass containing high level waste was passed round the audience and measured 2 inches in diameter×1 inch deep. Several people from Fulbeck were able to talk to Dr Chapman after the meeting.

A Joint Meeting with Yorkshire Geological Survey was arranged for a full day in Mid-November—the subject being “The Deep Geology of Eastern England”. This was held in the larger Lecture Hall in the Department of Geography, University of Nottingham, Professor Worsley kindly arranging this for the Society. Around 280 people arrived compared with the 150 expected. A Society team provided pre-meeting coffee, lunchtime drinks and afternoon tea, with outside caterers providing a cold salad lunch for those having ordered on previously. A complaint heard during and after the meeting was that most speakers were difficult to hear and in future on such occasions a microphone should be available. Dr Frank M Taylor had provided a bargain offer of the complete set of Journals, 39 parts, + membership fee for £11, and 11 people took up the offer.

Dr Tony C. Waltham promised that the December meeting would be entertaining rather than academic. His talk on the “Incredible Limestone Country of South China” was all limestone and caves, the geological aspect was kept to a minimum and instead he described trying to train the Chinese to descend caves and to swim. He did though put forward a reason for the spectacular features found in the area, climate and uplift of the land being unique there and giving rise to almost vertically sided hills. Their civilisation he claimed, is about 200 years behind our own and some of their habits leave much to be desired. A Social Gathering on a Chinese Theme followed the meeting and was provided by the following members:— Pauline Hatton, Emily Ramsell, Inga Flmer, Judy Small, Edna Colthorpe, Jean Brayne, Nancy Mulholland and Margaret Boneham. This time Dawn Marriott provided part of the Great Wall of China in sponge and icing.

The British Sedimentology Research Group Conference was held the week before Christmas in the Jesse Boot Centre, University of Nottingham. A stall was organised by Dr Frank M Taylor to display the Mercian Geologist and boost membership. A package deal was again offered of 39 journals for £5 if enrolling as an Ordinary member for £6. This was so successful that 35 people from Great Britain and Europe joined the Society and each staggered away with 39 journals. The Secretary covered the Wednesday morning, Mrs Dorothy M. Morrow the afternoon, Mrs Inga Flmer, Thursday AM, H.G. (Jack) Fryer PM with Drs Firman and Taylor filling in as required.

The first meeting in January 1987 was “Beetles and Beasts of the Ice Age” when Dr Brian J. Taylor, British Geological Survey, Keyworth talked to around 80 members of the work he had done with a not too serious look at beetles of the Ice Age. He assured the assembly that those found in the glacial tills of East Anglia were at present only found in far north latitudes and none have been found here to herald a return to the Ice Age.

The final meeting of this Society year was as usual the Presidential Address. Dr Sutton spoke to 70 members on “Chains and Honeycombs in the Silurian”. Illustrating the extent of the Silurian seas, he described the tropical conditions which corals need to flourish, and explained their structure. Wenlock Edge in the Shropshire landscape was a good example of a coral reef and the occasional knoll. Mr Colin Bagshaw gave the President a vote of thanks for his Address.

We thank the speakers, Norman Lewis, Peter Jones, Neil Chapman, Tony Waltham, Brian Taylor and the President for providing us with such interesting talks on so many subjects. Also the leaders, Mick Stanley, Ed Moczarski, Alan Dawn, Eric Robinson, Alan Bromley, Neil Aitkenhead, Dr N.J. Riley, J. Tilsley, David Robinson and Roz Grum for their varied programme of field visits. So ended another successful year and the above speakers and leaders efforts were much appreciated.

In response to a suggestion at a previous AGM, an additional picking up point was now included for excursions and especially for a Saturday. The South entrance bus stop at the University had proved very popular as parking in Nottingham was both expensive and almost impossible on a Saturday.

During the year 5 Council Meetings had been held and 1 cancelled because of snow. Society affairs are discussed and members suggestions are always welcome and considered. It was pointed out that the Conservation and Countryside Code should always be observed and one or two other points should also be emphasised in particular, during excursions when the leader was addressing the general assembly, it was most distracting if members either talked or hammered in the background. In fact we now advocate the use of a hand lens and no hammering on most occasions.

Sadly 2 deaths had occurred, firstly that of Bob Gratton, and later in the year Sir Peter Kent. Sir Peter's death necessitated an Extra-ordinary General meeting being held to appoint a fourth Trustee. This took place before Brian Taylor's lecture in January 1987, when in addition to the two previously nominated trustees, namely Professors Baker and Worsley, and the existing trustee, Dr F.M. Taylor it was agreed that whoever held the office of President should be a fourth Trustee. Mrs Sue Miles had kindly agreed to draw up the Trust Deed for us.

Ten circulars were produced during the year, the transition from foolscap to A4 being made with a little difficulty in setting out to start with. Those who hand delivered circulars and of course journals too, continued to save the Society many points over the year.

A Society Logo was called for, one which was appropriate to the East Midlands, but there had been a disappointing response up to the end of the year.

Membership had increased from 450 previously to 509—most of the increase due to the splendid effort made by Frank Taylor. We now had:—

Honorary	Ordinary	Joint	Full-time Students	UK Institutional	Overseas Inst
2	258	130	12	80	27

The Society bought during the year a Directory of Lapidary and Geological Societies which was available for consulting should anyone wish to make use of it. Also, Eric Robinson had sent a large batch of GA Guides, which had been reduced in price, for sale at our meetings.

During 1986 as usual I had excellent support from Council and members, and not forgetting the marvellous facilities allowed us by Professor Baker and the University of Nottingham. My thanks to all of you as another successful year was completed.

W. Madge Wright