

SECRETARY'S REPORTS FOR 1996/97 AND 1997/98

Reports for these two years have been amalgamated by the Secretary and Editor, in order to bring reporting up-to-date in Mercian Geologist.

Twenty new members joined in 1996 and 54 in 1997. In March 1998, membership stood at 332 ordinary/joint/student and 76 Institutional. It is with regret that the deaths of four long standing members of the Society are recorded: Mrs Madeleine Samuel, Miss Nancy Mulholland and Mrs June Elliot after illnesses; and Mr Tony Bampton, a founder member, in an accident. The Society was also saddened to learn of the death of Dr Ansell Dunham, a non-member who was well-known to the Society. The Society congratulates two members who were bestowed with Honours in the 1997 Queen's Birthday list (see *Mercian Geologist*, Volume 14, Part 2, page 51). Dr Trevor Ford, a founder member of the Society and past President was awarded an OBE for services to geology and cave science. Mr David Robinson, a member for 33 years and past Council member was awarded an OBE for services to journalism and the community in Lincolnshire.

Field meetings

The field meetings were once again organised by Dr Ian Sutton and the Society continues to benefit from his wide knowledge of interesting locations and enthusiastic leaders. Dr Sutton's office also saves us a lot of work by maintaining the Society's mailing list and receiving and collating postal bookings.

Few other geological societies can turn out sufficient members to make coach hire viable. This is greatly preferable to the marshalling of large numbers of cars, so please keep coming on the trips. We welcome guests of members on field trips where numbers are not limited. For insurance purposes, guests are assigned day membership at a cost of £2.00. Members are reminded that the Society has public liability insurance only and that it is members' responsibility to ensure that they have adequate personal insurance and are adequately equipped with appropriate clothing, footwear and a hard hat.

Trips in 1996. In May, Dr Lomax led 24 members on a trip to the Speeton Cliffs area of Yorkshire (see *Mercian Geologist* Volume 14, Part 2, page 88). The Speeton Clay Formation from the Kimmeridgian to the Barremian was followed along the beach and numerous interesting fossils were seen and some collected.

The weekend trip to the Lake District in June regrettably was cancelled due to lack of support. As a result of the cancellation, the views of a sample of the membership were sought to gauge interest in re-organising the trip. This showed substantial interest for a trip in September 1997, but in the event

numbers still proved insufficient and it was cancelled again.

In June, Albert Horton and Brian Chambers led an evening 'multi-disciplinary' trip to Cresswell Craggs in conjunction with Dr Pat Horton and the Institute of Biology. This included a lecture on bats, with the opportunity to handle live animals, a brief summary of the overall geology and more detailed study of the archaeology and geology of the Robin Hood Cave. Also in June, Ian Sutton led an evening walk from Robins Quarry to Ashover village to transect the Ashover inlier. The trip was well attended despite the rival attractions of Euro96. As is often the case there were additional interesting contributions from members.

In July, Neil Aitkenhead and Ian Chisholm led an interesting walk to Ecclesbourne Valley and Alport Hill. The trip was joined by local landowners who were most interested to learn about what lay below their property. The final field trip in 1996 was to the Ercall quarries and was led by Susan Beale. Nearly 40 members enjoyed a very well organised and prepared excursion.

Trips in 1997. The season began in May, when Dr Sarah Davis led 18 members on an energetic trip across Kinder Scout. In June, Albert Horton, Ian Sutton and Neil Aitkenhead led about 50 members on an evening trip to Dove Dale. They were also assisted by Dr Peter Gutteridge. Later in June, Alan Dawn and Albert Horton led 28 members on a day trip to Ketton and the surrounding area (reported in this issue). In July, Albert Horton and Keith Ambrose led an evening visit to Breedon attended by 76 members (reported in this issue). In September, Richard Ellison and Alan Smith of the BGS led a trip to the London Basin. The north Charnwood area was visited in October, led by John Carney with 30 members in attendance. The season was rounded off in November by a geomorphological excursion to south Lincolnshire led by Professor Jim Rose. As always, the extra contributions by BGS staff and other knowledgeable members have enhanced the value and interest of the trips.

Indoor meetings

The meetings for 1996/1997 and 1997/98 were organised by Dr Neil Aitkenhead for the fifth successive year. Again the Society is very fortunate to have someone with such a large number of contacts to be able to find suitable speakers.

The lecture following the 1996 AGM was by Dr Terry Fletcher on the famous Burgess Shales and its distinctive, ancient fossils. This proved to be both interesting and spectacular for members, with some graphic descriptions of the practical difficulties involved in working in inaccessible mountain terrain in high latitudes. The last meeting of the 1995/96 winter season was by Dr Jane Evans on the techniques she is using to date some plate boundary rocks in China. The talk included fascinating accounts of the local people and their culture. The

traditional lecture held annually at Derby was delayed to coincide with Derby Environmental Week in the hope of a good attendance. Although very few EMGS members attended, the presence of students and local people attending as a result of DEW activities made the meeting a success. Dr John Carney covered the geological history from the Pre-Cambrian to date and its influence on development in Derby and its surroundings. This was an ideal lecture for this occasion and was well received with lots of questions.

The new 1996/97 season started with a lecture by John Rippon on Rivers in the Coal Measures. Mr Rippon's researches over a long period challenged the existing theories. This enlightening talk was very well-received by 90 members and generated a lot of interesting questions. The November lecture was by Dr Dave Roberts on the Quaternary of Norfolk, and his fresh interpretations of the cliff structures were of particular interest in view of a recent Society trip to the area (for report see this issue).

The organisers of the Yorkshire Geological Society meeting at Leicester University in November 1996 invited EMGS as joint participants together with the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society. About 20 EMGS members attended four linked lectures on the theme of from 'mudrock to brick wall'. In December our usual 'light-hearted' lecture and "cheese and wine" were neatly combined by Dr Roger Suthern, who talked about the geology and wines of southern France and then led members in a wine tasting. Unfortunately, very bad weather on the night kept attendance low.

In January Dr Ian Hill presented his latest ideas on the puzzle of 'What moves the Plates?' A full house was enthusiastic about the talk and eventually questions had to be curtailed. For the Foundation lecture in February, the President took the plunge and shared her favourite geological locations with us to demonstrate geology viewed from afar and in close up. The address was followed by an excellent meal in the comfortable surroundings of the University Staff Club.

The meeting following the 1997 AGM was by Dr William Jones on the Geology and Scenery of Santorini. This proved to be both interesting and spectacular for members. In April 1997 a meeting held at Derby University was successful in attracting about 20 non-members. Dr Charlie Underwood's talk on small sharks and pink rocks in the Cretaceous created a great deal of interest. The last meeting of the 1996/97 season was by Dr Keith Ball who provided all the answers on the subject of Radon that had been prompted by a talk the previous year.

The 1997/98 season of lectures got under way in October with Professor Jane Plant giving a most clear overview of the radio-active processes driving the earth's geological evolution. In November, Dr Alan Wooley's talk on Carbonatites cleared up a lot of the mystery and controversy that has surrounded these rocks. In December our traditional 'cheese and

wine' was preceded by Dr Ian Sutton's entertaining talk on the geological background and the human story behind the Klondike gold rush, marking its centenary. About 90 members attended.

Following numerous expressions of interest from members, a workshop afternoon was held in March 1996, organised by Les Hall and Peter Jones. Members were introduced to the techniques of preparing replica fossils and acetate peals, and several microscopes were set up to enable hands-on examination of petrological and palaeontological specimens. Unfortunately, despite the success of the 1996 event, there was insufficient support for another workshop in 1997.

Other Society proceedings

Council met formally six times in both 1996/97 and 1997/98 and has continued to promote interest in geology in the region by encouraging research, education and conservation. The Society has continued with or supported several projects.

1. In 1996, the Society was well represented at Derby Environmental Week with a lecture and displays at Derby Museum, Derby University and Elvaston Castle. Dr Carney, Mr Horton, Mr Jones, Mrs Moore and Mr Mucklow are particularly thanked for their efforts. In 1997 the Society was represented at the National Environmental Week at Elvaston Castle by Les Hall and Colin Bagshaw.

2. The EMGS field guide has progressed steadily, with all except one contribution now edited by Albert Horton with assistance from Les Hall. Several members have assisted with putting the excursions to the test by walking over the routes and feeding comments to the editors.

3. In December 1996, following the considerable success of the first edition, a revised second edition of the Nottingham Sandstone Caves book was published and is an ideal purchase for anyone with a general interest in local history. Thanks to the generosity of the author, Dr Tony Waltham, and the energetic distribution team of Andrew and Judy Rigby, Judy Small and Dr Waltham, the Society made a profit of £4,200 on the first edition with nearly 4,000 copies sold. Dr Waltham has now rewritten the book to make it even more assessible to the lay reader and thereby broaden its appeal. The new version is in a smaller format with colour illustrations and extra information; it has received excellent reviews and is selling well. The Society expresses its gratitude to the author Tony Waltham, to Andrew Rigby for the production editing and printing, to Tony Waltham, Andrew Rigby, Judy Rigby and Judy Small for distribution and to Tony Waltham and Tony Morris for the publicity in the *Evening Post* and on Radio Nottingham.

4. We have now had four meetings with representatives of Nottinghamshire County Council on the provision of geological information for interpretative notice boards as part of the Corridors

to the Countryside project. This project moves very slowly, but has the aim of erecting display boards giving wildlife and geological information on local sites of scientific, environmental and educational interest. The Society has collaborated with the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to provide geological interpretations and descriptions of some sites.

Six circulars were published in both 1996 and 1997, and Ian Sutton and Tony Morris are thanked for their assistance in producing and distributing these. Andrew Swift is thanked for producing a new promotional leaflet-cum-application form, which is helping to attract new members. The Society also gratefully acknowledges the assistance of numerous members with various tasks such as preparing refreshments at meetings, providing accommodation for speakers and staffing the EMGS display at a range of events. Finally the Society wishes to thank Nottingham University for providing us with excellent accommodation for Council and indoor meetings. We are very lucky indeed to be able to use these facilities.

Alan Filmer

NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

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Abstract. Scientific papers should be accompanied by a brief abstract stating the essential information and conclusions presented in the text.

Text. Please present contributions on A4 (297 × 210mm portrait) paper, typed or word-processed on one side only, double-spaced, with ample margins.

References. All references cited in the text should be listed; the author is responsible for the accuracy of references. In the text, references should be given as: (Smith, 1992); use (Smith *et al.*, 1992) for more than two authors. In the References, list all authors and do not abbreviate journal titles.

Illustrations. Line drawings and photographs will all be included as text-figures, and should be presented wherever possible to cover or be in proportion to one column (width 84mm) or two columns (width 178mm) and up to 245mm depth. When full page line drawings and photographs are used an appropriate allowance should be made for the required caption. The smallest lettering on line diagrams should not be less than 1mm high. A full list of figures, with captions, should be submitted on a separate sheet. Approximate locations for text-figures should be indicated in pencil in the margin of the text. Tables will be typeset and should be designed to fit single or double column widths and up to the maximum depth.

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