

Manchester Geological Association

Newsletter ~ March 2008



www.mangeolassoc.org.uk

President: Joe Macquaker PhD

Dear Member,

At the AGM last month we saw a few changes in the Council:-

Our president **Dr Christine Arkwright** handed the gavel of authority back to **Dr Joe Macquaker** (temporarily ~ as she'll take over again next year)

Michael Aiers stood down from his role as our Honorary General Secretary and was warmly thanked for his years of service.

Nick Snowden was welcomed as his replacement and **Kathleen Mais** as our new Minutes Secretary.

All the other officers were re-elected as before and thanked for their efforts on our behalf. **The Council could do with some more volunteers to fill up the ranks!... Maybe you??**

We've enjoyed a fascinating programme of lectures this winter.. Thanks Jim!... more to follow in the autumn!

Jane has a great programme of field trips for us this year, booking is essential for all our outings.

Derek Brumhead is getting to grips with our **archives**.. which were eventually found in the bowels of Manchester Museum... see page 2 and let him know if you have any archive material.. Photos, books etc...

Holiday geology reports follow from two of our members... why not write a short article for the newsletter this year?

Our next big event is the **Local Heroes weekend** April 12th/13th.... If you've not yet booked and you intend to come, please do so ASAP.

It is essential to book for this event as numbers are limitedand you would get no lunch!

So, see you there, or in the field. with best wishes to all for a good outdoor season

Mary Howie newsletter editor

PS If you would like to save paper and postage and receive your newsletter electronically in PDF form , please email me on newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk

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Quick Diary

12/13 April	Local Heroes Weekend
10/11 May	Shap Area ~ field trip
17/24 May	Lagerstätten in Germany (full)
14 June	Styal Mill ~ field trip
12 July	Marsden Area ~ field trip
21 September	Ingleton and White Scar Cave ~ low mobility field trip
10 / 13 October	Isle of Man Weekend visit
19 October	Liverpool Urban Geology ~field trip

Great News.....Archives Recovered!!!...Derek to the rescue!!!...

MGA ARCHIVES

Following their removal to Buxton Museum while Manchester Museum was being altered, our archives are now once again placed in the geology department of Manchester Museum, and we are grateful for this.

I have gone through them and made a list of their contents. They go back to minute books and other material from the beginning of the Association in 1925, recording who set it up and why. These are valuable records and Council have asked me to consider the options as to where they should be kept permanently. Members opinions about this would be very welcome.

I am not providing here a complete list but have indicated below some gaps in the records which we would like to fill if possible. If any member can help, please would they contact me. I can email the complete list if anyone would like a copy.

Derek Brumhead

Archive material wanted by Derek:-

Notices of indoor and field meetings, any dates.

Circulars or newsletters, before November 1992

MGA excursions, before June 1992 and after October 1997

Notices and notes in respect of Council Meetings since 1967

Programme Cards and Calendars

Before 1973, and since 1998

Notices of AGM, any dates.

Notices of Annual Dinner, any dates

Lists of Members of Council, any dates

Any records of the MGA library

(you can contact Derek via info@mangeolassoc.org)

Fred Owen writes :-

Membership: -

"Thanks to all members who renewed their 2008 membership promptly and to those who let me know they will not be renewing. To date we have had 5 resignations and 4 new members. However, there are still 15 members from whom no response has been received. If you have had an email or phone reminder please send me your cheque ASAP to my new address .

If you are doubtful about renewing there is another mouth-watering programme of field trips and meetings lined up for your enjoyment. Should you still decide not to renew then I would appreciate it if you would let me know so that I do not have to pester you again.

Please note that members who have not paid, or otherwise contacted me, by 30 April will be deemed to have resigned and they will not receive anymore Newsletters."

You can contact Fred via info@mangeolassoc.org

Q ? Where would you expect to find a fossil cow ?

A ~ In a mooseum

Iceland - a Geologist's heaven - and the sun does shine there

I had two and a half weeks in Iceland in July and promised Mary I would write something for the newsletter. Well I've decided to just to tell you of my three favourite bits because I would need a whole newsletter for the proper report!!

1. Dettifoss and Selfoss



One of the most powerful waterfalls in Europe, Dettifoss in the north of Iceland was seriously scary. You can dangle one's toes in it as the silt-laden water falls over the edge as the photo shows. It was awesome.

2. Laki Gigar

A classical place in geology, Laki is everything I expected and more. We climbed Laki mountain itself, walked through the fissure area which was fascinating, drove our 4WD to another car park and walked through a lava tube looking at the most wonderful display of wild flowers.

3. Whale watching

We took a trip from Husavik to look for whales and were rewarded with seeing one Minke and 3 Humpbacks. Two of the humpbacks were 'together', a mother and calf. Watching their antics was magical - the synchronised diving drew gasps and sighs from everyone on the boat. (photo)

There was so much more, I could go on for ages more. Yes it was expensive but the geology, history, flowers and birds were well worth the cost. If anyone would like further information, please contact me.

Jane Michael



In September 2007 I led an “enthusiastic” group of my Stockport U3A geology group on a five day trip to the Isle of Wight. The Isle of Wight can best be described as a Geological Odyssey with the cliffs of the island as windows into lost worlds through which you can view the dinosaurs, ancient seas and frozen Ice Age landscapes.

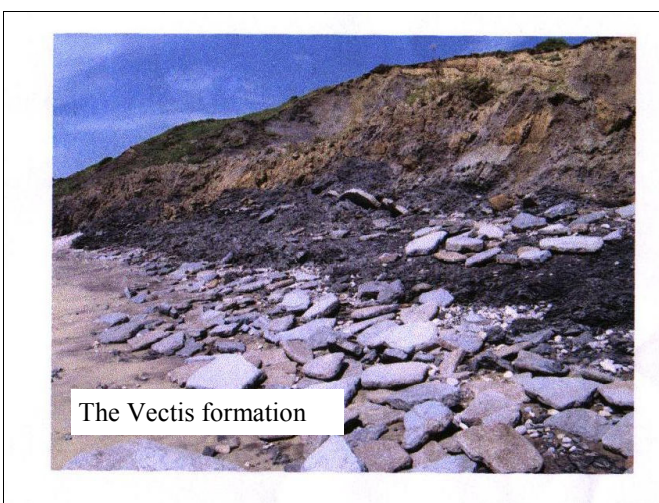
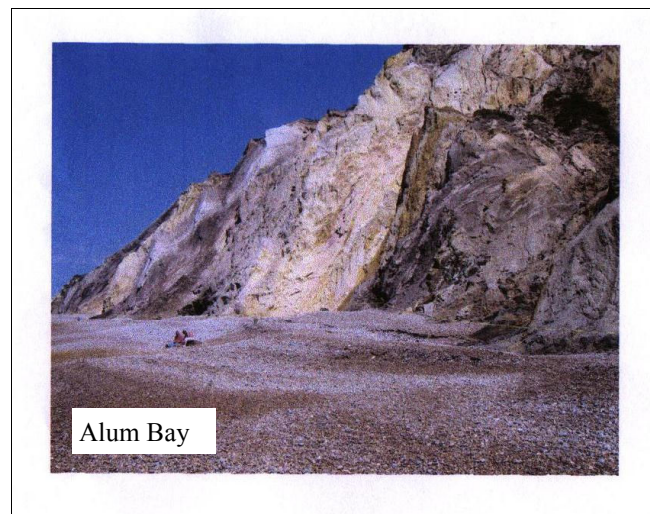
I wish to pay tribute to Dr Fred Broadhurst and Dr Paul Selden who, having led their own trip to the Isle of Wight at an earlier date, kindly gave me permission to refer to their field trip notes enabling me to lead my amateur group around the most important sites.

The island’s odyssey began about 120 million years ago, rocks (known as the Wealden Group), dating between that time and about 110 million years ago, can be seen in the cliffs along the south west coast and at Yaverland. From these rocks come the bones and footprints of dinosaurs. Fossil hunting near Atherfield Point yields a tremendous variety of nautiloids and dinosaur bones, most of which are housed and displayed in the Fossil shop at Blackgang Chine run by Martin Simpson. Some of our members may remember Martin who was once a member of the MGA.

He describes himself as an enthusiastic palaeontologist living in Whitwell and sharing his home with over 36,000 fossils! If you are ever visiting the Isle of Wight call Martin at the Fossil shop on 01983 730233. Martin also runs the Fossil Farm at nearby Brighstone and welcomed visitors (including us) and showed us round his fascinating display of fossils in the converted barn. (Tel 01983 740 844). Some time ago, before Martin took over, I visited the farm (as it was then) to view a dinosaur which had been exposed in the cliff face by erosion and the farmer on whose land it was had dug it out and the students from Southampton University were painstakingly cleaning it up. It has since been removed to the Dinosaur Isle Museum at Yaverland in the south east of the island.

By 110 million years ago, sea levels began to rise and the low lying land of the dinosaurs was lost below a warm shallow sea. This sea swarmed with ammonites, lobsters and oysters and the rocks formed from layers of sandstone & mud became known as the Lower Greensand, to be seen at Blackgang.

At about 94 million years ago the sea deepened and black muds were laid down to become known as the Gault Clay. Lying on top of this is the Upper Greensand and the Chalk.



At about 65 million years ago the Cretaceous world came to an end and the Palaeogene rocks were formed, the remains of which our group were able to view at Alum Bay, adjacent to the Needles. Here at about 35 million years ago we were able to see the folded and highly colourful rocks comprising glauconitic muds (aluminium/magnesium/iron rich micas) coarsening upwards into tidal sands with occasional lignite beds. (see photo above)

Continued overleaf.....

Happy Birthday Fred

Picture was taken on Fred's
80th birthday at his class in
Poynton in February.



Greater Manchester RIGS Group

On Saturday, 23rd. February, we held our AGM in Stockport Library. Our thanks to Mary Howie for her support and contribution.

In February I attended a meeting of the UK RIGS North West Region Geodiversity Partnership in Natural England's Office, Wigan. Among items discussed were the Greater Manchester Local Geology Action Plan (LGAP) and the position of the GMRIGS data base.

On Monday, 25th February, Sue Plumb and I put up a display of RIGS activities and local geology in Bramhall Library. The display will be there for three weeks. From Monday, 24th April to Monday, 28th April, there will be a GMRIGS Group display in Stockport Central Library. We hope that members of the MGA will support us.

Marjorie Moseley

.....Isle of Wight continued.....

Our other major visit was to Yaverland east of Sandown where they have an excellent "hands on" Dinosaur Isle teaching museum of dinosaurs – well worth a visit. Just east of the museum we were able to examine close-up the Wessex formation (dinosaur bones) and the overlying Vectis formation which are a series of dark grey mudstones absolutely packed with gastropods such as *Viviparus*. (See photo on p 4)

If any group is thinking of going on a geology trip to the Isle of Wight we found it convenient to base ourselves in Shanklin at a very obliging hotel on the cliff top and with an indoor swimming pool and good grub!

Shanklin Chine was the defile down which the Pluto pipe line was channelled before crossing over to the Normandy beaches..

John Price

A Geological Treasure Hunt

I would like to describe briefly, an intriguing and surprising geology trip suitable for all the family, young and old. Cemeteries, along with many buildings, provide valuable examples of local and distant stones and Rochdale Cemetery on Bury Road is no exception. However, amongst the many interesting tombstones and monuments is to be found a deliberately planned geological trail devised by two local geologists, James Horsfall and Robert Law, dating back to Victorian times,

Using as my guide the article by Chris Darmon in the December 2007 edition of “Down to Earth,” I followed this remarkable trail along the main route that separates the Church of England burial places from the Roman Catholic and Nonconformist ones. Here can be found at least thirty different geological specimens laid out in such a way as to reveal geology “through the ages.” Some specimens are roughly hewn pieces and others carved pillars approximately 1 – 1.5m high bearing inscriptions. Unfortunately, the starting stone, with a lengthy inscription “In the beginning God created the Heaven.....” is to be found in a steep, wet ditch near the boundary wall and looks like being lost under garden refuse fairly soon. Some of the limestones show signs of weathering and unfortunately the gypsum and Kentish Rag cannot be found and have probably weathered away completely. Other rock types include Basalt from the Giant’s Causeway, Cannal Coal from Wigan, Dinowic Slate, Carrara Marble from Italy and Portland Stone from Dorset.

This geological treasure hunt is an enjoyable day out for geologist and non- geologist alike, as the finding of each specimen is pleasing and worthwhile.

If you would like a more detailed description of this trail please refer to the December 2007 edition of “Down to Earth.”

Bibliography

Baldwin, A. and Anderson, D.M. 1996

“A remarkable survivor: a nineteenth century geological trail Rochdale, England.”

The Geological Curator 6 pp 227-232

Rochdale Cemetery is located on the Bury Road is open during daylight hours and is accessible by public transport.



in



Marjorie E. Mosley,
Secretary
GMRIGS Group,
March, 2008.

12-13 April 2008

In Celebration of the Carboniferous - the Manchester Connection

A weekend event forming part of the Local Heroes Initiative to celebrate 200 years of the Geological Society and 150 years of the Geologists' Association

Lecture Programme - Saturday 12 April 2008

- 10.00 Chris Arkwright - *Introduction*
10.15 Rob Gawthorpe (Man Uni) and Al Fraser (BP)
Tectonic stratigraphic evolution of the Carboniferous of N England
11.00 Pete Gutteridge and/or Andy Horbury (Camb Carbonates)
A new look at old reefs
11.45 Coffee
12.15 Cathy Hollis (Man Uni)
*Minerals, hydrocarbons and porosity changes:
a short history of fluid flow in Carb. Limestone*
1.00 Buffet Lunch
2.00 Alison Monaghan (BGS)
Time for Carboniferous change
2.45 Sarah Davies (Leic Uni)
New light on dark mud!
3.30 Coffee
4.00 Joe Macquaker (Man Uni)
Oil shales revisited
4.45 Closing remarks

Field Trips Sunday 13 April 2008

Rossendale - Leader Paul Aplin - 11.00am to 4.00pm

An overview of late Namurian geology and how it relates to industrial activity past and present. Walking from Cheesdon ~ 6 miles over rough open moor.

Igneous Rocks in Derbyshire- Leader Dr Chris Arkwright - 10.30am to 4.00pm

To investigate Carboniferous igneous rocks in Derbyshire where basalt lavas, tuffs and ashes are seen interspersed amongst extensive limestone beds giving evidence of small-scale, mainly submarine, volcanic activity in Lower Carboniferous times. Walking for ~ 5 miles in total in Millers Dale and to Calton Hill along public footpaths with rougher ground in quarry, including a couple of easy uphill sections.

Castleton - Leader Dr Kevin Church - 10.30am to 4.00pm

To examine the sedimentary successions of Mam Tor and the edge of the Derbyshire limestone platform (the latter underground in Treak Cliff Cavern, as well as at outcrop). To investigate how the environments in which these sediments were deposited changed through time. Walking ~ 2 miles on field paths with occasional rough terrain.

Booking is essential, using booking form enclosed.

Manchester University's Palaeontology Research Group is hosting the

"Progressive Palaeontology 2008"

conference in the Manchester Museum. The MGA is one of the sponsors of this event and members are welcome to attend, free of charge, the lecture sessions to be held in the Kanaris Lecture Theatre of the museum on Friday 30th May

(but not the associated Annual Dinner and Field Trip to Castleton, which are for paying participants).

If you would like to attend you need to register through the Palaeontology Association's web-site: - <http://www.palass.org/modules.php?name=propal&page=38>

The Museum is also holding lectures for the public on Thursday 29th May.

Details of these are available from the Museum: - <http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/>

If you don't have web access, please contact the MGA Indoor Meetings Secretary, Jim Spencer.

Other Societies...

Leeds GS

Contact anthea.brigstocke@zen.co.uk
8 May Environmental Change in Ancient and Modern
Desert Systems Lecture

Liverpool GS

Contact Joe Crossley 0151 426 1324
25-28 April Glen Roy field w/end
7 June Pendle Hill field trip
21 June National Coal Mining Museum
near Wakefield.

North Staffs GA

Contact Bob Jones 01785 815521
27 April The Hamps and Manifold Geo-trail

Oldham GS

Contact Jo Holt 01457 874095
19 April Manifold valley field trip
23 April Rocher Vale, Tameside field trip
11 May Ercall Quarry field trip
21 May Castle Hill, Huddersfield field trip
22 June Runswick Bay field trip

Open University G S North West

Contact Ian Barrow 0161 969 6229
6 April Crummockdale field trip
14 May Llangollan field trip
22 June Carrock Fell field trip

Shropshire GS

Contact David Pannet 01743 850773
5-6 April Two-day field trip to North Wales
(Snowdonia and Anglesey),
Hergest Gardens
19 April Poles Coppice and North
18 May Stiperstones ~field trip
Kinlet Fayre
25 May
11 July "The Evolution of Life and Landscapes: unravelling the
story in the Welsh Marches" Lecture in Ludlow by Prof Simon
Conway Morris (tel: 01938 820 777)

MGA members are welcome guests at other NW Geological Societies activities

Ring the contact given above for further details or look on their websites (via links from ours).

ESTA, the Earth Science Teacher's Association are holding their 41st Annual Course and Conference in Liverpool between the 12th and 14th September 2008. The theme this year is "**Global Issues**".

The main course and conference activities will be held at Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool.

Accommodation has been arranged at Liverpool University's Rankin Hall of Residence

Keynote Speakers :- **Professor Bill Maguire** (Benfield-Greig Hazard Research Centre at UCL)

"Mega-tsunamis and super-volcanoes as a cause of destruction on a global scale"

Professor Jim Marshall (University of Liverpool)

"Climate change and the impacts of climate change over geological time"

Field visits on Sunday to Brymbo, Wirrel,

Further details and booking forms etc can be found on www.esta-uk.org.

or from Maggie Williams, email ~ hiatus@liverpool.ac.uk or Hazel Clark, email H.E.Clark@livjm.ac.uk



Manchester Geological Society

OUTDOOR EVENTS 2008

DATE **Saturday 10 May - Sunday 11 May 2008**

Venue: Shap/Kirkby Stephen/Orton Area

Leader: Chris Arkwright

Time: To be advised.

Description: A trip to look at the geology of the area around Shap, Cumbria from the Silurian to the Permian. We will visit the famous Carboniferous unconformity in Lower Blea Beck and look at faults, folds, sedimentary and igneous rocks. Accommodation has been arranged in Kirkby Stephen for Saturday night. Further information will be available nearer the time.

Contact: **Jane Michael as booking is essential**

DATE **Saturday 17 May - Saturday 24 May 2008**

Venue: Germany Leader: John Nudds Contact: Jane Michael
This trip is fully booked.

DATE **Saturday 14 June 2008**

Venue: Styal House and quarry plus Styal Mill trail

Leader: Fred Owen and Fred Broadhurst

Time: 10.45am – 16.30pm

Description: A visit to the newly opened geological exposures in the recently renovated Quarry Bank House gardens in the morning. After lunch we will be doing the circular geology trail from the Mill to Twinnies Bridge and back.

Contact: **Jane Michael as booking is essential**

DATE **Saturday 12 July**

Venue: Castleshaw Moor and Pule Hill, Marsden

Leader: Joe Macquaker and Fred Broadhurst

Time: TBA

Description: The field trip involves a visit to Castleshaw in the morning and Pule Hill in the afternoon, with a pub lunch in between. Namurian marine bands will be examined to demonstrate the value of goniatites for dating and to discuss the conditions under which the marine bands and associated sediments were formed.

Contact: Jane Michael

DATE **Sunday 21 September 2008**

Venue: Ingleton and White Scar Cave Joint with OUGS

Leader: Norma Rothwell and Jane Michael + White Scar Cave Guide

Time: Probably 10am - 4pm

Description: Whilst this is a Low Mobility Excursion to the Ingleton Area, all are welcome. The aim is to view Ordovician metamorphosed basement rocks from the viewpoint of Ingleton Quarry and secondly to observe Carboniferous Limestone features including weathering, spring-line settlements, an unconformity and industrial use. Lastly there will be an overview of the landscape of the area. Very easy walking on tarmac paths or level ground. Distance is only about 100m from the cars. Sensible shoes required. After lunch we will be taking a guided tour of White Scar Cave (fee payable).

Contact: Jane Michael

Events continued overleaf.....

DATE **Friday 10 – Monday 13 October 2008 (provisional)**

Venue: Isle of Man
Leader: John Barker
Time: Travel to IoM Friday, field trip Saturday and Sunday,
 returning to Manchester on Monday.
Description: Details to follow when dates etc confirmed.
Contact: Jane Michael



DATE **Sunday 19 October 2008**

Venue: Urban Geology in Liverpool
Leader: Alan Diggles
Time: 10.30am - 4pm
Description: To view some natural outcrops and building stones in the City Centre.
 The itinerary of 4km on flat terrain will include St Georges Hall, Everton Gardens, the
 Metropolitan Cathedral and the Anglican Cathedral.
Contact: Jane Michael

Booking with Jane Michael is essential for most of our outings

For Field Excursions contact Jane Michael Tel 0161 366 0595 or email outdoors@mangeolassoc.org.uk

Further information about the MGA from the Hon. Gen. Sec. Nick Snowden (see below)

or email info@mangeolassoc.org.uk or go to our website www.mangeolassoc.org.uk

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

COPY NEEDED ...See your name in print...Share your experiences...

Send me your photos, jokes, cuttings

The next newsletter will be in **June** Copy to me by the **end of May** please.

Mary Howie - newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk or Snail Mail to Kinder View, 118 Glossop Road, Marple Bridge, Stockport SK6 5EL.

Tel: 0161 427 2965

Views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Association or its Council.