

# Manchester Geological Association

## Newsletter ~ March 2010



President : Tony Adams PhD

[www.mangeolassoc.org.uk](http://www.mangeolassoc.org.uk)

Dear Member,

We've just come to the end of a very busy MGA winter session and now look forward to getting out "in the field". Attendance at lectures has been at a record high, thanks to Jim's super programme, and membership has increased, thanks to Fred's diligence.

At the very well-attended AGM, the proposed changes in the MGA Constitution were all unanimously passed (see mailing sent out with the AGM agenda).

Dr Tony Adams was elected as our new President, and Peter del Strother as our Vice President. All the council were re-elected and were thanked for their service. Peter Giles was welcomed as our Web Manager and there was an internal reshuffle: Jane Michael is again our Field Meetings Secretary and Sue Plumb is our General Secretary, Marjorie Mosley will continue her work with RIGS. Our retiring President, Dr Christine Arkwright, was warmly thanked for her presidency. After the AGM she gave us a wide-ranging talk about the various volcanoes she has visited and worked on.

Marjorie Mosley has prepared a splendid outdoor programme for us this year which Jane Michael will now oversee. Details are on page 5. Jane asks all participants to contact her (phone or email) before coming on a trip: some trips are limited in numbers, and there is occasionally a cancellation or change of meeting place.

We would like volunteers next winter to join a rota of "Meeters and Greeters" and tea makers. Someone has to be on the door at meetings to sign members in and we all enjoy our cup of tea or coffee during the break and it is felt that we need to spread the load a little, more about this in September.

Members have suggested that we endow a Fred Broadhurst memorial of some kind, however, there is already a Fred Broadhurst prize in the Geology Department (set up when he retired), so we shall keep his memory green by having a Fred Broadhurst Memorial Walk every summer, a "Rocky Ramble" (see p 5), and a Fred Broadhurst Memorial Lecture each winter.

Here's hoping for a sunny spring so we can all get out and enjoy the rocks!

*Mary Howie*

MGA newsletter editor

### Quick Diary 2010 ~ Field Trips ~

Sat 17 April	Dr. Tony Adams ~ Inner City Salford ~ Geology and Urban Geomorphology
Sun 23 May	Dr. Jacqui Malpas ~ Carboniferous Limestone, Llangollen
28 May - 3 June	Dr. John Nudds ~ North Germany~ fully booked
Sun 4 July	MGA Open day at Styal
Sat 17 July	David Craven ~ Jumbles Country Park & Bolton Museum
Sat 14 Aug	Paul Chandler ~ Goodluck Lead mine, Matlock
Sat 4 Sept	Jane Michael ~ Dovedale ~ The Fred Broadhurst Memorial Walk

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## 'Darwin and Geology Day' at the Manchester Museum

On Wednesday, 17th February 2010, the Manchester Geological Association, along with Greater Manchester RIGS Group, took part in the Museum's 'Darwin and Geology Day.'

This was family day with craft activities provided by the Museum and hands on geology provided by the Earth Science Department of Manchester University. The MGA boards attracted interest because people recognised the field trip locations, and many were interested in obtaining information for geology walks and trails. Jim Spencer disseminated information about the Association; GMRIGS provided geological word-search and crossword activities, and David Green and Fred Owen provided various hands-on rock specimens, all which proved to be very popular with the children. An enjoyable day was had by all.



Fred Owen and Jim Spencer and the MGA display at The Manchester Museum ~ photo Marjorie Mosley

Marjorie Mosley RIGS

New Book ~ 'Lake District Mountain Landforms' - "*it's not a text book and not a guidebook but somewhere in-between*" will be published in the next week or so , so if this is your area of interest look out for it. Author ~ Dr Peter Wilson, Reader in Quaternary Science, University of Ulster.

The Harrow and Hillingdon Geological Association is running a field week in the West of Ireland this July ~ taking a coach from Dublin and staying in a hotel at Leenan. If you would like to know more then please ring or email Allan Wheeler ~  
allan.wheeler1@ntlworld.com,  
Tel: 01344 455451

If you want to go and visit volcanoes, then you could try "Volcanic Experiences"

Volcanic Experiences Ltd. Telephone (UK) 01527-83257 , Alan Clewlow, 19 Manor Court Road Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 3NW, email: [info@volcanic-experiences.co.uk](mailto:info@volcanic-experiences.co.uk) or look at [www.volcanic-experiences.co.uk/](http://www.volcanic-experiences.co.uk/)

This is not a personal recommendation, but the leader, Alan Clewlow, is known to some of our members and is a member of the North Staffs GA.

Rosemary Broadhurst says that Fred's "Rocky Rambles " may be reprinted soon. If you have noticed anything that needs revising , please let Rosemary know so that corrections may be made. She still has a few copies to sell.

Rosemary Broadhurst, 77 Clumber Road, Poynton, Cheshire, SK12 1NW  
Tel: 01625 877 255 email [fred.rose@ukgateway.net](mailto:fred.rose@ukgateway.net)



The next newsletter will be in late June. Copy to me by end of **May** please. Mary Howie - [newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto: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.

49 of our members now receive their MGA newsletters by email....if you would like yours sent in colour, by wire, then just email [newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk) and tell me. Ed.

## Darwinism and the Manchester Moth

The case of the melanistic (or Manchester) moth is well documented and understood. But I was astounded to discover that not only did the Manchester Museum not have an adequate display of the gradations of melanism, but neither did any other UK Museum! I found this out quite by chance.

I had always fancied having such a display case on my study wall, so having read a recent article by Mike Majerus, from the Cambridge Dept. of Genetics I rang him up and asked where I could buy one - fondly assuming that there would be a plentiful supply from a standard scientific supplier.

No chance! We chatted about the lack of adequate display material - anywhere - awhile, and then he offered to make me just such a case from his large collection! I was humbled by his generosity; and couldn't say "YES, PLEASE" fast enough. But it took a further three years for him to finish it (the Harlequin Ladybird got in the way) but eventually he delivered it for me to a friend of mine in Cambridge, with a collection of scientific papers detailing the history, evidence, and evolutionary significance of the "Manchester Moth" : the best known case of rapid, modern evolution taking place under our very noses - here!

But tragically, soon afterwards, Mike Majerus died. And the display case, with his beautiful specimens, sat in my study, with me gloating over it, uneasily. Because I got to thinking: "This should be in the Museum". So, I chose my moment.....

I'm a member of the Greater Manchester Humanists, and to celebrate the 150th year of the publication of "Origin of Species" we invited A C Grayling up here to give us a talk on the impact of Darwin. I suggested to our Secretary that the display case should be formally presented to the Museum by A C Grayling, and last November - he did. I'm really pleased about that.

And I think Mike Majerus would be pleased about it, too.

James E Sidelley MGA member

You can see James' display case in the resource centre on the top floor of the Manchester Museum... Do go and look at it and reflect... ed.



### \*IMPORTANT NOTICE: MGA INSURANCE\*

Each person attending a field meeting does so on the understanding that he/she attends at his/her own risk. The MGA has Public Liability Insurance cover (including member to member cover), for field and indoor meetings and an element of Personal Accident cover.

However, members should always ensure that they have Personal Liability cover (normally part of the standard householder's insurance policy - please check your policy) and comprehensive Personal Accident cover. These are \*/your/\* responsibility. Overseas trips are not covered.

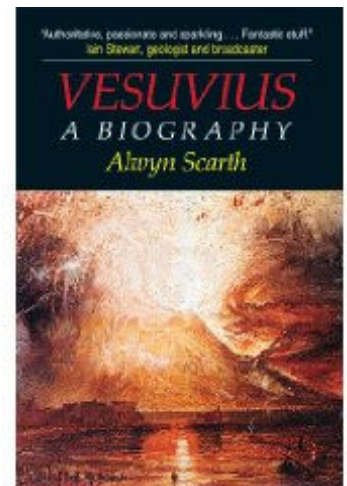
## Book review by Pete Loader

### ***Vesuvius - A Biography***

Alwyn Scarth

Terra Publishing 2009, ISBN 978-1-903544-25-9

Hardback : £24.95



Vesuvius is a dangerous volcano, though I was unaware quite how dangerous until reading this book. Most will recall specifics of the AD 79 eruption that destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum and, true to form, this book details this eruption, but only as one of the many events that has transformed Naples and the surrounding Province of Campania. For Alwyn Scarth, well known to us for his many books on the subject of volcanoes, has written a biography of Vesuvius from its birth long before mankind first settled in the region, right up to the present, with some worrying speculation about the inevitable future events.

The book was written in 2009 and is currently only published in hardback by Terra Publishing – well known to us to be specialists in producing readable books in the Earth sciences. This book is no exception and consists of 13 chapters chronicling the daily history of each major event, not only of Vesuvius, but also the Campi Flegrei caldera to the west. This is based on the latest geological research, backed up by contemporary historical accounts. Each chapter is well illustrated with black and white satellite images, photos, maps, diagrams and art that give a much needed spatial dimension as the various stories unfold. Most of these are written with the immediacy of an eye witness account and Scarth has graphically detailed the eruptions, sometimes on an hourly basis. The chapters are well referenced with further reading at the end and an extensive bibliography. I particularly like the many aside notes, blocked in a different background colour, which further develop a geological point, some social comment, or simply an interesting piece of historical perspective.

So we read that “Soon after 10.00 a.m. on 17<sup>th</sup> December (1631), it seemed indeed that the Last Judgement was about to be delivered.... An old women in Granatello described how the flow had emerged completely white, ‘like a silver baton’ and had rolled over the ground at first (as a pyroclastic flow).” Written in this way the science is secondary but implicit in the narrative for those with a geological background. And it makes a great read.

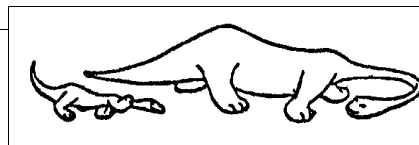
Campania has one of the longest recorded human histories anywhere in the world, and volcanoes have played a dominant role in fashioning the human environment. This is, therefore, not just a biography of a volcano but, also bound up in the pyroclastic deposits, mudflows and lava, is a biography of the changing social, spiritual, intellectual and political development of Campania as it finds its place in the changing world. So in addition to the letters of Pliny the Younger and the aid relief organised by the Roman Emperor Titus following the AD79 eruption, we read about the archaeological work of Giuseppe Fiorelli in excavating the remains at Pompeii, and learn of the work of Sir William Hamilton (of Emma Hamilton and Admiral Nelson fame) in the 1760’s as one of the founders of modern volcanology. And there are many more.

In all, this a very readable book for the non specialist as well as those with a little more geological knowledge and a great book to take with you should you be intending to take the equivalent of the eighteenth century “Grand Tour”. You are promised explosive stuff and this book delivers. And with this view of the volcanic history of the region, the overriding impression is that, inevitably, this is something of which we have not heard the last!

Peter Loader

St. Bede’s College, Manchester

## Manchester Geological Association Outdoor Events 2010



**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2010**

Leader: Tony Adams

**Inner City Salford: geology and urban geomorphology, history, culture and astronomy**

A round walk of around 4 – 5 miles touching on geology, urban geomorphology, environmental protection, local history culture, and astronomy. Come and enjoy the delights of inner city Salford. Preferably on public transport.

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2010**

Leader: Jacqui Malpas

**Carboniferous Limestones of Llangollen.**

Full day looking at the carboniferous limestones around the Llangollen area. There will be some ascent which may be steep. Further details are awaited.

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May – Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010**

Leader: John Nudds

'More Amazing Fossils' ~ Field trip to Germany ~ now full and booking closed.

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

Leader: Fred Owen

**MGA Open Day at Styal Mill**

Members are encouraged to visit the display we will be having at Styal promoting the local geology. There will be two guided walks (both repeated): one in the Secret Garden and the second one based on Fred Owen's Styal Trail.

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2010**

Leader: David Craven (Manchester Museum)

**Geology of Jumbles Country Park**

A visit to the various exposures of Carboniferous sand and grit stones, in particular the Ousel Nest Grit and a surprising fossil. In the afternoon, there will be the opportunity to see Bolton Museum and Archive Service's geology collections with a rare behind-the-scenes tour.

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

Leader: Paul Chandler

**Goodluck Lead Mine, Matlock**

A morning visit to the mine to view superb stone stemming, miners inscription and underground lead mining museum with displays of miners tools, artefacts and small mineral collection. On the surface, there is a display of original buildings and other mine exhibits. In the afternoon there will a mining walk on the tops. There will be a £5 charge for the mine visit – it is classified as a 'Working Mine'. Places are limited to 10. However, if more people wish to go, I will see if I can arrange for a second trip later in the day.

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

Leader: Jane Michael

**Fred Broadhurst Memorial Walk**

A day trip, this will follow the 9 mile Dovedale Walk (No 7) from Fred Broadhurst's "Rocky Rambles in the Peak District". This looks at various aspects of Limestone Scenery. The first part of the walk involves climbing up Thorpe Cloud. However, participants not wishing to do this can arrange to join the party further on. On the return from Ravens Tor, there is more ascent to go above the valley and there will be a low level alternative for this too.

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2010 (joint with OUGS North West Branch)**

Leader: Cynthia Burek

**Farndon and Holt: Geoconservation Issues**

A day trip around Holt and Farndon with the emphasis on geoconservation. This will be an easy walk on gravel roads and board walk at Farndon and a grass field at Holt.

Further information including start time, start location and Risk Assessment will be provided to participants nearer the time. If you would like any information before then, please contact Jane Michael either by telephone (0161 366 0595) or email [outdoors@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:outdoors@mangeolassoc.org.uk)

**EARLY BOOKING IS RECOMMENDED FOR THE ABOVE EVENTS**

## Who's Who in the MGA Council 2010 ~ 2011



President	Dr Tony Adams	SEAES University of Manchester
Past President	Dr Christine Arkwright	
Vice President	Peter del Strother, MBE	
General Secretary	Sue Plumb	20 Ridge Crescent, Marple, Stockport, SK6 7JA 0161 427 5835 <a href="mailto:secretary@mangeolassoc.org.uk">secretary@mangeolassoc.org.uk</a> 29 Westage Lane, Great Budworth, Northwich, CW9 6HJ; tel 01606 892690.
Membership Secretary	Fred Owen	
Treasurer	Niall Clarke	
Indoor Meetings Organiser	Jim Spencer	0161 434 7977
Field Excursions Organiser	Jane Michael	0161 366 0595
News Letter Editor	Mary Howie	0161 427 2965
Web Site	Peter Giles	<a href="http://mangeolassoc.org.uk">mangeolassoc.org.uk</a>
RIGS Group	Marjorie Mosley	<a href="mailto:gmrigs@hotmail.com">gmrigs@hotmail.com</a>
Minutes Secretary	Chantal Johnson	
Archivist	Dr Derek Brumhead, MBE	
Other Council Members	Lisa Abbott, James Jepson.	
President Manchester University Geol. Society (ex officio)		

**MGA email addresses :-** To contact our President or Membership Secretary email [info@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:info@mangeolassoc.org.uk)  
for Jane Michael and field visits - [outdoors@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:outdoors@mangeolassoc.org.uk)  
for Jim Spencer and indoor meetings - [lectures@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:lectures@mangeolassoc.org.uk)  
for Mary Howie and the newsletter - [newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk)

**Our officers may be contacted via the MGA website**

### Other Societies

**MGA members are welcome guests at other Geological Societies' events, some of their events are below.**

#### Black Country Geological Society

**Contact** [andrew\\_harrison@urscorp.com](mailto:andrew_harrison@urscorp.com)

24 April (Field Meeting) Visit to the Cotswolds to view the Jurassic. Led by Dave Owen

26 April (Indoor meeting) Lapworth Museum: West Midlands Fossil and Mineral Collections. Speaker: Jon Clatworthy

19 June (Field meeting) Buxton Volcanics. Led by Chris Arkwright.

#### Leeds Geological Society

**Contact** [anthea.brigstocke@zen.co.uk](mailto:anthea.brigstocke@zen.co.uk)

1 May Roseberry Topping and the Cleveland Dyke ~ David Taylor

13 May Evening visit, Gillfield Mine, Greenhow ~ Shirley Everett

19 June Afternoon ~ St Mary's Church, Studley Royal, Fountains Abbey with Murray Mitchell

26 June Calton Hill and Miller's Dale near Buxton ~ Chris Arkwright

#### Liverpool Geological Society

**Contact** **Joe Crossley** 0151 426 1324

16-23 Apr - 150th Anniversary Field Meeting to NW Scotland with Joe Crossley & Hazel Clark.

22 May - Field Meeting - Geology around St. Helens with Phil Firth.

12 June - Field Meeting - Charnwood Forest with Maurice Handley.

23 Jul - The Iceland Reunion Trip to Iceland with Chris Hunt.

#### North Staffs GA NSGGA

**Contact** **Eileen Fraser** 01260 271505

17 April ~ Field Day: Ecton Hills and the Ecton Hills Field Studies Association. Leader: Peter Kennett and Peter Lane

15-16 May ~ Field Weekend: North Wales Leader Richard Waller.

#### Oldham Geological Society

No details at present ~ monthly meetings in Oldham

**Contact** **Jo Holt** 01457 874095

#### Open University Geological Society NW Branch

**Contact** **Jane Schollick** 01704 565 751

28 March ~ Day trip to Clitheroe area with Dr Ian Kane Looking at channel sediments of the Craven Basin near Clitheroe, Lancs

20 Sun ~ Day trip to Styal with Fred Owen

#### Russell Society

**Contact** **Alan Dyer** on [Aldilp@aol.com](mailto:Aldilp@aol.com) or Harry Critchley, Tel: 01204 694345 if you are interested in these mineralogical events. No details yet for spring programme

**Ring the contact given for further details, or link to their websites via ours.**