

# Manchester Geological Association

## Newsletter ~ March 2011



**President** : Tony Adams PhD

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

Dear Member,

Well, we certainly finished our indoor programme in style this winter with another very full house, how lovely to see so many young people at last Wednesday's joint lecture.

At the AGM in February there were a few changes to the Council. We gave our retiring Membership Secretary **Fred Owen** a resounding vote of thanks for his work over the last eight years... our membership currently tops 200! **Lisa Abbott** has now taken over as our Membership Sec and **Nicola Fowler** was welcomed onto the Council. Other members were thanked and re-elected. We still have a vacancy on the Council so why not join us! (See page 8 for Council members' contact details.)

After the AGM our **President**, **Tony Adams**, gave us a delightful lecture on Poetry and Geology... a veritable mélange of poetry and rocks, starting with Wordsworth and going right through to the present day and including some hilarious verses by Mrs Hemans, and also "A Geologist's Wife; To Her Husband Setting Off Upon Excursion" by that well know author, Anon. This has prompted the suggestion that we all try our hands at a verse or two (see page 2).

Our **outdoor programme** is on pages 4 and 5 ... Jane Michael asks that you contact her if you intend to come on any of our outings.

The **provisional programme** for next winter's lectures is below.

Meanwhile, hope to see many of you out in the field this year ... April will definitely be warm and sunny!

With best wishes to all

*Mary Howie*

MGA newsletter editor

### Contents

Editorial, Contents & Diary	page 1
Poetry and geology	page 2
GA meeting report	pages 3
Outdoor programme	pages 4 & 5
Dovedale report	page 6
Book review	page 7
Who's Who?	page 8
Other societies	page 8

### Quick Diary 2011

#### Field Trips

Sat 9	April	Park Bridge, Ashton-under-Lyne
Sun 8	May	Cutacre Surface Coal Mine, Little Hulton
Sat 16	July	Great Orme and Copper Mines
26/29	August	Week-end Visit to Cardiff Museum and the Pembroke Coast
Sat 24	September	Fred Broadhurst Memorial Field Trip
Sat 8	October	Haigh Hall RIGS, Wigan

#### Provisional Lecture Programme

Wed 12 Oct	– Fossil Molecules – chemistry as a tool for palaeontology
Sat 12 Nov	– The Broadhurst Lectures
Sat 10 Dec	– To be confirmed
Sat 12 Jan 2012	– The Fossil Hunters

**MGA Poetry Competition** Following Tony's engaging Presidential lecture it has been suggested that members might like to try their hands at geological poems..... or if that is too hard, then why not a limerick or two??



Can you do as well as this ?

**To the disappointed archaeologist**

In the heart of the desert you found  
 Dreikanter, all strewn on the ground.  
 Though it wasn't man's hand  
 But the wind and the sand  
 That made these stones angled not round. Peter del Strother.

Or maybe you can emulate Mrs Hemans, (she of "The Boy stood on the burning deck" fame) who wrote at the end of her *Epitaph to a Mineralogist*:-.....



.....  
*Weep not, good reader! He is truly blest,  
 Amidst chalcedony and quartz to rest—  
 Weep not for him! but envied be his doom,  
 Whose tomb, though small, for all he loved had room  
 And, O ye rocks! schist, gneiss, whate'er ye be,  
 Ye varied strata, names too hard for me,  
 Sing 'O be joyful! for your direst foe,  
 By death's fell hammer, is at length laid low.  
 Ne'er on your spoils shall — — riot,  
 Shut up your cloudy brows, and rest in quiet!  
 He sleeps—no longer planning hostile actions,—  
 As cold as any of his petrifications;  
 Enshrined in specimens of every hue,  
 Too tranquil e'en to dream, ye rocks, of you.*

In a more serious vein our VP has contributed this sonnet.....

**Desert Seeds**

For nigh on seven years the land lay dry.  
 The latent lives upon the desert floor  
 Asleep, despite the storm clouds in the sky.  
 Was this the moment they had waited for?  
 A cone of dust leapt from the arid ground,  
 One drop of rain the sign of more to come  
 Or some false dawn? But soon the crashing sound  
 Of driving rain confirms the race is on.

The sun restored, green shoots compete for light.  
 It is the time to flower and set seed  
 Or failing now face everlasting night.  
 So man must wake and nature's lessons heed.  
 If climate change destroys the flowers that grow,  
 Mankind itself may be the next to go. Peter de Strother

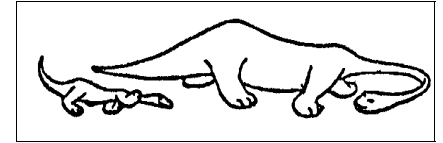
No prizes, but I'll publish any that you send me... if not too rude .....ed  
 ( I did limericks with 8 year-olds many moons ago!)

1. I attended the recent Membership Team meeting held at the Gloucestershire Geoconservation Trust office in February.
2. Chair, Paul Olver, advised that the GA had been given a mandate that the group should look at the GA becoming more relevant outside London, offer value for money and ways to attract new members (the main 'problems' identified).
3. The GA Council are also looking at organising more foreign field trips, particularly in Mainland Europe as it was felt that local groups and affiliates often found overseas trips difficult/time consuming to organise (and I can fully support that).
4. They are going to look at the content of The Proceedings. I had passed on several comments I had received about the Proceedings – it appears these had been mentioned at the November meeting which I was unable to attend.
5. Comments were made round the table that better use could be made of the GA website so that there was a notice board for events, **and** details of temporary exposures to advertise the GA Guides better.
6. Of particular note was the fact that money was available to do this.
7. There will be a regional event held each year outside of the South East to raise the profile of the GA to the general public. It was decided that the one for 2011 will be at the Three Counties Show in Malvern in June. Earth Heritage (Hereford & Worcester's Geoconservation Trust) and Gloucester Geocon had for the previous two years undertaken a publicity event at the show but with Local Authority support removed due to the cuts, they did not think they could do it this year. Funding from the GA will enable this event to take place. Whilst as a 'northerner' I would have liked something north of Birmingham, I can appreciate that with a relatively short time to arrange this, the Three Counties is suitable. Next year, an event will be held in the north (Durham Miners Gala was mentioned (not by me, I was the only 'northerner' attending as Noel Worley from Leeds couldn't make the meeting)).
8. There was discussion about local groups and affiliates and whether there actually was any difference (even though theoretically there should be). The conversation then turned to events to promote the GA to existing members of local groups and affiliates who were feeling disenfranchised (as I know several MGA members are – they have left the GA – and this includes me although I am still a member). I suggested possibly offering financial support towards a day of lectures (I was thinking about our own Broadhurst Memorial lecture where the number of people wanting to attend is likely to exceed the capacity of the lecture theatre). A bigger lecture theatre would cost more and perhaps this would be a good event for the GA to support. I also suggested supporting an event at a National Trust property citing our Styal event as an example. I regret to report that I am not sure that my suggestions were well received but I made them anyway!!! Time will tell.
9. We did agree that leaflets outlining what benefits membership of the GA confers should be sent to each group/affiliate for distribution at meetings. Whilst I suspect most of us were a bit sceptical about what benefits there are, clearly the GA Council is worried and is taking on board what the group is (albeit slowly – oak trees and acorns spring to mind I hope). I am now awaiting these leaflets.
10. We also felt that the local groups/affiliates should have links to the GA website and any other geoconservation sites etc. We do have a comprehensive list of links on the MGA website. I will also ask Mary Howie to put a mention in the newsletter that if you are a member of the GA, you can get a discount on the GA Guides. Whilst you would need to buy a lot of guides in a year to pay for your membership, it certainly is an advantage.
11. The next meeting is on 19 May 2011 and unfortunately I will be unable to attend as I am in Scotland at the time but I will keep members advised of developments. Meanwhile, if you are going to be in the Malvern area in June, visit The Three Counties Show and look for the geology marquee!!

Jane Michael

# MANCHESTER GEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

## OUTDOOR EVENTS 2011



**DATE**            **9 April 2011**

Venue:            Park Bridge, Ashton-under-Lyne  
Leader:           Chantal Johnson  
Time:             10:30 am  
Description:     This half day trip will be looking at the industrial archaeology around Fairbottom Bobs, the nearby reedbeds and the folds by Sennyfield Bridge.  
Contact:         Jane Michael



**DATE**            **8 May 2011**

Venue:            Cutacre Surface Coal Mine, Little Hulton  
Leader:           Alan Davies  
Time:             10.00 am  
Description:     This is a visit to a working mine which may well be closed and landscaped/infilled in the near future. Fossil collection is permitted. Further information is still awaited from UK Coal: hi-viz jackets, helmets and boots will definitely be required.  
Contact:         Jane Michael



**DATE**            **16 July 2011**

Venue:            Great Orme and Copper Mines  
                      a joint excursion with the OUGS  
Leader:           Jacqui Malpas  
Time:             10 am  
Description:     We plan to visit Bishop's Quarry with its fossils & folds & the limestone pavement at the top of the Orme.  
                      Further information will be available shortly.  
Contact:         Jane Michael

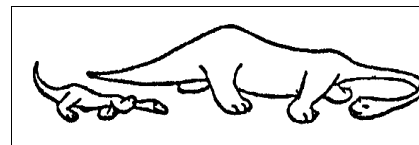


### **\*IMPORTANT NOTICE: MGA INSURANCE\***

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.

**DATE 26 – 29 August 2011 Long Week-end Visit**



Venue: Cardiff Museum and Pembroke Coast  
Leader: John Nudds  
Description: The party will travel to South Wales on **Friday** morning, breaking the journey at Cardiff for lunch and an opportunity to view the 'Evolution of Wales' Gallery in the National Museum of Wales. We will travel onto Pembrokeshire in the late afternoon, arriving in time for drinks and dinner.

**Saturday** will be spent on the North Pembrokeshire coast where we will see the classic Cambrian deposits of St David's and the famous Ordovician graptolite locality at the blue lagoon of Abereiddau Bay (swimming optional!).

**On Sunday** we will travel to South Pembrokeshire where we will see the Silurian and Devonian Old Red Sandstone at Manorbier and Freshwater West, and the Lower Carboniferous at West Angle Bay. We will be examining palaeontological and sedimentological evidence in an attempt to reconstruct the palaeoecology and palaeogeography of this area through the Palaeozoic.

We will travel back to Manchester on **Monday morning**, and those that wish can again break the journey, this time at Barry Island, where we can continue our stratigraphic traverse by visiting the classic dinosaur footprint locality in the beds of the Upper Triassic. Arrival back in Manchester should be in the early evening of Monday.

Contact: Jane Michael

**DATE 24 September 2011**

Venue: Fred Broadhurst Memorial Field Trip  
Leader: Jane Michael  
Time: To be decided.  
Description: This year's trip will be based round Rocky Ramble Walk 17: Rowarth to Cown Edge. This is a walk of around 10km (6 miles) with 250m (800 ft) of ascent some of it fairly steep. We will be looking at faults, folds and landslips with some stunning views as well.  
Contact: Jane Michael

**DATE 8 October 2011**

Venue: Haigh Hall Country Park, Wigan  
Leader: Chris Arkwright  
Time: To be decided.  
Description: A visit to sites within the Lancashire Coalfield, including some RIGS.  
Contact: Jane Michael

**You will need to contact our Outdoor Organiser Jane Michael if you intend to come on any of these trips.**

**She will send then you details of time and place etc.**

**Jane Michael tel.....0161 366 0595 email... outdoors@mangeolassoc.org.uk**

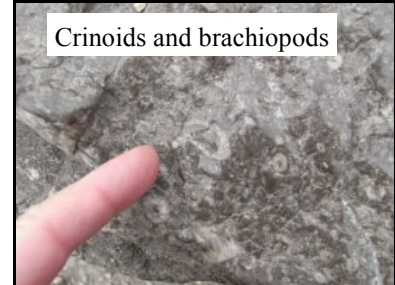


## Report of the Fred Broadhurst Memorial Field Trip to Dovedale, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2010

On a sunny day about 20 people gathered in the car park at Dovedale for the first Fred Broadhurst Memorial Field Trip. Fittingly, it was based on one of Fred's Rocky Rambles, adapted and led by Jane Michael. It was lovely to have the company of Rosemary Broadhurst and other members of Fred's family on this occasion.

Jane gave us an introduction to the geology of the area, which is early Carboniferous reef and bedded limestones, altered by relatively recent glaciation.

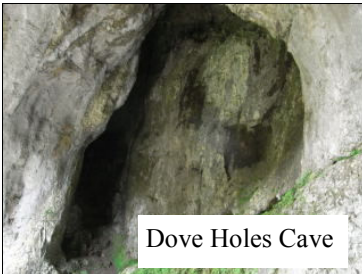
After watching the arrival of the refreshment kiosk, which looked like a stone building, pulled by a tractor into the car park, we walked upstream and inspected the many crinoids and some brachiopods in the steps, which we hoped were constructed using local stone! A few blocks were of a much darker colour and we wondered about the environment of deposition for these, and mentally compared them with the Ashford Marble. At the top of the steps, the limestone pinnacles known as the Twelve Apostles could be viewed from



Crinoids and brachiopods

Lover's Leap, but we were hard pressed to spot all twelve due to the vegetation.

We continued up Dovedale, looking for Reynard's Cave. Ilam Rock and Pickering Tor were the next landmarks, both in knoll reef limestone. Dove Holes cave was our lunch destination. Finally Ravens Tor appeared, where the contact between knoll reef and bedded limestone could be seen - bedded limestone is probably



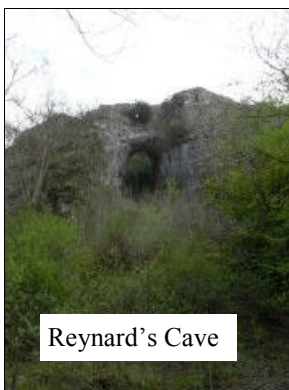
Dove Holes Cave

deposited in deeper water. On the way back we managed to find Reynard's cave – how did we miss it on the way up Dovedale? Jane took a small group up Thorpe Cloud to look for stromatolites on the top. After a steep climb and a couple of stops to look for brachiopod fossils, they arrived on top. After much searching, Tali



Ravens Tor

Broadhurst finally found some telltale concentric circles which the group agreed could be the missing stromatolites. Since Fred originally wrote the book, thousands of human feet plus the weather have eroded the limestone making these ancient algae very difficult to find. The views from the top were excellent and were worth the ascent. The sun still shone as we strolled back to the car park and a most welcome ice cream or cup of tea.



Reynard's Cave

Thanks to Jane for making it happen. Sue Plumb, September 2010



Thorpe Cloud

**Sue Plumb wrote the words and Jane Michael took the photos**



Stromatolites

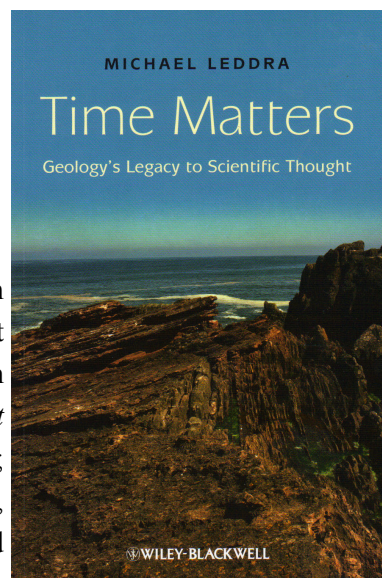
## **TIME MATTERS – Geology’s Legacy to Scientific Thought**

**Michael Leddra**

**Wiley-Blackwell: 2010.**

**ISBN No 978-1-4051-9909-4**

**Paperback: £23.70 (Amazon)**



The title of Michael Leddra’s book may have seemed an incongruous choice of holiday reading material during a time last summer when, for me, *time* really didn’t matter. But I was far from disappointed. *Time Matters - Geology’s Legacy to Scientific Thought* takes the reader through a comprehensive synopsis of the topic; through rock dating and time scales, plutonism and neptunism, uniformitarianism and catastrophism, evolution and creationism, and onto continental drift and plate tectonics. Each concept, set into its own historical timescale, details the development and discoveries that have shaped our understanding of geological time, by the people most notably involved.

*Time Matters* is more than a textbook and reads with the accessibility of a novel. Clearly written by an educationalist, the reader’s own understanding is frequently challenged with appropriate use of “discussion point questions” which make it much more interactive. The author also provides additional “background” to the topics discussed as well as “further reading” suggestions. Indeed, the author frequently quotes from an extensive bibliography which further directs the reader to new ideas for study and it is this synthesis of so many current books on this topic that makes *Time Matters* such a useful publication. Thus the book, which is liberally illustrated with black and white photos, maps and diagrams and a very good index, is an ideal introduction to the topic most central to any study of the earth sciences.

This is certainly appropriate for the A’level/first year university market and as a background to the development of the earth sciences for the educated layman. As the book covers so many important topics at A’level - remnant magnetism, geological principles, radiometric dating techniques, mountain building to name but a few - the A’level student and teacher will find this a particularly useful reference. Whilst the cost may be prohibitive for class copies, this is certainly one for the departmental and main school library. I thoroughly recommend the paperback version of this book to colleagues and students alike and know you too will not be disappointed.

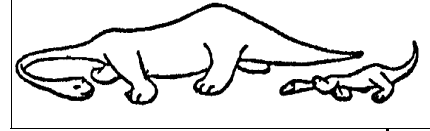
Pete Loader

St Bede’s College, Manchester

The next newsletter will be at the end of June Copy to me by May 30th 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.

## 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>
Membership Secretary	Lisa Abbott	8 Borrowdale Crescent, Didsbury, M/cr,M20 2XU, 07789 767732 <a href="mailto:info@mangeolassoc.org.uk">info@mangeolassoc.org.uk</a>
Treasurer	Niall Clarke	07785 778 250
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	Jane Michael	
Archivist	Dr Derek Brumhead, MBE	
Other Council Members	Nicola Fowler, James Jepson. Chantal Johnson	
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 Sue Plumb MGA General Secretary [secretary@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@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)

### Other Societies

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

#### Black Country Geological Society

Sun 3 April 2011: (Field meeting) Visit to the Saltwells Nature Reserve, Graham Worton and Julia Morris  
Mon 11 April 2011: (Indoor meeting) 'The Geology of Lundy'. Dr. Clive Roberts, Wolverhampton Uni.

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

#### Lancashire Geological Association

No details at present

**Contact** Jennifer Rhodes [s\\_j\\_rhodes@hotmail.com](mailto:s_j_rhodes@hotmail.com)

#### Leeds Geological Association

No details at present

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

#### Liverpool Geological Society

5 Apr - Geology and the A55 by Frank Nicholson.  
9 Apr - Field Meeting to Frodsham with Joe Crossley.  
15-19 Apr - Weekend Field Meeting to Ardnamurchan with Dr Jeff Harris.  
15 May - Field Meeting to N Wales - A55 Penmaenmawr with Frank Nicholson.  
19 June - Field Meeting to The Forest of Bowland with Neil Aitkenhead.

**Contact** [Joe Crossley](mailto:Joe Crossley) 0151 426 1324

#### North Staffs GA

Sat 4 - Sun 5 June Field Weekend in Teesdale  
Leader: Eileen Fraser NB .Places limited

**Contact** [Eileen Fraser](mailto:Eileen Fraser) [frasers@netfraser.me](mailto:frasers@netfraser.me)

#### Oldham Geological Society

Sat 16 April Healey Dell, Rochdale, Field Trip 1.45 pm  
Wed 27 April Wardle, Littleborough, Walk, 7.00 pm

**Contact** [Jo Holt](mailto:Jo Holt) 01457 874095

#### Open University Geological Society NW Branch

Sat Jun 04, Revision Day for S276 Students at Euxton, Lancashire near Chorley with OU tutors  
Sun Jun 19, Millom Rock Park & South lakes with David Kelly

**Contact** [Jane Schollick](mailto:Jane Schollick) 01704 565 751

#### Russell Society (mineralogy)

No details at present

**Contact** [Alan Dyer](mailto:Alan Dyer) on [Aldilp@aol.com](mailto:Aldilp@aol.com) or Harry Critchley, Tel: 01204 694345

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