



# MANCHESTER GEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

President: PETER DEL STROTHER

March 2013

Founded 1925

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

Dear Members,

Welcome to the March newsletter of the Manchester Geological Association!

Inside we have the usual MGA news, plus some very interesting articles from our members on the developments at Quarry Bank, Styal, Cobbles at Knutsford Heritage Centre, the Association and a book review on a guide to the Big Lakes of Lakeland. Also included is a list of the 2013 outdoor events for the MGA.

Many thanks to all the members who have contributed articles for this edition. If you have any geological articles, book reviews, field trip reports, or interesting geological photographs that you would like to include in the MGA's June newsletter please email them to me before the last week of May.

*James Jepson*

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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## QUICK DIARY

Outdoor:

**7th April** - Pott Shrigley

**18th May** - Dinckley Gorge and  
Brockholes

**16th June** - Derbyshire Limestones

**7th July** - Lymm Dam and Helsby Hill  
Quarry

# MGA NEWS

## COUNCIL CHANGES

A few changes have taken place in the council after the AGM. Lisa Jepson and Jane Michael have stepped down from their positions as Membership Secretary and Field Meetings Secretary to become regular council members. Many thanks to Lisa and Jane for their hard work over the years, both have done a fantastic job! These positions are currently vacant, so if there are any willing volunteers please contact the council.

We also have a new council member, Norma Rothwell, who we would like to welcome.

## MGA MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Many thanks to all those members who have renewed their subscriptions for this year. For those members who have not please can you do so as soon as possible in order to retain your membership for 2013. Many thanks to those members who have switched to receiving their newsletters via email - if anyone else wishes to change to this format, please email the membership secretary - [membership@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:membership@mangeolassoc.org.uk).

## MGA ON FACEBOOK

Just a reminder that the MGA has its own Facebook group. The group enables members to discuss geology, tell of interesting geological trips, share geology photos, and receive information on the Association's events.

If you are a regular internet user and a member of Facebook please join the MGA's Facebook group.

The groups can be found at:

[www.facebook.com/groups/404219199605689/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/404219199605689/)

or

by going to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and searching for "Manchester Geological Association"

# ARTICLES

## DEVELOPMENTS AT QUARRY BANK, STYAL

On the education front, I am pleased to say that the Learning and Interpretation Department at Quarry Bank will be offering Primary School teachers a Geology of Rock Module for Key Stage 2 pupils for the first time ever in March 2013. This is a major step forward in getting acknowledgement of the educational value of the geological resource at Quarry Bank out into the schools. A pilot run with Styal Primary School in 2012 was well received. Also for the first time, I took a group of QB volunteers from different departments on a geological tour of the estate; they were amazed to hear about things they never knew existed there.

Since the last MGA display in summer 2010 considerable changes have taken place. A major project to install a hydro-electric turbine and a fish/eel pass alongside the weir began in February. As can be seen in the photo, in preparation for this, the whole area has been cleared of vegetation so that the fossil sand-dune on the north bank of the weir is now clearly visible.



The site of the turbine and fish pass



The fossil sand dune

The network of paths within the Secret Garden has been extended and a new, gated access path from the lower garden along the River Bollin into the Northern Woods is now available (on acquiring the key) for pre-arranged guided walks; public access is not permitted. This allows direct access from the Mill to Giant's Castle via the Kingfisher and Oxbow Bridges and the impressive river meanders (previously a frustratingly long diversion via Norcliffe Chapel was necessary). This may lead to the opportunity to develop another interesting variation on the walks we have done in the park, especially as work continues to re-create the landscape as it was when occupied by the Greg family.



Cleared cliff top and landslide



Trees have been removed from above the Tarporley Siltstone exposures at the top of the sandstone cliff so it is much lighter and clearer to see from a distance. However, there have been a couple of landslides since, one of which can be seen in the photo covering some of the lower beds and preventing access until they were cleared.

In the Southern Woods, between the Mill and Twinnies Bridge, many trees and undergrowth have been cleared and visual access to the water flow and sedimentation processes in the river is much easier. Last year's heavy rainfall has caused severe erosion of the river banks at the meanders with many trees uprooted as well as resulting in quite thick alluvium flood deposits.

The National Trust has been working intensely with QB management to submit funding applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund for an £8m "Revolution and Revelation" project to turn QB, including Styal Village, into a world class, complete industrial community heritage site. The Conservation Statement of this submission included: "The Conservation Statement covers all aspects of Quarry Bank's significance, from its social history to its geology". So, hopefully, the geological attributes will become more widely appreciated.

National Trust Members will already have received an appeal for donations towards the first £1.4m. All this has led to the inevitable rebranding, so that from now on all the various names by which the site has been known in the past are superseded simply by "Quarry Bank".

Members who have not visited QB for some time could spend an interesting day there exploring these, and many more, developments.

*Fred Owen*

## COBBLES DISPLAY AT KNUTSFORD HERITAGE CENTRE

In 2005 the MGA kindly made a grant for me to install, at Knutsford Heritage Centre, a display of cobbles preserved from the Royal George Yard before it was converted to a shopping precinct. The display and accompanying explanatory poster were unveiled by Fred Broadhurst in March 2006. Each year since, I have cleaned the sand in the display to remove the moss and atmospheric grime from it. By last year the poster was looking tired and was no longer in keeping with the style being adopted by the new manageress, Mrs Val Bryant.



She wished it to be briefer and in larger print to match those used for all the other exhibits at the Centre. We have worked together to bring this into effect and the job was completed last week. The whole display, shown in the photo, has been spruced up to look like new again. The poster proudly shows the MGA logo in acknowledgement of its grant.

As a reminder, MGA members who have the complimentary copy of my geology trail, Knutsford's Building Stones and Cobbles, will find the cobbles referred to at Location 7 in the courtyard display at the Heritage Centre, 90A King Street. More details of Knutsford's history and opening hours can be found at <http://www.knutsfordheritage.co.uk/>

*Fred Owen*

## THE “ASSOCIATION”

On receiving an honorary membership of the Association recently, I recalled first joining some 40 years ago. I had been a member of my “home” Liverpool Geological Society for 12 years before, but becoming employed at the Manchester Department, I felt that I really had to shift my allegiance! But what was this “Association”? There were about a dozen Geological “Societies” around the country but the word “Association” carried vague Trade Union ties with it – why was it different?

I eventually found out that it was in fact a radical “breakaway” group – which endeared it to me immediately! There had been a Manchester Geological Society, (later the Manchester Geological and Mining Society) founded in 1838, making it one of the oldest in the country, but in the 1920s the opening of new coalfields in the area led the Geological Survey to establish an office in Manchester. There was a sudden influx of coalfield geologists joining the Society, that gradually overtook the membership and officers of the Society and the programmes became dominated by their interests, particularly the engineering aspects. A group of the membership decided that they had enough and set up the “Association” in 1925 as a rival group with a strong relationship with the University. In the first volume of the Proceedings of the Manchester Geological Association it was made plain that this was “an outlet for *pure geology*” (my italics).

I don’t know when the Society was finally disbanded, but I do know that until a few years ago a skeleton remnant of the Society met in a pub somewhere in Bolton(?) once a year, in order to preserve the name; it would be interesting to know if there is anyone who remembers anything about the latter years of the old Society and what happened to the old minute book.

*Jack Treagus*

# BOOK REVIEW



Landscapes of Cumbria No. 5:  
**The Big Lakes of Lakeland**

by *Alan Smith*

Rigg Side - 2012

ISBN 978-0-954467-94-4

Paperback: £6.99

This is the 5th book by Dr Alan Smith in this bijou collection of guides to various aspects of Cumbrian geology and geography, and with 104 pages, much more substantial than his other books in this series. It comes in a handy, A5 format and is an accessible and useful guide book.

He gives a brief description of the underlying geology of the Lake District and then shows how it affects the disposition, structure and shape of the various BIG Lakes. The text is lavishly illustrated by many photographs and very clear, simple maps. There are 104 figures (photos and maps) in all.

The vital statistics of the 17 major lakes are all there, as well as a little of the history of early surveys. The geomorphological processes by which the lakes were formed during the ice age are well explained followed by very detailed descriptions of each lake.

I am delighted to add this to my collection of Lake District guide books... lovely to dip into, with some fascinating data... I didn't know till now that four of the islands in Derwent Water are in fact drumlins left behind from the last glaciation, while others are rocky outcrops of the Skiddaw group, and that the whole valley is fault controlled by the Derwent Water Fault and excavated by ice into the relatively weak Skiddaw Group rocks, with a dolerite dyke forming the promontory of Friar's Crag, while other resistant volcanic rocks produce the crags along the eastern margin, (Falcon Crag, Shepherd's Crag, Ashness Fell etc) .

This guide book is rather more geomorphological in content than geological... but absolutely fascinating nevertheless.. and a good buy at £6.99.

*Mary Howie*

# OUTDOOR MEETINGS 2013

## **Sunday 7th April**

*Venue:* Pott Shrigley

*Leader:* Paul Aplin

*Time:* 11am

*Description:* To examine the Lower Coal Measures, evidence of former coal mining and the relation between geology and scenery

*Contact:* Jane Michael

## **Saturday 18th May**

*Venue:* The Namurian of Dinckley Gorge (River Ribble, near Ribchester) and the Quaternary of Brockholes (LWT reserve adjacent to M6 junction for Preston)

*Leader:* Peter del Strother and Jennifer Rhodes

*Description:* The plan will be to do Dinckley Gorge, an Upper Carboniferous locality on the River Ribble, in the morning and Brockholes, a glacial and geomorphological locality, in the afternoon. Brockholes is a Lancashire Wildlife Trust site (great for birds, wild flowers and insects) and has an excellent restaurant which also serves very good coffee. If it is a very wet day, the Brockholes centre will be a welcome warm and dry retreat for lunch.

For details contact Jennifer Rhodes, secretary of the Lancashire Group of the Geologists' Association at [lgga.info@gmail.com](mailto:lgga.info@gmail.com)

*Contact:* Jane Michael

## **Sunday 16th June**

*Venue:* Limestones of the southern margin of the Derbyshire Platform

*Leader:* Dr Cathy Hollis, University of Manchester

*Time:* 10 am - 4pm

*Description:* This fieldtrip will examine the Lower Carboniferous (Dinantian) limestone of the southern margin of the Derbyshire Platform. The trip will focus upon the area around Matlock and Wirksworth and will provide the opportunity to review the facies encountered along the margin of the Derbyshire Platform with the Widmerpool Gulf, to the south. As well as examining a range of different shallow water carbonate facies, evidence for subaerial exposure and syn-depositional volcanism will be assessed. The role of faults in controlling both sedimentation and subsequent diagenesis will also be illustrated. In particular, the importance of pre-existing (Caledonian) basement faults on providing a conduit for fluids responsible for dolomitisation and mineralisation will be discussed. The outcrops can be easily accessed from well-made footpaths, although some walking (approx 2km) is required at one locality.

*Contact:* Jane Michael

## **Sunday 7th July**

*Venue:* Lymm Dam and Helsby Hill Quarry

*Leader:* Fred Owen

*Description:* This will be a follow up to last year's Triassic Cheshire Overview talk looking at some of the structural, stratigraphical and glacial features of the Cheshire Basin

*Contact:* Jane Michael

### **Provisonal Saturday 10th August**

*Venue:* Fred Broadhurst Memorial Field Trip

*Leader:* Jane Michael

*Description:* Not finalised but probably based round Walk 9 Earl Sterndale - Parkhouse Hill - Chrome Hill

*Contact:* Jane Michael

### **21st/22nd September (travel down on Friday 20th September)**

*Venue:* The Jurassic of Ketton (Northamptonshire)

*Leader:* Peter del Strother

*Description:* Further information to come.

*Contact:* Jane Michael

### **October**

*Venue:* Skills Day

*Contact:* Jane Michael

## **TWO FURTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES**

### **Joint Yorkshire Geological Society/Manchester Geological Association meeting**

Saturday 19 October 2013 at The Dome, Buxton

Details of the day (lectures and other activities) have not yet been finalised but it will be an exciting day which will give members of both societies the opportunity to meet up.

### **Open University Geological Society North West Branch**

The OUGS NW have kindly offered MGA members the opportunity to join them on their Autumn Weekend Event Friday 18 - to Sunday 20 October based round Nottingham. This is a mix and match weekend: you do not have to commit for the whole weekend: day visitors will be very welcome. Further information can be obtained from the Branch Organiser, Jane Schollick by email JANESCHOL@aol.com or on the website at <http://ougs.org/events/index.php?branchcode=nwe>



# THE MANCHESTER GEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION COUNCIL 2013-2014



## MANCHESTER GEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

President: **PETER DEL STROTHER MBE**

Vice President: **DR RAY BURGESS**

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Other Council Members: **NICOLA FOWLER, MARY HOWIE, LISA JEPSON, JANE MICHAEL,  
NORMA ROTHWELL**

### EMAIL CONTACT:

To contact our **President** or for any queries - [info@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:info@mangeolassoc.org.uk)

To contact our **General Secretary** - [secretary@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mangeolassoc.org.uk)

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For **James Jepson** and the **newsletter** - [newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@mangeolassoc.org.uk)

## OTHER SOCIETIES AND EVENTS

Manchester Geological Association members are welcome guests at other societies' events, some are listed below:

**Black Country Geological Society** ([www.bcgs.info](http://www.bcgs.info)):

**Saturday 6th April** (Field meeting): Around Warwick and Warwick Museum. Led by Hugh Jones and Martin Bradley

**Monday 29th April** (Indoor Meeting): The Oxford Museum of Natural History. Speaker: Prof. Paul Smith

Contact: Andrew Harrison – [andrew\\_harrison@urscorp.com](mailto:andrew_harrison@urscorp.com)

**Lancashire Geological Association** ([www.lancashire-geologists.co.uk](http://www.lancashire-geologists.co.uk)):

Contact: Jennifer Rhodes – [s\\_f\\_rhodes@hotmail.com](mailto:s_f_rhodes@hotmail.com)

**Leeds Geological Association**

([www.leedsgeolassoc.freemove.co.uk](http://www.leedsgeolassoc.freemove.co.uk)):

**Thursday 18th April** (indoor meeting): UK Shale Gas Exploration. Speakers: Mr Huw Clarke and Ms Lucy Craddock, Cuadrilla Resources Ltd.

**Saturday 27th April** (indoor meeting): Mineral Resources of Yorkshire Revisited. Speakers: TBC - venue National Museum of Coal Mining, Wakefield

**Thursday 2nd May** (indoor meeting): Antarctica's Green History and Links to Scott's Legacy. Speaker: Prof. Jane Francis, Leeds University. [anthea.brigstocke@zen.co.uk](mailto:anthea.brigstocke@zen.co.uk)

**Wilmslow Guild** ([www.wilmslowguild.wikidot.com](http://www.wilmslowguild.wikidot.com))

**Saturday 20 April**: 10.00am to 4.00 pm

Climates ancient, modern and future - geology and meteorology dayschool with Christine Arkwright and Phillip Scragg.

£32 including lunch and refreshments.

Contact Wilmslow Guild 01625 523903

**Liverpool Geological Society**

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

**Saturday 20th April** (Field meeting): Silverdale, Lancashire. Details TBA.

Contact: Joe Crossley – 0151 426 1324

**North Staffs Geological Association**

([www.esci.keele.ac.uk/nsgga](http://www.esci.keele.ac.uk/nsgga)):

**Saturday 13th April** (Field meeting): Headstone Cutting & The Monsal Trail. Led by Eileen Fraser

**Thursday 23rd May** (Field meeting): The Woore Moraine. Led by Richard Waller

**Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd June** (field meeting) Pembrokeshire Weekend. Led by Ian Stimpson.

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

**Oldham Geological Society:**

Contact: Jo Holt – 01457 874 095

**Open University Geological Society North West**

**Branch** ([www.ougs.org/index.php?branchcode=nwe](http://www.ougs.org/index.php?branchcode=nwe)):

**Friday 24th - Monday 27th May** (Field meeting): Devon. Led by Jenny Bennett and Prof. John Mather.

**Wednesday 3rd July** (Field meeting): Edne Valley, Cumbria - Birkshead Gypsum Mine Tour. Led by Noel Worley.

Contact: Jane Schollick – 01704 565 751

**Russell Society (Mineralogy)**

(<http://www.russellsoc.org/nwbranch.html>):

Contacts: Alan Dyer – [Aldilp@aol.com](mailto:Aldilp@aol.com) or Harry Critchley – 01204 694 345

**The Manchester Museum:**

Website:

<http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/whatson/>

For more details on any of the other societies listed please check their websites



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