

## **EAST MIDLANDS GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1988/89**

This was the Society's twenty-fifth year, the high point of which was the celebration dinner attended by 78 members at the University Staff Club in February.

We have enjoyed the usual excellent variety of indoor and field meetings during the year, all of which have been very well supported by the membership. The year commenced in early March with the A.G.M. which was, on this occasion, held in the Swinnerton Laboratory at Nottingham University. Approximately 50 members attended and heard the Officers of Council report on the past year's events. The Secretary retired after 10 years sterling service in that Office, and has of course now moved on to higher things as our President. The Society's annual merit award was presented to a most worthy recipient—one of the founder members of the Society—Dr. Frank Taylor for his Lexicon of N.R.S. Stratigraphy.

Following the A.G.M., there was a Collectors' Meeting into which several members had put a great deal of effort in presenting collections of rocks, fossils, minerals, books and photographs of past Society excursions. Then in late March we ran an excursion to the Eighth British Mineral and Gem Show in London, the superb specimens on show being greatly enjoyed by all.

The last meeting of the Winter season, in mid-April, was a talk by Jan Zalasiewicz of the B.G.S. on Silurian sediments in Central Wales, an area where he had recently been researching and which was of particular interest to those members who had been on the Society's excursion to the area the previous Summer. He managed to make muds very interesting!

The B.G.S. held more of their successful Open Days at Keyworth over the first week-end in May and members helped to man a Society stall there throughout the three days. Many membership leaflets were handed out and approximately £100 raised by selling back copies of the Journal.

In late May the Society was closely associated with Derby Environmental Week and organised several activities during the period, in addition to manning the Society Exhibit on the opening and closing days of the event in connection with the Geological Road Show. On the Sunday afternoon Dr. Trevor Ford led a field trip to Castleton, then on Monday evening Dr. Ron Firman and Mr. John Young led a combined historical/geological excursion to the old Chellaston gypsum workings. On Tuesday, Robin Jeffcoat conducted a visit to the National Stone Centre site, and on Wednesday evening Dr. Neil Aitkenhead gave a lecture on the Geology of the Derbyshire Area. All events were very well attended and much interest in local geology appeared to have been engendered. It was felt by all those who had been involved in the week to have been a most worthwhile venture. Ros Grum and Colin Bagshaw are particularly to be thanked for their close involvement in the organisation.

Over the Spring Bank Holiday week-end at the end of May, Jim Rose and his colleague Wishart Mitchell led an excursion to the Swaledale area which was greatly enjoyed by all participants. Then on Saturday, 4th June, Dr. Robin Old of the B.G.S. led an excursion to the Coventry area which he, along with others from the B.G.S., had been engaged in re-mapping.

We chose one of the very few perfect Summer evenings last year, in late June, for an excellent evening excursion into the old ironstone quarries at Holwell with Dr. John Martin of the Leicester Museum Service. It was both a geological and botanic feast with the profusion of wild flowers we saw in the quarry, particularly the wild orchids.

In July, for the day's excursion led by Neil Aitkenhead and Tim Charsley of the B.G.S. to the Churnet Valley and Brownend Quarry, we were not quite so fortunate with the weather as those who were there will testify! We had just arrived at the quarry to commence looking at the Milldale Limestones when the heavens opened and remained so all day. In the Churnet Valley we descended down the glacially over-deepened and exceedingly slippery slopes through the Coal Measures to view the major fossil band which should have been clearly visible in the river bank, had the river not been several feet above normal. A few brave and extremely foolish souls immersed themselves in the river in the interests of science, whilst those with more sense and an eye

to their lunch proceeded to the Black Lion. After lunch the party went up-stream (literally) to view further formations before returning thankfully to the coach to dry out briefly before re-emerging at the Weaver Hills to conclude an inclement but nonetheless very enjoyable day.

Later in July Mr. Norman Lewis of the Notts. Trust for Nature Conservation led an evening walk in the Pleasley Vale to view the impressive gorge cut there in the Magnesian Limestone.

The venue for the week's excursion in August was South-West Scotland, the two leaders being Ray Chadburn, a local amateur geologist, and Dr. Phil Stone of the B.G.S. in Edinburgh. The geology ranged from the mineralisation of the Leadhills/Wanlock Head area to the more complex story of the turbidites, pillow lavas and associated rocks of the Ballantrae Ophiolite Complex.

The last field meeting of the year was to the Rochdale area in early October, entertainingly led by Dr. Fred Broadhurst of Manchester University. We were most fortunate with the weather particularly for that part of the world. A road cutting on the M62 provided the first exposure of the day and set the scene for the variety of superb sedimentary structures we were to see later on. Also of great interest were the well preserved goniatites we found in the marine bands of the shales above the Kinderscout Grit, the search for which worked up the necessary appetite for the excellent lunch which many thereafter enjoyed at the hostelry of "Owd Betts".

For our October indoor meeting Dr. Geoff Brown of the O.U. stepped in at very short notice to give us a lecture on "Steam-water Interactions at Crater Lakes and Geothermal Systems", a follow-up in a sense to the lecture given by his colleague Dr. Hazel Rymer the previous October.

In November we had a talk on Geological Conservation and Field Education by Mike Harley of the Nature Conservancy Council, which provoked some topical discussion from the floor on the subject of the preservation of Geological S.S.I's.

"Big Country, Big Mountain, Loads of Fossils" was the title chosen by Dr. Dave Martill of the O.U. for his fascinating insight into the acquisition of superbly preserved specimens from the fossil fish localities of the Green River formation in the U.S.A., and this was followed of course by our usual Christmas social gathering much enjoyed by the 100 or so members who were there. Tasty fare was provided by the kind contributions of several members, and I would like to thank all those who helped in any way with the evening, with a particular mention for Mrs. Dawn Marriott who provided her usual superb cake, this time, topical as ever, on an American theme.

1989, and we were very pleased to have Professor Baker of the Geology Department talking to us on the Geology of Cyprus in January, particularly as it is to be his last year at Nottingham. We all thoroughly enjoyed his comprehensive explanation of the complicated story of this geologically unique part of the world.

For the Foundation lecture in February, the President had invited Professor Howie to give his celebrated and entertaining lecture on "Gemstones", and he had also brought some superb specimens for us to pore over afterwards, although unfortunately no free samples! This was of course the appetiser for the Society's Jubilee Dinner which I have already referred to, and which was generally agreed by all who were there to have been a most excellent way of celebrating our first twenty-five years. There were several founder members of the Society present, and it was so nice that some members had come from as far afield as Newcastle-on-Tyne and Weymouth to be with us for the occasion. A fitting climax to our twenty-fifth year.

Six Council meetings were held during the course of the year to organise the Society's programme and affairs, and a major innovation this year was to the format of the circular. Seven circulars have been produced during the year, less than normal, but the full Winter and Summer programmes are now listed on the front page which has, we think, been popular with the membership. Also this year the job of Secretary has been lightened somewhat by Jack Fryer having taken over the task of organising indoor meetings, and Ian Sutton that of arranging the field meetings, with Judy Small being responsible, with a small sub-committee and the invaluable assistance of her husband Philip, for the production of the circulars. As ever we are most grateful for the help of those members who hand deliver many of the circulars and Journals, and also of course for the small team of helpers ably co-ordinated by Judy Small who check and sort the Journals for distribution.

The Society's exhibit has been on display at the B.G.S. during their Open Days and was much in evidence during Derby Environmental Week. It is currently being revamped by Mick Stanley, and we look forward to the unveiling of the new-look exhibit in the near future.

Membership of the Society currently stands at 472 and remains relatively steady, and it is pleasing to note that so many members have responded to the plea in the latest circular for them to complete Deeds of Covenant for their subscriptions.

We have sadly been notified of the deaths of two members during the year, Len Grundy and Harold Smith, and our condolences are extended to their families.

We are all most grateful to the excursion leaders and speakers who have entertained and educated us throughout the year, and are particularly grateful too to Professor Baker and the University for the use of these excellent facilities in the Geology Department which we have enjoyed for so long. We are very sad to note that the Geology Department is effectively to be closed at the end of the next academic year due to the nationwide reorganisation of University Earth Sciences Departments, particularly in view of the close relationship the Society has always enjoyed with the members of the Department and the help it has received from so many of them throughout its twenty-five years.

I would of course like to thank also all members of the Society who have helped in any way during the course of the year, and to the membership in general for their excellent support of the Society activities. May the next twenty-five years be as successful.

Susan M. Miles

#### **Erratum**

Inadvertently the wrong text figure was printed in vol. 11, no. 4 to illustrate the report on the excursion to the Churnet Valley and Brownend quarry. Fig. 1 (p. 287) was not, as the caption stated, a section of strata in Brownend Quarry but a graphic log of the nearby Caldon Low borehole. The authors and editor apologise to readers who may have tried to match this with what can be observed in the quarry. The intended section is reproduced overleaf (p. 48).