

**SECRETARY'S REPORT
FOR 1994/1995**

The Society has, once again, had a very successful year with 18 new members and one new institution having joined. Membership now stands at Ordinary 208, Joint 66, Institutional 80. Sadly, I have to report the deaths of the following current and former members: Lisa Morley, Mina Beaumont, Hugh Holgate, Florence Calladine and Mr G. D. Miller. The Society's sympathy and condolences are extended to their families and friends.

The Secretary's job is shared among a number of Council Members. I will use my review to thank the various individuals that have helped to organise such a successful and enjoyable programme of events in 1994/95.

There are obviously many things to thank the President for, but the one that I would like to mention here is for use of her office facilities to photocopy the circular, Council minutes and agendas etc., thus saving the Society a great deal of money.

The outdoor meetings are organised by Dr Ian Sutton and we are very fortunate to have someone with such a wide awareness of classic locations and knowledgeable

leaders. Dr Sutton also saves Council a lot of work by, through his office, maintaining the membership list, printing the envelope labels and posting the circular. Field excursions provide the best opportunity for amateur members to broaden their experience of 'hands-on' geology, with the guidance and knowledge of leaders who are often professional geologists. This year's excursions continued to be well attended, and I understand that very few other local geological societies can regularly turn out sufficient numbers to make coach hire viable. This is greatly preferable to the marshalling of large numbers of cars, so please keep coming on the trips. The field visits require a small subsidy but Council think this is worthwhile to encourage greater participation. We have decided to welcome guests of members on field trips where numbers are not limited. For insurance purposes, guests will be made members for the day at a cost of £2.00.

This year has seen uniformly enjoyable trips to Castleton, Derby city centre, the Central Pennines, the Trent Valley and Alderley Edge mines.

In May, the Castleton trip was led by Dr Peter Gutteridge (see this volume, pp. 38-43). Several excellent sections in disused quarries were examined and Whinnat's Pass was visited. With three generations of Castleton geological 'authorities' present, there was much interesting discussion on the re-interpretation of

some features, to the great enjoyment and interest of the 35 assembled members.

In June, Nick Moyes and Glynis Sanderson guided about 12 members around the building stones of Derby city centre in a most interesting manner.

The weekend trip in July to the Central Pennines (see *Mercian Geologist*, Volume 13, Part 4, pp. 199-201) was led by Paul Wignall of Leeds University and Ian Chisholm of the BGS. The 'leaders did us proud' was the comment after a most thorough examination of many sites of interest over the two days.

In September, Alan Brandon and Mike Sumbler of the BGS led a well-attended trip to study the Pleistocene fluvial gravels of the Trent Valley between Newark and Lincoln, and to examine an excellent temporary section of the 'Lower Lias' in the cutting for the new Leadenham By-pass, south of Lincoln (see this volume, pp. 4-11). The excursion provided the opportunity to follow a former, now abandoned, Pleistocene course of the Trent. At Leadenham, members responded enthusiastically (and successfully) to the leaders' challenge to find some stratigraphically useful ammonites. The day was rounded off by a brief visit to an archaeological dig at Newark Castle.

The trip to the Alderley Edge mineral mines in October was led by Geoff Warrington of the BGS. The limited number of places were fully booked well in advance of the trip. Despite the often strenuous going, which required the negotiation of several ladders, members' enthusiasm remained high, do doubt partly due to the less preferable alternative of the very wet weather outside. Members' spirit of adventure was amply rewarded with a highly interesting and stimulating description of the history of the mines and of the geological processes responsible for the mineralisation.

The indoor meetings are occasions when the membership get together. The meetings in early 1994 were organised by Jack Fryer and subsequently by Dr Neil Aitkenhead. Again the Society is very fortunate to have someone with such a large number of contacts among suitable lecturers and who has the experience to guide the often young and inexperienced speakers into a format that is suitable for our wide-ranging audience. This year we have enjoyed a wide, balanced and stimulating lecture programme, including: Canary Islands, Volcanics in Kenya, Gold in Wales, Corsica, Brachiopod Genes, Lake District volcanics, geology of Poland and Gold in Papua New Guinea.

Joan Bush is responsible for producing the Society's circular, without which there would be no publicity for Society events. Joan has the difficult task of tactfully chasing speakers and excursion leaders for information and then collating it for publication. Six newsletters were published this year.

The year saw the publication of Part 3 of *Mercian Geologist* Volume 13 and Part 4 was due in late March or early April 1995. The Editorial Board (Dick Aldridge, Judy Rigby, Judy Small, Bob Brown and Andy Howard) are to be congratulated on their sterling efforts in the compilation, production and distribution of the journal in its new format, and the Society's

appreciation also goes to Andrew Rigby in his pivotal role as co-ordinator of proofing and printing. Special thanks go to Dick Aldridge who, in standing down as Chairman of the Editorial Board, can look upon Volume 13 with the satisfaction of a job extremely well done. Dick will continue as a member of the Editorial Board, at least in the short term. Andy Howard will take over as Chairman for Volume 14.

Council has met formally 6 times during the year and has been conscious of its responsibilities to fulfil Society's objectives of promoting interest in geology by encouraging research, education and conservation. Additionally, the Auditors have indicated that we should use some of our investment income to pursue the Society's objectives rather than building up our capital reserves. As a result, in 1995 we have initiated two new projects, supported three others and continued with a sixth. All these will give us good publicity and hopefully an expanded membership.

1. The EMGS Award Scheme is designed to increase the awareness of geology among 18 year old school leavers. It comprises a travel award of £250 for the winner and £50 for their School, to be awarded to the best submission of a geological investigation proposal from a pre-undergraduate student in the East Midlands. Although we wrote to 160 schools who were identified as having geology on the upper school teaching curriculum, we were disappointed with the size of the response. We suspect there is a difficulty of getting past the school office to the teachers concerned, and we are investigating better ways of targeting these teachers and their pupils. However, we have made the award this year to Miss Katrena Stanhope of Skegness Grammar School. She produced an excellent proposal and will be going to Anglesey to study and produce a report for us (see *Mercian News*, this volume, p. 2). She is taking her A Level Geology examination this year (1995) and has applied to study Geology at Bangor University.

2. The second initiative is the EMGS excursion guide. This will be a field guide to classic geological sections in the East Midlands and will be aimed mainly at a lay readership. The Society has recruited a wide range of experts to write the individual excursions, each of which will describe several localities and provide the user with a very interesting and enjoyable day's geology. Publication is expected in 1996.

3. The Society has provided a grant of £100 to help Nottinghamshire RIGS (Regionally Important Geological Sites) Group publish a leaflet to publicise the aims of the RIGS scheme.

4. We have promised a grant of £500 to the Ketton SSSI project for information and interpretation notices. This is the project led by Alan Dawn with help from some EMGS members and members of the Stamford Geological Society. There was a Society evening visit to this location in summer 1995 (see this volume, p. 3).

5. We have made our usual small contribution to help the biennial Derby Environment Week. As always, Society was represented at the event last year. Members from the Derby area and others were involved in the

Derby City Building Stones walk and the exhibition at Elvaston. John Atkinson, Peter Jones and John Marriott are among those to be thanked for their contribution.

6. The sixth and ongoing initiative is the Nottingham Sandstone Caves booklet which originated as an off-print of a *Mercian Geologist* article. We would have been happy to break even on this project, but thanks to the generosity of the author Tony Waltham and the energetic distribution team of Andrew and Judy Rigby, Judy Small and Dr Waltham himself, we have so far made a profit of over £2000 and sales are still growing. Over 3200 copies have been sold and we have just budgeted for a fourth off-print of 2000 copies. To build

further on the public success of this book, Dr Waltham has offered to rewrite one section for the reprint to make it more accessible to the lay reader.

I have one final thank you to make on your behalf and that is to Nottingham University for providing us with excellent accommodation for our lectures and Council meetings. We are very lucky indeed to be able to use these facilities.

In conclusion I feel that the Society has had a very successful year and with the continuing and hopefully increased support of members, 1995 will be even better.

Alan Filmer

