

## SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1998/99

The Secretary reported that, since the last AGM, 28 new members had joined and membership now stood at 338 ordinary/joint/student, 68 Institutional. Regrettably the Society had learnt of the death of a longstanding member of the Society, Miss M. Palmer who joined in 1964. The Society has had a very successful year and once again I will use my review to thank the various individuals that have made that possible.

The Secretary's job is in fact shared among a number of people. The field meetings are organised by Dr Ian Sutton and the Society is very fortunate to have someone who has such a wide knowledge of locations and leaders. I understand that very few other societies can turn out enough members to make coach hire viable. This is greatly preferable to the marshalling of large numbers of cars, so please keep coming on the field trips. If you haven't this year you missed some excellent trips:

- In June, Peter Gutteridge led 43 members on a day trip to the Wye Valley.
- Also in June, Keith Ambrose led an evening visit to Breedon Cloud Hill Quarry attended by 23 members.
- In July, Albert Horton led a trip to the Holwell area, which included a contribution from the Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust warden.
- Also in July, Neil Aitkenhead led a day trip to Skipton Moor attended by 26 members.
- In September, Albert Horton led a second trip, this time to Ticknall and Ibstock.
- Also in September, Allan Brandon and Brian Moorlock took 54 members on a day trip to the Malvern area.

All the above trips are reported in *Mercian Geologist* Volume 14, parts 3 or 4. We welcome guests of members on field trips where numbers are not limited. For insurance purposes we will make such people members for the day at a cost of £2.00. Members are reminded that the Society has only public liability insurance and that it is members' individual responsibility to ensure that they have adequate personal insurance and to wear a suitable hard hat. A list of field trips for each year is published in the Society's Newsletter.

The indoor meetings are occasions when most of the membership can get together. The meetings for the 1998/99 season were, for the sixth and last year, organised by Dr Neil Aitkenhead. The Society has indeed been fortunate to benefit from Neil's tremendous knowledge of potential speakers, and he is sincerely thanked for his hard work as Meetings Secretary. Jennifer Anderson will take over for the 1999/2000 season. This year once again we have enjoyed a varied and fascinating programme.

The lecture following the 1998 AGM was by Gill Norton of BGS, who had just returned from

Montserrat. A huge audience saw some spectacular videos and slides along with a very interesting account of the life of a geologist at the volcano observatory. In April, the meeting was held at Loughborough University and was successful in attracting about 60 people. Tony Buck described the complete history of the Asfordby Mine from conception to demolition and explained the unique geological conditions and processes that contributed to the closure. Colin Bagshaw presented the EMGS lecture at Derby Environmental Week on the subject of Derbyshire Mines and mineralisation. A large audience of about 70 people, many of whom were non-members, all enjoyed a clear and humorous account.

The 1998/99 season of lectures got underway in October with a joint meeting with the Yorkshire Geological Society held at BGS Keyworth. A large audience (150) heard eight speakers on the theme of Recent Advances in Understanding of the Geology of the East Midlands. We are grateful to the organisers, speakers and BGS for this most successful meeting.

In November David Cantrill described the reaction of the Cretaceous flora of the Antarctic to the polar day length. The December meeting heard Russell Coope give his now famous talk on a Beetle's view of the Ice Age, which contained both humour and good science. In January, Andy Russell described the spectacular 1996 Jokulhaup. The Foundation Lecture was given by the President, who described the techniques and results of the BGS survey of the North Sea and English Channel. This was followed by an excellent meal in the comfortable surroundings of the University Staff Club.

There have been six circulars published this year. In producing this I have been greatly helped by Tony Morris and Ian Sutton's staff. Dr Sutton also saves the Society a lot of work by maintaining the address list and receiving and collating postal bookings for the trips. All members of Council have done their bit, including making tea, providing B&B and transport for speakers, moving and staffing the display, etc.

Your Council has met formally six times this year, and has been conscious of its responsibilities in accordance with Society's objectives of promoting interest in Geology by encouraging research, education and conservation. This year we continued with, or supported, several projects.

1. The Society was represented at the National Environmental Week, the Derby Show, Wollaton Hall and at three Minerals 98 quarry open days. Many thanks go to the volunteers who have taken, erected or staffed the stand. Les Hall and Philip Small have recently refurbished the display using photographs supplied by Judy Small, Peter Green and myself. We continue to welcome any other photos to help us keep the displays up to date.
2. The second initiative is the EMGS field guide

which is progressing steadily. A lot of work has been done on this by Albert Horton, Les Hall, Andy Howard and Ian Sutton.

3. The revised Nottingham Sandstone Caves book has sold well. Thanks to the generosity of the author Tony Waltham and the energetic distribution team of Andrew and Judy Rigby, Judy Small and Tony Waltham, 1200 copies of the second edition have been sold so far.

I have one final thank you to make on the Society's behalf and that is to Nottingham University for providing us with excellent accommodation for our meetings and lectures. We are very fortunate indeed to have access to these excellent facilities.

In conclusion I feel that the Society has had a very successful year and with the continuing and hopefully increased support of members, 1999/2000 should be even better.

*Alan Filmer*