



**Circular 374
January 2008**

Registered Charity No: 503617

President: John Travis

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INDOOR MEETINGS **SPRING 2008**

Saturday 12th January 2008 - 6.30 pm

Marie Stopes: Sex, lies and fossil plants

Speaker: Dr Howard Falcon-Lang (University of Bristol)

Saturday 16th February 2008 - 6.00 pm

The Foundation Lecture followed by the Annual Society Dinner – **BOOKING FORM ENCLOSED**

Please ensure all applications are submitted by Friday 8th February at the latest

Saturday 8th March 2008

Members Evening

Saturday 19th April 2008

Midlands Influences on William Smith

Speaker: Peter Banham

SPRING 2008 INDOOR MEETINGS

Saturday 12th January 2008 - 6.30 pm

Marie Stopes: Sex, lies and fossil plants

Speaker: Dr Howard Falcon-Lang (University of Bristol)

Marie Stopes (1880-1958) requires little introduction. She was one of the most flamboyant and influential figures of the twentieth century and, in 1999, Guardian readers voted her Woman of the Millennium in recognition of her pioneering work on birth control. Far less well known is the fact that Stopes trained as a geologist, and her work in palaeobotany remained her life-long passion. Although Stopes has been the subject of four previous biographies, none of these works address her geological career. In this talk I uncover the secret life of Marie Stopes and rediscover her major contributions to Earth sciences.

Saturday 16th February 2008 - 6.00 pm

FOUNDATION LECTURE

Looking for Life on Mars

Speaker: Prof. Monica M Grady (Open University)

Why is there so much interest in Mars? Many scientists believe that there is overwhelming evidence that suitable environmental conditions for life to survive existed on Mars in the past, when the planet had a thicker atmosphere and liquid water was stable at the Martian surface. Most of the observations in support of this belief come from missions to Mars, both orbiting satellites and landing craft. There is, however, another window on the Martian surface, and the processes that take place there: meteorites from Mars. Martian meteorites are igneous rocks, some of which have suffered alteration by aqueous fluids at Mars' surface. Many Martian meteorites also contain pockets of gas trapped within impact-generated melt; the gas was trapped from the Martian atmosphere during ejection of the meteorites from the surface of the planet. One of the Martian meteorites, ALH 84001, achieved notoriety after a team of NASA scientists identified structures within carbonate patches as fossilised Martian microfossils. Although their evidence is by no means conclusive, and not accepted by much of the scientific community, their findings have stimulated a great deal of interest in exploration of Mars for traces of past life.

In her talk, Monica Grady will consider what we know about Mars, both from space missions and from Martian meteorites. She will also discuss results from recent space missions, and whether analyses carried out on the Martian surface show that the red planet is a dead planet - or whether it is alive!

Saturday 8th March 2008 - AGM – 6.00 pm

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence;
2. Minutes of AGM held on 17/3/2007;
3. Matters Arising from those Minutes;
4. Secretary's Report;
5. Treasurer's Report;
6. Appointment of Auditor;
7. Editorial Report;
8. Election of Officers for 2008;

If there are no other nominations, it will be proposed from the chair that the following will serve:

President - John Travis;

Vice-President - Ian Thomas;

Secretary - Janet Slatter;

Treasurer - Christine Moore;

Editor - Tony Waltham.

9. Election of Council for 2008 – 5 members are eligible for re-election (Colin Bagshaw, David Bate, Tim Colman, Judy Rigby, John Wolff) and there are 5 vacancies
10. Vote of thanks to retiring Council members;
11. Any Other Business.

The Minutes of the last AGM and the Treasurer's Report will be distributed at the meeting.

followed by:

Members Evening - 6.30 pm

There will be four speakers (listed below alphabetically)

Title: Iceland, Faroe Islands and zeolites

Speaker: Alan Dawn

Abstract: The opening of the North Atlantic Ocean has left a trail of basalts stretching from East Greenland through the Wyville-Thompson Ridge to Iceland, through the Iceland-Faroe Ridge to the Faroe Islands, and then beyond to Skye, Mull, Rum and Eigg as far as the Giant's Causeway in Ireland. Active volcanism in Iceland today continues adding to the story as the island splits down the middle, exposing the Mid-Atlantic Ridge as it reaches the surface. Spectacular scenery results from the past and present volcanic activity. This presentation will be illustrated with colour transparencies and a display of some of the rock forms and specimens of the zeolite suite from Iceland, Faroe Islands and Skye.

Title: Ardnamurchan – micro to macro

Speaker: Robert Gill

Abstract: Visiting interesting geological sites often leads to rock samples being collected and taken home for study. Further investigation can be undertaken by thin section, and while this usually requires laboratory equipment and machines, thin sections can be prepared at home. Details of how to do so will be given, as well as sources for materials required. *Geosec Slides* grew from such a beginning and is now a full-time occupation for me since I mobbed from Lincolnshire to the centre of an eroded Tertiary volcano in Ardnamurchan, Scotland. The presentation will be illustrated with photomicrographs of thin sections of rocks collected from the East Midlands, Ardnamurchan and other sites around the World.

Title: The rise of the roddons

Speaker: Dinah Smith

Abstract: The Fenland of Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire is the largest area (400km²) of Holocene deposits in Britain. These are up to 15m thick and have a complex palaeoenvironmental history. The stratigraphy comprises a succession of interbedded clays (marginal marine salt marsh environments) and peats (freshwater reedbeds) representing greater or lesser amounts of marine influence over the time period from 6000 to 2000 BP. The salt marsh clays contain spectacular networks of silt/sand-filled tidal creeks known locally as roddons. These host a range of microfossils - especially foraminifera and ostracods, and the spines and skeletal fragments of echinoids. This study aims to ascertain the mechanism of infill which formed the roddons by analysis of their sedimentary fill and the accompanying microfauna, thereby giving a greater understanding of the transgressive/regressive history of the Fenland.

Marketing the Society's Publications

We are still in need of a volunteer to promote the marketing of the Society's publications such as the East Midlands Field Guide, Leicester Building Stones Guide and the Sandstone Caves of Nottingham books. If you have any expertise in this field, or even if you haven't but would like to volunteer to help, please contact the secretary or any other member of Council.

New Members

Mr Russell Corbyn, Derby
Mr Geoffrey Solomons, Market Harborough
Mr S K Foster, Swarkestone

The National Stone Centre

Are looking for volunteers for guiding and other activities on the site at Wirksworth. If you can help, please contact Ian Thomas on 01629 824833 or ian@nationalstonecentre.org.uk

e-mail addresses

We would very much like to send you your Circular by e-mail. If you have not already done so, please send your e-mail address to the Circular Editor, sue.miles@freethcartwright.co.uk.

Please can you also confirm your name and address when sending your e-mail so we can correlate these details with our membership listing.

The next Circular will be published in March.

The next Council Meeting will be held on 29th February 2008.

Secretary: Mrs Janet Slatter, 100 Main Street, Long Whatton, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 5DG
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Treasurer: Mrs Christine Moore, The Steading, Main Road, Elvaston, Derby DE72 3EQ tel. no. 01332 573065.

EAST MIDLANDS GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
44th Anniversary Dinner

16th February 2008 at 8.00 pm

The 44th Anniversary Dinner will be held in the University of Nottingham Club after the Foundation Lecture.

Join other members on this special occasion for a free glass of wine or soft drink before the meal, a three course dinner and coffee. Cost **£19.95** per person.

The menu is:

- To Start** Parsnip Soup *with spiced onion rings(v)*
Chicken Liver Parfait with Red Onion Marmalade *Melba toast*
Beetroot, Cheshire Cheese & Apple Salad (v) *Toasted Almonds, Mixed Leaves, Pomegranate Dressing*
- Main Course** Pan Fried Salmon, Confit Tomato, Saute Potato *Brown shrimp Butter Sauce*
Fillet of Lamb with Ratatouille *Basil Pommes Puree*
A Tian of Roast Vegetables *Rosti Potato, Poached Hens Egg, Sauce Vierge (v)*
- Dessert** Steamed Lemon Pudding *Lemon Curd Ice Cream*
Nutmeg Crème Brulee *Cinnamon Shortbread*
Local Stilton with Pickled Mushrooms *Walnut Bread*

Please indicate your choice of main course below.

Booking form: 44th Anniversary Dinner

Please reserve places

My/our choice of the three courses are as follows:

Starter.....

Main.....

Dessert.....

Name & Tel. No:

Address:

Cheque payable to EMGS enclosed for £.....

Send to:

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