

Secretary's Report for 1973-74

1973-74, the tenth year since the founding of the Society, might be regarded as its first landmark. To the 28 Founder Members who paid a first subscription at the inaugural meeting on February 1st 1964 it was astonishing and gratifying to consider the great mushroom which had grown from such a tiny spore. The Society owes a great deal to the industry and enthusiasm of early Officers and Councils, and to the unflagging loyalty and support of the first Ordinary Members.

The tenth year was a good year. Fifteen meetings were planned, and it was with the deepest regret that a geological film show had to be cancelled at the last moment because of the consequences of industrial strikes. There was a weekend field meeting, four day excursions and a halfday excursion; there were three indoor meetings in Nottingham, one in Derby, and one in Matlock; there was a Presidential Address, an Annual Dinner and an Annual General Meeting combined with a Collectors' Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting in March was attended by over 60 Members, and was notable for a change in the management. Dr. F.M. Taylor had held office as President for three years and was due to retire and become Vice-President. Mr. P.H. Speed had been Treasurer for six years and felt that it was time to pass on his burden. Dr. W.A. Cummins had been appointed to the Editorial Board of the Geological Society of London, and had resigned from his office of Editor of the Mercian Geologist. In consequence of this, Mr. H.R. Potter was elected President, Mr. E.H. Marriott was elected Treasurer, and Dr. F.M. Taylor was elected Editor.

Seven vacancies had occurred on Council, as members retired after a three year term, and a new Council was elected by ballot.

The Collectors Meeting began long before the A.G.M. and continued as soon as the business was concluded. As on former occasions, the exhibitions prepared by members were varied and original, and this very popular meeting was as lively and enthusiastic as ever. After such a long series of annual exhibitions, it is admirable that members should find it possible to keep up the standard and proliferation of their exhibits.

A list of exhibits follows:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|--|
| 1. | D. Manning and D. Kelsey | The Geology of the Island of Rhum. |
| 2. | W.A. Cummins | Neolithic Stone Axe Petrology. |
| 3. | E. Taylor | Chart: Science in the Search for Oil. |
| 4. | R. Bright | Ammonite Collection. |
| 5. | H.B. Briggs | Outdoor Gear suitable for the Practical Geologist. |
| 6. | J.C. MacDonald | Mineral Collection. |
| 7. | M. Beaumont | a. Science and Geology at the Open University.
b. Geology and Environment.
c. Experimental Kit for Course S 223. |
| 8. | R.C. Gratton | Collection of Fossils and Minerals. |
| 9. | C. Champion | Ordovician Fossils. |
| 10. | D.M. Morrow | Specimens from the Pleistocene Crag, Dunwich. |
| 11. | H. Manning | Semi-precious Stones from Australia and New Zealand. |
| 12. | M. Boneham | The Annesley Conglomerate. |
| 13. | F. Russell | Fossils from the Red Crag of Shottisham, Suffolk. |
| 14. | R.W. Morrell | Collection of Rocks and Fossils. |

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|
| 15. | J. Fletcher | Inlaid Marble Tabletop made in Bakewell. |
| 16. | P. Spencer | Books, Postcards, Transparencies and Journals of Geological Interest. |
| 17. | A. Houldsworth and
F.M. Taylor | a. The Permo-Triassic Unconformity at Trowell.
b. Barite of the Trowell and Bramcote Area. |
| 18. | The Editor | Complete set of the Mercian Geologist. |

During the meeting, Mr. J.H. Sykes held his second specimen sale, and his increasing competence and business acumen was rewarded by the amazing profit of £24.50, which he later donated to the Society's Trust Fund.

At the final meeting of the indoor session in April, Mr. D.N. Robinson Tutor-Organiser for South Lindsey, Lincolnshire, W.E.A. and a newly-elected Member of Council, described to a large audience the geology and scenery of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Mr. Robinson had led a most successful weekend field excursion to this area in 1970, and his lecture was closely associated with it. His description of the area was illustrated by splendid slides, and was particularly appreciated by those members who had taken part in the excursion.

The first field excursion of 1973 was the weekend in the Llangollen area, led by Dr. F.M. Taylor. A party of 26 assembled in Llangollen, most of whom found themselves lodged in unaccustomed starkness in a hotel "chalet block". Saturday, a refreshing, windy day, was spent most pleasantly on the hills among the slate quarries, but Sunday was very wet, and it was a heroic little band that grimly followed the Carboniferous sequence in the teeth of cold wind-driven rain. In the afternoon, however, the sky cleared, and the excursion ended charmingly at World's End in a blaze of bright sunshine.

Later in May, Dr. F.M. Taylor and Mr. A. Houldsworth led an afternoon excursion to examine the cutting which had been made at Kimberley for the new motor-way by-pass. Members had been asked to meet at Kimberley, and although it was a fine Bank Holiday Sunday, some 20 members were present. Impromptu excursions such as this have an urgent vitality all their own, and it is clear that members appreciate the opportunity to visit temporary exposures when these present themselves.

In June, Dr. I.D. Sutton led a large party to Shropshire. The coach travelled through heavy rain to Much Wenlock, but at the first quarry, the clouds parted, the sun appeared, the ground dried, and incredibly the dismal morning transformed itself into a beautiful summer's day. This fitter setting for the rich geology of Shropshire crowned a most rewarding and enjoyable excursion.

During June, an exhibition was held in Derby Museum, entitled "200 years of Derbyshire Geology". In association with this, a series of lectures was arranged and the Society was invited to hold a meeting in the museum to co-incide with one of the lectures. The meeting was accordingly held on the last day of June, when two eminent members of the E.M.G.S. were to speak. In the afternoon Dr. F.M. Taylor of Nottingham University described the Permo-Trias in Derbyshire, and after a break for tea, Dr. T.D. Ford of Leicester University gave an account of the Quaternary in Derbyshire.

Next day, the July excursion took place, and Dr. A.M. Evans of Leicester University escorted a very large party around Charnwood Forest. Since quarries in Charnwood were disinclined to accept geological parties, and since the use of hammers in Charnwood was in general frowned upon, Dr. Evans laid his emphasis on aspects of topography and structure. On such a lovely hot day the walking and the viewpoints delighted the party, many of whom had formerly regarded Charnwood only as an interesting sequence of quarries.

The September visit to the Ladybower and Derwent Reservoirs was quite unlike any other excursion held by the Society. The members who took part were exceedingly grateful to Mr. J. Bullivant, the Chief Draughtsman, who patiently described the geology and drainage

of the area, the construction of the dams, and the manner in which the reservoirs were manipulated. It was an intriguing experience to follow underground passages and to climb vertical iron ladders, and to emerge, surprisingly into a dam tower.

The last excursion of the season was held in October in the Walsall area. There were three leaders, Mr. L.A. Riley, now at Robertson's Research Laboratories and Dr. Taylor and Dr. Cummins of Nottingham University. Mr. Riley, with permission from British Railways, first took the party down into a railway cutting to collect Wenlock Shales - which they did nonchalantly as locomotives shunted at speed, back and forth alongside. After lunch, Dr. Cummins led a visit to a road metal quarry which held many other interests than road metal. Lastly, Dr. Taylor took the party into an Etruria Marl Pit. This fine triple field meeting was a worthy ending to a splendid outdoor season.

The first indoor meeting was held early in November. Mr. D. Sears, a Research Student from Leicester University described to an immense audience his researches on the luminescence of meteorites. There was great appreciation of his demonstration of luminescence, and great delight as his apparently white-hot stones were passed in darkness from hand to hand round the room. But an even greater joy was evident when he described the components of his simulated "moon-dust" - not, as might be thought, green cheese, but soot, talcum powder and cocoa.

The December meeting was held on a bitterly cold evening, but a good audience braved the sleet to hear Dr. R.J. Aldridge of Nottingham University describe conodonts. The conodont mystery was unfolded from a description of odd parts, of assemblages, and associations to the controversial "conodont animal" recently discovered, and so captured the interest of those present that they later flocked to examine an exhibition of conodonts which had been arranged under microscopes.

According to annual custom, a January meeting was held in Tawney House, Matlock, jointly with the Matlock Field Club. Mr. P. Wilkinson of Sheffield University spoke to a crowded room on the subject of Derbyshire Volcanoes. He describes various types of volcanic activity and related the products of these to the rock types found in Derbyshire. More than 120 people attended this meeting, a record even for Matlock.

The ninth Annual Dinner was arranged by Dr. I.D. Sutton and was held in the Nottingham University Staff Club. As always, it was a very pleasant social occasion, and a very happy party assembled.

At the last meeting of the year, the President, Mr. H.R. Potter gave his first Presidential Address, and took as his subject the Sediments of the Henmore Brook Catchment Area. As the University had cancelled weekend bookings because of the power crisis, the meeting was held in the Adult Education Centre, Shakespeare Street, Nottingham. Members were received in the entrance hall by candlelight, and conducted to the lecture room with torches to hear the President describe in a room, with electric light, the series of observations which he had made at Henmore Brook near Carsington in Derbyshire, and to see demonstrated his gauges and measuring instruments. It was an extremely interesting lecture, and a fascinating glimpse into the field of Hydrology.

In all, we have had a splendid year of activities, and our members have supported excursions and activities most enthusiastically. We give our grateful thanks to our excursion leaders, Dr. F.M. Taylor, Dr. I.D. Sutton, Dr. A.M. Evans, Mr. J. Bullivant, Mr. L.A. Riley and Dr. W.A. Cummins, and to our lecturers, Mr. D.N. Robinson, Dr. F.M. Taylor, Dr. T.D. Ford, Mr. D. Sears, Dr. R.J. Aldridge, Mr. P. Wilkinson, and to our President, Mr. H.R. Potter. They have given us great pleasure, and taught us a great deal.

Eleven monthly circulars were sent out to members during the year, and the high cost of postage was reduced considerably by the kindness of members who delivered circulars by hand to people who lived nearby. This is a real service to the Society and deserves appreciation.

Membership continues to be satisfactory. During the year a pruning operation was carried out, and members who had allowed their subscriptions to lapse were served with final notices. As a consequence, a good many subscription arrears were received, and there were some resignations. In 1973, however, there was a total of 60 new members, and the state of membership at the end of the year was as follows:

Ordinary	Joint	Institutional	Junior	Honorary	Total
244	86	130	25	2	487

During 1973, two issues of the Mercian Geologist were produced and distributed. Volumn 4, No.3 was prepared by Dr. W.A. Cummins, the retiring Editor, and was published in March. Volume 4, No.4 comprised the Bibliography of the Geology of Leicestershire, compiled by Dr. T.D. Ford, Mr. R.J. King and Mr. G.J. Snowball, and was published in December. The Society acknowledges with gratitude the generous donation of £150 from the Department of Civil Engineering, University of Loughborough, granted through the kind offices of Mr. W.S. Moffat, which made it possible to produce the Bibliography at little cost to the Society.

A tenth annual report cannot end without a deep acknowledgement to Professor Lord Energlyn for the infinite support he has given to us over the ten years. During all this time the Society has been made to feel welcome at the Department of Geology, whether holding a meeting or collating the journal or in making the numerous business calls which seem to be necessary. We, the Society, are grateful for this privilege.

We are also grateful to the University of Nottingham who allow us the use of their premises without making a charge, so enabling us to hold our meetings in the most advantageous surroundings, with the use of their excellent equipment.

As Secretary, I must acknowledge the tremendous co-operation and kindness I have received from Society members on all occasions. It has indeed been a most rewarding service.

D.M. Morrow
Secretary.