

UKRIGS NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2006, Vol. 4, No. 3



By RIGS for RIGS: Keeping you up to date with RIGS nationally and in your area.

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E D I T O R I A L

I travelled extensively this summer, expanding my knowledge of geoconservation and its history. In Tasmania I met the people responsible for coining the term ‘geodiversity’ and went caving in some pristine locations. How do you look after geodiversity processes which have never, and I repeat never, been affected by humans? I was unable to help the Department of Primary Industries and Water on this point as we have no such thing in the UK, or do we? Answers on a postcard please! I then travelled to my mentor’s inspirational landscapes on the north coast of Maine, where Rachael Carson wrote ‘On The Edge of The Sea’. What fantastic pink granite coasts, similar to Brittany. I could

have sat there all day, looking at the rock pools and tracing the dykes across the beach. After that, going to Macclesfield to finish the town trial did not seem quite the same. I hope you had a good summer too. An open invite for your diary – my inaugural lecture, on ‘Why Conserve Rocks?’ is at the University of Chester on 1st December. Do let me know if you can come. ■



C O N F E R E N C E S

UKRIGS AGM

Saturday 23rd September 2006

The Annual General Meeting for the Association of all UKRIGS groups will be held this year at Dudley Museum, in the West Midlands.

10am – 12 midday: An opportunity to visit Barrow Hill – the Dudley Volcano, or participate in an indoor workshop.

12 – 1pm: The AGM itself. As well as the Chairman’s report, Treasurers report, other reports and question time, there will be the election of new officers and members to the executive committee.

1 – 2.30pm: Further opportunity to participate in workshops or visits. ■

Wren’s Nest Conference

Friday 1st September

A two-day meeting of lectures and fieldtrips to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Wren’s Nest National Nature Reserve. The Mayor of Dudley attended, and talks were given by Prof. Richard Fortey, president of the Geological Society, Dr Alan Thomas, Graham Worton, Alan Culter and

Rev. Geoff Johnson. They covered a wide range of topics from the state of the community today to trilobites. Congratulations to Wren’s Nest NNR on its anniversary and for achieving the ripe old age of 50. ■

History of Geoconservation Conference

24th – 25th November 2006

Dudley Museum is the venue for a packed programme of geoconservation talks and visits. You will travel through time from the very origins of geoconservation, through its impact on the British and International landscape, to more recent social and legal issues. Geoconservation, geotourism, geodiversity, geoparks, the Geologists Association, in fact anything and everything Geo will be there! Visits include a canal boat trip through the Dudley Caverns, a walk around Wren’s Nest, and time to browse exhibitions at Dudley Museum and Art Gallery. The cost is £25 for non-members / £15 for members of UKRIGS, Black Country Geological Society, History of Geology Group or The Geological Society of London. ■



UKRIGS Education Project Update Earth Science on Site

John R. Reynolds

Work on the Project continues, with the help of local RIGS Groups and ESTA members. We are aiming to get teaching materials ready for the conference season in September. Tedbury Camp and Vallis Vale, Somerset, work should be ready for the ESTA Conference fieldwork session on September 17th, and Barrow Hill, Dudley for the UKRIGS Conference on 23rd September. The Dryhill Key Stage 2 teaching materials are now on the website.

We had a useful visit to Mungrisdale, Cumbria, in July, where, apart from the Carrock Fell Gabbro and Skiddaw Formation, we came

across useful glacial material exposed as result of aggregate working!! We anticipate visiting our last site, Meldon, Devon, at the end of September.

The Earth Science On-Site materials have now been separated from the main UKRIGS website so that usage can be accurately logged. You can still find them by clicking 'Education' on www.ukrigs.org.uk

Have close look and please give your feedback to us at - education@ukrigs.org.uk

Thanks to all concerned!

The UKRIGS Education Project is funded by Defra's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, administered by English Nature. ■

MOA Signed

Mike Browne

The Memorandum of Association for the Local Geological Site Conservation-Review Project (EIT37-04-010) has been signed by Mike Browne of UKRIGS, Mark Campbell representing the Geology Trusts and English Nature (8/8/6). ■

Last Gasp for English Nature

On 1st October 2006, English Nature will become part of Natural England. This is currently made up of the Countryside Council, parts of DEFRA and English Nature. We wish the new chair designate, Sir Martin Doughty and the whole organisation well. UKRIGS has sent a letter to the Chief Executive Officer of Natural England, Dr Helen Phillips explaining what RIGS and RIGS groups do, and offering our help when necessary. ■

UKRIGS

Alan Cutler

UKRIGS has 43 member groups spread across the UK (about 90% coverage) but the size and composition of each one varies enormously. A membership survey is about to take place and hopefully will yield more precise information on the current situation. My hunch (and that is all it is) is that nationally there will be between 500 - 1000 directly people involved in RIGS groups. ■

Defra Local Sites Guidance Published at last!

This article in the previous issue of the UKRIGS Newsletter was actually written by John Reynolds, not Colin Prosser. My apologies ■

4th State of Nature published on Geodiversity

Cynthia Burek

The launch of the long awaited 'Natural Foundations: Geodiversity for People, Places and Nature', finally happened on 1st September 2006, in Dudley at their 50th anniversary celebrations. Natural Foundations is an essential read for all RIGS Groups. It is available from Northminster House, Peterborough or through www.english-nature.org.uk. This 128 page document covers areas central to RIGS work. There are chapters on geodiversity in a sustainable future, conserving and monitoring geodiversity, and threats to geodiversity, as well as opportunities to conserve geodiversity. It is lavishly illustrated by superb photographs and there is also an executive summary (8 pages) available. It is free and every RIGS group should have at least one. There will be some copies available at the UKRIGS Conference for people to take away. ■



Scotland

James Hutton Trail and Exhibition

Mike Browne & Jim Floyd

On the morning of 23rd May 2006, The Borders Foundation for Rural Sustainability, launched its 'Scottish Borders, James Hutton Trail' and the permanent 'James Hutton Exhibition' at the Reviver Farm Shop at Auchencrow near Reston in Berwickshire. With local television and national press coverage, the exhibition and trail were opened by the inimitable Professor Aubrey Manning. ■

Perth Fossil Exhibition

See some great fossils in the free exhibition "Locked in Rock" at Perth Museum. ■

Glasgow Fossil Grove

Is open until 25th September, to show the remains of an ancient forest. ■

Tayside RIGS group name change

Geodiversity is the new name for the Tayside RIGS Group. ■

St Andrews Geoscientists

Richard Batchelor

I am pleased to announce that the cast metal plaques for Professor Heddle and Charles Lapworth, geoscientists of St Andrews, are now complete. They have been erected at their respective locations: Heddle at St. Leonard's House, part of St. Leonard's School, and Lapworth opposite Madras College. A descriptive leaflet for these two persons and all other "geoscientists" of St. Andrews is currently in production.

The formal unveilings will take place on Saturday 30th September: Heddle's at 10:30 and Lapworth's at 11:00. I do hope you will be able to attend. ■

London

Festival of Geology

For educational fun this autumn, bring your family, school group, geologically minded friends and Rockwatch members to this year's Festival of Geology at University College London. The Festival is on Saturday 4th November and includes the Geologists Association Reunion. There will be opportunity to see geological exhibitions, view the photographic competition and buy minerals, antiquarian books and refreshments. Come to learn about the geology of the moon, fireworks and dinosaurs in the Discovery Room and buy your Christmas presents early! For more information, phone 020 7434 9298 or visit www.geologist.demon.co.uk. ■

North Pennines

Art of Rocks Geotour

The 'Art of Rocks' geotour on 8th August provided an opportunity for the public to explore the use of rock in art at a number of places in and around Kirkby Stephen – in the part of the North Pennines that lies in Cumbria. Both ancient and modern uses were explored. The public walked the Poetry Path at Kirkby Stephen, visited an Andy Goldsworthy sculpture in Warcop and walked up to the recently restored Nine Standards stone cairns above Kirkby Stephen. The full day of geotours (guided mini-bus tours, including walks) were run by East Cumbria Countryside Project as part of the North Pennines AONB Partnerships ■

NEWRIGS

Quarry in Danger

North East Wales RIGS group is having difficulty with one of its sites – Holt Castle Quarry. It is trying to work with CADW and Wrexham Maelor Borough Council to prevent all the geological interest disappearing under shotcrete. We are hoping to save the Holt-Coddington fault exposure. Comment by OU students "This is a well cemented exposure". ■

Grant Awarded

NEWRIGS has been awarded a grant by the Welsh Assembly Government, in partnership with Denbighshire County Council and Clwydian AONB, to produce an LGAP. ■

Publications

RIGS

Central Wales RIGS Group, Goe Mon, NEWRIGS and UKRIGS

A leaflet about safeguarding Welsh geodiversity through local RIGS groups. This leaflet explains the geological heritage of Wales, and all about RIGS in Wales.

The Black Country Geodiversity Action Plan

The Black Country Geodiversity Partnership

"Making a positive contribution to the enrichment of the Black Country environment and quality of life by conserving, enhancing and managing the region's geological heritage and diversity for the benefit of all."

Copies available from geodiversity@btconnect.com

Building with Scottish Stone

Natural Stone Institute

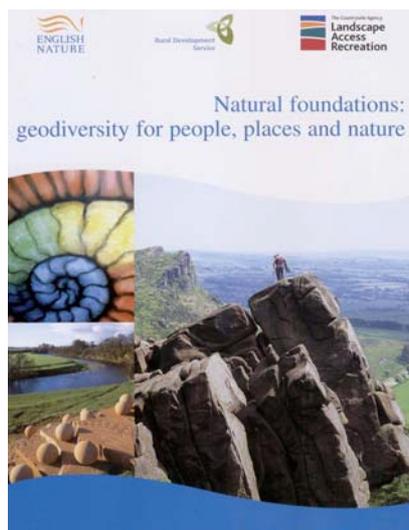
A useful resource about the history of stone, working with stone and building with stone. Copies available from the Natural Stone Institute.

Geological Conservation - a guide to good practice

English Nature

A very thorough book including why geology should be conserved, how to do it well, and how to manage different types of sites. Copies available from English Nature –

www.english-nature.org.uk



Diary Dates 2006

- 1st – 2nd September
Wren's Nest Conference
- 15th – 17th September
ESTA Conference
- 17th – 21st September
Geoparks 2006, The 2nd International Conference
- 23rd September
UKRIGS AGM, Dudley
- 4th November
Geologists' Association Festival of Geology UCL
- 24th – 25th November
History of Geoconservation Conference

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It is always interesting and enjoyable to read about RIGS groups and their work. To share your news and events in this quarterly newsletter, please contact Prof Cynthia Burek, RIGS Newsletter Editor, c.burek@chester.ac.uk or Vic Page, Assistant RIGS Newsletter Editor, v.page@chester.ac.uk 250 words max, pictures if you can. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors and unless stated, do not represent the opinions of UKRIGS.