

Bulletin Number 57 April 2001



Brownend Quarry, Waterhouses - Sunday 1 April 2001

**** Postponed until Sunday 30 September due to Foot & Mouth restrictions ****

Dinosaur Coast - weekend 11 to 13 May 2001

**** Cancelled due to Foot & Mouth restrictions ****

ROCKWATCH

Carboniferous Fun Day - Saturday 16 June

at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent in collaboration with Blue Circle Industries PLC from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm.

There will be a variety of activities to find out more about the theme for the day - "The Geology of the Carboniferous Period".

for further details contact:

Mike Fereday ☎ 01782 714643 / (713227 evg), mobile 07785 334414 email: mike@mfereday.freemove.co.uk

Carsington Area - Sunday 17 June

Leader: Dr. Neil Aitkenhead (ex. British Geological Survey)

Meet at the Carsington Reservoir Visitor Centre at 10.00am for an introductory talk by the leader in the teaching room there. Time will be allowed to visit the excellent explanatory exhibits at the Visitor Centre. We will then move on to Ballidon Quarry (between Ashbourne and Wirksworth). This is a large working quarry in the Carboniferous Limestone - limestones that were deposited near the edge of the Derbyshire platform.

Hard Hats Required

All trips are subject to developments in the Foot & Mouth crisis;
for further details of the excursions contact Steve Alcock: 01538 360431

ROCKWATCH

Rockwatch Field Trip to Park Hall 14 April 2001.

This has had to be postponed due to the Foot & Mouth outbreak. New date to be arranged

Rockwatch at the Staffordshire Show 30 / 31 May 2001.

This will probably have to be cancelled due to the Foot & Mouth outbreak.

Rockwatch Day - Saturday 16 June

The next Rockwatch meeting at the Potteries Museum will be in collaboration with Blue Circle Industries PLC and will be held on Saturday 16 June 2001 from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm.

The theme for the day's activities will be "The Geology of the Carboniferous Period" and includes:

- * a continuous showing of a Blue Circle video that shows how limestone is quarried and converted into cement for use in the construction industry.
- * making your own "Carboniferous" forest/marine scene.
- * brushing up your rock and fossil identification skills by examining samples from localities in North Staffordshire and Derbyshire.
- * casting your own Carboniferous fossil (50 p per fossil, Rockwatch members get one fossil free).
- * learning about how coal was made.
- * learning about the "Carboniferous" period of geological time.
- * learning about Millstone Grit and how it was created.

Lunch break, bring your own packed lunch or eat in the Museum café.

There will be activities for the younger children

Articles & Publications

Brumhead, D. 2000 **

Geological features in the upper Goyt Valley

The North West Geologist 10 pp.48-53

Some of the features to be found in the Goyt syncline (which has its southern outcrop on the Roaches, Leek Moors)

King, M.J. & Thompson, D.B. 2000 **

A history of the vertebrate footprint discoveries on Hilbre, Wirral, Merseyside, England, 1990-1994

The North West Geologist 10 pp.10-38

Describes the finding of the most complete in situ assemblage of Lower - Middle Triassic vertebrate footprints in Britain in the last 80 years.

Nowell, D.A.G. 2001 **

Book Review: including Geology of the country around Stoke-on-Trent

Proceedings of the Geologists' Association 112 pp.93-96

Review of four recently produced BGS memoirs, including the Stoke-on-Trent sheet123.

Reynolds, J. 2001 **

RIGS recording and assessment update

UKRIGS Newsletter 4 supplement

The latest in the development of a standardised national recording forms for RIGS sites, which is largely based on the Staffordshire RIGS Group model.

Thompson, D.B. 200 **

The development of geological education in the Potteries area and the wider role of the Education Department of Keele University 1951-1997

Bulletin of the North Staffs. Group of the Geologists' Association 57 Appendix 13

This issue of the Bulletin contains another in-depth study of a particular aspect of local geological education.

** items are available for reference (by prior appointment) at the Geological Records Centre,
Natural History, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 3DW ☎ 01782 232323

Using e-mail

If you would like to receive the Bulletin by e-mail, please contact NSGGA Treasurer Carol Burnett via:

carol@burnett40.freeserve.co.uk

National Nature Reserve Bid

The Environmental Initiatives Team of Stoke-on-Trent City Council have put in a bid to English Nature to upgrade the status of Park Hall Country Park to National Nature Reserve. Park Hall contains Hulme Quarry, which is already an SSSI for Triassic conglomerate geology. If successful, the bid will allow more funding opportunities and could result in improved explanations of why the geology is significant.

John Myer's Award

It was announced at the AGM that due to other commitments, John Reynolds wishes to step down as Chair. Anyone who is interested in taking on this less than onerous task should contact John on 01782 327068 for details.

Staffordshire RIGS Group

- * **Birchenwood Quarry, Kidsgrove** Report of site visit - 9th January 2001

John Reynolds and Jonathan O'Dell [representing NSGGA/Staffs RIGS] met with Elaine Moulton [Newcastle Planning] and Nigel Williams, geologist, plus the site manager [for the developers - Parkhill Estates Ltd] on this bright sunny morning. The object of the visit was to discuss and hopefully agree proposals for keeping as much of the Coal Measures rocks exposed after the Birchenwood Brickworks site has been developed for housing. The site is to the south of Birchenwood Country Park, owned by

Newcastle Borough Council. The site is in the lowest part of Westphalian ³C², between the Aegiranum (Gin Mine) marine band and the Cambriense (Bay) marine band and contains the Stafford Tonstein [ash band]. The agreed proposals are for two exposures to be left:

- * On the west side the 14-metre thick current-bedded sandstone near the top of the sequence, below the Cambriense or Bay Marine Band, will be stepped back. [This is the exposure shown in recent photographs in the Sentinel!] . A footpath will be cut diagonally across the face, linking the boundary path of the adjacent Country Park on the west with one of the housing estate roads on the east. The top of the current exposure is both inaccessible and dangerous and cannot realistically be left as it is. The proposed footpath will run behind gardens and should give access to the entire sequence.
- * On the east side of the site a new access road is being cut to link the estate to the A50 at the top of Kidsgrove Bank, via part of the original road to the brickworks. The developers and planners have agreed that this road can be built slightly further west than originally proposed so that it will cut through one of the lower sandstones and mudrocks below, leaving the rocks exposed at the roadside. Although the mudrocks will eventually grass over naturally, the sandstone above is expected to delay the process.

We had an obvious quick look at the geology, with plenty of evidence of small-scale normal faulting. Much of the middle of the sequence is faulted out. Some near-horizontal movement had taken place. Jonathan thought the evidence points to penecontemporaneous shearing of partly lithified sediment- possibly rotational failure due to differential compaction or bank collapse. The sheared coal seam was particularly interesting and indicates the need for a comprehensive photographic record of all such exposures. A nice project for someone!

JR did a quick lesson on Coal Measures geology for Elaine Moulton, who was impressed by the plant fossils and fossil soil with roots! It was her first visit to such a place! Perhaps we have a convert. Nigel Williams is a geologist and had met Jonathan before. He was quite keen to have exposures preserved, suggesting the alteration of the access road to increase the exposure. Both took away several copies of the RIGS leaflet.

Of immense significance is that the RIGS designation of the site brought the consultation for us to have a hand in the planning process. This was the second consultation involving Staffs RIGS -the other being the Wootton Estate of the Greenall family on the Weaver Hills.

We trust that Birchenwood will have a successful outcome.

One day we will need display boards and a leaflet!

In an odd moment!

John R. Reynolds

24 January 2001

* **next SRIGS committee meeting: Tuesday, 5 June 2001 at 7.30pm. This is the AGM.**

at the Staffs. Wildlife Trust offices, Coutts House, Sandon. Contact Sue Lawley at the SWT for details ☎ 01889 508534 or contact SRIGS Chairman, Ken Rout ☎ 01785 662291

Ecton Hill Field Studies Association

Due to circumstances beyond their control, EHFSA are currently unable to take bookings from sixth-form groups wishing to take the educational courses offered at Ecton Hill. EHFSA will continue to exist and have plans to continue with other educational projects. For full details contact Zoe Fleming, 1 Vicars Close, Oulton, Stone, Staffs ST15 8UQ 01785 816862

From the Local Papers

English Heritage will be contributing towards the repairs of the listed lime kilns at Consall Forge, along the canal between Cheddleton and Froghall. Leek Post & Times 21.2.2001

News that jobs were to be lost at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery (Sentinel 27.2.2001) prompted the Chairman of NSGGA to call for a response at the AGM. By a unanimous vote, those present empowered the NSGGA Secretary to write a letter on the Group's behalf expressing concern at the loss of expertise and service that would ensue. This response was published in mid-March and a full copy is available from the Secretary, Dorothy Wright.

Winsford Salt Mine visit

The NSGGA has been put on the waiting list for groups wishing to visit the underground salt mines at Winsford - we hope therefore to be able to run a trip there sometime in 2002.

NSGGA Committee 2001-02

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Executive Committee (honorary):

Dr. Colin Exley; Terry Jones; David Thompson; Ted Watkin.

Executive Committee (elected):

Mike Fereday; Chris King; Phil Pye; John Reynolds; Ken Rout; John Winchester.

Executive Committee (co-opted):

ROCKWATCH

Zoe Fleming; in addition a representative from the Staffs. University Geol. Soc. and the Keele Geol. Soc. is invited to attend committee meetings

Co-ordinator: **Mike Fereday** ☎ 01782 714643 / (713227 evg), mobile 07785 334414

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Why not visit the NSGGA web pages: www.esci.keele.ac.uk/nsgga

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