



**THE OPEN UNIVERSITY GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
GOGLEDD CYMRU - NORTH WALES
BRANCH NEWSLETTER**



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Branch Organisers Bit (December 2004)

Welcome to the Gogledd Cymru Branch Newsletter for December 2004. On behalf of the Committee I would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a successful 2005, and for those waiting for exam/course results, good luck.

This newsletter is the last one before our AGM on 5th February 2005. The committee for 2005 will be decided at that meeting. The following members have indicated their willingness to stand:-

Rachel Atherton; Wendy Owens; Tony James; Lyn Relph.

If you are interested in joining the committee, but don't know if it is for you, please feel free to get in touch (by phone or e:mail).

We are in the process of putting together a programme of field trips for the next year or two. If you would like an input and can suggest places of geological interest to visit and/or possible leaders please let me know (particularly for those areas we have not visited recently).

I would like to remind everyone that the subscription renewal form has been sent out with the OUGS newsletter. I have also been asked to remind you to let the membership secretary know if you have changed your email address or other details.

Finally I would like to thank all those members who have been on field trips in 2004. It has been a pleasure to meet everyone, but especially those who have been on a field trip for the first time.

I hope to see you at the AGM in February and at field trips during 2005.

Best wishes Rachel

The Precambrian Rocks of the Rhoscolyn Anticline

On Sunday 13 June I had the pleasure of attending a field trip to the Rhoscolyn Headland, Anglesey at which the Gwynedd and Mons RIGS Group launched the publication of a guide to the structure of the world class structures of the Precambrian Rocks of the Rhoscolyn Anticline. It has been published by Seabury Salmon & Associates in partnership with the Association of Welsh RIGS Groups, based on work started by the late Professor Dennis Wood, who sadly passed away in April 2001 before completing it. Despite world-wide experience of geology the Rhoscolyn area was his favourite spot. Dr Margaret Wood (no relation) completed his work and has dedicated the booklet to him. To launch the booklet we had a champagne toast to Dennis at the Welsh slate memorial near the Coastguard Lookout (GR SH 263752) erected in his memory.

The 24 x A4 page booklet has 13 numbered locations and 22 excellent coloured photos from the SE slightly overturned limb of the assymmetric anticline to Bwa Du on the gently dipping NW limb. The booklet (ISBN 0-9546966-0-3) costs £4.50 and is in English and

Welsh; excellent value for those who love this beautiful, and geologically challenging, region.

Prof. Jack Treagus, a structural geologist at Manchester University, has been appointed by Dr Wood as adviser to continue a RIGS project to elucidate further some outstanding structural uncertainties of the deformation sequence of the Holy Island Group. *Fred Owen.*

Glacial Geomorphology of Cadair Idris.

The Cadair Idris massif comprises rocks of Ordovician age, dominated by interbedded marine mudstones and volcanic rocks. The landscape of Wales was shaped by glaciers until they finally melted, about 12,000 years ago - this latest estimate is earlier than the previous estimates of 8,000 years. On the field trip, we looked at the glacial evidence in Llyn Cau on Cadair Idris and the area to the Southeast. It is thought that a cold ice field covered central Wales, not moving much because it was frozen to the bedrock, but fed by glaciers that moved down the valleys. One of these glaciers occupied the valley along which the A487 runs. This in turn was fed by a small glacier that



originated in the cirque, now occupied by Llyn Cau. On leaving the car park we climbed the steep steps from the valley floor, up the cliff face before moving onto more level ground. This gently sloping U-shaped valley is a hanging valley, where the smaller cirque glacier flowed south east to join the larger glacier flowing valley now occupied by the road. On the northern side of the hanging valley is a large lateral moraine, centre of picture shown above.

On the valley floor, are patches of diamicton, (not till because it is uncertain that the material was deposited directly from the glacier). Stones from the base of the glacier tend to be sub-angular while



those carried along on the glacier surface are angular (because they have not been scraped along the bedrock with overlying weight of ice.). Striations were in evidence, everywhere - especially on the mudstones and hard volcanic rocks (usually not as easy to scratch).

Further up the hanging valley were several large well-smoothed Roches Moutonnees. Standing beside the very deep lake we could see the craggy tops of the mountains, these are nunatoks, the peaks which were not covered by ice and snow but exposed

to severe frost shatter. The upper edge of the permanent snow/ice line is the Trim line. Today geological processes are still modifying the valley sides. A rock fall and streams that are depositing fan delta on the valley floor. As they are not deposited into a moving body of water they retain a river dominated lobed shape right of picture (previous page). This is a short summary of some of the interesting things I learnt on Saturday. It was a very enjoyable day though rather energetic. Professor Michael Hambrey was our excellent leader for the day. If this write-up stirs your interest in glaciology, he has written an undergraduate book on glaciology. I read it several years ago, good to read or for reference. *Lyn Relph.*

Announcements

Please do remember your AGM.

This will take place on 5th February 2005 at 2pm – 4:30pm, hopefully this should avoid any football crowds...

There will be a talk after the meeting as usual ---- a speaker is being confirmed as I write.

The venue as usual is the Library Lecture Theatre B at NEWI (make sure you tell the car park attendant that you are visiting NEWI otherwise you will be charged good cash money!!! (Wrexham are playing at home.).

Please note that the website address is www.OUGS.org.uk. We are also attempting to put a copy of each newsletter on the Gogledd Cymru website, any photos can then be viewed in full colour and at much better resolution.

The new membership secretary has asked me to remind members that any change of address should be sent to her (Penny Widdison e-mail: p.e.widdison@durham.ac.uk), this will ensure that a single database can be kept as up to date as possible. Please use the Giftaid on the renewal notice for membership – this will enable the OUGS to reclaim some of your tax, and put it to a better use.

I've been asked (as usual) to remind everyone that the cost of field trips is £2.00. This covers expenses for the leader (travelling and/or photocopying etc.). Remember to check your insurance details for trips, the exact requirements are published in the national newsletter.

Events Diary

This is in the process of being constructed, hopefully in 2005 we can arrange a trip to Parrys mountain on Anglesey. We are also trying to re-activate the peat bog trip, so fingers crossed all you bore-hole anoraks. We also plan to redo some old favourites like Hilbre Island – let's take some spades and examine the bioturbation on the walk to the island. Erratics on nearby Thurstaston Beach can be a goldmine. Unfortunately all our efforts to get down the 'salt mines' of Northwich have met with little success, but we are still trying. If you have any ideas or suggestions please let us have them.

Liverpool GS: Contact Joe Crossley

18 Jan: The Antiquity of Human Behaviour, Dr Laura Bishop

8 March: Walking with Cavemen, Prof. Peter Wheeler

3 April: Field trip to Cwm Graianog, Nant Francon, leader Joe Crossley

20/21/23 May: field w/e to Antrim Coast, leader Dr. Alan Bowden

Manchester GA: contact Fred Owen and/or visit www.mangeolassoc.org.uk for more detail and synopses.

Sat 22 Jan: Afternoon seminar, start 1.30 pm - Evolution of the Cheshire Basin:
Sherwood Sandstones, Dr Geoff Warrington, BGS
Mercia Mudstones, Dr Albert Wilson, BGS

Sat 19 March: Afternoon seminar, start 1.30 pm - Living with Volcanoes:
4 papers by Dr Peter Kokelaar, Prof Steve Self, Dr Jeurgen Neuberg and Prof Harry Pinkerton

Your committee for 2004 is

Branch organiser	Rachel Atherton
Acting Treasurer	Sue Hughes
Newsletter Editor	Tony James
Webmaster	Wendy Owens
Committee member	Lyn Relph

Next issue we will have a report from Lyn Relph on Fred's excellent trip to the Prince Madog...
This photo is a taster....

