



The Open University Geological Society



Gogledd Cymru (North Wales) Branch

Volume 7 Issue 1

Newsletter

January 2004

Branch Organiser's Bit

Firstly, the committee hope that everyone had a good Christmas and we would like to wish everyone a prosperous and happy 2004. If you had taken exams in 2003 we hope that the results were what you hoped for and that you are enjoying a well-deserved rest before commencing a new course.

There is quite a lot happening at the moment from the branch perspective. The preparations are well under way for the branch AGM on 7th Feb.2004.

Both Fred Owen and Sue Hughes will be retiring from the committee at the AGM. Both have been involved with the branch since its inception and have a wealth of experience, which will be sorely missed.

NB All branch committee members are elected or re-elected each year.
Currently the committee is: (vacant positions are identified)

Branch Organiser (Rachel Atherton)
Heads the branch and represents it at the National Committee meetings (3 per year).
Chairs the branch committee meetings (4-5 per year depending on requirements)

Branch Secretary (post unfilled).
Takes minutes at the Branch committee meetings and deals with a small amount of correspondence relating to the branch. Makes the arrangement for the AGM each year (location/time/equipment etc.).

Treasurer (Elaine Tilson)
Oversees branch accounts, which currently covers costs of visiting Field trip Leaders, Newsletter production, photocopying etc.

Liaison Officer (Fred Owen, Retiring)

Responsible for the upkeep of the list of members, who request, e-mail reminders of branch field trips and events including those of other local societies, a few days prior to the date.

Web Master (Wendy Owens)

At present in the process of designing, installing and running the Gogledd Cymru Web page.

Newsletter Editor Ann Bunning

Produces 5 Branch Newsletters per year.

Ordinary Members (Tony James) (Sue Hughes retiring)

These members help out at events, attend committee meetings, are active in arranging events programmes etc. No specific responsibilities are attached but such members are of great value to the committee.

NB it is likely that there will be a requirement for somebody/bodies to arrange the S260/S269 revision day 2004 to be held in Chester. (Sue Hughes did this very successfully in 2003).

Plea for help:

The committee is in the process of change. If you would like to be part of the group who arrange field trips/talks/revision days, and would like to influence where we go, then please get in touch or come to the AGM. There may be a job to which you would be ideally suited, for which you may have relative experience or which may interest you. If so we would welcome your help. We need your help! Even as an Ordinary Committee Member this help would be invaluable to the running of the branch. However if you would like to be nominated for a post currently filled please contact me prior to the AGM.

David Maddocks (OUGS Chairman) will be the speaker at our AGM, time and venue detailed on

An enclosed agenda The aim is to have two short talks on topics related to African, (Savanna and Namibian), geology and wildlife. For those who heard David's talk on Namibia in Chester last year, I am reliably informed that there will be an update and more photographs presented on 7th Feb.

We hope to see you there.

Rachel

For details of the present committee tel. number etc. see previous newsletter.

PROVISIONAL BRANCH FIELD TRIP PROGRAMME 2004

March 27th Wrexham Science Fair
Contact Tony James (combined with NWGA)

April
Visit to a sand and gravel quarry near Mold
Contact Wendy Owens

May/June Anglesey with Gladys Dinnacombe
Contact Ann Bunning

May? Bangor University Oceanography
Research Vessel or Bangor Town Trail & Dyke
Swarms around Beaumaris with Fred Owen
Contact Rachel Atherton (combined with NWGA)

June 12th or 19th
Cadair Idris Glaciation with Professor Mike Hambray
Contact Rachel Atherton

September Revision Day Chester
Contact TBA.

Other venues are under negotiation with leaders these together with further detailed information relating to the above will appear in the Feb edition.

OUT AND ABOUT Events 2004 NWGA

March 27th NEWI Wrexham Scientific
Showcase for North Wales Geology
Website www.ampyx.org.uk/cdgc

MGA
January 17th 2.00pm
Afternoon Seminar on Martian Geology
by Dr. Jamie Gilmour (Univ. of Manchester)
Website www.mmggeolassoc.org.uk

OUGS NW
January 18th 2.00pm Lecture Afternoon Chester
Contact Paul Wyre

LGS
January 13th The Great Glen Fault
Martyn Stewart
Contact Joe Crossley
February 2nd or 10th The Geology of Connemara
by Professor Bernard Leake
March 2nd Building Stones
by Alan Thomas
Website www.livjm.ac.uk/lgs

FLUORITE FROM PANT QUARRY

Members who went on the trip to Pant Quarry on 10th May 2003 will remember the lump of a yellow mineral, which the manager showed us at the beginning of our visit. No one was very convinced as to what it was or even whether a knife scratched it. Although it appeared to be all one crystal, it did not show any characteristic crystal form. Fluorite, calcite and quartz were all proposed as possible identifications. On our walk round the quarry, we saw and collected fine examples of galena and fluorite but the fluorite was the usual purple colour, although there was one area where we saw small yellow crystals.

The manager kindly allowed me to take away the yellow mineral for further investigation. The lump was 6 cm long with a pale amber yellow colour. One end had clear glassy surfaces whereas the other was more irregular and had small patches of clay where it had presumably been attached to its host rock. There are cleavages in several directions and the surface of the specimen is made up largely of cleavage planes. The cleavage planes follow the same orientation throughout the specimen, confirming that it is all one crystal. One interesting feature of the surface is that there are two or three pyramidal indentations forming negative crystal shapes.

The following week I showed the specimen to Tom Cotterell, a mineralogist at the National Museum of Wales. He identified it as fluorite, adding that yellow coloured fluorite was well known in the Carboniferous of Northeast Wales.

Jonathan was present at this meeting and took a small piece from the irregular end of the lump to do an X-Ray Diffraction test. I subsequently measured the density of the specimen.....

Taken from a report by Will Jones & Jonathan Wilkins, any member wishing to read the technical results of the X Ray and density test please contact me and I will forward a copy.

Many thanks to the co-authors for the follow up - the answer to the mystery. Ed.