



Farnham Geological Society

Next meeting on Zoom 7:30pm for 8pm, Friday 8th March 2024

The glaciation of Deeside, Aberdeenshire Stuart Archer

Abstract

In Aberdeenshire, the Dee Valley is well recognised as the ‘jewel in the crown’ of the landscape of NE Scotland. This talk will illustrate the glacial scenery from the Cairngorm plateau to the coast, including, the Pools o’ Dee, the Larig Ghru, Devil’s Point, Linn o’ Dee and down past the B’s of Braemar, Ballater, Banchory, Bielside to Balnagask.

Just north of the River Dee and to the east of the Morven massif, lie two kettle hole lakes called Loch Davan and Loch Kinord. Geomorphological and sedimentological evidence suggests that both lochs were once higher and linked, forming a large palaeo-lake that has been named for the purposes of this talk as palaeo-lake “Davord” (Davan and Kinord).

Although there are many lines of self-supporting data to support the existence of the palaeo-lake, the most dramatic evidence is a series of outflow channels that are prevalent to the southeast of the former lake basin and these channels are the focus of the second part of this talk.

There appears to be a palaeogeographic requirement for an ice dam to the south of the palaeo-lake to explain the higher lake levels. It is likely that the gradual release of the southerly ice dam controlled the timing and tempo of lake level fall as the Dee Valley glacier gradually retreated and down wasted at the end of the last glaciation.

Intriguingly, the deposits of the palaeo-lake link Dinnet to the Nobel Peace Prize.....more on that in the talk.....

Bio

Stuart Gordon Archer was born in Glasgow in 1972, and later attended Kingussie High School in the Scottish Highlands. It was living in Aviemore, with a view of the northern corries of the Cairngorms, that catalysed his interest in glaciation as a school boy.

In 1994, he obtained a First Class Honours in Geology and Geography from the University of Glasgow. An MSc and PhD were later gained from the University of Aberdeen. He has been in the oil industry since the late 90’s after joining Conoco in Aberdeen and has also worked in Houston and Copenhagen as an exploration geologist.

Stuart has always been interested in geology and geomorphology in equal measures, viewing the interlinkage between both disciplines as a powerful and iterative sense check on ideas. This talk on the glaciation of Deeside is based on years of “hillwalking with a geo-eye”.

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