

Farnham Geological Society

NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 1972

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8th.

Since the last newsletter we have had two field trips and a lecture. The first trip was to Bracklesham Bay on September 17th and a report is included with this Newsletter. The weekend trip to the Avon Gorge in early October was a very educational trip. We saw many interesting features and, thanks to Ted Finch, I think we all learned something. The report for this trip will be included in the next Newsletter.

The lecture was given by Mr. R. Butler of the London Natural History Museum on "The Geology of Cornwall". Mr. Butler came well equipped with slides, books, maps and quite a number of impressive hand specimens. There were only two minor disappointments during this interesting evening - the first, there was not very much time after the lecture to look at all the hand specimens before Mr. Butler had to leave. The other - he didn't tell us where he found them all, much to the disappointment of one or two people present!

The next two Society functions are a lecture on "The Geology of Iceland" next month, and the Wine and Cheese Party in December. The West Surrey Lapidary Society have organised a visit to a factory doing lapidary work and they have kindly asked us if we would like to join them. More details later on in the Newsletter.

Two suggestions have been made and I would like some opinions from you on them. The first is for the Society to buy, as funds allow, various geological works, guides and memoirs of areas of particular interest. These would then be available for members to borrow. A nominal amount would be charged and the proceeds from this would be used to obtain further publications.

The second suggestion was that if members were willing to donate any spare 35 mm. colour slides they had, of any subject of geological interest then the Society would hold a library of slides. Over a period of time these, together with any notes connected with them, would form a unique record of the geology of various places or regions. These could then be used by the members, both present and future, as a regional guide, or as an introduction to the subject of geology or just to look at.

The final point I would like to mention is that Ted has now taken on the job of Regional Co-Ordinator for the South and South-West areas of the Nature Conservancy Board. This will mean that he will know of any exposures of geological interest temporarily unearthed during building or road making operations

in the south of England.

Roger Ashcroft.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

In AD 52 the Atrebate King Commius, having fallen foul of Caesar, fled from Gaul to Britain, landing somewhere near Selsey. Had he arrived one Sunday afternoon last September, he would have thought the natives were acting very strangely. Patrolling the shoreline in a most random fashion, carrying fearsome war hammers, all with their heads bowed and eyes fixed on the ground. Another geological society he might have thought. Yes it was - the Farnham Geological Society on an afternoon field trip to Bracklesham Bay.

The beds exposed in this area are all marine in origin and many giant foraminifer Nummulites laevigatus were found on the beach. About the size of a new penny, these are one of the larger Protozoans. Their body is made up of only one cell. The test or skeleton is composed of a number of interconnecting chambers arranged in a flat coil. The presence of Nummulites indicates periods of communication with the Tethys, a warm-water sea lying along the line of the present Mediterranean.

Fossils are so abundant in places that beds have been named after them. The Cardita Bed is one such bed that we saw. It was solid with Cardita (Venericor) planicosta. These lamellibranchs varied from less than one inch up to about four inches across. One was found with both valves still attached. Unlike the brachiopods, the hinge system of these bivalves consists of a number of teeth and sockets in each valve. If the dentition is made up of two or three rather complex teeth, as in Venericor, it is termed heterodont. If there are many smaller teeth, it is known as taxodont. Other shells that were commonly found were Turritella (Haustator) imbricataria and Turritella (Isapharina) sulcifera. These are both turreted forms of the gastropod, with a spiral angle of about 20° and a shell originally made of Aragonite. In the former, the cross section of each spiral at right angles to the direction of the spiral is flat, whilst in the latter it is convex.

The most spectacular finds of the day were the sharks teeth. There is certainly a knack in spotting these. Your chronicler found one and a half, but some people were picking them up by the dozen and others found none at all. It seems a fact that the more times you have been to Bracklesham Bay, the more teeth you find. These teeth are thought to have been washed ashore from a submarine outcrop of an earlier Eocene bed, the London Clay.

Some fish remains were also discovered on the beach. They looked like pieces of a broken toothless comb but in fact were Myliobatus striatus. They were once part of the lower tooth plate of the Eagle Ray.

As was mentioned in the previous newsletter, two of our members are putting on a display at the annual reunion of the Geologists Association. If you have any interesting finds that you wouldn't mind lending for a while, contact Ted Finch. The reunion is on Saturday November 4th at

Lightfoot Hall,
Chelsea College,
Chelsea.

It is open to anyone, you don't have to be a professional geologist, and there are usually some very interesting stands and displays. So why not go along and see them!

Visit to Wessex Impex Ltd., November 5th.

Members of the Society have been invited by the West Surrey Lapidary Society to join them on a visit they are organising to Wessex Impex Ltd. This will include a tour of the factory and a demonstration and exhibition of lapidary work.

The address is,

Winnel Trading Estate,
Moorside Road,
Winchester.

If you are interested in going, contact Julian Bantick (Farnham 4445) as there is some limitation on the numbers of people. The visit starts at 14.30.

Lecture on "Icelandic Geology" November 10th.

Mr. P. Sowan, the honorary secretary of the Croydon Natural History Society, is coming to give us a lecture on the "Geology of Iceland". Knowing something of Iceland's connection with the mid-atlantic ridge, this should prove an interesting evening. It is at The Boys' Grammar School at 2000 hours.

Wine and Cheese Party, December 8th

The social event of the year! Ted is dreaming up something special for this occasion so be sure to leave that evening free. It starts at 2000 hours or earlier if you prefer and it is to be held at

"The Cricketers"
Lower Bourne
Farnham.

The cost will be 35p per person.

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