



THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GLASGOW

Registered Scottish Charity No. SC007013

President: Dr. Simon Cuthbert

www.geologyglasgow.org.uk

March 2022

164/3



A big boulder!. Come and listen to Noel Williams' talk on the work of the 'Boulder Committee' on the 10th March. Details inside

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Lecture Meetings

All remaining lectures for this session will be held in-person at the University. We are now using the Boyd Orr building, but the two dates in April/May are in the adjacent James McCune Smith building. Meetings commence at 7.30 pm. Venues noted below. We hope to record the talks. More info from Meetings Secretary: meetings@gsocg.org

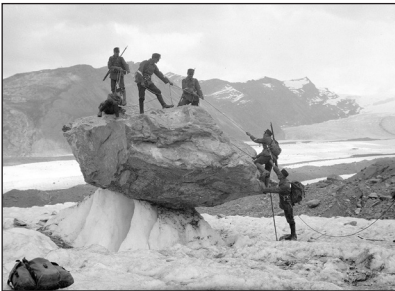
Thursday 10th March 2022 Boyd Orr - Lecture Theatre 203

Noel Williams, Lochaber Geopark.

Big Boulders of Scotland

In April 1871 The Royal Society of Edinburgh appointed a Committee to “make inquiry about boulders in Scotland”. The Committee on Boulders had two main aims:

1. To identify where boulders of interest were situated
2. To indicate which boulders were deemed especially worthy of preservation...



The idea of setting up this Committee was inspired by large surveys which had been set up in 1867 to record erratic boulders and “enormous heaps of gravel” in Switzerland and the Jura region of France.

David Milne Home was encouraged by Professor Favre of Geneva to organise a similar survey in Scotland. In order to set up such a widespread survey Milne Home made contact with church ministers, head teachers and landowners across

Scotland. The Committee on Boulders collected data over 13 years (1871–84) and published 10 reports.

We will retrace the steps of Professor Heddle and local headmaster Colin Livingstone who recorded the position of large erratic boulders, as well as glacial striations, during lengthy outings on the hills in the Lochaber district around Fort William.

*Noel Williams has written and edited guide books that have inspired thousands of mountain walkers and climbers. His great knowledge of the mountains, shown in his books, guides and magazine articles, has been garnered through painstaking research and thousands of hours exploring the hills, from being author of *Scrambles in Lochaber* in 1985 to being editor of *Highland Scrambles South* for the SMC in 2017. His interest in geology has also reached print, and he was co-author of *Ben Nevis and Glen Nevis* (NCC 1989) and *Exploring the Landscape of Ben Nevis & Glen Nevis* (Nevis Partnership 2016). He has also contributed photos to a number of different guides.*



Noel was a member of Lochaber Mountain Rescue team for many years and for a while was deputy leader. He was involved in some big lowers on the North Face of Ben Nevis, including the first night-time lower on the Orion Face. He retired from the team in 2011. He has also been a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club (SMC) since 1982, where he took on roles of Vice President from 1997 to 1999 and President from 2014 to 2016. He was also editor of the SMC Journal from 2008 to 2014.

As one of the founding members of Lochaber Geopark (2003/4) Noel Williams is Chairman/Director of the charity. He has also been a Director of the Nevis Partnership for many years. The charity guides policies and actions to safeguard, manage and where appropriate enhance the environmental qualities and opportunities for visitor enjoyment and appreciation of the Nevis area

Noel taught for 10 years at Lochaber High School where he was involved in running the school mountaineering club. Several of his pupils went on to become members of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team. He later taught at Kinlochleven High School until his retirement in 2005.

Although he claims to be not much of a runner, Noel Williams has completed 21 Ben Nevis Races, as well as Tranter's Round and six marathons. He has also completed quite a few new routes on the sea cliffs of Skye.

Thursday 14th April 2022 James McCune Smith - Room 639

Professor Colin Ballantyne, University of St. Andrews

“Landslides, Glaciation and the evolution of mountain landscapes during the Quaternary”.



A persistent view amongst geologists is that landscape evolution in mid-latitude mountains during the Quaternary (2.6 Ma to the present) was dominated by glacial erosion. Using examples from Scotland, this presentation shows that areas of high ground have experienced very limited glacial erosion, and that classic glacial landforms such as glacial troughs, corries and arêtes continued to evolve during successive interglacial periods through rockfall and rock-slope

failure. The present mountain landscapes of Scotland and other tectonically stable mid-latitude mountains therefore represent a synergistic relationship between glacial and interglacial (paraglacial) processes operating over very long timescales.

Colin completed a PhD at Edinburgh University on the periglacial geomorphology of mountains in NW Scotland before taking up a lectureship at the University of St Andrews in 1980. He was appointed Professor of Physical Geography at St Andrews in 1994. His research has been recognized in a number of awards, including the Warwick Award



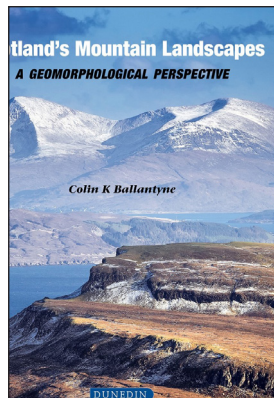
(1986) and Wiley Award (1999) of the British Society for Geomorphology (formerly BGRG), the President's Medal (1990) and Newbigin Prize (1991) of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, the Saltire Society Scottish Science Award (1996) and the Clough Medal (2010) of the Edinburgh Geological Society, the premier Scottish award in Earth Sciences. He was elected FRSE and FRSA in 1996 and received the degree of DSc from the University of St Andrews in 2000. He is a visiting professor at UNIS (Svalbard) and former Erskine Fellow at

the University of Canterbury, New Zealand.

Colin has recently published a very accessible book on 'Scotland's Mountain Landscapes'. This would make a great gift for folk interested in Scottish mountains and how they were shaped. He will bring some copies along for purchase at a bargain price of £20 (RRP £28).

Further Reading:

BALLANTYNE, C.K., SANDEMAN, G.F., STONE, J.O. & WILSON, P., 2014. Rock-slope failure following Late Pleistocene deglaciation on tectonically stable mountainous terrain. *Quaternary Science Reviews*, **86**, 144-157.



Thursday, 12th May 2022 James McCune Smith - Room 639

Members' Night

Short presentations by members of the Society. Members' Night is an opportunity for Society members to give short presentations or displays about their own interests and adventures in geology. If you are interested in presenting then please contact the Hon Secretary, Walter Semple, by email at sec@gsocg.org

Recordings of Previous Lectures

Tectonics and Mountain Building in the Himalaya by Mike Searle	https://youtu.be/csgauixXZM
Dinosaurs from Muck by Neil Clark	https://youtu.be/bbu1KsctvLo
Deformed Dirt - A lecture on glacitectonics by Emrys Phillips	https://youtu.be/XXxPSTM2tzQ
Below the Bonnie Banks by Andrew Finlayson	https://youtu.be/6oyTUO_IRCM

Emrys' new paper on Dogger Bank has just been published :

PHILLIPS, E.R. et al. (2022): Glacitectonic evidence of ice sheet interaction and retreat across the western part of Dogger Bank (North Sea) during the Last Glaciation. *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, **133**, pp.87–111. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pgeola.2021.11.005>

Day Field Excursions 2022

I am glad to announce that we are in the advanced stages of planning our day excursion program for this summer.

We have confirmed dates for the following:-

- 11th June. **Charleston Lime Quarry.** Katie Strang and Gary Hoare.
- 2nd July. **Trearne** and possibly **Hesselhead Quarries.** Gary Hoare.
- 16th July. **South Queensferry.** Richard Smith.
- 13th August. **Onich Shore.** Jim Blair and Iain Allison.

The South Queensferry excursion is held jointly with the Edinburgh Geological Society. They have stipulated that there will only be 10 places available for each society on this trip. Due to the economics, I will not be arranging a bus for such a small number, so we will have to arrange car shares. As usual participants will be expected to join together after the excursion for a High Tea at a hotel of Edinburgh's choosing.

Similarly, Onich shore is about a 2 hour drive in the bus, so we will be visiting a hotel around 5pm for a bar snack before returning to Glasgow by around 8pm.

I am still in the process of confirming dates / itinerary for:-

- A look behind the scenes at the Hunterian at Kelvin Hall
- Elie and St Monans in the East Neuk of Fife.

I will have a booking form available soon and look forward to meeting up again out in the real world.

Roy Bryce daytrips@gsocg.org



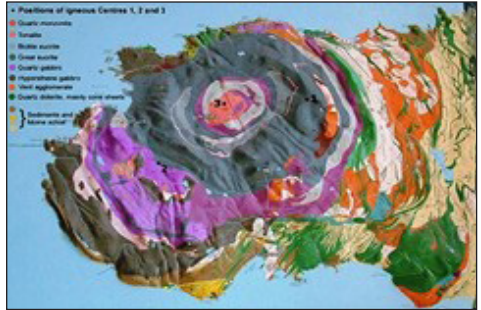
Residential Field Excursions 2022

Residential Trip to Ardnamurchan

Leader Con Gillen

Fri 6th to Mon 9th May 2022.

The Ardnamurchan Peninsula, Peninsula, which includes the most westerly point of the Scottish mainland, is composed mainly of the remains of an early Palaeogene volcano with three centres of activity. Part of the North Atlantic Igneous Province which includes Mull, Rum and Skye, it was erupted into Moine metasedimentary rocks and overlain by a sequence of thin sedimentary rocks. Ardnamurchan displays classic geology on a colossal scale, with features such as mixed magma, ash flows, ring dykes, cone sheets and examples of 'airfall' rocks formed from lava ejected from the heart of the volcano – it is regarded as almost a 'textbook volcano'. A drive across the peninsula is a journey through its magma chamber. Its overall structure is difficult to perceive on the ground but from space the picture is much clearer – rings of once molten magma can be seen to define a series of almost perfect circles. These are the lower parts of the volcano after the superstructure has been planed off by erosion, in this case, effectively, by the last Ice Age. We plan to visit significant localities of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks and there may also be the opportunity to go to Tobermory those who wish to do less climbing!



Accommodation will be B & B in Kilchoan etc; transport will be in shared cars.

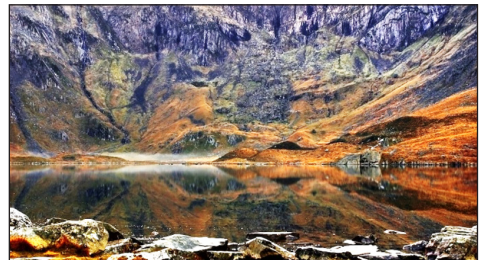
To go on the waiting list for this trip please contact the Residential Excursions Secretary, Maggie Donnelly at restrips@gsocg.org

Residential Trip to Snowdonia

Leader Simon Cuthbert

Fri 9th to Mon 12th Sept 2022.

The Landscape of Snowdonia National Park, “Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri” in Welsh (Eryri means place of the eagles) is dramatic and varied, with mountains, high passes, craggy peaks and precipices and cascading waterfalls. The elegant pyramid of Snowdon – Yr Wyddfa – is the highest peak at 3,560ft. Snowdonia’s geology consists of sedimentary, volcanic and intrusive rocks of late Proterozoic to



Silurian age. The rugged mountain scenery

is dominated by the Ordovician volcanics, including spectacular pyroclastic rocks, all related to subduction of the Iapetus Ocean crust. The geochemistry of the igneous rocks suggest that they formed as part of the back arc basin in a volcanic arc system. These, and the famous Cambrian slates that “roofed the world” were intensely faulted, folded and subjected to low-grade metamorphism during the Caledonian Orogeny. The region was uplifted as the North Atlantic opened during the Cenozoic while the current mountainous landscape and its cwms (corries) have resulted from repeated late Cenozoic glaciations, as recognised by Charles Darwin during his travels in the area.

The trip will focus on the Ordovician volcanics in which we can see evidence for giant ash-flow eruptions in the extensive ignimbrites. We will also examine the large-scale Caledonian folding, all set in Eryri’s wonderful glacier-carved mountain scenery. We may also manage a trip on the Snowdonia mountain railway!

Accommodation will be B & B; transport to be decided.

If you are interested, please contact the Residential Excursions Secretary, Maggie Donnelly at restrips@gsocg.org.

Report on Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held virtually on Thursday 9th Dec 2021. Thanks were expressed to all Council Officers for their work during the recent session, and particularly to those who had come to the end of their term of office. The customary officers’ reports were presented.

There are some changes to the membership of the society’s council.

- The main change is that Neil Clark’s three-year tenure as society president has come to an end, and Simon Cuthbert has been elected as the new president. Neil continues as vice-president and web consultant.
- Ian Millar has taken over from David Webster as meetings secretary. David continues as proceedings editor and newsletter coordinator.
- Gary Hoare fills the previously vacant post of publications officer.
- David Brown becomes one of the two editors of Scottish Journal of Geology appointed by the society. This post was formerly vacant.
- There are still five vacant positions for ordinary members. If any member would like to join the council in one of these posts, please contact the society’s secretary.

The full composition of the council is as follows:

President	Simon Cuthbert pres@gsocg.org
Vice Presidents	Brian Bell
	Neil Clark
Honorary Secretary	Walter Semple sec@gsocg.org
Treasurer	Ian Veitch treas@gsocg.org

Membership Secretary	Campbell Forrest memsec@gsocg.org
Meetings Secretary	Ian Millar meetings@gsocg.org
Librarian	Post vacant
Assistant Librarian/Honorary Archivist	Margaret Anderson
Excursions Secretary (Day)	Roy Bryce daytrips@gsocg.org
Excursions Secretary (Residential)	Margaret Donnelly restrips@gsocg.org
Junior Members' Representative	Matthew Staitis
Proceedings/Newsletter Editor	David Webster contact@gsocg.org
Publications Officer	Gary Hoare books@gsocg.org
Webmaster	Bill Gray web@gsocg.org
Web Consultant	Neil Clark
Editors, Scottish Journal of Geology	Colin Braithwaite
	David Brown
Ordinary Members	Mina Cummings
	5 posts vacant

Dr Judith Lawson

The society is sorry to report the death of Dr Judith Lawson. Judith, who was a member of the society for almost 60 years and served as president from 1985 to 1988, died on 27 January 2022. Many members will remember study tours that Judith led to the Alps, the Pyrenees and Provence.

She studied at Bedford College in the University of London and graduated in 1959 with a degree in geology. She was then able to spend 3 years in the geology department of the University of Grenoble.

In 1962 she moved north to Glasgow University, where she worked as an assistant lecturer for 3 years. Judith gave courses in the extramural department in Glasgow University and elsewhere. She produced a guide to the building stones of Glasgow with walking trails around the city centre

Judith then moved to a full time lectureship at what is now the University of the West of Scotland in Paisley. She retired in 1997.

A full obituary will appear in the next Proceedings



Update on Fossil Grove

The project to renovate the fossil grove is now starting in earnest.

The Building: The Trust have been in discussion with Smith Scott Mullan Associates, the appointed architects about taking development of the Fossil Grove forward. A detailed project plan has been prepared representing a detailed account of the history and state of the building and the fossils as well as works required for a phased programme of immediate repairs and improvements and a longer term strategy for building and fossil preservation. The project has been divided into phases the first of which will address reducing water ingress and the second of which will experiment with means of reducing the excessive moisture in the building by better use of natural ventilation. The architects are advising how to take this forward. The final design will not emerge until the results of the initial work are known.



Glasgow City: The Trust have good communication with staff in Glasgow City Council who are anxious to see trustees make good progress with the project. This involves establishing a sustainable long-term arrangement with the City which will allow the trustees to take responsibility for carrying out the development and future management with the support but probably not the financial support of the city.

Change of constitution to SCIO: The Trust expects that the existing constitution of the trust which takes the form of a public trust deed will be changed to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and that work on this will begin shortly.



Finance: The Trust have successfully been granted some financial support from the Architectural Heritage Fund for the initial fees of the professional team. We hope that as the project develops their funding support will continue. We also have been offered an amount of support for the initial contract work on site from Historic Environment Scotland.

In the meantime volunteers from the society and Friends of Victoria Park have been clearing gutters and testing the drains.

A number of open afternoons are being planned for later this year - provisionally the third Sundays of the month from April to October (afternoons 12-4).

More information at www.fossilgroveglasgow.org

On-Line Resources

A selection of recordings you might find interesting:

Geologists Association

Their next lecture will be on Friday 4th March at 18:00 GMT via Zoom, where Dr Amy Edgington from @GeoBus_UCL will deliver the Halstead Lecture on the Power of Outreach in the Geosciences. Non-members free of charge.

Contact: sarah@geologistsassociation.org.uk

Also keep an eye on “Geology from your Sofa” for a comprehensive catalogue of on-line resources.

<https://geologistsassociation.org.uk/sofageology/>

Geological Society of London

New insights into the Quaternary of the North Sea - by Dr Mads Huuse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgWlf4faCQU>

There is a lot of excellent geological videos on the Geological Society's YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/GeologicalSociety>

Edinburgh Geological Society

The EGS have setup a dedicated YouTube channel for their lecture recordings:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPYcOIV-w9rgr_nb52ByV1w

Westmoreland Geological Society

Another channel with some excellent lectures

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6uVPL3DMpqJXyTS-Z_6ADA

Cardiff School of Earth Sciences

Some videos of their Voyages of Great Discoveries lectures

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpjhubJYpBo>

Oxford University

Darwin's Dilemma: The importance of fossilization to our reading of animal antiquity

- Ross Anderson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKh4zqlZE3s>

Geologists' Association Forthcoming talk



Whilst government advice to restrict gatherings is in place we are ahead delivering virtual 'vLectures' instead of our monthly talks at Burlington House. These will be freely available to all. Join us for an interesting and informative evening.

Friday 4th March 2022

Halstead Lecture:

The Power of Outreach in the Geosciences

By: Dr. Amy Edgington, Outreach Leader for GeoBus, University College London

GeoBus is a free educational outreach project for schools and aims to provide research-led teaching packages supporting teachers and highlighting the many exciting topics, avenues and careers that can stem from Earth Sciences. The project was originally created by a team at St Andrews University, Scotland, and as a result of its astounding success, GeoBus UCL was launched in 2016.

Since joining the GeoBus UCL team in 2019 we have reached close to 20,000 students across the UK, despite having to stop running face-to-face workshops in March 2020 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. With in-person workshops impossible, we started creating online content that students could follow from home.

I now combine my passion for teaching with the cutting-edge research here at UCL. I get to be creative every day and adapt the incredible work of researchers into lesson-sized and curriculum-embedded workshops in the hope of inspiring the next generation of science leaders!



Lecture starts at 6pm (18:00 BST)

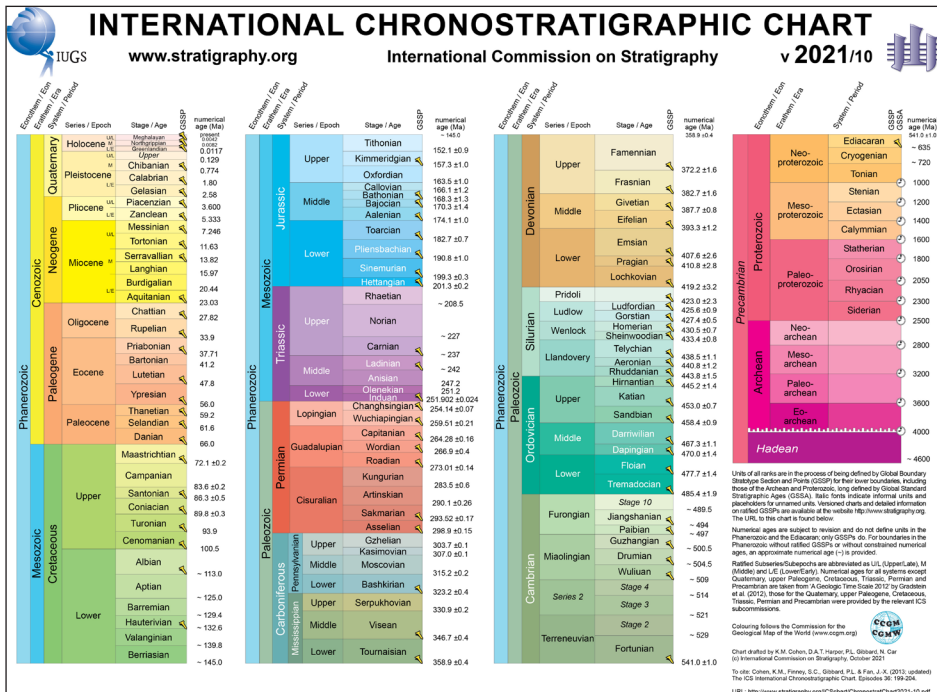
The talk will be via Zoom. Members will receive an access code via email before the meeting. Non-members should telephone 020 7434 9298 or email the Secretary (sarah@geologistsassociation.org.uk) for details.

www.geologistsassociation.org.uk



New Version of International Chronostratigraphic Chart

Have you lost track of time? Here is the latest chronostratigraphic chart from the International Commission on Stratigraphy, charting 4,600,000,000 years of Earth history - now also available as an iPhone app and in 23 languages on <http://stratigraphy.org/chart>



Whisky on the Rocks

A whisky with a geological theme!. The Isle of Raasay whisky has a nice geological story - the water used is quite mineral-rich and flows through Jurassic Sandstones and the overlying lavas. This results in a longer fermentation and the production of higher alcohols and some extra esters - giving it a fruity taste. Its lightly peated - an ideal dram in my opinion!



Events from other Geological Societies and Organisations

Edinburgh Geological Society www.edinburghgeolsoc.org

2 March - Tim Smithson: A new beginning: recent discoveries in the early Carboniferous of northern Britain reveal rapid faunal replacement following the end-Devonian extinction

16 March - Kit Hardman: The geology and evolution of near-surface fissure systems in Calabria, Italy and other areas

30 March - Mark Bateman: The day a tsunami hit Scotland

Highland Geological Society www.spanglefish.com/highlandgeologicalsociety

16 March - Tim Lawson: Glaciation and paleoenvironmental reconstruction in Assynt and Coigach

Aberdeen Geological Society <https://www.aberdeengeolsoc.org.uk>

2 March - Glaciology

17 March - Howard Johnston: The Jura Quartzite

NW Highlands Geopark www.nwhgeopark.com

3 March - Dougie Cunningham: How to write a walking guide

8 March - Seoras Burnett: Trees, The Unseen Fabric of Coigach & Assynt

10 March - Adrian Hall: How Glacial Erosion Works

Plus several Geotours in May/June

Westmoreland Geological Society www.westmorelandgeolsoc.co.uk

16 March - Ian Davidson: Giant Salt Domes, how they are formed and their uses for toxic waste disposal and energy storage

20 April - Jonathan Redfern: A Tour through the Geology of the Moroccan High Atlas and Atlantic Margin

Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group <https://www.wgcg.co.uk/>

16 March - Alex Maltman: Wine, Whisky and Beer – the role of geology

20 April - Stephan Lautenschlager: Jurassic Brain Teasers

Hon. Secretary: Walter Semple email: sec@gsocg.org

Membership Secretary Campbell Forrest email: memsec@gsocg.org

Proceedings/Newsletter Editor: David Webster email: contact@gsocg.org



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