



# THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GLASGOW

## Newsletter - September 2025

### Lecture Programme

Venue - Kelvin Hall Lecture Theatre and afterwards in the Activity Room, Kelvin Hall (Geonatter Room).

Parking is available at the adjoining Bunhouse Car Park (currently £3 for the evening)

Date	Speaker	Affiliation	Title / topic
9 <sup>th</sup> October	Katie Strang	The Hunterian, Glasgow	Gilmour Hill and the building of the Gilbert Scott Building, with topical snippets from the Hunterian collections.
13 <sup>th</sup> November	Simon Cuthbert	AGH University of Kraków	Deep Continental Drilling: The COSC borehole project (Collisional orogeny in the Scandinavian Caledonides).
11 <sup>th</sup> December	David Bond	University of Hull	Mass extinctions: are we all doomed?
8 <sup>th</sup> January 2026	Iain Neill	University of Glasgow	From collision magmatism to a geothermal future in the Northern Highlands
12 <sup>th</sup> February	Elsa Panciroli	NMS Edinburgh	T.N. George Medallist lecture. Title tbc
12 <sup>th</sup> March	Keyron Hickman Lewis (Grant Awardee)	Birkbeck College, London	Astrobiology and the Torridonian
9 <sup>th</sup> April	Anna Bird	University of Hull	Basement ("Lewisianoid") inliers in the Northern Highlands terrain
14 <sup>th</sup> May	Members' Night		

### Dr. Jim Morrison

Jim Morrison passed away on 12th August. All of you who knew Jim will remember his special knowledge of geology and his quirky humour. Our sympathy goes out to Mandy

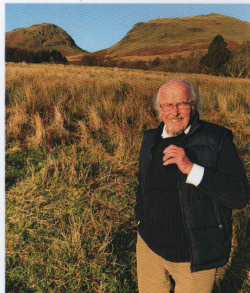
Jim was born and brought up in Aberdeen and graduated in Biochemistry from Aberdeen University in 1964. He then moved to Glasgow University, where he did a PhD under Hamish Keir and Prof J. N. Davidson on DNA replication in herpesvirus. 'JND' was a friend of 'TNG' (T. Neville George); indeed the two families holidayed together. After a spell as research fellow at Stanford University with Nobel laureate Arthur Kornberg, he spent the rest of his career at Glasgow University, teaching science, medical and vet students and continuing his herpesvirus research. Latterly, he became interested in all viruses and especially their evolution, because from the mid-1980s the DNA and RNA sequences of all kinds of viruses were determined and so the genetic relationships between them could be evaluated.

He has always been interested in rocks of hill and shore in NE Scotland. About 1980, he renewed an interest in hydro-electric schemes, especially

In Loving Memory

*Dr James Murray Morrison*

30th May 1942 - 12th August 2025



Bishopbriggs Crematorium  
Monday 25th August 2025  
at 2.00 pm



those of pre-1950 vintage; this “exposed” him to more rocks and started a strong interest in geology. In the early 1980s Graham Durant, then at the Hunterian, introduced him to the Geological Society of Glasgow, where he made steady progress with the help of “real” geologists, including Brian Bluck, Chris Burton, Jim MacDonald and Geoff Tanner, and people at BGS Edinburgh, especially the late John Mendum. Jim’s initial interest was the Highland Boundary fault, but this soon extended to all Highland geology and especially the Great Glen Fault and the Moine Thrust. Starting sea kayaking in 2004 allowed him to explore some of the less accessible areas of Mull and Shetland. His interest in virus evolution has parallels with the notions of the evolution of geological structures in the Highlands, especially in the period 1200-400Ma.

Jim joined the Geological Society of Glasgow in 1986 and served on the council for three years as an ordinary member before taking on the post of meetings secretary, which he held for 25 years, from 1990 to 2015. He served as president of the society from 2015 to 2018.

## Paul Carter

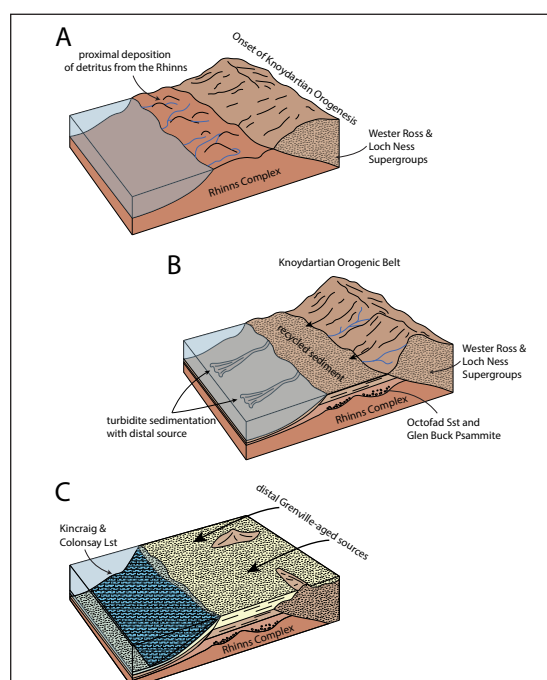
We are sad to announce that Paul Carter collapsed and died on the 30th August. Paul was a close associate of the Strathclyde Geoconservation Group. Together with Mike Browne they carried out - in their own time - a detailed audit of geoconservation sites in North and South Lanarkshire and in the Falkirk district.

Paul took some of us round Calder Glen Country Park, which resulted in the new flier - in which he stars. Last year Paul led a group of us along Carron Glen (picture R) and some went back to his house afterwards for tea and cake.

He has written leaflets on Kelvin Valley Rocks and Cumbernauld Rocks as a friend of Kelvin Valley, and also been involved with local groups and schools whenever there’s has been an opportunity for Paul to talk about rocks. Another loss to geology.



## Recent Papers on Scottish Geology



### [Early basin development of the Dalradian Supergroup](#)

Elias J. Rugen, David Webster, Graham A. Shields, Fred Bowyer, Pieter Vermeesch and Anthony Prave

*Scottish Journal of Geology* <https://doi.org/10.1144/sjg2025-006>

Our data support early Dalradian sedimentation within a foreland basin setting, potentially initiated during the mid-Tonian Knoydartian Orogeny. Shifts in the detrital zircon spectra are interpreted here to record a transition from proximal to more distal sediment sourcing in a flysch setting, the progressive infilling of topographic lows and the expansion of a molasse apron across eastern Laurentia.

### [Hugh Miller the elder and the younger, a geological dynasty enabling a re-interpretation of the Middle Devonian fish-bearing beds of Cromarty](#)

R. G. Davidson and S. D. Johnston

*Scottish Journal of Geology* <https://doi.org/10.1144/sjg2025-003>

## **Scottish Geology Trust**

### **Scottish Geology Festival**

The Scottish Geology Festival is taking place in September and October 2025 with the theme: *Volcanoes in our Neighbourhood*.

Full details at <https://www.scottishgeologytrust.org/festival/>

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## **Geological Society of London - Public Lecture**

### **The Garvellach Islands, Scotland a rare record of Snowball Earth, by Elias Rugen**

*Tuesday 9th Sept 18:00 - in-person or zoom. See link for booking information*

<https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/events/the-garvellach-islands-scotland-a-rare-record-of-snowball-earth-public-lecture/>

The Geological Society is pleased to be working with its Early Career Network for this September Public Lecture, which will be presented by the Early Career Geologist of 2025.

At the beginning of the Cryogenian Period, around 717 million years ago, ice caps advanced abruptly to cover the entire planet. Global ice cover is thought to have been attained relatively quickly, over thousands of years, because of the albedo effect – that is, the more ice there is, the more sunlight is reflected back into space, and vice versa. After reaching the equator, ice sheets persisted there for up to 58 million years. Understanding how our planet could have plunged into such extreme cold is still the subject of intense debate, but there is a problem. Sedimentary records of the moment when ice first reached low latitudes are absent everywhere on Earth, or so we once thought.



Off the west coast of Scotland lies a chain of tiny islands called the Garvellachs that may hold some of the clues to a time in Earth's history known evocatively as 'Snowball Earth'. The islands host the only known demonstrably transitional record from underlying carbonate rocks of the Tonian period into glacial rocks of the Cryogenian. Sedimentary observations of these late Tonian carbonates can be interpreted as deposition in warm tropical seas, full of bacterial life, before an observable transition into an increasingly frigid climate and the definitive movement of ice caps over the land; akin to seeing Greenland-scale ice caps descending on the Caribbean today. Elsewhere on Earth this pivotal transition into the Cryogenian period appears to have been removed by the erosive power of glaciation, resulting in a missing time gap in the sedimentary record. However, on the Garvellachs no such gap is found, making it a truly unique location globally for Snowball Earth science.

New geochronological age constraints from the rocks on the Garvellachs show that they were deposited between 717 and 660 million years ago, marking the first of two Snowball Earth glaciations in the Cryogenian. Armed with these new age constraints, and the unique preservation of the transition into this global glaciation, these Scottish islands may prove integral for understanding how and why Earth descended into a Snowball Earth climate state, whilst having ramifications for defining the geological timescale

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## **How to publish a paper with the Geological Society.**

Gain expert insights with our upcoming, in-depth webinar, **How to publish a paper with the Geological Society**. This one-hour tutorial will guide participants through every stage of the publishing pipeline, from manuscript submission to final publication.

Participants will learn:

- Where, when, why and how to submit a paper to one of our journals
- All the checks that we do behind the scenes, both technical and scientific, with expert guidance presented by the Editor-in-Chief of Quarterly Journal of Engineering Geology and Hydrogeology, Professor Cherith Moses
- How to revise manuscripts, including obtaining permissions and responding to reviewer feedback
- What happens to a paper after it is accepted, including licensing, open access publishing options and indexing
- What awards are available for early-career researchers and how to win one

Participants will be able to ask questions in the chat and have their questions answered during the session. They will also be provided with pre-written notes, so they can enjoy the webinar more freely.

[Register your interest](#)

Thursday 2 October Time: 13:00-14:00 BST Location: Online via Zoom. Free

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## **Down to Earth**

September episode of Extra [here](#)

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### **Volcano Comedy Show**

Ben Miller is a stand-up comedian from NYC bringing an hour of volcano jokes to Glasgow on 10 September.

For more info about the show:

<https://www.ercultureandleisure.org/events/ben-miller-volcano/>

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## **Geology Bites**

A new episode to enjoy: see [www.geologybites.com](http://www.geologybites.com)

### **Cees Van Staal on the Origin of the Appalachians**

In his podcast episode, Rob Strachan described how a single extended orogeny, the Caledonian Orogeny, formed rocks now in the northern British Isles, eastern Greenland, and western Norway. In this episode, Cees Van Staal explains how the Appalachian Mountains are also part of this same story, even though they now lie across the Atlantic ocean. These mountains stretch for over 2,000 miles, all the way from Newfoundland in Canada to central Alabama in the United States.

Van Staal has been studying the Appalachians for over 35 years, focusing especially on the large-scale tectonics of their formation. He is Emeritus scientist at the Geological Survey of Canada and an Adjunct/Research Professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Waterloo in Ontario.



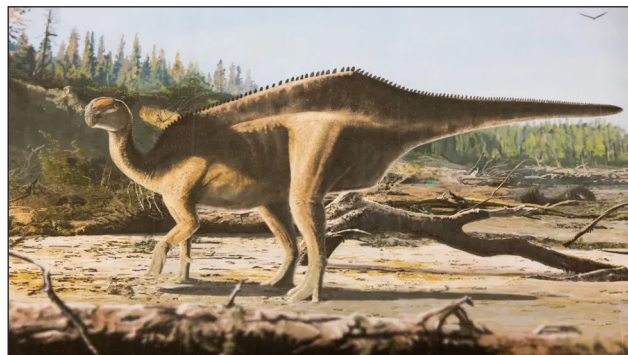
## **Dinosaur News on the BBC website**

New dinosaur named after record-breaking sailor

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c87ew7qq4ww0>

‘Punk rock’ dinosaur with metre-long spikes discovered

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5y2emnnn4po>



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