



THE HIGHLAND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Scottish Charity No. SC004427

FEBRUARY 2018

Dear Members,

Many thanks to everyone who has already renewed their subscriptions; if you have yet to pay for 2018, the rates are unchanged at Ordinary membership £15, Family membership £22.50, and Student membership £7.50. Payment can be made by Bank Transfer, Standing Order, by cheque, or you can pay (cash or cheque) at February's meeting. If you joined the society as a new member from October 2017 onwards, your membership will be carried forward to 2018. If you would like more information about the payment options, please contact Alan (his details are given at the end of the newsletter).

WINTER PROGRAMME 2018

Our next meeting is the AGM on Wednesday 14th February so do hope that you can join us:

14th February – AGM followed by a members' fieldtrip review. Recent years have seen us add a number of member-led excursions, including week-long trips to Mull (2014; 2015) and Islay (2017). The sad death of Eddie Lynch has also brought into focus how much we rely on the interest and expertise of our members and the AGM seems an appropriate point to reflect on some of these excursions. We also have many more participants in our lecture programme than in the summer trips so again the AGM provides an opportunity to share with members some of our wider activities.

21st March – *Greenland: Geology from South to North*, Ian Parsons. Lochaber Geopark and Edinburgh University

Greenland is the world's largest island and most thinly populated landmass. A brief overview of its human history and present-day culture will be presented together with a broad outline of its geology, which includes the oldest known supra-crustal rocks. Personal experiences, scenery and geology will be described on a journey from Kap Farvel in the extreme south to Peary Land in the far north, the nearest land to the North Pole. The Gardar Rift in the south-west includes some of the world's most extreme alkaline rocks, including syenites with spectacular, and in some cases unique, styles of layering. Along the Blossville Kyst, in East Greenland, basalt lavas, with a total thickness is 7 km, cover at least 65,000 km². This stupendous event occurred over only a million years, 55 million years ago, just after the formation of the volcanic centres of our West Highlands and Islands.

Talks take place in Meeting Room 145/146 at Millburn Academy, Diriebught Road, Inverness, IV2 3QR at 7.30 pm.

Entry is £2 for members, £5 for non-members.

If you would like to join the group for dinner before the talk (usually 6 pm) please let Alison know beforehand.

We still hope to add an additional talk in April (dependent on the proposed speaker's itinerary!) but, if this doesn't proceed, our lecture programme will resume in October (see below).

WINTER PROGRAMME 2018 – 2019 (more details and other dates to follow)

10th October – *Origin and Early Evolution of Mammals* (tbc), Elsa Panciroli, University of Edinburgh / NMS

7th November – *The Caledonian Unconformity*, Professor David Macdonald, University of Aberdeen

SUMMER PROGRAMME 2018

Our first excursion this summer will be a member-led week on Arran; dates have been added for the long weekend excursion to Strontian in June and for the weekend trip to Achiltibuie in September. Dates for day trips to Glen Roy and the Water of Ailnack will be added in due course.

Saturday 21st April to Saturday 28th April – *Isle of Arran*, self-led

The group will be based in the Kilbride farmhouse near Kilmory at the southern end of Arran. There is still some room available at the farmhouse; contact Alison for more details (a £100 deposit will be payable at time of booking). Members may stay elsewhere and join the group for either the full week or on days to suit but must let Alison know beforehand. Every effort will be made to share transport where possible.

Cut by the Highland Boundary Fault, Arran offers a diversity of geological exposures ranging from metamorphosed Dalradian sediments in the north of the island to Carboniferous deposits caught up in Palaeogene volcanic activity... Arran is famed for the unconformity between the Dalradian rocks and younger Devonian sediments, described by Hutton at a site near Lochranza in 1787. Arran is also bidding to become the next Scottish Geopark and we hope to meet local volunteers involved with this process during our week on the island.

Arran is covered by BGS Special Sheets S13 and S21 (published as one map in 1987) and the associated memoir (Arran. Memoir for sheet S13 & pt. S21 (1928)) is also available from the BGS bookshop (http://shop.bgs.ac.uk/bookshop/subcategory.cfm?series_id=C1700&sort=PRODUCT_TITLE%20ASC&PAGE_NO=3). The map can also be viewed on the BGS portal: <http://www.largeimages.bgs.ac.uk/iip/mapsportal.html?id=1002532>

Friday 8th June to Monday 11th June – *Strontian*, Jim Blair, Lochaber Geopark

An opportunity to explore the wider Strontian area, including the silica mine at Lochaline, with additional visits to Ballachulish and Cuil Bay at the beginning and end of the Strontian weekend; participants may attend all 4 days or just days to suit but please let Alison know which parts of the excursion you plan to participate in.

Friday: Meet at Ballachulish Tourist Information Centre, 12 pm.

Visit Ballachulish slate quarry, view the tectonic Ballachulish slide and explore the limits of the Ballachulish Granite on the Onich shore.

Alternatively:

Meet at the silica mine, Lochaline, 16.30 prompt (see <http://www.lochalinequartzsand.co.uk/contact>)

Note: If you wish to visit the Lochaline silica mine please let Alison know as soon as possible as the mine operator may restrict the number of participants permitted underground.

Saturday: Meet at the Information Centre, Strontian (NM 8151 6164) 9.30 am (tbc)

The day's programme will include the Strontian Granite and Mines in the morning and the Permo-Carboniferous dyke swarm at Rhubha na h'Earba in the afternoon.

Dinner at the Strontian Hotel, 19:00 Please let Alison know if you would like to join the group for dinner.

Sunday: Meet at the Information Centre, Strontian (NM 8151 6164) 9.30 am (*tbc*)

The day will comprise a number of stops on the Strontian to Ardtornish and Lochaline road, including 'Dyke Quarry', the limestone quarry at Ardtornish, and the 'dyke with the hole' at Clach na Criche.

Monday: Meet at the Holly Tree Hotel, Kentallen, Argyll PA38 4BY 9.30 am (*tbc*)

A short day walk to take in the Cuil Bay traverse, including Bailey's 'Tiger Rock', and the Kentallen GCR/SSSI shore.

The group will be based at the Ariundle Centre, Acharacle, PH36 4JA (<http://ariundlecentre.co.uk>). If you would like accommodation at the centre (£20 per person per night) please let Alison know as soon as possible. A deposit of £30 is required at time of booking. Other accommodation options are available: see <http://www.ardnamurchan.com/> for more details.

Saturday 1st September to Sunday 2nd September – Achiltibuie and Coigach, Pete Harrison, NW Highlands Geopark

This excursion will run as part of the NW Highlands Geopark Geofestival which runs from April to October. The detailed itinerary has yet to be agreed but broadly will be:

Saturday: Achiltibuie itself, Aclochan for the Stour/Lewisian unconformity and the Torridon/Stoer unconformity, the shore at Achiltibuie to see the Stac Fada member and then to Cnoc Mor to see the Lewisian in more detail and the Lewisian/Torridon (Diabaig) unconformity in 3D.

Sunday: Start at Enard Bay and then visit one or two other sites (possibly Reiff, Badentarbat, Achininver, Dornie, or Achduart).

The group will be based in Ullapool for the weekend as Pete has very kindly offered us the use of the high-school minibus, which will simplify the logistics, although it will add travel time to the programme. Of course, if you wish to stay in Achiltibuie (or elsewhere in Coigach) that is absolutely fine! (see <http://coigach.com/directory/category/b-and-b/> for ideas).

OTHER DIARY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Friday 16th February Lochaber Geopark Association AGM, 6.30 pm, 55A High Street, Fort William, PH33 6DH. Topics to be covered include setting of membership fees, the recruitment of 2 new directors to join the board, and how to encourage more volunteers to help in the visitor centre.

Wednesday 30th May to Thursday 7th June – IODP Nankai Post-drilling Conference, Ullapool

Details to be confirmed but the conference is likely to include:

Saturday 1st June – programme of general talks, Ullapool, open to HGS members

Tuesday 5th June – NW Highlands field day

Wednesday 6th June – evening lecture, Ullapool

Please let Alison know if you are interested in attending the field day and/or talks and she will keep you informed of developments.

Saturday 16th June Friends of Hugh Miller AGM and Hugh Miller Writing Competition Prize-giving Ceremony, The Scottish Poetry Library, Edinburgh (from 10.30 am)

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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