**THE HIGHLAND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**Scottish Charity No. SC004427**

 **JANUARY 2018**

Dear Members,

Many thanks to everyone who supported our lecture programme and excursions during 2017; the coming year promises to be equally busy so Happy New Year and best wishes for 2018.

Please note that **your** **membership subscription for 2018 is due to be paid this month**. The rates are unchanged at Ordinary membership £15, Family membership £22.50, and Student membership £7.50. Many of you pay by standing order, a few by internet banking, and others by cheque or cash; if you have paid by **10 January** Alan will bring your membership card to the meeting (you will also be able to pay at the meeting). If you joined the society as a new member from October 2017 onwards, your membership will be carried forward to 2018.

**WINTER PROGRAMME 2018**

Our programme of winter talks continues on Wednesday 10th January and a new date has been added for March:

**10th January** – *Hydrogeology - water under the ground*, Dr John Heathcote, HGS

30% of the fresh water on the planet is groundwater, and 69.8% is ice. Most of the drinking water supply in southern England is from groundwater. Groundwater often features in civil engineering too - usually as a nuisance. Thus there's a whole branch of science that studies groundwater - it involves chemistry and maths as well as geology. The talk will cover the broad scope of hydrogeology, without too much chemistry and maths!

**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 bought 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 must 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; we also have plans to visit Strontian, the NW Highlands, Glen Roy and the Water of Ailnack – dates will be confirmed as soon as possible.

**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*

**OTHER DATES FOR YOUR (new!) DIARY:**

**Monday 15th January** *The Ice Age in Scotland*, Professor Colin Ballantyne, Scottish Royal Geographical Society meeting, Highland Council Chamber, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, 7.30 pm. https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/inverness-professor-colin-ballantyne-the-ice-age-in-scotland-tickets-37486816076

**Saturday 20th January** NW Highlands Geopark AGM, Scourie Village Hall, 12 pm. The Geopark is proposing introducing a membership fee from 1 April 2018, which would be applicable to both groups and individuals. More information is available in the latest newsletter (contact Alison for a copy) or by email from info@nwhgeopark.com

**Thursday 31st May – Thursday 7th June** IODP Nankai Trench post-expedition conference and field trip, Ullapool. More details to follow, but it is anticipated that the HGS will be involved in the conference activities.

**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)

**DEATH OF FORMER MEMBER**, **Dr Mary CATHERINE MACLEOD**

Longer-term members of the society will sad to hear that Catherine Macleod died peacefully at her home in Portknockie on 26 November. Catherine was a member of the HGS for a number of years and enjoyed attending excursions when she could. A formidable mountaineer in her younger days, she was involved with the pioneering use of dogs in search and rescue missions whilst living in Glen Coe and she also worked as a GP in Glenelg. Her funeral service was private but events in both Buckie and Fort William were held to celebrate her life.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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