



THE HIGHLAND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Scottish Charity No. SC004427

FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our latest newsletter where we can remind members about our final winter 2024 lecture, detail of our 2024 field trips and preliminary information about 2024/2025 autumn/winter lectures.

Dr John Adamson

It was with great regret that the Society learned last November of the death of long time member John Adamson at the age of 87. John was a familiar figure on Society outings in deerstalker and tweed breeches, always good humoured and enthusiastic. More recently he was a regular attendee at Zoom meetings.

John was the GP at Kyle of Lochalsh for over 30 years and carried on as a locum after his retirement. He spent several of his early years as a doctor in Norway and often spoke of his fond memories of the country. He was involved in Mountain Rescue and also was a RNLI crew member and medical officer. He was a fluent Gaelic speaker and played the pipes. He served as an Elder of the Church of Scotland for many years.

His funeral saw both Church and Hall packed out and there were many on-line attendees. He was a great character and always good company. We were lucky to know him.



John Adamson

Dr John Heathcote – Whitaker Medal

I'm sure members will want to join me in offering congratulations to John Heathcote on his award of the Whitaker Medal. This medal is awarded by The Hydrogeological Group of the Geological Society of London for an outstanding, long term contribution to hydrogeology. Details of his work are listed on the Group's website and includes working on the Sellafield radioactive waste repository and the Dounreay site restoration. Well done John!

HGS Social Media: Facebook and X

At a recent committee meeting it was decided that using social media might attract new younger members to the HGS. Karen Deans and Andy Legatt have agreed to become HGS administrators in overseeing these platforms and we wish this new venture the best of luck.

New HGS Treasurer and 2024-25 Committee

Kathryn Logan has kindly agreed to take on the role of HGS Treasurer from Alan Thompson and her new position was confirmed by the membership at the AGM. We also say a huge thank you to Alan for his work in keeping our accounts in order over the last 7 years.

Alan will continue to 'act' as Treasurer until all the paperwork has been actioned by the bank to enable Kathryn to operate the bank accounts and then the handover will take place. Alan will continue to be on the committee and do all the other things which he is involved with! All the other committee members agreed to stand again and were re-elected en masse.

This is also an opportunity to say that new committee members are always welcome to join us in our quest to arrange field trips, lectures and the general running of the HGS. Several of the committee are over 70 and it is hoped new blood will join to enable continuity of the Society for years to come.

The remaining winter 2024 talk is:

20 March 2024 (Zoom): Dr Davide Foffa; The Elgin Reptiles: new insights from digital technology

Dr. Foffa is a postdoctoral researcher in Paleobiology in the Department of Geosciences at Virginia Tech (USA) and the University of Birmingham. His research is funded by an Independent (Global) Fellowship (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action by the European Commission Research Executive Agency). Prior to arriving at Virginia Tech, Dr. Foffa was a postdoctoral fellow at the National Museums Scotland. He completed a PhD at the University of Edinburgh, a MSc in Palaeobiology at the University of Bristol, and a BSc in Geological Sciences at the University of Pisa (Italy).

<https://futurumcareers.com/Davide-Foffa-Article.pdf>

<https://davidefoffa.weebly.com/research.html>

Abstract : After Davide was awarded funding from the Royal Commission of the Exhibition of 1851 he has been using scanning techniques to study fossils found in Triassic rocks of the Lossiemouth area around 100 years ago. His lecture will include results of research into reptiles such as *Erpetosuchus* and *Scleromochlus* and show how modern techniques can help unravel the mysteries of these ancient animals.

2024 field trips

Self-led week in Fife, Saturday 13 April to Saturday 20 April

Self catering accommodation has been booked in Fife near Anstruther.

Please contact Anne Cockroft at hgssec@gmail.com if you are interested in joining us on this field trip. We will be using 'Fife & Angus Geology Excursion Guide' by A R MacGregor as our main inspiration for localities to visit. It can be viewed online at https://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php/Fife_and_Angus_geology:_an_excursion_guide

Saturday 18 May: Don Stewart: Glen Tilt - following in the footsteps of James Hutton

In 2023, Don led the Aberdeen Geological Society to look at the exposures that had influenced James Hutton's thoughts on the age of the granite rocks that he found intruded into country rocks in Glen Tilt. Don has agreed to provide the same field trip for HGS members. Ann has been in touch with Atholl Estate and they are happy for 3-4 cars to drive up the glen and stop at various locations. The Society will be looking for drivers who are prepared to take their cars up the unmade road, which is in fairly good condition as the properties that the Estate lets are accessed by it. Hopefully we can get 4-5 people in each car. Places will be allocated on first to express an interest basis. If additional people wish to come then we may be able to get permission for a further car. In any case a waiting list will be held if necessary

Edward Acton edward.acton@btinternet.com will deal with all the arrangements for this trip.

Thursday 20 June – geology on 4 days Friday 21- Monday 24 June inclusive: Prof Rob Strachan: North of Scotland Geology. Based at Tongue Hostel and Campsite.

Fully booked with 24 participants including the leader and with members either using campervan, caravan or hostel accommodation: <https://www.tonguehostelandholidaypark.co.uk/tongue-hostel-hostelling-accommodation-kyle-tongue/>

I'm sure most participants will have a copy of 'An excursion guide to the Moine geology...' but here is the online link:

https://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php/Excursion_guide_to_the_Moine_geology_of_the_Northern_Highlands_of_Scotland#:~:text=The%20aim%20of%20this%20excursion,Caledonian%20foreland%20to%20the%20NW.

Saturday 31 August: Prof Peter Scott: Nigg and Cromarty. Due to the time of low tide it will be an afternoon and early evening excursion with possible bar meal in Cromarty at the conclusion.

NB If you have a Scottish Bus Pass then bring it – it will cover the cost of the ferry crossings.

We expect to start this field trip at about 14.00, meeting at Nigg ferry pier in Cromarty after everyone has had their lunch. The object of the trip is to look at the Old Red Sandstone, first on the north shore as far as North Sutor and then on the south shore as far as South Sutor. We shall also examine the unconformity with the Moine and the fish beds on the south shore. Expected finish time about 19.00. Contact Ann Reynolds at highlandgeologicalsociety@gmail.com if you wish to join this trip.

Sunday 15 September: Prof John Parnell: Scardroy, Strath Conon. The purpose of this trip is to examine a Lewisian inlier in the Moine bedrock.

Parking at the car Park at Loch Beannacharain grid ref: NH227519 for 10.45. I understand that boulders of all types of the rocks involved can be seen at the loch side, so no matter what your physical state you can see examples of the rocks that tell the story here. Our fitter and more intrepid members can accompany John up the hill beside the stream then you can see the rocks in situ. It is suggested that you bring a packed lunch and be prepared for the weather that is forecast. Also bring midge repellent and be aware there might be ticks if going up the hill.

In all cases remember to bring details of your next of kin and your mobile phone number with you – copy blank form attached. To save you printing this out each time you can ask for your form to be returned at the end of each field trip otherwise they will be shredded and you will require a new form for each trip. Contact Ann Reynolds at highlandgeologicalsociety@gmail.com if you wish to join this trip.

Talks Autumn/Winter 2024/2025

It's early days of course but work on the next season of lectures is underway and we have the beginnings of a programme, more details to follow!

2 Oct 2024 Dr Martin Smith: the Glen Doe Tunnel Collapse
13 Nov 2024 Dr John Heathcote: Radioactive waste
TBC Feb 25 Andy Moffat: Chicxulub seismic and drilling data

Other speakers are still awaiting confirmation.

Items of interest and geological websites

Friends of Hugh Miller

<https://www.thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk/>

Scottish Geology Trust (SGT) Geosites Project

The SGT Geoconservation Review (GCR) database keeps growing and is slowly turning into a very valuable resource and HGS members are heavily involved with this.

<https://geosites.scottishgeologytrust.org/>

You can choose particular categories of SSSI from the main page or tick on 'Show photographs' to see how this work has progressed.

Moray Walking Festival

You might be aware of the annual Moray Walking Festival. Although many HGS members have already enjoyed a Hopeman geology excursion Dave and Alison are hosting a Hopeman-Clashach geology field trip on Saturday 15th June under the auspices of this event and anyone new to this locality is invited to join us. <https://www.moraywalkoutdoorfest.co.uk/>

YouTube

Professor Rob Butler, University of Aberdeen, has been very busy putting together a highly impressive series of over 230 instructional geology videos, many from Scottish locations, onto his area, The Shear Zone, on YouTube. These videos generally last around 20 minutes and are highly recommended – this is a tremendously informative resource.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIUyjr1yPCZQWYI9cJCO1mA/videos>

Palaeocast podcasts:-

<https://www.palaeocast.com/category/mesozoic/>

The Scottish Geology Trust

<http://www.scottishgeologytrust.org/>

Other Scottish geological societies:

Aberdeen Geological Society

<http://www.aberdeengeolsoc.org.uk/>

Edinburgh Geological Society

<https://www.edinburghgeolsoc.org/>

Glasgow Geological Society

<https://geologyglasgow.org.uk/>

Open University Geology Society

<https://ougs.org/>

and for the Scottish branch <https://ougs.org/scotland/>

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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