

One of my duties as GA President is to introduce the speaker at the monthly Friday lectures in London and in February this year it was the Henry Stopes Lecture. Whilst doing a little background research in the Proceedings of the Geologists' Association I accessed a paper entitled 'Henry Stopes' published posthumously by the first recipient of the Henry Stopes Medal, A.S. Kennard in 1949. Henry Stopes was born in 1852 into a Quaker family who owned the Eagle Brewery in Colchester. As well as being involved with the family business, as a young man he established an engineering company associated with the brewing industry. However, his real passion involved flints and fossils and his work associated with Pleistocene geology and prehistory in Swanscombe area is his scientific legacy. At an early stage he anticipated the conflicts between development and heritage, and endeavoured to minimise the impact of building near the key Swanscombe site.

His daughter (Marie Stopes) was to leave a legacy to the world in Carboniferous palaeobotany, and work on women's rights and birth control.

His bequest to the GA is the Henry Stopes Memorial Fund, which, once every 3 years, strikes a medal in his name which is to award work on the Prehistory of Hominins and their geological environment. The 2018 recipient was Prof Nick Ashton, who provided a fascinating lecture in February on the Climate and Palaeogeography of Early Human Settlement in Britain.

As a representative of the GA I was invited in late February to the North Lincolnshire Museum for the re-introduction of the Scunthorpe Pliosaur to the world. This was a truly inclusive event at which the fossil remains of an 8m marine reptile were shown to a diverse audience who were both excited and curious. The BBC and local press were present to record the day. Significant support was provided by the GA Curry Fund, the Yorkshire Geological Society and Friends of the Scunthorpe Museum, to enable the remains to be professionally preserved. More details of this can be found on page 23.

Central to our activities at this time of year is the preparation for the GA's AGM and presentation of the medals and awards. It is an opportunity to recognise the contribution individuals have made across a diverse range of activities that include making a significant contribution to

the running of the GA, the promotion of geology and the best paper in the Proceedings of The Geologist's Association (PGA). There are also a series of awards to students embarking on fieldwork, and best MSc. thesis. One award which has only recently been introduced, is the Presidents Medal which on this occasion it was awarded to Dr Michael Oates for his involvement with Rockwatch and as GA Lecture Meeting Organiser since 1992 amongst his many contributions. This was a wonderful part of the evening and the delight of all the deserving recipients was apparent. Congratulations to all the award winners (see pages 6 & 7 for full listing).



**Figure 1: GASS2019 contributors**

I would also like to congratulate and welcome Dr Vanessa Banks who joins Council as Senior Vice President (SVP), and will be taking on the role as President in May 2020. Vanessa, works for the British Geological Survey (BGS) and has been heavily involved with local geology groups for many

years and participated in past GA Conferences. In fact, she is presenting at the GA Conference in Manchester (October 2019). I really look forward to working with her on Council. One of the GA's many positive qualities is the ability to provide excellent field trips, and we need to explore how we can provide excursions which appeal to undergraduates and early career individuals.

Following the AGM, both Dr Colin Prosser and Prof David Bridgland step down from the Executive Committee but still remain on Council to provide a focal point for Geoconservation and Chair of the Publications Committee respectively. I wish to thank them for their valued contribution and judgment along with Rhian Kendall and Dr Paul Olver who are both retiring from Council. Mick Oates will be taking on the role of Vice President and Richard Trounson who has much experience in legal matters has been nominated to Council.

The third GA Student Symposium (GASS 2019) was on the 17th May 2019 at Burlington House. There were 80 delegates, 12 presentations and a similar number of posters on the theme 'Geological Solutions to Global Challenges'. It was a wonderful day full of stimulating talks and poster presentations. It is by students but not exclusively for students; providing as it does a great opportunity to hear about a diverse range of geological research. The prize winners are invited to submit an article to the autumn GA magazine!

Planning for our GA Annual Conference (Geological Resources of the North West past, present and future) in Manchester 18th - 19th October, 2019 is in the final stages, with a visit to the Manchester Museum on the Friday afternoon followed by a full programme of lectures on the Saturday and four field trip options for Sunday. Thanks to Dr Cathy Hollis and her co-convenors who are putting a lot of thought and hard work in to ensure we have an interesting and enjoyable conference.

The Council are always considering the next step and are presently exploring venue options for the 2020 GA Conference to be hosted jointly with the Edinburgh Geological Society. Very exciting prospect indeed.

On behalf of the GA I attended the opening of two sites prepared by the Bedfordshire Geology Group along the Greensand Ridge, in association with the Greensand Heritage Trust. A real collaborative effort from numerous focused charities who have worked to bring alive and realise the distinctive heritage which is prevalent in this unique landscape. Support from the Curry Fund has been accessed to finance some of these initiatives. At Potten Scout Hut

Quarry, Bedfordshire a 5m vertical section of Greensand has been cleaned, and access for people with restricted mobility has been constructed. There is a 3D interpretation board to help those with impaired vision (see article on p.26).

The second event was ribbon cutting at the opening of a Geological Wall at Clophill; a clear way of representing the geology and landscape before you. This site is included in one of several GeoTrails the Bedfordshire Geology Group have compiled - see their website <http://www.bedfordshiregeologygroup.org.uk/information.html>

As I mentioned in the last magazine, we have done much work on GA Governance including a risk register, safeguarding documentation and field trip protocols, thanks to Adrian Champion for helping us to put much of this documentation in place.

Finally, please check the GA website for future events and field trips which I am sure you will find of interest.

## REPORT FROM COUNCIL

By: Diana Clements

Since the March issue Council have been very busy with Governance Issues. One of our 2018 intake of Council Members, Adrian Champion, has been spear-heading the various initiatives. Council have now drawn up a Risk Register, a Complaints Procedure and a Safeguarding document (Alison Barraclough is our Safeguarding team leader). We have also formalised the Protocols for both the Overseas and UK Field Trips. We have been working on these two for a while and the added information has been included in the Circular and with the information for those who sign up.

The Annual General Meeting was held on Friday 3rd of May where the Annual Accounts and Report were approved. Members should have received copies either electronically or through the post. Accompanying the report was a letter detailing the new password for the GA Members Only pages on the website. If you did not receive it for some reason please get in touch with the office.

At the meeting Colin Prosser stepped down as Senior Vice President and we are very pleased to welcome Vanessa Banks from the British Geological Survey to take this position. Colin will remain on Council with responsibility for Geoconservation. David Bridgland retires from his stint as Vice President but continues as Chair of Publications and as our representative on Earth Heritage. Mick Oates became the new Vice President, a position that is normally held for two years. The President thanked Colin and David for their terms on the Executive and for all their hard work in this capacity. Paul Olver retired from Council earlier in the year and we also said goodbye to Rhian Kendall whose 3-year term of office has ended. Other members of Council were willing to continue and were re-elected en bloc. Nick Pierpoint thanked everyone for their contributions. Richard Trounson was nominated as a new trustee for advice on legal matters but

prefers to be co-opted and contacted as the need arises.

Barbara Cumbers has stepped down as co-opted Awards Secretary, a position she has held, almost since the beginning of our Research Awards in 2011. During her time the number of recipients has grown dramatically and at the AGM the names of the seventeen 2018 recipients were listed. In addition prizes were awarded to support worthy undergraduates in their studies. The GA was delighted to award a total of £13,150 to 25 recipients including small grants for attending meetings. This year all the recipients were students. Members should be aware that Research Grants are open to GA Members as well as students (details are on the GA website). In addition, nearly £24,000 was awarded through the Curry Fund on a variety of projects. This makes a total of over £37,000 given to deserving students and other causes.

The interesting part of the Proceedings is hearing about the winners of the GA Prizes. Many congratulations to all of them. Full details can be found on p.6 - 7. All the Prize winners are invited to the Annual Dinner and it is a great chance for GA members to meet them and hear more about the work they have been doing. We hold the Annual Dinner in the Lower Library of the Geological Society and it is very congenial. Many thanks to Sarah and Geraldine in the office and our Geological Society colleagues who help to make it run smoothly.

Unfortunately the AGM and dinner have a habit of clashing with the Lyme Regis Fossil Festival. This year was no exception. Partly for that reason, but mainly because the Festival organisers were unable to procure space for exhibitors this year, the GA were not able to attend officially. I was fortunate to attend with the team from the Natural History Museum and distributed information on Rockwatch to families who attended the William Smith workshop I was