

AGM update

By Bev Fowlston

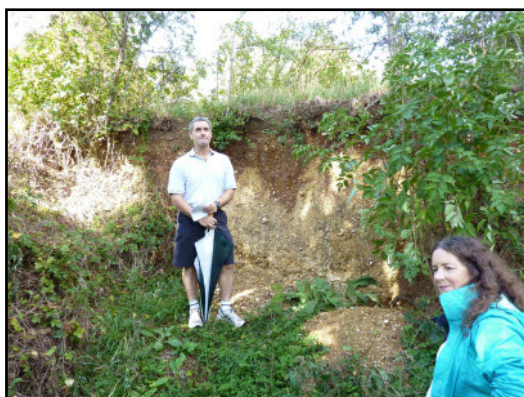
Prior to the AGM this year, Martin Whiteley took a group of members for a tour of the River Great Ouse terraces around Biddenham and Bromham. The walk took us on a scenic route along the river where Martin pointed out the modern river terrace and its impact on the landscape. The group sheltered from the pouring (drizzle) rain under a road bridge.

The intrepid bunch then hiked up the 'massive' (~2m) second terrace which took us across muddy fields and along farm tracks before we attempted the third and final terrace with its 'steep' incline of another couple of metres or so. Where we then emerged in a beautiful housing estate!

However, there was one last surprise for the intrepid explorers - a wonderful exposure of river terrace deposits! Martin explained the history of the site and its geological and archaeological past.



Sheltering from the pouring drizzle!



Exposed - river terrace deposits!

Following this walk, the group then reconvened at Kempston village hall where the AGM took place. The usual business was discussed with a brief review of the year given by Peter Lally. He reflected on some of the wonderful events we have given and the successful projects that have taken place since the last AGM. Concerns over funding were brought to the fore by several members and these will be discussed at the committee meetings in due course. Thanks were given to all those who have been committee members for a number of years now and it was with great pleasure that we welcomed Glynda Easterbrook to the committee to aide with fundraising and Public Relations.

However, it is still sad to see that we have three vacancies on the committee. One very important role, that of secretary, remains unfilled for the second year. If you can spare three or four evenings a year to help fulfil any vacancies on the committee then please do get in touch with Peter, Lindsay or myself. All help is welcomed.

If you wish to see more pictures of the river terraces walk then please look at the photo gallery on the website.

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Edited by Bev Fowlston.

If you have any comment or wish to include an article in the next issue of this newsletter then please contact me on 01525 375353 or by email bev.fowlston@gmail.com Deadline for next issue is 25th February 2012.

I hope you enjoyed reading.

Event reviews

BGG Visit to the Sedgwick Museum, Cambridge

By Anne Williams



The Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences dinosaur replica.

The Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences is responsible for around 1.5 million fossil, rock and mineral specimens from around the world, encompassing more than 500 million years of Earth's history; many of these are on display, including a large Iguanodon, several marine reptiles and the famous collection of bizarre early creatures from the Burgess Shale.

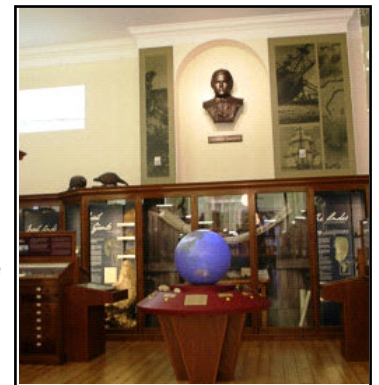
On Saturday 15th October eleven of our members visited the Sedgwick where we were given a conducted tour by the Collections Manager, Dan Pemberton. We started in the basement with the Building Stones Collection, stones from all around the world and not normally open to visitors. Many of us would have liked to spend longer with this huge and beautiful collection of dressed hand specimens. But Dan with his vast knowledge of the museum's collections and many funny stories, whisked us upstairs into the open museum where he showed us the restored Woodward Room that houses what is thought to be the oldest surviving intact collection of its type in the world, bequeathed to the museum by Dr. John Woodward in the seventeenth century.



Hallucigenia, from the Burgess Shale.

Dr. Woodward had five walnut cases specially made to house and display his collection. The specimens are still stored in these today, and form the part of the display. His will stipulated that the lecturer should "*attend daily in the room where [the collections] are repositied from the hour of nine of the clock in the morning until eleven, and again from the hour of two in the afternoon until four three days a week to show the said Fossils, gratis, to all such curious and intelligent persons as shall desire a view of them for their information and instruction.*"

Very relevant to our own Bedfordshire geology were the exhibits 'Life in the Jurassic Seas' and 'Local Geology' the rocks and fossils of Cambridgeshire and the Fens. We finished the tour in the new section devoted to the life of Charles Darwin and the specimens collected by him on his 1831 *Voyage of the Beagle*.



The Darwin collection.

Members' Page

The only correspondence received for this newsletter has come from Graham Hickman, who has sent a pdf full of information about a new service from the BGS. You can read it on page 4.

If you wish to see more images from our events then please visit our new Gallery page on the website.

www.bedfordshiregeologygroup.org.uk/gallery

If you have any interesting images or just want to voice your opinion on a geological issue, events or how the group is run then this is your page. Just send your images, in jpeg format, or any letters or comments as a Word .doc document via email to the editor at bev.fowlston@gmail.com

Biddenham Gravel Pit site clearance

By Bev Fowlston

Following the AGM visit to this one-off site in Bedfordshire, Martin Whiteley arranged for a group of members and non-members to clear more of the outcrop of river terraces. The motley crew with shovels, rakes and pick-axes set to work on a glorious Autumn morning. Everyone worked hard to clear vegetation away from the face, line a path with the rubble and soil that was scraped away from the face and remove debris from old badger holes. The exposure of gravels now shows the features created by the Ice Age. This site was first cleared in 2010 after consultation with local residents. It exposes clayey and silty layers, which have yielded interglacial mollusca and mammalian remains. I also has a rich history of Palaeolithic industry, which are unfortunately too deep in the succession for us to expose, safely.



The motley crew of clearance workers.

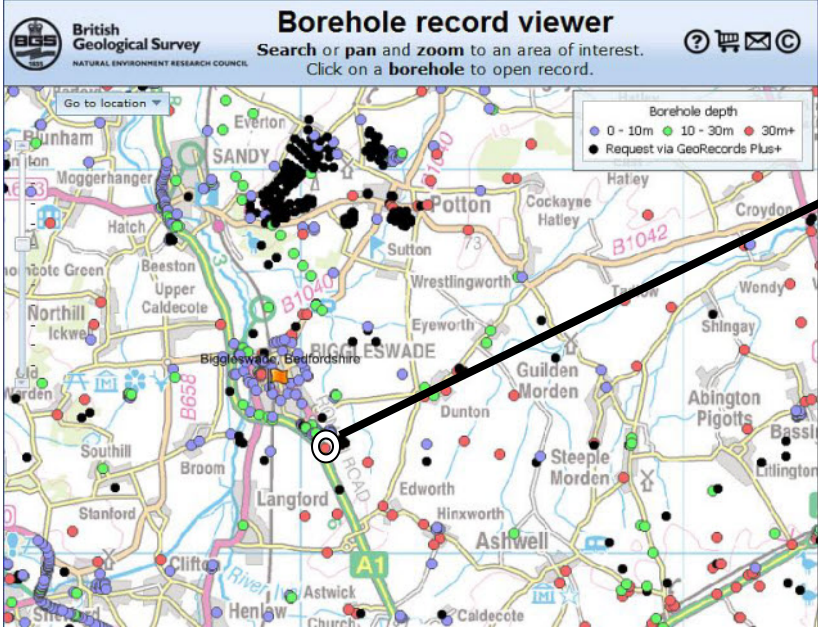


The image on the left shows Biddenham gravel pit after its initial clearance in 2010. The image below shows the cleaned outcrop exposes more of the ice wedge structures and the gravels.



Digging Deep Free stuff during the government cut backs!

The government austerity measures are evident everywhere, with the constant erosion of benefits and stuff that used to be free or subsidised now being charged for. It was therefore a great surprise to discover something that used to cost £25 being given away...free! The British Geological Survey has digitised its large collection of borehole records and these are now downloadable at no charge.



The example map above, shows the boreholes available around Biggleswade. The depths of the boreholes are shown by the different coloured dots. Blue: 0-10m, Green: 10-30m, Red: 30+m, Black is confidential and not available.

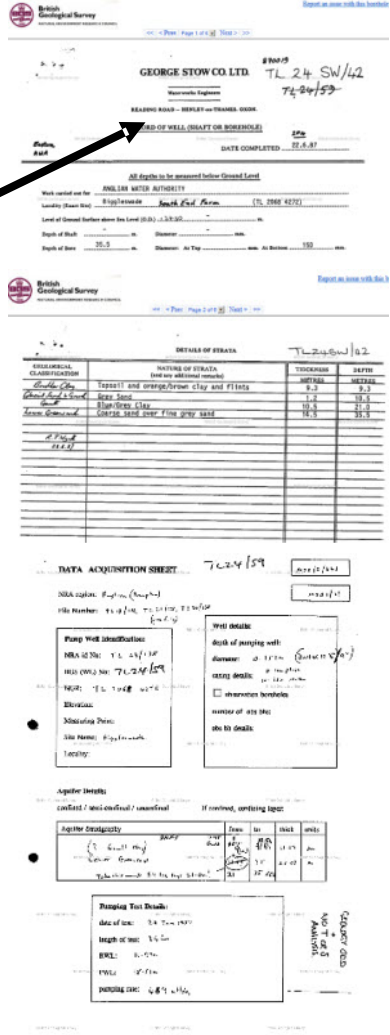
The example to the right shows the Biggleswade South End Farm bore hole TL24Sw42 which is almost 35m deep. There are 6 pages of information associated with this borehole which records the thickness of the Boulder Clay and Gravels, Gault Clay and Lower Greensand drilled at this location.

Combined with surface geology maps, these data are very useful for understanding our local geology.

The data can be accessed through the Geindex:

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/boreholescans/boreholescans.html>

Graham Hickman



GEORGE STOW CO LTD TL 24 SW/42
71-24/59

READERS ROAD - BERRY-ON-TREASURER

DEPTH OF WELL (SHAFT OR BOREHOLE) 35m
DATE COMPLETED 22.5.57

STRATIGRAPHICAL CLASSIFICATION	NATURE OF STRATA	THICKNESS	DEPTH
1. Boulder Clay	Topsoil and orange/brown clay and flints	0.3	0.3
2. Gault Clay	Grey sand	1.2	1.5
3. Lower Greensand	Light green clay	18.5	20.0
4. Boulder Clay	Orange sand over fine grey sand	13.5	33.5

DATA ACQUISITION SHEET 71-24/59

Pump Well Identification:
 NRA ID No: 71-24/59
 HED (OS) No: 71-24/59
 NGR: 55 1048 5076

Well Details:
 Date of opening well: 22.5.57
 Diameter: 0.17m (6.7 in)
 Casing details: 100 mm dia
 Construction materials: concrete brick other

Stratigraphic Data:
 No. of strata: 4
 No. of details: 4

Geological Details:
 If received, opening log:

Geological Description	From	To	Thickness	Depth
Topsoil and orange/brown clay and flints	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.3
Grey sand	0.3	1.5	1.2	1.5
Light green clay	1.5	20.0	18.5	20.0
Orange sand over fine grey sand	20.0	33.5	13.5	33.5

Pumping Test Details:
 Date of test: 24.5.57
 Length of test: 1.5 hr
 Bore: 0.17m
 Flow: 0.17m
 Pumping rate: 0.8 l/min

Forthcoming Events and Contacts

Don't miss the next event

**21st Feb 2012 - Talk by Dr John Catt
at Christchurch Bushmead at 7.30pm**

Dates for your diary

- 21st Feb** Talk on Hertfordshire Geology by Dr John Catt, 7.30pm at Christchurch Bushmead, Hancock Street, Luton LU2 7SF
- 22nd Mar** Talk by Glynda Easterbrook, 7.30pm (venue to be confirmed)
- Apr** Site clearance at Kensworth and a visit to the Tree Cathedral (date to be confirmed)
- May** To be decided
- Jun** Fossil Fun Day at Harrold-Odell Country Park (date to be confirmed)
- 28/29th Jul** Rushmere test pit day
- August** Field trip to Barton Springs (date to be confirmed)

A 12-month rolling programme of events is being organised - check the website for further details. Further events will be confirmed via email and in the next newsletter. Watch this space!

If there is an event you would like to see then please let Bev Fowlston know and she will aim to organise it.

For more information on any of the events, please contact Bev Fowlston at the details below.

Subscriptions kept at same level - again!

Following the committee meeting held in October, it was agreed to keep the membership costs at the same level. However, with increasing insurance costs and limited external funding within the current economic climate, the committee will review the costs at each October meeting. This is in order to maintain a healthy bank balance for the Group and allow further events, trips and educational opportunities to take place.

Membership information

Individual membership is £7.50 per annum.
Group membership is £25.00 per annum
(Available to organisations that have 4 or more employees or members wishing to join B&LGG)

To continue to receive this newsletter by email or post then you must renew your membership. This newsletter is not the only benefit of remaining a member of the B&LGG; all our events for members are **free of charge**, non-members must pay £2.00 to attend.

You can renew now by either:

1. Sending a cheque made payable to BGG
2. Requesting and completing a Standing Order form

Both available through contacting:
Lindsay Hiles BGG Secretary, 4 Phoenix Close
Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 3YW

Remember without you - the members - this Group does not exist.

We need you!

Committee Members 2011 - 12

Chairperson
Secretary
Treasurer/Membership Secretary
RIGS Manager & BNHS representative
Events Coordinator
Chalk Downs rep/Events Organiser
Beds CC & Biodiversity Forum rep
Events Organiser
The Greensand Trust representative
PR/Promotions/Fundraising Officer
Information Officer

Peter Lally
Vacant
Lindsay Hiles
Dr Martin Whiteley
Bev Fowlston
Janet Munro
Vacant
Vacant
Malcolm Oliver
Glynda Easterbrook
Anne Williams

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