

Geoscientist

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LINO BEAUTY

Art and science
combine

SLIMEBALL EARTH

Oldest complex life
sees light once more

BHUTAN CONTACT

Fieldwork on the roof of the world

Life and the Planet

New perspectives in Earth system science

5th and 6th May 2011

The Geological Society of London, Burlington House

Launch of the NERC Long-term Co-evolution of Life and the Planet Programme

Convenors:

Professor Tim Lenton, *University of East Anglia*

Dr Graham Shields, *University College London*

Professor Andrew Watson, *University of East Anglia*

Keynote speakers include:

Dr James Lovelock, *Independent scientist*

Professor Lynn Margulis, *University of Massachusetts*

The Earth that sustains us today was born out of a few remarkable revolutions, started by evolutionary innovations and marked by global environmental consequences, including abrupt rises in oxygen and extreme glaciations. The coupled evolution of life and the planet has continued up to the present, and now includes the planet-reshaping activities of our species.

This two-day discussion meeting will showcase recent progress in understanding the development of the Earth as a system. The meeting will outline how new science can help in tying down critical uncertainties, regarding the nature and timing of past events. Finally, it will explore how an improved understanding of life and the planet in the past can help us achieve future sustainability.

Call for posters

Conference poster contributions are welcome. Please email your poster abstract to Georgina Worrall.

For further information about the conference, or to submit a poster abstract, please contact:

Georgina Worrall

The Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BG

T: 020 434 9944 F: 020 7494 0579

E: georgina.worrall@geolsoc.org.uk W: www.geolsoc.org.uk/events

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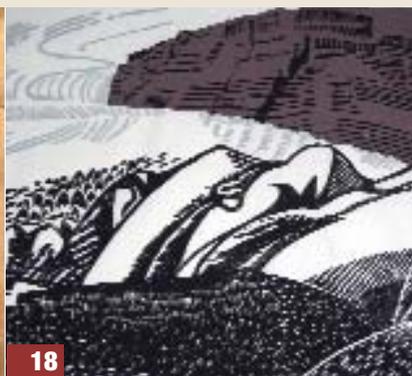
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Marine Tephrochronology

26th October 2011 at Burlington House, London, UK

This one-day meeting is sponsored by the Marine Studies Group of the Geological Society of London, with additional support from the Quaternary Research Association. We invite contributions (oral or poster) on a wide-range of topics which are relevant to Marine Tephrochronology, including: tephra geochemistry; analytical advances; event-stratigraphy; land-ice-ocean correlation; geochronology and transport mechanisms. Subject to community support, the meeting conveners propose to edit a book on the same thematic topic, to be published in 2012 as a Geological Society Special Publication (<http://www.geolsoc.org.uk/gsl/publications/books/sp>) – expressions of interest are welcome from attending and non-attending participants.

Keynote Speakers

- **Christel van den Bogaard** (GEOMAR, Kiel, Germany)
- **Haflidi Haflidason** (Bergen, Norway)
- **John Lowe** (Royal Holloway, London, UK)
- **Steve Sparks** (Bristol, UK)



Meeting Co-Conveners

- **Peter Abbott** (Swansea, UK)
- **William Austin** (St Andrews, UK)*
- **Siwan Davies** (Swansea, UK)
- **Nick Pearce** (Aberystwyth, UK)
- **Stefan Wastegaard** (Stockholm, Sweden)



*main contact & scientific enquiries: bill.austin@st-andrews.ac.uk

Abstracts

Abstract submissions (one page A4) should be submitted by 1st September 2011 to Mrs Helen Olaz, School of Geography & Geosciences, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, Scotland, KY16 9AL, UK.

E-mail: ho10@st-andrews.ac.uk

(Please state your preference for oral or poster presentation)



Registration

Registration (£35 - full / £20 - student) should be completed on-line by 1st October 2011 by visiting: <https://onlineshop.st-andrews.ac.uk/> (please navigate to Conferences & Events, then Geography & Geosciences)

Marine Tephrochronology

“ RAY OF LIGHT FALLING UPON PARO DZONG, BHUTAN ”

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Contact

The Geological Society,
Burlington House, Piccadilly,
London W1J 0BG
T +44 (0)20 7434 9944
F +44 (0)20 7439 8975
E enquiries@geolsoc.org.uk
W www.geolsoc.org.uk

Publishing House

The Geological Society
Publishing House, Unit 7,
Brassmill Enterprise Centre,
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T 01225 445046
F 01225 442836

Library

T +44 (0)20 7432 0999
F +44 (0)20 7439 3470
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W www.centuryone
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Nick Simpson
T 01727 893 894
E nick@centuryone
publishing.ltd.uk

ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE

Jonathan Knight
T 01727 739 193
E jonathan@centuryone
publishing.ltd.uk

ART EDITOR

Heena Gudka

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Sarah Astington
Tanya Kant

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OLYMPIC DREAM

Dorset has two big things going for it: its geology, especially as displayed along the Jurassic Coast, which is mostly within the County – and its literature. I review the most recent example of how tourism is increasingly becoming integrated with the UNESCO World Heritage Site concept in *Geoscientist Online*, where this month you can find an additional review and associated article about the Thomas Hardy Society's latest publication – *Thomas Hardy and the Jurassic Coast*.

But if you come to visit the Jurassic Coast, where is its front door – its shop window – its point of departure? Where could you go to learn about it, get enthused, see exhibitions or pick up maps and leaflets? Where is its one-stop-shop?

You might cite the charming Victorian Dorset County Museum, in busy and congested Dorchester. Then, in congested and almost car-free Lyme Regis, you can visit the charming and quaint Philpot Museum. Indeed, no visit to Dorset is complete without both. But neither could claim to be an adequate focal point for a tourist-attracting natural wonder of global standing. The short answer is – there is no focal point for the Jurassic Coast.

However, amazingly, slap bang in the middle of the Coast, lies a large brownfield site – a huge area of deprivation, industrial dereliction and depopulation, begging to be “re-purposed”, as planning jargon has it, and waiting expectantly below some relatively low-hanging cash from regional and European development grants. Not only that - the area is about to become the focus of the 2012 Olympics sailing competition and needs sprucing up. If you wanted convincing of the power of the Olympics to regenerate large areas in short order, go to the Lea Valley, where the Olympic velodrome has just been completed – a mere five years after the bid was won.

This place, of course, is the Isle of Portland, where many old quarries, prison areas and docklands would only be improved by the addition of a state-of-the-art interpretation centre, complete with walk-through aquaria, alive with real sharks and swimming animatronic ammonites, and surrounded by ample car parking. A real museum, showing some of the NHM's Jurassic and Cretaceous collections, currently hidden away in storage, could help fulfil that institution's remit to place its riches before the public. The local economy would be boosted permanently – providing an all-important legacy that the local Council could buy into.

The time is right – action should be taken now.

DR TED NIELD EDITOR

