

THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Burlington House 13.30hrs Thursday 14 September 2006

MINUTES

1. Attendance

Apologies: Ian Bartholomew; Peter Doyle; Richard Fortey; Nina Fullbrook (EC Assistant); David Ovadia; John Simmons; John Underhill; Steven Veal (AAPG representative); Bob White.

Present: Joe Cann (JC, Chair); Ted Nield (TN, Secretary); Judi Lakin (JL, Education & Training Officer); Susan Brown (SB); Edmund Nickless (EN, *pars*); Tim Radford (TR); Dave Sanderson (DS, Chair, Education Committee);

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes, circulated previously and posted on www.geolsoc.org.uk were approved without one small amendment, substituting "Rockwatch-inspired" for "GA-inspired" (SB) in AOB item on "*Earth Rocks*" (see also AOB below).

3. Matters Arising

There were no outstanding actions, and no matters arising that were not covered in the agenda.

4. Report of the Chair

There was nothing to report that was not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

5. Minutes of the Education Committee

The minutes were tabled and circulated (see <http://www.geolsoc.org.uk/template.cfm?name=Externalrelations>). DS reported that the Key Stage 3 Primer was on track to report by the deadline. This deadline would not see a "finished product", but a fleshed out structure that could then be filled in. The project would continue, mindful not to get bogged down in design and functionality. JC thanked DS for the work of the Committee, which was deserving of high praise for the way in which it had got going so quickly from a standing start. The KS3 project was a wonderful basis for further work, especially if tied in to an initiative like "Geoscape Canada".

DS said that the Higher Education Academy were keen to establish a nationwide review of the teaching of Earth sciences and had approached GEES. However it was felt that the GEES remit was already too broad to be useful. Other subjects are scheduled for review in the first year, so there was no need to hurry with this, since any review of Earth science was some way off.

JC asked what would be the level of the review, and whether it would be a huge nationwide review with committee of inquiry, or would it be a smaller “personal view” by a commentator chosen for the job. DS said this was not certain at this stage. JC said he was keen not to draw up too many boundaries just now – especially when many of the most active and exciting areas of Earth science lay outside the field of “traditional” geology. Clearly there was a debate to be had here – should the remit of this review err on the broad or narrow side? Would breadth add to or detract from its usefulness?

JL presented two new leaflets she had produced, to replace “*Earth Work*” and the long out-of-print poster/leaflet “*Geoscience: a World of Choice*”, both previously produced by TN (the latter in association with CHUGD since its first edition, in 1987).

These updated versions had been written by JL, in collaboration with ESTA – whose logo also appeared on them. They had been edited for publication by TN and produced by TN and JL, and designed and printed (in full colour and to a much higher set of production values than any previous leaflets of this sort) by the society’s preferred designer/printers Witherbys, using photographs by TN. The project had been successfully completed in time for presentation of both leaflets at the September 2006 ESTA conference. The committee **noted** the new leaflets.

DS said that a good outcome of producing these texts was that JL had now established for the Society a harmonious working relationship with ESTA.

6. International Year of Planet Earth – draft MoU

TN introduced the model MoU, explaining that all National Committees were encouraged to sign such a document expressing their relationship with and duties towards the International Year. It was the wish of the Project Leader, Eduardo de Mulder, to sign such an MoU with the UK National Committee at the inaugural meeting of the Board of International Year, on 9/10 January in Burlington House – arranged to coincide with the joint balloon launch for the Bicentennial and the International Year 2007-9. DS asked about the “cash income” clause, but was reassured that since the UKNC has no income from national sources, it did not pose a problem. The clause was also merely an invitation, not an injunction, TN pointed out. TN said that the MoU had been drafted permissively so that it did not restrict the actions of any NC unduly.

The Committee **agreed** to accept the MoU as it stands. This would now go forward for ratification by Council on 22 November so that it could be signed in January 2007. **Action JC/TN**

7. Bicentenary Media Planner

TN introduced ERC to the extensive media plan he had devised for the Bicentenary Steering Group which had met earlier in the month. Unfortunately it had not been possible to print an update of the planner because of technical difficulties with the colour A3 printer. Nevertheless the reason for showing it was to give an impression of the continuous nature of the media relations activity planned for those activities possessing media potential. The plan now extended to December 2007, following the extension of the *Bicentenary Anniversary London Lecture Series*.

TN also pointed out that it was highly unlikely that all this activity could be fitted in around his irreducible commitments to magazine, Web site and Annual Report; and that to help mitigate this capacity problem, Weber Shandwick Worldwide were being brought in (at Mick Lee's recommendation) to help with certain aspects of outreach – including the preparation of self-help packs for such activities as the *Local Heroes* and the *Associated Regionally Sited Events*.

The report was **noted**.

8. EEON

TN reported that he had now placed a permanent link to EEON on the front page of www.geolsoc.org.uk. However the other Societies made very little use of it, and then often only when nagged.

DS said that he had mentioned the site to GEES, many of whom were not aware of it. He said he would continue to promote it with GEES as one way, potentially, for them to reach their constituency. He also said that he would approach the current President of the Challenger Society, who he knew well, to encourage them to make greater use of the EEON website.

JC asked the Committee to do likewise with their contacts. **Action ALL**

9. IGCP Travel Fund report

TN reminded the Committee that the fund was successfully spent out last year, and that in order not to deny late applicants in the final round, grants had been made against this year's allocation. The Society had claimed an extra £5k, bringing the total claim to £20k, and this had now been paid into

our account. The operation of the fund, ably organised by Nina Fullbrook, was proceeding smoothly, and there was even evidence of new interest from outside the “regulars”.

10. GCC - report from Chair

There was no report.

11. International Year Planet Earth “Elevator Pitch” for children

At the previous ERC, Sue Brown had been asked to translate the “Elevator Pitch” - a shorthand justification of the need for an International Year - for the Rockwatch audience.

The piece she had written was very warmly received and the ERC thanked SB for her work. DS said that it was, in fact, a potentially very versatile piece extolling the virtues of Earth science generally, which could find many uses as a preamble to such things as the KS3 primer.

TN was asked to edit the piece, and to receive suggestions or corrections from the ERC while doing so. **Action TN.**

SB said she had been unable to find a link to Rockwatch on the GSL web site. TN said he was surprised, but would check and correct it if necessary. **Action TN**

12. "Local Heroes" Initiative

JC introduced the paper, which included the current updated list of proposals under the scheme, from all over the UK. He said that the time had come to begin responding positively to some of the proposals, and with this in view he and TN had spent some time earlier that day going through the list and ranking them as follows:

F = approved for funding (F1 = up to £1000; F2 = up to £750; F3 = up to £500)

Funding Grade	Organisers	Shorthand title
F1	Shropshire GS & co	Welsh Marches
F1	Mid Wales GC	Welsh Basin
F1	North Staffs Group	John Cadman
F1	Leicester Museum & co	<i>Charnia</i>
F2/3	Pal Ass	Hooker
F2/3	Peter Worsley	Martin te Punga
F2/3	YGS	Modern Strat
F2/3	YGS	Sorby & Sediments
F2/3	YGS	Engineering Geol

F2/3	YGS	Yorkshire Quaternary
F3	Peter K	John Milne
F3	Hastings GS	Beckles <i>et al.</i>

Other proposals not yet deemed ready for funding (not here listed) would be written to, to ask their proposers to refine or readjust their bids. JC asked the ERC if it thought it worthwhile to establish a working group of 2 or 3 to supervise this process and bring these proposals on; however the Committee decided that there was neither time nor need – and asked JC to proceed himself. **Action JC/NF**

DS asked whether there should be a financial incentive in the funding plan to engage with the media? He feared that if there was not, few would make the effort, and we would end up largely talking to ourselves, as usual. SB said she would write a piece about Local Heroes for the *GA Magazine* in December. The GA contribution could be expected to grow as its 150th approached.

JC also noted there was an extensive list of missing heroes whose cause had not been taken up:

"Hero"	Locale	Organiser?
William Smith	?Scarborough ?Bristol	
Jas. Hutton	Edinburgh	
Arthur Holmes	Durham	Cherry Lewis
Chas. Darwin	London	
Gideon Mantell	Brighton	Deborah Cadbury
Chas. Lapworth	B'ham	Paul Smith
Mary Anning	Bournemouth	Hallam etc
Plate Tectonics	Cantab./UEA	Fred Vine
Peach & Horne	BGS Edinburgh	
E B Bailey	BGS Keyworth	
Harker	?Hull	
HMS Challenger	So'ton	
Petroleum		
Metals/Cornwall, N. Pennines	Plymouth? Exeter? CSM	
Volcanology GPL Walker etc	Bristol	Sparks
Burgess Shale	Cantab	
Hugh Miller	Inverness	
Granite: Pitcher, Read, Hutton	Liverpool	

JC said we should soon publish on the Local heroes page of the web site, a list of funded projects to date, and thus encourage more bids. **Action JC/NE/TN**

13. AOB

SB reported on a Rockwatch-inspired project to write a children's book called *Earth Rocks*. This would be aimed at 10-15 year olds and would present geological information in a historical framework. SB had said at the last meeting that they were looking for a small publishing house that might like to collaborate with them on the venture - though not to the extent of having any editorial influence.

Since the last meeting, a mock-up of the book, consisting of many attractive spreads designed after the manner of *Rockwatch* magazine by its designer, had been produced. The idea was to go to something like 100 spreads, resulting in a full colour book about 2cm thick, dealing with geological science in four 50 year tranches, reflecting the history of the GSL and GA by dealing with issues as they became ripe during that historical period of development. The book would be badged by both organisations.

TN said that what they were doing was essentially packaging a children's book proposal - he noted that his wife Fabienne had extensive experience in children's publishing and in book packaging, and offered to see if she was amenable to giving Sue the benefit of some free advice on how this sort of project should work and how to take the project forward. **(Action TN)**.

DS pointed out the need to ensure the protection of foreign rights. TN agreed, noting that foreign publishing was one of his wife's specialities. Once again ERC commended the project and wished Sue well with it. TR agreed that this was something that should be done even if the prospect of return was slight because it was worth it for the exposure in bookshops.

14. DONM

Dates for the summer meeting would be canvassed by email. **Action NF**

There being no further business the meeting was closed at **16.15**

ENDS