The 21st Glossop Medal

24th November 2021

presented by the Engineering Group of the Geological Society
at the premises of the Royal Institution, London.

David Shilston
(BSc, MSc, DIC, Cert Prehist Arch, CGeol, CSci, EurGeol, FGS, FRSA)

‘Tools of the trade: engineering geology and the geoscience time machine.’

Preceded by the 24th Glossop Award presentation:
Josh Dunlop – “Impact of Groundwater on the Middlewich Eastern Bypass”

Programme:
Pre-lecture Tea/Coffee on the first floor (Royal Institution) from 18:00;
Prompt start for Glossop Award/Glossop Lecture in the Faraday Theatre (Royal Institution) at 18:30.

Synopsis
How did the geology and geomorphology of a site become the way it is today? And what are the practical engineering geological applications of that knowledge to civil engineering and environmental projects? The answer is much more than the description of a site’s geological history. It requires a mental time machine that enables us to investigate and understand the conditions and processes occurring over geological time and recently (including human-induced, anthropogenic impacts).

In this paper, I propose to explore and describe how the application of a time machine approach is an essential tool for the engineering geologist, both in the field and back at the desk.

For further information, please contact:
Event Convenor: Lorraine O’Leary email: Loleary@fugro.com
The 21st Glossop Lecture

David Shilston BSc, MSc, DIC, Cert Prehist Arch, CGeol, CSci, EurGeol, FGS, FRSA

David Shilston is a Chartered Engineering Geologist with some 40 years’ experience of civil engineering, geotechnics and geology. His has worked in many countries and physical environments: the foothills of the Andes and Caucasus Mountains; the loess plateau of China and the deserts of the Middle East and North Africa; the temperate and Mediterranean climates of Europe; the tropics of the Americas, West Africa, and the Far East; and the islands of the Caribbean and the Atlantic. He views such world-wide experience as an enormous privilege. However, it was in the United Kingdom that he gained his formal education and early professional experience, benefiting from the UK’s varied geology and geomorphology.

Having studied Geology at Nottingham University and then Archaeology at Cambridge University, David began his geological career with Nuttall, obtained an MSC in Engineering Geology at Imperial College, and then joined Soil Mechanics Limited. He joined Atkins in 1988, where he is now an Atkins Fellow and Professional Head of Discipline for Engineering Geology. David’s particular expertise is in the characterisation of ground conditions for engineering design and in the assessment and management of geohazards, including problems encountered during the construction and operation of projects. He has been appointed as a testifying expert witness in arbitrations for construction projects in Algeria, Finland, Java, Panama (two arbitrations), and Trinidad.

In addition to geology, David has a had a life-long interest in archaeology, and in his student-days worked as a volunteer on excavations at the Roman towns of Viriconium (Wroxeter) and Camulodunum (Colchester), a large Early Saxon settlement in Essex, and the Bronze Age landscape of Dartmoor.

David was the first engineering geologist to be elected President of the Geological Society of London (2012 to 2014) and was President of the Earth Science Teachers’ Association (2016 to 2018). In 2018, The Geological Society of London awarded David a Coke Medal, which is “… made to geoscientists for their contributions to science…. in addition to significant service to geoscience….”. He is currently Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Geoscientist magazine.

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