'general management' and became the country manager of Marathon's operations in Gabon and Holland. Since retiring from Marathon I have held non-executive directorships of a couple of 'start-up' exploration companies. My wife and I moved down to the Westbury area in early 2006 and are still wondering why we hadn't moved a lot earlier!

Well that is enough about me; the Society's Membership continues to improve, standing at present at 87. The lecture programme is as robust and varied as usual and as always, well attended. Six field meetings have been held so far this year, Brown's Folly, Combe Down, Saltford, Symond's Yat, Bradford on Avon and at Wick Quarry with the next field meeting near Warminster on Saturday, 29th October.

On the 9th September I attended and represented the society at the Geologist's Association meeting on 'Geoconservation for Science and Society' in Worcester.

If you have any suggestions for the Society, please do let me know. Should you have any ideas for field trips for next year please let us know. We try to keep the website, www.bathgeolsoc.org.uk, up to date - tell us if it is not. Other local geological happenings can be found at - http://geologywestcountry.blogspot.com

May I also take this opportunity to thank Elizabeth Devon, on behalf of you all, for her stalwart achievements as Chair in guiding and leading the society over the past years and more recently in opening her garden to the members for our 'Open Day' on the 25th June. I only hope I can do half as well.

Richard Pollock
July 2011

ANOMALOCARIDID FOSSIL
Jane Browning

The fearsome anomalocaridad, a giant prawn, unlike modern prawns, used its razor-sharp teeth as nippers to crack shellfish. They were believed to be the largest animals of the Cambrian period between 500 m to 540 mya. A fossil measuring 1m (3ft) was unearthed in Morocco earlier this year, making the creature 30cm (1ft) larger than previously thought. This is probably because they developed for a longer period of time; dating suggests it was around for 30 million years longer than had been realised.

The iconic anomalocaridids had large limbs resembling shrimp tails and a big mouth on the undersurface of the head. They also had large eyes and a ring of sharp teeth that could close in like nippers to crack shellfish.

The find also reveals a series of blade-like filaments in each segment across the anomalocaridad's back, which could have functioned as gills.

Anomalocaridids would have inhabited a muddy sea floor in quite deep water and were trapped in sediment clouds that buried them and preserved their soft bodies.

After death anomalocaridids and similar creatures tended to disintegrate and fall apart into separate chunks, and completely intact fossil remains are very rare.

A re-creation of an anomalocaridid, CREDIT: Esben Horn