

Chairman's Report for the Bath Geological Society, 2017

The Society has had another successful year with a wide range of topics in the talks and enjoyable days out on our fieldtrips. The membership hovers around 70/75 and between 30 and 50 attend the lectures, including guests. Earth science continues to receive more and more coverage in the news and on the television and people in general are becoming more interested in the world around them.

We are grateful to our speakers over the last year for a wide range of topics, enthusiastically given, providing much new information and questions to ponder. In November (2016) Alex Liu from Cambridge discussed the early record of animal evolution, describing the Ediacaran biota, including the remarkable fossils from Mistaken Point, Newfoundland. Ken McNamara, also from Cambridge, followed in December and reported on arthropod trackways from Silurian sandstones of Western Australia, some made by animals more than a metre long. In February (2017), Gordon Inglis (Bristol, Organic Geochemistry) explained how biomarkers are able to explain the cooling of the Earth during the Eocene, leading to the icehouse phase in which we are now living. Prof Tom Blenkinsop from Cardiff reviewed the Earth's natural resources, gas, gold, geothermal energy and their depletion. Cosmic Dust: Little Rocks from Space was the topic for April from Matt Genge of Imperial College London, and then in May Malcolm Hart from Plymouth explained the controversies over the Cretaceous - Paleogene boundary, meteorite impact or not? We saw dinosaurs in a new light in June as Jacob Vintner described the feathers and colours of these enigmatic animals following studies of new fossils in China. July's talk from Andy Chadwick (BGS) looked at Carbon Capture and Storage of CO₂ and whether it will leak out. September saw Tony Watts (Oxford) describing Mountains in the Sea with spectacular multibeam images. And then in October, Liz Martin-Silverstone from Southampton considered how the pterosaurs, with 11 metre wingspans, were able to fly.

Fieldtrips this year were well attended and blessed with good weather - to Portishead in October and Lulworth Cove in April. The fossil forest was not accessible but could still be appreciated looking down from the cliff path. The annual Brown's Folly pruning of the bushes and undergrowth took place in February.

It is with sadness we report the passing of David Workman who made many contributions to the Society and was an authority on William Smith and Bath stone. I should like to record the Society's gratitude to all committee members for their contributions and a special thanks to Richard Pollock for producing this journal. And finally, thanks to you the members for all your support.

Maurice Tucker