



DROPPINGS
FROM THE
GEOLOGICAL
CURATORS
GROUP

OPROLITE

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Coprolite is compiled by Tom Sharpe, Department of Geology, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff CF1 3NP (tel 01222 573265, fax 01222 667332, e-mail Tom.Sharpe@nmgw.ac.uk) and produced by Monica Price, Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PW. It is published three times a year in March, June and November. Any material for inclusion should be sent to Tom Sharpe by the first of the previous month, i.e. by 1 February, 1 May or 1 October.

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Notice of Annual General Meeting

Please note that the 24th AGM of the Geological Curators' Group will be held at 1530 on Wednesday 2 December 1998 at Wollaton Hall, Nottingham. Nominations for the posts of Officers, and 3 Committee Members must be made by two members of the Group and submitted in writing to Amanda Edwards, GCG Secretary, Department of Geology, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL by 11 November 1998.

Subscriptions 1999

This issue of *Coprolite* includes your subscription renewal form for 1999. In previous years, this form has been published in the first issue of the year, but as subscriptions are due on 1 January, this resulted in delayed and late payments. You will be pleased to note that subscriptions remain at last year's level. Please return the form promptly, with your payment, to Andrew Newman, GCG Treasurer, at the address on the form.

1998 membership list

The 1998 GCG membership list is published in this issue of *Coprolite*. As in

previous years, the list comprises those members who have paid their subscriptions for 1998 and who have returned the membership form to indicate that they agree to the publication of their address details. The list also includes members from last year's list; these are marked with an asterisk to indicate that the address details may not be up to date. The list is far from complete, with only about 50% of the membership represented, but it is hoped that it will be of value nevertheless. For the first time it also includes institutional subscribers. Please help to make next year's list more comprehensive by paying your subscription and returning the form promptly.

New members

GCG is pleased to welcome the following new members: **John Marjoram**, Wrexham; **Dr A J Rundle**, Richmond, Surrey; and **Dr S K Donovan**, The Natural History Museum.

Musical Curators

Mark Evans, Documentation Assistant at the National Museum of Wales has been appointed Deputy Curator (Geology) at Leicester City Museum and took up his post in October; **Phil Manning** has been appointed Keeper of Geology at the Yorkshire Museum and took up his post in June; **Glenys Wass**, formerly at the Natural History Museum, is now Geology Project Manager at Wisbech and Fenland Museum; **Alistair Bowden**, Assistant Curator (Geology) at Clitheroe Castle Museum is taking up a post as a field geologist with the British Geological Survey.

Designated geology

The second round of the Museums and Galleries Commission Designation Scheme includes several geology collections. These include Bristol City Museum, the Sedgwick Museum, Cambridge, and Tyne and Wear Museums.

Earth galleries

The Natural History Museum has opened the second phase of its Earth Galleries in the former Geological Museum. The four new galleries complete the five-year, £12 million redevelopment of the Geological Museum.

Oxburgh to chair NHM

Sir Ronald Oxburgh FRS, Rector of Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, London has been appointed Chairman of the Trustees of the Natural History Museum for four years from 1 January 1999. He was Head of the Department of Earth Sciences at Cambridge University from 1980 to 1988 and was recently a member of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (the Dearing Committee).

Newish publications

Food of the dinosaurs by B A Thomas and C J Cleal, 1998. Cardiff: National Museum of Wales, 32pp. ISBN 0 7200 0453 5, £4.95.

- The papers of H T De la Beche (1796-1855) in the National Museum of Wales* by T Sharpe and P J Mc Curtney, 1998. National Museum of Wales, 257pp. Cardiff: National Museum of Wales, Geological Series No 17. ISBN 0 7200 0454 3, £25.00.
- Amber. The natural time capsule* by Andrew Ross, 1998. London: The Natural History Museum, 72pp, ISBN 0 565 091311 X, £7.95.
- Quaternary of South-West England* by S Campbell, C O Hunt, J D Scourse, D H Keen and N Stephens, 1998. Geological Conservation Review Series no 14, London: Chapman & Hall, xxi + 439pp. ISBN 0 412 78930 2.
- The floating egg. Episodes in the making of geology* by R Osborne, 1998. London: Jonathan Cape, xii + 372pp. ISBN 0 224 05028 1, £15.99.
- The crucible of Creation. The Burgess Shale and the rise of animals* by Simon Conway Morris, 1998. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 320pp. ISBN 0 19 850256 7, £18.99.
- The tracks of Triassic vertebrates. Fossil evidence from North-West England* by Geoffrey Tresise with William A S Sarjeant. London: The Stationery Office, xii + 204pp. ISBN 0 11 290498 X, £65.00.
- Groundwater. our hidden asset* by R A Downing on behalf of the UK Groundwater Forum. Keyworth: British Geological Survey, 60pp. ISBN 0 85 272304 0, £6.50.

Exhibitions 1998-99

- Dinosaurs then and now* Monmouth Museum, Priory Street, Monmouth until 22 November; North Somerset Museum Service's 'Time Machine' Museum 19 December 1998 - 31 January 1999.
- Tracking dinosaurs* Bristol City Museum, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 2RL until 29 November; Liverpool Museum, William Brown Street, Liverpool 11 December 1998 - 7 March 1999
- Claws!* Yorkshire Museum, Museum Gardens, York until 3 January 1999; City Museum and Art Gallery, Priestgate, Peterborough 19 January - 21 February 1999; South Shields Museum, Ocean Road, South Shields 8 March - 6 June 1999.
- Fossils & Feathers* City Museum, Weston Park, Sheffield until Easter 1999.

Earth Story

A major new eight part documentary series on geology, *Earth Story*, presented by Aubrey Manning, will be broadcast by the BBC in the autumn. Filmed in locations as diverse as the bottom of the Atlantic and the crater of an active volcano on Hawaii, the series will include the origin and development of life and how it is bound to geological processes. The series is accompanied by a book, *Earth Story: the shaping of our world* by Simon Lamb and David Sington.

New amber club

A new organisation for amber collectors, the International Club for Collectors of Amber, has been established. It aims to provide a service to authenticate and

evaluate amber, to find specific pieces for purchase and sale, and to organise events such as tours, lectures and museum visits. For further information contact ICCA, 10 Thrapston Avenue, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8LH.

Wisbech family geology trail

Wisbech and Fenland Museum in Cambridgeshire has published a fold-out trail guide to the building stones of Wisbech. Produced by the museum's Education Service and written by Stuart Slade and Keith Smith, the leaflet makes clever use of a 19th century local collector, William Peckover, to guide families and children through the town. The guide is designed to be used on its own or as part of a free visit to the museum. It is available from the shop at the museum or from the Tourist Information Centre, and can be purchased on its own for 50p, or as part of a pack containing a magnifying glass and children's worksheets for £1.00. For further information, contact Su Booth, Education Officer, Wisbech and Fenland Museum, Museum Square, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 1ES.

Mineral, fossil and gem shows 1998

7 November Federation of Lapidary and Geological Societies Exhibition, GA Reunion, University College, Gower Street, London WC2 1230-1630.

14 November Sidcup Lapidary and Mineral Society's Unique Christmas Fair, Emmanuel Church Hall, Hadlow Road, Sidcup, Kent 1000-1600. Contact: Ken Luff tel 0181 300 2505.

21 November Sussex Mineral Show, Clair Hall, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, Sussex 1000-1630.

5 December Amateur Geological Society's Annual Bazaar, St Albans Church Hall, Westheath Drive, Golders Green, London NW11 1015-1530.

Gault fossil collections - Folkestone

Ron Cleevely is seeking information on museums with collections of Gault fossils for a new Palaeontological Association guide. If you have a good selection of Folkestone Gault material in your collections, other Gault fossils from other localities, or any named collections of Gault fossils made by an individual, Ron would like to hear from you. The museums with these collections will then be listed in the Gault guide. If you can help, please contact Ron Cleevely, c/o Dept. of Palaeontology, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, or at 'High Croft', Gunswell Lane, South Molton, Devon EX36 4DH, e-mail roncalrs@eclipse.co.uk

Duncan Friend - new Rockwatch Officer

My interest in geology began when I was just six years old, so I realise the benefit of starting young. My mother joined a local geology society which enabled me to go on field trips and I continued my 'rock passion' at school and then on to university. Two degrees later and I had searched for gold in Ontario, Canada; collected and studied trilobites from a Devonian reef in Western Australia and looked at the early evolution of the fantastic multi-celled animals from the

Burgess Shale of Canada and the Chengjiang fauna of China. In all, I have spent over a year of my life doing fieldwork, so I am no stranger to rocks. Now as National Rockwatch Officer I am able to take geology to a much wider audience. Rockwatch currently has over 3000 members (aged eight to 16) and one aim is to allow as many young people as possible to attend our events. To this end, if anyone is interested in putting on an event for Rockwatch, please contact me for a leaders' support pack.

Duncan Friend - National Rockwatch Officer, Rockwatch, The Green, Witham Park, Waterside South, Lincoln, LN5 7JR tel 01522 574538 fax 01522 511616 e-mail dfriend@wildlife-trusts.cix.co.uk

Write for *The Geological Curator*

The Editor of *The Geological Curator*, GCG's journal, is keen to encourage members to contribute papers for publication. The journal can accommodate a wide range of article formats, from short notes to longer papers, as well as acting as a clearing house for collections lost and found. A lot of new work is being done by members in museums both in the UK and abroad, and deserves to be shared and circulated. If you have any ideas or proposals for a paper or a short contribution to the journal, please contact the Editor, Patrick Wyse Jackson, Department of Geology, Trinity College, Dublin 2, Ireland tel +353 1 608 1477, fax +353 1 671 1199, e-mail wysjcknp@tcd.ie

A GCG success story!

On the 17 August 1998, the entire geological collections of Blackburn Museum were transferred to The Museum of Lancashire. For the first time in its history, this material will be cared for by a professional geology curator. This may not seem like a particularly momentous occasion, however it is the satisfactory end to an episode which began over twenty years ago when the youthful Geological Curators' Group became involved with attempting to raise the quality of the curatorial care of these collections.

The saga is long and perhaps not truly gripping in the sense of a well shot Hollywood blockbuster, however a short résumé will be given to highlight the part played by the Group. In 1976, an article in 'Collections and information lost and found' by Howard Brunton (Natural History Museum) asked for details of a lost collection of Carboniferous brachiopods from Staffordshire¹. This snowballed and, to cut a long story short, resulted in Alan Howell (curator at Bolton Museum) visiting Blackburn Museum where they were thought to reside^{2/3}. It later turned out that the brachiopods were actually housed in the Institute of Geological Sciences (now British Geological Survey) collections, so that part of the story comes to an end⁴.

Alan Howell's visit to Blackburn resulted in an article on the collections⁵ and, though by no means unusual, it detailed a history of neglect. To add to the chaotic state of these collections, soon afterward the geological collections of Rossendale Museum were transferred to Blackburn⁶. The Geological Curators'

Group was involved with highlighting the need for a professional to care for the Rossendale collection. As these new collections were only adding to the problem of long term neglect at Blackburn, the Rossendale Collections were loaned to Bolton Museum in 1979 where they were catalogued and re-stored⁷. In 1989, Bolton had a storage crisis and it was deemed impossible to continue to store a large collection on loan, so the Rossendale collections returned to Blackburn.

Unfortunately this was the state of the situation until 1997. The local collection research unit was contacted for advice on dealing with the geology and natural history collections and the result was the proposed transfer of the geological collections to The Museum of Lancashire. After numerous meetings, reports, committee proposals and van journeys, the collections have now been fully transferred to The Museum of Lancashire. A scheme of re-storage and documentation is now planned which will make these collections accessible for the first time.

The Saga Unfolds (in date order)

1. Brunton, C H C, 1976. Collections and information lost and found: 12. James Eccles (? - 1915). *Newsletter of the Geological Curators Group*, **1**(6), 297-8.
2. Torrens, H S, 1977. Collections and information lost and found: 12. James Eccles (? - 1915). *Newsletter of the Geological Curators Group*, **1**(10), 489.
3. Howell, A, 1977. Collections and information lost and found: James Eccles (? - 1915). *Newsletter of the Geological Curators Group*, **2**(1), 41.
4. Brunton, C H C, 1977. Collections and information lost and found: James Eccles (? - 1915). *Newsletter of the Geological Curators Group*, **2**(1), 41-2.
5. Howell, A, 1978. Collections and collectors of note: 18. Blackburn Museum. *Newsletter of the Geological Curators Group*, **2**(3), 103-114.
6. Torrens, H S, 1978. Post script (Rossendale collections move to Blackburn). *Newsletter of the Geological Curators Group*, **2**(3), 114-5.
7. Howell, A, 1979. Collections and collectors of note: 24. Rawtenstall Museum. *Newsletter of the Geological Curators Group*, **2**(5), 233. (Rossendale Museum is in Rawtenstall and is therefore often mis-named.)

Alistair Bowden, The Museum of Lancashire (Clitheroe Castle Museum)

Has the Past got a Future?

**A joint meeting of GCG, History of Geology Group and the
Geoconservation Commission at Burlington House, London, 24
September 1998**

Whatever one's preconceived ideas about the content of this meeting, the combination of sponsors ensured that at very least the programme was to be varied. First off was Phil Doughty who explained the prehistory of GCG - the boom in young professionals in the 1960s in the run up to *State and Status* (the Doughty Report). It was good to hear Phil describe this as a seminal paper - which it certainly is - and to list much that has transpired as a result of its publication. Perhaps it was modesty, but anyone looking at the history of museums or the museum profession in the last quarter of the twentieth century

will see a much wider impact than Phil admits. It formed a major part of an initiative which has transformed the way museums in Britain manage their collections, the way museums are managed by government, and the way they are staffed. Historians often inflate small events into major sea changes but I really do think the report has been very far reaching in its impact. Everyone knew its results regardless of their subject background. GCG led the way in so much but we could not have done so without this report. Of course, what the report signalled was a new professionalism rather than a new crisis. If it had been published in 1825, 1875, or 1920 and had we had the modern expectation of museums, it would have read much the same. With its silver anniversary next year, Phil suggested that the biggest challenges for GCG lie ahead of us. This cannot be doubted: we have ridden the Doughty Report wave for a quarter of a century... now what?

Steve McLean followed with a detailed account of the transfer of the University of Newcastle's mineral collection to the Hancock. What is perhaps most impressive here was both the rigour with which it was undertaken and Steve's mobilisation of Russell Society talent into a process which was not simply making good the results of long term neglect but really transforming the collection into a modern resource. John Martin (not to be confused with the HOGG Secretary of the same name) brought out his pet dinosaur once again to review progress. It's a story that has been evolving for some 33 years and this specimen at last seems to be realising its scientific potential after so many years of work. Not only will its taxonomic place at last be determined but the work of John, and others at Leicester Museum, on biomechanics will also be published. John wondered if museums have the resources for this kind of thing anymore but I have no doubt who would be first in the pit if they found another one in Leicester!

After lunch, the meeting examined site conservation and the history of geology. Colin Prosser of English Nature showed that while the historical status of British geology was influential in motivating site conservation, ultimately it was not to be a factor in the selection of SSSIs. All historical sites were designated but on modern scientific grounds rather than because of their history, but perhaps this *just goes to show how geology builds upon past research*. Modern practice cannot be separated from that undertaken in the past. Colin went on to suggest that RIGS might be extended to historical sites such as the Crystal Palace Dinosaurs and introduced the concept of Geoparks which might have some mileage for historians of geology and local curators. He also mentioned the proposal for the Dorset coast to become a World Heritage Site - a project to be explored further at the Cardiff meeting in October.

Chris Green of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College described how the Curry Fund of the Geologists' Association had participated in conservation - and it was good to see the considerable impact it has had on what museum geologists have been able to achieve. This ranged from the purchase of tonnes of coal waste from Writhlington to create perhaps the most comprehensive coal insect fauna known,

to the Westbury Plesiosaur, the Charmouth Ichthyosaur and Lizzie. We should at least learn from this that if you wish to achieve success with your fossil purchases make sure you give them a good folk name.

David Oldroyd, who is well-known to historians of science for his fieldwork-based analysis of past practice, discussed his current project to write a history of geological investigation in the Lake District. Long resident in Australia, he had to admit that his research was perhaps just a little determined by his preferred holiday destinations. However, trying to disentangle what is in the field from what should be in the field (from past accounts) is not for the faint hearted, and David gave countless examples of why this was so.

The third session of the day considered geological archives. Michael Collie, who has undertaken much research on Murchison in Scotland, described the assembling and dispersal of a major geological archive in Scotland. The story is not unfamiliar to anyone acquainted with the report that formed the basis of the opening session. But whilst familiar, it is still a story that is difficult to listen to, and, indeed, in these days hard to credit. Michael was passionate in his description of such a major loss of primary historical material.

The day ended with John Thackray who was also chairing the session in which he spoke. John, with his usual wit, admitted to the blind leading the blind as he pondered what would survive from the present electronic age of geology. As he traversed a minefield of obsolescent technology and formats, non-existent standards, archival panic, deletion and confusion even over the nature of primary and secondary sources, it was hard not to agree with John's summary to the day that the past definitely did have a future but the present may not.

Simon Knell, Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester

Forthcoming meetings and seminars

2-3 December 1998 Wollaton Hall, Nottingham and British Geological Survey, Keyworth.

GCG Seminar and AGM: Little and large - local treasures with a museum and national treasures without.

Housed in a stately home, Nottingham Natural History Museum has a geological collection of about 50,000 specimens including 42 type, figured or cited fossils with public exhibits. At a converted teacher training college in nearby Keyworth, the British Geological Survey holds THE national geological archive of millions of geological specimens including palaeontological collections in excess of 2.5 million with many thousands (c.30,000) of type, figured and cited specimens, and argued by some to be the most important collection of British fossil material in the world! Although it used to have the Geological Museum in London, it no longer has a 'public face'. The GCG seminar will compare and contrast these two collections and give an opportunity in discussion to consider the differences and what the future might hold for them.

Wednesday 2 December: Wollaton Hall

10.30 Registration and coffee

11.00 Administrative matters

11.05 Welcome: Graham Walley (Site Manager Wollaton Hall Museums)

11.15 The geological collections at Wollaton Hall: Neil Turner

11.45 A local hero: Rev. J.F.Blake: Beris Cox (BGS)

12.00 Nottingham Museums database - demonstration: Mick Cooper (Nottingham Museums) demonstration

~~12.15 Lunch and an opportunity to visit the galleries and collections of the Nottingham Natural History Museum, Wollaton Hall~~

13.40 The rocks and minerals in the BGS collections: Neil Fortey (BGS)

14.00 A national collection of boring material: Stuart Hollyer (BGS)

14.20 The palaeontological collections of BGS: Steve Tunnicliff (BGS)

14.40 The collections of the Geological Society of London: John Thackray (NHM)

15.15 Break for tea

15.30 24th Annual General Meeting of the Geological Curators' Group

Thursday 3 December 1998

Visit to the British Geological Survey campus at Keyworth. An opportunity to view the collections amassed over 160 years of mapping and to see the steps in the production of maps and to visit the Library. The precise programme will depend on numbers but individual requests for access to collections will be catered for if at all possible. Make the most of the opportunity. Location information and details of local accommodation will be sent to those expressing interest. Wollaton Hall is some way from the centre of Nottingham and is perhaps best reached by car (there is copious parking). Keyworth is several miles from Nottingham and is again most easily reached by road. However, bus and taxi services can be found close to Nottingham railway station for those who prefer public transport.

The registration fee of £4.00 covers coffee, tea and a buffet lunch at Wollaton Hall on the first day. Restaurant and sandwich bar facilities will be available at Keyworth on the second day when coffee and tea will also be provided. Please complete the form on the centre pages and return it with payment to Neil Turner, Keeper of Geology, Nottingham Natural History Museum, Wollaton Hall, Nottingham NG8 2AE **by 27 November 1998.**

1 February 1999 North Lincolnshire Museum, Oswald Road, Scunthorpe BCG Training meeting: Geology for biologists

This meeting aims to introduce the basic concepts of caring for and using geological collections; to provide sources of information; and to enable curators with no geological background to meet registration requirements with regard to their geological collections. Speakers include Monica Price, Glenys Wass and Phil Manning and the meeting will cover the care of rocks, fossils and minerals; storage, documentation, handling, environmental factors, preventative conservation and conservation problems; the use of geology collections and activities based around them; and information sources.

Registration fee: £10.00 (includes a buffet lunch).

Contact: Steve Thompson, North Lincolnshire Museum, Oswald Road, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN15 7BD.

**3 March 1999 Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London
History of Geology Group and the Russell Society: A history of mineral
collecting.**

Contact: John Martin, The Hall, Roudham, East Harling, Norfolk NR16 2 RL tel/fax
01953 717444.

18-21 March 1999 Braintree, Essex

**A joint conference of the Institute of Biology's History Committee, the
John Ray Trust and the Society for the History of Natural History: John
Ray and his successors: the clergyman as biologist.**

Contact: Rev Nigel Cooper, The Rectory, 40 Church Road, Rivenhall, Witham,
Essex CM8 3PQ tel 01376 511161.

19-22 March 1999 Dorset County Museum, Dorchester, Dorset

Palaeontological Association: Life and environments in Purbeck times

Contact: Dr Andrew Milner, Department of Biology, Birkbeck College, Malet
Street, London WC1E 7HX, fax 0171 631 6246, e-mail
a.milner@biology.bbk.ac.uk

**22-26 March 1999 Department of Museum Studies, University of
Leicester in association with Techniquist: Communicating Science
Course** An Introduction to the issues and approaches of science communication
using various media.

Contact: Department of Museum Studies, 103-5 Princess Road East, University of
Leicester, Leicester LE1 7LG tel 0116 252 3963 fax 0116 252 3960 web: [http://
www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/](http://www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/)

22 April 1999 National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

GCG Workshop: The curation and hazards of mineral collections

Contact: Steve McLean, The Hancock Museum, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon
Tyne, NE2 4PT tel 0191 222 6765, e-mail s.g.mclean@ncl.ac.uk

17 May 1999 Leicester City Museum, New Walk, Leicester

GCG Seminar: 25 Years of GCG!

May 1999 is GCG's 25th anniversary. This seminar will examine the original aims
and objectives of GCG, review the work of the Group over the last 25 years, and
set the agenda for the future, with the focus of the meeting on collections. It is
hoped to include speakers who were associated with the Group from its
foundation. If you would like to give a talk please contact Steve McLean, The
Hancock Museum, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT tel 0191 222
6765, e-mail s.g.mclean@ncl.ac.uk

2-5 June 1999 Philpot Museum, Lyme Regis, Dorset

Mary Anning and her times: the discovery of British palaeontology, 1820-1850. A bicentennial celebration in honour of the first woman palaeontologist

Mary Anning was born at the end of the 18th Century and lived until the middle of the 19th. In those years, beginning as a young woman collecting fossils, she worked with the leading scientists of her day to assure England's place in the developing field of palaeontology. Nearly 150 years after her death, her life is still largely shrouded in mystery and misrepresentation; her discoveries helped to form the foundations of palaeontology, and she was quite possibly the first professional fossil collector, as well as being widely considered the first woman palaeontologist. The true importance of her work and contributions is not yet adequately recognised. This symposium aims to bring together specialists in palaeontology, history and sociology of science to create a picture of Mary Anning's life, work, and times. Drawing on new discoveries about her, situated in the historical and social context of early Victorian England, we will explore who Mary Anning was; what her contributions meant to the science of her times; and her role in society in an age of simultaneous liberation and constriction.

The convener of the symposium is Sir Crispin Tickell, Patron of the Museum, formerly Warden of Green College Oxford and British Permanent Representative at the United Nations, President of the Royal Geographical Society, and a great-great-great nephew of Mary Anning. The Organising Committee includes palaeontologists and historians of science Hugh Torrens, James P Secord, Roy Porter, Michael Taylor, Christopher McGowan, and Kevin Padian, and Liz-Anne Bawden, Hon. Curator of the Lyme Regis Museum. John Fowles, Honorary Archivist and formerly Honorary Curator of the Lyme Regis Museum, is also participating. He is, of course, one of Britain's greatest living writers and a renowned conservationist; his novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, which was largely concerned with evolution and palaeontology, was set in Lyme Regis. Keynote lectures in the symposium will be given by Stephen Jay Gould; Hugh Torrens, an expert on Mary Anning and former president of the British Society for the History of Science; Sir Crispin Tickell; and John Fowles. A reception hosted by John Fowles is planned for symposium participants. A geological walk in the environs of Lyme Regis's spectacular Mesozoic horizons is also planned.

Contact: Lyme Regis (Philpot) Museum, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3QA tel 01297 443370.

14-18 June 1999 Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester in association with Leicester City Museum and Leicestershire Museums, supported by BCG and GCG: Natural Science Curatorial Course. An introduction to the collection, curation and identification of natural science materials.

Contact: Department of Museum Studies, 103-5 Princess Road East, University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7LG tel 0116 252 3963 fax 0116 252 3960

**September 1999 Camborne School of Mines, Camborne, Cornwall
GCG Seminar and field trip**

Contact: Lesley Atkinson, Camborne School of Mines Geological Museum and Art Gallery, Pool, Redruth, Cornwall TR15 3SE tel 01209 714866, e-mail L.Atkinson@csm.ex.ac.uk

October 1999

GCG Study visit to Paris

Contact: Steve McLean, The Hancock Museum, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT tel 0191 222 6765, e-mail s.g.mclean@ncl.ac.uk

3-5 December 1999 Trinity College Dublin

GCG Seminar and AGM

Contact: Patrick Wyse Jackson, Department of Geology, Trinity College, Dublin 2, Ireland tel +353 1 608 1477, fax +353 1 671 1199, e-mail wysjcknp@tcd.ie

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