

Geoalumnus News

Autumn 1998

Welcome to the first issue of the Aberdeen University Geological Alumni Newsletter.

Those people who attended the introductory meeting at the end of May will already have some idea of the reasons behind the formation of an alumnus association. We have tried to boil down the various motivating factors to the following mission statement:

"To provide a focus of peer-group support in order to preserve and promote the tradition of geoscience excellence at Aberdeen University"

The initial goals of the association are as follows:

1. To facilitate rapport through newsletters and social events between under-graduates, graduates and friends of Aberdeen University Department of Geology.
2. To provide opportunity for undergraduates to meet and benefit from the experience of graduates and friends of Aberdeen University.
3. To promote goodwill links between Aberdeen University Department of Geology and industry, government and other universities through graduate contacts.
4. To maintain/consolidate bonding with the alumni through social and academic activities.
5. To raise money to help offset the cost of undergraduate fieldwork.

This list is a starting point and will be subject to refinement as time goes by.

Allan Mathieson, voted first chairman of Geoalumnus (in his absence, of course) explains a little more about the development and aims of Geoalumnus:

"I am very pleased to introduce this first newsletter of the Aberdeen Geoalumnus Society which has been formed to help to preserve and promote the geological tradition at Aberdeen University. The Society is the brainchild of Professor Andrew Hurst who felt he needed to do something to promote geology amongst alumni and friends when he realised he was one of only two ex-Aberdeen geology graduates on the teaching staff at the University.

Following a well attended meeting at the Geology Dept in the University in May, a band of 'volunteers' formed themselves into a committee with the task of trying to establish the objectives of the Society and put together a programme of mainly social and educational events. We would also like to come up with a good name for the Society.

We have already arranged a wine tasting for the 10th September and a ceilidh for the 24th October at the Stakis Hotel in Aberdeen which I hope as many of you as possible will attend and support.

We are arranging these types of events not only to provide opportunities for improved contacts with alumni and the University but also to raise money that we would use to help fund, for example, undergraduate field studies.

In this way we believe we can go some way at least to preserving and promoting the tradition of Geology at Aberdeen University.

I would request that you actively support Geoalumnus by paying a small membership fee, attending the social events or volunteering to participate in the activities of the Society in some other way. Suggestions will always be welcome for topics to include in our activities.

Suggestions for a new name have already been made. We would welcome your input, and we invite you to send suggestions for an appropriate name to Rachel Charnock at the address at the end of this letter. The final name will be selected and announced at the wine tasting with a free year's membership for the person who suggested it.

Geoalumnus will only work with your active support. Please take a little time out of your busy schedules to help and support in whatever way you can.

Allan S. Mathieson"

Why Support Fieldwork?

George Downie, probably the member of staff known to the widest range of graduates, reflects on the importance of fieldwork to the student.

Answers to questions such as “What is a granite?” or “How do you recognise a shoreline facies sandstone?” can be taught in laboratories. However, questions like the above are secondary to a geologist and are very different to the primary question that a geologist must ask when presented with a core or confronted by rocks at an outcrop.

Students can only gain confidence in answering this primary question by examining whole assemblages and sequences of rocks in the field. Only there, in three dimensions, can the extent thickness and variability of assemblages be appreciated. Virtual reality, through computer systems, is a valuable aid but it is no substitute for student fieldwork.

The introduction of tuition fees will place even more strain on finance for fieldwork. Hence the intention of Aberdeen Geoalumnus to support student fieldwork.

Social Events

The social programme will be kicked off with a lecture, Nae Terror in Terroir, exploring how the interaction of rock, soil and vine gives individual wines their particular characteristics. Jim Anderson has selflessly devoted years to the appreciation of the subtle variations between wines, and those who know Jim won't be surprised to learn that the lecture will be lubricated with wine samples before, during and after. There will also be the opportunity for anyone with a particularly discerning palate to purchase the wines on offer at discount prices.

*Jim has presented this lecture to enthusiastic receptions everywhere and usually charges a minimum of £5 just to cover his costs. However, as an introduction to the society, tickets will be just £3. Better still, if you join the society now or on the night, the evening is **completely free!***

Entry is not restricted solely to Aberdeen Geology graduates, in keeping with goal no. 1, so feel free to invite other interested parties along. All we ask

is that you complete the tear-off slip at the end of this newsletter and return it so we can estimate numbers on the night.

The lecture will be held in the Meston Building, Regent Walk, Old Aberdeen on Thursday the 10th September 1998, starting at 7.30 pm.

The next event will be a Ceilidh on the 24th October at the Stakis Hotel in Market Street in Aberdeen. In order to keep costs at a reasonable level, the usual four course banquet will be compressed to a plate of stovies, but the beer and the band will be of superlative quality. Once again, those with the foresight to have paid subs to Geoalumnus will enjoy a reduced rate of £7.50, whilst everyone else will pay £8.50. Nobody will be excluded from the fun.

Name Change

This will be the last Newsletter to sport the deeply unattractive Geoalumnus name. Suggestions for a new moniker should be sent to Rachel Charnock at the address on the tear-off slip before the 7th September. The best name suggested will win the entrant a free subscription, or a refund of the sub if it has already been paid. The winner will be announced at the wine tasting on the 10th September. Suggestions for mastheads, mottoes and mascots are also welcomed and inventive entries will be suitably rewarded.

Your Input

Anyone wishing to get in touch with the committee to suggest activities, volunteer help, trace old friends, pay subs or for any other reason should write to:

Rachel Charnock
Alumnus Officer
University of Aberdeen Development Trust
University Office
Regent Walk
ABERDEEN
AB24 3FX

Fax: 01224 272271 e-mail r.chnock@abdn.ac.uk
Envelopes, faxes and e-mails to Rachel's office should be clearly marked "Geoalumnus" for ease of sorting, as she is dealing with far more than just us.

Include your graduation year in correspondence so that we can group people together.

The Future

The initial aims of Geoalumnus are to meet old friends, make new ones, try to help current students to enjoy their time at university despite financial pressures and to have a good time in the process. Suggestions for future areas of activity include:

- *Interaction between actual working geologists and students;*
- *Field trips for members;*
- *A bigger and better newsletter;*
- *A Geoalumnus website to help to locate friends, download the newsletter, send in suggestions for articles and much more.*

The committee will warmly welcome any further suggestions for activities or projects.

Membership

Members of the Geoalumnus society will be entitled to future copies (2 per year planned) of a bigger, brighter newsletter, discounts on social events and a warm glow that comes from knowing that you are helping your old department. We are not in competition with other geologically-oriented clubs and societies but would like to see ourselves as complementary.

The subs proposed for 1998-99 are:

Student member	£2
Graduate member	£10

Students who are members of AU geological society are entitled to free membership of Geoalumnus.

Company membership from £50

Companies stumping up £50 will get a mention at the foot of the newsletters and on promotional material printed for social events during the current membership year. Whoever persuades the company to contribute will be entitled to a free membership for himself. If you can squeeze more than £50 out of the firm they can expect a higher profile and this can be negotiated directly with the committee.

Any money raised from membership fees and the social events will be channelled into support for current students. In order to prevent all of the revenue being consumed with expensive mailshots such as this one, we would ask that you complete the tear-off strip at the end of the newsletter.

If you have an e-mail address please note it on the tear-off strip and return it to us. Include any other e-mail addresses for other alumni that you may know. The more electronic versions of the newsletter we can send the less postage to pay, and the more money that can be put to good use.

Committee Members

The 1998-99 Committee consists of the following volunteers:

Chairman	Allan Mathieson
Vice-Chairman	Bruce Mair
Treasurer	George Downie
Secretary	Rosie Kelly
Department Rep	Andrew Hurst
Newsletter Editor	John Sands
Ordinary Members	Roger Hinton Jim Anderson

Upcoming Events of Interest

September 1998

2 AFES AGM & Sand Detection in the Tertiary: A Petrofacies Approach 6pm, Geology Dept.

6-11 SPE Forum, Designer Well Placement Using Advanced Geoscience

and Visualisation Techniques, Aviemore, Scotland

9-11 Shared Services Rotterdam

10 “Nae Terror in Terroir” Geoalumnus Wine Tasting and Lecture, Meston Building, Regent Walk, Aberdeen – Free for Geoalumnus members, £3 others – book in advance and pay at door.

13-18 SPE Forum; Technical Solutions for Offshore Field Life Extension

14 - 18 Subsea Awareness Course (SUT) Aberdeen

15 PESGB Aberdeen Branch Evening Meeting 6.30pm, Geology Dept.

20-25 SPE Forum Oil Recovery by Gas Injection from Design to Operation

both at Aviemore, Scotland

22-23 Modern & Ancient Analogues, Uses and Abuses in Subsurface Interpretation – Aberdeen University

October 1998

7 AFES Capillary Pressure: The Key to Producing Porosity 6pm, Geology Dept.

13 Brent Field Redevelopment, Aberdeen Inst Petroleum

20 PESGB Aberdeen Branch Evening Meeting 6pm, Geology Dept.

24 Geoalumnus Ceilidh. Music from Galik Bred. Stakis Hotel, Market Street, Aberdeen. Geoalumnus members £7.50, others £8.50. Tickets from Rachel Charnock, address below, or at Wine Tasting

27-28 PESGB, MINSOC & AFES Minerals in the Oil Industry, Aberdeen University

27-29 IOCE Subsea '98 Aberdeen

29 5th Atlantic Margin Conference, Aberdeen

November 1998

3 Downhole Production and Subsea Processing, Aberdeen

4 AFES Topic to be confirmed 6pm, Geology Dept.

6 Institute of Petroleum Aberdeen Dinner

17 PESGB Aberdeen Branch Evening Meeting 6pm, Geology Dept

18 AFES Reservoir Characterisation & Optimisation Seminar

December 1998

1-3 PETEX '98, London

This newsletter has been sent to over 400 recipients. Please, please help us to remove incorrect addresses and add good ones. If you don't want to receive another newsletter, or if you know an Aberdeen Geology Graduate who might like a newsletter but didn't get one, please let us know with the form below.

Cut Here

Send completed forms to: Rachel Charnock, Alumnus Officer, University of Aberdeen Development Trust, University Office, Regent Walk, ABERDEEN AB24 3FX. Mark the envelope “Geoalumnus”.

Name_____

Address_____

e-mail_____

☐

Please update my address as left.

☐

I WILL attend the Wine Tasting on the 10th Sept with _____ guests.

☐

I have no interest in Geoalumnus. Please do not darken my doormat again.

☐

I am very enthusiastic. Please find enclosed my subscription.

Payment for “Nae Terror in Terroir” should be made on the night, but please let us know if you are coming! Make Cheques Payable to “Aberdeen Geoalumnus”.