

# AGA News

SPRING 1999

## Name Change

Our more eagle-eyed readers will notice that there is a new masthead over this copy of the most dynamic and thrusting geological newsletter available. Those people (around 70 in all) that attended the wine tasting event last year will remember with some distaste the unseemly rabble that voted in the AGA name (Aberdeen Geological Alumni) over the witty and neat Petrodons alternative. Your newsletter editor, as ever, maintained a completely even-handed and objective approach, but would like to point out that he is not responsible for the generation of yet another TLA for you to remember.

## Social Whirl

*The social calendar got off to a rollicking start with Jim Anderson's wine tasting on the 10<sup>th</sup> September. Jim's usual reticence led him to avoid packing the standard slide show and son et lumiere that would normally accompany his "Nae Terror in Terroir" talk, assuming that only 6 folk would turn up. Caught somewhat on the back foot by the appreciative audience of 70-odd that turned up, tongues unfurling across the floor, Jim extemporised magnificently with an extremely entertaining string of student and wine trade anecdotes. The 44 foot articulated lorry laden with sample wines proved adequate to meet demand, and further orders from satisfied slurpers have netted the society another £50 or so.*

## Ceilidh

If you missed it last year, don't make the same mistake again. The ceilidh in October came within a whisker of being sold out, despite fairly low-profile publicity and an unfortunate clash with Aberdeen's Alternative festival. Stovies, glittering raffle prizes, great music from Galik Bred (with sympathetic caller) and pretty swish venue add up to a heap of laughs for



*Wild-eyed revelry at the AGA ceilidh*

everyone that went. Despite prices pared to the bone the event still managed to show a £200 profit. If every day prices had been charged the whole event would have been a major contributor to AGA coffers.



*Geologists working up a thirst*

## Committee? What Committee?

As well as the change of name the committee has been downgraded to a steering group. This sudden burst of political correctness arose once George Downie counted the AGA pennies and

realised that receipts for 1998 (our first half-year of existence) had broken into four figures. A new air of gravitas descended and the current steering group will (probably) stand for election to the real committee at the AGM, to be held at next October's wine tasting. In the meantime the steering group has had a few shuffles, losing Jim Anderson, Allan Mathieson and Graham Smith but gaining Amanda Cowley, Gordon Holm, Rachel O'Brien, Jim Ritchie and Cameron Hercus.

Rosie Kelly (nee Watson) has finally let a man kiss her and is paying the consequences with a roller-coaster pregnancy that has had Norris McWhirter around to see if it needs to be listed in the top 10 hair-raising pregnancies of all time. Even the normally strict AGA steering group have let her off minute-keeping duties.

The constant changes of steering group members are a reflection not of an awful organisation but more of the pressure of work that most geologists seem to be under despite (or because of?) the current difficult conditions. The steering group is always happy to hear from people who feel that they could lend a hand with the organisational trivia or the momentous decision-making.

### **Money Money Money**

*The initial aim of AGA was to help undergraduates to enjoy the same standard of fieldwork that was the prerogative of most of the older alumni. To this end we are proud to announce the planned dispersion of £450 of AGA funds amongst current Aberdeen Geology students. As the steering group members hate to see anyone left short, the tricky question of proper disbursement of funds has been left to Alan Crane, departmental beardie and general outdoor type. He will report on how the money has been distributed in the next AGA newsletter.*

*So far, AGA funds have been predominantly the result of membership subscriptions. This is all very well, but more could be made of the social events. Another source of income that could usefully be tapped is company sponsorship. With any luck, this will be the last newsletter that will be free from company logos. Even in these troubled times, a few quid from an operator isn't too difficult to extract*

*and it soon adds up – so get after it! £50 will get two newsletters' worth of logos appended to the bottom of the document, read by all the really important movers & shakers in geo science.*

*Speaking of membership, this newsletter is the last that will be sent to non-members. If you have not yet stumped up for membership, to ensure that you get your fair share of news and gossip, it is necessary to fill in the slip at the end of the newsletter and send your cheque in the direction of Aberdeen. In order to ease the pain for those who always meant to respond to the first newsletter but never quite got around to it, the membership for 1999 (to October, when all memberships are up for renewal) has been reduced to £6. Get your chequebook out now, while it is at the forefront of your mind, and clear your conscience for the rest of the year.*

*Current subscriptions have come from all over the globe, with people stumping up odd currencies from Switzerland, Zimbabwe, Australia and South Africa. We hope that we can keep the membership worthwhile even for those outwith Aberdeen, so if you have any ideas for news articles that would appeal to those in far-flung areas please get in touch.*

### **Departmental News**

**After years of defying medical advice on his diet, the remarkably unscathed Brian Williams is flying the academic coop at Aberdeen. Anyone who would like to wish him farewell is welcome to attend a party in the Central Refectory, Elphinstone Road, Aberdeen on Friday 12 February. Brian is keen to point out that he is changing direction rather than retiring, so anyone handing over pipe and slippers will get short shrift.**

**Anyone wanting more information on Brian's Cheerio should call Sheila McKay on (01224) 273428.**

### **AGA Quiz Evening – 24 March 1999**

You should have found an A4 poster in this mailing for the upcoming AGA Challenge Quiz Evening. Details are contained therein, including a tear-off slip for teams to return. If you can rustle up any appropriate prizes, either company freebies or

anything else, get in touch with Roger Hinton at the number on the slip.

### Other Social Events

Also planned are a couple of urban **field trips** – Aberdeen’s wealth of fascinating outdoor and indoor geology will be assessed and explained through the year, with a detailed inspection of pub interior stonework led by Malcolm Hole of the geology department and a slightly healthier trip around interesting Aberdonian architecture and masonry led by George Downie. Both of these expeditions are still very much in the planning stages and will be the subject of a mailshot later in the year once details have been firmed up.

Also upcoming is another **wine tasting**, following the undiluted success of the last one.

Although Jim Anderson has retired from the steering group he is still willing to let us share the benefits of his remarkable knowledge and insight once more. The next tasting will be in October 1999, to ensure that the new intake of Aberdeen geos are settled in, and will incorporate the AGA AGM.

There will also be a ceilidh sometime in October, giving plenty of time for you to polish up your Gay Gordons.

If you have any suggestions for social events that would attract geological alumni and their friends and benefit the society, let any of the people listed below know and we will float the idea at the next meeting. Ideally, suggestions will be easy to organise, have wide appeal and raise money rather than consume it.

### Get in touch with your AGA Steering Group

If you would like to get in touch to offer ideas, ask questions, offer help or anything else, the steering group members are always available to help. Membership/change of address queries should be addressed to Rachel Charnock in the first instance.

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Sands	John	176 Mid Stocket Road	AB15 5HS	01224 855367	01224 625571	john_sands@email.mobil.com

# Upcoming Events of Interest

**February 10** – AFES/EAGE/SPE Student Forum, King’s College Conference Centre, all day  
February 16 - PESGB Aberdeen Evening Lecture Meeting – The Britannia Field by Peter Hill et al  
February 24 – SPE Texaco talk on Captain Field Development – Stakis Treetops, 6pm (01224 313377)

**March 3** - AFES Evening Lecture – Wellsite Data Transmission over the Internet - Aberdeen  
March 10 - PESGB One Day Meeting in Aberdeen – “Consultants – Who needs them?”  
March 13 – Granite City Ball  
March 16 - PESGB Aberdeen Evening Lecture Meeting  
March 18 – 22 - PESGB Field Trip to Ainsa in the Spanish Pyrenees, led by Brian Cronin, University of Aberdeen

**March 24 – AGA Quiz Night, Crombie Hall, Old Aberdeen, 7.30 pm**  
March 24 – SPE Bruce Phase 2 Development – Stakis Treetops, 6pm (01224 313377)  
March 30 – SPE Light Subsea Well Intervention (lunchtime) – AECC (01358 743543)

**April 7** – AFES Evening Lecture - Aberdeen  
April 20 – SPE Wells Aspect of DCR – the regulator’s perspective (lunchtime) – AECC (01358 743543)  
April 28 – SPE Environmental Impact Assessments – Stakis Treetops, 6pm (01224 313377)

**May 5** – AFES Evening Lecture – Aberdeen  
May 19 – AFES Seminar - Aberdeen  
May 26 – SPE Agip T Block, Martin Currie of Agip – Stakis Treetops, 6pm (01224 313377)

**June 2** – AFES Seminar - Aberdeen

AFES: [www.afes.org.uk](http://www.afes.org.uk)  
PESGB: [www.pesgb.org.uk](http://www.pesgb.org.uk)  
SPE: [www.spe-uk.org](http://www.spe-uk.org)

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.

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

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