



DE LA BECHE CLUB

ISLE OF WIGHT TOUR REPORT

AUTUMN 2009

DATES OF TOUR:

Friday 30th October – Sunday 1st November

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

34 in total, all full members of the club from the Earth Sciences Department of Imperial College. Please see accompanying list.

THE TOUR:

We departed from the RSM foyer at 1pm on Friday the 30th after having a spot of lunch on the steps and packing up the minibuses. In the minibus on the way to Southampton we listened and danced to Phil Collins and Cheryl Cole; we arrived early at the port and managed to get on an earlier ferry. The ride over was blustery, after getting off we embarked on the first of several visits to Morrison's to grab some food and supplies for the next few days. We arrived at the accommodation; unpacked, before the committee went and grabbed fish and chips for the rest of the group. As it was very dark and late when we arrived on the island, we did not have the opportunity to do any geology during the late afternoon, so we went out to socialise and enjoy the island's evening entertainment...

We set off via taxi for 'Colonel Bogeys' nightclub but several members of the trip had forgotten appropriate footwear which led to us being denied entry, so we settled for the bar on the corner named 'The Jolly Roger'. The pub was empty and we instantly claimed control – we made several song requests to the DJ and had a great time dancing and chatting until closing time.

The following morning we were up early to drive to the western side of the island. We stopped for cooked breakfast at Morrison's and then continued on what proved to be a very very long journey! After some poor navigation from the passengers in the front rows combined with encountering only roads suitable for narrow cars or those which were closed, we spent a longer time getting to Hanover point than planned or expected. However, the weather was beautiful and we walked down the cliff and along the beach. We searched for preserved Iguanodon footprints approximately 140 million years old along the shoreline and everyone sat whilst we explained the history of the area and how the footprints had been preserved. The south west coast of the Isle of Wight exposes rocks of the Wealden Group, deposited in a floodplain setting during the Early Cretaceous and is the most productive region in Europe for discovering dinosaurs; a wide range of fossil material having been found. In the Early Cretaceous this region had a monsoonal climate with long dry summers and flash floods. The floodplain drained to the south and preserved channels are sometimes found to contain log jams with associated bones. We also explained the geological history of the Hanover point area and its relationship with the Needles, the attraction we were set to visit on the following day.

| Name | Year Group |
|-------------------|------------|
| Jamie Thomas | 1 |
| Matt Webb | 1 |
| Toby Gann | 1 |
| Nat Elliot Green | 1 |
| Alex Lewis | 1 |
| Beneen Tahir | 1 |
| James Scaife | 1 |
| Ed Vaughan | 1 |
| Robin Bridge | 1 |
| Chris Dean | 1 |
| Matt Carney | 1 |
| Sofia Walker | 1 |
| Mike Jones | 1 |
| Amelia Davies | 1 |
| Kirsty Poore | 2 |
| Fiona Ashman | 2 |
| Hannah Bungey | 2 |
| Katy Hebditch | 2 |
| Matt Wilks | 2 |
| Sam Davies | 2 |
| Giles Ostermeijer | 2 |
| Joe Matthews | 2 |
| Tom Earnshaw | 2 |
| Alex Stevenson | 2 |
| Sang Kim | 3 |
| Kirsty Reynolds | 3 |
| Frances Cull | 3 |
| Nick Wainwright | 3 |
| Henry Debens | 3 |
| Michael Stoner | 4 |
| Mel Kinchington | 4 |
| Katie Vowles | 4 |
| Sammy Jones | 4 |
| Danny Hill | 5/ DPFS |

We didn't have time for lunch so we ate in the minibus and drove towards the dinosaur museum back in Sandown. We began with a guided fossil walk led by Steve Radforth, a trained geologist from the 'Dinosaur Isle' museum. We spent time walking along the beach examining the cliffs and being educated about the

geology of the island and its relationship with mainland Britain. After the fossil walk we went back to the museum and looked at all of the amazing exhibits including the interactive sections: sitting in the sand pits excavating fossils, or doing jigsaw puzzles to recreate different species, until it was time to go back and get ready for the fancy dress Halloween fines dinner...After the committee members and some of the older years had finished cooking some amazing spaghetti bolognaise, we sat down for dinner: some before the president. A rookie error. The fines dinner was a great way for everyone to relax and have a great night. It helped the students to learn each other's names and get to know them better and encouraged the fresher's to be confident! During the meal there were some hilarious episodes, and the best part was that the fresher's offered to clear up afterwards too! After this we sat in the social area in our ridiculous costumes having a great time. Some daring people decided to go for a midnight swim whilst others set up an assault course involving climbing around table and hanging on to coving with their fingertips. Overall it was a great night that really helped the fresher's get to know people in their own year much better and those students in older years.

Sunday started very early! After standing outside in the horizontal rain loading up the minibus and the accommodation was thoroughly cleaned and vacated, we headed once again for our beloved Morrison's. Never have so many hot cooked breakfasts been ordered in such a short time! Upon leaving the car park, we assured everyone that the navigational mistakes of yesterday would not be repeated, and that we wouldn't get lost! We travelled to the Western most tip of the island once more to the Needles attraction park. At the park we climbed down the cliff path to the beach at Alum Bay, renowned for its beautifully coloured sandy cliffs and its fantastic view of the Needles limestone formation. The Needles pointed shape is a result of their unusual geology. The strata have been so heavily folded during the Alpine Orogeny that the chalk is near vertical. This chalk outcrop runs through the centre of the Island from Culver Cliff in the east to the Needles in the west, and then continues under the sea to the Isle of Purbeck, forming Ballard Cliff (near Swanage), Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door. It is also believed that The Needles were once connected to Old Harry Rocks (east of Studland and north of Swanage) where these strata lines moving from horizontal to near vertical can be seen from the sea. We stood on the cliffs and gave a talk about how the varying sandstones had formed and discussed the strangely dipping dramatic strata of the Needles. Had it been the correct time of year we would have had a boat trip around the Needles themselves but as it was, the tours were not running. As a gesture of their will against the sea, two very brave (and let's be honest, a little high on the stunning geology) fresher's decided it was time for a swim. We watched and took photos from the steps and started on our way back up to the amusement park where we went to the sand shop to buy containers and fill them up with layers of the different sands. We also went to the old fashioned sweet shop and the glass blowing shop where we saw people blowing glass swans. After everyone had grouped back together, we had been at the Needles for several hours and decided to make our way to a nice place for lunch. Having gone around the one way system twice, and people insisting we go to a carvery, for late lunch we stopped at a pub advertising Sunday roast and a pint for £6. Even though we settled for this, several members of the trip thought it necessary to have two lunches! Back on the road we made it to the Ferry Port just as the last cars were loading on to the 4.30pm trip, again leaving ahead of schedule. After some sleeps on the Ferry we made it back to the RSM where we unloaded Steven the tree and the bags before going to the union for a couple of drinks...

So that was it: a wicked weekend, amazing mates and some hilarious stories.

FINANCIAL STATE OF THE TOUR:

Autumn Tour Finance:

The Tour ran at a £792.67 profit, which is a first in my 3 year involvement in the club. Usually the club runs these events at a loss with the deficit being made up at other events. This profit arose from the lack of sponsorship and donations leading into the event, this meant that every avenue was used to try to find funding, many of which came through in the end. The excess can be used to write off the £632.18 deficit that remains in the budget from last year's winter tour to the Pyrenees. The allocation of money towards transport from the union, money from the department and our sponsors Limsco is greatly appreciated.

General Club Finances:

| Budget | Balance |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Grant | £1,124.57 |
| SGI | -£209.20 |
| IC Trust | £364.12 |
| Faculty | £400.00 |
| Cash Balance | £1,679.49 |

(Cash balance as of 22.00 Wednesday 25th November 2009)

At the beginning of the 08/09 academic year the clubs finances were in disarray with a starting balance well in excess of -£5000. Much of this money was recovered by the efforts of last year's committee. While the club is not run for profit some events and fundraising efforts must make a profit in order to run the field trips which are largely loss making.

This effort to create a positive cash balance for the club is continuing. The club finance page is slightly confusing as historically things have been incorrectly coded. One session has been held with Aziz to rectify this and another will be held soon. This hopefully will move money into the correct sections of the SGI accounts making it more clear and transparent.

(Information provided by Michael Stoner, Club Treasurer 2008-2010)

DID IT ACHIEVE THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES?

The aims and objectives of the De La Beche Club are to promote the enjoyment of Geology within Imperial College and aid in the integration of new students to the RSM community. The DLB society is a long standing club founded in 1914 and is named after Sir Henry De La Beche, the founder of the Royal School of Mines. The society boasts a large array of members including many leading geologists and anyone from the college who wishes to get involved. We welcome members with all geological abilities and promote the chance to learn under a relaxed and social environment.

Our aims for this particular tour were to encourage the Fresher's of 2009 to integrate with all of the years in the department and make them feel comfortable and welcome. As many students studying the subject have no prior geological experience we aimed to introduce them to field geology in an exciting way. Overall we feel that the trip was thoroughly enjoyed by all; even those with prior fieldwork had great sights to see. The dinosaur footprints, Dinosaur Isle museum, Needles and Alum Bay were all great fun and really educational.

CHANGES TO THE PROPOSED A&O's OR ACTIVITIES:

There were no changes to the proposed aims and objectives or to the initial itinerary. However, although there was no change to the structure of activities, there were slight changes to timings.

PARTICIPANTS' IMPRESSIONS OF THE TOUR:

The following are impressions and reviews of the trip submitted by participants:

- 'Really fun trip! Absolutely hilarious. Great people. Scenic drives & places. Some geology too. Pubbing & clubbing. Chillin out. Nice weekend away from London! And to remember it all, a tree in the undergrad study room and lots of photos :) Can't wait for the next trip...wouldn't miss it!' **Sophia Walker**
- 'A truly carnagous weekend... Keep up the good work DLB... Already looking forward to the next one!' **Danny**
- 'This was ... awesome! :)' **Giles**
- 'I had a really good time and am glad so many freshers came! Field trips are a great way to integrate them into the DLB and RSM communities' **Sammy Jones**
- 'MASSIVE thanks to the girlies for organising it all we had a amazing time even if we did drive round the entire coast of the IOW looking for one dino footprint!' **Katie Vowles**

MAJOR ISSUES ARISING ON TOUR:

No major issues arose whilst on tour. The navigation capabilities of the collective leaders were somewhat sub-par, unfortunately leading to the minibus having to take a rather significant detour due to misdirection. Although this little problem did not lead to any activities being missed out, it would have been nice to have been able to spend a greater length of time at Hanover Point examining the Iguanodon footprints and having lunch on the beach!

IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE FUTURE:

Whilst the trip really enjoyable, as a committee we have thought of ways in which it could have been improved. Firstly, we would have liked to take a greater amount of students. Unfortunately, the date of the trip was rescheduled to a week before the original date so as not to clash with an alternative RSM event. It meant that a second minibus was unavailable for our use, but hopefully on the next trip this will not be an issue! Secondly, we usually ask a lecturer or PhD student to lead the trips and aid with educating the participants' to the geology of the visited sites. As none were available, we relied on the research and confidence of committee members to give information on the geology of the island, and whilst our knowledge was rather good, it most certainly could have been improved by someone with greater field experience. However, to counter this point we were taken on a geological tour by a very experienced field geologist and guide working at the Dinosaur Isle Museum, named Steve, who educated us about the sedimentary history of the area which was really useful and enjoyable.

Clubs and Societies Board
7th December 2009

In conclusion we would like to greatly thank the union for providing us with a means of transport and a source of funding. We hope to continue leading trips within the UK and abroad, and appreciate the opportunity to encourage the enjoyment of the subject to new and existing students.

Thank you once again,

Hannah Bungey
DLB Honorary Secretary 2009-2010



The group at Hanover Point with the Iguanodon Footprints

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