

Geological Walk - A walk through geological time

by Graham Hardman

On a wet day in June (was there any other sort) I travelled to Nottingham having been invited to the opening of a Geological Walk. The very notion seemed interesting, and on further enquiry I learned that it was in fact a path created from paving representing all the major periods in geological history.

The invitation came from Michael Heap of CED Ltd., and given this I wanted to support him as he has been so helpful to the JGS over the years. Michael was the driving force behind the creation of the walk and hosted the opening event. Having studied geology as part of my degree I had a personal interest in attending, so off I went, though I was a little unsure about the relevance to JGS.

My destination was the offices of the British Geological Survey at Keyworth, just southeast of Nottingham. The BGS was founded in 1835, and their website describes it as 'the world's oldest national geological survey and the United Kingdom's premier centre for earth science information and expertise'. As a public sector organisation they are responsible for advising the UK government on all aspects of geoscience as well as providing impartial geological advice to industry, academia and the public.



I was a little surprised when I arrived to find it was a much larger event than I'd imagined, with well over 100 people attending.

The main focus of course was (and is) the path, a 130m long walkway paved with stone from every geological period in history. It was really rather beautiful, and very interestingly laid out in sequence from the earliest rocks which are Pre-Cambrian, dating from 2500 million years ago, through to Quaternary which are a mere 2.6 million years old. Not only is this a visual lesson in geological history laid out in a walkway, it has a practical side too. Examples of many of the samples of paving are commercially available and suppliers are identified.

Accompanying the walkway, at various points along it, are 20 examples of natural boulders of the different periods. These are superb examples, some spectacular in their mineral content, others in their size and beauty. The combination made a really interesting insight into the vast range of rock types we have in our country. Anyone interested in rocks, and surely as JGS members we are, would find this a fascinating visit. I thought it would be eminently suitable for regional groups to visit. (Not very



far away are Newstead Abbey with its historic Japanese garden and Buddha Maitreya's Pureland Meditation Centre and Japanese garden. CED's centre at Langley Mill is also only a few miles away, with a new display area of their stone products as well as Granite Connection Japanese artefacts).

The BGS centre itself has interesting displays of minerals, rocks and geological maps and a splendid shop where all such things may be purchased at very reasonable cost, including a very impressive collection of jewellery made from all manner of crystals and minerals. They have a free leaflet about the Geological Walk which illustrates the various geological periods, and a plan of the walkway with each stone type identified.

The centre and pathway are open to the public from 9am to 4:30pm from Monday to Friday. Groups of ten or more should book in advance and I was assured that guided tours would be available for groups, including possibly at weekends by appointment.

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