



# Buckinghamshire Earth Heritage Group

## Newsletter No. 11 September 2010

### Walk :Thornborough Community Woodland to Coombs Quarry

Tuesday 24th August 2010

A group of about 30 attended this joint evening event of the BEHG and MKNHS (Milton Keynes Natural History Society). Julia Carey led the group on a gentle stroll through the community woodland looking at the fauna and flora. Jill Evers then led group through Coombs Quarry looking at the Jurassic White Limestone Formation.



Photo left: Lindsay with the Community Orchard in the background. Photo right: Coombs Quarry

Of particular interest was the pond which is fed from springs and provides a good aquatic habitat. The hydrology of the area is quite complex as springs are fed from local aquifers in the more permeable Jurassic limestones and Quaternary river gravels. Jurassic clays and glacial till provide impermeable layers that support a number of meandering streams and ponds.

Although no bats or owls were observed during the evening meeting plenty of other things held the groups interest. As darkness fell the group retraced their steps to the Bucks County Council Depot building where tea, coffee and cakes were enjoyed thanks to the WI.

Lindsay Hiles

Further details at: [www.bucksgeology.org.uk/pdf\\_files/Walk1\\_Coombs\\_Thornboro.pdf](http://www.bucksgeology.org.uk/pdf_files/Walk1_Coombs_Thornboro.pdf)

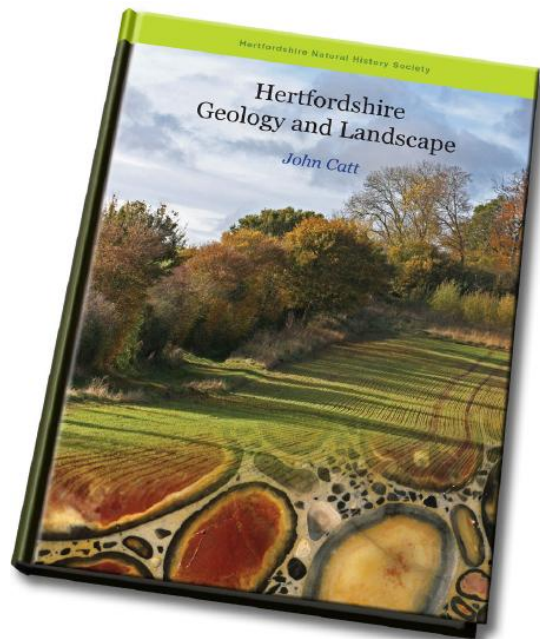
### Hertfordshire Geology and Landscape – New Publication Dec 2010

Our neighbouring society, the Hertfordshire Natural History Society, has asked us to advertise their new publication. A pre-publication offer is also available.

The book gives a comprehensive and authoritative account of the basic geology of Hertfordshire and its relationship with a wide range of topics, including soils, ecology, agriculture, prehistoric archaeology, hydrogeology, mineral resources and building stones. The editor John Catt worked on soil research at Rothamsted and is Hon. Professor of Geography at University College London. The chapter authors include John Catt and local experts from the Hertfordshire Geological Society.

#### Pre-publication offer only £29 (P&P free)

Full price £39 – publication expected December 2010  
A4 format, hardbound, about 400 pages, illustrated in colour throughout with over 200 maps and photographs.



To pre-order and pay online at [www.hnhs.org](http://www.hnhs.org) or send your order and cheque to:  
HNHS, 24 Mandeville Rise, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7JU.

Enquiries to: [secretary@hnhs.org](mailto:secretary@hnhs.org)

## Jill Eyers reports on an innovative fieldwork technology

The Open University is working on a project called “**In here, out there**” (OTIH) and have been using Coombs Quarry, one of the Bucks LGS (Local Geology Sites), as the test location.

Basically this project uses modern technology to bring ‘access’ to field localities for those unable to undertake outside fieldwork. In the long term this process may be filmed and integrated into a training course on field techniques and interpretation. The technology enables the home student to receive real-time field information and to communicate or interact with the field team making their own observations and even directing data collection.



The BEHG site proved perfect for the first trails which used 10 students (5 indoors receiving field information, and 5 out in the field). The ‘Out there’ element was led by Jill Eyers (**photo above in light blue**) and Kevin Church (**photo below in dark blue**) leading the ‘In here’ team back at the Open University.



The students in the field observed first hand the Jurassic rocks and features, and then by sending a combination of photos, texts and phone messages back to base, the ‘In here’ students could undertake field sketches and interpretations.



But more than that, the ‘In here’ team (**photo above**) could research on behalf of the ‘out there’ team and sent back information such as maps or illustrations to the field i-Pad thereby providing instant solutions to field problems!



(**photo above: Trevor with the transmitting equipment at the edge of the quarry**)

The whole process was immense fun and we will keep you posted on how this trial progresses. If successful then significant funding for worldwide courses could result. It is nice to know that by working hard on our Local Geology Sites, they are not only nice for us to visit but are proving very useful to a potential worldwide audience who could get to practise field skills without getting cold and wet!

**Jill Eyers**

# 2010 BEHG Programme

**Sunday September 26<sup>th</sup> 2010: 10am – 4pm. Visit to Totterhoe Stone Quarry. Leader: Dr Michael Oates.** This trip will explore the geology of the area around Totterhoe, just over the Bucks border into Bedfordshire, by visiting the quarry site. Lunch will be taken at the Cross Keys Inn pub in Totterhoe village. We shall then walk over the downs nearer Pitstone to look down at the various geomorphological features visible, like Gubbins Hole. Park in National Trust Car Park Grid Ref: SP986217 at 10am. If planning to attend: Contact Graham Hickman. ([hickmang@bp.com](mailto:hickmang@bp.com)) or call 07763363266 for more information. [flyer with directions](#)

**Saturday October 9<sup>th</sup> 2010: Four Decades Of Earth And Planetary Sciences At The OU.** The Open University celebrated its 40th anniversary last year and to celebrate past achievements it is organising two days of scientific meeting and an Open Day on the 9 October 2010. BEHG members have been invited to participate. [More details to follow.](#)

**October 2010: Conservation work at Froghall SSSI. [more details to follow](#)**

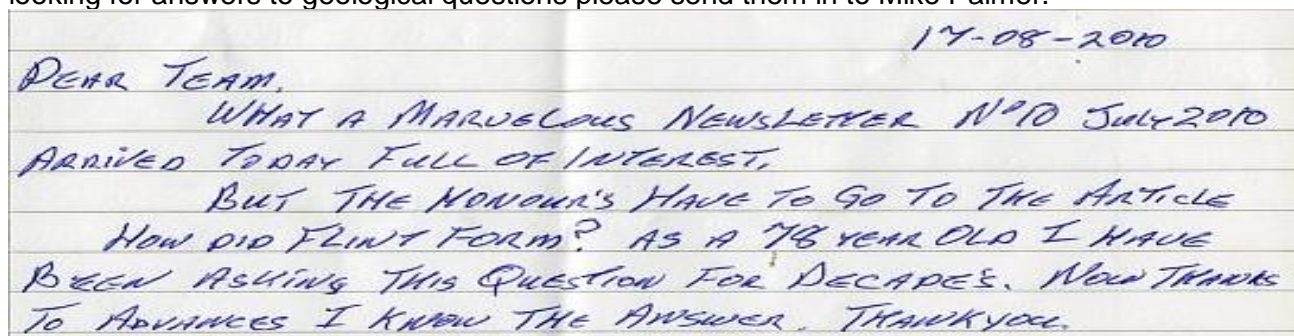
**Saturday November 6<sup>th</sup> 2010: 10:30am - 4:30pm. Festival of Geology at University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT.** This free event organised by the Geologists' Association is open to the public. There will be speakers, exhibitors and activities suitable for children. The BEHG are planning to have a stand contact Graham Hickman ([hickmang@bp.com](mailto:hickmang@bp.com)).

**Saturday 20th November 2010: 2.30pm - 4.00pm. Messages in Stone - Buckinghamshire's geological Past.** A talk by Graham Hickman. Meet at Buckinghamshire County Museum, Church Street, Aylesbury. A joint meeting of the BEHG and the BAS Natural History Section.

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## Members Letters – from Roy Valentine

This month we are pleased to attach this positive feedback from one of our members. If you are looking for answers to geological questions please send them in to Mike Palmer.



## Membership

Membership is open to beginners and experts alike. Annual membership runs from 1st January. Individual membership is £5 and Family membership is £8 per annum. A copy of the membership form is available on our website: [www.bucksgeology.org.uk](http://www.bucksgeology.org.uk) If you would like to join please complete and send the application form together with payment to: **Membership Secretary, Lindsay Hiles** email: [behg.membership@btinternet.com](mailto:behg.membership@btinternet.com)  
4 Phoenix Close, Leighton Buzzard Beds LU7 3YW

*The Buckinghamshire Earth Heritage Group aims to record, conserve and promote the geology of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.*

For general enquiries please contact:

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