

Manchester Geological Association

Holiday Geology

Wednesday 25 September 2019

Abstracts

Glimpses of Scandinavian Geology: Phil Scragg

On a recent rail-based holiday travelling north through Norway and south through Sweden, Brenda and I took some photos of geological interest. Here's a selection, some taken from a moving train so apologies for quality!

Geoliday highlights of south west Ireland: Lyn Relph

South-west Ireland has some stunning scenery and geological exposures. I will be looking mostly at sedimentary geology but also with some of the other highlights of my trip.

Harz Mountains: Fred Owen

Our holiday was planned around trains, both for travel and interest, to Germany and Switzerland. We chose to try the famous steam train to The Brocken, the highest summit, 1141m, in The Harz Mountains of northern Germany. It was to be a strictly geology-free holiday.

However, our hotel in Wernigerode happened to be right next door to the Harz Geology Museum!

The mountains were formed during the Variscan Orogeny in the mid-Carboniferous with multiple intrusions of granite and Harzburg Gabbro into the existing sediments. The area is known for the type locality of Harzburgite, a peridotite. The Brocken is a biotite, orthoclase granite pluton surrounded by hornfels and many mineral veins which have been extensively mined and now form a network of Landmarks in the Harz Geopark. My talk describes economic, strategic, and scientific uses made of this geological feature discovered as a result of this steam train excursion.

Canyons and Geology of Arizona and Utah: Dr John Nudds, University of Manchester

In July we embarked on a 2,500 mile roadtrip starting in Los Angeles and heading through northern Arizona and southern Utah with the aim of exploring some of the many canyons, national parks, state parks and national monuments of this amazing area. As well as seeing some absolutely stunning scenery, we also experienced some fascinating geology, ranging from the Early Proterozoic of the Grand Canyon, right through to the Pleistocene tar pits of Rancho La Brea. Highlight of the trip was a hike to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, but we also took in Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park, Arches Canyon, Canyonlands National Park, Goosenecks State Park, Monument Valley, Canyon de Chelly, Petrified National Forest and Meteor Crater. We ended up in Williams on the original Route 66!

As well as being a wonderful holiday, the trip also doubled as a reconnaissance for a possible future fieldtrip which I could offer to the MGA or other groups if sufficient people were interested. The trip would form a natural sequel to MGA USA 2012, when a small but very select group of MGA members explored Wyoming, Colorado and northern Utah.