



EARTH SCIENCES HISTORY GROUP
(A Specialist Group of the Geological Society of Australia Inc.)
Email Bulletin No. 49
January 4 2016

In this first Email Bulletin for 2016, the ESHG Committee takes this opportunity to wish members a Happy New Year

INHIGEO News Circulars

Since the last Email Bulletin in July, the ESHG has received copies of the News Circulars of the International Commission on the History of Geological Sciences (INHIGEO) of which the ESHG is now an affiliate. The INHIGEO circulars for September and December are attached with this edition of the Email Bulletin.

Congratulations

Congratulations to David Branagan, who was recently awarded the 2015 Sue Tyler Friedman Medal by the Geological Society of London for his contributions to the history of geology. The learned society has over 9,000 Fellows as members, that number illustrating the prestige associated with the medal that was first awarded in 1987. It is named after the wife of academic journal editor and publisher, Gerald M. Friedman.

AESC2016—Uncover Earth's Past to Discover Our Future

Adelaide 26–30 June 2016

Website: www.aesc2016.gsa.org.au

Email: aesc2016@amevents.com —the official convention email address managed by All Occasions Events.

Key Dates:

Close Call for Abstract submissions: 15 February 2016
Final acceptance notification to speakers: 18 March 2016
Close Early Bird Registration: 15 April 2016

Early Bird Registrations

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| Early Bird Full Registration Member | \$625.00 |
| Early Bird Student/ Retired Member Registration | \$275.00 |
| Early Bird One Day Only Member | \$350.00 |

Standard Registrations

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|--------------------------|----------|
| Full Registration Member | \$725.00 |
| Student/ Retired Member | \$355.00 |
| One Day Only Member | \$410.00 |

Late Registrations (2 weeks from convention)

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| Full Registration Member | \$925.00 |
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As previously advised, in recognition of the ongoing remembrances marking the centenary of World War 1, the ESHG is convening a session on the war records of Australian geologists and their contributions to geology before, during or after their service. The session entitled **War Records of Australian Geologists** will be part of the **Geoscience and Society: Education, Integration and Translation of Earth Science for Societal Benefit** theme.

Papers are therefore invited on such geologists, although papers of a more general nature such the geology of the battlefields and its effects on the course of the war will be considered. It is anticipated that Edgeworth-David's service as a geologist on the Western Front will be one address. Other papers already offered are on: Leslie Blake, who mapped Macquarie Island as part of Mawson's Australian Antarctic Expedition, and who as an Artillery officer, received a Military Cross for applying his surveying skills in mapping the British Lines while under fire during the battle of The Somme; and Walter Heywood Bryan, later Professor of Geology and Mineralogy at the University of Queensland, who also received a Military Cross for service in the Artillery in France.

Appropriate papers from these sessions will be published in the ESHG Newsletter as was done so successfully after the AESC Canberra meeting of 2010, and also for the 34th IGC Brisbane 2012. Therefore, keep this in mind when preparing your abstract and presentations or posters for the AESC.

Some geologists that could be discussed include members of the Australian Tunnelling Companies who gave their occupation on enlistment as geologists. Apart from Edgeworth David (who actually gave his occupation as "teacher", they were:

Captain Stanley Burrill Hunter (mining geologist and boring engineer)
2nd Lt Leonard Langdale Wrathall (geologist)
2nd Lt Carl Sidney Honman (geologist)
Lt Loftus Hills (mining engineer and geologist)

David, Hills and Hunter had the opportunity to apply their technical skills while on active service, but both Wrathall and Honman had significant geological careers before and after the war. Loftus Hills appears to have been an interesting character and his story is worth retelling.

Other hints to get started are consulting the Annual Reports of the State Geological Surveys which will probably list those of their members on active service.

The Geotourism and Geological Heritage Standing Committees will also be convening sessions **Recent advances in Geotourism in Australia and beyond** and **Geoheritage** under the **Geoscience and Society** theme, and members of ESHG will be welcome to submit papers or posters on topics that cross over into their sessions.

41st INHIGEO SYMPOSIUM - CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

The 41st INHIGEO Symposium will be part of 35th International Geological Congress scheduled in Cape Town, South Africa, 27 August–4 September 2016.

The Third Circular is currently available at:
www.35igc.org/Content/Downloads/35th_IGC_Announcement_ThirdCircular.pdf

Abstract submission has opened and will close on 31 January 2016.

Early Bird Registration has opened and will close on 31 May 2016.

Symposia

A "History of Geoscience" theme is listed under a Core Topic of "Geoscience and Society" with the INHIGEO Secretary General being the designated co-ordinator.

The historical symposia suggestions under the "History of Geoscience" theme for the 41st INHIGEO conference are listed as:

1. General contributions on the history of geology
2. Historical studies of Gondwana
3. Local (indigenous) understanding of geology

4. History of fossil man investigations
5. History of geology over the past 50 years

Field Trips

A one day pre Congress field trip is being planned around Cape Town by INHIGEO Vice President North America, Greg Good on Saturday 27 August 2016. It will cater primarily for INHIGEO members.

The exact itinerary of this pre Congress field trip is not yet worked out, but the idea is to visit several historical sites near Cape Town visited by John Herschel and Charles Darwin in their geological fieldwork.

Otherwise a general day excursion for all Congress participants during the Congress will visit the historically important “Sea Point contact”.

Critical Dates

- 31 January 2016 - Abstract submissions close
- 1 March 2016 - Fourth Circular released
- 31 March 2016 - Formal notifications to authors on their abstracts
- 1 May 2016 - Accommodation bookings close
- 1 July 2016 - Fifth Circular released - Preliminary Programme

The conference website is www.35igc.org.

Contributions for the ESHG Newsletter

No articles have yet been received for the ESHG Newsletter, so unless there is a sudden flood of contributions, we will hold over publication until after the AESC, when hopefully we will be able to publish papers presented during the session on Australian geologists in World War 1. However, if you already have an article for the newsletter, you are still welcome submit it to the Newsletter Editor, Mr John Draper at jdraper@hn.ozemail.com.au.

As mentioned in previous Email Bulletins, the committee is considering a change of name from Newsletter to a more suitable term and continues to be open to suggestions for a suitable name. INHIGEO renamed its annual publication from Newsletter to Annual Record in 2014, so what do members think of using a similar term, such as Records of Australian Earth Science History?

Books of interest

CRUMPS AND CAMOUFLETS: Australian Tunnelling Companies on the Western Front

Damien Finlayson

Big Sky Publishing, 2010, 2014 480pp

While you are thinking about the records of Australian geologists in World War 1, this book by Melbourne hydrogeologist and amateur military historian, Damien Finlayson, may be of interest. It tells the story of the Australian Tunnelling Companies on the Western Front during World War 1. David Branagan gave glimpses of this story in his 2004 biography of Edgeworth David, who was the founder of the Australian Mining Corps, and some of you might be familiar with part of the story, told in the movie *Beneath Hill 60*, but Finlayson gives a complete history of Australia's role in the tunnelling war of 1914–18.

Unlike the ‘tunnel rats’ of the Royal Australian Engineers, who explored the tunnel complexes used by the Viet Cong in Vietnam, 50 years later, the Western Front tunnellers excavated tunnels to lay offensive mines, and also for defensive purposes.

Finlayson starts with a discussion of the place of mining in the First World War, and various techniques and technology used to cope with the differing geology across the Western Front. The raising of the Australian Mining Corps in 1915, and its disbandment and separation into three tunnelling companies in 1916 is recounted, followed by the exploits of those companies and the Australian Electrical and Mechanical Mining and Boring Company,

nicknamed the Alphabet Company. Of course the role of Edgeworth David in forming the corps is outlined and his work in understanding the geology and hydrogeology of the Western Front and its importance to the allied campaign is covered.

Australian official histories mention the offensive mining on the Western Front particularly in the Messines Ridge area but do not give a feel for the full extent of these operations. Finlayson covers these in detail, along with the defensive mining operations and the employment of the companies to construct tunnels to give protected access to forward trenches and general-purpose dugouts for accommodation, headquarters and medical facilities. In the last months of the war, and after it ended, the tunnellers also were employed in clearing German mines and booby traps. The book gives insights into the personal experiences of the men, the daily terrors they encountered as well as the amusing incidents and humour that offset the grim nature of their work.

Originally published in hard cover in 2010, the book was released in paperback form in 2014 and is also available as an eBook.

This Wonderfully Strange Country

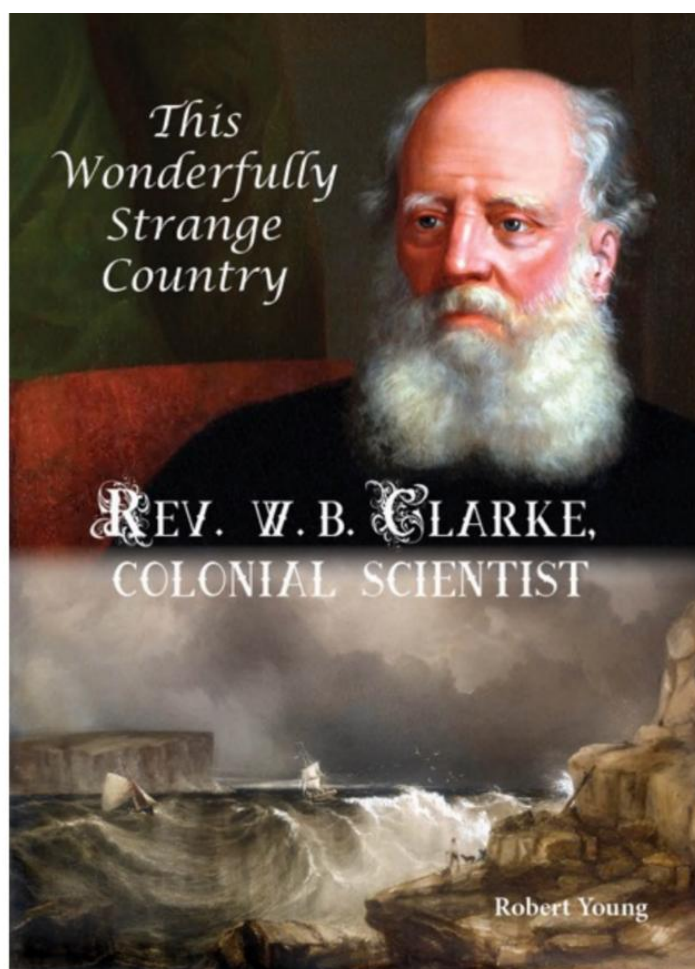
Rev. W. B. Clarke,
colonial scientist

The Rev. William Clarke came to Australia in 1839 with an established reputation in geology, and was so influential that he is known as the 'father of Australian geology'. He surveyed the colony for both gold and coal, and was a leading palaeontologist. He was respected not only here but in Europe and was nominated as Fellow of the Royal Society by Charles Darwin.

In this book, Robert Young portrays the man as scientist, cleric and scholar. He reveals previously unrecorded strengths of Clarke's work in meteorology, hydrology and education, as well as his support for Australian exploration.

Cost \$35 + \$10 postage. To order, contact:
email: aryoung1453@gmail.com
phone: 0242673556
mail: 4 Roxburgh Ave, Thirroul, NSW 2515
Direct credit payment to Robert Young, IMB, Thirroul
BSB 641-800, account 200047229

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