

Jamaican Geode

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Geological Society of Jamaica

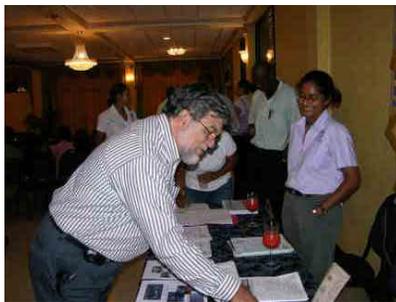
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Oil and Gas Exploration and Marine Life Public Lecture/Seminar

By Gavin C. Gunter

Against the backdrop of high energy costs, Jamaica is currently engaged in a renewed oil and gas exploration project after approximately 20 years of inactivity. Exploration efforts are currently focused on the Walton Basin, an area of relatively deeper water between the mainland and the Pedro Bank. Other areas both onshore and offshore are also viewed as attractive. Presently, eight of the 24 exploration blocks have been awarded by the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ) in accordance with the Petroleum Act (1979). Finder Exploration Pty. Ltd of Perth, Australia, has been awarded five blocks while Rainville Energy Corporation of Calgary, Canada has been awarded 3 blocks.



Mr. Basil Fernandez registering for the lecture

Jamaica's eleventh and most recent offshore seismic survey was conducted by the seismic contractor Fugro for Finder Exploration between February 10 and May 20 of this year. This precipitated some debate amongst stakeholders in the offshore area concerning the nature of the impacts caused by this form of exploration.

On July 13, 2006, members of the public were invited to participate in a lecture/seminar entitled "Oil and Gas Exploration and Marine Life" at the U.W.I. Mona Visitors' Lodge. The Geological Society of Jamaica (GSJ) hosted the event, sponsored by the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica, as part of its 50th Anniversary celebrations.

The consulting firm Canning & Pitt Associates, Inc., based in Newfoundland, Canada, in conjunction with LGL Ltd., an environmental research and consulting company, presented information on the interaction between hydrocarbon exploration (with a focus on seismic surveys) and the marine environment. The consulting team consisted of Mr. Robert Pitt, Mr. Scott Carr, Ms. Val Moulton and Mr. John Christian. The public lecture/seminar was preceded by a one-day workshop at the PCJ Auditorium held on July 12. At this workshop, a wealth of information concerning scientific studies on the impact of seismic surveys was presented and discussed with invited stakeholders. Essentially, the information presented at the public lecture/seminar represented a summarized version of the workshop.



Prof. Edward Robinson opens the Public Lecture as Chair of the evening

Inside this issue:

Field Trip Photos	3
Tremors	3
Congrats	4
Geosciences Week Flier	5
Membership Form	6

Coming in Nov. 06:

The GSJ will be hosting :

*Geosciences for
Development
Week*

November 26—
December 3, 2006

*Old Dramatic Theatre,
UWI*

(Continued on page 2)



(Continued from page 1)

Approximately 70 persons (excluding media personnel) were registered at the public forum (admission was free). This represented a wide cross-section of participants which included students, representatives from government agencies, environmental non-governmental organizations, other private sector representatives, and interested members of the public. It was felt that, had it not been for the heavy rain just before the scheduled start of the event (at 4 p.m.), even more persons would have been in attendance.

Prof. Edward Robinson of the Marine Geology Unit, U.W.I., chaired the forum. The welcome and opening remarks were given by Mrs. Ruth Poptosingh, Group Managing Director of the PCJ. The consulting team then made their presentations, which included an overview of seismic surveys (R. Pitt), the acoustic properties of the marine environment (S. Carr), and the scientific literature documenting the impacts on marine mammals and sea turtles (V. Moulton) and finfish and invertebrates (J. Christian). These four presentations were followed by a presentation by the team leader, Robert Pitt, on fisheries, mitigation and best practices.



Specialist panel V. Moulton, S. Carr and J. Christian

Mr. David Barrett, Regional Representative of FINDER Caribbean Ltd., then gave a brief presentation on FINDER, with particular emphasis on its activities and plans related to the Jamaica. He outlined the willingness of FINDER to participate in the funding of a baseline study of the nation's (southern) offshore environment. This desk study is currently being conducted by a research team gathered from the U.W.I. Department of Life Sciences and the U.W.I. Centre for Marine Sciences. The research is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year.

A summary of the workshop that preceded the lecture was given by Ms. Joy Douglas, consultant at the Office of the Prime Minister, who pointed out that some key ideas had been generated from those discussions. Organizations and individuals who have data relating to the marine life, both resident and transitory, offshore southern Jamaica, were requested to offer this information, whether anecdotal or scientifically derived, to the baseline study. There was significant audience participation with regard to questions and discussions.



Captive audience

The vote of thanks was delivered by Ms. Shakira Khan, GSJ Vice-President. This was followed by presentations of tokens of appreciation provided by the PCJ and the GSJ to the lecture/seminar presenters. The audience was then invited to mingle and partake of refreshments. The consensus gathered from a small informal survey was that the food was excellent, as was the overall forum!



Robert Pitt making his presenta-



FIELD TRIP TO WINDALCO'S MINES AND PLANT

JUNE 2006

The Society had its second field trip to the Schwallenburg Mines and the Ewarton Works alumina processing plant on June 10, 2006. Get more details on the Society's website at:

<http://gsj.monainformatixltd.com/latest.html>



The president surveys the troops



Rafi questioning Locksley

Mined out pit being topsoiled

Tremors

- Geology is back on this year, the date will be confirmed, but we're planning for the 1st week in December
- The Brown Bag seminar series hosted by the Department of Geography & Geology, UWI invites you to attend weekly presentations on varied topics:

Thursdays 1:00- 2:00pm , Lab 4

Department of Geography and Geology

October 12 -Stephanie Pedro, Regional Planning Commission, New Orleans

October 26 - Frank Fillebeck, Louisiana State University

November 2 - Thera Edwards, University of the West Indies

Think you missed a Journal? Please check the Society's website for the full listing of journals in stock and place your back order.

Society t-shirts and polo shirts may be ordered through the GSJ's secretariat. Prices and available colours are listed on the website www.gsj.monainformatixltd.com

Orders will be accepted at the end of every other month: the next order will be placed at the end of October.



Congrats...

Warm wishes to Debbie Rowe, who heads to the UK on a fellowship to pursue a PhD in the Department of Geography and Development Studies at the University of Chester.

Congrats to Dr. Parris A. Lyew-Ayee Jr. , who was awarded the Governor General’s Achievement Award for academic excellence and his research in the field of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and its use in the study of natural hazard.

Congrats to Prof. Edward Robinson, who has been named to the PCJ Board.

Damian Williams is the proud father of a baby girl.

All the best to Graeme Salmon, last years’ UWI Student Society president, who is off to work in the oilfields of Trinidad.

Best wishes to Shanti Persaud, who got married over the summer.

IN THE NEWS.....

Dr. Ray Wright awarded the first Caricom Science Award



JAMAICA's Raymond Wright, special projects manager at the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ), has won the first Caricom Science Award.

Dr Wright was presented with the award recently at a ceremony in Trinidad by Grenada's Prime Minister Keith Mitchell, who has responsibility for science and technology in the Caribbean Community (Caricom).

Dr Wright served as group managing director of the PCJ from 1994 to 2005.

Yesterday, chairman of PCJ, Dr John Cooke, lauded Wright on receiving the award and also for his 28 years of sterling service to the energy sector in Jamaica.

Jamaica observer—June 13 2006



Franklyn McDonald is a 2006 Silver Musgrave Medallist

This year Mr. Franklyn McDonald, longstanding member of the Geological Society of Jamaica and formerly of the Mines and Geology Division, the Natural Resources Conservation Authority and the National Environment and Planning Agency is to be recognized by the Institute of Jamaica as a 2006 Silver Musgrave medallist

(excerpt from the Daily Gleaner Sunday | September 17, 2006)

The 2006 silver Musgrave medallists include Professor Eccleston Kean, for his work in Biochemistry; **Franklyn McDonald** for his work in environmental science, and renowned author and educator Dr. Velma Pollard, for literature.



THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF JAMAICA

Commemorates

GEOSCIENCES FOR DEVELOPMENT WEEK 2006

NOVEMBER 27th – December 2nd, 2006

with the theme:

“Jamaica’s Energy Sources”

AND

A GRAND EXHIBITION
November 28-29

Lectures

Fieldtrip

Hosted by Jamaica
Gypsum and Quarry

VENUE:

**OLD DRAMATIC THEATRE
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES**

OPEN FROM 9AM TO 3:30PM DAILY

ADMISSION IS FREE

An excellent opportunity for teachers and students to learn more about their Jamaican environment! Great for students of GSAT, CXC and CAPE! All are welcome!

SPECIAL FEATURES:

LUNCHTIME TALKS

TOURS TO THE GEOLOGY MUSEUM

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:

Ms. Shakira Khan
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY, UWI
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Email gsj50years@yahoo.com

Poster
Competitions



with

Primary,
Secondary
and Tertiary School
Categories



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The Geode would like to report the news on geology and geologists at your organization! Please contact us with details of achievements, appointments and special projects at your agency.

GSJ COUNCIL 2006—2007

President	Mr. Parris A. Lyew-Ayee
Vice President	Ms. Shakira Khan
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	Prof. Edward Robinson
Webmaster	Dr. Parris Lyew-Ayee Jnr.

GSJ MEMBERSHIP FORM 2006 – 07

PREFERRED TITLE: Ms. / Mrs. / Mr. / Dr. / Prof. / Sir

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

POSITION: _____

TEL(O): _____ **FAX.:** _____

TEL(H): _____

E-MAIL: _____

HOME ADDRESS (if different from above): _____

At which address would you like to receive mail?

HOME

OFFICE

MEMBERSHIP FEES (Indicate your status with an asterisk '')**

STATUS	ANNUAL FEE (J\$)
Institutional	3,000.00
Professional	1,000.00
Associate	200.00
Student	100.00

Areas of Interest: _____

Membership in the Society is open to all persons with an interest in Geology and all related earth sciences. Application for Membership may be submitted to the Secretary/Treasurer, Geological Society of Jamaica. c/o Department of Geography & Geology, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING EACH YEAR OR BY JANUARY 31.