



# Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 1

March 2013

## President's Message

Welcome to the March 2013 MIS Newsletter. When I took on the role of President of the Mining Institute of Scotland, I didn't expect the calendar of events to fly past so quickly. There are only a few events remaining, the first will be a talk in Ayrshire and the final talk will be in Fife. Five technical meetings have already been assigned to the history books.

I have been fortunate in that every presentation on the programme has been most interesting and well attended. For example, hearing about BP's Andrew Field project in the North Sea shows the scale of challenges in that environment and the engineering solutions that are being found to ensure that oil keeps flowing.

My travels have taken me to BP in Dyce and the University of St Andrews, both of which were first time visits for me, as well as the more familiar locations in Edinburgh. The visit to St Andrews for the Young Persons' Lecture Competition was a rewarding experience. All the competitors were students and for them to be motivated to prepare and present their talks is indicative of the quality of those entering the minerals industry.

It is being reported that the opencast coal mining businesses in Scotland are currently experiencing difficult financial issues as a result of poor world coal prices and high fuel costs. It is to be hoped that these problems do not last too long and that we once again have a thriving coal industry.

Support from Council has been as always excellent and I must mention in particular those who are involved in the MIS history project. This is a considerable task and is being carried out in a professional manner. It is intended that the next Council meeting will be held in a location to allow both those from the Central Belt and from Aberdeen to meet in one place rather than via video link.

Thank you for your continued support of The Mining Institute of Scotland and the IOM3.

Ian Purdie

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## YPLC 2013

For the second time the Department of Earth Sciences, University of St Andrews hosted the Scottish Heat of the YPLC. Unfortunately this year two competitors from BP Aberdeen had to withdraw due to work commitments, but hopefully they will manage to enter next year. This did not distract from the high quality of competition put forward from St Andrews, any one of the four competitors would be worthy of going forward to the National Final. Support from an audience of about thirty, consisting of students and lecturers provided the competition with a real live atmosphere.

### Candidates and their Titles in alphabetical Order:

Thomas Baker, University of St Andrews  
*The Platinum Group Element Deposits of Shetland's Ophiolite Complex*

Ronald Guthrie, University of St Andrews  
*Graphene: Miracle Material?*

Joshua Hughes, University of St Andrews  
*Aillikite – an unconventional diamond host rock and its importance in the 'Greenland-Labrador- (Scotland?) Diamond Province'*

Matthew Warke, University of St Andrews  
*Carbon Dioxide Sequestration in Mine Tailings: A step towards the carbon offsetting of mining operations*

All of the competitors put up a great display of presentation and in depth knowledge of their chosen subject, giving the judges a very difficult job, but in the end Joshua Hughes came first and will represent Scotland at the National Final in London on Wednesday, 24 April 2013, where we all wish him the best. The winner received £250, second place (Matthew Warke) received £150 and third place (Ronald Guthrie) received £100. The final competitor (Thomas Baker) received £50 and all competitors will receive certificates. The winner collects his certificate at the National Final and the other competitors have already received their certificates. Prizes in addition to that provided by IOM3 are made available through the generosity of The Mining Institute of Scotland Trust, who sponsor the event.

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## Minerals for Life

The Mineralogical Society is organising a conference entitled *Minerals for Life*, which will be held in Edinburgh during 17-19 June 2013. The aim is to provide a forum for real interaction between those in academia and those in industry. Representatives of various regulatory agencies will also be present. There will be four main themes and, at present, 14 sessions are planned. Key to the planning is that there will be overlap and 'crossover' between the various sessions. Delegates interested specifically in one aspect of the conference can also attend other aspects to contribute and to learn. Several formal opportunities are being built into the programme to allow for interaction between the different parties present.

Both IOM3 and The Geological Society have agreed support the event and participate in the organisation. The Mining Institute of Scotland has agreed to provide sponsorship. This is a reciprocal arrangement to the sponsorship provided by the Mineralogical Society to *Scottish GeoResources in a Changing World* in 2011.

Details and registration for the conference can be found at [www.minersoc.org/minerals-for-life.html](http://www.minersoc.org/minerals-for-life.html)

## Petroleum and Drilling Engineering (P&DE) Division Update

The UK oil and gas industry is forecasting record offshore investment of £13bn in 2013 with associated high levels of activity to address both the integrity challenges of ageing infrastructure and bringing replacement/new production on stream. Offshore operators have £100bn on investments on the UK continental shelf in their plans. Onshore the UK government removal of the temporary suspension of hydraulic fracturing has enabled the exploration and appraisal of onshore shale to recommence. Sustained high levels of activity are driving demand for personnel. Offshore drilling in the UK has been ongoing for over 50 years and onshore even longer, the easy to access resources have already been developed. Incidents continue to highlight the inherent risks from oil and gas operations. Our Institute has a role to play in helping engineers, technicians and students develop, maintain and demonstrate up to date knowledge. This is a key focus for the Division. The news section of the Division microsite at [www.iom3.org](http://www.iom3.org) contains summaries, and links to, new guidelines and forthcoming legislation, for example: the announcement of an offshore safety directive from the European Commission and shale gas well guidelines for onshore exploration and appraisal. The Division is developing a library of educational material on the microsite, the latest addition being an introduction to well integrity. In February the Division gave a presentation on the well related guidelines issued by Oil and Gas UK; despite the disruption caused by a snowfall the presentation was attended by 108 people. The Division has given seminars to undergraduate and postgraduate students at the Robert Gordon University covering the latest developments in subsea operations, well completions and sand cleanouts. Ed Wade is again running his popular training course on downhole metallurgy. The Division are keen to continue to develop our educational offering, if you have any material that you would like to share this would be much appreciated – please contact myself ([bedfords2@bp.com](mailto:bedfords2@bp.com)) or Margaret Copland ([margaret.copland@uk.bp.com](mailto:margaret.copland@uk.bp.com)).

Steve Bedford  
P&DE Division Chairman

## History of The Mining Institute of Scotland

This project is now well under way. We are aiming to produce a lively story of our organisation from its foundation in 1878 right through to the present day. We shall trace how the MIS with its roots in the coal mining area of the Clyde valley has now evolved into a professional body with a spread of interests undreamt of by the pioneers.

Several in-depth interviews have been conducted with members experienced in various aspects of Scottish coal mining and in other minerals-related fields. The Editors would like to thank all who have contributed their memories and have loaned important documents. Thanks are also due to the staff at the National Mining Museum Scotland for help in tracing photographs and important technical literature.

We still have one gaping hole in our planning – a title. We do have a secondary line “-----”, a celebration of the Mining Institute of Scotland”. Can you help fill the gap? It was with some regret that we felt we had to turn down one suggestion – “Shafted”!

Richard Crockett

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## BP Annual University Seminar

This year's Seminar was held on 6 March and three presentations were made to the students. Scott Higgins spoke about *Subsea Challenges & Opportunities*, Allan Wilson spoke on *BP North Sea Completion Strategy* and Abbas Delavar spoke on *Sand Clean Out in Central North Sea*. Beran Tanilir gave an update on IOM3 and opportunities for students. Twenty-seven students attended and some of them may become members of IOM3.



An audience photo taken at the BP Annual University Seminar

## YPLC 2013 **cont'd**

Our thanks to the competitors for their efforts and preparation, to Graham Smith, Jim Wishart and Ed Wade as judges, and to the Department of Earth Sciences, University of St Andrews in hosting the event, an exercise they would be willing to repeat next year.

Allan J A Thomson



Back row (left to right): Joshua Hughes, Ian Purdie (President), Jim Wishart (judge), Ed Wade (judge)

Front row (left to right): Allan Thomson (organiser), Graham Smith (judge), Ronald Guthrie, Matthew Warke, Thomas Baker

**AN INSTITUTE EVENT IS THE PLACE TO MEET FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES BOTH OLD AND NEW, WHY NOT JOIN WITH US?**

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### TECHNICAL MEETINGS

THE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN 2013 ARE:

21 MARCH 2013 – 6.00PM AT LOCHSIDE HOTEL, NEW CUMNOCK  
TBA

SPEAKER: WILLIAM WISHART, SCOTTISH RESOURCES GROUP

25 APRIL 2013 – 6.00PM AT GARVOCK HOUSE HOTEL,  
DUNFERMLINE

*Shale Gas Fracking*

SPEAKER: PROFESSOR BRIAN SMART, CONSULTANT

Video-conferencing links will **NOT** be available for these events

#### SOCIAL EVENT

8 MAY 2013 – 12.00NOON AT LOCHSIDE HOTEL, NEW CUMNOCK  
Retired Members' Lunch (Ayrshire)

#### TRAINING COURSE

16 & 17 APRIL 2013 – 8.45AM AT ABERDEEN PETROLEUM  
CLUB, MILLTIMBER

DOWNHOLE METALLURGY – SELECTION FOR OILFIELD  
EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION AND INJECTION WELLS

Details on website at [www.mining-scotland.org/pdfs/Downhole-Metallurgy-16-17Apr2013.pdf](http://www.mining-scotland.org/pdfs/Downhole-Metallurgy-16-17Apr2013.pdf)

## Arkwright Scholarships

David McKinney, one of our current Arkwright scholars, has decided to study Chemical Engineering at Strathclyde University. Richard Crockett has invited David and his parents to the Technical Meeting being held in Dunfermline on 25 April.

Our other scholar, Catriona Sinclair, will be going to Aberdeen for some industrial exposure, which has been arranged by Steve Bedford.

Dr Richard Crockett has mentored three scholars so far but intends to step down from his role. The search is on to find a replacement. Do you think that you have the necessary skills to take on the role? Please get in touch with Richard to discuss matters ([rich.crockett@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:rich.crockett@tiscali.co.uk)).

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Members can receive all correspondence by email. Please contact the Secretary if you wish to receive correspondence electronically but currently don't.