

GPRG Tenth Birthday Symposium Wed 18 June 2008

The Groundwater Protection and Restoration Group at the University of Sheffield will celebrate its tenth birthday in 2008, and will hold a symposium to acknowledge both the individuals who have been involved and the research that has gone on within the Group. The programme will be as follows, and will be preceded by a dinner on Tuesday 17 June.

- 10.00 Keynote speaker and Harry Kroto Lecturer: **Paul L Younger** (University of Newcastle)
"Groundwater: Cinderella, Ugly Sister or Fairy Godmother?"
- 10.45 **David Lerner**
"From point sources to integrated catchment management in 10 years?"
- 11.15 **Steve Thornton**
"Natural attenuation: From process to performance assessment and beyond"
- 11.30 **Ryan Wilson**
"Advances in groundwater remediation"
- 11.45 *Lunch: the savoury part*
- 12.30 **Maria Romero-Gonzalez**
"Dotting the i's and crossing the t's in Groundwater Science - the molecular level"
- 12.45 **Wei Huang**
"The contribution of Environmental Microbiology to Groundwater Contamination Research"
- 13.00 **Steve Banwart**
"Life on the Edge: Environmental Research at the Cell-Mineral Interface"
- 13.30 *Lunch: the sweet part*
- 2.00 Guest from industry: **Phil Morgan**, The Sirius Group
"From research to application (and vice versa)"
- 2.20 Guest from Environment Agency: **Hugh Potter**
"Evidence based decision-making: can research influence environmental regulators?"
- 2.40 Guest from academia: **Terry McMaster**, University of Bristol
"The study of Environmental Reactions on Mineral Surfaces Using Atomic Force Microscopy and Related Techniques"
- 3.00 Alumnus: **Mike Spence**, Shell UK
"A many TEA'd cake: from Four Ashes to Ashley Road and Beyond"
- 3.30 Close

Keynote speaker and Harry Kroto Lecturer: Paul Younger (University of Newcastle)
"Groundwater: Cinderella, Ugly Sister or Fairy Godmother?"
Prof Paul L Younger FREng C.Geol. FICHEM

Abstract: For many years groundwater was a 'Cinderella' subject for both civil engineers and geologists. The traditional complaint of the hydrogeologist has long been that groundwater is 'out of sight and out of mind'. It often felt like many colleagues were happy for that to remain the case. However, the profile of groundwater as a subject began to grow rapidly from around the mid 1970s, as challenging management problems emerged. Grudgingly accepting that groundwater could no longer be simply ignored, traditional chauvinists in geology and civil engineering remained unwilling to view it as anything other than a rather ugly appendage to more respectable 'mainstream' endeavours. Most of the opinion-formers and discipline-leaders in hydrogeology and groundwater engineering today won their spurs during this era in which groundwater was regarded as an 'Ugly Sister'. Declining to even attempt to squeeze their feet into the glass slippers offered by the mainstream disciplines, pioneers of contemporary groundwater science continued to expand the horizons of their multi-disciplinary trade. In doing so, they became experts in working across the traditional discipline boundaries, gaining generic insights which are now much in vogue as responses are sought to other environmental challenges which similarly demand integration of insights from a diverse range of specialisms. The very nature of groundwater provides a powerful metaphor for integration, linking as it does the surface to the subsurface, and the geosphere to the biosphere. Just when the world needs it most, groundwater science is emerging as a veritable Fairy Godmother, dispensing its integrational magic with all the verve of down-to-earth problem solving.