

# Jamaican Geode

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Geological Society of Jamaica

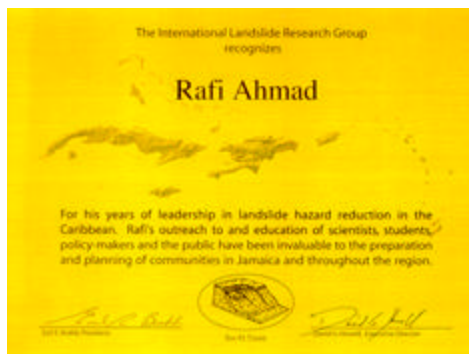
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## THE INTERNATIONAL LANDSLIDE RESEARCH GROUP (ILRG) RECOGNIZES MR. RAFI AHMAD FOR LEADERSHIP IN LANDSLIDE HAZARD REDUCTION IN THE CARIBBEAN

At the public lecture on "What can be done to reduce the impact of natural hazards in Jamaica" given by Dr. Earl E. Brabb on Thursday, July 17, 2003, Mr. Rafi Ahmad, Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Geology, UWI Mona, was presented with an award by the International Landslide Research Group. This is only the fifth such award given in the 25 years of the organization and recognizes Mr. Ahmad's work in this area.



The following are excerpts from his citation:

"For nearly 15 years, Rafi Ahmad has championed efforts to reduce landslide hazard and risk in Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean. Through his research and publications, he has improved the understanding of landslide occurrence in Jamaica. His contributions to popular publications and newspapers, development of a website, and talks to various groups have increased the awareness of the general public and other professional organizations to landslide problems in the country. As an active member of the Department of Geography and geology at the University of the West Indies, Rafi's infectious enthusiasm for the subject was transferred to many of

his students. Consequently, he has increased the number of practicing professionals interested in landslide issues in both Jamaica and the Caribbean. "

"His collaboration with the Organisation of American States and U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance provided the necessary support to initiate a geographic information system-based hazard zonation for the Greater Kingston area. Nearly ten years to the day after hosting the landslide hazard assessment workshop, Rafi culminated his quest with a workshop for Jamaican professionals and government agency representatives to address institutionalizing the landslide hazard assessment results into existing land use regulations and procedures.

Even after accomplishing this significant task, Rafi continues with great emphasis on expanding and share knowledge of landslides. This includes expanding the areas of Jamaica with landslide hazard zonation through additional field study. He has turned to the internet as a communication tool by establishing a web site to share available information on landslides for most of the countries in the Caribbean. He also instigated a summer workshop for University of the West Indies students that draws on notable landslide professionals from other parts of the world. It is both for his accomplishments to date and his continued dedication to landslide hazard reduction that this honour is bestowed on him by his friends and colleagues. "

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Presentation to Mr. Ahmad (left) by Dr. Earl Brabb-president of ILRG.



## EARTHQUAKE UNIT REPORT: EARTHQUAKE OF MAY 14, 2003

On Wednesday May 14, 2003, at 8:54pm a minor earthquake rocked various sections of the island. While felt only slightly in the parish of Kingston and St Andrew [Bull Bay (II), Hope Pastures(III), Half-Way-Tree, Abbey Court(II), Zadie Gardens(II)] it was notably felt in the parishes of St Catherine, Clarendon, St James [Maldon (IV), Cambridge(IV), Montego Bay (III)] and Trelawny

This earthquake had a magnitude of 3.8Mt and its epicentre was located in the Cockpit Country of the parish of Trelawny. Armed with the knowledge of where the epicentre was located, members of the Unit visited communities in Trelawny to collect intensity reports. It was no surprise that the people of the parish had felt the earthquake and quite strongly too. We gathered reports from a few towns as we travelled inward from the coast. Reports were taken from Duncans (IV), Clarkes Town (IV), Kinloss (V), Duanvale (V), New Forest (V) Sherwood Content (V), Windsor (V), Coxheath (V), Fontabell (IV) Friendship(V), Wakefield (V), Wilshire (I), Falmouth (IV), Rio Bueno (IV). Many people stated that it was most frightening and was the strongest earthquake they had felt in recent times. In one instance one woman claimed that coconuts actually fell from her tree during the event in another instance a hog house was said to have shifted slightly off its foundation.

### CONGRATS!!

**Brian Richardson**

Brian has relocated to the United Kingdom to work for a consultancy in his capacity as a hydrogeologist. We wish him all the best in his professional endeavours.

**Deborah-Ann Rowe**

Debbie has started her career as a consultant with the ODPEM/UNDP, as a local expert for Community based Disaster Mitigation, stationed at Mines and Geology. We wish her every success for the future.

**Anestoria Shalkowski**

Anestoria has been awarded a Government of Japan—Monbukagakusho scholarship to study for a masters in the field of Geotechnical Engineering. Good luck Ann and all the best in learning Japanese!

It is very interesting to note that during the Montego Bay earthquake of March 1, 1957, nearly half century ago, the Maldon Baptist Church was destroyed (now rebuilt), Maldon is close to the epicentre of the May 14<sup>th</sup> 2003 earthquake. In memory of this a monument was erected on the church grounds (see photo).



*Photo by Gavin Gunter*

The May 14, 2003 earthquake was the second felt earthquake since the beginning of the year. The other took place on January 30, 2003 at 10:14 a.m., with magnitude of 3.8Mt and an epicentre located near Blue Mountain Ridge, Silver Hill Peak, Portland. It was widely felt in the city of Kingston and parts of St Andrew; Intensity estimated to be III to IV on the EMS scale. Note: EMS = European Macroseismic Scale of Intensities.

*By Raymond Stewart, Earthquake Unit, UWI*

*The GSJwelcomes short articles, technical information, reports, news items, old photos etc. which are suitable for inclusion in the Newsletter. Submissions should be made to the Geological Society of Jamaica newsletter c/o Department of Geography and Geology, University of the West Indies Mona, Kingston 7.*



PAPERS APPEARING SOON IN THE NEXT  
CARIBBEAN JOURNAL OF EARTH SCIENCE VOLUME 37

**Caribbean datums and the integration of geographical data**

Keith M. Miller

**Measurement-based soil information systems for the Caribbean**

Bheshem Ramlal

**The trace fossil *Schaubcylindrichnus coronus* Frey and Howard, 1981, from the White Limestone Group of northeast Jamaica**

Donovan J Blissett and Ron K. Pickerill

**Enhanced earthquake risk in Kingston due to wave field excitation in the Liguanea Basin, Jamaica**

Margaret D. Wiggins-Grandison, Tarek R. M. Kebeasy and Eystein S. Husebye

**Field Guide to the geology and geomorphology of the Tertiary limestones of the Central Inlier and Cockpit Country**

Simon F. Mitchell, David J Miller and Ravidya Maharaj

**REPORT ON IGCP PROJECT 433**

**“CARIBBEAN PLATE TECTONICS”, MARCH, 2002.**

The GeoMin Conference was held at the Hotel Nacional, Havana, Cuba, from 18-23 March, 2002. Of particular interest to the Caribbean community was the International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP) Project 433 “Caribbean Plate Tectonics”. This represented a day of discussion on various topics related to the Caribbean Plate, and involved researchers from 9 countries. The day finished with a discussion of the most recent ‘Pindell’ model for the Caribbean. A detailed report on the meeting is available online at [http://www.ig.utexas.edu/CaribPlate/reports/cuba\\_2003.htm](http://www.ig.utexas.edu/CaribPlate/reports/cuba_2003.htm).

The conference was very enjoyable and was an ideal forum for discussion of research on the Caribbean.

## **T r e m o r s**

### **Public Lecture on Natural Hazard Mitigation in Jamaica**

The Geological Society of Jamaica was proud to be a co-sponsor of the public lecture “What can be done to reduce the impact of natural hazards in Jamaica” given by Dr. Earl E. Brabb, Scientist Emeritus, United States Geological Survey, Menlo Park, California, held on Thursday, July 17, 2003 at the Mona Visitor’s Lodge and Conference Centre, UWI Mona Campus.

Dr. Brabb’s lecture showed various types of hazards and mitigation methods used throughout North America and demonstrated situations in which they may be applied in Jamaica. The lecture was attended by several members of the private and public sector.

The other sponsors of the lecture were the Unit for Disaster Studies, The Jamaica Geographical Society, the National Environment and Planning Agency, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management and the Department of Geography & Geology, UWI Mona.



## GSJ Summer Social

The Summer Social held on July 11, was a resounding success at Shanti's house. The turn out of members was encouraging and it was a pleasant evening outdoors. The best part being that there was more than enough food and drink for all who were able attend.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the society's 2 field trips to St. Thomas and Western Jamaica held earlier this year. The commentary by the trip leaders provided additional entertainment.

We look forward to this being a regular event to be included in the regular GSJ activities.



(L-R, front row) Prof. Robinson, Dr. Mitchell, Ms. D'Aguiar, Dr. Abbott (sitting)  
(Back row) Visiting students



(L-R, standing): Ms. Khan, Mr. Butterfield, Dr. Stemann  
(sitting): Visiting student, Dean Williamson, Ms. James  
(in shadow) Mrs. Wiggins Grandison, Ms. Black, Mr. White, Mrs. White  
(forefront): Mr. Gunter giving his presentation.

## Coming Events

\* *September - Barbeque*

The GSJ will be planning its major fundraising activity for the year in mid-September.

Please come support the society!!!

\* *September - Field Trip*

The society is planning a field trip to the St. Ann's Great River Inlier.

This trip will be led by Dr. Simon Mitchell and Ms. Sherene James.

\* *December - Geology*

Please remember that our annual Christmas social is on again for December.

The date will be announced.



# BLAST FROM THE PAST



Dr. Chubb (left) addresses a group of local spectators and H. Versey (seated) and Mr. Munoz-Bennett (then president of GSJ with pipe). Trelawny, circa 1950.



Dr. V. A. Zans (right) and Mr. Farquharson with the Humber Super Snipe vehicle of the Geological Survey Division. Trelawny, circa 1950.



From left: H. Finnikin, (Bobsie), V. Farquharson, H.R. Versey, V.A. Zans, B. Bailey, L.W. Edwards, local field assistant. Trelawny, circa 1950.

**These photographs are from the private collection of Professor Edward Robinson.**



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Editor: Shakira Khan  
Layout: Shanti Persaud

Department of Geography and Geology  
University of the West Indies,  
Mona Campus  
Kingston 7

Phone: (876) 9272728  
Fax: (876) 9776029  
Email: [geosocja@uwimona.edu.jm](mailto:geosocja@uwimona.edu.jm)

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\* Demitted office April 2003

**G SJ MEMBERSHIP FORM 2003 – 04**

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STATUS	ANNUAL FEE (J\$)
Institutional	3,000.00
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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 THE 31<sup>ST</sup> OF JANUARY.**