

Report for the Mineralogical Society

Senior Bursary awarded to Kathryn Goodenough for attendance at the 23rd Colloquium of African Geology in Johannesburg, 8-14 January 2011

I would like to thank the Mineralogical Society for the award of a Senior Bursary, which enabled me to attend the 23rd Colloquium of African Geology in Johannesburg, 8-14 January 2011. The meeting was attended by some 400 delegates from across the world, and papers were presented on all aspects of African geology.

I attended a 2-day pre-conference field trip to the Pilanesberg Igneous Complex, led by Grant Cawthorn. This trip combined excellent outcrops of alkaline igneous rocks with



opportunities to view game such as elephant, rhino, giraffe and zebra, and provided a great introduction to South African geology. The Pilanesberg is of interest for its alkaline mineralogy, and contains some mineralised zones that have been investigated for their contents of uranium, niobium, and rare earth elements. I also joined a one-day mid-conference field trip to the classic meteorite impact structure of the Vredefort Dome.

In the Pilanesberg National Park, where we were accompanied by a game ranger so that we could leave our vehicles to look at the outcrops!

The Colloquium itself comprised four days of talks with five sessions running in parallel. I presented two talks, one on Mesozoic to Cenozoic volcanic rocks in Madagascar in a session entitled “Cenozoic alkaline provinces of western and southern Africa”; and a second on the post-collisional granitoids of the East African Orogen, in a session on “The nature and significance of the Pan-African Orogeny and the relationships of alkaline ring complexes to orogenies”. This latter session was a memorial symposium in honour of Professor Russell Black, and was thus very well attended. It included keynote talks by Peter Bowden and Bernard Bonin, and is expected to lead to a Special Publication of the Geological Society of London.

Other talks of particular note for me during the conference included the Plenary lecture by Chris Hawkesworth on the geological record of continental crust generation; a superb lecture by Allan Wilson on early stages of magma emplacement in the Bushveld intrusion; contributions from John Clemens and Jean-Francois Moyen in a session on TTG and granitoids; and a lecture by Dave Evans on Neoproterozoic – Palaeoproterozoic continental reconstructions.

This conference provided a really valuable opportunity for me to meet up with other colleagues working in Africa, to make new contacts, and to learn about just some of the incredible range of interesting geology that is currently being studied across the African continent. Financial assistance from the Mineralogical Society, which covered the cost of my registration, was instrumental in allowing me to attend the colloquium, and thus very much appreciated.