

Introduction to the Fifteenth Glossop Lecture



Fig. 1. Mike Sweeney.

Mike Sweeney joined Rendel Palmer & Tritton Consulting Engineers in 1970, after graduating from Manchester University in Civil Engineering, and Imperial College in Geotechnics. He was involved in site investigation and geotechnical design work for roads in the South Wales Valleys and rock slope stabilization in the West Country, both dominated by engineering geology. Mike was involved in bridge foundations in Baghdad, moving then on to Nepal, where he was introduced to mountain slope geohazards and the value of geomorphological assessment.

In 1977 he joined BP, eventually becoming Head of Geotechnics, and then BP Upstream Technical Authority for Geotechnics. He was

responsible for technical leadership and coordination of BP's geotechnical discipline for over 20 years and had oversight of BP's geotechnical activity on assets and major projects worldwide, both onshore and offshore.

Mike has been involved with the engineering geological and geotechnical aspects of energy industry practice, often with developments in remote frontier regions. His work on performance of pipelines highlighted the terrain risks in remote regions and this led to large-scale risk reduction on pipeline projects in the Andes, Caucasus and elsewhere. This led to his initiating the first international conference on 'Terrain and geohazard challenges facing onshore oil and gas pipelines' hosted by the ICE in 2005. These will be the themes of the 15th Glossop Lecture.

Mike initiated research on a variety of topics relating to energy and the challenges of terrain, including engineering in mountains and deserts, novel pipeline techniques and plant performance, storage tank foundations, tropical seabed carbonate soils and seabed scour. This research work led to some two dozen publications in technical conferences and journals.

Outside of work Mike has sat on numerous industry committees and lectured regularly to postgraduate courses at Imperial College and the University of Newcastle, to ICE regional groups and to the Engineering Group of the Geological Society.

I'm sure you'll agree, an impressive career and worthy recipient of the Glossop Medal. We look forward to hearing more.... Mike, will you please come and deliver your Glossop Lecture.

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