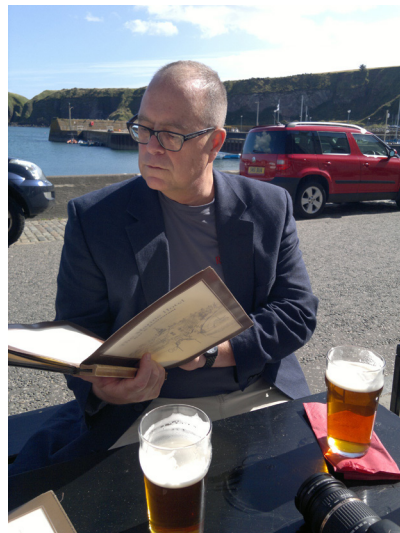


British Branch Meeting 2012

5–6 September 2012
University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen

Scotland has had the rainiest summer on record this year. The 37th annual meeting of the British branch of the IGS, however, commenced with fine weather in the ‘granite city’ of Aberdeen, Scotland. The meeting was hosted and organized by the Cryosphere and Climate Change group in the School of Geosciences at the University of Aberdeen (thank you Brice, David, Doug, James, Matteo and Rob). A program of 38 oral presentations (a significant portion of which featured student presenters), 18 posters and a ‘public debate’ co-sponsored by the British Science Festival (also hosted by the University of Aberdeen for the week) made for an engaging visit to the granite city.

Following the public debate on ‘The Future of Our Polar Regions’ featuring David Vaughan, Peter Nienow and David Macdonald, a wine reception was held in the new campus library (one of the few examples of modern architecture in Aberdeen that does not conflict with its granite uniformity). The first full day of the meeting began with a session on Arctic Glacial Hydrology and Dynamics featuring six student presentations (Tom Cowton, Alison Banwell, Jonny Kingslake, Catriona Butler, Sam Doyle and Christine Dow) and only one presentation of an ‘elder’ (Richard Hodgkins). The student presentations in this session, and in all that followed (both oral and poster) were over the top. (The high quality of the science and clarity of presentations by students prompted Liz Morris, of the Scott Polar Research Institute, to speculate that parents of the recent past deserve some kind of an award for creating a younger generation that is smarter than those of us who are in their later career stages.) Oral sessions continued with talks on Recent Glacial Change and Basal Processes (mostly involving Arctic-oriented research) and Glacial History (with fascinating talks ranging from local Scottish glacial geology (Clare Boston, Derek Fabel and Danni Pearce) to studies of inverted basal channels in Antarctic ice shelves that conspicuously coincide with grounding-line outflow of subglacial water streams (Anne Le Brocq). Eighteen posters on a variety of subjects (including cryoconite casserole recipes by Michaela Musilova of Bristol University) preceded a Panel Session of the UK Polar Network on Conquering Fieldwork. (At this session, sage advice was given by various ‘old hands’ to the younger people considering field work: don’t put



Doug MacAyeal, IGS President, reviews the prospects for the upcoming IGS BB meeting. After hiking with the Secretary General on a sightseeing trip to Dunnottar Castle the day before the meeting, the two developed a need for re-hydration, which they satisfied in nearby Stonehaven.



The Secretary General where he feels quite at home – in the ‘Thief’s Hole’ at Dunnottar Castle. In the old days, one misplaced reference citation or extra word over the maximum in the abstract would land you in this place. Fortunately, with the on-line submission system, the only hole likely to be encountered nowadays is digital.



Roger Hooke derives great enjoyment from Martyn Tranter's presentation.



The latest Seligman Crystal awardee, David Sugden, displays the Crystal, accompanied by John Glen, who had been awarded the Crystal 40 years before, in 1972.



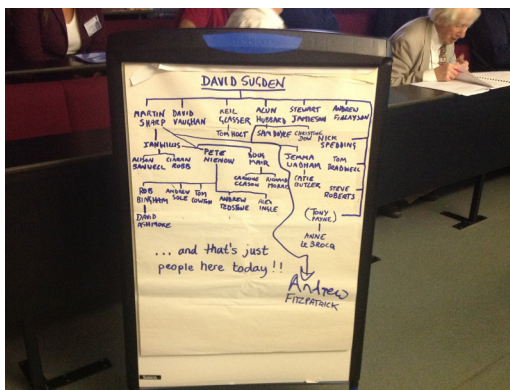
Richard 'the Enforcer' Hindmarsh chaired an interesting session and mercilessly enforced the time limits imposed on the speakers.



The Sugdens and the IGS President, pictured as the latter, ever the gentleman, presents Britta Sugden with a bouquet of flowers.



As always, the IGS BB meeting attracts participants from different generations. Liz Morris, former IGS President, and Alison Cook enjoying the poster session.



David Sugden's 'Family Tree'. His academic descendants congregated at the meeting to honour their mentor.



British Branch President, Jemma Wadham, addressing the banquet guests to introduce the after-dinner speaker. The banquet was held at the Foyer Restaurant, which doubles as an art gallery – very posh.

down your rucksack and assume that you'll hike back to it, don't separate yourself from your food, dust destroys tent zips, usually just prior to the mosquito 'mozzy' season...)

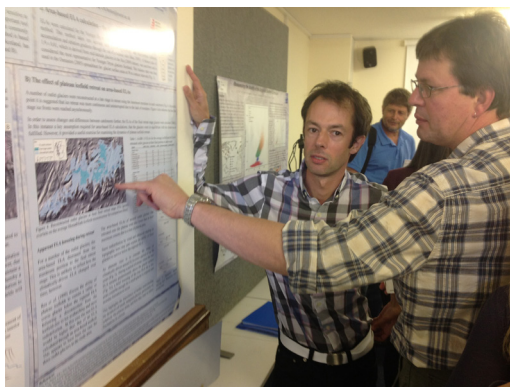
The signature event of the first day was the presentation of the Seligman Crystal to Professor David Sugden before the evening's banquet. The presentation featured a moving citation presented by Martyn Tranter, followed by David Sugden's address entitled 'A Geomorphologist in the Glaciological World'. This presentation of the 33rd Seligman Crystal (see additional material in this issue of ICE) was attended by John Glen, the recipient of the 4th Seligman Crystal. John's attendance was a reminder to David that the award does not signify any reason to ease up in one's commitment to glaciological research!

The conference dinner was held immediately after the award presentation at the Foyer Restaurant and Gallery in downtown Aberdeen (a portion of proceeds received by the Foyer paid by meeting participants was donated to local charity). The menu was delicious (excellent wines, local salmon and vegetables, piquant dessert treats), but the main enjoyment came from the various toasts that were held in honor of the Branch meeting, the new Seligman Crystal laureate and the gathering of good friends and colleagues. Following president Jemma Wadham's gracious welcome, Martyn Tranter took the floor with various toasts and stories, culminating in the account of his recent experiences in airport security while attempting to carry formaldehyde-preserved samples in his hand luggage. The evening concluded with various groups exploring the pub culture of Aberdeen in search of its excellent cask-conditioned ales.



It has become a tradition that the after-dinner speech is given by Martyn Tranter. Invariably it involves anecdotes of glaciological exploits in various parts of the word and includes illuminating accounts of consumption of the type of refreshment displayed behind Martyn.

The second day of the meeting again featured stirring talks and continued poster discussion on a range of subjects including glacial biochemistry, glacial sedimentology, exploration of subglacial Lake Ellsworth, microbes that eat rock, an awe-inspiring session on ice-sheet modeling (this intimidated the session host so much that he threatened that any speakers who took more than their allotted time would have their picture posted on Facebook with Doug and Magnús wearing their Glengarry hats), and geophysical observations of surface and basal features of Antarctica and Svalbard. During the lunch hour, the AGM of the British branch of the IGS was

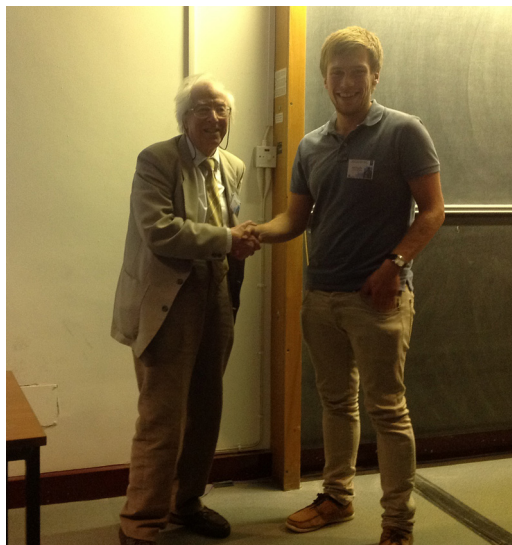


It may look like a tablet computer, but actually it's a sophisticated camera. Tom Bradwell was about to explain his poster to Derek Fabel when they were rudely interrupted by a large, bearded man waving an iPad about.



For decades John Glen has attended the IGS British Branch meeting and carefully reviewed the contributions made by student participants. Here he is presenting Danni Pearce with the prize for the best oral student presentation ...

held. The discussion and announcements focused on various aspects of IGS policy and practices that determine its effectiveness in supporting the science of glaciology. The day concluded (in time for departing travel) with the presentation of the John Glen Prize for Best Student Oral and Best Student Poster presentations. This year's winners were Danni Pearce of the University of Worcester for her oral presentation on 'Evidence for a late glacial plateau icefield in the Tweedsmuir Hills,



...while Jeremy Ely won the prize for the best student poster.

Southern Uplands, Scotland' and Jeremy Ely of the University of Sheffield for his poster presentation on 'Reassessing the validity of the subglacial bedform continuum'. The meeting ended with a round of thanks to Doug Mair and his local organizers for an excellent experience. Next year's British branch meeting will be held in Loughborough.

Doug MacAyeal