



British Branch Meeting 2015

University of Durham, Durham, UK, 3–4 September 2015

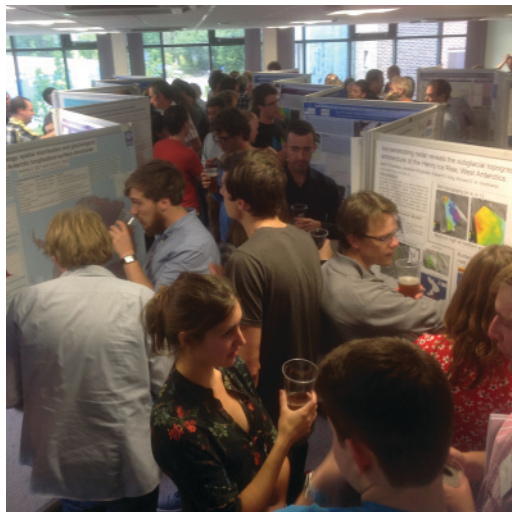
The 40th Annual Meeting of the International Glaciological Society British Branch, with a total of 113 delegates, was hosted by the Department of Geography at the University of Durham. Day 1 kicked off bright and early with a warm welcome from Chris Stokes, anticipating two days of presentations covering many aspects of glaciology. These included 38 talks (with 13 delivered by postgraduate students) and a whopping 50 posters (perhaps a record?).

The first session on Day 1 focussed on glacier dynamics and mass balance, with particular reference to the Greenland Ice Sheet and glaciers in Nepal and Chile. We learned that, although the higher melt rates on the Greenland Ice Sheet in recent years have typically resulted in higher summer velocities, there appears to be a general slow-down of ice velocities over decadal timescales. Next came an equally intriguing session concentrating on the more historical aspects of glaciology, from West Antarctica to Kamchatka, Russia.

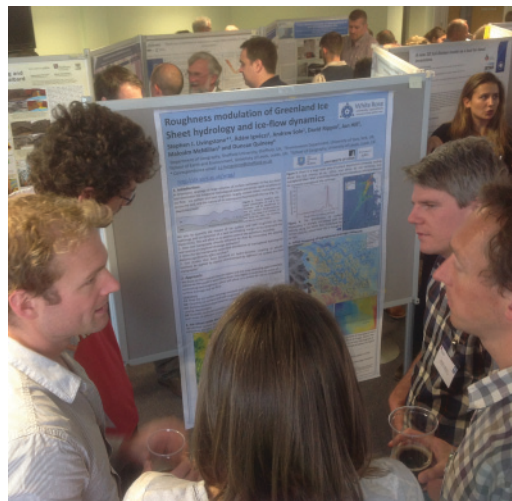
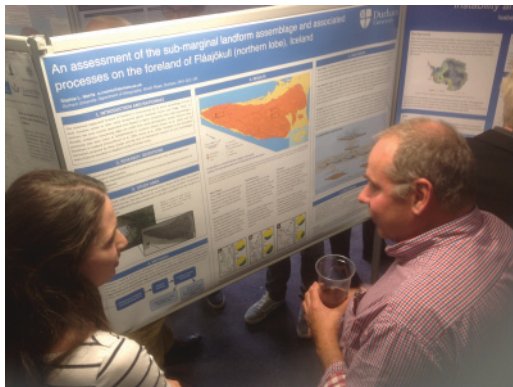
Lunch was provided on three floors and, with the large number of delegates, the crucial task of finding the shortest and/or fastest-moving queue quickly became obvious to most.

The afternoon session focussed on glacier geology and geomorphology. In only an hour and a half, we travelled from Greenland to Iceland, to Canada, to Scotland, and finally to the Himalaya. This was followed by an extremely busy and stimulating poster session, where the provision of free-flowing local beers seemed only to enhance the energy levels and the quality of the discussions.

The Great Hall of Durham Castle was the location for the wonderful Conference Banquet. Dinner was preceded by an optional tour of the Castle by our own distinguished guide, Anne Le Brocq, who led us through poky passages, spooky stairwells and to the dark depths of the dungeons. During the dinner itself we were able to admire the backdrop of Cromwellian breastplates, helmets and muskets, although it was the collection of



The poster session was exceptionally popular.





The setting of the Banquet was most impressive. Some of the Great Hall of Durham Castle dates from the 13th century (although the windows and panelling are 19th-century). Photo: Hilmar Gudmundsson.



Meeting organizer Chris Stokes chairs the AGM. Photo: Hilmar Gudmundsson.



Poul Christoffersen, Pete Nienow and Rob Arthern in Durham Castle's dungeon bar. Photo: Hilmar Gudmundsson.

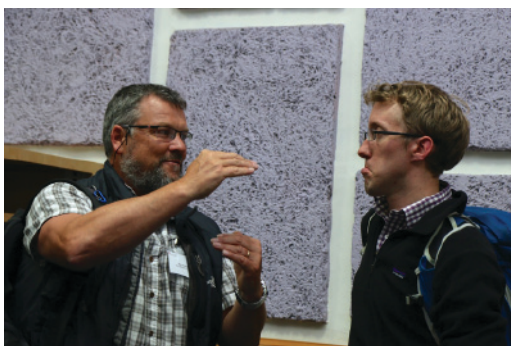
swords that particularly caught the attention of our Secretary General. Festivities continued in the Castle's dungeon bar, and for some, they were prolonged yet further at various hostelrys in town. Luckily, not everyone had to accidentally circumnavigate the Castle walls before finally escaping into the town centre.

Day 2 kicked off with a session on ice shelves and ice-ocean interactions. Particularly memorable was Joe Todd's 3-D fly-through movie of the calving front of Store Glacier, which made several stomachs twist and turn (particularly those that were already feeling a little sensitive after the previous night's exploits).

Lunch was devoted mainly to the Annual General Meeting, at which the locations of IGS BB meetings were eagerly discussed (perhaps too eagerly, some might argue) and planned for up to 10 years into the future! The only finalized venue for a future meeting, though, is Southampton for next year.



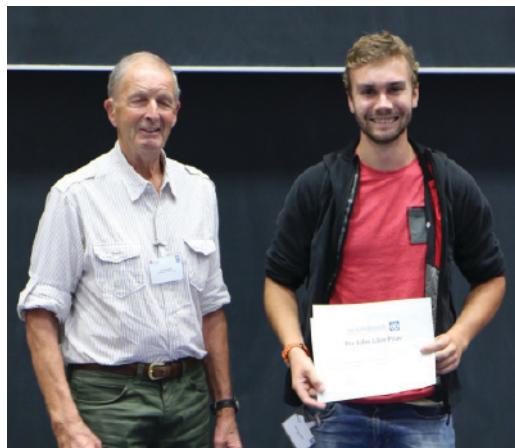
The bar was every bit as popular as the poster session.



Ian Hewitt looks unimpressed (though apparently he was quite the opposite) to hear about Bryn Hubbard's massive ice layer in the Larsen C Ice Shelf. Photo: Hilmar Gudmundsson.



Jo Jacka awards Donald Slater the John Glen Prize for the best student talk. Photo: Hilmar Gudmundsson.



David Sugden awards Sebastian Rosier the John Glen Prize for best student poster. Photo: Hilmar Gudmundsson.

The first afternoon session focussed on glacier hydrology, with a strong emphasis on the subglacial hydrology of the Greenland Ice Sheet. Second came a session on various geophysical and 'emerging glaciology' techniques.

The British Branch Meeting finished with the customary awarding of the John Glen prizes for the best student presentations. Unfortunately John Glen was unable to attend this year; however David Sugden and Jo Jacka did an excellent job of selecting and awarding the prize-winners on John's behalf. Donald Slater won the award for the best talk, which focussed on the effect of meltwater plumes on the submarine melt rates of marine-terminating glaciers, with special mentions given to Stephen Chuter, Rebecca Burns, Joe Todd and Damon Davis. The award for

the best student poster went to Sebastian Rosier, who is modelling the response of ice streams to tidal effects, and special mentions were given to Isabel Nias, Beth Hungleby, Emily Langley, Lucy Kissick and Stephen Brough.

The local organizing committee were thanked for providing us with such a smooth-running and intellectually stimulating meeting, and we can all look forward to the next British Branch Meeting in Southampton in September 2016.

Alison Banwell



IGS Secretary General Magnús Magnússon engaged in the important job of keeping the 'Friends of the International Glaciological Society' Facebook page up to date during the sessions. Photo: Hilmar Gudmundsson.