

Postgraduate Conference Attendance Report – AGU Fall Meeting 2013, San Francisco

Edwin R.C. Baynes

Edwin R.C. Baynes, School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh, UK. Email: e.r.c.baynes@ed.ac.uk

This report summarises my attendance at the American Geophysical Union annual Fall Meeting held in San Francisco in December 2013, which was kindly supported by a Postgraduate Conference Attendance grant from the British Society for Geomorphology for £1000.

The AGU Fall Meeting is the largest annual meeting of Earth Scientists in the World, with over 22,000 delegates in 2013, covering a broad mix of topics such as Planetary science, Atmospheric science, Glaciology, Volcanology and Geomorphology. I presented a poster of some of PhD results entitled 'Constraining bedrock erosion during extreme flood events: Jökulsá á Fjöllum, Iceland' (abstract number EP53A-0713) in the General Contributions in Geomorphology poster session on the last day of the conference.

The results I presented on my poster included some surface exposure ages from abandoned strath terraces with the deeply incised Jökulsárgljúfur canyon, Iceland, thought to have been eroded during a series of discrete extreme flood events during the Holocene. These ages were very new data when I presented them at AGU as I had only just returned from GFZ Potsdam where I undertook the geochemical analyses. The aim of presenting this data at AGU was to encourage discussion with international scientists in this field, to aid my interpretation of the dataset, which was still very much in its infancy at the time.

The discussions I had over my poster were extremely helpful as it developed new ideas and helped me really understand the possible interpretations of my surface exposure ages and the wider implications of my work, beyond the specific study area of my PhD. This brought a new dimension to my study and has greatly aided the write-up of this work into a paper. I received some excellent and helpful feedback during the course of my poster presentation and also later through the Outstanding Student Presentation Awards.

The 2013 AGU Fall Meeting was also my first major international conference, which I found academically stimulating and exciting, allowing me to develop contacts from a range of countries and also meet the international experts in my field. I met, and had interesting discussions with, a lot of people based at institutions located across the World which has exposed me to a range of different ideas and new approaches; all of which will benefit me in my future career.



I also attended the Gilbert Club meeting held on the Saturday after the AGU Fall Meeting at the Lawrence Hall of Science at the University of California Berkeley, which had some stunning views overlooking San Francisco Bay towards the city. The Gilbert Club meeting is specifically for Geomorphologists, and included three keynote speakers throughout the course of the day followed by two minute 'pop-up' talks. This provided an additional informal environment to listen to interesting talks including a highly stimulating talk from Jerry Mitrovica about Sea-Level change and was a highlight of the week.

My attendance at the AGU Fall Meeting would not have been possible without the support from the BSG and would like to thank the society for the opportunity. I would encourage all PhD students to attend the meeting (and the Gilbert Club) if they are able to.

Fig. 1: The Golden Gate Bridge in the sunshine.