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## BGRG Windsor

### Postgraduate

### Workshop

8–11 December 2003

Postgraduate report

On the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2003, 34 enthusiastic young geomorphologists from across many universities, both from the UK and abroad, arrived at the magnificent Cumberland Lodge at Windsor to partake in a four-day postgraduate workshop hosted by the BGRG.

The lodge is situated in beautiful surroundings and the students were very impressed with the high standard of accommodation. On arrival, we were greeted with tea and coffee and attended an icebreaker lecture. Here, we were introduced to the organisers, Bernie Smith and Brian Whalley (QUB) and were briefed on the exciting week ahead of us.

Students had their first taste of the delicious cuisine, which was impressive and talked about all week. We then attended an informative and entertaining evening lecture on the changing nature of the PhD. Following this lecture, we headed for the bar, which was to be the focal point of the conference! Here, students could meet academics, chat to peers about PhD life, and engage in more informal chats, realising that scientists can be normal people!



*Fig. 1 : Bernie Smith discussing research philosophies.  
© Brian Whalley.*

Throughout the week, both Bernie and Brian shared their experiences of postgraduate research with us, discussing many fundamental issues including: research philosophy, time management, research presentation and the expectations of PhD students. One of the main activities of the workshop was a small group presentation on project preparation. This was complicated by the fact that we were assigned projects outside the remit of our expertise. However, this proved to be very useful, making students think about time manage-

*Report continued on page 8*

A B.G.R.G. non-publication compiled by Sue McLaren, Department of Geography, University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7RH

PLEASE SUBMIT MATERIAL FOR GEOPHEMERA 92 BY 10 May 2004

## Executive Committee: 2003-2004

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### Editorial, Geophemera 91

Please note that the deadline for material to be submitted for Geophemera 92 has been brought forward from the usual 1<sup>st</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> May 2004. The reason for this is that the next Annual General Meeting of the BGRG is earlier this year (August 19<sup>th</sup> 2004). There will be constitutional issues that need to be discussed at this meeting. The constitution states that such items need to get to members at least one month before the AGM. If Geophemera went out at the normal time, the forewarning would be too short and so a one-off earlier deadline and publication is planned.

Unfortunately the BGRG Administrator has been on leave for a while and any material that may have been sent to her may not have been forwarded on to me in time for this issue. Apologies if this is the case and I will include such material in the next issue.

Sue McLaren                      Leicester

Contact the B.G.R.G.

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contact: BGRG Administrator  
Christine James***

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***For further information about BGRG postgraduate issues  
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Simon Reid***

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Visit the BGRG Web Site at: <http://www.bgrg.org/>  
Submit electronic copy for Geophemera to: sjm11@le.ac.uk

## BULLETIN BOARD

### Midlands Drylands Lectures

An annual one-day meeting for students taking physical geography courses on dryland environments.

Wednesday 12th May 2004, University College Northampton

More information from Ian Livingstone (ian.livingstone@northampton.ac.uk; 01604 892122) and at <http://oldweb.northampton.ac.uk/aps/env/deserts/index.html>

### Future BGRG Meetings

Volunteers are needed to hold the January, Spring Field and AGM Meetings from 2006 onwards. Please contact John Wainwright.

BGRG members are entitled to 15% off all Wiley books. Details: [www.wileyurope.com](http://www.wileyurope.com) Quote promotional code BEW when ordering. This can be done via the website or using email: [cs-books@wiley.co.uk](mailto:cs-books@wiley.co.uk).

### BGRG Working Group: final meeting

#### Terrestrial Geochemical Sediments & Geomorphology

May 6<sup>th</sup> 2004, Leicester University

The main aim of this symposium is to bring together researchers from a range of disciplines including geomorphology, sedimentology and geochemistry to discuss surface and near surface geochemical sediments.

For further details contact Sue McLaren at [sjm11@le.ac.uk](mailto:sjm11@le.ac.uk)

Closing date for receipt of abstracts is April 30<sup>th</sup> 2004

### Joint International Geomorphology Conference

BGRG with IAG and IGU Geomorphology Commission, Glasgow,

August 17-20

BGRG Postgrads attending may apply for support of up to £50 towards the cost of the meeting. Priority may be given to those offering papers/posters. Use the Postgrad Conference Forms found on our website.

For postgraduates only, accommodation (floor space and couches) is being offered by postgraduates at the University of Glasgow. Spaces are limited & will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. If you are interested in this option please contact Trevor Hoey: [thoey@geog.gla.ac.uk](mailto:thoey@geog.gla.ac.uk). People should include their dates of arrival/departure for accommodation.

### Obituary

#### Dr S Brian McCann

Many of us remember Brian McCann or knew him through his work on coastal geomorphology, who died peacefully in hospital in Canada in January. Brian graduated from the University of Wales in 1956, and obtained a PhD from the University of Cambridge in 1961. He was a lecturer in geomorphology at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, until he moved to McMaster University in Canada in 1967.

He will be remembered personally by many of us, but professionally for his work particularly on coastal and Quaternary geomorphology. His PhD was on western Scottish raised shorelines on which he published in the 1960s. Following his move to Canada he published extensively on Canadian coastal geomorphology, particularly on the Canadian Arctic. Throughout his career he was a dedicated and enthusiastic field geomorphologist. During his period at Aberystwyth he became well known in Quaternary geomorphology circles. In Canada he was active in professional geomorphological affairs, as an associate editor of the Canadian Journal of Earth Sciences and in organising a number of high-profile conferences. He is survived by his wife and two children. To them we convey our sympathy.



# B.G.R.G. Meetings



## **BGRG Spring Field Meeting at Exeter, May 6-9 2004** ***Call for Papers for an Open Session, Recent Geomorphological Research in SW England and Experimental Geomorphology***

**Place:** Exeter and Devon

**Accommodation:** Crossmead Conference Centre, University of Exeter

**Format:** day of papers and day and a half in the field

**Theme:** Open Papers, Recent Geomorphological Research in SW England and Experimental Geomorphology

**Leaders:** Prof. A G Brown, Dr T. Quine, Dr A Nicholas, Dr K. Kuhn and Prof. D. Walling

### **Provisional Itinerary**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>** Registration p.m., evening dinner and lecture by an invited speaker

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup>** Paper sessions (3):

a.m. Open Session and Recent Geomorphological Research in SW England

p.m. Experimental Geomorphology and visit to the Sediments Research Laboratory Exeter.

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>** Field visit to the Lower Exe, Culm, Middle Exe Valley and Exmoor

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>** a.m. local sites: Exe Sub-catchments and Soil Erosion sites

p.m. disperse

### **Estimated Cost**

Based on 3 nights B&B one dinner (Thursday) but no other food included: £160

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*Call for Papers and Booking: BGRG Spring Meeting May 6-9 2004, University of Exeter*

Name.....

Affiliation and Address.....

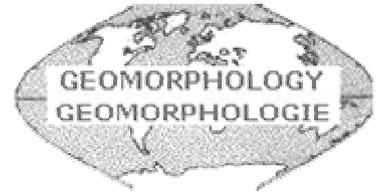
.....

.....

I wish to present a paper entitled:.....

.....

Please email a copy of this booking form to: J.Thatcher@exeter.ac.uk



**BGRG**

**Joint International Geomorphology Conference  
BGRG with IAG and IGU Geomorphology Commission  
Glasgow, August 17-20, 2004**

This is the BGRG Annual Meeting for 2004 & includes the AGM.

**Programme:**

**Tuesday 17 August**

BGRG Frost lecture: Professor Tim Burt

**Wednesday 18 August**

Whole day paper & poster session: 'Geomorphology & Instability'

Linton lecture (early evening) followed by the BGRG Dinner

**Thursday 19 August**

Whole day paper & poster session: 'Geomorphology in a New Century/ Submitted (Unthemed) Papers'

Whole day paper & poster session: 'Past Hydrological Events Related to Global Change'

Plenary lecture by Professor Andrew Goudie

Wiley lecture

BGRG AGM

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August**

Whole day paper & poster session: 'The Managed Landscape and Restoring Nature'

Plenary lecture by Professor Will Graf.

**Papers:** At the time of going to press, a large number of abstracts have been received. These submissions are from many international geomorphologists & across the UK community, including postgraduates. All themes are well supported & it promises to be a very exciting conference. For a more detailed programme of papers go to the BGRG web site: <http://www.bgrg.org/pages/meetings/conference%202004.htm>

**Accommodation:** A wide range of accommodation will be available for delegates, ranging from University accommodation and budget hotels to 4 and 5 star hotels. Glasgow also has a large number of low cost Bed and Breakfast establishments and hostel accommodation. For details see: <http://www.meetingmakers.co.uk/IGC-UK2004>

**Registration:** For details see the second circular at: <http://www.meetingmakers.co.uk/IGC-UK2004>. Reduced rates are available for postgraduate students.

**CLOSING DATE FOR EARLY REGISTRATION FEES IS 21 MARCH**

**Field Trips:** Several field trips will be run, both before and after the conference, including local excursions and longer trips in Scotland, Ireland and Iceland. For details go to: <http://www.meetingmakers.co.uk/IGC-UK2004>

*Notice of a Joint BGRG/BSRG International Conference*

Drylands: Linking Landscape Processes to Sedimentary Environments

2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> February 2005, Geological Society, London

The overall aim of this joint BGRG/BSRG international conference is to bring together researchers working in modern and ancient dryland environments, in order to improve our understanding of arid zone processes and landforms and the preservation potential of dryland sediment successions in the geological record. We anticipate that the meeting will not only promote interaction between geomorphologists and sedimentologists, but will also enhance our knowledge about contemporary dryland environments and the factors influencing subsurface sedimentary architecture. This conference will also be of considerable interest to practitioners working in the water and hydrocarbon industries.

The conference is open to a wide range of researchers and practitioners. However, we specifically wish to attract oral and poster presentations on the following themes:

- Factors influencing sediment mobilisation, transport and deposition in the range of earth surface process domains operating within dryland environments;
- Impacts of external tectonic, climatic and base-level controls upon sedimentation patterns in drylands;
- Interactions between process domains (e.g. weathering, fluvial, hillslope, playa lake and aeolian processes) and their impacts upon dryland sedimentary systems;
- Preservation potential and sedimentary records produced by the various components of dryland landscapes;
- Impacts of near-surface geochemical sedimentation upon preservation potential within dryland systems;
- Modern analogues for dryland sediments in the geological record;
- Predictive models for spatial and temporal lithofacies distribution in dryland settings;
- Behaviour and sedimentary records of drylands that existed before the evolution of plant life on land.

An edited Geological Society Special Publication and a Special Issue of *Earth Surface Processes & Landforms* are proposed.

For further information contact the Convenors: Dr David Nash (University of Brighton), Dr Joanna Bullard (Loughborough University) and Dr Colin North (University of Aberdeen).

Website: <http://www.bton.ac.uk/environment/drylands/> Email: [drylands.2005@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:drylands.2005@lboro.ac.uk)



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

*Postgraduate Workshop*  
**Contaminated Sediments**  
**Workshop Leaders: Dr Kevin Taylor (MMU); Dr Phil Owens (NSRI, Cranfield)**  
**May 25th and 26th 2004, Manchester**



This workshop, supported by the British Sedimentological Research Group (BSRG), the British Geomorphological Research Group (BGRG) and the British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) is part of an initiative to provide postgraduate training workshops in the areas of sedimentology, geomorphology and soil science. The workshop aims to provide an overview of the scientific principles and applications relevant to the characterisation, assessment and management of contaminated sediments. This workshop will focus on terrestrial and freshwater aquatic environments. The following will be covered:

- sources and pathways of contaminated sediments,
- assessment and characterisation of contaminated sediments,
  - sediment quality guidelines and procedures,
  - legislative framework for contaminated sediments,
- management and remediation.

The workshop is open to postgraduate research students only. Registration fees and accommodation costs will be kept to a minimum.

For more information contact: Dr. Kevin Taylor, Dept of Environmental and Geographical Sciences Manchester Metropolitan University Manchester. M1 5GD. Tel. 0161-2471569; E-mail: [k.g.taylor@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:k.g.taylor@mmu.ac.uk)



*Notice of an international conference to mark the retirement of Professor Roy P.C. Morgan*

**The role of vegetation in environmental protection: theory & best practice.**

**24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2004 At the National Soil Resources Institute, Cranfield University at Silsoe, Beds, UK**

It is proposed to hold this ESSC-sponsored conference in March 2004, at Cranfield University, Silsoe campus. The conference will mark the retirement in September 2003 of Professor R.P.C. Morgan, currently Deputy Director of the National Soil Resources Institute, Cranfield University, Dean of the Faculty and former President of the ESSC (1992-1996). Roy Morgan has worked in the field of soil erosion, with particular interest in the role of vegetation in erosion control for over 30 years.

The theme of the meeting will reflect the significant contributions made by Professor Morgan in the field of erosion control using vegetation. Presentations on the role of vegetation in the control of hillslope erosion, shallow slope movements and riverbank failures are particularly welcomed. Key themes will include physical processes, modelling, bio-engineering, development and design of vegetative solutions, and implementation of best practice. It is envisaged that this international conference will be held over 2 days, with both oral and poster presentations.

An edited volume of selected, peer-reviewed papers is proposed, as well as the opportunity to improve communication between European scientists working in this field. [j.rickson@cranfield.ac.uk](mailto:j.rickson@cranfield.ac.uk)



# Reports



Continued from page 1—

## BGRG Windsor Postgraduate Workshop

8–11 December 2003

Postgraduate Report



*Fig. 3: Darren Atkinson at the start of his presentation on his own research. © Brian Whalley.*

ment and research skills as related to their own research. This also provided use with a chance to demonstrate teamwork skills and to prepare for the individual presentations that were to follow.

On Wednesday, students gave (much anticipated) presentations on their individual research. The workshop was split into small groups with people of similar research interests. This made the exercise slightly less daunting and allowed for constructive feedback. Most of the students felt the chance to share ideas in an informal atmosphere was rewarding and was also one of the most valuable aspects of the workshop. People were encouraged by what other students and the chair of each group had to say, however marking each other's presentations out of 10 was slightly less so.

During the workshop, we were privileged to have a



*Fig. 2: Small group presentations. © Brian Whalley.*

number of guest speakers. On Tuesday, Paul Farres (Portsmouth) presented an introduction to modelling. On Wednesday, Sue McLaren (Leicester) and Tom Coulthard (Aberystwyth) spoke about the organisation of fieldwork, and then Avril Allman (NERC) gave an informative lecture on the funding opportunities and facilities available from NERC. Finally, Simon Reid (Leeds) shared his reflections on the postgraduate experience: with some very amusing anecdotes! On the last night of the workshop, students were fortunate to receive an inspiring talk from Professor Adrian Harvey (Liverpool, BGRG Chair) on contemporary geomorphological research.

Overall, the workshop provided invaluable guidance and an excellent opportunity to meet fellow geomorphological postgraduates in a friendly and informal atmosphere. This encouraged students to share experiences, communicate ideas and discuss potential concerns. The workshop was very well organised and helped prepare us for the forthcoming challenges ahead. We thank Bernie Smith, Brian Whalley, Simon Reid and all guest speakers for their hard work, advice and for making it such an enjoyable week.

Finally, just a reminder to all fellow postgraduates

to attend the BGRG postgraduate symposium in University of Southampton on the 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> April 2004. We look forward to seeing you all there!

*Helen Moggridge and May Lee (King's College London).*



BGRG Windsor Workshop

Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park

Postgraduate Representative Report



*Fig 4: Evening meal at Cumberland Lodge. © Brian Whalley.*

The annual research training workshop for BGRG and NERC postgraduates ran from 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> December 2003 at Cumberland Lodge. This year, 31 students attended, with 28 coming from a wide spread of U.K. institutions and 3 from overseas (Hungary and Italy). The workshop was again a great success, receiving very positive feedback from the students. Thanks must be given to the organisers and facilitators, Brian Whalley, Bernie Smith, Paul Farres, Tom Coulthard and Sue McLaren, with Avril Allman from NERC briefing students on issues and resources available. It was encouraging to see the number of students rise once again to the recent average after a couple of years of low attendance numbers, credit for this must be given to the facilitators and link



*Fig 5: Informal discussions over a beer or two after a hard days work. © Brian Whalley.*

persons for promoting the workshop within the wider academic community.

The introductory day saw registration and the ice-breaker reception which the students responded very well to, with Brian Whalley's talk on the changing nature of the PhD in the evening getting all the participants in the right frame of mind for the workshop. The second day provided an opportunity for the students to discuss and appreciate the importance of experimental research design and present ideas for their own PhDs which could be discussed in a small group environment. All the individual presentations were very well organised and delivered and it should be noted the range and quality of innovative projects that are being undertaken in the U.K. and abroad. This is of encouragement to the discipline as a whole. The third day allowed students the opportunity to review fieldwork strategies, data collection and analysis and to look at approaches to modelling. It is interesting to note that of the 31 students who attended, 18 were planning some form of computer modelling within their research.

The guest lecture in the evening was kindly given by Professor Adrian Harvey, the Chair of the BGRG who discussed the topic of Geomorphology and his own experiences. The lecture was greatly received by the students who found it very informative and encouraging for their own research. Many also indicated that it was an excellent idea that the BGRG Chair deliver the lecture, the main reason for this being that it was interesting to see what BGRG members were researching and very comforting to know that they were within a community of very experienced researchers whose ideas and knowledge they could draw upon. The final day saw a discussion on elements of good scientific practice and expectations of research degree. Post-

graduate issues, experiences and some reassurances were then talked through before the range of NERC facilities was presented by Avril Allman. This proved to be an eye opener for many of the students who did not appreciate that they had access to such a wide pool of equipment for their own research. This was encouraging to many who had wanted to do elements of work where equipment was not available within their home institution. Overall, the workshop was very well received by the students and many said that it provided great encouragement and reassurance before they began their research degree.

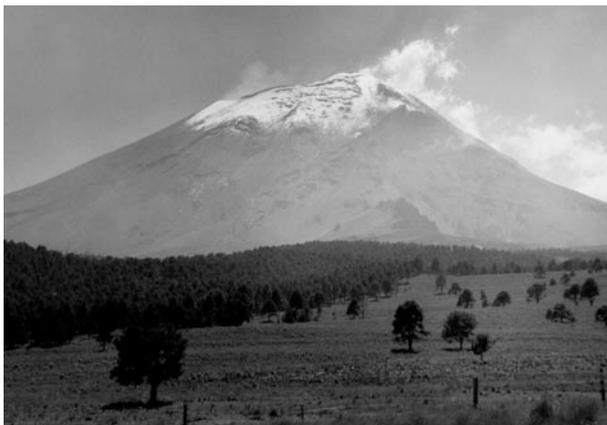
*Simon Reid, BGRG Postgraduate Representative, University of Leeds*

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GEOMORPHOLOGISTS

### REGIONAL GEOMORPHOLOGY CONFERENCE

#### “Geomorphic hazards: Towards the prevention of disasters”

27 October - 2 November 2003, Mexico City



*Fig 6: The northwest side of Popocatepétl - a potential hazard for Mexico City. © Alan Dykes.*

Mexico City is subsiding (at up to 1 mm/day) into the sediments of a former lake bed that render the city particularly vulnerable to damage during earthquakes. Less than 50 km southeast of the city is Popocatepétl Volcano, highly explosive and known to have covered the site of the city with significant deposits during the Holocene and currently active.

The conference venue had been changed as the building planned to accommodate the event had been recently damaged by a small earthquake. However, the replacement venue was a fine old building, the city didn't shake, and the 'smoking mountain' didn't even rumble, although it was continually emitting visible clouds of gas from its crater. The rather moderate attendance (e.g. only 6 out of c.200 delegates were from the UK) was due to the timing of the conference: even the Vice-President of the IAG could only stay for the first day.

Nevertheless, there were plenty of people to fill up the available space and time, particularly a relatively high proportion of geomorphologists from Central and South America who are often unable to attend international conferences further afield, and enough contributions to occupy four lecture rooms in parallel every day. This led to the usual problem of having to decide which session to attend, but as the rooms were close together it was easy to move from one to another between presentations and not miss anything. The title of the conference reflected the wide range of hazards that Mexico experiences, many of which are directly and indirectly related to volcanic activity throughout the Transmexican Volcanic Belt, but there were plenty of examples of potentially and actually damaging geomorphic events from around the world. A moderately random selection (partly biased by the effects of jet-lag - why is it only me that gets it flying west?) follows to give a flavour of the issues raised during the conference.



*Fig 7: Main Square and cathedral, Mexico City—the view from the hotel balcony where the conference dinner was held.*

© Alan Dykes.



*Fig 8: Conference dinner.*

© Alan Dykes.

In session S1 'Volcanic geomorphology and hazards' was a paper by R. Paris (University of Paris) and seven others, examining the massive flank failures of the Canary Island volcanoes. They suggested that the large tsunami-producing failures are associated with the end-stage of shield volcano development (c.1-2 Ma cycle), and that the next volcano to reach this unstable stage is only around 125 ka in age, so the potential tsunami disaster for the USA highlighted by the British media a few years ago is not going to occur for a while yet. Session S3 'Hillslope processes and hazards' was predictably dominated by slope instability and landslide topics. Odette Magri (University of Malta) described and analysed instability along the northwest coast of Malta, Dave Petley (University of Durham) presented an updated account of the 1/velocity vs. time relationship in the early stages of movement of a failing hillslope, and André de Souza Avelar (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) demonstrated controls on soil flows in flume experiments. After the coffee break, Jiun-Chuan Lin (National Taiwan University) discussed the evolution of landslides in tectonically active areas, using Taiwan as the main example, then C. Puglisi (ENEA CR Casaccia, Rome) proposed a methodology for assessing the risks from rapid superficial landslides in Italy, before M.C. Larsen (US Geological Survey) highlighted the possible scale of landslide disasters where housing exists in vulnerable locations using case examples from Puerto Rico and Venezuela. In the afternoon M.J. Mendoza (CENAPRED and National University of Mexico)

detailed the mechanisms and contributory factors of the earthquake-triggered landslide in El Salvador in January 2001, then Alan Dykes (University of Huddersfield) described the 30+ peat slides that occurred during an extreme rainstorm in western Ireland just 6 weeks previously, causing up to 10 million Euros (c.£7M) worth of damage. The IAG Council Meeting for the remainder of that afternoon was somewhat less exciting.

In session S4 'Soil erosion and geomorphic features of land degradation', adjustments of the Lower Missis-



*Fig 9: Live music at the conference dinner.*

© Alan Dykes.

issippi River to changing sediment inputs from tributaries, associated with human modifications, were discussed by Paul Hudson (University of Texas at Austin); in session S9 'Geomorphology and disasters', Laura Perucca (San Juan University, Argentina) presented an examination of factors influencing the flooding of parts of San Juan city due to rapid storm runoff from the adjacent mountainous catchments, and later V. Vilímek (Charles University, Prague) described research into large scale slope movements and other geodynamic processes (including neotectonic movements) in the Cordillera Blanca of the Peruvian Andes; in session S10 'Hazard and vulnerability assessments for risk analysis and risk management', relationships between geomorphic hazards and human activities in mountainous areas of central Europe were discussed

by Piotr Migon (University of Wroclaw, Poland); and in session S12 ‘There is more in geomorphology than the hazards’ (!), Jorge López-Blanco (National University of Mexico) considered evidence for landscape evolution by long term river incision in the Tepic-Zacoalco Rift Area of western Mexico, and A. Rovira (University of Lleida, Spain) described results from a sediment budget study of the Lower Tordera River in northeast Spain which showed significant accumulation along an 11 km length of channel during a relatively dry study period.

A Presidential Lecture by Mario Panizza (introducing ‘dark geomorphology’ as a term relating to territorial vulnerability, vaguely analagous to the idea of being ‘bad’ or ‘evil’? - strange) and Plenary Lectures by Olav Slaymaker (long-term land degradation as a geomorphic hazard, presented as if no-one had thought of this before - curious), John Thornes (plant cover and erosion in response to rainfall, introducing overgrazing as a theme - characteristic), Avijit Gupta (river sediments generated by tropical cyclones) and Jesse Walker (disasters affecting coastal environments) rounded off the afternoons in fine style to large audiences, and the traditional Mexican music and dancing at the closing ceremony came close to outdoing the welcoming Aztec ceremony on the first night.

The conference dinner on the last night was held on a hotel balcony overlooking the main square and cathedral in Mexico City centre, and the party that followed the food (dancing to a band of extremely good folk musicians) went on far longer than it should have. The entire conference was brilliantly organised by Irasema Alcántara-Ayala (as President of the Mexican Society of Geomorphology) and her Mexican colleagues, all of whom should be congratulated for staging such a splendid event.  
*Alan Dykes, University of Huddersfield*



*Fig 10: Bank erosion, River Swale UK. © Phil Owens.*

## CONTROLLING THE LOSS OF SOIL TO WATER

Geological Society, London

21st January 2004



The second of the BGRG January meetings held at the Geological Society took place on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2004. The Burlington House lecture theatre provided an excellent setting for the meeting of minds, with geomorphologists from the academic and applied communities well represented, together with a range of environmental managers from both governmental and non-governmental organizations. I tried the usual arm-twisting to sign up new members, and actually managed a new recruit on this occasion!

Dick Thompson of the National Soil Resources Institute (NSRI) introduced the meeting by highlighting the scale of the erosion problem in the UK. Despite significant issues relating to data availability, he noted that the context of the Soil Action Plan for England and the Water Framework Directive now provide a means of developing realistic approaches to the problems.

The first invited talk (entitled “Soils are terrestrial, not aquatic – so how will you help us to keep them on the land?”) was by Rob Jarman of the National Trust. Rob highlighted the need for more information to provide the support for “normal” land managers, particularly in relation to multi-functional landscapes and with a focus on education and action. He provided an excellent example of how *not* to manage the landscape in terms of the farm contractors in the field next to his house, who managed to work through the night on several occasions to produce soil conditions that became a long-term erosional disaster! Bob Evans made

some of his usual, insightful comments in relation to traditional approaches to land management (sometimes environmentally sustainable, if only by accident) and discussion centred around the nature of soils as non-renewable, fossil resources.

John Boardman (Oxford) gave the second invited talk on what he saw as the challenges in controlling soil loss. There is still a need to ensure the erosion and resulting pollution problems are generally recognized, and that confusion between on-site and off-site impacts needs to be addressed. Better databases are required, but can effectively be built up using simple risk-assessment methods and mapping (e.g. the winter cereal cropping map previously produced by MAFF). Simple techniques can be used to overcome erosion problems, such as land-use change and farming practices. Regulation may be a possibility, but implementation may be difficult given the perception that farming in the UK is already over-regulated!

Following coffee and chocolate biscuits in the wonderful setting of the Geological Society Library, there followed a session of submitted papers. Brian Irvine (Leeds) presented the results of his work on the use of buffer strips and sediment traps to enhance the success of afforestation. John Quinton (Lancaster) noted the interest in erosion in Norfolk from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century before giving an up-to-date analysis of the results of the Woburn experimental plots. Yours truly followed with a talk on problems with the commonly used techniques for estimating and scaling erosion, while Ian Smalley (Nottingham Trent) finished off the morning session with a discussion of approaches to understanding the tensile strength of loess soils.

A splendid buffet lunch allowed for the usual interaction and networking. Afterwards, Jane Morris, Soil Policy Manager of the Environment Agency, gave a keynote talk on the subject of various policy solutions to erosion problems. She demonstrated the complexity of the problems by considering the job description of an average hectare of soil (making the busiest of academic schedules look a breeze!) and presented the various current initiatives. Further coordination of effort is required to reduce issues of duplication in research and to provide the broad structure for solutions.

A further four submitted papers were then pre-

sented. Bob Evans (Anglia) talked about “What works?” based on his extensive experience in monitoring erosion and provided examples of how farmers can be encouraged to make appropriate decisions regarding land management. Mike Hann (Cranfield) considered the necessity for interdisciplinary work between geomorphologists and engineers in providing solutions to erosion around oil pipelines. Ian Smalley returned to consider piping of an erosional variety, and Jane Rickson (Cranfield) finished the session by considering the effectiveness of geotextiles from a geomorphological perspective.

Following a further chocolate-biscuit-replenishment opportunity, the meeting split into two discussion groups. Four questions were considered:

- (1) how significant is soil erosion and to whom?;
- (2) what existing and emerging EU and UK policy is relevant to controlling soil loss?;
- (3) how can we bridge the gap between research products and both policy and end-user groups?; and
- (4) what further research is required?

There isn't enough space to go into the results of this discussion here, but a summary of the results will appear on the NSRI website in due course ([www.silsoe.cranfield.ac.uk/nsri](http://www.silsoe.cranfield.ac.uk/nsri)).

Thanks to Michelle Clarke, Marianne McHugh, Phil Owens and Alison Collins of the NSRI for organizing an excellent meeting that enabled both the research frontier and practical applications to be addressed in a very constructive way. Hopefully the dialogue started in the meeting will have very beneficial results in terms of mitigating the erosion hazard in the UK and further afield.

Thanks also to the conference organizers at the Geological Society for their assistance in making everything run smoothly. The January meetings are an excellent setting for themed meetings. The 2005 meeting will have a dryland theme, and (with my Honorary Secretary hat on) I would encourage anyone who's interested in organizing a meeting from 2006 onwards to get in touch with a proposal.

*John Wainwright, King's College London*

# MISCELLANY

## Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Grants

### Ralph Brown Expedition Award

The Society welcomes applications for the 2004 Ralph Brown Expedition Award. The Award is open to Fellows of the Society planning to lead a research expedition involving the study of inland or coastal wetlands, rivers or shallow (less than 200m) marine environments including coral reefs. Applicants should be aged over 25 and planning to spend four to six weeks undertaking active fieldwork.

### Hong Kong Research Grant

2003 saw the launch of a new RGS-IBG grant for PhD students undertaking research in the Greater China region. This is an annual award of £2,500 open to post-graduate students of any nationality registered at a University undertaking a PhD with field research to be carried out within the Greater China region.

### NEW - EPSRC Geographical Grants

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) is delighted to announce a new joint initiative with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). Grants of up to £3,000 are available for individual researchers working in a UK institution at a post-doctoral level on topics related to: 21<sup>st</sup> Century infrastructure; sustainable urban environment; the social issues related to transport; inclusiveness of the urban environment; impacts of climate change and flooding reduction.

### Small Research Grants

Grants of up to £3,000 are available to individual researchers working in a UK institution at a post-doctoral level to assist with travel, maintenance, data collection and temporary research assistance costs of a geographical research project. Applicants must be a Fellow of the Society.

### Gilchrist Fieldwork Award

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) invites applications for the Gilchrist Fieldwork Award. The grant of

£12,000 is available to support an original and challenging overseas fieldwork project to be carried out by a small team of university academics and researchers. **The next application deadline is 15 March 2004.**

Full details of these and all other grants are available from the Society's website: [www.rgs.org/grants](http://www.rgs.org/grants) or from the Grants Officer, email [grants@rgs.org](mailto:grants@rgs.org); tel. 020 7591 3073

### Fluvial Geomorphology Image Based Undergraduate Learning Resource

In 2002-03 Dr Tim Stott, Reader in Physical Geography and Outdoor Education at Liverpool John Moores University obtained funding from FILTER (Focusing Images for Learning and Teaching - an Enriched Resource) to develop an Image based Learning Resource. The FILTER project is based at the Institute for Learning and research Technology (ILRT), University of Bristol. This web based level 2/3 undergraduate course in fluvial geomorphology aims, via Units 1-4, to provide learners with a level of knowledge and understanding to work at undergraduate level 2/3 in Fluvial Geomorphology.

It also aims, via Units 5-6, to provide ideas, techniques and a suitable grounding for students wishing to undertake a dissertation study in the discipline. The module assumes some basic understanding of the principles of hydrology and geomorphology. The resource uses 147 images (terrestrial and air photographs, maps, graphs, diagrams, GIS generated digital terrain models), VR Panorama movies and time-lapse aerial photography to act as a stimulus to introduce topics. Each topic then refers the learner to Essential Reading and if appropriate to Further Reading to provide the detailed knowledge and understanding required at this level. Readings are graded by their level of 'friendliness' to the newcomer to the discipline. Topics end with an assessment test.

BGRG Members are encouraged to access this resource free at: <http://www.filter.ac.uk/database/insightrecord.php?id=48> and to refer their students and colleagues to it, and/or to use images from it to complement their own teaching resources. All I require is an acknowledgement of the source as usual. Any comments will be welcome.

*Tim Stott, Liverpool John Moores*

## Grants Available From the B.G.R.G.

The B.G.R.G. runs a range of different grant programmes spanning research and education initiatives and conference travel. Full details of eligibility, and application forms are available on the B.G.R.G. Website at <http://www.bgrg.org/>  
The main categories of grant available are:

### Research Grants

Funds are available to contribute to small projects or specific costs of research. These grants are available to all non-postgraduate members of the B.G.R.G. and are judged on their scientific merit. Maximum £1000

### Postgraduate Research Funds

Funds available to all postgraduate members registered for a higher degree. They are primarily to support students who do not receive full funding, or where an opportunity has arisen to add value to an existing PhD programme. Maximum £500

### Postgraduate Conference Fund

This fund assists postgraduate members in presenting a paper or poster at a conference and is intended to cover part of the total cost of registration, accommodation and travel.

### B.G.R.G. Fixed Term Working Groups

The B.G.R.G. funds up to three working groups at one time to enable members to meet to discuss specific topic areas Funding up to £500/year

### Long Term Geomorphological Monitoring

Aims to supply small sums (up to £200 pa) to support individuals to maintain long term monitoring sites (at least 10 years)

### Promotion of Geomorphology in Schools

Grants of up to £500 for projects involving school teachers and pupils that will raise the profile of Geomorphology in schools

### Task forces to develop proposals for major research projects

Funding of up to £1000 available for groups of members aiming to develop major proposals for submission to external funding bodies.



Diary

Diary

## BGRG Sponsored Meetings

2004

|             |                                                                                                                      |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 14-16 | BGRG Postgraduate Symposium, Southampton.                                                                            |
| May 6       | Terrestrial Geochemical Sediments & Geomorphology, Leicester. <i>Contact: sjm11@le.ac.uk</i>                         |
| May 6-9     | Spring Field Meeting—Exeter. <i>Contact: j.thatcher@exeter.ac.uk</i>                                                 |
| May 25-26   | Contaminated Sediments, Manchester. <i>Contact: k.g.taylor@mmu.ac.uk</i>                                             |
| Aug 17-20   | BGRG with IAG and IGU, Glasgow. <i>Contact: janet.hooke@port.ac.uk</i>                                               |
| Feb 2-4     | Drylands: linking landscape processes to sedimentary environments, London. <i>Contact: drylands.2005@lboro.ac.uk</i> |

DIARY

## New Appointments

|                     |                                                   |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Institution:</b> | University of Ulster                              |
| Dr Peter Wilson     | Reader in Environmental Science from October 2003 |



## JOINING THE BRITISH GEOMORPHOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP

### Diary Part 2 Events Convened by organisations other than the BGRG

| Date        | Conference                                                    | Location                              | Contact                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2004</b> |                                                               |                                       |                                                                                                                                                     |
| Feb 19      | Researching the World                                         | RGS                                   | grants@rgs.org                                                                                                                                      |
| March 24-26 | Vegetation in environmental protection                        | NSRI                                  | J.rickson@cranfield.ac.uk                                                                                                                           |
| March 26-28 | Terrestrial Environmental Change in the Highlands and islands | Inverness                             | Martin.price@perth.uhi.ac.uk                                                                                                                        |
| Apr 19-23   | QRA Annual Field Meeting and AGM                              | Isle of Man and North-west Lancashire | R.C.Chiverrell@liverpool.ac.uk                                                                                                                      |
| Apr 25-30   | EGU 1st Assembly                                              | Nice, France                          | <a href="http://www.copernicus.org/EGU/ga/gu04/deadlines_and_milestones.htm">http://www.copernicus.org/EGU/ga/gu04/deadlines_and_milestones.htm</a> |
| May 19      | Yorkshire Windy Day                                           | Sheffield                             | D.s.thomas@sheffield.ac.uk                                                                                                                          |
| July 21-23  | Climate Change and aquatic systems—past, present & future     | Plymouth                              | mat-trill@plymouth.ac.uk                                                                                                                            |
| Aug 20-28   | 32nd International Geological Congress                        | Florence, Italy                       | <a href="http://www.32igc.org">http://www.32igc.org</a>                                                                                             |

#### *Why join the BGRG?*

- Contact with a world-wide body of geomorphologists;
  - Geophemera, the tri-annual newsletter of the BGRG containing news, views, reports, forthcoming conference announcements, registers of new students & grants and much, much more;
  - access to a variety of research & conference funding opportunities; funds targeted directly at postgraduates;
  - opportunities to attend fixed-term working groups on specific developments or topic areas within Geomorphology, postgraduate training workshops, conferences & field trips;
  - discounted subscriptions to Earth Surface Processes & Landforms (£65) and other Journals – e.g. Hydrological Processes, Journal of Quaternary Science (£85 each) & Geomorphology.
- How do I join and how much does it cost?**

Please print out a membership form from the BGRG website, complete the form, & send it to the BGRG Administrator (Christine James) together with your subscription. The form will be used both as a record of your wish to take up membership of the BGRG & to establish a computerised database of members. The information will be used in the strictest confidence (under the Data Protection Act) all members will have access to their own records on request. The annual subscription rate to the BGRG is £20 for full membership (or £50 for five years for overseas members). Unwaged, fulltime students & retired members pay £8 per year whilst postgraduate students may pay £20 for a three-year membership, commencing at the beginning of their research project. Subscriptions may be paid by standing order (by completing the form from the website & sending to your bank & the BGRG Administrator), cheque, or money order. Administration costs can be reduced if members pay by standing order. Cheques should be made payable to the British Geomorphological Research Group & made out in pounds sterling. Other currencies cannot be accepted.