

Report from the EGU General Assembly, Vienna, April 2007

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I will begin by addressing the fact that I am a self funding M.Sc by research student who could not have afforded to attend the EGU general assembly had it not been for the generous travel bursary awarded to me from the Geochemistry Group, and I am extremely grateful to the group for that.

The EGU general assembly was in April 2007 hosted at the Vienna International Centre, Austria. Vienna is a tranquil and clean city. The Austrians were very hospitable, polite and based on the size of the steaks I received when I ate out, they are very generous too.

The amazing thing about the EGU general assembly as a geoscientific conference is the diversity of disciplines within the sessions running simultaneously from 0900 to 1800 for 5 days. There are 22 sessions on all aspects of geosciences, more than enough to keep the most curious of minds well and truly satisfied.

Some examples of the sessions are: Isotopes in geosciences: Instrumentation and applications; Geochemistry, Mineralogy, petrology and Volcanology; Energy resources and the environment; Geodynamics, planetary Sciences; Hydrological sciences and soil sciences. Each session is subdivided into several programs focused on common themes, for example the session I was part of was Geodynamics. The Geodynamics session alone boasted 27 programs running for the duration of the week long conference.

My presentation was in the program entitled 'The Origin of Melting anomalies' convenors Gill Foulger (Durham University, UK) and co-convenor A Sobolev (Max-Planck-Institut für Chemie, Germany). This session focused on the mantle processes responsible for all types of volcanism on Earth, especially with regard to the ongoing debate on mantle plumes (see www.mantleplumes.org for more) which came to life and was initiated by Prof Foulgers opening talk. I cunningly adapted an oral presentation I gave a month earlier at the geochemistry groups annual research in progress meeting (2007) hosted at Burlington House, London for my poster slot. The poster was entitled 'Steinafjall, SE Iceland: A pile of Tertiary lavas, a Central Volcano or Both?' which was well received and produced some interesting and very beneficial discussions from geoscientists from all over the globe. I already had several conclusions already drawn out for the write up of my dissertation, so I used this opportunity to pick the brains as many geochemists and petrologists as I could to improve my work. Which I am happy to say worked very well on my part.

Again I would like to express my gratitude to the Geochemistry Group for the bursary and advise all postgraduate geochemists and petrologists to consider attending both the Geochemistry Groups annual research in progress meeting 2008 and the EGU general assembly 2008 as they have done nothing but benefit my research project.