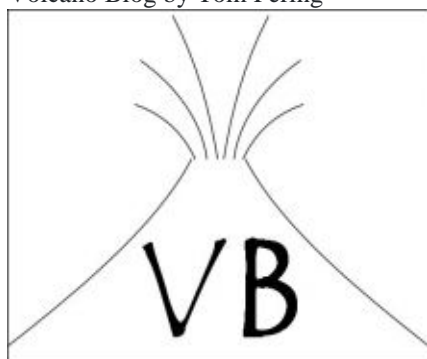


An exciting week of volcano science at #IAVCEI2017 in Portland

Volcano Blog by Tom Pering



IAVCEI, the shortened version of a very length name, is one of those conferences which comes about every 4 years, and is accompanied by a healthy dose of anticipation at the same time. To describe what IAVCEI is I am going to steal a friends phrase who described IAVCEI as "the world cup of volcanology", this is a great analogy as it encompasses the excitement of the event with the standard of science that is conducted. My first IAVCEI was in Japan four years, and included a fortuitous viewing of an erupting Sakurajima, so I was certainly looking forward to this one!

I was a little tardy to the opening ceremony...but had a good view of the large number of volcanologists in attendance!

Me pointing to Mt St Helens....

As always these conferences start with conglomerations of groups catching up after what may have been a long time since the last meet and then it's straight into the sessions. Given that this is a volcanology specific conference there was frequently more than one session of interest so there was a lot of running around between different rooms. I gave a talk on some of our recent work at Sheffield on low-cost ultraviolet remote sensing.

The poster sessions, whilst 2 hours in duration, were still no where near long enough to get to everyone you wanted to talk to! These are a great time to seek people out to not only discuss the work on posters but also chat about other work and common interests, all over a frosty cold beer in a friendly and relaxed environment. Also kudos to the organisers for selecting breweries with themed beers, some of my favourites included: Mozaic Eruption IPA, Caldera Dry Hopped Orange, and Pyroclastic Porter! This conference was also one of the best I have been to for early career academics, with several specifically tailored events and socials, which were definitely appreciated.

One of the amazing aspects of the IAVCEI conferences is the midweek break in between which incorporates a field trip. There were several options including Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge but I just couldn't look past a trip to Mt St Helens to observe the location and result of the iconic and infamous eruption of 1980 (pictures above and below). I have been teaching volcanology for a few years now and St Helens often features, seeing the deposits and location in person was extremely valuable. I am now able to match up the numerous pictures with the locations! An added bonus was being led on the guided tour by geologist Richard Waitt, who just so happened to be with the USGS and in the area at the time of the 1980 eruption. An incredible wealth of knowledge which was fascinating to listen to.

To top off a productive week, there was also a solar eclipse on the following Monday! Roll on the next IAVCEI in New Zealand...

A panorama of the vista surrounding Mt St Helens (centre).
