

NEWS



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Edited by Marie Busfield



It is my pleasure to welcome you to this year's newsletter. This has been an exciting year for the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences on many fronts.

We have continued to perform well in the National Student Survey with levels of overall satisfaction for our degree schemes above the national average. We are also extremely pleased by our excellent employability figures, which show that 96% of our students are either in employment or registered on a postgraduate course six months after graduation.

As you can see from the various articles in this newsletter, our staff have been extremely busy over the course of the year, conducting ground-breaking research in various places around the globe. Some highlights include the research projects being conducted by DGES staff on the environmental contexts of early human evolution, the impacts of climate change on glaciers and ice sheets, and the geographies of globalisation and of civil society in Wales.

At the same time, our students have been engaging in a range of different activities, not least with respect to their use of our travel awards to visit different parts of the world. Not only do our students get an opportunity to explore the UK, Crete and New Zealand as part of their undergraduate courses, but can also gain funding to design their own field excursions to far-flung regions such as Bali, Norway, Iceland and the French Alps.

Finally, we are pleased to have been able to re-launch our degree scheme in Environmental Science. As part of this venture, we have been fortunate to welcome two new lecturers to the department; Drs Marie Busfield and Joe Williams. This year also sees the launch of our new undergraduate field excursion to world-class field sites practically on our doorstep along the Welsh coast and throughout Snowdonia. The glorious sunshine certainly helped make it a great success!

As you read the various articles, I hope you get a clear sense of how vibrant a department DGES is and of the close sense of community that connects students and staff alike. You can get hold of further information by contacting one of our recruitment team, by visiting the Department's website or by visiting the Department on an Open Day. We will be very pleased to welcome you and show you what we have to offer.

Professor Rhys Jones, Head of Department

North Wales Bound

Inaugural First Year Field Course a Great Success!

October 2015 saw the launch of the new field course for our first year DGES students studying geography and environmental science. Approximately 130 of our new students headed to North Wales to participate in a three-day series of field activities. Physical geographers and environmental scientists explored the problems of coastal inundation, the impacts of mining on water quality in Welsh rivers, the impacts of glaciation in Snowdonia, and searched for traces of the human impact on the environment in the remotest corners of North Wales. Meanwhile our human geography students learned about sustainable woodland management practices, the emergence of the mountain biking industry, and the connections between Snowdonia and romantic art and poetry.

Although the trip gave students first hand experience of a series of themes and issues that they will encounter in their studies, the trip was also about helping them get to know each other and their lecturing staff. The evenings were thus filled with plenty of fun with a student poster competition and a quiz night (controversially won by the postgraduate team – perhaps with the help of some staff) providing the social highlights of the trip.

Feedback from students and staff who attended the trip was universally positive. The field course appears to help students to settle into their lives at university while learning about the fascinating geography of Wales along the way.

Finding evidence of glacial grooves and striations on Snowdon



Mapping the most vulnerable areas to flooding



Discussing woodland management and the mountain biking industry at Coed-y-Brenin



Evaluating the power of catastrophic flooding at Dolgarrog



Giant imbricated boulders as a result of the flooding



Examining sea defences and coastal management in Fairbourne



A selection of some of the staff involved in running the trip



Marie Busfield, Stephen Brough & Johnny Ryan



Mark Whithead & Head of Department Rhys Jones



Stephen Tooth & Geoff Duller



Sarah Davies



Sarah Jones & Helen Stockley Jones



Kenya Photography

Tom Nolan, 1st year in Environmental Science (F750)

This summer I had the incredible experience of teaching photography to schools and theatres in Nakuru, Kenya. With support from the superb company, Gap Creative I travelled to Nairobi before a three hour drive west to Nakuru where I stayed for 4 weeks. Alongside four others who were teaching a wide range of creative medias from dance to theatre I drove into town daily to introduce pupils as young as 10 to the huge benefits of cameras. I found a great diversity in lecturing styles that I had to use.

Some schools with younger children were used to very strict, classroom format of teaching and they had never seen a camera in their lives. Teaching at the theatre in town with more knowledgeable, older people who volunteered to be there was a lot more relaxed. Through discussions about what I do back in Aberystwyth, one school found out about my work with Aberystwyth Student Media as a graphic designer so as a team we developed a new school magazine that they wrote a huge range of articles for. Once they had been written and I helped them take photos for it I put it together on my laptop then a friend and I funded the printing of a few copies for their school. This gave such huge satisfaction seeing the smiling faces of young children at what they had achieved.

As a reward for the teaching we were given trips to some of the most beautiful, interesting and sometimes desolate areas of Kenya. Lions, giraffes, elephants, vultures and many other animals were in abundance on safaris around Lake Nakuru and the Maasai Mara as well as hippopotamus and crocodiles in Baringo. One safari took us to the locally known 'Attenborough rock' where David Attenborough himself has filmed numerous series about the 'Big 5'. Here we also managed to catch the migration of flamingos at the lake who have only recently returned due to a change in migration patterns.

Not only did this trip help me hugely in the development of my own skills to enhance my photography business but it was so very rewarding to help the very passionate and eager to learn young people of Kenya.

If you wish to help by teaching a creative media of your choice through this great company contact me for more information on ton4@aber.ac.uk.



Student Exchange

Gabriela Ligeza

3rd year in Environmental
Earth Science (F640)

In the last year thanks to the Study Abroad Office, I got a wonderful opportunity to spend my second year at University of Ottawa, Canada. It was an unbelievable experience and the best decision of my life. This student exchange was an enriching experience – I got to practice my French, travel North America, make friends from around the world, live in a new country but it also helped me greatly with my professional development, through studying at the one of the best Universities in the world. The modules which I was doing at University of Ottawa also had an impact on my choice of dissertation topic, which I am doing this year. I also joined AIESEC, an organisation to promote global internships and volunteering for students. I had a role of an International Exchange Manager, which helped me with my confidence, management and public speaking skills, as well as it gave me an opportunity to meet with young leaders from Canada.

Thanks to the geology course I also got a chance to see many places in Ontario and Quebec during field trips. Previously, Canada was an unknown country for me, but after last year I learnt a lot about this beautiful, multicultural and geographically diverse place.

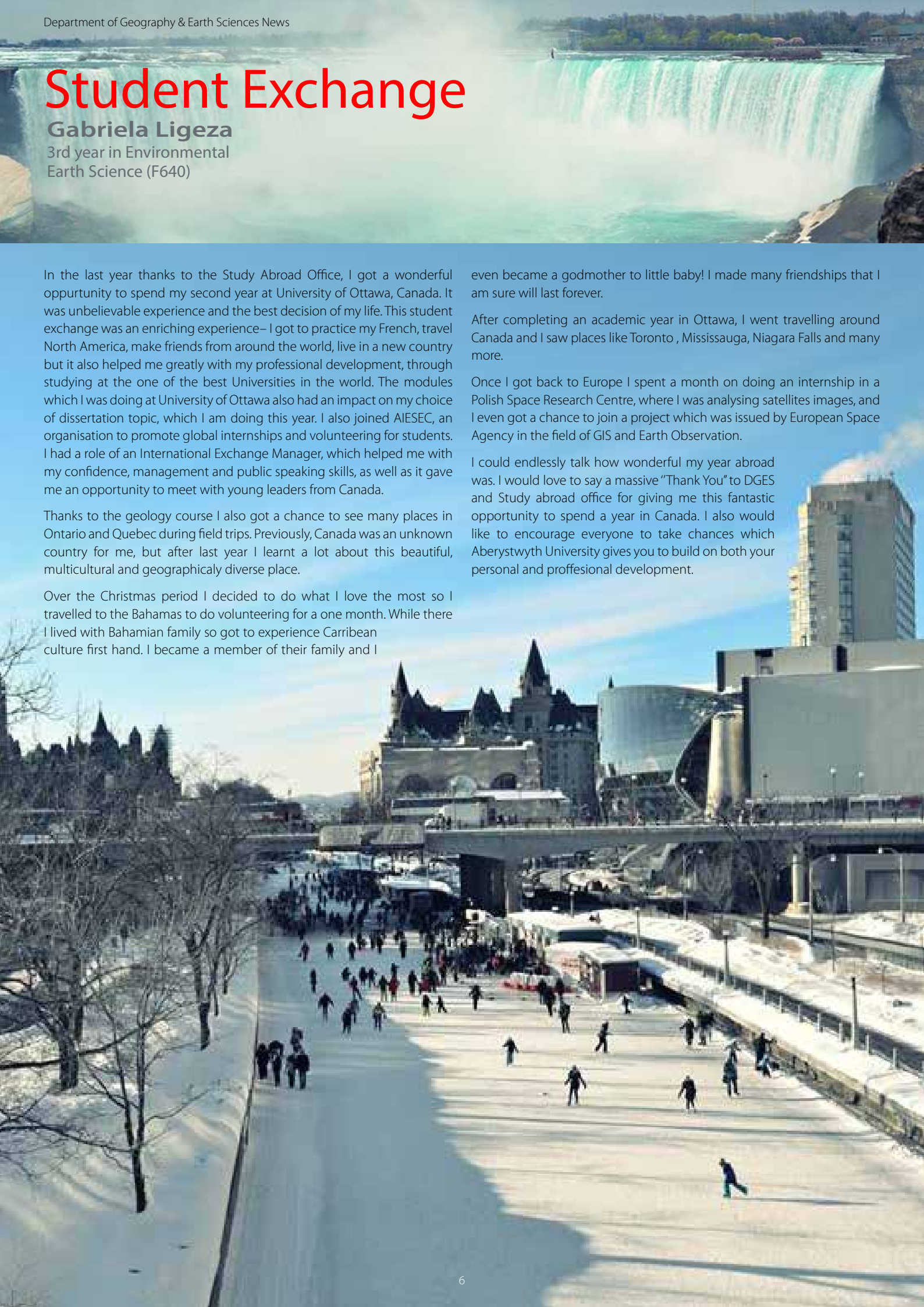
Over the Christmas period I decided to do what I love the most so I travelled to the Bahamas to do volunteering for a one month. While there I lived with Bahamian family so got to experience Caribbean culture first hand. I became a member of their family and I

even became a godmother to little baby! I made many friendships that I am sure will last forever.

After completing an academic year in Ottawa, I went travelling around Canada and I saw places like Toronto, Mississauga, Niagara Falls and many more.

Once I got back to Europe I spent a month on doing an internship in a Polish Space Research Centre, where I was analysing satellite images, and I even got a chance to join a project which was issued by European Space Agency in the field of GIS and Earth Observation.

I could endlessly talk how wonderful my year abroad was. I would love to say a massive “Thank You” to DGES and Study abroad office for giving me this fantastic opportunity to spend a year in Canada. I also would like to encourage everyone to take chances which Aberystwyth University gives you to build on both your personal and professional development.



2015 Gareth Thomas Travel Award Report

Laura Truelove Geography (F800) graduate

After winning the Gareth Thomas Travel Award, I set out on my travels to Bali, Indonesia for seven weeks. I flew from Heathrow airport with Qatar airways; the first time I embarked on a flight by myself. With two transfers, one in Qatar and another in Jakarta, I surprisingly arrived in Bali along with my giant backpack and surfboard. The main aims I set out before my journey began was to learn about the Balinese way of life, surf remote beaches and encounter some of Balis wildlife. Little did I know that I would experience so much more. I documented each experience throughout my travels in my travel journal in order to publish on my blog www.truelovestravels.com. On my travels I learned Indonesian to a standard that eventually allowed me to hold a conversation with the local people. I swam with sea turtles on Lombok's Gili Islands, an experience I will keep with me forever. I learned so much about the different religions and beliefs that exist within Bali and the surrounding islands, which was almost unavoidable as I experienced many religious holidays during my stay, including Ramadan and Galungan. Along with my partner Harry, I travelled the East, West and South coast of Bali, the central mountains and also the islands Nusa Lembongan and Gili Trawangan, one of the many small chains of Gili Islands off of the mainland of Lombok.



Ubud

I began my travels in Ubud, exploring the foothills of the Gianyar rice fields. I stayed in a traditional, hand-carved, Balinese wooden house surrounded by rice fields, disturbed by nothing but the sound of croaking frogs. Ideal for vegans and earth-lovers, Ubud is the perfect place to get in touch with nature, eat natural, organic foods and practice yoga. It is also home to the world most talented artists. As the art capital of Bali, Indonesian painters, sculptors and dancers bring the upmost respect to their families by displaying their artistic talents on these busy streets. This small town is filled with art museums and displays of artistic expression. Each evening, traditional legong dancers perform dances that incorporate religious and cultural myths and creatures, within the walls of Ubud Palace. On the outskirts of town, the Ubud monkey forest is home to hundreds of monkeys whom protect the ancient Hindu temples and the surrounding overgrown



vegetation. Baby monkeys travel around the vast space of forest by clinging onto their mothers underbellies. Their possessive mothers protect them from the aggressive males.

Tourists flock here from all over to see the monkeys in their natural habitat and buy bananas in order to feed them. Just a few miles out of Ubud, in Petulu, a similar phenomenon to Aberystwyth's starlings occurs; the roosting of the black and white herons. People gather in the watch tower

in this tiny village to watch as the birds fly over the rice fields in vast numbers at sunset to roost in the trees.

Medewi & Balian

The second location I travelled was Medewi, a small village on the West coast of Bali. Medewi, unlike the majority of Bali, consists of a large community of Muslims as oppose to Hindus. Surfers visit here to surf Medewi's slow breaking reef break located on the end of a road of surf inspired home-stays and hotels. For only £5 a night, Harry and I stayed in a home-stay owned by a local woman, Pitri. Pitri and her son, Hassim, were very friendly, and very helpful when I accidentally stood on a sea urchin whilst surfing the local break at low tide. The bar over which the waves break on Medewi's seafront, is infested with large number of sea urchins and I was unlucky enough to become a victim to their large spines. I did however learn from this experience, that if it were to happen again, lemon and hot water is key in order to dissolve the calcium carbonate. After three days, we left Medewi and headed towards a Hindu village just an hour drive South called Balian. Balian is also home to a notorious surf break that is rumoured to possess reef sharks that more commonly make an appearance in the wet season. Luckily we visited during the dry season. From Balian we took a financial lesson. ATM's are rare in the remote villages of Bali, and are often specific to certain types of cards. With our several types of cards being declined, we were forced to leave this beautiful coastal village and head to a more populated town with ATM's.

Canggu & Seminyak

Canggu is full of surfers and is most commonly the area which attracts vast numbers of Australian tourists. The many beach breaks in this area attract all kinds of surfers, from beginners to professionals. Each evening, sunset watchers gather here to sit with a beer and watch as the sun descends into the sea. In the last few years, Canggu has become one of the most developed areas of Bali. By today, ex patriates have set up homes and businesses here which has attracted the development of trendy restaurants, villas, surf inspired clothing shops and beauty salons which have overtaken the rice fields that used to occupy the landscape. During our stay in Canggu we

experienced a religious Hindu holiday, Galungan. During this time, Hindu communities hand-make crafty, colourful decorations adorned with petals to display outside their homes and in the streets.

Galungan lasts a couple of weeks, and is a period dedicated to welcoming the good spirits of Hindu gods and deceased ancestors into family homes with offerings, traditionally more extravagant than those offered daily, such as special flowers or different kinds of foods, often chicken satays. Religious Hindu families take the most important days of Galungan off work in order to travel to temples to pray. Those of the Hindu religion, on average days, usually lay out offerings and prayers to their gods three times a day; morning, afternoon and evening. Prayers and offerings increase during Galungan, along with the wonderful, intense smell of burning incense.

Seminyak is a lot busier than Canggu, with more shops, restaurants, bars and clubs, and a lot worse traffic, making it only possible to travel by petrol scooter. Further inland and nearer Kuta and Ngurah Rai airport, Seminyak is by far one of the islands busiest tourist hotspots. It is indeed one of the most globalised and expensive areas of the island. It is also an area in Bali that is infamous for its historical drug trade as revealed in Kathryn Bonella's "Snowing in Bali".

The Bukit

After spending some time in Canggu and Seminyak, we travelled to the Bukit. The Bukit is on Bali's southern peninsular and in my opinion, is the most beautiful part of the Balinese coastline. It is by far the most famous area for surfing on the island, as it is home to Uluwatu; a world class surf break, most exposed to incoming swell. During our travels around the Bukit, we stayed in Bingin. Alike all other villages on the Bukit, Bingin is located on a clifftop, infested by monkeys, wild flowers, surfers, travellers and restaurants. To the right of Bingin is Dream Land, a white sand, virgin beach, spoiled by the development of a Japanese hotel complex. To the right of Dream Land is Balangan beach. To the left of Bingin are the most famous surf breaks; Impossibles and Padang Padang. During our stay here, we were lucky enough to witness the famous Muzza swell roll in from Australia. We watched as the most talented surfers across the globe made their way to surf

Padang Padang's double-overhead, barreling wave. Uluwatu during this swell was by far the most impressive, attracting people from all over to watch as a handful of the world most bravest big wave surfers came to surf the largest wave my eyes had ever bared witness to. We watched from Uluwatu's temple as the wave orthogonal formed on the horizon, eventually travelling towards us and crashing into the foot of the cliff below. The monkeys freely roamed the rooftop of the sacred temple, unaware of the storm brewing out to sea. Westared at them as they passed us by or tugged at the traditional, purple silk sarongs we were made to wear to enter the temple grounds.

As the beaches on the Bukit are very busy due to their pristine waves, we searched for quieter beaches to surf and enjoy solitude. We found Nyang Nyang. Nyang Nyang is located near Uluwatu, however is one of the most inaccessible beaches on the Bukit. We walked over six hundred steps down an almost vertical cliff, to the sights of wild monkeys swinging in the cliffs treetops. As we reached the bottom, more monkeys played on the white sands, bulls grazed at the roots of the trees and monitor lizards basked in the midday sun. I felt a great sense of achievement setting up a hammock by myself for the first time on a perfect set of palm trees after the long, tiring walk. It was paradise, with not a soul in sight. We enjoyed surfing the perfect waves alone, looking down at the colourful reef and the variety of fish that lived amongst the aquatic ridges below us. Exploring the beach further, we came to find an exposed shipwreck; you could even climb into the boats cabin. Sadly this beach is victim to longshore drift, and was ridden with rubbish, so naturally we attempted to collect what we could and carry it back up to the clifftops with us. Bali has a huge waste issue which is greatly affecting the sea turtle population. Many programmes such as 'Tidak Plastic' and Uluwatu's 'Keep Uluwatu Clean' are attempting to improve this problem, and awareness does seem to be increasing.

Further North than Bingin, we travelled to Jimbaran. Honeymoon bay, or what I liked to call Whale's Mouth bay as its headland is shaped like a whale with its mouth open. From this headland, we went cliff jumping. On Jimbarans beach we sat with our freshly caught red snapper and clams in a sweet sambal sauce whilst we watched the fireworks overhead.

The Gili Islands

After half an hour of haggling, we were eventually picked up by a shuttle bus. A two hour journey from Kuta to Padang Bai. At Padang Bai, we waited patiently for our boat to arrive whilst being hassled by local women attempting to sell us food and beverages from the baskets they balanced on their heads. A bumpy boat ride later, we pulled up at Gili Trawangan. With no cars or petrol scooters allowed, people travelled around the island by horse and cart. The horses here are treated very poorly, with the life expectancy of only around three years. The first day we arrived was the first day of Ramadan. Six a.m each morning the call to prayer sounded from the islands mosque and everyone from all around the island came to pray. Each morning we rose early with the islands locals and made our way to turtle bay with the goggles

and snorkels we brought with us and swam out to the reefs edge and waited amongst the jellyfish for the sea turtles to make an appearance. On our first day of free diving, we saw only three turtles, one of which was missing one of its fins which we assumed was due to a possible collision with a fishing boat as they tend to drop anchor around the turtles feeding grounds. On our second day of free diving we got lucky and encountered over ten sea turtles in only a couple of hours. They were close enough to touch and as I put my hand out, one swam right past and I brushed its shell. Each evening, at sunset, as fasting came to an end for the day, the air on Gili Trawangan was filled with amazing smells of sambal, peanut sauce, fish, chicken, Indonesian styles crepes and all other sorts of delicious foods from the local food market.

Sanur & Jasri

We decided to explore the East coast of the island and headed to Sanur to stay in a nice villa, just in time for my degree result. A second class, upper division with honours and a first in my dissertation; I was over the moon. The East coast is a lot less developed and visited than the South and West coast of Bali, although, Sanur has attracted some development, mainly luxury, five star hotels which seems to attract a lot of weddings and honeymooners; not a surprise when considering the beautiful, quiet surrounding beaches. We surfed Sanur's crystal blue waves; the water here was so clear you could open your eyes as you dove in, to witness the colourful array of fish feeding off the reef. We visited an old abandoned safari park in a village nearby. We'd heard that the safari park was abandoned over ten years ago and five years ago, over three hundred crocodiles lived in the stagnant waters inside the buildings, which led to the local people being forced to shoot them to stop them from escaping into their village.

We'd heard good things about Jasri, an area a couple hours North of Sanur, and decided to travel there to stay for a couple of days. Down the road from our homestay was a chocolate factory, owned by an Australian surfer who discovered the area forty years ago and decided to relocate here and set up a chocolate factory as a business, right on the beach amongst the palm trees. Ironically, his name was Charlie. The factory mainly attracted tourists who'd seen pictures of the giant swing built amongst the wooden shacks of the factory, that swings right over the sea. We surfed the break that drew Charlie to live here and understood his fascination as sea turtle heads popped up between waves.

Relaxing on the pebble beach post surf, we spotted a hornbill in a tree overhead. His wingspan was enormous as he swooped down to sit next to us. We threw him small stones and he caught them in his beak, like a game of catch.



Nusa Lembongan

From Sanur we took a very small, public boat along with locals on day trips to the island. We docked in Mushroom Bay and hired a bike to travel over to the next bay over via a bumpy, winding road. We stayed in hotel Nikita, a small home stay overlooking the islands three famous reef breaks; Playgrounds, Shipwrecks and Lacerations. We spent every day surfing and stand up paddleboarding around the island. Nusa Lembongan's Mangrove Forest was by far one of the most magical parts of the island. Local people hired out traditional, wooden boats for a small fee, and often made their sons push the boat around the forest like a gondola. We sat as Gede pushed us around the salty water amongst the mangrove roots in nothing but pure silence.

The Central Mountains

An Indonesian friend of ours, Putu, took us up into the cold, central mountains of the island to show us Strawberry Hill, where the islands freshest, most delicious strawberries are grown and hand-picked. We feasted on plentiful strawberries before getting lost amongst the hills searching for a nearby waterfall. After a two hour bike ride on the cold, wet mountain roads, the temperatures dropped and we ended up making our way to a local hot-spring. Putu assured us no tourists would be found here and she was right. Only locals came to enjoy this hot-spring. Warmed by natural, geothermal heat, these hot-spring pools are hidden away in the vegetation and not advertised to the islands tourists. Lying in the largest pool, under the pipe releasing fresh, flowing water from the source, overlooking the nearby waterfall and wild, vibrant flowers, I felt as though I was in paradise.

Returning Home

Returning home was most definitely the hardest part of my travels. I did however bring with me the many amazing experiences, knowledge and skills from my journey. Little did I know that the written work I produced during my travels would inevitably earn me a place on the MA in Nature and Travel Writing at Bath Spa University, allowing me to continue my dream of travel writing. Thanks to the Gareth Thomas Travel Award, I was able to have some of the most memorable life experiences, learn a new language, gain further knowledge on cultures and religions, explore one of the most beautiful parts of the world and surf some of the worlds best waves.



Spreading the Geography Love

My Life as a RGS Geography Ambassador

Geoffrey Main Geography (F800) and Masters in Regional and Environmental Policy (L796) graduate

During my final year at sixth form, I became aware of a scheme, run by the RGS, which involved university undergraduates, postgraduates and graduates going into schools in their local area and talking to school pupils about the fascinating discipline of geography. This was something I always wanted to do, to give something back to the teachers and the schools that had inspired me to continue on my geography journey – and to other schools beside, so when I heard about the scheme I was determined to get involved.

Following my training in October 2011, I carried out my first visit in early January 2012, back to my old high school and to the geography teacher who had first fuelled my geography passion. This was going to be a big day, safe to say I was a little nervous – not least because my younger brother and his friends were going to be in the classroom! Reading this now, I'm sure many of you are thinking that you could never get up in front of a group of 30 or so 14-15 year olds and deliver a one hour session on Geography. Neither did I. But since that first time, I have delivered a total of 6 sessions independently to year 9 school children at schools

in my local area and have taken part in events at the RGS with year 12 students from across the country.

Apart from the skills you develop on the scheme, which of course look brilliant on your CV, it is the feedback you get from students and the staff that make taking part in the scheme so worthwhile. Whether it be a pupil coming up to you at the end of a session and personally thanking you, whether it be through word-of-mouth, or even the teacher saying it was a brilliant session... There's not a better feeling out there. To, as we say: "Spread the Geography Love", you first need to be enthusiastic about the subject – the more enthusiastic you are, the more that will come across, and the more the students will love your session.

When you become an Ambassador, not only do you get an awesome t-shirt that makes you look like a Geographical Superhero, but you become part of our family. You can forge new connections with schools and professionals, and create close friendships with fellow ambassadors. So if you love the subject of geography, then get involved.





Representing CoppaFeel! and Breast Cancer Care

Emma Beenham

2nd year in
Physical Geography (F840)

facebook.com/TPABER
[@abertickledpink](https://twitter.com/abertickledpink)

Charity work is something we're all encouraged to get involved with from a young age, and the freshers fair is no different. But, we aren't your average university charity branch! Oh no, we like to do things just a little bit differently... We are the Aberystwyth 'UniBoobTeam' and we are dedicated to ensuring that young people get to know their bodies, and particularly their boobs, in an attempt to stamp out late detection of breast cancer. We represent CoppaFeel! and Breast Cancer Care, two amazing charities which both dedicate themselves to supporting those with breast cancer and raising awareness of the signs and symptoms of breast cancer.

We support our charities by both raising money and awareness. These first three months of the year have been jam packed with events for us, including our always-successful bake sales and face painting for the rugby world cup. We can be easily recognised by our bright pink tshirts and our enormous balloon-filled boobs! Yes, you read that correctly.

We had an extremely successful freshers fair and also ran a few small events for activities week. We were lucky enough to be invited by the organisers of Blackhouse to fundraise and raise awareness during their October event, which also incorporated Bierkellar. We had a really successful night, and were also treated to VIP access to enjoy the event from 11pm. Our first bake sale of the year was also at the beginning of October, in which we raised a brilliant £158.66, which is split between our two charities. Perhaps one of our biggest fundraisers of the year is our annual naked calendar. This year this took place at the Royal Pier. 12 societies and sports clubs were invited to take part: Showdance, Real Ale and the Union Staff being amongst just a few of them.

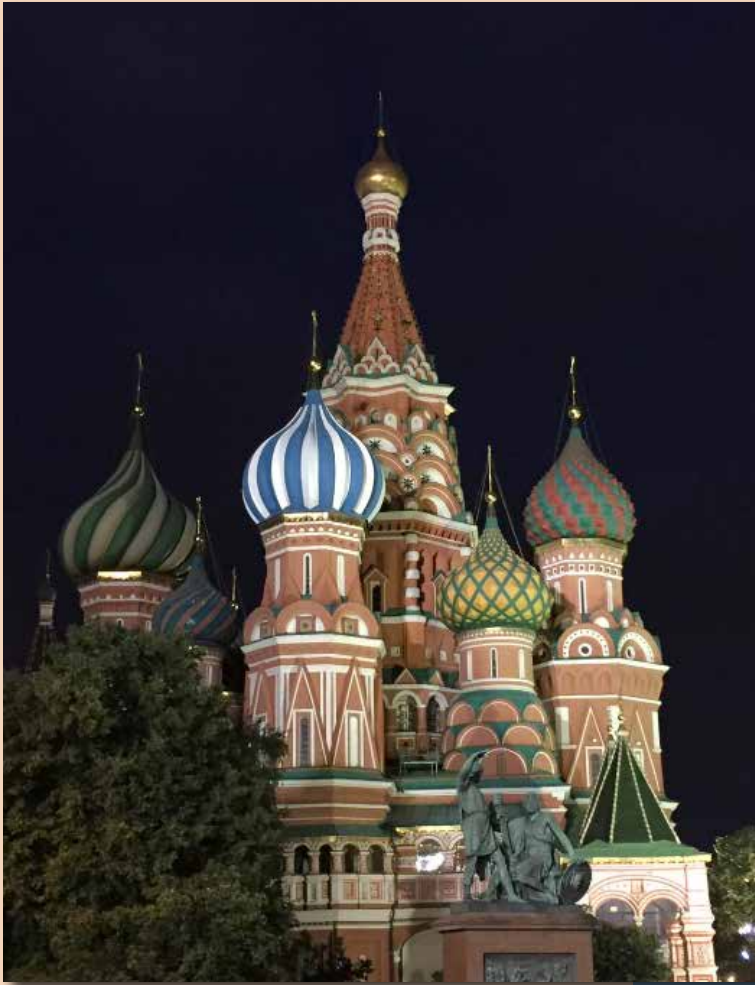
The day started at 8:30am with the Tickled Pink committee having our photos taken both of top of the pier and underneath in the pouring rain and cold winds (dedication!) and ran through to 4pm with a half an hour

slot for each society (and a scheduled lunch break, of course). A massive thanks to Keith Morris for being our ever-enthusiastic photographer. If you'd like one, get in touch with us.

We're all extremely passionate about the work that we do and over the past 2 years we've grown massively as a society. Our reasons for our fundraising all vary, from personal experiences, breast cancer scares, or just a passion to make a difference and raise awareness of something that affects so many women and men. We all thoroughly enjoy the fundraising we do, especially as much of it is a little different, with a flash mob and a glitter party being on the list of our outside-the-box events, but we also have weekly themed socials on a Tuesday night. Of course, our first social was pink-themed, but other themes have included Come-As-Your-Subject (cue the colouring stereotypes) and joint socials such as Angels vs Demons, as well as sober socials.

We welcome anyone who is passionate about raising breast cancer awareness and having lots of fun! If you would like to find out more about the society you can find us on social media or email us at scty127@aber.ac.uk. And then go and check your boobs!





**Pierre Lardeux -
HIGHLY COMMENDED**

Photograph location: Moscow, Russia

There were three categories:

Discover – Finding that something different, something that someone else just may never have found, or an image that expresses the joys of discovery.

Engage – Show people engaging directly with Geography and Earth Sciences, or images that will engage people.

Inspire – Images that inspire you in your study, and would inspire others to study Geography and Earth Sciences.

Images could be of field trips undertaken as part of their studies or adventures from anywhere around the world.

Prizes were awarded as follows:

Best Overall Photograph - £50 Amazon voucher

Best Overall Film - £50 Amazon Voucher

Best entry in each category - £30 Amazon voucher

Photographic and Film Competition 2015

Discover
Engage
Inspire

This is what we, as a department, believe Geography and Earth Sciences are all about. For this year's competition, we wanted our students to show us what these things mean to them in terms of Geography and Earth Science.

**Emily Brown -
HIGHLY COMMENDED**

Photograph location: Tromso, Norway



Tomos Nolan - **OVERALL WINNER**

Photograph location: Fairbourne, Gwynedd

*Josh and Heather searching for the age of the sea defences at Fairbourne.
They didn't realise it was right under their feet!*



Tomos Nolan - DISCOVER WINNER

Photograph location: Llyn Llydaw, Snowdon



Tom Nolan – ENGAGE WINNER

Photograph location: Glacially striated rocks at Llyn Llydaw, Snowdon



Chloe Ludbrook - INSPIRE WINNER

Photograph location: Vietnam Memorial, Washington DC



Travel Awards

Every year the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences offers up to 13 travel awards worth up to £400 each to students looking to explore the world. Here are some of the stories from those who made it back!

Alexandra Hallatt (Geography F800)

Iceland: the land of fire and ice...



At Gonguleidir, a region known for its geothermal energy and is currently used to help supply Reykjavik with hot water and energy through pipes

The aim of the award

The aim of the departmental travel awards is to give the opportunity to all students to travel and see the world for themselves. It allows students the chance to help fund their own research and exploration abroad, allowing you to witness Geography first hand and watch Geography come to life!

Where did I travelled and what did I do?

Over 2 weeks myself, and a fellow Geography student, travelled across the Western and Southern coast of Iceland allowing us the opportunity to see a fantastic range of different geographical features including waterfalls, geysers, geothermal pools and volcanoes.

Not only this, we was able to explore the Icelandic culture through various museums and tours inside and outside of Reykjavik learning about the Islands rich history, way of life and their myths and legends.

There were several highlights over our stay in Iceland including visiting my first ever glacier, going to the Blue Lagoon to experience some of the more relaxing outcomes of geothermal activity and exploring the picturesque city of Reykjavik.

What were the benefits?

The benefits to going to Iceland were countless in relation to both academic and personal skills. Having undertaken modules in Geohazards and Volcanic Activity: Hazards and Environmental Change in years 2 and 3, the setting of Iceland was ideal to see numerous processes and examples I had researched and studied in my lectures.

Other skills I gained included planning and organising. Through this grant I had the opportunity to plan, organise, book and budget a 2 week venture across Iceland which resulted in 2 fantastic weeks with sights and memories that will stay with me forever thanks to the Geography departmental travel awards!



Sólheimajökull Glacier (above) is myself and Tom (another travel award holder) at the base of a glacier tongue extending to the Southern coast of Iceland



Gullfoss is made up of two waterfalls formed through glacial floods at the end of the last Ice Age



Thingvellir National Park is at the plate boundary between North American and Eurasian plate boundaries which are currently moving apart at the rate of a few cms each year



The Strokkur Geyser is one of the most active geysers in Iceland, erupting once every few minutes

Elis Llŷr Nutall (*Daearyddiaeth F801*) Ecuador and the Amazon



View of the Cotopaxi volcano (approx. 7 miles away) and the hostel we stayed in. You can see the glacier occupying the mountain peak. Since 1738 the volcano has erupted >50 times.

During the summer of 2015 I embarked on a voluntary excursion with the NGO 'Volunteer Eco-Students Abroad'. This was made possible through financial support from the Gareth Thomas Travel Award, which I have to thank for this unique opportunity.

My main objectives were to immerse myself in the native way of life, and to explore the unique interaction of eco-systems, habitats and culture in Ecuador through a range of volunteer projects. This gave me the opportunity to experience a natural environment beyond compare. My principal interests surround the protection of natural habitats, and this trip was invaluable in improving my understanding of sustainable lifestyles and eco-tourism practices within the country.

During the first week I stayed in the small village of Misahuhalli, on the banks of the river Napo, travelling each day by canoe to a remote settlement where I taught English to the local children, alongside assisting with setting up new water supplies, improved sanitation, painting and renewing school facilities.

Following these activities I undertook a walking and canoeing tour through the Amazon rainforest, climbed the mountains of the Andes to the ancient town of Banos, explored volcanoes and glaciers of the Cotopaxi National Park and travelled beyond the coast of Ecuador to the unique habitats of the Galapagos Islands. These travels gave me a real taste of the range of different natural environments and ecosystems throughout the country.

Academic benefits

Travelling to a country which is developing its eco-tourism industry across a diverse range of contrasting natural environments was a golden opportunity for me. Ecuador is widely considered as an area of outstanding biodiversity driven by its variable geography. One issue I was conscious of was keeping my carbon footprint as low as possible, and by doing so vastly improved my knowledge of sustainable tourism practices on both a local and global scale, and their important role in mitigating the effects of future climate change.



A number of the local children in the settlement where we were volunteering. The children range between 5 and 13 years of age, and receive basic education in English, Spanish, the native language of Quichua and maths. The older children are called upon to assist their families with farming.



We embarked upon a 3 day trek through the Amazon rainforest, during which we learnt about the biodiversity, use of medicinal plants and protection measures for the forests, alongside how local communities are sustained in these environments.



Mixing cement to construct septic tanks for the community's toilets. During our time there we built 10 toilet blocks and started construction on another 5, helped renew the local school and a number of other facilities e.g. water supply.

The physical geography side of my course naturally lends itself to studies of the country's volcanoes, expansive river systems and dramatic landscape. Having had the unique experience of climbing an active volcano and living on the banks of the largest river system in the world I feel a greater sense of appreciation of their natural power, and the struggles native populations overcome to use these natural resources.

Ecuador is a developing country, where approximately 70% of its population live in poverty, though the figure is much higher in rural and especially native communities. I had the opportunity to learn first-hand about the native populations in the region: their culture, their people and the challenges they face. Through studying aspects of human geography during my degree I can now critically assess how groups such as VEGA contribute to the vision of Ecuador's government in improving the quality of life in these remote communities, tackling major issues such as malnutrition, poverty and the lack of education.

Personal benefits

- Developing my own independence and self-confidence travelling on my own for the very first time
- Gaining greater social skills through co-working and co-habiting with new people, making new friends and lifelong memories
- Gaining a broader understanding of life in a developing country
- Learning more about health and safety requirements travelling alone in a foreign country
- Being able to offer help and assistance to local populations

Elliot Hoyle (*Physical Geography F840*)

Dissertation Fieldwork on Glacier Noir, France

The departmental travel award helped subsidise research for my 3rd year dissertation, for this I studied the melt rate of a portion of Glacier Noir in the French Alps, over a 10 day period. I was fortunate enough to enlist the help of two close friends (Will and Tom), and with the travel award I was able to cover the travel and accommodation (camping) costs. Our location was very scenic, we stayed at a campsite down valley of Glacier Noir in the mountain village of Ailefroide, surrounded on all sides by mountains. Glacier Noir is itself located within the Ecrins National Park, an area of stunning wildlife and scenery that is very popular with climbers and hikers alike.

Each day comprised of an hours hike up to the study site on Glacier Noir, in order to collect repeat measurements of ice melt beneath the glaciers debris cover. In the afternoon however we were fortunate enough to enjoy some free time, during which we were able to take on some activities such as visits to a nearby lake, and by far our favourite past time, Via Ferrata. Essentially a climbing activity, Via Ferrata involves traversing rock faces along an existing route of safety cables and steel rungs, and is open to people of all abilities.

Not only was the whole trip extremely enjoyable, it was also key for me to be able to collect data for my glacial dissertation. It is definitely a location I will be returning to in the future, and would recommend to all those interested in climbing hiking, cycle and canoeing, or just the general outdoors.



Will and Tom enjoying some of the Via Ferrata



One of the study sites, showing the debris excavated to the ice with a stake in place



The three of us at the snout of Glacier Noir

Emily Brown (*Physical Geography F840*)
 Norway 2015



Tromsø, view at 1am due to the 24 hour daylight

Thanks to the Gareth Thomas Travel Award I was able to visit Norway, my dream destination, for 2 weeks this summer.

My first stop was the capital, Oslo. Here I absorbed the culture and visited the harbour, Vigeland Sculpture Park and museums on the Bygdoy peninsula which showed the Viking history of Norway and the cultural changes through timber houses at the Norsk Museum.

I then visited Tromsø situated in North Norway and within the Arctic Circle. Because of its position I experienced the midnight sun and 24 hours of daylight, this was confusing at first but a magical experience. While in Tromsø I took on some hikes which led to amazing views showing the interlinking fjords.

Following Tromsø I travelled to Bergen, this city is Norway's second largest and known as the 'Gateway to the fjords'. I took a Fjord Cruise from Bergen through the Osterfjord to Mostraumen including Heskjedalsfossen where we paused to have a drink from the waterfall. The following day I hiked the famous Stoltzekleiven consisting of 800 steps which the locals often race up! At the top was stunning views across the city and the fjords. I continued the hike to Rundamanen, Blamanen and Floyen where the views did not disappoint. Bergen is also famous for its fish trade and markets so I immersed myself in the culture and enjoyed several fish

Bryggen, Bergen, historical fish trading houses within the UNESCO world heritage area



Viking Ship museum, Oslo

meals on the harbour front. Also on the harbour front was Bryggen the historical fish trading houses within the UNESCO world heritage area.

I took the Bergen railway on my return to Oslo which is renowned for being one of the most scenic train journeys in the World, it crossed Hardangervidda the highest mountain plateau in Europe.

I think from this trip I have consolidated my three years of study at Aberystwyth particularly that from glacial modules due to the Fjord landscapes of Norway. By visiting the Fjords first hand it has enhanced my knowledge of the glacial process responsible for producing these stunning landscapes. To make the most of the trip I conducted a great deal of research which has developed a more specific understanding in the contemporary research being undertaken. Throughout the trip I met like minded people and many friendly Norwegians who I enjoyed comparing cultures with.

By visiting Norway at the end of a fantastic degree, I have renewed my energy and passion for geography and hope to boost my productivity so I am ready to take on board new challenges and new projects post degree, whatever they may be. I hope my enthusiasms for geographical phenomena will promote conversations within the work place and socially which will hopefully inspire others to travel, explore, and protect the fantastic world we live in.

Lowri Jones (Geography F800)
 Crete 2015



Spinalonga from the boat

This summer I was awarded the Gareth Thomas Travel award by the Geography department. The award of £400 helped me to fund a trip to Crete, Greece's largest island located to the southwest of mainland Greece. For my stay I chose the small coastal town of Stalida, a sleepy seaside location with an outstanding beach. Stalida provided a good central location from which I could go on daily expeditions to various locations across the island.

During our trip to Crete we visited Spinalonga. Spinalonga is a small island located off the coast of the Kolokytha Peninsula, famed for its history as a Leper colony during the 20th century and featuring in the popular novel 'The Island' by Victoria Hislop. When you approach Spinalonga your eyes are immediately drawn to the magnificent fortress which was built by the Venetians during their occupation of Spinalonga. Once on the island the first thing you encounter is an ominous dark tunnel that was referred to by the lepers as the 'gateway to hell'. Once you pass through the tunnel on the other side were reconstructed houses demonstrating how the lepers would have lived with a main street, shops, houses and a surgery.

To reach Spinalonga we had to sail from Agios Nikolaos, a coastal market town. Agios Nikolaos was different from the other parts of Crete we had visited, it was full of modern buildings, especially at the redeveloped sea front. The walk through the town was interesting with lots of steep hills covered in stairs and fruit bearing trees. Walking up them in the midday sun was a huge feat! Nevertheless the views from the top of the town overlooking the port made the hills worth the climb. To rest our feet we sat in the port for lunch watching fish swim about below us in the crystal clear waters.

During our time in Crete we visited the city of Heraklion, the fifth largest city in Greece. In Heraklion we spent the

majority of the time in the Heraklion archaeological museum. The museum is popular for its vast collection of Minoan art and items of cultural interest from Cretan and Greece history. My favourite exhibits throughout the museum were the monuments they had salvaged from the ancient palace of Knossos, they gave an amazing insight into how this ancient palace would have looked in its prime and a better understanding of Minoan culture.

Towards the end of our stay in Crete we discovered an animal rescue centre that housed an assortment of species of fish and reptiles. The work they were doing to help local wildlife was inspiring. They had many success stories of releasing animals back into the wild, however some could not be released. Some such as the blind turtle that washed ashore and a boa constrictor that was once an exotic pet that had been abandoned. They among others now resided in the aquarium and reptile house rescue centre. Running around our feet the entire time we were there was a small tortoise, that they had aptly named Usain Bolt.

This trip to Crete benefitted me immensely for my third year dissertation. Before I left for Crete I was still changing between different dissertation topics because I was unsure of what to do my dissertation on. However whilst in Crete I found that my passion was with studying the tourism industry, due to my fascination on how so many people in Crete depend on tourism to make a living. Without this travel scholarship award I would never have been able to take this trip that was so beneficial not only academically but personally. The personal benefits that I received from my trip to Crete was an experience of a different culture and an increase of my understanding of the world, which would not have been possible without the help of this travel award.



A bull's head from the Heraklion archaeological museum demonstrating some Minoan art



A small tortoise, named Usain Bolt, from the rescue centre



An example of an ancient teapot, depicting the Goddess Hera, from the archaeological museum



Agios Nikolaos

Thomas Wiacek (Geography F800)

Iceland 2015



In June of 2015 I had the opportunity to travel to Iceland for two weeks as part of the DGES travel awards. I took part in a volunteer project with the Icelandic non-governmental organisation SEEDS who coordinate a variety of projects, the majority of which are focussed on the environment. The project I was involved in was based in a town called Vík í Myrdal which had a population of approximately 300 (yes, that's classed as a town in Iceland!!). Vík is 110 miles from the Icelandic capital Reykjavik and is the southernmost town in Iceland.

The main aim of the project was to maintain hiking trails around the base of the Katla volcano and to prepare Vík for the start of the tourist season. On top of Katla lies the Myrdalsjökull glacier, and there is speculation that Katla will erupt soon as one is long overdue. As soon as we arrived



Layers of volcanic ash (black) in a piece of soil we removed when installing the water pipe

we were informed that in the event of a possible eruption, everyone in the area would receive a text with a bilingual warning, and if we received a warning we were to go to the church which is on high ground – this was due to the melting glacier causing flash floods in Vík which lies at the bottom of a valley.

Along with maintaining hiking trails we also carried out a number of other tasks around the town such as restoring a hydroelectric power station and installing fences on the beach. On one of the days we took a trip into the interior and helped to install water infrastructure into a hut that the local hiking club are in the process of building which is going to be used for hikers to stay the night when they are out in the mountains.



Installing the water pipe at the hikers hut in the mountains... with help from the dog! We had to put the pipe underground, and the pipe itself was fed from a mountain stream

Iceland is a fantastic place from the perspective of a geographer and enabled me to see a lot of things I had learnt about, especially in my glaciers module in second year and earth surface environments in first year, and has made me consider changing to more physical geography modules for third year. For the trip, I was with 9 other volunteers from around the world including Spain, South Korea, Canada, plus a geography student from Nottingham! We also connected well with the locals and were invited to a BBQ with a local family and to play a volleyball match with a group of locals! We all formed some great contacts and are likely to keep in touch. I would like to thank DGES for giving me the opportunity to visit Iceland and have this great experience.

Tom Reader (Geography F800)

Iceland 2015



Thingvellir National Park - tectonic rift

What we did and where we went...

During our trip to Iceland we explored Reykjavik, the southern and western coast, and the classic golden circle. This meant we had the opportunity to see the spectacular waterfalls of Gullfoss and Skogafoss. We also witnessed geothermal pools and geysirs, such as the famous Strokkur geyser that erupts every few minutes. A personal highlight was a visit to the snout of the Solheimajokull glacier where we were able to learn about the effects of climate change on glacier retreat.



Hellisheidi Geothermal Power Plant

During our trip we learnt a lot about Icelandic culture, their myths and legends, and the value they place on nature. We also learnt a lot about the tectonic and geothermal forces at work in the country, and were able to take full advantage of one of

the more relaxing aspects of this through a visit to the Blue Lagoon!

The aim of the award...

The Gareth Thomas Travel Scholarships supports students to fund travels and explorations around the world. Our award enabled myself and a fellow geographer to fund a trip to Iceland in June 2015.

The benefits...

Our trip to Iceland provided an invaluable opportunity to explore some of the case studies and themes covered during our degree lectures in glaciology, geohazards and volcanic activity. The trip has also enabled me to develop skills in planning and organising a trip on a budget. This will be an invaluable skill as I am about to start teacher training in order to be a secondary geography teacher. Planning and organising fieldwork is a key part of the course, and so the Gareth Thomas award has helped me to develop these skills.



Gullfoss Waterfall

Hello from



We are one of Aber Uni's biggest and best societies and are still continuing to grow. This year has been one of our most successful so far with a number of events having taken place.

We kicked this year off with the "what I wish I'd known last year" event where some key tips were passed on and where we answered some pressing questions from first year students. This was followed by a meet and greet session where we worked alongside the DGES staff to answer questions about the various courses.

Afterwards we had a barbeque on the beach, making the most of the good weather, and enjoyed some good food and met people on the same course, whilst taking part in a number of games including rugby and football.

We have had two fantastic trips this term. Our first trip was our annual outing to Borth Animalarium.



This had the largest turn out in the history of the trip, and was a great chance to see some exotic animals whilst getting to know your course mates. Our second trip was paintballing which had another fantastic turn out and where people had to not only battle each other but also battle the wintry weather conditions.

Our 5-a-side football and rugby teams continue to go from strength to strength. Our rugby side now consists of two men's teams and one women's team, who all performed excellently at last year's 7s Tournament. Both sports teams were in action in the GeogSoc vs HistSoc day, where the rugby team won resoundingly 63-0. Unfortunately, the football lost 3-2. The quiz went down to a tie-breaker which the History Society won and saw them win the cup this year.



Vanishing Glaciers of Everest

at the Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition in London, July 2015

A team of academic staff and postgraduate students from the department's Centre for Glaciology (CfG) joined colleagues from the Universities of Sheffield, Leeds, Northumbria and Hertfordshire to exhibit their research at the Royal Society's Summer Science Exhibition this year. Current CfG members Professor Neil Glasser, Professor Michael Hambrey, Dr Tristram Irvine-Fynn and Morgan Gibson alongside former affiliates Dr Ann Rowan, Dr Duncan Quincey, Owen King and Dr Matt Westoby joined a 16-strong team to discuss the rapid recession of glaciers on the world's highest mountain (Mt Everest, 8848 m).

"Our fieldwork on the Khumbu Glacier 12 years ago, followed up by further fieldwork by our postgraduates, and combined with analysis of satellite imagery, has clearly demonstrated that this glacier and its neighbours are wasting away rapidly. This is taking place in a way that allows potentially dangerous glacial lakes to form. Also, the recent earthquakes have highlighted how vulnerable the people of Nepal are to landslides. Himalayan glaciers provide water to 1.3 billion people in Asia, so are a vital, but diminishing resource. We want to find out why these glaciers are changing so rapidly in response to climatic warming, and obtain better data so we can predict changes more accurately." (Professor Michael Hambrey)

The team used a combination of photographs and video footage from the Khumbu, Imja, Lhotse and Ngozumpa Glaciers, 3-D models of these regions and hands-on experiments to illustrate the response of these glaciers to present and future climate change, and how this will influence the huge populations who are reliant on their water supply. Beyond the exhibition, a short video was produced highlighting the significance of this research (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9W0V1gK0LU>), and a series of photographs have been made available on the website 'Glaciers Online' (<http://www.swisseduc.ch/glaciers/himalaya/khumbu/index-en.html>) as an important educational resource.

The exhibit benefited from valuable sponsorship from the Natural Environment Research Council, the Climate Change Consortium of Wales, the Quaternary Research Association and the five Universities involved.



Amplified melting in Greenland driven by summer rainfall

According to a new study published in Nature Geoscience, late summer rainfall events on the Greenland ice sheet – which are set to increase under climate change – drive widespread melt and ice flow acceleration across the ice sheet and its outlet glaciers.

The Centre for Glaciology's Dr Samuel Doyle together with Professors Alun and Bryn Hubbard and an international team of colleagues combined records of ice motion, water pressure at the ice sheet bed, and river discharge with surface meteorology across the western sector of the Greenland ice sheet capturing the wide-scale effects of an unusual week of warm, wet weather in late August and early September 2011.

They found that the cyclonic weather system led to extreme surface runoff – a combination of ice melt and rain – that overwhelmed the ice

sheet's basal drainage system, driving a marked increase in ice flow across the entire western sector of the ice sheet that extended 140 km into the ice sheet's interior.

The late-summer timing of the event was critical. The event occurred after the end of the melt season, and the ice-sheet's drainage system had started to close down. In this state, the drainage system just couldn't cope. High water pressures hydraulically lifted the ice sheet of its bed allowing it to flow faster.

Cyclonic weather systems, or depressions, are no great surprise to us in Aberystwyth where they are part and parcel of our everyday weather – commonly bringing wind and rain. In contrast, such conditions are less common across Greenland, which is normally dominated by stable, high-pressure systems centered over the ice sheet, and snowfall during the winter.

Since the 1980s when measurements began in the West Greenland town of Kangerlussuaq, the focus of the study, the proportion of precipitation now falling as rain rather than snow has both increased and extended into the late summer and autumn, with rain now falling at higher elevations on the ice sheet.

The influence of such rainfall events had not been considered in assessments of the melt and flow response of any ice sheet. This is an important omission because, although such cyclonic conditions are currently rare across Greenland, they are predicted to increase in the future, and may play an increasing role in driving mass loss from the ice sheet, which currently contributes over 0.7 mm per year to global sea-level – a rate at least double that of Antarctica.



*Camp on the ice sheet.
Credit: Alun Hubbard*

The Chew Bahir Drilling Project: shedding light on early human evolution

Professor Henry Lamb, a leading researcher in Quaternary environmental change within the department, is head of an important collaborative project between the Universities of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Liverpool, Newcastle, Oxford and St Andrews, and the British Geological Survey, investigating the evolution of early hominids and their dispersal from eastern Africa.

The Chew Bahir Drilling Project focuses on the eponymous lake basin in southern Ethiopia, part of Africa's Great Rift Valley, and in close proximity to sites of the earliest known fossil *Homo sapiens*. The project will generate a detailed record of changing temperature, precipitation and vegetation over the last 500,000 years with the view to gaining insight into how past climate changes influenced human evolution and migration.

Professor Lamb notes that "ideas about how climatic change may have influenced the emergence and dispersal of modern humans have remained largely speculative. We are now going to be able to place the fossil and archaeological data against a detailed record of climatic variation. This will allow us to make more rigorous tests of these hypotheses."

The project is part of the international Hominin Sites and Paleolakes Drilling Project (HSPDP), funded by the International Continental Scientific Drilling Project (ICDP), the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), the German Research Council (DFG) and the National Science Foundation (NSF).



Congratulations Dr Hywel Griffiths



Significant Contribution to Science Award

Congratulations to Dr Hywel M. Griffiths for being chosen as this year's recipient of the Eilir Hedd Morgan Memorial Award. This annual award was presented to Hywel as an individual under forty years of age who has made a significant contribution to science through the medium of Welsh. As only the second recipient of this prestigious award, Hywel was named as its winner at the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's Annual Congregation on 3 March 2015.

In addition to Hywel's large contribution to the teaching of physical geography through the medium of Welsh at DGES, he's the current chair of the National Welsh-medium Geography and Environment Committee, the sub-editor of the journal *Gwerddon*, and one of his current research projects involves the accounts of flood events by the Welsh colony of Patagonia, Argentina.

Winner of the Eisteddfod Chair 2015

Hywel's talents also extend beyond the walls of Geography and Earth Science as he was this summer crowned the winner of the prestigious Eisteddfod Chair in the National Eisteddfod at Meifod, near Welshpool. Under this year's theme of 'Web', Hywel's poetry combined the recent conflict in Gaza with aspects of the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, and earned him great praise as "a poet who can see afar and who listens astutely". Hywel is no stranger to success at the Eisteddfod, having won the Crown at the National Eisteddfod in Cardiff in 2008, but achieved a lifelong goal to win the Chair this year.

Promotion to Senior Lecturer

And to draw Hywel's big year to a close he can also celebrate a well-deserved promotion to Senior Lecturer. Congratulations all round!

Celebrating 50 years of academic research and publication



Professor Ron Fuge, Senior Research Fellow within DGES, celebrates 50 years of academic research and publication from his first paper on the spectrophotometry of vanadium to his latest contribution surrounding the importance of

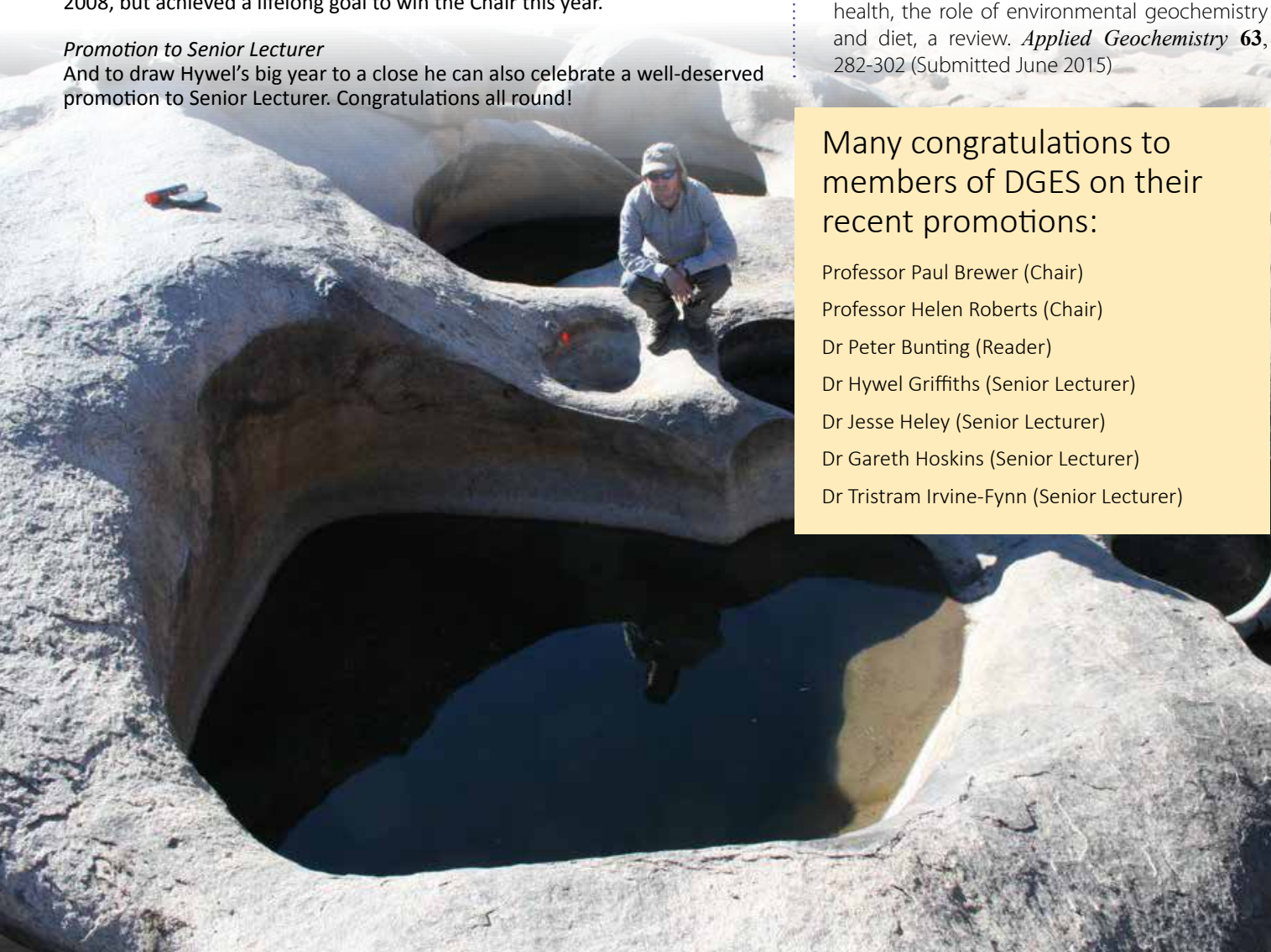
iodine in human health. Congratulations Ron!

Fuge, R., 1967. The spectrophotometric determination of vanadium in rocks. *Analytica Chimica Acta* **37**, 310-315 (Submitted July 1966)

Fuge, R., Johnson, C.C., 2015. Iodine and human health, the role of environmental geochemistry and diet, a review. *Applied Geochemistry* **63**, 282-302 (Submitted June 2015)

Many congratulations to members of DGES on their recent promotions:

- Professor Paul Brewer (Chair)
- Professor Helen Roberts (Chair)
- Dr Peter Bunting (Reader)
- Dr Hywel Griffiths (Senior Lecturer)
- Dr Jesse Heley (Senior Lecturer)
- Dr Gareth Hoskins (Senior Lecturer)
- Dr Tristram Irvine-Fynn (Senior Lecturer)



Day in the Life of...

Dr Catherine Cottrell

What's your title?

Lecturer in Human Geography

What's your area of expertise?

I am a broadly trained human geographer with particular interests in political and cultural geographies of post-Soviet Europe. My research focuses on citizenship, nationalism, and geopolitics.

What's your job like?

My job is rewarding, fun, challenging, and a bit chaotic at times! No matter what I'm doing on a day to day basis, I'm always learning—whether it's from my colleagues or from my students. The most fun I have at my job is when I'm in the classroom with my students, especially when students ask questions that generate discussions or when we have a class exercise that brings out different perspectives on the module topics. I love that the students at Aber challenge me to think differently about issues that are a big part of my research outside the classroom! Their feedback also makes me a better instructor, which I appreciate. My job always provides me opportunities to be better at what I do.

What's a typical day like?

Typical days don't exist! Depending on what time of the semester it is or what time of year it is my days may be focused mostly on teaching, writing papers, prepping for upcoming lectures, planning for future research, or marking coursework. I might be in my office or sitting in IBERs café to work—it all depends on which task is at hand.



What's fun?

The field courses are particularly fun. I've been on the New York City field trip for second years as well as the Plas Menai/North Wales field trip for first years. I enjoy getting to know the students better during the field course exercises, and also being able to show students how our research as geographers is relevant "out in the world."

What's challenging?

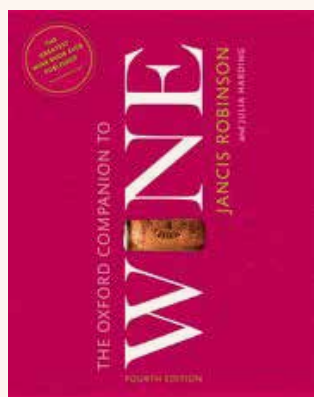
Finding a healthy work/life balance. It's easy to become completely focused on work and all of the things that I need to do to maintain good standing as a lecturer. But I've seen a lot of academics burn out because they forget to take care of themselves mentally, emotionally, or physically. Sometimes you need to shut the computer off and just take a walk or read a book. Maintaining your sanity (and your relationships) is important!

What's your advice to students?

Never, ever be afraid to ask questions. Go outside of your comfort zone. Talk to people who have different experiences, backgrounds, and opinions than you do. Make up your own mind about things—don't let anyone tell you who to be. And delete your Facebook account. Your life will be simpler.



On the Bookshelf



“*The greatest wine book ever published*” is how one U.S. newspaper describes the new edition of the Oxford Companion to Wine, in which Professor Alex Maltman dealt with all the material involving vineyard geology. Alex attended the celebrity launch of the volume, in London at the beginning of September.

In addition, Alex wrote the feature article – on geological time and vineyard soils – in the summer issue of the quarterly, upmarket magazine “The World of Fine Wine”. In July, the Wine Country Ontario organisation hosted Alex for a week during which he gave a keynote symposium address on the concept of minerality in wine. Alex is currently on the Advisory Panel of the International Cool Climate Wine symposium, which meets every four years – most recently in Tasmania and before that Washington State – and which next May will convene in Brighton, England. (<http://www.iccws2016.com/cool-climate/international-cool-climate-wine-symposia/>)



In this new four-volume edited work on “*Space*” in Routledge’s Critical Concepts in Geography series, Professor Peter Merriman provides the first authoritative reference work on classic and cutting-edge writings on theoretical approaches to space and spatiality. The work includes key works in human geography, philosophy and the broader sciences, social sciences and humanities – from Descartes, Kant and Einstein through to Michel Foucault, Bruno Latour, David Harvey, and Doreen Massey – accompanied by an extensive introductory essay.



Soils are the thinnest, outer-most layer of the Earth’s land surface: a complex combination of weathered parent material, organic matter, water and gases upon which humans are wholly dependent. It takes thousands of years to develop fertile, healthy soil, but poor management can lead to rapid and devastating degradation. The United Nations designated 2015 the International Year of Soils in an attempt to raise the profile (no pun intended) of this vital but much maligned component of our world. It’s fitting then, that Andrew Thomas, along with his colleague Francis Brearely, have published a new edited volume on soils and land use in the tropics. Their book brought together researchers from all over the world to examine the effects that land-use changes have on soil characteristics and processes. It deals with the impact of agricultural intensification, logging, erosion, urbanisation and mining on a range of soil processes and characteristics across the tropics. It provides a snapshot of the challenges we face in ensuring soils are managed sustainably in the future.

New articles

DR MARIE BUSFIELD:

Busfield, M.E. & Le Heron, D.P. (2015). A Neoproterozoic ice advance sequence, Sperry Wash, California. *Sedimentology* doi: 10.1111/sed.12210

DR CATHERINE COTTRELL:

Cottrell Studemeyer, C. (2015). Geographies of Flexible Citizenship. *Geography Compass*, **9**, 565-576.

DR SAM DOYLE:

Doyle, S.H., Hubbard, A., van de Wal, R.S.W., Box, J.E. et al. (2015). Amplified melt and flow of the Greenland ice sheet driven by late-summer cyclonic rainfall. *Nature Geoscience*, **8**, 647-653.

DR TRISTRAM IRVINE-FYNN:

Cook, J., Edwards, A., Takeuchi, N. & Irvine-Fynn, T. (2015). Cryoconite: the dark biological secret of the cryosphere. *Progress in Physical Geography* doi: 10.1177/0309133315616574

PROFESSOR MARK MACKLIN:

Foulds, S.A. & Macklin, M.G. (2015). A hydrogeomorphic assessment of 21st Century floods in the UK. *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms* doi: 10.1002/esp.3853

DR KIMBERLEY PETERS:

Peters, K. & Turner, J. (2015). Between crime and colony: interrogating (im) mobilities aboard the convict ship. *Social and Cultural Geography*, **16**, 844-862.

DR JOE WILLIAMS:

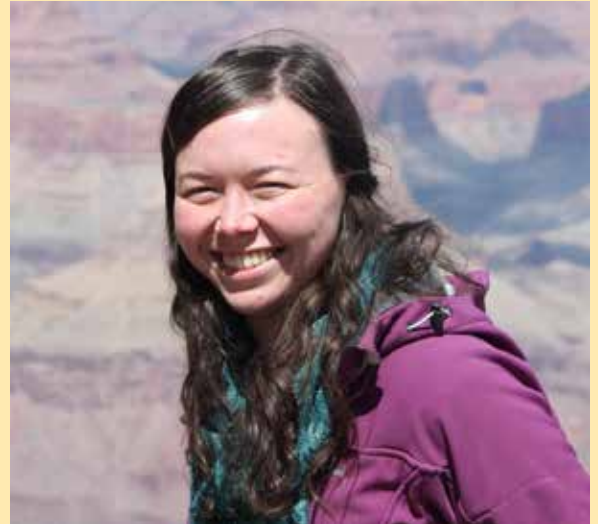
Williams, J.J., McLaughlan, K.K., Mueller, J.R., Mellicant, E.M. et al. (2015). Ecosystem development following deglaciation: a new sedimentary record from Devils Lake, Wisconsin, USA. *Quaternary Science Reviews*, **125**, 131-143.

New Staff

Marie Busfield is a newly appointed Welsh-medium lecturer in environmental science in DGES, employed under the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol staff recruitment scheme. Marie graduated with an MGeol in Geology from the University of Leicester in 2011, where her Masters research focussed on the provenance of Pleistocene till in eastern Britain during the Last Glacial Maximum.

In 2011 she began her PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London, under the supervision of Dr Daniel Le Heron, an Aberystwyth University geology alumnus. Her PhD thesis research project, entitled 'Sedimentology of the Sturtian icehouse: perspectives from Namibia, Australia and western USA', involved field-based examination of Neoproterozoic (> 700 million years old) glacial sedimentary rocks to understand the distribution and mobility of these ancient ice masses. This research was funded by numerous grants from Royal Holloway, National Geographic, the Geological Society of London and the British Sedimentological Research Group.

Marie joined DGES and the Centre for Glaciology in October 2015, where she will continue research on both Neoproterozoic and more recent glaciation.



Spin to win with DGES

The departmental spin class was set up last year with the aim of getting the staff at DGES fit and healthy. The class has been fully booked since it started and has proved to be an unmissable weekly event for those that attend.

Spinning is a cardio group exercise class set to music and led by an instructor. It involves no complicated choreography and doesn't require any co-ordination, it is low impact and therefore the perfect workout to fit into a busy lifestyle. Each week we have music themes, the staff send me their song request to add to the playlist...rock week is always popular!

The class lasts 45 minutes and can burn up to 500 calories per session depending on how hard you work. Participants control their own speed and resistance and therefore intensity level, so it can be as easy or as challenging as they want it to be. I make sure I put them through their paces with killer hills and power sprints, ensuring everyone in the class has a healthy glow and the tower stairs are a challenge for the rest of the day.

Along with the physical benefits of spinning, the classes are also effective at relieving stress and giving the participant essential time out in an otherwise busy day, eliminating the afternoon energy slump.

Like many things in life you get out of it what you put into it. DGES' Wednesday afternoon spinning is full of energy and enthusiasm, and is a fantastic team building activity helping us to get to know our colleagues outside of the workplace, and developing friendly competition and banter.

Spinning sessions are run daily at the University sports centre, booking is essential but classes can be attended by anybody.

Helen Stockley Jones #spinwitch 😊



BA Human Geography
BSc Daearyddiaeth
BSc Environmental Earth Science
BSc Environmental Science
BSc Geography
BSc Physical Geography

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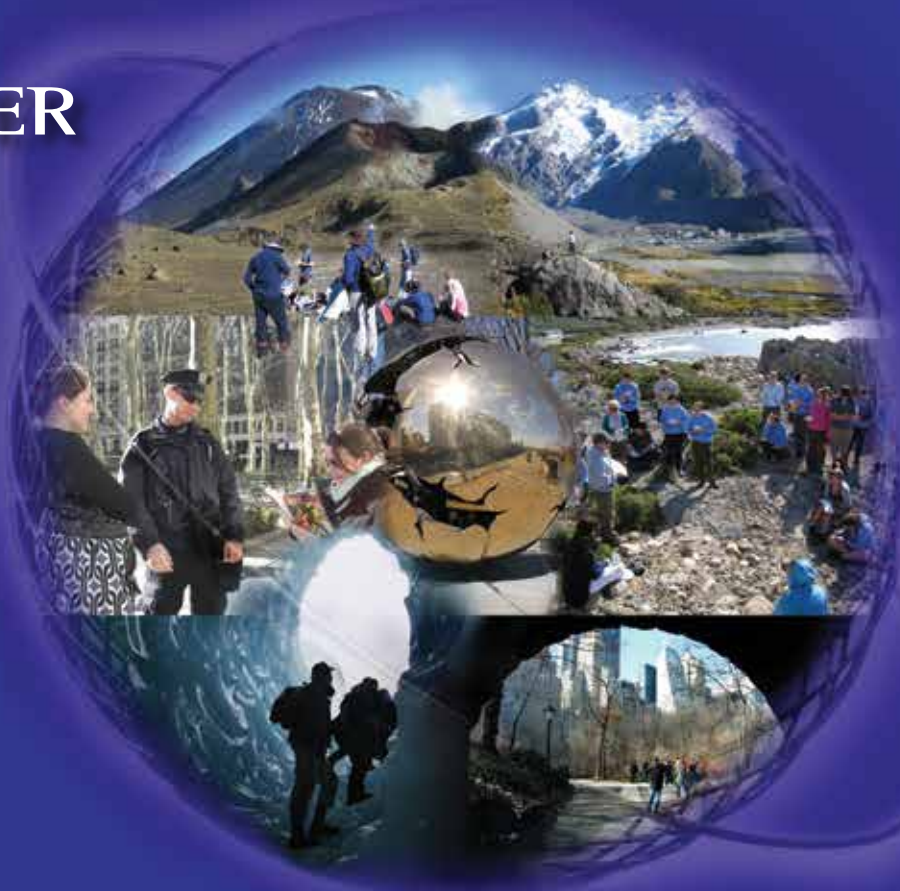
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Fax: (0)1970 622659
E-mail: iges-admissions@aber.ac.uk