

I would like to thank the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland for supporting my attendance of IAVCEI 2008, Iceland. This was an international conference that only occurs once every four years, so I was extremely fortunate to be able to attend as a PhD student.



I presented a poster on my ongoing PhD research and had a great response from a variety of international experts. Interesting discussions about my work provided me with an opportunity to share my research and also to feed their comments and suggestions back into the work. This has allowed me to make a number of improvements and additional plans for future project work. Attending the meeting also provided me with a great opportunity to keep up to date with the cutting edge research field of volcanology.

My research is aiming to improve our understanding of the behaviour of energetic pyroclastic density currents around the eruptive vent and over topographic barriers around a volcano. I am focusing on understanding the emplacement of a pristine, radial ignimbrite sheet on Pantelleria, Italy, by studying its chemical zoning. Detailed outcrop logging combined with very close-spaced sampling for XRF, EMP, and petrographic analysis has distinguished a detailed internal stratigraphy enabling the definition of *entrachrons* (entrainment isochrons) marked by variations in glass chemistry, and in crystal and lithic compositions. These 'time-surfaces' are being mapped internally through the deposit, both longitudinally from source and laterally up and around draped topographic barriers, taking advantage of the superlative exposure. This will allow temporal correlations within the sheet to be established in order to reconstruct the behaviour of this sustained, unsteady current as it waxed and waned, and encroached and overtopped various barriers.

Whilst in Iceland for the IAVCEI conference I also had the opportunity to take field trips to several locations of classic volcanological interest. I took a few days exploring the volcanic islands of Heimaey and Surtsey, the rift valley at Þingvellir and of course the Blue Lagoon near Reykjavik.

