



International Association of Geoanalysts

<http://geoanalyst.org>

IAG AUTUMN COUNCIL MEETING

The governing council of the IAG meets roughly every six months to discuss pending business of the association and to plan new initiatives in support of the goals of our society. Our most recent meeting (autumn 2017) was held at the Beaumont Estate, a rural venue just west of London (UK) which specializes in the hosting of such events. In total, thirteen members of council were able to attend the most recent meeting. Due to the growth in our society, as well as due to the expanding number of activities that it supports, council meetings now must be planned to cover two days, the second being reserved for discussing technical issues such as improving instrument calibrations, data intercomparisons and the characterization of new reference materials.



After a quick lunch members attending the autumn council meeting gather outside their meeting venue for a group photo.

Participants of this past autumn's meeting gathered on Sunday evening for an informal dinner, allowing them to discuss their efforts since council last met in April in Mainz (Germany). Monday was a very full day, starting at 9:00 a.m. and continuing on until 5:30 p.m. Here the focus was on the core activities of the association, including information exchanges on such topics as the editorial accomplishments at *Geostandards and Geoanalytical Research*, the further expansion of the activities of the IAG's trading arm IAGEO Limited, and further refining of the awards and grants programmes run by the society. One topic that merits special mention was a discussion related to the latest results from the two proficiency testing programmes organised by IAG: GeoPT for whole rock chemical analyses and G-Probe for microanalytical chemical analyses. Both of these initiatives continue to have strong uptake by the user community. For many labs, these programmes play important roles in helping analysts improve their data quality, and for many commercial laboratories GeoPT is a key tool for demonstrating analytical competence. Council also discussed a proposal to expand IAG's spectrum of proficiency testing programmes; a final decision on this topic is expected at the spring 2018 meeting. A second agenda worthy of highlight was the task of selecting the venue for the Geoanalysis 2021 meeting. With four universities or geoscience institutes vying to host this event there were many details that needed discussing. The final decision regarding the location for the Geoanalysis 2021 conference will be announced next July at Geoanalysis 2018, which will be held at Macquarie University in Sydney (Australia).

Monday evening was devoted to a more formal dinner, including a small number of brief presentations by individual council members. A very special event of the evening was the presentation by our association's president, Thomas Meisel, of the first ever IAG Exceptional Service Medal, which was awarded to IAG's founding president, Doug Miles, who played an essential role in creating our society back in 1996 and who has been a very active supporter of IAG ever since. Our greatest thanks go to Doug for his many contributions, as well as his brilliant comradery over two decades.



Monday evening: Doug Miles (right) receives the first ever Exceptional Service Medal (**inset**) from IAG president Thomas Meisel.

Tuesday morning was devoted to more technical topics, mostly dominated by refining a strategy whereby the results from a proficiency test can be utilized for a formal certification of a material's properties. There is much debate on this topic in a wide diversity of fields within metrology, where IAG has often been at the forefront in designing a robust strategy for addressing this task. Tuesday afternoon, for those able to stay on for the full day, was spent mostly in smaller groups planning tasks for the coming six months. Topics included work on designing a new class of microanalytical reference samples and on refinements to the on-line data reporting portal for IAG-led proficiency tests.

SIMS SHORT COURSE

In 2017, the IAG again supported the short course "Introduction to Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometry in the Earth Science", which is held each autumn on the campus of the Helmholtz-Zentrum in Potsdam (Germany). This year brought 17 participants from five countries to learn about SIMS and other microanalytical technologies. As is common for this course, it was a very busy week, with the students learning the basics of mass spectrometry, ion optics, data quality assessment and the determination of isotope ratios on samples sizes at or below 200 picograms. Course participants not only visited the large geometry SIMS instrument, but they also had "excursions" to the femtosecond laser ablation, field emission electron probe and dual focused ion beam (FIB) laboratories located on the campus. The course will next be held in the first week of December 2018 and will again be supported by the IAG.



Some of the participants of the 2017 SIMS short course in Potsdam relax after completing a busy week and the course exam on Friday afternoon.

GEOANALYSIS 2018

Planning for July's Geoanalysis conference is now reaching its most busy phase. We would like to remind both IAG members and scientists from the broader geoanalytical community that the deadline for submitting conference abstracts is 23 March 2018. For more information please visit ccfs.mq.edu.au/Geoanalysis2018/.

GEOANALYSIS 2018
8-13 July, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

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SYDNEY

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