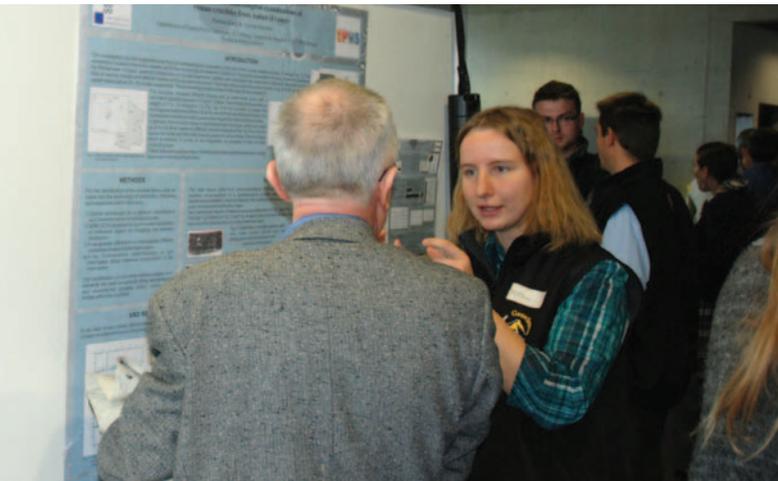




Swiss Society of Mineralogy and Petrology

<http://ssmp.scnatweb.ch>

8th SWISS GEOSCIENCE MEETING 20–21 NOVEMBER 2010, FRIBOURG



Successful poster session at the 8th Swiss Geoscience Meeting. PHOTO: F. HIARD, FRIBOURG

The 8th Swiss Geoscience Meeting was held at the University of Fribourg. It was organized by the small Department of Geosciences, which successfully survives in an increasingly centralized scientific community. SSMP member Bernard Grobéty acted as president of the Organizing Committee. The theme “Hot and Cold: Extreme Climates in Space and Time” attracted a large audience to the plenary talks on Friday and the fourteen parallel scientific sessions on Saturday. The plenary talks focused on ancient climate disturbances (Snowball Earth, Paleocene-Eocene thermal maximum) and on modern climate change (ice-core studies in Greenland, glacial hazards in the Andes). The annual meeting continues to be successful and is growing. This year’s meeting featured more than 600 participants who presented over 300 talks and posters covering the whole range of geosciences. Our society sponsored a “mineralogy–petrology–geochemistry” open session, which attracted a significant number of interested people. Sixteen oral presentations, including the lecture by Niggli medallist Christian Huber (see below), and 24 posters demonstrated the wide range of interests of our society’s members, from archaeology, forensics, and hard-rock science to soils and marine geochemistry.

NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The annual assembly of our society was held during the Swiss Geoscience Meeting, and the members elected Bernard Grobéty (Fribourg) as the new president. Urs Schaltegger is stepping down after serving a three-year term. Urs will stay in the Steering Committee for another three years as past-president and *Elements* news editor. Two new young scientists were elected to the committee, Leander Franz (Basel) and Sébastien Pilet (Lausanne). We welcome them to the committee and are happy that these talented young scientists are interested in our society. We were again successful in attracting young colleagues as new members of the society, partly as a result of distributing Alpine cleft minerals to the first dozen new registrants. The fact that society members receive *Elements* plays a pivotal role in recruiting new members.

2010 NIGGLI MEDAL TO CHRISTIAN HUBER



The Paul Niggli Medal is Switzerland’s most prestigious award for young Earth scientists. It is awarded every year to a young Swiss who has made an outstanding contribution to mineralogy, crystal chemistry, petrology, resource geology, or exploration physics. It is worth mentioning, unfortunately, that the number of potentially qualified candidates for this award is decreasing due to the very international population in Earth sciences at Swiss universities.

The award of the 2010 Niggli Medal to Christian Huber was based not on the promise of future scientific productivity but for the work he has already published since he received his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley, in mid-2009. This work involves the application of numerical models to magmatic and other geologic processes. More specifically, he constructs quantitative models for multiphase flow regimes in magmas that are variably rich in crystals and/or gas bubbles; these models consider all thermal and mechanical aspects of dynamically evolving magmatic systems. Christian has achieved all this in part by becoming a leading practitioner of Lattice-Boltzmann modeling, a mathematical method that is gaining wide acceptance in the physical sciences.

Christian completed his bachelor’s degree at the University of Geneva in 2001 and a master’s in volcanic seismology in 2004, in collaboration with Bernard Chouet (USGS, Menlo Park, California). He then undertook the important step of augmenting his quantitative skills by obtaining a bachelor’s degree in physics at the University of Geneva. In 2004, he joined Professor Michael Manga at the University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Manga wrote in his letter of support for this medal, “Chris is the most technically and mathematically talented student with whom I have ever worked. He also has broad interests and has demonstrated tremendous intellectual creativity through his interactions with a range of colleagues.” This assessment is amply supported by the diversity of subjects on which he has already published. At the time he received the Niggli Medal, he had begun to collaborate with a number of workers on topics far outside the field of magmatic petrology. Christian is currently a postdoctoral researcher at Georgia Tech University (USA) and will be joining the faculty there as an assistant professor in 2011. The Niggli Commission congratulates him for his accomplishments and for starting a career that does indeed promise a very high level of achievement.

Michael Dungan
Université de Genève

9th Swiss Geoscience Meeting Zürich

November 11–13, 2011