

Manchester Trip Report July 2016

After a long but uneventful flight to Manchester I met up with my former student Vandana Jha and took the train to Piccadilly Station. We arrived in the area of the hotels before noon. After a bit of confusion, we figured out that our hotel was an easy walk from the train station. Bruce Bowe and I were staying at the same place. After checking in we joined Vandana and tried to find the conference meeting site but couldn't. But we strolled around the old town. Right in the middle of the old but tall brick buildings was a classic English pub. I have no idea how old it is.



Later I walked around and asked some students who directed me to it so I registered.

I met up with Jerry Harrington and his recent PhD, Anders Jensen and we went to dinner to an Italian restaurant. It was quite good but on the pricy side.

I persisted to stay up until about 8PM and slept well until my alarm went off at 0530. Then I jogged along an old canal with hand-operated locks. The trail follows the old tow path and is either brick or cobble stone. That stuff gets really slippery when it rains and does it rain here! My hotel is a Hilton Double Tree which is quite nice. The breakfast is enough to live on!





It was only a 10 minute walk to the conference center. The conference began with the usual introductions. One of the local organizers quoted Mark Twain: "I would like to live in Manchester. The transition from Manchester to death would be unnoticeable!" After a week there, things have not changed much from Mark Twain's time! :) The conference started with a memorial to BJ Mason who was one of the pioneering cloud physicists in the 50's and 60's. He became director of the British Met Service. Actually I thought he was a bit of a pompous ass! Then the scientists who had passed away since the last meeting was listed. It included Paul Willis who was a good friend from our Miami days. It also included a scientist whom I knew well, Klaus Beheng. I had not heard about their passing until the meeting.

I attended most of the talks on Monday. Then in the evening there was an ice breaker which was held at the Town Hall. The Town Hall is built like an old cathedral and is very dark and foreboding inside. At the ice breaker I met many old friends including Zev Levin and wife Susie. It was funny, Susie introduced me to a postdoc Chinese woman at the Weizmann Institute. When she realized who I was she went crazy. She had many pictures taken of me with her and lots of hugs. I guess I would call her my groupy! Then the mayor of Manchester said a few words. Vandana got a picture of her between the mayor and his partner.





I got to bed about 9:30PM and slept like a log. In fact, I felt like I had been drugged when I woke up to my alarm. I was in a fog and woozy for most of Tuesday morning. I took another jog along the slippery tow path. Once I got a half mile or so away from the hotel the tow path became more scenic and there wasn't as much junk floating in the water. After breakfast I attended most of the talks that day. For the most part they were not terribly controversial and rather boring. I guess I am getting old, so that it takes a lot to get me excited. Vandana gave a talk on her dissertation research. Unfortunately she tried to race through the main points of her dissertation which was too much for most to follow.

Last night was the banquet. They bused us out to the soccer stadium. First we had to wait in a long security check line. Then we were crammed into this low-ceiling trophy room with jersey's, trophies etc behind glass cages(not my scene). The ceilings were low and the noise level from all those people talking was extreme! It was driving me crazy! I felt like screaming! After that we were escorted out to the playing field. Saw nice Cbs in the background. Otherwise the whole scene was not my cup of tea. They took a group picture with us standing in the bleachers. Finally after what must have been an hour we were seated at our tables. It was a large high-ceilinged hall so the noise level was not so bad. At least the food was excellent!

Zev got this award for his outstanding achievements in the field. Great going Zev!

I didn't notice what time we finally got back but it was late, near mid-night. I woke up about 0615 and jogged along the tow path. It was raining, sort of, but more like a fog with tiny raindrops. I helped a woman push the gate on a lock open while her husband drove the boat. She said they expected to go through 30 locks today! Kind of crazy.

I gave my talk on Wednesday based on Michal Clavner's dissertation. First I gave an impromptu tutorial on air motions in stratiform-anvils of MCSs because a number of preceding MCS talks seemed to indicate that the stratiform-anvil was driven mainly the outflow from cumulonimbi within the system, which I call the "fountain view" of the MCS. Michal clearly showed that regions of the MCS were of the "fountain nature" and other regions by slantwise mesoscale ascent, and in other regions, the both slantwise ascent and cumulonimbi outflow. I emphasized this in the talk and a number of people complimented me on my talk.

Overall the conference was a bit boring to me. The highlights included several talks on condensation invigoration by high aerosol concentrations in convective clouds. It seems this process is getting the attention it deserves.

On Friday, Jerry Harrington and Anders Jensen took the train to the airport where we rented a car. We were upgraded to a Nissan diesel-powered SUV. It probably would have been better to have a smaller car on those narrow roads we drove on later in the weekend. Traffic on the freeways was horrible with a lot of stop and go. Finally after Blackwater we could move along at 75mph or so. The main issue for me driving on the left was figuring out how far to the left my left wheels were. One's perspective changes dramatically from our right side driving.

Following our GPS we made it to the hotel with no problems. It is an English stone structure with a pub, restaurant, and even meeting rooms. Our room was a very large room with a double bed and two singles which we shared. We decided to have dinner and a few beers at the pub rather than wait to get a table at the restaurant. The food was pretty good. As to the beers, I find the British beers rather watered down compared to some of my favorites in Fort Collins. After dinner I took a walk along a side road that was lined with large trees with occasional views of the mountains and pastures filled with sheep. I had be careful as the cars go like heck on these narrow road.

On Saturday we took two hikes. First we met with Jerry's friends(former PSUers) Mark, Carolyn, and 4 year old Isaac. We hiked with them up a ravine with lots of waterfalls. It was quite scenic but very heavily used. Then Jerry went to Keswick(pronounced Kesick) with them with his friends, and Anders and I hiked up a mountain near our hotel. It has a number of nice views of Baithenwait Lake as we climbed through meadows filled with sheep and sheep shit. We could see a few hikers off in the distance but otherwise saw no one except lots of sheep and a few cows. We climbed about 1000' and turned around since we were meeting up with Jerry and friends for dinner at 4:45PM. The summit of the mountain was shrouded in cloud so it wouldn't have been much fun at the top anyway. We returned to the hotel and showered, then drove along Baithenwait Lake and arrived in Keswick in plenty of time. The town is quite scenic with lots of pubs, restaurants, curio shops(what I call tourist traps), but over-run with tourists. While we arrived in town in plenty of time for a 4:45PM meeting time, we arrived a bit late because it took us a long while to find a parking place. Getting into it parallel parking on the right hand side of the road was interested as the space was very small and my perspective is all screwed up. My right rear wheel was on top of the curb when I finally got it into the space!

We had a nice supper of vege lasagna. The others had beers(except Carolyn and Isaac) but I had a glass of wine. Then walked along the lake at the edge of Keswick. Isaac is one exuberant 4 year old and is quite smart and talkative, and sometimes a bit “over-the-top” on showing off.

On Sunday morning we took a hike with Jerry and Anders up a mountain near Keswick. We first had to drive through Keswick again and then about 5 miles along a narrow, windy road with lots of traffic. ON the way back I encountered a huge bus which was at least a foot on my side of the center line. Given, that I did not know exactly where my left wheels were and that the road went right up to a stone wall, it made for a few tense seconds! The trail began along a river but then became an almost vertical ascent up rock steps for about 600'; very hard on my old knees. Then we had a nice view of a rather large tarne(at least by CO standards), and then the trail went through a lot a marsh lands. Then it descended a not so steep as the ascent trail but it had a lot of loose gravel. Vollie would not have liked any of this trail.

After the hike we attempted to stop in Keswick and have lunch and let Anders shop the tourist traps for a present for his fiancée. But after several attempts we couldn't find a space in any of the parking lots. I had enough of this town by this time and headed out missing the correct exit on a round-about and having to loop through a part of town again. We stopped in a little town of Penswick where we found a bar and Jerry and I had some nice tuna burgers. Anders wanted to try a fish and chips take-out place so picked up food there afterwards to eat in the car. He said it was very good. From there we headed back to our hotel near Manchester airport. Part of the way the traffic was again stop and go, but finally it cleared up, and we got to the hotel in one piece.

The hotel is a pretty basic small room, typical of a near airport hotel but for one night it is OK. Jerry and I had supper at the hotel bar which was so-so. Anders stayed at another hotel. Jerry and I took a brief walk and found a trail which I took a short jog on in the morning.

My flight back was uneventful and with the help of a ride to the Fort with the Eigels I got home before dark. Compare that with Jerry, who had major issues in getting seated with American Airlines, and got to University Park Airport sans luggage and after dark even though it was a much shorter flight.