

Preview

77th Annual Meeting of the VSP-ASP

19th-21st June 2010 at Stresa (Lago Maggiore, Italy)

The annual meeting 2010 at Stresa (Italy) between 19th and 21st June is dedicated to the geology of the Southern Alps, particularly to the "Zone of Ivrea". Starting at Stresa, situated at the beautiful Lago Maggiore, we will be able to study the sequence and structure of upper and lower crust, as well as of associated mantle rocks. Leaders of the field trips will be Peter Brack and Peter Ulmer (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, ETHZ).

The site of the 77th Annual Meeting will be Stresa at the Lago Maggiore in Northern Italy. Stresa can easily be reached by rail or car by way of the Simplon route or via Locarno - Ascona. The closest airport is "Milano Malpensa" (some 50 km to the south). Stresa presents itself as a suitable location for the meeting (and holidays), due to its numerous hotels, its situation at a lake surrounded by south-alpine mountains and as a point of origin for rewarding excursions.

On **Saturday 19th June** Peter Brack (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, ETHZ) will talk about geology and tectonics of the Southern Alps. Other interesting topics (as always during the scientific meeting) will be presented in further lectures. The partners' programme of the afternoon will go to the "Isola Bella" with its baroque palace, built by Carlo III Borromeo for his wife Isabella, and its unique Italian formal gardens.

As every year, we will all meet for cocktails and a subsequent dinner of Italian specialities with delectable regional wines.

Theme of the excursions is the earth's continental crust with visits to worldwide very rare locations, where - through alpine movements - a sequence is exposed from upper crustal parts with volcanics down to mantle rocks. **On Sunday** we will visit "Val Sesia" west of Stresa. Starting with originally near-surface magmatic rocks of Permian age (volcanic rocks: ignimbrites and rhyolites; plutonites: granite and diorite) we follow a series of gneiss and amphibolite of the upper crust ("Serie dei Laghi") and the 'stratigraphically' deeper rocks of the lower crust ("Ivrea-Verbano Zone"). The latter consist mainly of high-grade metamorphic metapelites (kinzigite, strombolite) and basic magmatic rocks (diorite, gabbro). At the end of the day we shall see outcrops of peridotites from the sub-continental upper mantle.

It is worth mentioning here that we will have lunch on "Sacro Monte" (holy mountain) at Varallo.

This is the oldest and most impressive holy mountain of the Piemonte-Lombardy region.

Its origin in the 15th century goes back to a friar from Milano, Bernardo Caimi, who had spent many years in Palestine. Upon his return he decided to build a new Holy Land depicting the stations of Christ's life in Varallo. The monastery has been classified as Unesco world cultural heritage.

On Monday we will have another opportunity to study south-alpine upper and lower crustal rocks, now in the section of "Val d'Ossola". Of special interest is a visit to the marble quarry of Candoglia. For centuries this has been used exclusively to furnish building materials, excavated and worked, for the Duomo of Milan. Access to this quarry requires a special permit from the offices of the archbishop of Milan.

The last stop of the excursion is at the chapel of Loro, half of which lies on the gabbros of the south-alpine “Ivrea-Verbano-Zone” and the other half on strongly deformed rocks of the “Insubric” fault zone. In addition, one has an impressive view from here onto the course of the “Insubric Line”, this marked border that bounds the Southern Alps to the northwest, towards the Central Alps. Stefan M Schmid, a co-leader of this excursion, will enlighten us on the significance of the “Insubric Line” at the end of the excursion.

The final programme of the Annual Meeting and documents for the registration will be published on the Web Site (www.vsp-asp.ch).

Bernhard Gunzenhauser

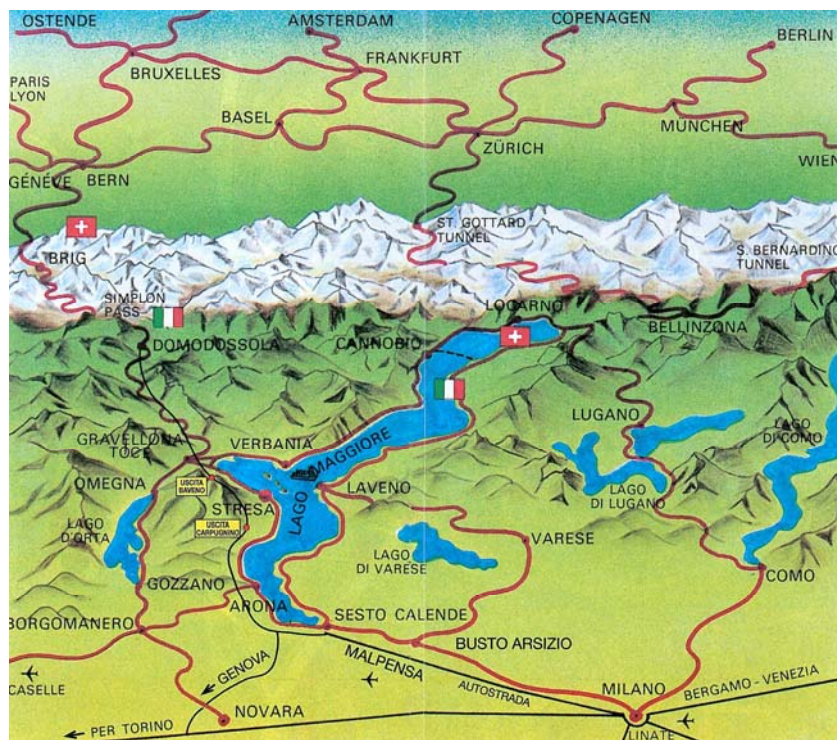


Figure 1: Situation of Stresa and access routes



Photo 1: Isola Bella near Stresa, Lago Maggiore



Photo 2: Sacro Monte, Varallo



Photo 3: Marble Quarry of Candoglia (right of centre)