



Figure 3. A watercolour on Arches 300-grade rough paper, featuring Wivenhoe from across the River Colne. It was painted at midday and records a storm brewing over the Essex marshes to the east. (© Brian Aldrich.)

Figure 3 is a pure watercolour and, like Figure 2, was painted in three stages. First, the buildings were lightly sketched in and then masked off. The area of paper reserved for the sky was then thoroughly wetted and

three colours were run in. Cerulean Blue was dropped in to the top of the picture and allowed to settle. Whilst still wet, two other colours, Payne's Grey and Windsor Blue, were mixed and run in to form the

base of the clouds, and this was then run off to give the lighter top edge. Before the paper was dry, the top of the cloud was sponged off and the whole sky scene was dried out in the sun. This all took about ten minutes and, when dry, the masking tape was removed and the remainder of the picture was completed. Fortunately, the storm was moving away from me and I was able to complete the work on site. The paper used was heavy grade Arches: a watercolour paper which does not require to be stretched.

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Obituary

Chris Bell



Dr Chris Bell, a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Reading meteorology department, died after being hit by a car in Reading on 19 June. He was 27. Chris was one of the most joyous, sociable and helpful people one could ever hope to meet. Much could be written about his life, but we will focus here on his academic career and achievements.

Although Chris had only been a researcher for five years, his achievements and reputation in the field were noteworthy. He originally came to Reading to undertake a PhD with Prof. Lesley Gray in 2005 after obtaining a first-class degree in mathematics at Warwick University; the title of his thesis was *The role of stratospheric variability in climate* and from it he published two papers as first author. He first dealt with the stratospheric communication of the El Niño signal to European climate and showed that a stratospheric pathway was key in order to reproduce the European surface response to El Niño in global circulation models: essentially, that a fully-resolved stratosphere was needed in such models to add confidence to predictions concerning El Niño. In the second paper, Chris investigated stratospheric variability under increased CO₂ concentrations and showed that the Northern Hemisphere stratospheric polar vortex would break down more often under increased CO₂ concentrations in an event known as a major sudden stratospheric warming. Chris also showed that these events would be largely caused by wave number 1 planetary-scale Rossby waves. Remarkably, when this paper was submitted to this Society's *Quarterly Journal*, one of the anonymous reviewers accepted it

immediately with no corrections required: a testament to how Chris was viewed in the eyes of the academic world.

After completing his PhD, Chris continued to work with Lesley and others as a post-doctoral researcher, studying the influence of solar activity on climate. During his short time in this position he was co-author on two papers (with a third being written at the time of his death). One of the most exciting results for Chris, which he often mentioned, was the relation of zonal temperature and wind profiles to a relatively new solar index known as the open solar flux. The papers demonstrated how the open solar flux often performed better than more traditional measures as a proxy for solar activity.

Chris was buried on 25 June in Ballyoan cemetery close to his home town of Derry in Northern Ireland. He is much missed by so many in the academic community, and the Reading University meteorology department is arranging for a memorial bench to be placed near the department. If you would like to make a donation, or keep up-to-date with events relating to Chris, please contact Dann through the following website: www.met.reading.ac.uk/chrisbell.

Dann Mitchell
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