

26th International Conference on Software Engineering (ICSE 2004)

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Edinburgh

The city of Edinburgh was very beautiful. It has a lot of old impressive stone buildings such as churches, monuments and castles. The city is dominated by Edinburgh Castle, overlooking the city centre from the top of a very steep and rocky cliff, at least 50 meters high. Since Edinburgh attracts a lot of tourists, there are plenty of hotels, pubs and nightclubs. However, although the city has an intense night-life, walking around in the city felt very safe. Ordinary people in Edinburgh walk to a large extent, so there were always people around. The city has less crime than other larger cities in Europe.

Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland and has a population about 408.000 in the inner city. It is however not the largest city, Glasgow is significantly bigger with almost 700.000.

The trip

I left for Edinburgh early on the 22nd of May, together with Dag Nyström. The plane departed from Arlanda at 09:20, so I had to get up around 05:30 in the morning. Flew with BA to Heathrow, where we switched planes for a domestic flight to Edinburgh. My hotel was located about 1.5 km outside the city centre, a 15 minute walk from the conference centre. The hotel was very nice; It was fresh and I had a view over a large park from my room.

The Conference

Apart from the ICSE main conference, there were a lot of workshops and tutorials. I attended a tutorial about Software Architecture Reconstruction, given by Claudio Riva from Nokia Research Center, and also a workshop, the Second International Workshop on Dynamic Analysis (WODA 2004). They were both very interesting, as these areas are close to my research.

The main conference was quite large, 600-700 delegates and several parallel sessions throughout the three days. Richard Stallman, founder of the Free Software Foundation, opened the conference as keynote speaker. He gave a 1 hour talk on Software Patents. I don't believe that the talk can be considered objective, software (idea) patents is the essence of evil according to him. However, he was a very good speaker.

The technical sessions were often quite interesting, and not too long. Typically 3 papers were presented in each session, where each paper had 25+5 minutes. The most interesting sessions I attended were "Dynamic Analysis" and "Static Analysis".

Two social events had been arranged for the main conference: a whisky tasting event, which was very nice and informative, and a main reception, where we got the chance to see clowns playing bagpipes while dancing and try the infamous Haggis. It tastes and looks like "kryddad pölsa".