

[November 2015 London/UK VMUG Recap](#)

Having just finished up a trans-Atlantic trip, I am reminded again about how important the community is. The theme of the VMUG may be changing as we watch the progression in technology, but the core importance has not changed, and if anything, has strengthened.

Meeting of the Mentors

A few folks in the community stand out personally for me from the experiences that I've had. It wasn't that long ago that we were lucky enough to have Mike Laverick come to speak at the Toronto VMUG on the concepts of cloud and how it is related to traditional virtualization. That was over 3 years ago when I was just a member of the Toronto VMUG. I had the pleasure of having dinner with Angelo Luciani and Mike Laverick while Mike was in town, and he was very kind to share stories and ideas on how to advance careers in IT.

Those words stuck, as did the impact of what Mike has done for the community. It made it very special to finally come and to now be a guest speaker at a VMUG in the home VMUG of Mike and the team.

Josh Atwell and John Mark Troyer also flew in to speak at the event, both of whom have been excellent personal mentors to me and many in the community. I had a chance to meet so many of the folks I have been reading content from for years, and despite being a few thousand kilometers from where I started the journey, everyone in the UK VMUG made it feel like I was right at home.

OpenStack at the VMUG?

Not only did I have the pleasure of delivering a session in the main room about OpenStack and how to embrace the open cloud as part of our IT portfolio, but I was able to also sit with a great group of folks for a round-table session on containers and OpenStack in the afternoon before delivering my session for Turbonomic.

The crowd was very keen to listen and to ask questions. There is no doubt that OpenStack, while seemingly off topic at a VMUG, was quite important for the future of our careers. I always say that before you dismiss OpenStack, it is as important to fully understand why it may not work for the organization as it is to understand why your organization may need it.

Open Source IS fundamentally good - [@discoposse #UKVMUG](#)
pic.twitter.com/2y3AmYCNg1

— Ather Beg (@AtherBeg) [November 19, 2015](#)

During the containers round-table, I had a chance to hear various thoughts from folks on how they think containers will impact their roles, and companies who are embracing the technology. The group came with a variety of backgrounds and skill levels, and the chat was superb as we ran right up to the finish of the session having seen that we could clearly have spent the day learning and discussing much more on the subject. The key moment I enjoyed was when I asked everyone what they thought the skill that they need to set as a learning priority, and the answers from all around the table were OpenStack, and only one who said "OpenStack, but for my direct work I'm doing today, I need to ramp up on configuration management tools like Ansible, Puppet, Chef and Salt".

It's a proud moment when you see that all the work that you do gets validated as the community really latches on to the work that we have been doing to help open up everyone's opportunities to learn.

Changing of the Guard

It was rather touching to see the final moments of the event. Congratulations were being shared all around from a great day of sharing and learning, which led to a slide that VMUG co-leader Alaric Davies brought up titled "UKVMUG: The Red Wedding Edition". In a speech that was mixed with humor and touching moments, we learned that three of the four co-leaders are stepping down from the committee.

Your [#UKVMUG](#) committee welcomes you! pic.twitter.com/cUv5R3QPXg — Jane Rimmer (@Rimmergram) [November 19, 2015](#)

Having been able to get to know [Alaric Davies](#) and [Jane Rimmer](#) personally, and to have met [Stuart Thompson](#) at the event, it was clear that their impact on the community has been amazing, and I have no doubt that [Simon Gallagher](#) will be filling up the leadership committee with other great advocates from the group.

If you are interested in helping to lead the UK VMUG, I encourage you to take the step of becoming a leader. It is a very special experience, and one that will give both a personal and professional boost to you as you have an opportunity to engage with, and give guidance to this great technology community that we have grown.

Visit <http://bit.do/lonvmug> to sign up for a leadership role and find out more about what's next for the upcoming UK VMUG events.

Thank You Alaric, Jane, Stuart, and Simon, for leading the VMUG event. Thanks as well to the VMUG head office team, plus Jean from VMware, all of whom have continued to drive the community and give a special experience to me and all of the attendees.

See you all at the next one, hopefully!

p.s. Don't stay at the Travelodge Birmingham Airport if you attend the event. It's like a penitentiary except without the charm.