

EDITOR'S NOTE

It has been an eventful six months for the IAG. Earlier in the year the editors of Geographical Research (Arthur Conacher, George Curry and Roy Jones) were very pleased to announce that our new look journal '*Geographical Research*' has been included in the ISI Social Sciences Citation Index. This is excellent news! I am sure all members extend their congratulations and thanks to the editors of the journal for their hard work in leading the effort to achieve this outcome.

The IAG council, together with the Australian Geography Teachers Association and the state geography societies met with the Commonwealth Minister for Education, Ms Julie Bishop to discuss a heightened profile for geography in the secondary school system. Jim Walmsely provides further details on the IAG's lobbying efforts in 'Up Country' (p.2).

The organising committee for the next IAG conference have accepted over 100 paper abstracts for the meeting. Further details on the conference have been included in this edition.

Thank you to those who have contributed to this edition. The deadline for the next edition is the October 5th 2007. Could you please send your contributions to: <adavies@cyllene.uwa.edu.au>

Amanda Davies
School of Earth and Geographical Sciences
The University of Western Australia

UP COUNTRY

Your President's Column

Into the second quarter of my Presidency, I am still finding out what the job involves. Aside from the visible things like Council meetings and conferences, the Presidency brings with it a lot of behind-the-scenes activity. Inevitably, there is a steady stream of emails. The Institute is a member of FASTS (the Federation of Australian Science and Technology Societies). I must confess that, as a rank and file IAG member and even as a Council member, I never really understood what the Institute got for its FASTS membership fee. That has changed. I am now coming to recognise what an important body FASTS is in lobbying the Commonwealth Government. FASTS produces an almost daily stream of emails. Not all are relevant to "Geography" but all are interesting.

On the subject of lobbying, the last *Newsletter* emerged at a time when the IAG Council was trying to arrange a meeting with the Commonwealth Minister for Education, Julie Bishop, to lobby for a heightened profile for Geography in the secondary school system. The meeting with the Minister took place in December 2006. In this lobbying exercise, the IAG joined forces with the Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA) and with the state geographical societies (represented by the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland (RGSQ)). Our feeling was that professional geographers should, in such exercises, speak with one voice. We also felt that it was important to tackle the position of Geography in schools so that the demand for geographical education would flow through to the tertiary sector. We had a good hearing from the Minister and, in due course, she announced that Geography should be liberated from "Studies in Society and Environment" and given greater independent recognition. The details are not yet clear but progress is being made.

Of course later this year Australia will have a federal election. There is therefore a chance of a change of government. The IAG, AGTA and RGSQ would not want to see its current lobbying go to waste. We have therefore made a submission to the ALP to try to lock them into support for free-standing Geography in secondary schools. As this *Newsletter* goes to press, we are also preparing for a meeting with Kevin Rudd's staff on the issue. We also made a submission to the Senate "Inquiry into the Academic Standards of School Education" to try to promote Geography. This has resulted in an invitation to appear before the Senate Inquiry in late May. More of that in due course.

Another element of IAG lobbying concerns the way in which Geography is recorded in official government statistics. This matter is, in my view, critically important. Universities are being subjected to new research funding processes, commonly referred to as the RQF (research quality funding). Universities are required to propose research teams which will be funded on the basis of both research "quality" and research "impact". There are standard measures of quality: citation indices, journal impact, national competitive grants, publication rates, and so on. We might all of us have misgivings about some of these indicators but they are widely used and there is every reason to believe that government funding agencies will fall back on some or all of them. "Impact" is much more difficult to measure. The IAG made a submission on how this might be done. I think that

this is an important issue because Geography is very much an applied discipline and may therefore be able to make a claim to impact to a greater extent than many other disciplines.

Whether or not groups of geographers are proposed by universities as “quality research teams with high impact” will depend on strategic decisions made by individual universities about how best to package their talent, a decision which itself will depend on details of precisely how the RQF funding system will operate (notably whether big groups will be funded differentially from small groups and whether research teams will be placed into different bands). What we do know is that the whole exercise is being guided by the RFCD classification. This acronym stands for Research Fields, Courses and Disciplines. Geography fares badly in this classification. “Human geography” appears as a sort of distinct category, under the general classification “Studies in Human Society”, but with somewhat curious sub-categories: Urban and regional studies; Social and cultural geography; Recreation and leisure studies; and Human geography not elsewhere included. Economic geography is tucked away in Applied Economics. Physical geography fares much worse. Geomorphology is placed with the earth sciences, biogeography with the biological sciences, and climatology with atmospheric sciences. GIS and remote sensing are placed with information sciences. Is it any wonder that politicians and governments generally have a poor appreciation of how much geographical research is going on when it is recorded in such a haphazard way?

The significance of the RFCD for the RQF exercise is that the RFCD classification will determine which general panel assesses the research teams that universities propose. Under the current classification, for example, most human geography would go to the panel on “Studies in Human Society”. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), which is in charge of the RFCD, is reviewing the classification. The IAG has made submissions to this review, notably through FASTS, arguing for more recognition of Geography. The outcome of the review is not yet clear but there is a chance that physical geography made be consolidated into one group, that economic geography might be repatriated in human geography, and that the IAG might be consulted about what are the most appropriate sub-categories for both physical geography and human geography. Maybe it is wishful thinking on my part to imagine that this might happen but my contacts with the ABS were encouraging.

Finally, and importantly because of the emphasis on research quality, it is wonderful to report that the IAG’s journal *Geographical Research* is now being included in the ISI Social Sciences Citation Index. A lot of hard work went into lobbying for this change, most of it by our fine team of editors: Arthur Conacher, George Curry and Roy Jones. The Institute is very grateful to them for their work on this – and on producing such an excellent journal.

Jim Walmsely

IAG NEWS

News from the Council

Danielle Drozdowski (*University of New South Wales*) joined the IAG council in 2006. She is in the final year of her doctoral candidature at the University of New South Wales. Her thesis focuses on the role of cultural memories in discourses of national and ethnic identity in Polish persons. She has spent time in the field in Poland and studying Polish at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. Her research interests include, histories of migration to Australia, the role of multiculturalism in discourses of national identity, Australian war time memory, Polish cultural history, and youth out-migration from non-metropolitan coastal regions.

Julie Kesby has completed the first part of a major upgrade to the IAG website. Initially Julie has focused her efforts on up-dating the content and streamlining the format. Julie is currently working on designs for a new page format.

Stewart Williams has sent out subscription renewal notices. If you have not yet paid you membership fees for this year could you please send your payment to Stewart.

Alaric Maude notified members of the Annual General Meeting, to be held in Melbourne on 3rd July at 5.30pm. A call for nominations for council positions was also sent to members via the IAG list and the IAG webpage. Nominations for council positions closed on the 1st June. Should an election be required, ballot papers will be distributed to financial members, who will have until **22 June 2007** to return them to the Secretary, who will be the Returning Officer.

IAG 2007 CONFERENCE UPDATE

The conference organising committee is pleased to announce that the program for the 2007 IAG conference is now taking shape with over 100 papers to be presented over a three-day period (July 2-4). Room venues at Melbourne University have been booked and catering organised (including daily lunches!).

A key feature of this conference will be the juxtaposition of panel discussions with a number of specialist or themed sessions. Panels will address the topics of, 'Bushfire resilience in Australia', 'Future indigenous geographies', 'Reflections on geography and engagement with development in the Asia-Pacific region', 'Evaluating 'An Inconvenient Truth' and 'Researching in a 'Post Capitalist Politics World''. Plenary sessions will reflect on contributions of the discipline within contemporary Australia and on current developments in secondary and tertiary geography teaching.

The postgraduate day on Sunday (July 1) aims to provide a relaxed occasion for postgrads with an interest in Geography across the Physical – Human spectrum to meet and network. The day will include workshop sessions, a forum on contemporary Geography in Australia, a buffet lunch, and an evening reception.

Please note that registration is free for all IAG student members. If you are not yet a member now could be a good time to join!

The broad outline of the conference program can now be accessed from the conference website at

<http://www.sages.unimelb.edu.au/IAGconference/index.html>

or via a link from the IAG website. Details of the papers to be presented in the specialist sessions can be obtained by contacting the various session convenors at the addresses provided in the call for papers, also accessible from the conference website.

Queries on matters other than the program may be addressed to Professor Ruth Fincher, chair of the conference organising committee, at

r.finch@unimelb.edu.au

IAG Postgraduate Day, Melbourne, July 1, 2007

This year's postgraduate day will be held on Sunday 1st July. We are aiming to cater for the wide spectrum of postgraduate from both physical and human geography. Included in the program will be a forum on the contemporary situation of geography for postgraduates, with guest speakers, and workshop sessions targeted at each stage of the postgraduate candidature.

This is a great opportunity to meet other postgrads before the conference begins.

The day is free for all postgraduate members of the IAG attending the conference. Registration also includes lunch and evening drinks.

The IAG also provides postgraduate travel scholarships to assist in the costs assist in the costs associated with attending the conference (please see the IAG website).

The details for the workshop are:

When: Sunday 1st July 2007, from 12.30pm to 6.00pm (plus evening reception)

Where: Gryphon Gallery, University of Melbourne (Parkville Campus), Grattan Street (corner of Swanston Street)

What do I have to do? Tick the box for postgraduate day on your conference registration form or email danielled@unsw.edu.au or amity.james@flinders.edu.au

NOMINATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE FOLLOWING AWARDS OF THE INSTITUTE

GRIFFITH TAYLOR MEDAL

The medal is awarded for distinguished contributions to geography in Australia. No more than one medal is to be awarded in each two year period.

Award Rules

Nominations will be invited in September each second year through the IAG list and by email sent to each member who has registered an email address, and through a notice in the Institute's last Newsletter for the year. A full statement (of no more than 1000 words) must be made describing the nominee's suitability for the award. This statement is to be accompanied by the signatures of two proposing financial members and seconded by a further two financial members. Awards will be made by a majority of Council after receiving advice from the President.

Nominations for awards are strictly confidential and must not be made known to the nominee.

No member shall be informed of nomination until formally invited by Council President to accept the award.

The closing date for the next nomination period is November 2006. Nominations should be sent to the Secretary.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHERS

The Fellowship is awarded for distinguished service to the Institute. No more than one Fellowship is to be awarded each year.

Award Rules

Nominations will be invited in September each year through the IAG list and by email sent to each member who has registered an email address, and through a notice in the Institute's last Newsletter for the year. A full statement (of no more than 1000 words) must be made describing the nominee's suitability for the award. This statement is to be accompanied by the signatures of two proposing financial members and seconded by a further two financial members. Awards will be made by a majority of Council after receiving advice from the President.

Nominations for awards are strictly confidential and must not be made known to the nominee.

No member shall be informed of nomination until formally invited by Council President to accept the award.

Nominations should be sent to the Secretary.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AWARD

In recognition of a distinguished contribution to geographical education or for the advancement of geographical practice in Australia. Each nominee should be required to have a continuous record of IAG membership of not less than ten years. There will be a maximum of three awards annually.

Award Rules

Nominations will be invited in September each year through the IAG list and by email sent to each member who has registered an email address, and through a notice in the Institute's last Newsletter for the year. A full statement (of no more than 1000 words) must be made describing the nominee's suitability for the award. This statement is to be accompanied by the signatures of two proposing financial members and seconded by a further two financial members. Awards will be made by a majority of Council after receiving advice from the President.

Nominations for awards are strictly confidential and must not be made known to the nominee.

No member shall be informed of nomination until formally invited by Council President to accept the award.

Nominations should be sent to the Secretary.

AUSTRALIA-INTERNATIONAL MEDAL

In recognition of either outstanding contributions by Australian (or Australia-based) geographers to the advancement of Geography world-wide or of outstanding contributions to the understanding of the geography of Australia by geographers permanently residing outside Australia. No more than one medal is to be awarded each year.

Award Rules

Nominations will be invited in September each year through the IAG list and by email sent to each member who has registered an email address, and through a notice in the Institute's last Newsletter for the year. A full statement (of no more than 1000 words) must be made describing the nominee's suitability for the award. This statement is to be accompanied by signatures of two proposing financial members and seconded by a further two financial members. Awards will be made by a majority of Council after receiving advice from the President.

Nominations for awards are strictly confidential and must not be made known to the nominee.

No member shall be informed of nomination until formally invited by Council President to accept the award.

Nominations should be sent to the Secretary.

DISCOUNTS ON BLACKWELL BOOKS AND JOURNALS FOR IAG MEMBERS

Blackwell are delighted to offer IAG members a discount of 20% off all Blackwell books and many journals. To take advantage of this offer, simply:

1. Visit <http://www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk/journals/ages/society>
2. Print off the Society Members Special Order Form
3. Enter the details of the books and journals you wish to order
4. Return your completed form, with payment, to: Judy Cornish, IAG Member Orders, Blackwell Publishing, 108 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1JF, UK. Fax: +44 1865 381361

IAG General Meeting 2007

Members of the Institute of Australian Geographers are notified that the next General Meeting of the Institute will be at 5.30 p.m. on 3 July 2007, during the Melbourne IAG Conference. Agenda papers will be distributed at the meeting.

IAG STUDY GROUPS

The IAG hosts a number of special interest study groups which provide a forum for advancing the development of sub-discipline expertise or special interest issues.

At present the active groups and their convenors are:

Cultural Geography

Dr. Rachel Hughes

Geography Program
University of Melbourne VIC 3010
<hughesr@unimelb.edu.au>

Rural Studies

Dr. Amanda Davies

School of Earth and Geographical Studies
The University of Western Australia
35 Stirling Highway, CRAWLEY
Western Australia, 6009
<adavies@cyllene.uwa.edu.au>

Environmental Sustainability

Dr. Nicholas Gill

School of Earth and Environmental Science
University of Wollongong
NSW 2522 Australia
<ngill@uow.edu.au>

Postgraduate

Amity James

School of Geography, Population and
Environmental Management
Flinders University
GPO Box 2100 Adelaide SA 5001
<Amity.James@flinders.edu.au>

Economic Geography

Professor Philip O'Neill

Director Urban Research Centre
University of Western Sydney
Locked Bag 1797
Penrith South DC NSW 1797
<p.oneill@uws.edu.au>

Indigenous Issues

Dr. Cathy Robinson

School of Geography and Oceanography
University College, ADFA
University of New South Wales
Canberra, ACT 2600
<cathy.robinson@adfa.edu.au>

GIScience

Dr. Amy L. Griffin

School of Physical, Environmental and
Mathematical Sciences
UNSW@ADFA
<A.Griffin@adfa.edu.au>

Postgraduate

Danielle Drodzowski

School of Biological, Earth and
Environmental Science
University of New South Wales
Kensington, NSW, 2052
<danielled@unsw.edu.au>

GIScience Study Group

The GIScience, Spatial Analysis and Modelling Study Group have organized a special session of papers at the July 2007 IAG meeting in Melbourne. Approximately 80% of all data collected have associated geographic location information. GIScience represents one of the primary approaches by which these data can be analysed in the consistent, repeatable and objective manner required for broad application. The applications of GIScience span those of geography, and it is one of the key approaches linking geography to other disciplines. Papers have been invited on a number of topics, including terrain analysis, crime mapping, coastal GIS, uncertainty and error, and spatial analysis and modeling."

Rural Studies Group

The Rural Studies Group have organised number of special papers session for the Melbourne Conference. These include:

- Contemporary Rural Transitions; convened by Amanda Davies (UWA)
- Geographies of the Sea-Change (Tree-Change) Movement; convened by Amanda Davies (UWA)
- The Nature of Rural Geography; convened by Amanda Davies (UWA), Nicholas Gill (UOW) and Neil Agent (UNE). This session is co-sponsored by the Environmental Sustainability Studies Group
- Rural Cultural Studies: Exploring historical and geographical perspectives; convened by Kate Darian-Smith (UoM), Chris Gibson (UoW), Andrew Gorman-Murray (UoW). This session is co-sponsored by the Cultural Study Group and the ARC Cultural Research Network.

The Rural Studies Group will also be holding a short panel discussion at the IAG conference on the apparently widening gap between physical and human geography and the possibilities for collaborative research in the rural setting. Neil Argent, Lesely Head and Nicholas Gill will form the panel for this discussion, which will be held during the second paper session of the 'Nature of Rural Geography Session'.

Political Study Group

The Political Geography Study Group will be holding its first session at the IAG in Melbourne, entitled 'Critical political ecology and hybrid geographies: from resources to political subjects'.

Group Convener Kersty Hobson (ANU) will also be hosting a 3-day workshop at ANU's Kialoa campus in September on environmental governance which is open to anyone with relevant research interests. Please contact Kersty via email, or at the IAG conference in Melbourne, if you are interested in attending this workshop.

Cultural Geography Study Group

As the 2007 IAG conference draws near, CGSG members are swinging into action as session convenors (of some five sponsored sessions), presenters (involving upwards of forty papers), and hosts (for those of us based in Melbourne). CGSG sessions are set to cover a number of vibrant areas of current scholarship in the subdiscipline: geographies of care, materiality, gender and sexuality; rural cultures and visibility. These are joined by many additional sessions from environmental, indigenous, urban, economic and political geography perspectives. Conference plenary topics include: geography's place in contemporary Australia; secondary and tertiary teaching of geography; geography's engagement with development in the Asia-Pacific, and new research methodologies. Despite Melbourne's inevitable winter chill, the conference promises to be hugely interesting and enjoyable.

For all the latest information, including a draft brief program in PDF and Word form, see:

<http://www.sages.unimelb.edu.au/IAGconference/index.html>

As usual, the study group will hold its AGM/ business meeting within the conference period. The current scheduled time is 1-2PM on Tuesday July 3, but do check program details on arrival to confirm this. Hope to see many of you there.

FASTS NEWS

Voters Want Scientists to identify and reduce risks in an uncertain world

By Professor Tom Spurling, President

Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS)

Published in Opinion – Canberra Times Monday 19th March

On March 28, 200 of Australia's leading scientists will come to Canberra for a day of face-to-face meetings with the majority of our Federal Parliamentarians.

Since 1999 this annual event – Science meets Parliament – has been a terrific opportunity for scientists to get a sense of political processes and for Parliamentarians to hear first hand how science contributes to Australia's environmental, social and economic development.

In preparation for the meetings, Parliamentarians select topics they wish to discuss from about twenty options. These vary each year but typically cover environmental issues such as water and biodiversity to health and social issues to industry R&D and innovation. It is fair to say that politicians typically put a lot of effort into trying to understand the issues they think their constituents think are important, particularly in an election year.

In that sense, the topics Parliamentarians choose for Science meets Parliament could be considered an informal 'poll' on what they think are the science related issues they are most likely to be challenged about by constituents.

This poll is hardly – dare I say it – scientific. Nevertheless some interesting points emerge.

Unsurprisingly, by far the two most popular topics are water and climate change. However, interest in climate change is heavily focused on energy and carbon mitigation including renewable energy, clean coal and nuclear power. There is less interest in other climate issues such as impacts on agriculture, public health and biosecurity.

Some topics attract interest one year but seem to disappear without trace the next. However, water management, Australia's energy futures, environmental degradation and biosecurity are consistently among the most popular. Health issues including depression and obesity are not far behind. By way of contrast,

interest in commercialisation and innovation is steady but in the bottom half of selected topics.

If we assume Parliamentarians are collectively pretty good at identifying constituents' (voters) concerns and expectations, then the Science meets

Parliament 'poll' raises interesting questions: Are there significant gaps in policy and funding that constrain the capacity of scientists and research organisations to address the key issues Parliamentarians select? How well aligned are these concerns and expectations with current science policy settings?

The Government's own audit of science and engineering skills found Australia faces a shortage of 20,000 scientists by 2012 and scientists have long been concerned about chronic underinvestment in research infrastructure. However, there is little comment on the management and collection of the data that are essential for scientific research, monitoring resource use and remediation.

For example, in the Government's recent water package, \$480m over 10 years was specifically tagged for the Bureau of Meteorology to develop a national capacity for water data and forecasting services using common systems and standards. I do not recall many questions about why the current state of water data necessitated the additional investment of half a billion dollars.

The State of the Environment 2006 report prepared for the Government is particularly blunt on this matter. Even though it is the third report since 1996, "it is still impossible to give a clear national picture of the state of Australia's environment because of the lack of accurate, nationally consistent, environmental data. This has particularly serious consequences for identification and management of Australia's biodiversity, coasts and oceans, and natural heritage."

Perhaps most damning – of the 263 indicators the report tried to use, there was useful national data for only 37 per cent, some data for 51 per cent and no data for 12 per cent. That means more than half the data are lacking to make reasonable national assessments.

The problem is not just lack of resources. The incompatibility of data and classification systems between States, Territories and Commonwealth is yet another artifact of State/Commonwealth tensions. Moreover, the sheer volume of scientific data necessitates sophisticated ICT and management capabilities and much improved co-ordination across a range of Commonwealth and State departments and agencies, universities and research institutions.

To the second question of alignment of Parliamentarians choices at Science meets Parliament with current policy settings. Since Backing Australia's Ability was announced in 2001, science and innovation policy has been heavily skewed toward commercialisation of publicly funded R&D. Yet it would appear that politicians' own constituents might have a somewhat different view of priorities.

Given the enduring concern over water management, energy options, climate change and public health perhaps the real message is constituents (voters) believe the fundamental role of science is to identify and help reduce risks in an uncertain world.

That does not mean commercial benefits are not important but it highlights the growing appreciation - as evidenced by the recent Productivity Commission work on public support for science and innovation – that preparedness to deal with uncertainties and risks is an outcome of science that deserves greater recognition and support in public policy.

CONFERENCES

XII World Congress of Rural Sociology 6-11 July 2008, Goyang, Korea

The XII World Congress of Rural Sociology is fast approaching. Information on how to submit session proposals can be found at the International Rural Sociology Association (IRSA) web site at:
<http://www.irsaworld.org/XII/program/index.html>

“A Greater Mekong? Poverty, Integration and Development” 26th-27th September 2007, co-hosted by the Australian Mekong Resource Centre and AusAID

The conference will

- contribute to public awareness, discussion and debate over the direction of Australia’s aid program, in light of directions indicated in the 2006 White Paper;
- provide an update on developments in the Mekong River Basin and Greater Mekong Subregion; and
- explore the implications of regional integration, infrastructure development and integrated water resource management for the sustainable well-being of the region’s lower income countries and poorer communities

Participants and speakers at the conference will come from academic, government, NGO, international organisation and community backgrounds, from around Australia, from Mekong countries and elsewhere. The conference will include keynote speakers, case studies, panel discussions and breakout sessions. There is no fee for the conference, however prior registration is required to assist with catering and conference planning.

AGRI-FOOD XIV

25th – 29th November 2007

**Emmanuel College, The University of Queensland, Brisbane
Sponsored by the University of Queensland and Griffith University**

We invite the submission of papers from people currently undertaking social scientific research on agri-food systems. Topics can include any aspect of the political or social life of food, and we are eager to hear from those who have proposals for panel sessions and symposia. Post-graduate students are particularly encouraged to present papers at the conference.

**2007 UrbanSalt Conference "Dealing with Salinity in Urban Environments"
22nd-23rd May, 2007**

Waterview Convention Centre, Homebush Bay

The Conference will provide an opportunity to learn from the experts in urban salinity from around Australia. The Conference will be attended by key decision makers from local government, state and federal government agencies, representatives of catchment management authorities, environmental scientists, geotechnical officers, landscape architects, builders and developers, engineers, damp proofing contractors and building repairers.

IGU's Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND)

Forthcoming include:

Inner Mongolia September 2007

Taiwan and Japan June 2008

Probably Germany 2009

For details please go to <https://webspaces.utexas.edu/hudsonpf/comland/>

UNU-WIDER Project Workshop

Beyond the Tipping Point: Development in an Urban World

19th – 20th October, 2007

London School of Economics,

Project Directors: Jo Beall (London School of Economics), Basudeb Guha-Khasnobis (UNU-WIDER), and Ravi Kanbur (Cornell University)

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/DESTIN/beyondtippingcallforpapers.pdf>

Environmental governance workshop

10th – 13th September 2007

Australian National University's Kioloa Property

Expressions of interest are invited for attendance at the above 3-day workshop, to be held at the Australian National University's coastal Kioloa Property. The purpose of the workshop is to bring together PhD students and established scholars from across Australia working in the area of environmental governance. The aim is to share on-going work in a mutually supportive manner, and to critically discuss current debates around environmentalities within human geography. In particular, individuals working on (broadly conceived) neoliberal policies and practices, and their linkages with environmental governance in Australian, New Zealand and Asia-Pacific contexts are invited to attend.

Further information can be obtained from:

Kersty Hobson

The Australian National University

Email: kersty.hobson@anu.edu.au

Third State of Australian Cities Conference

28th – 30th November 2007

Jointly hosted by the University of South Australia, Flinders University and the University of Adelaide.

The conference venues will be the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia campuses on North Terrace in the heart of Adelaide.

The Adelaide conference has a focus on the Growth, Sustainability and Vulnerability of Urban Australia. It will be a working research conference extending over three full days, providing participants with the opportunity to report on and learn about current research on issues related to urban and regional sustainability and to identify research gaps for future exploration and funding. The conference will be an important forum for established researchers but will also include space for early career academics and doctoral students.

REGISTER ON-LINE AT WWW.UNISA.EDU.AU/SOAC2007

International Geomorphology Conference – 2009

Melbourne Convention Centre

Meredith Orr and David Dunkerley (*Monash*) are on the organising committee for this conference, which will be the first time that this 4-yearly conference has been held in the southern hemisphere. About 1000 delegates are expected.

See <http://www.anzgg.org>

GRANT AND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

IAG Honours Award

Each year the Institute of Australian Geographers offers a cash Award and a year's free membership of the Institute for a paper based on work undertaken in the 4th year Geography Honours degree, or equivalent program, at an Australian university. Manuscripts must not exceed 6,000 words (inclusive of references) and may include not more than six diagrams, maps or photographs together with necessary tables. Manuscripts should be submitted to the editors of *Australian Geographical Studies*, stating that the paper is to be considered for the award. Three copies of the paper should be submitted following the style conventions of *AGS* (see "Notes to Contributors" in a recent issue).

The papers will be reviewed independently by at least two referees and considered for publication in the normal way. The editors will judge which paper receives the award although all papers deemed acceptable by the referees and editors will be published in *AGS*. The designation of high commendation, with a year's free membership of the Institute, may be given to those submissions which come close to the level of the award winner. The paper is expected to be submitted within two years of the student's Honours thesis being accepted. All papers must be single authored. Papers should be submitted to the Editors of *AGS* before the 1st October closing date.

IAG Postgraduate Paper Award

Applicants for the Postgraduate Paper Award are asked to submit a paper based on work undertaken during their own research for a higher degree. The paper could be submitted during the period of enrolment but should not be submitted later than one year after the award of the degree. The paper must be single authored. Format and standards for the paper will follow that of journal articles

to *Australian Geographical Studies*. The Editor(s) of the journal will have sole discretion as to whether the paper will be published. The Award will consist of one year IAG membership fees and a cash sum of \$200.00. The Institute reserves the right not to make an award in any year.

For further details on both of the above awards contact:

The Editors
Geographical Research
School of Social Sciences
Curtin University
Perth, WA 6845

Brian McLoughlin Postgraduate Award

The Brian McLoughlin Postgraduate Award had been established by Urban Policy and Research to honour the memory of Brian McLoughlin and to encourage new and emerging scholars in fields such as urban planning, human geography, urban sociology and housing studies. Brian, who died in 1994, was Chair of Town and Regional Planning at the University of Melbourne. His most well-known publication is probably *Shaping Melbourne's Future. Town Planning, the State and Civil Society* (1994), which presents a theorised and empirically-grounded study - still-unequaled in Australian planning literature - of the effects of planning policies and practices and their unintended consequences for urban spatial form.

The recipient of the Award will receive a cash amount of AUS\$1,000 and one year's free subscription to *Urban Policy and Research*. In addition to the main prize *Urban Policy and Research* can award the designation of high commendation, with a year's free subscription to the journal, to those submissions that come close to the level of the award winner in a given year.

The paper must be based on work undertaken for a higher degree at a university in the Asia-Pacific Region. It can be submitted during the period of enrolment but no later than one year after the award of a higher degree. All papers must be single authored. Papers should be submitted to the Editors of *Urban Policy and Research* before the 15 October of each year. Manuscripts must not exceed 5000 words (inclusive of references) and it should be indicated that the paper is to be considered for the Award. Three hard copies or one electronic copy of the paper should be submitted and must follow the style conventions of *Urban Policy and Research* (see "Notes for Contributors" in the journal). The papers will be reviewed independently by at least two anonymous referees and considered for publication in the normal way. The editors will judge which paper receives the award although all papers deemed acceptable by the editors will be published in *Urban Policy and Research*. The Editors of the journal will have sole discretion as to whether the paper will be published. *Urban Policy and Research* reserves the right not to make an award in any year.

Papers can be submitted either by post to
Urban Policy and Research

School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning
RMIT University, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne VIC 3001
or by email to upr@rmit.edu.au

HOT TOPICS FROM THE IAG LIST

IAG-List is an initiative of the IAG. It is an electronic medium of communication intended to serve as a forum for discussion and the sharing of information relevant to Australian geographers and interested others. The list is open to anyone who wishes to join. The list facilitates and advances the study and discussion of geography in and of Australia and helps bring together in hyperspace a co-operative community of 'Australian' geographers. These ends are achieved through the exchange of information concerning relevant meetings, conferences and job opportunities; the posting of article synopses, book announcements and reviews; calls for papers; presentation of concise essays, legislative alerts and relevant cross-postings from other lists. Contributions from academic and applied geographers, non-geographers and independent scholars are welcome. The IAG-List is managed by Dr Lisel O'Dwyer.

To join IAG-list, go to <https://listserver.flinders.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/iag-list> and follow the subscription instructions.

Posted by Lisel O'Dwyer (22/05/07)

School geography has lost its way, say teachers.

By Justine Ferrari, Education writer, The Australian, 19th May 2007

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/images/masthead.gif>

GEOGRAPHY is taught in schools as a series of issues pushing a particular opinion rather than giving students a grounding in basic facts about natural processes and human interaction with the environment.

The Australian Geography Teachers Association and the Institute of Australian Geographers told a Senate inquiry into the academic standards of school education that geography, under the umbrella of Studies of Society and the Environment, had lost its disciplinary rigour. AGTA director Grant Kleeman told the hearing in Sydney that students studied global warming but not the atmospheric processes required to understand climate change and its impact.

"The traditional discipline encouraged students to look at issues from a variety of perspectives with the expectation students then formulate their own opinions rather than inculcate them with a particular perspective," Mr Kleeman said.

IAG president Jim Walmsley said the teaching of SOSE into schools resulted in geography students being "issue-led rather than being rigorous in their understanding of these issues".

Mr Kleeman said the notion of issue-based learning was introduced in the 1970s and 80s when everything taught in schools had to be immediately relevant to the lives of students. "We're advocating a return to a more systematic study of

geography and history, where you look at processes as the entry point of study rather than the issue," he said.

AGTA chairman Nick Hutchinson said the perspectives pushed in school geography included radical green opinions and neo-liberal views school, when it should have a robust core as the base. "In geography, we've taken on board everything from extreme environmental perspectives through to peace perspectives," Mr Hutchinson said. "But all the time we come back to this core of the discipline, so we can deal with an issue like deep ecology, which might be as controversial as black-armband history, but we can do it within the discipline because we have tools of dissection," he said.

Deep ecology is a philosophy that says animals and plants have the right to as much ethical consideration as humans. "The automatic reaction of most kids is they want to protect nature, the environment, animals and cuddly things," he said. "The job of the teacher is to show them other sides, to facilitate class discussion so they can work out their values towards issues." Understanding the processes at work in areas such as the Great Barrier Reef or cyclones destroying rainforests showed students that destruction was part of the natural growth cycle, he said.

The AGTA says geography should be compulsory for all students in years 7 to 10 as a stand-alone subject.

Posted by Kristopher Olds (24/05/07)

The ongoing UNSW Asia crisis is laden with geographic elements. As UNSW vice-chancellor Fred Hilmer put it:

"This venture was, perhaps in hindsight, a little bit too ambitious ... we didn't have the balance-sheet strength to undertake the venture," he said. "Geography is really important. When a student says, 'I want an Australian degree', what he really means is, 'I want the experience of living in Sydney' ... The lesson we learnt is a student comes as much to a geographic destination as they do to a brand of a university," he said.
<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporebusinessnews/view/278073/1/.html>

Also see a very insightful analysis on this issue in the consistently interesting (even if you disagree with him) Yawning Bread blog: <http://www.yawningbread.org/>

The convergence of forces - weak student demand in Year 1 (though surely this was expected...), new forms of cowboy "academic capitalism" (see the clip below), and the intertwined geographies that this event sheds light on, is fascinating (though I am aware that a lot of money is being lost, and lives disrupted, by this debacle).

I would be interested in hearing from anyone who is tracking this event, or is writing about the changing nature of UNSW, or about the changing nature of academia in Australia more generally (such that universities feel a need to stretch their institutional fabric across great distances to new spaces of perceived

"opportunity"). I ask as I am writing up a project on the Singapore "global schoolhouse" development approach this coming fall and I am interested in citing some grounded Australian voices on one aspect of the development process I am examining.

Best wishes,
Kris Olds

For further information see

'Uni was warned about Asian campus debacle'

By Harriet Alexander, Higher Education Reporter, Sydney Morning Herald, 25th May 2007.

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/uni-was-warned-about-asian-campus-debacle/2007/05/24/1179601579557.html>>

GRANTS AND AWARDS RECEIVED

Iain Hay (*Flinders*), was named as Australia's top university teacher at the Carrick Awards for Australian University Teaching presentation ceremony in Canberra on November 28 2006. As the winner of the Prime Minister's Award for Australian University Teacher of the Year he received a medal and \$75,000.

Katharine McKinnon (formerly a PhD student in *Human Geography, RSPAS, ANU* and now at Massey University, NZ) was jointly awarded the 2006 President's Prize and DK Award for best thesis of the year by the Asian Studies Association of Australia. Her thesis was entitled 'Discourses of intervention and identification in the highlands of northern Thailand'.

Elizabeth Pryde (PhD student, *JCU*) has been awarded an Australia & Pacific Science Foundation grant of \$22,000 to implement the project "Does the landscape matrix of native *Eucalyptus deglupta* plantations, logged-over and primary rainforest on the Gazelle Peninsula, Papua New Guinea, provide sustainable habitat for local wildlife?"

Amanda Davies and **Matthew Tonts** (*UWA*) have been awarded \$280,000 by the Rangelands Coordinating Group to investigate the human uses and social values of the rangeland coast and marine environment. This project compliments Amanda and Matthew's current study on the human uses and values of the marine and coastal environments of Western Australia's south coast, funded through the \$4.2 million Natural Heritage Trust II project 'Securing WA's Marine Future'.

Neil Argent, Fran Rolley and **Tony Sorensen** (*UNE*) have won a consultancy (\$14 000) NSW Department of Environment and Conservation to examine the economic geography of the towns of the Gwydir and Macquarie Rover catchments. The work is to be completed by June 2007.

Emma Baker and Andrew Beer (*Flinders*) with Professor Gavin Wood were awarded an \$86 000 ARC linkage grant for their project "Housing Assistance and the Life Course: Understanding the Impact of Policy Alternatives". The funding will begin in July 2007 and span 2 years.

Beverley Clarke (*Flinders*), a lecturer in the School, has won the Institute of Australian Geographers Postgraduate Award for 2006 for her paper Australia's Coastcare Program (1996-2002): its Purpose, Components and Outcomes.

Dr J Beringer (*Monash*) along with A/Prof JM Hacker; Prof K Paw U; Dr BG Neining; Dr LB Hutley were awarded an ARC Discovery "Patterns and processes of carbon and water budgets across northern Australian landscapes: From point to region"; 2007-2009, \$660,000. This project will support the existing National Carbon Accounting System by providing new information on processes and spatial variability and regional budgets of carbon and water budgets that underpin our International commitments.

Dr J Beringer (*Monash*); Prof AJ Pitman; Prof W Steffen; Dr G Richards; Dr Y Wang were awarded an ARC Linkage for the project "Reengineering a dynamic vegetation model to explore the stability of Australian terrestrial carbon", 2007-2009, \$192,000.

Dr J Beringer (*Monash*); Dr LB Hutley Dr SK Arndt; Dr S Livesley; Dr GDCook; Dr K Butterbach-Bahl, have been awarded an ARC Linkage grant for the project "Integrative assessment of disturbance and land-use change on total greenhouse gas balance and nutrient cycling in savanna ecosystems" 2007-2009, \$190,000. This project will enable NT specific calibrations of climate variability-land use models, such as the National Carbon Accounting System.

Nigel Tapper (*Monash*) with Prof Patrick DeDecker at ANU have been awarded an ARC Discovery for 2007-2009 for \$745,000 for the project "The composition and transport of Australian airborne dust".

The following geographers have recently qualified for the award of PhD

Leasie Felderhof (*JCU*) has completed her doctoral research on fire ecology and management in the spinifex/snappy-gum woodlands of northwest Queensland, Australia. This work has been funded by the Savanna CRC and Ergon Energy.

John Guinotte (*JCU*) has completed his doctoral thesis on "Understanding Environmental Controls and Predicting Climate Change Effects on the Health and Occurrence of Coral Communities and their Constituent Organisms". John is now working as a marine biogeographer at the Marine Conservation Biology Institute in Washington, USA.

Kim Doohan (*Macquarie*) Making things come good: Aborigines and Minors at Argyle

Daniel Galli (*Macquarie*) A new approach for modelling an ideal economic system

Louise Crabtree (*Macquarie*) Messy Humans, Dirty Economics and Leaky Houses

Nicole Cook (*Macquarie*) Conflict and consensus in the redevelopment of de-industrialized property in Sydney

Andrew Gorman-Murray (*Macquarie*) Queering Home, Domesticating Deviance

Gorawut Numnak has been awarded a PhD from the *University of New England* for the thesis entitled 'Migrant Labour in Thailand: The Thai State and Governance of International Labour Migration since the 1990s'. Gorawut was supervised by Professor Amarjit Kaur (Economic History) and Dr. Barbara Rugendyke (Geography).

Judith Burns' thesis, entitled 'Routes and Branches: Residential Mobility Among Aboriginal People in Western NSW' has been accepted by the examiners. Judiths' supervisory team at the *University of New England* consisted of Dr. Barbara Rugendyke, Professor Jim Walmsley and Dr. Frances Rolley.

Paul Huddleston (*University of Western Australia*) has been awarded a PhD for his thesis entitled "Contract Farming in Oil Palm: The Case of Ghana and the Philippines". Paul was supervised by Professor Matthew Tonts.

Five students from *Human Geography, RSPAS, ANU* have all been admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy:

Steven Jarvis whose thesis topic was 'Incubation nation: ubiquitous internet and Japan's changed role at the technological frontier';

Mike Lowe 'Smallholder agrarian change: the experience of two Tolai communities';

Rie Makita 'Livelihood diversification of the landless poor through sponsored non-farm activities in north-western Bangladesh';

Michael Pretes 'Renewing the wealth of nations' and

Ruth Turia 'Cannot see the land for the trees: the forest management dilemma in Papua New Guinea'.

Charlotte Morgan (*Flinders*) has been awarded a PhD for her thesis entitled "Revealing patterns of *Campylobacter* Infection in South Australia: An exploratory space - time analysis".

Peter Smailes (*Flinders*) has been awarded a PhD for his thesis entitled "Redefining the local" The social organisation of rural space in South Australia, 1982-2006"

NEWS FROM DEPARTMENTS

University of New England

UNE is undergoing yet another restructure of its academic "departments". Geography and Planning has been in the School of Human and Environmental

Studies, along with Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology, since 1999. All that is to change. Six schools in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences are to be combined into three and the Faculty itself is to be combined with the Faculty of the Sciences into one mega faculty. Geography and Planning will combine with Sociology, Psychology and Linguistics in a new School of Behavioural, Cognitive and Social Sciences. Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology will go their separate way and join History, Politics, Philosophy and Classics. The change is proposed for July 2007.

Many IAG members will remember the old weatherboard building in which GeoPlan is housed at UNE. This is a “temporary” building built in the late 1950s. With its fiftieth birthday coming up, it may well have become a heritage item. The University has however decided that the building is well past its use-by date. GeoPlan is therefore scheduled to move into a refurbished Geology Building, there no longer being many geologists on campus. The closing date for tenders has passed and a move to new premises is scheduled for sometime later in the year. The “temporary” 1950s building is certainly showing its age.

Dr Raj Rajaratnam joined GeoPlan as a Lecturer at the beginning of the year. Raj has a strong background in animal ecology and environmental science with research degrees from Malaysia and the USA. He will teach principally in physical geography, in particular reinstituting a unit in biogeography. Raj replaces **Bob Haworth** who retired in January 2007 after many years service as a distinguished geomorphologist.

GeoPlan has recently hosted several overseas visitors. **Professor Reza Pourmahammadi** from the University of Tabriz has spent six months in the School, working principally with Tony Sorensen on the changing nature of planning systems. **Vanessa Wiggeraad** and **Rixt Bijker** from the University of Groningen recently spent two months in the School, using it as a base for their Masters degree fieldwork. Both are cultural geographers as they worked with Jim Walmsley, looking at the way in which Uralla uses the Thunderbolt legend to promote itself and at the way Glen Innes promotes itself as a Celtic settlement.

James Cook University

Professor David Gillieson has been leading the Dynamic Savanna project for the Tropical Savannas CRC. The overall objective of the project is to increase the ability of land managers and policy makers to make informed decisions regarding the management of woody vegetation dynamics in the savannas of north Australia. Fifteen scientists from universities, CSIRO and State government agencies have been involved in the research, which has been funded to \$591,000 over three years. The Vegetation Change section of the new Land Manager website provides a valuable resource for land managers, scientists, policy makers and other stakeholders in Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia. See <http://www.boabdevelop.info/fire/fire.aspx> for more details. The Dynamic Savanna Web GIS (at www.dynasav.org.au) provides access to a wide range of spatially referenced information (literature, maps, data sources, photographic archives). A book from the project is in preparation.

Professor Gillieson has also led a project looking at the nature, extent and

severity of rainforest damage following the impact of severe tropical cyclone Larry in March 2006. Accurate mapping of the extent and nature of rainforest canopy damage along the track of Cyclone Larry is based on both medium-resolution radar and optical remote sensing. Ongoing monitoring of the recovery of canopy closure and structural integrity is using combined rapid field assessment and satellite observations. Funding has been provided by the Tropical Landscapes Joint Venture (CSIRO – JCU). He is also currently engaged in an inventory of wild sandalwood stocks in Vanuatu, using remote sensing, bioclimatic modelling and field surveys. This is funded by ACIAR to \$84,000.

University of Western Australia

The geography and planning discipline at The University of Western Australia has continued to grow with three new positions created (and filled) during the last 6 months.

Dr. Bryan Boruff has recently joined the School as a lecturer in Geography and will teach in geographic information science and environmental management. Bryan is primarily interested in the spatial manifestation of human-environment relationships as they pertain to the interdisciplinary field of vulnerability science. His expertise is the use of remote sensing and geographic information technologies for disaster management applications particularly in the assessment of risk and vulnerability to extreme natural events. His previous work has focused on the methodological development of multiple-hazard assessment frameworks predominantly on small island developing states.

Dr. Paul Maginn has been appointed as a senior lecturer in geography and planning. Paul will coordinate UWA's new undergraduate and postgraduate programs in urban and regional planning.

Dr. Julian Clifton has been appointed as a research fellow in geography. Julian, who was previously a senior lecturer at Portsmouth in the UK, will continue his research on collaborative coastal and marine management and planning issues in Australian and South East Asia.

The School will shortly advertise for two new lecturing positions in Geography. One of these positions will be in geomorphology and the other in climate.

Macquarie University

Professor Bob Fagan (*Macquarie*) will spend from May to July at the National University of Ireland, Galway as visiting fellow in the Centre for Structural Change and Innovation working with a research team exploring global commodity chains and strategies of local-regional accommodation and resistance to globalisation. A particular focus of the team is the global banana industry and Bob is writing a book with Dr Peter Krinks (*Macquarie*) on implications of globalisation for banana-growing localities in Australia and the Philippines. Bob will also explore setting up research links between NUI's Social Science Research Centre and Macquarie's Centre for Research on Social Inclusion in which the Department of Human Geography is a major participant.

Robyn Dowling, Bob Fagan, Richie Howitt, Kevin McCracken and Frank Siciliano are part of a multidisciplinary team from Macquarie's Centre for Research on Social Inclusion, that has formed a five-year, funded, research relationship with Parramatta City Council and their community capacity building initiative. Macquarie University has also provided seed funding for the partnership.

Robyn Dowling, in collaboration with **Pauline McGuirk** (*Newcastle*) and **Rowland Atkinson** (*Tasmania*) has begun work on their ARC Discovery Project on 'Privatising residential life'.

Monash University

Sophie Bickford has been appointed as a Lecturer in Physical geography and will be teaching in the areas of biogeography and quaternary environments

Jo Brown has been appointed as a Research Fellow to the Climatology research group.

Megan Farrelly has been appointed as a Research Fellow and is working within the National Urban Water Governance Program. The aim of the program is to investigate the changing governance of traditional urban water management in Australia, focused specifically on case studies in Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth. The program has also appointed **Stacey Sawchuk** and **Ben Iaquinto** as Research Assistants.

Lyle Pakula has been appointed to a 5 year lecturing contract teaching in atmospheric science. His appointment is co-shared with Mathematics.

Peter Isaac has been appointed as a Research Fellow in Land Atmosphere Ecosystem interactions

Meredith Orr who taught in soils and geomorphology has resigned from this position.

The School of Geography and Environmental Science will be soon to advertise for 2 senior support people (Executive Officer and Technical Manager), a Professor of Human Geography, and a Technician in the area of climatology/hydrology.

University of New South Wales

Kevin Dunn was promoted to Associate Professor in September 2006.

Shawn Laffan has been promoted to Senior Lecturer in late 2006

Professor Andy Pitman has joined The University of NSW and was appointed as co-director of the new UNSW Centre for Climate Change Research.

Flinders University

The School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management at Flinders University welcomed two new adjunct lecturers, Dr James Chalmers and Mr Paul Green. **Dr James Chalmers** has a PhD from James Cook University and until recently was a Coordinator, Human Development Reports, United Nations Development Program in Port Moresby PNG. **Mr Paul Green** began his professional career teaching Botany and Environmental Studies at Adelaide University and researching the vegetation ecology of the Mount Lofty Ranges. For the past 15 years he has been Principal of his own environmental consultancy practice. Many of his recent projects involve the design and management of the reedbed components of constructed wetlands used to improve the quality of urban stormwater.

Peter Smailes was awarded the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia John Lewis Silver Medal for his PhD entitled "Redefining the local: The social organisation of rural space in South Australia, 1982-2006". The award is made to the candidate who has made a significant theoretical or empirical contribution to geography through the completion of a Masters degree or a PhD.

The 2006 Les Heathcote Award for Masters of Environmental Management winner is **Louise Anders**. This prize is awarded each year to the student achieving the best overall Master of Environmental Management performance (including thesis and coursework).

Staff from Flinders hosted a symposium on restructuring in the automotive industry on the 29th and 30th of November 2006 at McLaren's at the Lake. The Symposium sought to draw out the similarities and differences between the closure of the Lonsdale plant of Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (MMAL) and the Rover MG plant in Longbridge, Birmingham. Participants in the Symposium were drawn from Flinders University staff working on an ARC Linkage grant entitled the Health, Housing and Labour Market Impacts of an Automotive Plant Closure, and UK-based staff who have worked in Birmingham. Visitors included Prof David Bailey of the School of Business, University of Birmingham; Prof Phil McCann, Waikato University; Dr Caoline Chapain and Dr Stephen Hall of the Center for Urban and Regional Studies, Birmingham University; and Dr Ed Ferrari, Sheffield University.

Australian National University

Bryant Allen (*Human Geography, ANU*) has completed his contributions to a book on agriculture in the Papua New Guinea economy being edited by Mike Bourke and Tracy Harwood and has completed a first draft of a book on food security in Papua New Guinea, to be published in 2007. This book includes chapters on environmental quality, food production systems, the relationship between malnutrition and food security, domestic food marketing, imported food, environmental, social and economic threats to food security and local, national and international responses to the main threats to food security. His 180 page report on the national roads of PNG was published by AusAID in December 2006 (ISBN 1 920861 90 4)

Mike Bourke and **Tracy Harwood** (*Human Geography, ANU*) are editing a book with a working title: *Graun, mani na kaikai: agriculture in Papua New Guinea*. It has been written by Mike Bourke, Bryant Allen, Matthew Allen and several other specialist contributors. Mike is also involved in three ACIAR-funded projects in PNG on aspects of soil fertility in the highlands, sweet potato variety evaluation and forestry.

Katherine Gibson (*Human Geography, ANU*) has during the year presented invited seminars and discussions about her recent book with Julie Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*, at the following universities; Griffith, Melbourne, Newcastle, Otago and the University of the Philippines, Diliman. She spent three weeks in April in the Philippines visiting community enterprises established during a recently completed action research project as well as others associated with the NGO Unlad Kabayan Migrant Services foundation Inc. with whom she has been collaborating since 2000.

Kersty Hobson (*Human Geography, ANU*) spent two months last year in the USA, where she was part of a multi-disciplinary research team exploring land management options in northern New Mexico, using deliberative participatory methods with both key local organisations and community members. She continues to write up this work, as well as writing invited papers on sustainability for the new Routledge journal *Geography Compass* and a *Geoforum* editorial. In September this year she is holding a three-day workshop on environmental governance at the ANU's coastal campus, to which established scholars and postgraduates working in this area are encouraged to attend.

Lesley Potter (*Human Geography, ANU*) is continuing her work on tree-based commodities and traditional agriculture in Indonesia. A few months ago she completed a chapter on coffee in southern Sumatra for a book entitled *Taking Southeast Asia to Market*, edited by Joe Nevins and Nancy Peluso, to be published by Cornell University Press. She is now writing on oil palm in Kalimantan for two volumes associated with the 'Agrarian transition in Southeast Asia' project, one focussing on challenge and resistance to the transition, the second exploring the nature and limitations of the transition on the island of Borneo. These materials will also be presented to a meeting of the Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies in Quebec City in October.

GEOGRAPHERS ARE WORKING ON ...

George Curry and **Gina Koczberski**, (*Curtin*) together with E. Omuru, J. Duigu, C. Yala and B. Imbun, have completed a social assessment report for a proposed World Bank funded smallholder agricultural development project in the oil palm growing areas of PNG.

Gina Koczberski and **George Curry** (*Curtin*) also recently returned from fieldwork in East New Britain and West New Britain as part of their ARC discovery grant investigating the land accumulation strategies of migrants in the two provinces

Fran Rolley (*UNE*) has been appointed as a Council Member on the Australian Population Association Council for 2007 and 2008.

Jim Walmsley, Tony Sorensen, Fran Rolley and Raj Rajaratnam (*UNE*) have been part of a team which has just finished a major report from the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship (formerly Immigration and Multicultural Affairs). The report is entitled "The social costs and benefits of immigration for Australia". It is hoped that the report will be published on the DIAC website by July. The research team was organised by UNE's Centre for Applied Research in Social Science, led by Kerry Carrington. The final report was edited by Kerry Carrington, Jim Walmsley and **Alison McIntosh**, a recent doctoral graduate in GeoPlan.

Amanda Davies with **Matthew Tonts and Julia Fry** (*UWA*) is finalising a number of research projects on the geography of rural skilled labour. These research examines issues including underemployment in the rural labour force, the role of skilled migration in overcoming regional skilled labour shortages, and ageing in the rural labour force. The research is funded by The Department of Transport and Regional Services, The Wheatbelt Development Commission, The Great Southern Development Commission and The Department of Local Government and Regional Development (WA).

Deirdre McKay (*Human Geography, ANU*) is completing a book, based on her fieldwork in Ifugao Province, Philippines, and with Ifugao outmigrants in Hong Kong. She is also working on journal articles, data analysis and video production for the diverse economies project in the Philippines that she shares with Katherine Gibson and Department of Anthropology colleagues, Kathryn Robinson and Andrew McWilliam.

Lesley Potter (*Human Geography, ANU*) is continuing her work on commodities and traditional agriculture in Indonesia, especially coffee in southern Sumatra and oil palm in Sumatra and Kalimantan. Forest governance is also an interest, and she recently gave a keynote address to a meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on forest governance and decentralisation in Asia and the Pacific. The meeting was organised by the Center for International Forestry research (CIFOR), and the Asia Forest Partnership (AFP); Lesley's address was entitled 'Governance, tenure and equity in Asia-Pacific forests'.

Andrew Beer (*Flinders*) has been appointed to State Minister Weatherill's Ministerial Strategic Housing Advisory Council (MSHAC) for a period of three years.

Simon Bengier (*Flinders*) has been invited to serve as a reviewer for the journal "Restoration Ecology"

Bev Clarke (*Flinders*) was appointed to the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board Coast, Estuarine and Marine Advisory Committee (AMLR NRM CEMAC).

In his role as Director of the Southern Research Centre **Andrew Beer** (*Flinders*), attended a 'Think Tank on Housing Wealth' held in Durham Castle on the 8th and 9th of February. The Think Tank was organised by Professor Susan Smith of the Geography Department, Durham University and attracted contributions from the Bank of England, the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, and the OECD. The Think Tank also heard from a range of private sector organisations - such as the Chicago Mercantile Exchange - and academics such as 'Chip' Case from Wellesley College, Mass; and Gavin Wood, RMIT. Discussion focussed on a range of issues, including the role of housing wealth in the economic cycle - the most recent economic modelling suggesting that housing wealth has a muted impact on additional consumption spending - and the capacity of securitisation to reduce the cost of home ownership to low income groups. There was also considerable debate about the potential role of property derivatives within the money market, with several speakers highlighting the emergence of this new class of assets.

GEOGRAPHERS ON THE MOVE

David Rich, currently Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University of New England in Armidale, NSW has been appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Provost at the University of Tasmania. He will take up his position in July and will be based in Launceston.

Paul Maginn has left the University of South Australia to take up a position as a senior lecturer in Geography and Planning at the University of Western Australia.

Karen Holmes, a research fellow at the University of Western Australia, will take up a senior scientist position at the Department of Agriculture (WA), in the Centre for Ecosystem Hydrology. Karen will still be housed in geography at UWA, and will continue to work collaboratively with geographers in the school.

PUBLICATIONS

John Pigram, Australia's Water Resources

In, *Australia's Water Resources*, Professor John Pigram examines the critical water-related issues facing Australia at the beginning of the 21st century and the policies and strategies necessary for their management. The book is intended as a wide-ranging assessment of Australia's water endowment and its sustainable use in the urban sector and in industry, agriculture and outdoor education. Particular care has been taken to present a balanced approach to the many contentious questions that have arisen over the allocation, use and management of water, and to put forward future policy directions for the resource in coming years.

For further information, review copy requests and images please contact Melinda Chandler at **CSIRO PUBLISHING** Email: melinda.chandler@csiro.au

POSTGRADUATE NEWS

Nathan Wales (*University of Sydney*) is investigating the relationship between spatio-temporal patterns of vegetation change and forest management practices within the Angkor World Heritage Site. In examining the ecological integrity and cultural value of remnant vegetation there is a need to understand the spatial and temporal patterns of change including quantifying vegetation pattern in the landscape. A combination of remote sensing techniques, fragmentation analysis, field botanical surveys and interviews with the local community will be adopted in the investigation of vegetation change.

Jo Gillespie's (*University of Sydney*) PhD research is geographically focused on the World Heritage site at Angkor, Cambodia. She is investigating the impact of the World Heritage classification on the local population - assessing the effect of the regulatory regime which overlays the World Heritage site. Specifically, her research is centred on the twin issues of land "ownership" and land use (or control). As such, she is blending her background in geography and law and situating her work within the rubric of 'legal geography' – as she is interested in the spatial analysis of law. She has placed her work in a conceptual context that considers the complexities of a legally saturated World Heritage landscape. Jo's PhD is part of an ARC linkage project known as the "Living with Heritage".

GeoPlan at University of New England has welcomed **Kath Beech** as a new PhD student. Kath is working on supervised by **Neil Argent** and **Robyn Bartel**. She is working on international trade in genetically modified organisms and the impact of this on indigenous people.

Stephen Smith (*ADFA UNSW*) is currently in the second year of his research examining the geography of minor party electoral performances at Australian State and Federal elections held between 1997 and 2006. He has a forthcoming paper entitled 'In need of revival: Assessing the state of Australian electoral geography research' which will be published in *L'Espace Politique/The Political Space* in early 2008.

Andrew Kinsela (*University of New South Wales*) recently submitted his PhD entitled 'Volatile sulfur compounds in acid sulfate soils, northern NSW', much to the relief of family and friends. His work focused on the previously unexplored area of gaseous emissions from such soils using both field-based micrometeorological flux-gradient techniques as well as laboratory-based headspace solid-phase microextraction with gas chromatography. Five refereed articles have been published from work contained within his thesis.

Amity James (*Flinders*) has begun writing up her PhD entitled: Ageing in Regional South Australia and Northern Ireland: Intentions and Realities. Expected submission date is May 2008.

Tim Sharp (*ANU*) who is looking at betel nut networks is completing his field work in PNG.

Kelly Dombroski (*ANU*) who is researching the role of Hui women as significant economic agents is completing field work in Western China.

Pyone Myat Thu (*ANU*) who is researching displaced households is completing fieldwork in rural regions in East Timor.

Narsimha Garlapati (*Monash*) has submitted his Master of Science thesis “*Lang Lang Catchment canopy cover changes (1947-2004): Exemplifying increased significance of time series air photo archive in catchment management*”.

Shaun Berg (*Monash*) has submitted his PhD thesis, titled “*An investigation into alpine catchment behaviour, and the effects of wildfire on hydrological processes and soil erosion on the Bogong High Plains, north-eastern Victoria*”.

POSTGRADUATE REPORTS FROM THE IGU-IAG 2006 (Part Two)

The Institute awarded a number of travel grants to assist postgraduate students to attend the IGU-Brisbane in July 06. Below are extracts from the award winners' reflections on the conference.

Leah Gibbs, University of Sheffield/ University of Glasgow

[At the IGU conference] I presented a paper based on my PhD research, undertaken at the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, The Australian National University. My paper was entitled: ‘Valuing Water: variability and the Lake Eyre Basin, central Australia’. This research considers the disparity between the ways in which water is valued within existing natural resource management frameworks, and the values associated with water in a particular place. My research draws on fieldwork conducted in the arid and semi-arid Lake Eyre Basin; in particular, on in-depth interviews with people living and working in the Basin. I propose a new framework for valuing water, which I term ‘valuing variability’. *Valuing variability* captures the variable qualities of water: its diversity, change, and complexity. My research found that in addition to characterising water’s physicality, values associated with water are also marked by variability. In this way, *valuing variability* emerges from place.

My paper was part of a day-long session entitled ‘Cultures of Nature’, organised by Professor Lesley Head of the University of Wollongong. Professor Noel Castree, of the University of Manchester, United Kingdom, presented a keynote address, which considered the production, dissemination and consumption of environmental knowledges. Prof. Castree’s address set the stage for papers concerned with challenging the binary of nature/culture and exploring the ways in which ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ are co-constituted. Within this discourse, papers in this session explored themes including: nation-building; belonging and ‘nativeness’; the multiplicity of interpretations of natural resource management and environmentalism; mental models as a means of understanding nature–culture interactions; environmental values; heritage and environmental agency; connections between health, place and food; narratives of nature; travel and the sublime; and tourism and reconciliation. The session demonstrated a strong body of theoretically informed empirical research in this area.

The 'Cultures of Nature' session was part of a prominent strand of cultural geography at the conference, complimenting sessions concerned with material geographies, indigenous knowledge and peoples' rights, geographies of belonging; transnationalism; visual arts; antipodean geographies; spaces of culture; and urban geographies. The cultural geographies strand contributed a rich and dynamic suite of perspectives to the broader conference theme of 'Regional responses to global changes: a view from the Antipodes'.

Professors Head and Castree are coordinating a special edition of the journal *Geoforum* to bring together a number of the papers presented in the 'Cultures of Nature' session. It promises to be a stimulating read.

Happily, I was admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in July 2006, and am currently working in the Department of Geography, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom, as a Postdoctoral Research Associate. I thank the Institute of Australian Geographers for supporting my participation in the IGU conference; the Institute's commitment to supporting graduate students is invaluable.

Sarah Hemmingsen, Australian National University

Stradbroke Island Pre-conference Workshop on Indigenous Issues

The Indigenous Issues Pre-conference Workshop was held on Stradbroke Island from Friday afternoon, June 30th to Sunday afternoon July 2nd at the Minjerribah Holiday Camp. This was a smaller, less formal, workshop that contrasted to the more tightly timetabled conference that IGU Conference members and their companions and families with interests in Indigenous issues were invited to join, bringing together Indigenous peoples and scholars working on Indigenous issues from across the globe.

Within the workshop, there was a welcome to country by the Minjerribah Elders who welcomed us and shared some their stories about the area. Time was also taken to tell each other about the places we had come from, the Indigenous issues current in those places, and the tasks/research we are currently engaged in. Those involved on the IGU Indigenous Knowledges and Peoples Rights Commission committee were also there to do its.

IGU regional congress and IAG national conference

At the conference proper, the new IGU Commission on Indigenous Knowledges and Peoples Rights was launched on Thursday 6 July. Marcia Langton from Australia and Sir Tipene O'Regan from Aotearoa/New Zealand were keynote speakers for this plenary session. The contributions made to our work by Elspeth Young and Evelyn Stokes were also recognised.

The Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples Rights sessions were of particular significance for my research. These sessions also had a special enthusiasm for the contributions graduate students were making in these fields, placing them along side researchers well established in their careers such as Ritchie Howitt, Cathy Robinson and Evelyn Peters, providing a supportive environment for speakers

and their contributions. I presented my paper entitled “Kaikōura: creating a bi-cultural marine resources space: a rūnanga perspective” in the Indigenous Perspectives on Co-management sub-theme of this session.

Following individual talks, the academy engaged in helpful discussions with students and provided suggestions for ongoing research ideas. Encouragement and networking formed a significant part of the student experience, with many new contacts made. The opportunity to publish in a special edition was an added bonus.

Louise Askew, University of Newcastle

The conference was a great experience that I enjoyed on a personal and professional level. I presented a paper on my current PhD work on the first day of the conference. This was a useful experience in presenting to a larger and more diverse audience than I have previously presented to throughout my candidature. I was able to gain significant and constructive feedback on my paper which will provide insight and assistance when preparing the paper for publication in the near future. I was also able to gain beneficial feedback on the presentation more generally which I will be helpful when preparing future conference presentations.

The range of papers I was able to view over the week provided me with relevant information to my own work as well as diverse papers of broader interest. The plenary sessions of the opening session and also the lunchtime sessions were very enjoyable and in many cases provided an encompassing and inspirational view of current geographic research. Other themed sessions I particularly enjoyed were the cultural geography sessions and also the Antipodean socio-spatial theory sessions on the final day of the conference.

I was able to meet with many of the presenters over the week, some of which have been an influence in my own research work. I was able to discuss issues and topics that were a shared subject of interest between myself and other researchers and academics. I felt that I was able to develop many of the ideas for my PhD research that I will subsequently use in developing and extending my own theoretical and methodological frameworks.

Kirsten Maclean, Australian National University

I am a final year PhD scholar at the School of Resources, Environment and Society at The Australian National University, Canberra. My research considers the role of local and Indigenous knowledge in environmental governance and management in Australia. The opportunity to attend the Institute of Australian Geographers' National Conference, incorporating the International Geographers Union Regional Congress in Brisbane, 3-7 July, 2006 was invaluable as an arena in which to present the findings of my research; to learn about other research projects; and, to further develop and extend my academic networks.

Before attending the IAG Conference I participated in the pre-conference Indigenous Issues Workshop, Stradbroke Island 30 June- 2 July. This workshop coincided with the inaugural meeting of the IGU Commission on Indigenous Peoples Rights. This was an excellent workshop because it facilitated discussion

between Indigenous peoples and others interested in Indigenous issues from 8 different countries. At this workshop I met several individuals with whom I intend to develop research relationships into the future. A personal observation relates to the fact that an Indigenous Commission has not existed before now. This symbolises a timely change in direction of the IGU however it still needs to develop mechanisms to genuinely engage with Indigenous peoples. This was evidenced at the IAG Conference and IGU Congress opening by the absence of a welcome to country by the local Aboriginal people of the Brisbane area.

I attended the IAG Conference from 3-5 July. I presented a paper entitled "Local natures: engaging disparate knowledges for ecologically sustainable development in Australia". This paper presented some of the research findings from my PhD studies in central Australia and Victoria. I also participated in the audience of many interesting and stimulating sessions. These sessions related to development, south-east Asia, Indigenous issues, participatory research, cultures of nature, object geographies and spaces of culture. I would have enjoyed attending some physical geography sessions, however given the time available I attended papers directly related to my own research interests in the area of human/cultural geography. Unfortunately, there continues to be a divide between human and physical geographies although the opening session of the Conference did make a positive step towards integrating the two by including speakers who are approaching issues of environmental management and community development from complementary human and physical geography view points. I enjoyed attending the Conference immensely and look forward to presenting and being involved in future meetings.

Ruth Fazakerley, University of South Australia

My paper, 'Landscape techniques and the Mall: visual order, public art and urban design', was delivered at the Brisbane IAG National Conference as part of the *Visual Art & Cultural Geography* sub-session, which I jointly convened with Gavin Malone as a sub-session of the *Cultural Approach in Geography*. Papers in this session ultimately formed a surprisingly coherent group, partly as a result of shared emails and discussion in the six months prior to the conference. We also coordinated an informal, pre-conference meeting of the national and international presenters from the Visual Art & Cultural Geography session, together with interested others, which facilitated face to face contacts and thereby (for me at least) a more comfortable experience of the conference that followed.

My first geography conference, this was also my first experience of a large international conference, potentially overwhelming in terms of the scale of participation and diversity of sessions. Over the five days I attended papers across a range of themes, focusing principally on aspects of Cultural Geography. The conference provided me with an insight into some of the key players and contemporary debates in the field of geography; particularly those ongoing conversations concerning the relations between human and physical geography, questions of disciplinary relevance and engagement in the Asia Pacific region, and quests to think about the meanings of Indigenous, Australian, New Zealand, Asia Pacific and 'Antipodean' geographies.

The conference was placed in broad context for me by the encouragement of Katherine Gibson in her plenary address to explore 'hopeful geographies' and found specific resonance in papers such as (among many others): that of Divya Tolia-Kelly, who questioned the ethnocentricism of recent affectual geographies; Kay Andersons' re-reading of the impact of Australian indigenous-settler interactions upon European knowledge and ideas about humans in 'nature'; Marcia Langton's challenge to geographic researchers to engage with indigenous knowledges; Bruce Brauns' analysis of the construction of 'bio-security' as a solution to the problem of unknown dangers; and Sallie Marston's work on re-thinking the ontologies of globalization.

As a postgraduate researcher, perhaps one of the most useful aspects of participation in a conference such as this was the opportunity to contextualise my own PhD research at the SA School of Art (University of South Australia), within a broader academic context, and in particular within the context of the discipline of geography. The conference has enabled me to develop a better understanding of the links and divergences between geographical research and my own concerns with visual culture, space and subjectivity within the fields of visual art and cultural studies. I appreciated the opportunity to be part of this conference, and continue to draw on the issues raised there as food for thought in my current research activities.

Brenton Chatfield, University of Western Australia

The IGU 2006 in Brisbane was my first international conference and it certainly provided a diverse range of research topics to explore. Not only have I come away with a better appreciation of the latest research being conducted within my own area of interest, but seeing the scope of the geographic research being done has provided some ideas of where I would like to head in the future.

Presenting a talk at the conference was very rewarding, as I gained some useful feedback and it was also a good opportunity for letting people know who I was and what I am interested in. I have learnt that conferences are as much about making and maintaining networks between researchers as they are about showcasing the latest research.

Being able to meet and discuss ideas with the leading researchers in one's chosen field was also very interesting. To hear them talk about their own work and hear their questions and thoughts on the work of other speakers was very informative and provided a synopsis of where the current thinking is at and where it is heading. It was also great to interact with these people on a social level at the various conference functions. It was during these functions that I received some good advice and tips to employ throughout my PhD and future research endeavours.

I would like to thank the IAG for the postgraduate travel award and would encourage other postgraduate students to attend similar conferences in the future.

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