

Rural Studies Study Group Report for 2002-2004

Nearly two years have passed since we last met as a study group. Not a lot has happened during, that time, although the joint Study Group workshop with the Economic Geography Study Group last November at Newcastle University on theme of 'Neoliberalism and Australia's Regions' was a real high point. I found this a very intellectually stimulating event and from what I have heard, this was true for many others. As most of you will know, we are now proceeding with a special edition of the IAG's own journal, *Australian Geographical Studies*, which will carry selected papers from this workshop. This will appear in early 2005, and this study group will be well represented. This will be the second special edition of a journal in which study group members have featured in three years. As Michael Roche showed in his recent review of rural geography for *Progress in Human Geography*. the sub-discipline is in robust health in Australia and New Zealand, with group members making major contributions to international debates.

On another front, we have tentatively been exploring establishing links with the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology. The IAG already provides accreditation for its members, so we have been looking at other issues of common interest.

Financially, we are in a very healthy position, as the following table shows. Perhaps members could think of something worthwhile to spend some of this accrued surplus on. We probably need a more up-to-date and tidier web presence and maybe this is something that the money could be used for.

Opening Balance	5888.58
IAG Payment	52 000.00
Neoliberalism Workshop Expenses	(\$ 1 787,69)
Available Balance	\$1 145 89

Thanks must go to Rae Dufty, who has filled the role of Newsletter Editor since the last IAG conference. Sadly, Rae has resigned her position. I would like to wish her all the best with her doctoral studies. Obviously, we need to recruit someone to fill the Newsletter Editor role as soon as possible. Thanks, too, to Fran Rolley, who has kept a close eye on the Group's finances for the past few years.

Neil Argent
Convenor. Rural Studies Group