EDITOR’S NOTE

This Newsletter again highlights the range of diverse topics being investigated by Australian Geographers, and the tremendous successes of IAG Members. The IGU Regional Congress to be held in Brisbane mid 2006 will showcase much of this work, and undoubtedly the next six months will be both very busy and exciting for many Australian geographers. With a number of IGU Study Groups and Commissions also meeting around the time of the main congress, there will be ample opportunities to participate. The IGU meeting also incorporates the annual IAG and New Zealand Geographical Society meetings. Details on registration are in the Conference section of this edition of the Newsletter.

The deadline for the next edition is the 30th May 2006. Could you please send your contributions to: mtonts@cyllene.uwa.edu.au

Matthew Tonts
School of Earth and Geographical Sciences
The University of Western Australia
I vaguely remember that someone famous, possibly William Shakespeare or P.G. Wodehouse, noted that ‘we are all but leaves on the stream of time’. In the next issue of our bulletin you will search in vein (sic) desperation for my column, as my presidential leaf will have sunk to the vice-presidential (exiting) substratum on the occasion of our meeting with our New Zealand and other international colleagues in Brisbane, in July 2006.

Leaves may sink, but they never seem to learn not to fall into streams. Speculative bubbles and depressions occur at regular intervals, timed by the retirements from power of those who were in the last ones. It has taken a good quarter century for the proponents of the insanity of nuclear power to be able to publicly pretend that it has something going for it. ‘Glow, if you want to be cool’ seems to be the current message. Socially and politically, there seem to be tendencies to sink back into the mid-nineteenth-century. Although the present day global empire does not show up satisfactorily pink, or any other colour, in our atlases, it is there, as is the cant of ‘free trade’.

The Geography teachers of Australia met recently on the northern campus of my august institution. As I gave my plenary address I noted an age-class/size-class distribution that would indicate phasic regeneration in a canopy tree. While the occasional younger individual had managed to squeeze into a chance gap, most Geography teachers appeared to be early baby boomers like me, the males with thinning foliage and increasing diameters at stomach height. In contrast, the individuals in the conjoint meeting of those working in Spatial Information Systems exhibited the classic ‘reverse J’ curve, a shape that indicates continuous regeneration in a canopy tree. Almost all were satisfactorily foliose and not large enough to be loggable.

The age class distribution of Geography teachers is partially a function of the squeeze on public education, but largely a function of the drift to SOSE and the ‘essential learnings’ approach to the incarceration of children and adolescents. These leaves are both showing strong evidence of waterlogging, while leaves from the Geography tree are abscissing above the stream. In New South Wales, the basic disciplines of Geography and History have vanquished SOSE in the secondary schools. Interestingly, I learned that the resurgence of Geography in the lower secondary schools has not been reflected in increased enrolments in the subject in fifth and sixth year.

The point I have been meandering towards is that a discipline that encompasses knowledge and skills that are demonstrably useful for functioning in the contemporary world is less likely to disappear than bell-bottomed pants, and even they tend to resurge every few decades. I suspect that Geography in tertiary institutions is close to its nadir. University managers have to change something, otherwise there would be no reason for their existence, apart from a Vice-Chancellor available to make speeches, open things and chair committees. Over the
last few decades, university managers have been very much engaged in making larger, ‘more efficient’ units by merging discipline areas in giant departments or schools. Apart from having something to manage, the main virtue of this activity seems to have been to have units large and heterogeneous enough to facilitate the passing of the responsibilities and difficulties of getting rid of staff to a lower level in the hierarchy. Now, the imperative to change things still exists, but the real rationale for large units does not, with academics having all the rights of a roof rat in our new industrial relations system. What could be a more logical change than to restore ‘traditional’ disciplines, like Geography, while cutting away the radical protuberances, like environmental studies and cultural studies, that so annoy some elements of the alumni and other potential funders?

I look forward to seeing a substantial proportion of you at the IGU Regional Meeting in Brisbane. Have a great 2006.

Jamie Kirkpatrick
President
Institute of Australian Geographers

IAG NEWS

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 31 January 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.

Alaric Maude
Secretary
Institute of Australian Geographers
Postal address:
26 Blyth Street
Parkside SA 5063
email: polymaude@ozemail.com.au
Phone: (08) 8271 7673
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 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 Chris Gibson
Geography Programme
Faculty of the Built Environment
University of New South Wales
Sydney, NSW
<ChrisG@fbe.unsw.edu.au>

**Economic Geography**
Dr Philip O’Neill
Centre for Urban and Regional Studies
University of Newcastle
Rankin Drive
Callaghan, NSW 2308
<gpmono@cc.newcastle.edu.au>

**Rural Studies**
Dr Neil Argent
Department of Geography and Planning
School of Human and Environmental Studies
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351
<nargent@metz.une.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>

**Environmental Sustainability**
A/Prof Arthur Conacher
School of Earth and Geographical Sciences
The University of Western Australia
Crawley, WA 6009
<arthur.conacher@uwa.edu.au>

**Postgraduate**
Amanda Davies
Institute for Regional Development
School of Earth and Geographical Sciences
The University of Western Australia
Crawley, WA 6009
<adavies@cyllene.uwa.edu.au>
The following are extracts from recent media releases by Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies

The Executive for FASTS 2006 is:

President:   Professor Tom Spurling (CRC Wood Innovation)
Vice President:  Associate Professor Judy Mousley (Deakin Uni)
Secretary:   Professor John O’Connor (Newcastle Uni)
Treasurer:   Graham Taylor (Industry consultant)
Chair, Policy Committee:  Dr Ken Baldwin (ANU)
Early Career Scientist:  Dr Matthew Hole (ANU)
Ordinary Member:  Professor Alan Carey (ANU)

We also gratefully acknowledge the work of the retiring members of Executive Snow Barlow (President), Rob Norris (Vice President) and Mike Smith (Treasurer). Snow and Rob have both had very long and productive associations with FASTS.

Alarming Trend In R&D Investment Must Be Reversed

Analysis of the budget shows Commonwealth investment in R&D will drop to below 0.6% of GDP in 2005/6 – the lowest level in two decades.

The President of FASTS, Professor Snow Barlow said Australia cannot expect to maintain strong economic growth while national investment in science and R&D continues to decline as a percentage of GDP.

“Despite the modest increases in R&D in backing Australia’s ability, Commonwealth investment in R&D is projected to fall to 0.597% of GDP in 2005/06 – down from 0.66% in 2003-04 and 0.62% in 2004/5. Investment in R&D as a % of GDP is an important indicator of future economic growth. It tells us a lot about how much of today’s economic activity we are prepared to invest for our future and our children’s future”.

“It would be very courageous to assert there is no correlation between investment in R&D and long term productivity and economic growth. The ageing population and future climate change are two very good reasons to ramp up our investment in science and innovation”.

“Where is economic growth going to come from apart from increased productivity grounded in new knowledge and R&D? Governments cannot simply rely on consumer spending and strong commodity prices to continue to prop up record GDP growth”.
“Reversing this decline in R&Ds share of national economic activity must be a top priority for the next budget. Failure to address this urgent issue will threaten our future prosperity and result in Australia going backwards in a highly competitive global knowledge economy”, concluded Professor Barlow.

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Excellence the Basis for Research Grants

Professor Snow Barlow
President
Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS)

A fundamental principle of national competitive research grants is applications should be based on excellence, not on the basis of which institution researchers come from.

Minister Nelson has, quite rightly, unequivocally upheld this principle on a number of occasions.

On the 2nd of June, for example, he told a high level forum gathered to discuss the development of the Research Quality Framework (RQF) that their first task was to develop a framework “which will support funding of the highest quality research, irrespective of where that research is undertaken”.

This principle is essential to ensure a robust and credible research funding system, and is strongly endorsed throughout the research sector both in Australia and internationally.

It is of great concern that this principle is now under threat.

Last Friday, Minister Nelson announced that: “My Department will conduct a process, with the Australian Research Council and the National Health and
Medical Research Council, to develop the way in which the outcomes of the RQF will impact on the funding distributed by the research councils."

There are fundamental and important differences between what the RQF will measure and assess, and the selection processes for the National Competitive Grants schemes administered by the ARC and NHMRC.

The RQF is intended to drive allocation of university block grants by measuring and ranking the quality and impact of research groups, as distinct from individuals. Indeed, the proposed model of the RQF is quite explicit that individual rankings will not be reported.

On the other hand, ARC and NHMRC selection processes are rigorous assessments of individuals or small teams, and the merit of the specific project for which they are applying for funds.

If the Minister insists that RQF rankings are used in ARC or NHMRC grant assessments and approvals, this is likely to create perverse outcomes. For example, it is quite conceivable that an outstanding researcher associated with a comparatively lower ranked research group or university will miss out on a grant they would have received if judged solely on merit. Conversely, it is possible that a modest performer, who happens to work in a very highly rated research group, will win grants they otherwise would not have received.

The more logical link between the two systems, is a ‘bottom up’ link of excellence identified from ARC and NHMRC projects /researchers informing the RQF assessment. Particularly as individual researchers will almost certainly receive greater scrutiny in ARC and NHMRC processes than the panel assessments of research groups proposed for the RQF.

Therefore the better question is not what impact the RQF will have on the ARC and NHMRC but rather, what conclusions can be drawn about the quality of research groups based on their members’ success in gaining ARC and NHMRC grants?

To use the ‘top down’ as suggested by the Minister on Friday risks a number of perverse outcomes; lower quality research, less incentive for collaborations between and within universities and discrimination against emerging researchers and research groups.

It is unacceptable to assume a researcher is not first-rate just because they are part of a research team or institution that is not ranked highly in the RQF. There may be all sorts of personal reasons why they work there, such as family commitments, partners employment or desire for their children to have uninterrupted schooling.

The problem is not simply that of isolating emerging or high quality researchers who are not part of established research groups or universities. This development has the potential to undermine collaboration between researchers, research groups and universities.
Researchers from highly ranked research groups may well choose not to collaborate with colleagues from lower ranked groups, despite their individual merit, because to do so may risk the success of ARC or NHMRC grant applications.

It would be a serious matter if changes to ARC and NHMRC selection processes produced disincentives for collaboration.

This extension of the scope of the RQF from university block grants to national competitive grants was a surprising development and, according to media reports, had not been considered by the Expert Advisory Group developing the RQF.

FASTS believes a robust, high quality research system is best supported by a plurality of funding sources. The ARC and NHMRC are not monolithic and do not support all types of research. Nor should they. Rather, they have important roles in a diverse fabric of Australian research as do CRCs, university block grants, CSIRO and a wide variety of other funding programs. To, in effect, link and partially merge selection criteria between block grants and the research councils would undermine diversity and richness within the Australian research system.

To date, the Minister has not provided any detail on how he intends the RQF to impact on ARC and NHMRC funding processes.

The risks and possible perverse outcomes are readily apparent and it is hoped that a very careful examination of how and why an RQF could inform ARC and NHMRC processes is undertaken in close consultation with the sector before any final decisions are made.

This article originally appeared in The Australian Higher Education Supplement, 14 September 2005.

Nuclear debate must focus on Waste

Professor Snow Barlow
President - Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies

Nuclear energy has recently entered the national political debate as an option to reduce Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions.

The range of claims and counterclaims about nuclear energy and its efficacy and safety in climate change scenarios has demonstrated an urgent need for comprehensive studies of Australia’s energy futures.

These studies must include a detailed analysis of the economic, environmental and social costs and benefits of all energy sources, including, for instance, the substantial costs of decommissioning nuclear reactors and safely disposing of the waste.
But what chance a sensible and well-informed debate on nuclear energy when dealing with Australia’s existing nuclear waste has been so fraught?

Radioactive materials have been routinely used for the last 50 years in Australia for a wide variety of industrial, medical and research purposes.

In that period, about 3700 cubic metres (4,000 – 5,000 tonnes) of low and short lived intermediate level waste and 500m3 of long-lived intermediate waste has been accumulated (there is no high level waste in Australia).

The prime responsibility for managing radioactive waste lies with the Commonwealth as about 95% of existing and future waste is generated by Commonwealth agencies, primarily ANSTO at its Lucas Heights facility but also small amounts at CSIRO and the Department of Defence.

While the amount of waste generated under State and Territory licences is small, this waste is currently stored in over 100 locations around the country in metropolitan and regional sites.

Dispersed storage of radioactive waste is not a viable long-term strategy and is potentially hazardous, inefficient and impossible to completely secure. That is why the States and Territories must demonstrate political leadership and join with the Commonwealth to ensure the proposed site is a comprehensive national facility that is state of the art in terms of environmental safety, efficiency and security.

The Commonwealth Government recently announced plans to investigate three possible sites in the Northern Territory for a national storage facility when a proposal for a South Australian site was abandoned last year after a sustained political campaign.

The science, engineering and technology of safely storing, transporting and disposing of low and intermediate level waste is well understood and can be achieved safely and efficiently if done properly.

Much of the political debate has focused on site selection for storing radioactive waste. But storage is only one part of the equation. Australia must aim for safe and efficient disposal.

Given rising concerns over security of radioactive waste and possible ‘dirty bomb’ scenarios, it is surprising that safe disposal has not received the focus it warrants.

The key object of safe disposal is to sufficiently dilute radioactive materials so that its radioactivity is comparable to naturally occurring background radiation. In the case of long-lived radioactive waste (materials with a half life of more than 30 years), radioactive waste needs proper shielding from the biosphere in a geologically stable site.

Australia has the relevant scientific and engineering expertise to design, build and manage disposal of such waste.
Radioactive waste that has been properly disposed of has no value whatsoever for would be terrorists. Stored intermediate level waste represents a greater security risk.

Quite apart from security concerns there is a real intergenerational equity issue at stake – it is irresponsible to leave our waste to our children.

There are about 30 radioactive materials routinely used in Australia including a wide variety of industrial applications such as smoke detectors (americium$^{241}$), sterilisation (cobalt$^{60}$) or equipment to check the integrity of welding (caesium$^{137}$).

Each year more than 500,000 Australians undergo diagnosis or treatment procedures using a variety of nuclear sources. Technecium$^{99m}$ is used in about 80% of diagnostic procedures and iodine$^{131}$ for thyroid treatments.

Some of the radioactive materials used in Australia are produced at ANSTO’s Lucas Heights reactor. Others, including cobalt and caesium are imported.

But these imported radioactive materials no longer add to Australia’s long-term waste because for the past decade or so, the industry standard is suppliers of products such as cobalt, must take waste back for reprocessing or recycling after use.

Will Australia adopt a similarly responsible attitude to waste generated from our exports of uranium? If we are to seriously ramp up our participation in the nuclear industry then the option of being a full service provider must be considered including accepting the waste as part of the deal.

This article appeared in the Canberra Times, Monday 26th, September.
NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR GEOGRAPHY

An Overview of the National Committee for Geography
Australian Academy of Science
Professor Iain Hay, Flinders University

The National Committee for Geography (NCG) is one of twenty-two national committees supported by the Australian Academy of Science. The NCG is seen as one of the most active committees, and our engagement with geography teachers and State organisations is seen as exemplary.

The formal aims of the National Committee for Geography are to:
1. liaise with the International Geographical Union (IGU) through its Executive and Commissions
2. propose and encourage activities in Australia that will enhance the status of the Geography discipline and promote cooperation between professional and regional societies
3. encourage and support Australian geographers in all vocational areas to join IGU commissions and attend IGU Congresses
4. inform the IGU of Australian activities and ensure our views are heard.

The current strategies to allow these aims to be achieved are to:
• provide a central coordinating role in the organisation of the 2006 regional IGU conference in Brisbane
• actively promote Geography as an integrating science in the Southwest Pacific region
• enhance existing strong links to national and State geography teachers’ associations
• involve Australian geographers in IGU commissions and congresses.

Current members of the National Committee for Geography are: Professor Iain Hay (Chair – Flinders), Mr Steve Cranby (AGTA), Professor Bob Fagan (Macquarie), Professor Lesley Head (Wollongong), Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick (Tasmania), Dr Marcus Lane (Adelaide), Dr Margaret Robertson (Tasmania), and Professor Nigel Tapper (Monash). The following corresponding scientific societies are also members: Geographical Society of New South Wales; Royal Geographical Society of Queensland; Royal Geographical Society of South Australia; Spatial Sciences Institute Inc.

The NCG coordinates the activities of the IGU Commissions in Australia. Many Australian geographers are members or office-holders of the 32 IGU Commissions. This provides Australian geographers with timely access to the latest developments in their chosen sub-disciplines of Geography, as well as creating opportunities for international publications and conference attendance.
CONFERENCES

*International Geographical Union 2006 Brisbane Conference* and joint meeting of the Institute of Australian Geographers and the New Zealand Geographical Society

3rd – 7th July 2006

IGU 2006 Brisbane, held at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), will focus geographical attention on critical physical and human processes driving global change. Complex, global-scale processes exert pressures on environmental, social, cultural and economic resources at regional and local scales. It will look at regional responses in a changing world, with emphasis on tropical and arid zones, particularly in Australia, New Zealand, south-east Asia and the south-west Pacific.


*Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Conference London*

30 August – 1 September 2006

**Call for Papers - Justice, Nature and the City**

In his 1996 work, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, David Harvey brought together a series of debates – including those concerning environmental values, the nature of social justice, and the future of cities – which are rarely articulated within the same analytical lens. A decade later, and drawing inspiration from this approach, this session, organised by the Centre for the Study of Cities and Regions (CSCR) Durham University, will examine how concepts of justice and nature in urban places are being constructed, reworked and contested, and the extent to which common ground between concerns for social and environmental justice can be forged in the city. While concerns for social justice and the social life of cities have long been a mainstay of geographical work, issues of environmental justice and urban ecology have only recently begun to gain analytical purchase in the discipline. This session will provide an opportunity to bring together work from across these areas to examine:

- Concepts of social and environmental justice
- The political economy of justice in the city
- Urban political ecology
- Social and environmental justice movements in the city
- Lived and material experiences of inequality in the city
We welcome theoretical and empirical papers which address these themes and which seek to contribute to the aim of the session for an interdisciplinary dialogue which can inform our understanding of the future of cities and regions.

Abstracts of 200 words, using the form available from the RGS-IBG website (www.rgs.org), should be submitted to either Joe Painter (j.m.painter@durham.ac.uk) or Harriet Bulkeley (h.a.bulkeley@durham.ac.uk) by January 16th 2006.

Royal Geographical Society with IBG Annual Conference: Global social justice and environmental sustainability

London 31st August – 1st September 2006

The Planning and Environment Research Group (PERG) are convening sessions on the following themes at the Annual Conference of the RGS-IBG:

- Environmental justice: movements and mobilisations
- New Economies, New Sustainabilities
- The Governance of Transnational Environmental Harm: Addressing New Modes of Accountability/Responsibility
- Conceptions of Sustainability and Urban Regeneration

We welcome submission of abstracts by Friday 20th January to the convenors listed below. Abstract submission forms can be downloaded from www.rgs.org

Inquires about PERG and its activities should be directed to Kate Theobald, SCRI (kate.theobald@unn.ac.uk) or Harriet Bulkeley, Durham, (h.a.bulkeley@durham.ac.uk).

Australasian Housing Researchers Conference

Adelaide 19th – 21st June 2006

Geographers at Flinders are leading the Organising Committee for the Australasian Housing Researchers Conference to be held in Adelaide from the 19th to the 21st of June, 2006. This conference is being constructed as a conference for housing researchers, by housing researchers and focuses on two themes: Towards Fair Housing in Australia and New Zealand? and Unleashing the Housing Imagination. Prof Hugh Stretton has agreed to open the conference and present a paper based on his recent book. It is expected that the conference will consider a range of housing issues, including rural housing. Anyone interested in attending should contact Andrew Beer on andrew.beer@flinders.edu.au.
Senses of Place Conference  
Hobart 6th – 8th April 2006

This is a joint conference of the Place Research Network, the National Museum of Australia, the Mountain Festival and the Community, Place and Change Theme Area of the University of Tasmania. The theme of the conference will be an exploration of place in multiple formats and media. The conference will go far beyond the traditional concept of ‘conference’ as well as of ‘place’ to create a venue for place to be experienced as a sense, analysed as a concept, and expressed creatively. Specially invited presenters will provide their reflections on the meaning and being of place in their chosen format. They will be chosen to reflect place through different senses or lenses.

‘Place’ is to be regarded as a metaphor and will include conventional and broader understanding of: home, virtual, border, embodied, Indigenous places, urban and rural, significant, heritage and iconic places, islands, mountains, forests, deserts, aquatic places, and more. Equally, ‘senses’ and ‘lenses’ are also metaphors to express different ways of experiencing, expressing and seeing places.

Venue  
Most of the activities will be in the School of Art of the University of Tasmania in the art precinct of Hobart’s waterfront (Sullivan’s Cove), very near the CBD and close to a range of accommodation, shops, and tourist attractions.

The maximum number of total participants will be 200. There will be 180 registrations available for the conference. This will be an interdisciplinary conference aimed at reaching a diverse audience beyond the narrowly academic or institutional. Those for whom this conference is aimed include: place researchers in Australia and overseas; other people interested in ‘place’ from around Australia; Mountain Festival participants; and the general public.

For more information see: www.utas.edu.au/placenet/senses

Call for Expressions of Interest - Student support grant International Network for Learning and Teaching Geography in Higher Education (INLT) Workshop in Brisbane.

8th to 10th July 2006

The International Network for Learning and Teaching Geography in Higher Education (INLT) is offering two support grants for Australian students to attend the forthcoming INLT Workshop, to be held following the International Geographic Congress in Brisbane on 8-10 July 2006.

Honours and postgraduate students engaged in studies of geography and education, or with a strong academic interest in geographic education, are invited to submit an expression of interest for a grant to attend the Workshop. Two grants will be
available to cover workshop fees and accommodation; the grant will not cover travel to the workshop. The Workshop organizers anticipate awarding the grants to students already attending the IGC conference.

The INTL Workshop

This INTL Workshop brings together participants from around the world to compare expectations, practices and problems in respect of a series of teaching and learning issues that face geographers everywhere. These issues will be explored in the months leading up to the workshop, with group producing an outline paper, hosted on this website, which collates the variety of international experiences within the group. The papers from all of the groups will be posted by mid-April, after which the discussion will be opened more widely to users of this site. At the Brisbane Workshop, groups will meet to consider the web feedback on their outline papers, to debate their findings with other workshop participants, and to turn their work into a draft academic article for consideration by the Journal of Geography in higher Education. Eight topics are under being considered.

1. Ethics requirements and encouraging ethical behaviour amongst student and staff researchers
2. Attracting, teaching, supervising and examining postgraduate students
3. Contributing to and resolving issues in teaching interdisciplinary courses
4. Integrating e-learning with on-campus learning in geography
5. Developing effective active and inquiry based learning in geography
6. Collaborative learning with students in other higher education institutions
7. Building community engagement into the geography curriculum
8. Developing enterprise and entrepreneurship in geography

This workshop offers a valuable opportunity for students interested in geography education to become engaged in and contribute to current debates. More information about the International Network for Learning and Teaching Geography in Higher Education (INLT) and its Workshop can be obtained at http://www.gees.ac.uk/events/2006/inlt/iguevent.htm.

Expressions of Interest

Students should forward an expression of interest to Bill Boyd by **28th February 2006**. Expressions of interest may be mailed to Bill at the School of Environmental Science & Management, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore, NSW 2480, or emailed to him at bboyd@scu.edu.au.

The expression of interest should be no more than one page in length, and should be accompanied by a letter of support from the student’s supervisor or Head of Department. The expression of interest should include the following.

(i) An outline the student’s interest in geographic education.
(ii) A brief statement describing why the student thinks the opportunity to attend the INTL Workshop would enhance his or her studies and/or career.
(iii) Details of the course the student is enrolled in.
(iv) A statement of whether they plan to attend the IGC.
**Report from Language and Academic Skills in Higher Education Conference held on 24-25 November 2005, University House, ANU**

On 24 November I attended the Language and Academic Skills in Higher Education Conference 2005 held at University House, ANU. This two day conference was of interest to those researching, teaching, and involved in supporting academic skills, language skills, and learning skill development at a tertiary level. There were 151 delegates, representing 33 of the 38 Australian universities as well as delegates from New Zealand and South Africa.

Various presentations emphasized the need to embed skills development within disciplines and programs, take collaborative approaches, and motivate students to take some responsibility for developing various academic skills.

A meeting on the afternoon of 24th November formed a new association – The Association for Academic Language & Learning (AALL).

"The Mission: The Association for Academic Language & Learning Incorporated (AALL) is committed to promoting and providing academic language and learning development through policies, practices and research that build, enhance and extend teaching and learning opportunities for all students and staff in tertiary education settings."


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**Julie Kesby**

*School of Physical, Environmental and Mathematical Sciences*

*UNSW@ADFA*

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**GRANTS AND AWARDS**

**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

*Australian Geographical Studies*

School of Social Sciences

Curtin University

Perth, WA 6845

**Grants and Awards Received**

Dr Clive McAlpine, A/Prof Stuart Phinn, Dr David Pullar and Dr JA Ludwig (*University of Queensland*) have been awarded an ARC Discovery grant worth $380,000 for the project ‘Beyond discrete landscape metrics: spatial analysis tools and surface textural measures for quantifying gradients in landscape structure’.

A/Prof Stuart Phinn (*University of Queensland*) with colleagues has been awarded ARC funding for a project on ‘Understanding salt dynamics to facilitate water reuse on coal mine sites’.
In June, **Professor Iain Hay** (*Flinders*) won the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Iain has won this award on two previous occasions (1995 and 2000).

**Andrew Beer** (*Flinders*) received a NH&NRC grant for a project on The Health, Housing and Labour Market Impacts of Job Losses at Mitsubishi. The grant is worth $500,000 over 5 years.

**Professor Iain Hay** (*Flinders*) accepted an invitation from the Australian Academy of Sciences to chair its National Committee for Geography until 31 December 2006.

**Dr Meryl Pearce and Dr Eileen Willis** (*Flinders*) were granted support from the Department for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation for a project on Water service delivery and State and Commonwealth water reform objectives - a response from Aboriginal communities in South Australia. The grant is worth $18,500.

**Bev Clarke, Eric Compas, Andrew Beer and Cecile Cutler** (*Flinders*) have received a seeding grant ($5,158) from the Flinders Social Monitoring and Policy Futures Network towards understanding the impacts of rapid urban growth adjacent to a proposed Marine Park to the South of Adelaide.

**Bev Clarke, Meryl Pearce, David Bass and Robert Keane** (*Flinders*) have been awarded a Flinders University Teaching and Learning Innovation Grant ($8,996) to develop a virtual field trip (VFT) to enhance student learning in a second year Environmental Studies topic. The VFT will integrate numerous interpretative layers showing catchment changes brought about by human modifications of the environment. Students will be able to repeatedly investigate, interrogate, map and display catchment information.

**Dr Neville Crossman** (*Flinders*), a recent PhD graduate, won first place the South Australian Spatial Awards for 2004 - "Tertiary Award Category B". This is awarded to the best work for South Australian students completing spatially oriented research work at the masters and doctoral levels. Flinders’ Steve Fildes was awarded second place in the same award. Whilst in the original announcement of this competition, there was no second prize, the judges thought that Steve's work was of a very high standard and therefore varied the rules to award a second prize.

**Mike Bourke** (*Human Geography, ANU*) has been awarded a 30th Anniversary of PNG Independence Medal for his services to agriculture in PNG.

**Katherine Gibson** (*Human Geography, ANU*) has been elected a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

**Kersty Hobson** (*Human Geography, ANU*) has been given a two month Residence Award by the Australia-China Council to undertake research in April and May 2006 into animal welfare and trafficking non-governmental organisations in Hong Kong.
Lesley Potter (Human Geography, ANU) has been elected to the Council of the Asian Studies Association of Australia as a General Councillor.

Matthew Tonts (UWA), Mike Taylor (Birmingham), Bob Fagan (Maquarie) and Paul Plummer (Bristol) were awarded ARC Discovery funding for a project entitled ‘New Regionalism and the Dynamics of Local Economies’.

Matthew Tonts (UWA), Dr Fiona Haslam-McKenzie (Curtin) and Julia Fry (UWA) has received funding of $66,000 through the Western Australian Regional Initiatives Scheme to study ‘Future Skilled Labour Requirements in Western Australian Regions’.

John Fien and Dave Mercer (RMIT) have received funding from the Victorian State government to support a PhD student for three years from early 2006. The project is entitled “Enhancing Social Learning for Sustainability in Water Management and Conservation in Victoria”.

Michael Buxton, Dave Mercer (RMIT), Trevor Budge, Brendon Gleeson and Darryl Low Choy (Griffith) have received funding for a study on ‘Change and Continuity in Peri-Urban Australia’. This is a large research project that involves a collaboration between the School of Social Sciences and Planning at RMIT University and the Urban Research Program within the School of Environmental Planning at Griffith University in Brisbane. It is funded through the Social and Institutional Research Program of Land and Water Australia, with supplementary funding from the Department of Environment and Heritage under the National Vegetation Initiative within the Natural Heritage Trust. It commenced in 2005 and will run until mid-2007 (approximately $400,000 over 2½ years).
NEWS FROM DEPARTMENTS

University of Queensland

The School of Geography, Planning and Architecture underwent a (seven-year cycle) external review at the end of August 2005 which produced around 30 recommendations for further development which are now being finalised within the University prior to implementation.

The importance of geographical thinking in urban planning was highlighted recently through a number of Group Projects in the Bachelor of Regional and Town Planning. Second and fourth year students looked at the implementation of 'transit oriented development', or TOD. TOD is an important focus for urban consolidation policies and for achieving the regional planning framework set out for South East Queensland by the State government. TOD relates to the spatial co-location of land uses (linking public transport, land using activities and increased residential densities to major public transport facilities).

Students had to grapple with the topographical space at the locations of the TOD sites they were dealing with. They also had to reach a good understanding of what different levels of residential density actually implied, remembering that high density is not necessarily the same as high rise. In addition, there were existing developments on the sites they were studying so they had to understand what the changes they proposed might actually mean in real locations.

The two classes dealt with a number of potential TOD sites around Brisbane: Buranda, Toowong, Indooroopilly, Albion, Bowen Hills and Upper Mount Gravatt. Some used a three-dimensional computer graphics package called 'Sketch-up' to visualise their proposals. Others created physical models. All students found how important it was to be able to 'read' the physical nature of the site, the human artefacts, and the social and cultural characteristics of the suburb. They also had to be able to demonstrate the impacts that their proposals might have. It is hard to find a better way of demonstrating the close connections between physical and human geography on the one hand and urban planning on the other.

Human Geography, Australian National University

Professor Katherine Gibson took extended sick leave for much of this year. Bryant Allen acted as Head of Department and was also Deputy Convenor of the Division of Society and Environment. Katherine will return to full time work and her position as Head of Department from the 1st of December.

Bryant Allen, Deirdre McKay and Kersty Hobson again taught undergraduate courses in the School of Resource and Environmental Studies at the ANU. Next year it is likely they will make their teaching contribution through the newly established College of Pacific and Asian Studies.
Dr Lihui Chen from Yunnan University joined Lesley Potter as a long term visitor in the department. She is working on the social and economic impact of dams in Yunnan Province, China.


Flinders University

The School has been pleased to have Professor Chris Paris (Ulster) and Dr Tracey Skelton (Loughborough) as Visiting Research Fellows in the second half of 2005. Shambhu Bhattarai from Nepal also joined the School to conduct research during the year. In 2006, we will also be welcoming Dr Paul Sutton (Denver) who will be based in the School for the entire year to work with academic staff on various GIS/RS projects.

Changes have been implemented in the Population Studies program offered by the School. The title has been changed from Population and Human Resources to Applied Population Studies to better reflect the program’s content and to address the emphasis being given by many countries and agencies on the application of population studies to planning, development, population sustainability (ageing, low fertility), poverty reduction, reproductive health and women’s empowerment.

The School hosted its inaugural Postgraduate Research Degree Symposium in September in the University Function Centre. The Symposium was attended by many of the School’s research higher degree students and members of the academic staff.

The School’s first group of final year students in the Bachelor of Applied Geographical Information Systems gave presentations in February on their applied projects to an audience of lecturers, fellow students and industry representatives.

Short courses in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) are being offered for the first time in December 2005, through the School. These two day courses are designed to attract researchers and resource managers from government agencies, universities and industry working with the latest ArcGIS software. Participants have included representatives from CSIRO Land and Water, Dept of Land, Water and Biodiversity Conservation and Plant and Animal Control Boards. It is anticipated that shortcourses will be run every six months, targeting different user groups and levels of expertise.

The School is publishing a half yearly Newsletter for distribution via email and/or post to all interested parties. Themes will include: Research activities of staff members; Postgraduates and their activities; Alumni news and General news items. The first issue is now ready and will be distributed shortly. If you would like to receive a copy of the Newsletter, please email: geography@flinders.edu.au
**STAFF APPOINTMENTS/MOVES**

**Dr Simon Benger (Flinders)** has been appointed to the position of Lecturer within the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management. Simon will teach Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and formerly taught Spatial Information Systems at the University of Canberra.

**Mr Eric Compas (Flinders)** has been appointed to the position of Lecturer within the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management. Eric is currently finishing a PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and studies growth pressures on protected areas. He has a three-year contract to teach Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

**Dr Emma Baker (Flinders)** has joined the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management as a NH&NRC Post Doctoral Fellow. Emma's work will focus on the relationship between health and housing. Emma is employed as part of the Australian Health Inequities Program (AHIP) working three days per week for five years in the first instance.

**Dr Holli Thomas** joined Geography at Flinders in April 2005 as a Post Doctoral Fellow working on the HSRIP and ARC Linkage Funded project Health, Housing and Labour Market Impacts of an Automobile Plant Closure. Dr Thomas also received funding from Flinders University's Early Career Researcher Establishment Grant scheme for comparative research examining the closure of the Rover plant in Longbridge, Birmingham and Mitsubishi’s Lonsdale plant in Adelaide.

**Michael Kroehn (Flinders)** has rejoined the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management to work with Professor Andrew Beer on the evaluation of the Northern Advanced Manufacturing Industry Group (NAMIG).

**Alice Bass (Flinders)** has rejoined the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management to work with Professor Andrew Beer on the evaluation of the Northern Advanced Manufacturing Industry Group (NAMIG).

**Dr. Udoy Saikia (Flinders)** will join the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management in January 2006 as a Lecturer B. Udoy joins us from Flinders’ Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences. Udoy has an MA (Economics, Golchale Institute, India), MPS (IIPS, India), MSc (LSE) and PhD (Flinders). He will be involved in teaching across a broad range of the School’s academic areas of interest.

**George Curry (Curtin)** has been promoted to Associate Professor.

**Amanda Davies (UWA)** has been appointed to a Post Doctoral position to work on a range of projects in the area of regional development.

**Ben Radford (UWA)** has been appointed to a Post Doctoral position as part of a project investigating the spatial dimensions of marine habitats.
GEOGRAPHERS ARE WORKING ON ...

**Professor Iain Hay** (*Flinders*) has accepted an invitation to join the Editorial Board of the *International Journal on Research in Critical Discourse Analysis*

Work has begun at RMIT University on the ARC Linkage-Grant Research Project ‘Re-imagining the Australian suburb’. This is an umbrella research project which examines the social, economic and environmental consequences of current housing development and the potential in the future for this to be more sustainable. It is underpinned by funding from three separate ARC Linkage grants, which are now in their second year of funding. They are:

- **Ecological Sustainability in Urban Development** - Dave Mercer; Tony Dalton (2 PhD projects)
- **Biodiversity Planning in Urban Fringe Landscapes** - Sarah Bekessy (one PhD project and two post-doctoral positions)
- **Local Governance and Community Building** - John Jackson; Dave Mercer (5 PhD projects)

The project has evolved to take the form of a research collaboration between seven research clusters that focus on separate but highly correlated areas of sustainable urban development. Within these clusters, researchers examine and review the current methods, thinking and practices that are being used and developed by local governments, catchment authorities, housing and land developers, builders and planners in order to create more sustainable suburbs. They also look out for gaps in knowledge across the field of sustainable urban development and propose new approaches to bridge these gaps. The project is a collaborative effort involving the work of research managers, PhD and Masters students. It works closely with industry partners such as the City of Whittlesea, VicUrban, Stockland, Metricon, Australand, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, to name just a few, to develop information and frameworks that will aid the integration of sustainability into industry processes and policy.

**Sarah Bekessy, Ian Thomas** and **John Fien** (*RMIT*) are working on a project called ‘Building Capacity for a Sustainable Future’. This project has the aim of promoting sustainability principles within universities as corporate entities and in their teaching curricula, and it has a broader agenda of promoting profound organisational change on a wider scale. It is founded on a collaboration between RMIT University, state government agencies responsible for sustainability (DSE) and educational innovation (VSIC), the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage and an industry association (the Hornery Institute). All share a common goal of developing models for institutional change for sustainability. Within RMIT, it involves personnel from SS&P, the School of Property Construction and Project Management, the School of Management and Education. Specifically, it will identify effective change management strategies for integrating sustainability as ‘embedded practice’ rather than ‘innovation’ in organisations. It builds on and extends an existing partnership between RMIT University and DSE to develop an understanding of key drivers and processes through which individual sustainability innovations in discrete courses can be
embedded across an organisation, so that sustainability understandings and skills are established as core graduate outcomes at the university scale. The project has three years of funding commencing in 2006 and involves two PhD scholarships.

**Ian Thomas** and **Ruth Lane (RMIT)** are working on an ‘Environmental Careers Survey’. In 2004-2005, funding was obtained from the Commonwealth Dept of Environment and Heritage to conduct a survey of environmental careers in order to establish how well the environmental degrees currently offered by Australian universities meet the current and foreseeable needs of employers. This work has produced an online publication ‘Careers in the Environment in Australia: A Guide to Environmental Jobs’ which will be disseminated to schools and tertiary institutions, and interested industry and government organisations.

**Ruth Lane** and **Quentin Farmar-Bowers (RMIT)** are working on a project called ‘Understanding Farmer Decision Systems that Relate to Land Use’. This research project is funded through the Department of Sustainability and Environment and builds on previous research conducted for the Drivers of Land Use Change (DLUC) project into farmer decision systems. That project developed a ‘drivers model’ that has two elements to farmer decisions - motivations on the one hand, and available and suitable opportunities on the other. The DLUC project explored motivations in depth. This project will address the opportunities dimension, while also testing previous findings about motivations. This research also links with research that has been undertaken by Ruth Lane, Dave Mercer and Chris Harrington on farmer decision-making and conservation covenants in Victoria. This research is in the final stages of preparation for publication.

**Bryant Allen (Human Geography, ANU)** and **Michael Lowe** completed a report on national roads in PNG for AusAID. Bryant visited Port Moresby in June to present the report to the Secretaries for the Departments of Treasury, Transport and Works, and National Planning and Rural Development. Bryant also assisted a World Bank team to develop estimates of the population potentially exposed to the HIV/AIDS virus in PNG through urban areas, roads, ports, airports, mining projects and timber camps.

**Mike Bourke (Human Geography, ANU)** is working on a number of projects funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research. These are on agroforestry in PNG (as part of an ANU project), evaluation of sweet potato cultivars in Madang Province, PNG (a World Vision project), soil fertility management in the PNG Highlands (with the University of Queensland). They have involved fieldwork in the PNG highlands and lowlands. He is also working as the Rural Livelihood Strategy Adviser for the Solomon Islands Community Sector Program and has made one trip to Solomon Islands on that project.

**Katherine Gibson (Human Geography, ANU)** and Professor Julie Graham from the University of Massachusetts have completed their book ‘A Post-Capitalist Politics’ and it will be published by the University of Minnesota Press in March 2006.

**Kersty Hobson (Human Geography, ANU)** has this year conducted qualitative research into the Australian Conservation Foundation’s Sydney-based ‘Green
Home’ program, as well as writing papers on pragmatism and environmental responsibility, and environmental NGOs in Singapore. Thanks to an Australia-China Council Residence award, in 2006 her research will focus on animal welfare and anti-trafficking NGOs in Hong Kong.

**Deirdre McKay (Human Geography, ANU)** is conducting additional field research in Ifugao Province and with Ifugao outmigrants in Hong Kong, as well as continuing data collection for the diverse economies project in the Philippines that she is working on with Katherine Gibson and Department of Anthropology colleagues, Kathryn Robinson and Andrew McWilliam.

**Lesley Potter (Human Geography, ANU)** has continued working on Southeast Asian, (especially Indonesian) environmental history and current rural issues in Indonesia with a particular focus more recently on smallholder producers of tree-based commodities.

In July, **Jon Barnett (SAGES, Melbourne University)** commenced a 5 year ARC Discovery Project with associated Research Fellowship on 'Climate Change and Security in the South Pacific'. The first major phase of fieldwork is scheduled to begin in March 2006. Jon is also on the Scientific Steering Committee of the Global Environmental Change and Human Security project, which is a Core Project of the IHDP (see [http://www.gechs.org/](http://www.gechs.org/)). Australian geographers with an interest in collaborating with the GECHS on environmental change issues are encouraged to contact Jon.

**Dr Bev Clarke, Mr Eric Compas, Prof Andrew Beer and Ms Cecile Cutler** of Geography at Flinders recently completed field investigations on Kangaroo Island. Their research is focussing on the impact of the introduction of the Endeavour Marine Protected Area in that region. A paper has been submitted to the *South Australian Journal of Geography*.

**Professor Iain Hay (Flinders)** has recently completed a book with Professor Mark Israel (Flinders, Law) entitled *Research Ethics for Social Scientists: between ethical conduct and regulatory compliance*. The book will be published by Sage, London in May 2006. Iain is also completing the third editions of *Communicating in Geography and the Environmental Sciences* and *Making the Grade*, both published by Oxford University Press. In addition, in 2005, and after 10 years in the role, Iain stepped down as Australian Commissioning Editor for *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*.

During 2006, **Iain Hay** will commence work on a new pilot project, funded by Flinders University, looking at postcolonial virtual geographics. He is also founding a new journal with archaeologist Donald Pate entitled *Cultural Landscapes*.

**Professor Andrew Beer (Flinders)** is continuing to lead a large inter-disciplinary team examining the Health, Housing and Labour Market Impacts of an Automobile Plant Closure. His other current large research project is the AHURI funded Collaborative Research Venture - 21st Century Housing Careers and Australia's Housing Future.
Dr Beverley Clarke, in conjunction with Dr Maria Zadoroznyj (Sociology) and Professor Peter Fairweather (Marine Biology) (Flinders), are currently undertaking a study for the City of Onkaparinga exploring the social and environmental ramifications of allowing vehicles on beaches.

Dr Beverley Clarke (Flinders) is working on an interdisciplinary project that, in part, is exploring public attitudes about vehicle access to several beaches to the South of Adelaide. Vehicle access has been permitted for many years to a number of beaches within the City of Onkaparinga. The current project aim is to assist Council come to a well-informed decision about how to proceed in managing the issue.

Dr Mark Lethbridge (Flinders) in collaboration with Professor Hugh Possingham, University of Queensland and Dr Michael Westphal, EPA (Washington), have developed a GIS tool that helps conservation planners find optimal solutions when restoring native habitats.

Research Network in Spatially Integrated Social Science
A new ARC Research Network in Spatially Integrated Social Science (SISS) has been established with headquarters at The University of Queensland. The Network Convenor is Professor Robert J. Stimson who holds a Chair in Geographical Science and Planning, and is Director of the Centre for Research into Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures (CR-SURF).

The SISS Network’s mission is to encourage a spatial perspective, and promote spatial investigations and analyses among academics, planners and policy-makers in government, and decision-makers in business, industry and commerce.

The Network has already attracted ninety individual participants drawn from 14 social and behavioural sciences, with 18 Australian universities and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as institutional members. It also works closely with the Centre for Spatially Integrated Social Science (CSISS) at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

SISS Network activities include information and advisory services, summer schools for RHD students, an annual national SISS conference, an online repository of shared research resources, and publications, projects and workshops promoting spatially integrated theory, methods, tools and applications.

IAG members, indeed all practising geographers are encouraged to join the Network and participate in the promotion of innovative, cross-disciplinary, policy-relevant research in spatially integrated social science.

Visit the SISS Network @ www.siss.edu.au
POSTGRADUATE NEWS

The IAG conference in Armidale was well attended by Postgraduate students. For many postgraduate students the conference began on the Monday with the IAG postgraduate workshop and lunch. Over 20 students attended this workshop and were joined for lunch by many of the council members. At the workshop Dr Neil Argent and Associate Professor Steve Turton presented lively papers on getting published in geography and grant writing. Both presentations were very well received by the audience. In the second half of the workshop postgraduate students discussed issues related to research ethics standards and procedures and also university intellectual property rights regulations.

From the discussion on ethics regulations it became clear that there were significant differences in these regulations and procedures between different universities. This generally had to do with how university ethics committees were interpreting the national guidelines. For example, the national guidelines require data to be securely stored for a period of five years. It was found though that one student was required by their university to destroy their data after five years from its collection. This ethics ruling restricts the student’s ability to conduct longitudinal studies or review that data later in their career. Another issue raised concerned restrictions being placed on data collection methods. A number of students reported that they had designed their research using what they believed were fairly standard geographical research techniques only to find that the ethics committee would not allow such methods. For example, on student wished to conduct follow-up interviews. The student intended that these follow-up interviews were only to be conducted on a voluntary basis. However, the student’s research ethics committee felt that the student’s proposal to send a single letter each to participants requesting a follow-up interview would be harassment. Therefore, the student was not allowed to directly contact research participants. The student was permitted to conduct follow-up interviews only if the participant contacted the researcher and asked the researcher to conduct a follow-up interview with them. I can’t imagine that this student got a very high response rate!

Ethics regulations are an important issue for all researchers to consider. For students who have had restrictions place on their data collection or analysis techniques I suggest you outline these clearly in your research write-up.

Following the postgraduate workshop most postgraduate students presented papers at the IAG conference. These papers were of a high standard with a number of students winning awards for outstanding papers (as voted by the IAG council). Well done to all those students who received awards.

Coming Up...

I am currently in the process of up-grading the postgraduate web page (with help from Julie Kesby). I would like to construct a postgraduate member’s profile page. This page would include information on who is doing what research and where. If
you would like your details to be included on this page could you please send me a short statement outlining your research topic and university contact details.

In July 2006 the IAG conference will be held in conjunction with the IGU conference in Brisbane. This promises to be an excellent conference. I have spoken with the organisers of the conference and they are very keen for postgraduate members to present papers in specialty sessions or in the general paper sessions. So if you are interested in presenting your work to a very friendly international audience then check out the web site now. Super early bird registration is due by the 24th February 2006.

Amanda Davies (Institute for Regional Development, UWA)

Tony Gill (University of Queensland) is working on a PhD that aims to provide a new technique to estimate ground cover in regions where overstorey vegetation obscures the satellite sensor’s view of ground cover.

Yadira Mendez de Martinez (University of Queensland) PhD student is working on poverty in campesinos' households living in peri-urban areas of Mexico City. She is analysing how the growth of the metropolitan area of Mexico City has altered the nature and availability of resources in three peri-urban communities and how such changes have affected the assets and adaptive strategies of campesinos' households.

Sirixai Phantavongs (Flinders) a past Master of Environmental Management student, has recently been appointed as Programme Analyst, Environment with the United Nations Development Programme in Laos.

Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa (Flinders) (2004 Les Heathcote Award joint recipient) is now employed as a National Project Manager for a community based biodiversity conservation project in Mongolia.

Amity James commenced her PhD in May 2005 in the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management at Flinders University. Her thesis focuses on housing and ageing in South Australia and Northern Ireland.

Eleanor Button (Flinders) is embarking on the fieldwork component of her PhD into Gambling and Pathways into Homelessness. Importantly, part of her fieldwork will be undertaken outside the metropolitan area - specifically the Riverland of South Australia.

Linda Malam (Human Geography, ANU) has been awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Her thesis was entitled ‘Encounters across difference on the Thai beach scene’.

Ruth Turia (ANU) was admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. She researched the development of forest policies in PNG from colonial times to the present, in an attempt to examine why sustainable forest practices have not been achievable.
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Seconder: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Nomination Consent (to be completed by nominee)

Title: ____________________________

Name (please print in full): ____________________________

University Degrees (with date of award and University for each) ____________________________

______________________________

Present Position: ____________________________

Professional Address: ____________________________

______________________________

Telephone: ____________________________

Fax: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________

Please list your major research/teaching interests: ____________________________

______________________________

I do / do not (delete one) consent to having these professional details included in the IAG's WWW membership directory.

I wish to be elected to ORDINARY/RETIRED/STUDENT membership of the Institute of Australian Geographers Inc.

Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

If elected a member, do you wish to become a Registered Member by signifying your agreement to abide by the IAG Code of Professional Conduct? YES NO

Please return completed form to:
Elaine Stratford, School of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 7001, Tasmania, Australia.
MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT

Anyone with a university degree in Geography (or its equivalent) is qualified to join the IAG. The annual subscription is A$100 for full members, A$50 for retirees and student/concessional members (note: the financial year is the calendar year). This includes copies of all publications.

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The IAG holds back issues of *AGS* and is able to provide single issues or runs for volumes 20-34. Since volume 35 the journal has been published by Blackwells and these are available from them on a commercial basis. Members who have missed issues in volumes 35-37 because of membership problems may seek missing copies from the Treasurer.

Copies of volumes 20-34 are available at a single issue rate of $12, or whole volume rate (2 issues per volume) of $20 plus $5 handling in Australia, $10 overseas surface mail or $20 overseas air mail. Payment can be made using Visa, Mastercard, Bankcard or cheque made payable to IAG Inc.

To receive back issues send the following form to Elaine Stratford, School of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 7001, Tasmania, Australia.

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