

Western Division, Canadian Association of Geographers



Newsletter

February 1996

WCAG '96 - Annual Division Conference March 8-9, 1996, Lethbridge, Alberta

Early March will see geographers from across Alberta and British Columbia converging on Lethbridge. This year the Division is holding the annual meeting at the University of Lethbridge where a distinctly "western" flavour is assured. A full slate of paper presentations is planned, with two concurrent full-day sessions being prepared. In addition, field trips and opportunities to experience the geographical diversity of the Lethbridge area are all planned. The Division will be holding its Annual General Meeting after lunch Saturday, March 9, 1996. Time and place will be announced at the conference.

Next year the annual conference is being hosted by the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George. Details will be announced in the next Newsletter.

News and Announcements

Augustana University College

Budget cuts have been felt across the province and on our campus. However, the geography department has been lucky to expand its map library and geography lab with kind donations from the Battle River Regional Planning Commission, the County of Camrose, and the City of Camrose. Next year, a new course on Canadian Cultural Geography, will be taught by Dr. Lucille Marr, from the History department. A field course in physical geography is in the works, to be taught in

conjunction with an outdoor leadership course from the Physical Education department. Despite the slight drop in enrolment in many of Alberta's universities and on this campus, geography courses at Augustana are heavily enrolled, bucking the trend.

Glen Hvenegaard was active in the parks field this fall, attending conferences in Lake Louise (IUCN's Commission on Parks and Protected Areas) and Calgary (Parks and Protected Areas in Resource-based Economies).

Augustana is sponsoring an important conference in May of this year, entitled "Liberal Arts and the Future of University Education." The conference is presented by CIRLA, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in the Liberal Arts, and will be held in Banff, Alberta. For more information, contact Chris at CIRLA@corelli.augustana.ab.ca.

For questions about geography at Augustana University College, contact Glen Hvenegaard, 4901-46 Avenue, Camrose, Alberta T4V 2R3 (ph.403-679-1574; email: hveng@augustana.ab.ca)

Camosun College

Camosun College is offering a "HONG KONG IN 1997" study tour. The objectives of this program are to observe the political transition of Hong Kong from British to Chinese rule; study social and economic transformations in Hong Kong; and understand the implications on Canada's relationship with Hong Kong. Date: Last week of June and first week of July, 1997 (10 days).

Simon Fraser University

A book entitled *Suburb of Happy Homes: Burnaby* has just been published at Simon Fraser University. Originally conceived as part of the university's activities to honour Burnaby's centennial, the volume comprises ten chapters and three appendices specially written for this project. The story of the founding of the municipality is outlined and the history of Burnaby during the first fifty years is highlighted. Other chapters discuss the ward system of local elections during the 1920s, the development of zoning, and how Burnaby has become a leader in handling development and property information in map and computer form. Special themes include the story of Metrotown's development, land values along the main commercial part of Hastings Street, and how elderly men negotiate space and time in their daily routines. An evocative essay about Burnaby Mountain's natural landscapes concludes the volume and will be of interest to all who have ever hiked its trails and wondered about its geological make-up, vegetation, weather and seasons. Appendices provide a discussion of trends in population development and sources for further reading about Burnaby.

Written with the public in mind, the book should appeal to all those with an interest in Burnaby history, geography and social development and, by extension, the municipalities of the Lower Mainland. (Geographers among the authors are: Tom Poiker (SFU), J. Bruce Prior (SFU and US Dept. of State), Colin Crampton (SFU), Lyall Armstrong (Genstar), Kenji Ito (Burnaby Planner), Louise McTague (SFU and Creo Inc.), Rod Fowler (SFU and Kwantlen). Len Evenden, chair of the university's Burnaby Centennial Committee, edited the volume.)

The book is available through the Centre for Canadian Studies at SFU (291-3689); the SFU Bookstore (Burnaby Mountain and Harbour Centre branches 291-3656); the Duthie bookstores; and several of the Coles, Smith, and Book Company stores in Burnaby and Coquitlam Centre.

University College of the Cariboo

Two UCC, Carla Stewart and Tracy Moore, have received funding from the Royal Canadian Geographical Society for a study of Kamloops' urban geography. The study is an investigation of recent changes in the housing stock in Kamloops' inner neighbourhoods. The students will also try to determine if these changes are accompanied by changes in the social composition of this area. The study involves field work, the analysis of occupational and housing data, and the construction of maps and a report. The project is supported by the RCGS's Grants in Aid of Research. These grants are made "to stimulate and encourage geographical research among secondary school and college students and their teachers and university undergraduates". Ross Nelson and Robert MacKinnon are supervising the study.

Ross Nelson is working with the Kamloops' Tenants' Action Centre on a Community Mapping Project. The primary objective is to increase the availability of affordable housing in Kamloops. The Community Mapping Project will provide a data base on housing and its demand, identify constraints and opportunities in the housing market, and ultimately help set courses of action. The initial phase of the project is an analysis of the geography of housing and neighbourhoods from existing data bases. The analysis will provide a background for subsequent surveys of the community.

Ken Favrholt will be traveling to Edinburgh, Scotland this summer to present a paper at an upcoming Canadian Studies Conference.

University College of the Fraser Valley

The Department hopes to see six geography majors graduate with UCFV/SFU B.A. degrees this Spring. Interest in both physical and human geography continues to be strong in the Fraser Valley region. New courses, new computer facilities (including PowerMac direct links to the Internet and a Website homepage under development at <http://ucfv.bc.ca>), an increasing number of field activities in geomorphology, another

Admission Requirements: approval by Chair, Pacific Rim Studies Program, participation in pre-trip orientation sessions, register in PAC 190, no language requirements. (Credits: PAC 190 Directed Studies (1.5 units))

Tentative activities:

- i) studies of urban development in Hong Kong - visit port areas, airport and new town projects, tour of public and private housing projects;
- ii) observation of political transition - interview politicians, students, and residents on their opinions and concerns of political changes;
- iii) understand cultural patterns - visit cultural centres, temples, shopping areas and other places of interests

An optional study tour to China (including Guangzhou and Beijing) is being planned in conjunction with the trip to Hong Kong.

For further information, contact Dr. Francis Yee, Department of Geography, Camosun College, 3100 Foul Bay Road, Victoria, B.C. V8P 5J2, by phone (604) 370-3307, fax (604) 370-3417, or by E-mail: Yee@Camosun.BC.CA

College of New Caledonia

On March 21, 1996, Dr. David Ley will be the visiting speaker in the College of New Caledonia Geography Department's Geography Lecture Series. The series is sponsored by the Koerner Foundation. Dr. Ley is scheduled to give two lectures: an afternoon lecture to students from CNC and possibly UNBC and a public lecture in the evening. The public lecture should be of great interest to the general public because it will deal with issues related to downtown revitalization, an item of present concern to the Prince George community.

A two-month long (June-July) course of study is currently in the development stage as a joint effort between Langara College and The College of New Caledonia. The program will involve courses in Anthropology, Ecology, Human Ecology and Physical Geography, with special focus on the Fraser River. As an added component the program includes a 14-day

rafting trip down the Fraser from Prince George to the Strait of Georgia.

Interested individuals should contact either: Rick Blacklaws (Langara College) Ph: 323-5318; E-mail Rblacklaws@langara.bc.ca or Dr. Frank Williams (Langara College) Ph: 323-5378 or Cliff Raphael (College of New Caledonia) ph: 562-2131 loc. 276 E-mail: Raphael@cnc.bc.ca.

Medicine Hat College

Medicine Hat College Geography has undergone an expansion over the last year - one that continues into September of 1996. Having reached a transfer arrangement with both the University of Lethbridge (indirectly) and Lethbridge Community College (directly) for students in the first year of LCC's Watershed Management Programme, we have begun teaching courses in the "technical" side of the discipline.

Three new courses have seen or are about to see the light of day. Map Interpretation (Geog 332), Remote Sensing (Geog 334) and Introduction to G.I.S. (Geog 338) have been added to the calendar and schedule. While these classes serve a particular programme, they are all university-transfer as well. To that end, transfer arrangements are being worked-out.

A part-time member of the faculty has been added to the roster of Medicine Hat College - Mr. Ivan Shukster (B.Sc. from University of Alberta). Despite reduced budgets, offerings at MHC have increased substantially. Each year at least seven first and second year classes are being offered.

Despite the devilish nature of Ben Moffat's field trip south last year (see earlier Newsletters), he is venturing into the wilds of the USA again this spring. June will see a dozen MHC geographers braving the roads, byways and National Parks of the south-central states. Anyone on the GEOGRAPH discussion list knows the field course travelled to Utah, Arizona, Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota and Montana last year. Hopefully, the snow will be gone this time around.

edition of our Latin American study tour, access to the UCFV co-op education program, and the beginning of an active Geography Undergraduate Society are among the developments and initiatives at UCFV.

The department is also sponsoring two events this Spring. The first is a lecture series on topics relevant to the valley region and borderland generally. In the first of the series (on February 21), Profs. Dan Turbeville and Susan Bradbury from Eastern Washington University will address cross-border issues in a talk on "From Fur Trade to Free Trade in the Pacific Northwest."

The second event - on May 10 and 11 - is the annual Geography Articulation meeting. Plans are underway for some scholarly and social activities on the Friday and for the usual discussion and debate session on the Saturday.

Despite crowded classrooms and continued demand for course development, faculty have been working on various projects and maintaining connections outside the department. Ian Okabe will be doing collaborative research with Prof. Roland Stull at UBC on ensemble numerical weather prediction modelling to help improve weather prediction for B.C. Doug Nicol is finishing off a long-term project with the Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society on the historical geography of burial grounds and settlement in the Upper Valley and, with a colleague, Cherie Enns, is extending some work already presented at a past WDCAG conference. Cherie herself offered a new third year planning course this year and guided several students through some very well received local projects in the communities we serve. David Gibson is off to Mexico in May and hopes to be on educational leave for part of the following year. John Belec continues his role in GIS for the department and will again offer courses at the new university college centre in Mission.

University of Northern British Columbia

Chair Kevin Hall has been busy expanding UNBC's international profile. At December meetings of the International

Conference for Arctic Research Planning and International Permafrost Association in Hanover, New Hampshire, he managed to set up several co-operative agreements for future collaborative work with universities in England, Finland, China and Argentina. Kevin will visit China in late March to follow up on one of these projects.

Greg Halseth heads off to the Czech Republic in April as the second stage of a Toyota Foundation research project looking at whether new information sharing technology can assist community development activity in small town and rural communities. Greg was recently appointed to the BC Science Council's "Communities Committee" responsible for reviewing FRBC proposals.

Focussing her research closer to home, Ellen Petticrew presented a talk at Canadian Society of Limnology in January in Montreal, on her work with the Tabor Lake Restoration Project. She has received a grant to look at snow quality in the Tabor Lake watershed.

Graduate student Jenny Lo is preparing for fieldwork connected with her master's thesis research on "Womens' Participation in Local Community Development Organizations". Her summer data collection will focus upon the communities of Quesnel and Williams Lake in BC's Cariboo region.

New offerings this term at UNBC include 400-level courses in the Social Geography of Northern Communities, the Geomorphology of Polar Regions, and Advanced GIS, and a 300-level course on Russian Geography. The latter serves as part of a new, interdisciplinary Russian Studies Minor. The Geography Club continues its noontime talk series, featuring talks on various corners of the earth, from Nepal to Amazonia to Baffin Island.

The February 1996 edition of the WDCAG Newsletter was printed at the Department of Geography, University of Victoria.

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