

# Western Division, Canadian Association of Geographers



## Newsletter

Spring, 2002

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### Augustana University College

The department will offer two new courses over the next few years, biogeography and a capstone course on the history and impacts of environmental science. The department also continued with a cooperative project with Ducks Unlimited Canada. Students gain valuable experience by participating in a long-term habitat monitoring project of the parkland region in east-central Alberta. Discussions are underway to plan and implement an urban wildlife enhancement project, in cooperation with the City of Camrose and the Wildrose Outdoor Club.

Faculty member, Glen Hvenegaard, began a biogeography project on the influence of patch size on forest songbirds in upland aspen forests in central Alberta. He also finished off a project to estimate the economic impacts of the annual Snow Goose Festival in Tofield, Alberta. Glen plans to present at the Bird Conservation and Monitoring Conference and Canadian Congress on Leisure Research, both in Edmonton. Forthcoming publications relate to park interpretation, tourist typologies, recreation specialization, ecotourism, and Irrawaddy dolphins with colleague and wife, Pam Stacey.

For more information, contact Dr. Glen Hvenegaard at [hveng@augustana.ca](mailto:hveng@augustana.ca) or look at our website:

### Capilano College

The spring term geography sections have experienced heavy demand with waiting lists for most courses. This is a good thing; however, the future in terms of class size and working conditions may be in jeopardy because of Bill 28. A government that legislates the right to break legal contracts undermines the relationships of trust that most of these institutions are built upon. This should be concern to all colleges and universities, and there needs to be solidarity for those of us in British Columbia.

Sheila Ross is going to remain on leave for another year. Brett McGillivray will be away next year on a relatively rare paid educational leave. He will be travelling across Canada next fall gathering information leading toward the writing of a Geography of Canada. We are hoping not to have to go through a hiring process by retaining Chris Bottrill and Cheryl Schreader.

Capilano College is looking forward to hosting the 2003 Geography Articulation Meeting at our Sechelt Campus (let,s hope it is still there with the cutbacks). For those attending there will be an interesting field trip for both human and physical geographers.

## Douglas College

There is really not too much new at Douglas College. Bluntly put, we are waiting to see what happens once the budget comes down on February 19th. By March, we may have cutbacks to announce.

## University of Lethbridge

The Department of Geography at The University of Lethbridge is hiring five new academic staff members this year: a geoarcheologist to support our archeology program, two new Academic Assistants to support our Concentration in Geographic Information Systems, and two term faculty members in physical geography and yet another a GIS position. This is quite a large number of applications to manage but it promises a number of new colleagues which will change the complexion of the department and further diversify our teaching and research activities as the university continues to grow.

The University of Lethbridge is proud to have received support from the **Canadian Council for Geographic Education** to host an Institute to foster geography in secondary education. The institute is entitled, "Geographical Information Science in Urban and Natural Environments: A Field and Laboratory Experience in Lethbridge, Alberta" and will be held July 8-13, 2002. This provides the department a terrific opportunity to reach out to local high school teachers of social studies and science with state-of-the-art methods in geography and encourage greater attention to geography in the Alberta curriculum.

## Okanagan University College

There has been a number of significant developments in the Geography Department at Okanagan University College since our last report in the newsletter. The department now offers a Bachelor of Arts Geography major degree, after almost a decade of having only a minor. The Geography major presently has about 25 students and we expect to graduate our first students at spring convocation, 2002. Moreover, the number of Geography major students is growing fast, and we expect significant growth in the program over the next few years.

A number of new faculty have joined the department in the last few years. Kathleen Jagger has joined the department as Visiting Assistant Professor. Kathleen comes to us via Rutgers and the University of Toronto (where she completed her PhD) and she currently teaches physical geography courses at our Penticton campus. In addition to keeping up with her teaching and research, Kathleen maintains a busy schedule as a new parent and the owner of a rather large orchard on the Peachland benchlands overlooking Okanagan Lake.

Terry Day joined us from the University of The Gambia in August last year and is surviving a lack of sunshine and ocean. Terry, a Visiting Associate Professor filling in for Mike Pidwirny while he is on sabbatical, teaches a number of our environmental and quantitative methods courses at the North Kelowna Campus. He relaxes with his *kora*, a 21 string Mandinka instrument that looks like a lute, but is played like a harp. In The Gambia he had a *jaliba* (professional *kora* player and oral historian) visit him every day in his compound, but in Kelowna he's a little stuck for someone to teach him more. However, he seems to have survived post-tropical trauma, is well settled in the Department and enjoys working with his new colleagues.

Lawrence Berg was recently hired as an Associate Professor after five years as a

lecturer at Massey University in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Lawrence is located at our Vernon Campus, and he teaches courses in our social and cultural geography stream at both Vernon and North Kelowna. Although he misses urban life, he is beginning to enjoy the compensations of living in a small town located just twenty minutes from a world-class ski resort. The easily accessible beaches and mountain-biking have not proved too difficult to live with either.

Donna Senese has taken over the thankless job of Departmental Chair while Mike Pidwirny is on sabbatical. Donna had some pretty big shoes to fill, as Mike actually seems to enjoy administration and is thus quite effective, but the department members are all in agreement that Donna has been doing a great job. Thanks Donna!

With the development of our BA major, students have formed a Geography Students' Course Union, calling themselves the 'Masters of Disasters'. The Geography Course Union has been very active both on and off campus, having organised many social and academic events including guest lectures, hiking fieldtrips, and holiday socials. The student course union is planning a trip to the WDCAG meetings in Vancouver this spring.

Since our last submission to the newsletter, departmental members have developed a significant number of new research projects and collaborations. For example, Terry Day is chairing a session on Environmental Change at the AAG in March, and he will present a paper on, "Reasonableness of U.N. World Population Projections Tested against Benford's Law". Terry is continuing with research collaborations with colleagues in Eastern Canada and The Gambia, as well as developing new projects here in the Okanagan.

Fes de Scally is continuing his measurement programme in the Canadian Rockies on the importance of sediment loading of debris flow channels by snow

avalanches. He is also investigating the morphometric and sedimentologic properties of alluvial fans in the Southern Alps of New Zealand with Ian Owens at the University of Canterbury, and will be reporting on some of this work at the March WDCAG meeting. Fes is also continuing to provide consultation to Parks Canada on the ecological consequences of debris flow and flash flood mitigation in the Bow Valley, Banff National Park. And just to prove that a geographer's breadth of experience can also be measured as a vertical distance, he has initiated a project to study the risk of tropical cyclone strikes in the Cook Islands! Fes' interests in the South Pacific have led to development of a course on Geography of the South Pacific that was offered last semester for the first time. This interest also spawned ongoing volunteer work organising the collection and shipment of textbook donations to the Cook Islands National Library on Rarotonga.

Lawrence Berg has been active with a number of projects relating to place and the politics of identity in various locales in Canada and New Zealand. He continues work on the politics of naming places in Aotearoa/New Zealand with Robin Kearns from the University of Auckland. He has recently completed a project with Matthew Henry from the University of Auckland that focuses on issues of nationalism and (hetero)sexuality in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Lawrence is starting work on a project with Pamela Moss from Uvic., which examines issues of disability, identity and space. He is beginning two new projects, one on the relationship between sexuality, (dis)ability and masculinities, the other on historical geographies of whiteness in the Okanagan (circa 1890-1920). Lawrence will be presenting a paper on 'Duppy Feminism' at the upcoming AAG meetings in LA, as well as participating as a panelist, paper discussant or chairperson in seven other special sessions. Lawrence is a theme co-ordinator for the upcoming Third International Critical Geography Conference in Hungary, as well as being an organiser for the International Critical Geography

Group. In between, he will give presentations at the CAG and IGU Gender and Geography conferences in Toronto. In the past 18 months at OUC, Lawrence has developed and taught seven new courses.

Mike Pidwirny is currently on sabbatical from the department, during which time he has been completing research and development of a number of very interesting internet teaching and learning projects.

Bernard Momer has been completing research and development for a number of new courses in the Urban Geography stream of our degree program.

Donna Senese, in the few spare moments she has from her work as department Chair, is finishing work with the South Okanagan wine appellation and also doing research on an emerging wine region in the Cowichan Valley. Donna's expertise in the geographies of wine has also led her to develop a new fourth-year course that focuses on Geography and Wine. Apparently, we have yet to lose a student on any of the 'required' fieldtrips for the Geography and Wine course!

Ian Saunders has been making forays into Cathedral Park and, with student Peter Rotheisler, initiated a terrain mapping project of the area, and a presentation of this work is scheduled for the May meeting of the Geological Association of Canada. Peter has since graduated and is now working on his MSc at the University of Western Ontario. Ian also led a geomorphology field trip through the park last fall, and apparently everybody survived okay. In other activities, Ian has been exploring potential field study sites in the Columbia Mountains, and in between attended the BC-CIARN climate change workshop in November. In the past year at OUC, Ian has developed two new upper-level courses in applied climatology and research methods.

The geography department has been very fortunate this year in securing money from the SSHRCC Aid to Small Universities fund and from the Kalamalka Campus Student's Association to fund an international seminar series entitled 'Critical Studies of Culture, Society & Space'. The series included talks by Richie Howitt (Macquarie University, Australia), Chief Dan Wilson (Okanagan Indian Band), Audrey Kobayashi (Queen's University, Canada), Derek Gregory (UBC, Canada), Neil Smith (City University of New York, USA) and Cindi Katz (City University of New York, USA). Upcoming talks will be given by Rob Kitchen (National University of Ireland, Maynooth), Robin Kearns (University of Auckland, New Zealand) and Kirsten Simonsen (Roskilde University, Denmark). We have also secured funding from the OUC Strategic Directions and Innovations Fund for a second seminar series in critical geography, to run from January – April, 2003. Colleagues who are interested in attending these talks should contact Lawrence Berg for further information. [Lberg@Okanagan.bc.ca](mailto:Lberg@Okanagan.bc.ca)

### **Simon Fraser University**

As our usual Newsletter authors are fully involved with organizing the upcoming WDCAG meetings, this will be a very brief note. We wish to welcome John Ng to our ranks; John replacing Ray Squirrell as departmental cartographer.

Our undergraduate curriculum revision continues, with Alex Clapp directing the transition most ably. The changes should allow us to offer all undergraduate courses in a timely and effective manner, and place more emphasis on our graduate program despite the resource limitations that we all 'enjoy' these days. The revision is long overdue; we owe a debt of thanks to Alex.  
Bob Horsfall

department activities in a variety of ways as well.

## **U B C**

Retirements: Dr. Terry McGee (June 30, 2001); Dr. Robert North (June 30, 2001); Dr. Cole Harris (December 31, 2001).

Appointments: Dr. Karen Bakker, Assistant Professor in Environmental Geography (July 1, 2001); Dr. Philippe Le Billon (July 1, 2001).

Achievements: Dr. Tim Oke, 2002 recipient of the American Meteorological Society's (AMS) award for outstanding achievement in biometeorology.

Recruitments: The Department is currently recruiting for 4 Assistant Professor positions: Human Geography of Asia; Human Geography of Continental Europe; Population/ Health Geography - GIS; and Urban Geography.

All 4 positions are to be effective July 1, 2002.

## **U C F V**

Geography at UCFV is full for the Winter term with sizeable waitlists in many classes. There seems to be an almost unlimited number of students for introductory regional, physical and human courses. At the moment we have about 60 majors, 15 extended minors, and 10 minors in the program, and we offered over 1000 seats for the January enrollment. We are still eight faculty, one lab assistant, and some much appreciated sessional people!

The Geography Undergraduate Student (GUS) group is very active as a result of the interest in our program. Car rallies, Halloween candy sales, scavenger hunts (always in training for WDCAG student events!!), and a major Christmas party highlighted the students' social scene this past term. They participate in other

Faculty news: Steven Marsh, stepping in for Ian Okabe in the climate courses this year is also busy with his joint venture with Tampere Polytechnic in Finland. Students in Steve's two environmental courses are focussing on water quality and water resources this year, and have cooperated with both Finnish and Russian students in an online forum for information sharing.... David Gibson is tuning up the next Mexican Study Tour, due to leave in early May. The tour is full once again....Sandy Vanderburgh is planning for a sabbatical next year and will offer both our lower level geomorphology courses in our short Spring semester.... The Borderlands regional course, our joint venture with Western Washington University in Bellingham is growing, with the highest enrollment ever this term. John Belec has taken a break from teaching the course, but is taking a paper about the course to the CAG in Toronto in late May. Our Canadian quartet, John, David, Steven, and Doug Nicol are planning to teach Geography 328 (Canada) at Western Washington in the Spring Quarter, working under NAFTA Visas for the term. Adapting our semester system course outlines to a quarter system framework will be a bit of a challenge.... Cherie Enns is off to North Carolina in the spring as a keynote speaker at the Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute conference on innovations in strengths-based family, school, and community practices....Don Tunstall is moving some of his research directions toward Australasia, including the first-time offering of a senior level seminar course on the region.

## **U N B C**

Life at UNBC is still in turmoil as the program attempts to expand. Much to the relief of husband Neil Hanlon, Catherine Nolan, who has been with us since September, was successful in obtaining the tenure track position in human geography,

which she will officially begin for the 2002-03 year. The competition for the new geomorphologist has been completed and we should be able to announce the successful candidate by the annual meetings. Interviews for the economic geography position have also just been completed. Participation in all these competitions has taken up much of the time of the program members over the past few months so we have no exciting research endeavours to report.

Funding cutbacks have made it impossible for CNC to share the cost of travel to the annual meetings this year and therefore we may have fewer participants than usual, however several faculty are planning to fly down to Vancouver on their way to the AAG meetings...nice timing SFU.

Construction of a new lab building at UNBC is continuing on pace and the geography program members will be moving into new office space in that building over the summer.

After six years of being your humble correspondent, this brief message is my last entry. Best wishes to all.

--Reg Horne

## U Vic

### MCCANN AWARDED 2001 MASSEY MEDAL:

Dr. Larry McCann is the 2001 winner of the Massey Medal for outstanding achievement in Canadian geography. The award, established by Governor General Vincent Massey in 1959, is sponsored by the Massey Foundation and the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. After graduating from UVic geography in 1966, Larry earned an MA and PhD in Alberta, and returned to UVic's geography

department in 1992. He had spent many years on faculty at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick where he was Davidson Professor and director of Canadian studies. Until receiving the Massey Medal, Larry was perhaps best known as the author of the popular textbook *Heartland and Hinterland: A Geography of Canada*.



### DAVID C-Y LAI AWARDED UVIC SOCIAL SCIENCES 2002 AWARD:

Dr. David Chuen-yan Lai is receiving UVic's Faculty of Social Sciences 2002 Annual Award for Teaching Excellence in an April ceremony. Previous awards recipients include UVic Geography Department's Dr. Larry McCann.

### GEOGRAPHY STUDENT WINS COASTAL INQUIRIES AWARD:

Uvic Geography undergrad Jennifer Harvey has been awarded the 2001 Coastal Inquiries student research award, which will include intensive courses at University College Dublin, as well as support for several months self-directed research among coastal communities in Ireland. Coastal Inquiries includes UVic, as well as Memorial University, University of Ottawa, University of Nijmegen, University College Dublin and University of Copenhagen. (<http://www-filosofie.sci.kun.nl/ci/introduction.html>). Jennifer joins previous winners from UVic Geography, including Cara Segger and

Jessica Dempsey. Jennifer also won best undergrad student presentation award at the September 2001 meeting of the Association of Washington Geographers in Seattle.

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

Dr. Harry Foster has just had a letter accepted by The Lancet on how viruses cause heart attacks in selenium deficient people.

#### COASTS UNDER STRESS PROJECT:

Dr. Martin Taylor heads the West Coast fifth year of the Coasts Under Stress Project (CUSP: <http://www.coastsunderstress.ca/>), focusing on population and community health. CUSP is a major collaborative research initiative funded by the SSHRC and NSERC, whose purpose is to evaluate environmental, social and human health outcomes of recent rapid economic and social change on the Canadian East and West Coasts.

The project brings together researchers and students from an array of social science, natural science and humanities backgrounds from nine universities in Canada and three in the United States, as well as government scientists in both countries. Dr. Rosemary Ommer at the University of Calgary is Principal Investigator.

Taylor's own research investigates whether there are altered population health outcomes following economic and/or consequent social restructuring in British Columbia coastal communities, over the time period 1985-1999. Delineating population health effects of economic and social change on Canadian coastal communities requires a broad range of data available from federal, provincial and regional registries, as well as primary data collected by project researchers.

Two research assistants, undergraduate student Michel Demyen and history Ph.D. student Mia Reimers, recently compiled community historic and economic profiles for Port Hardy, Tofino-Ucluelet and Prince Rupert. Martin Taylor will design and begin primary data collection through the 2001-2002 academic year, with UVic Geography Ph.D. student Sulan Dai.

#### NEW BOOK IN UVIC'S WESTERN GEOGRAPHIC SERIES:

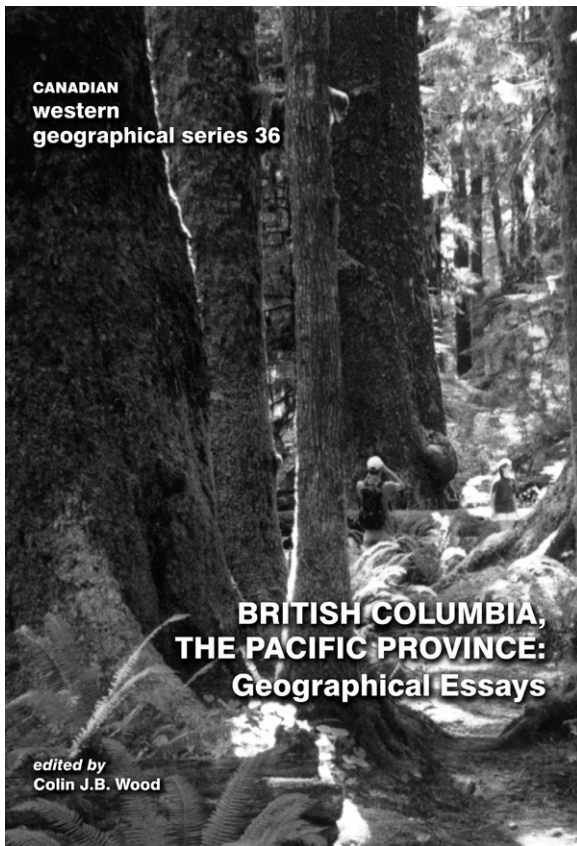
British Columbia: The Pacific Province  
Volume 36 of the Western Geographic Series.

UBC Press. Available from Raincoast Books, \$32.

Edited by Colin J.B. Wood

British Columbia is a distinctive province and major region of Canada. Its size, mountainous character, extensive indented coastline, mighty rivers and orientation to the Pacific realm, create a special identity that sets it apart from the rest of the continent. Its diverse ecosystems are paralleled by a rich ethnic mosaic and variegated tapestry of human activity - from

the sophisticated metropolis of Vancouver to the remote and isolated settlements of the northern interior.



This is a revised and completely updated version of British Columbia: its Resources and People.

It systematically describes and interprets the physical and human geography of the province at the turning point of the millennium. The text is ideal for a secondary or post-secondary course resource on British Columbia.

And late-breaking news from U Vic....

Dr. Chuenyan Lai has been selected as the winner of the 2002 Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching. This is delightful news and, coupled with his selection as the Faculty of Social Science Teaching Award recipient, a wonderful measure of his impeccable contribution to teaching in the department.



Heartiest congratulations Chuenyan !