The Oldest
Head Ever?

Mike Bovis, Head
Department of Geography

This past year has seen a changing of the guard as Graeme Wynn stepped down last June after serving as Head for six years. Graeme is now enjoying a well-earned sabbatical and will return to regular teaching and research duties in July of this year. I’m sure everyone will join me in giving Graeme a resounding vote of thanks for his enormous contribution to our department, and for his selfless devotion to many tasks.

He left large shoes to fill, but regrettably my feet are somewhat lacking in size! Taking over the headship for me was a fairly big step relatively late in my UBC career. However, examination of departmental history and the long list of previous, illustrious leaders revealed that, as I approach my 60th birthday, I am probably the oldest person ever to have assumed the Headship. No wonder I feel so tired! I quickly put that thought out of my mind as I plunged into the murky, uncharted waters of administration, where I learned that ‘Administratium’ is indeed the heaviest known chemical element.

Given the shape of the departmental demographic pyramid, the past two years have seen a number of retirements, as detailed by Graeme in the Spring 2002 Geogramme. These were Bob North, Terry McGee and Cole Harris.

We have added six faculty members and, throughout the Faculty of Arts and the university as a whole, it is a time of great renewal as many faculty reach retirement age. This past year has seen renewal in the areas of resource geography, political geography, population and health, area studies, and urban geography. As mentioned in the last Geogramme, Karen Bakker and Philippe LeBillon are both Oxford graduates, hired in 2001 but who elected to commence their appointments in July 2002. Karen’s expertise lies in water resources, including issues of privatization, while Philippe’s straddles the fields of political geography, resource exploitation and regional security. Philippe’s appointment is shared between Geography and the Liu Centre for Global Issues. Mike Buzzelli is a McMaster doctoral graduate (1999) and postdoctoral fellow whose research interests span the inter-disciplinary areas of housing provision and environmental equity in urban North America. Mike is offering courses on urban geography, health and society, and introductory GIS. Elvin Wyly received his undergraduate degree from Penn State and did his graduate work at the University of Minnesota (PhD’95). He was a faculty member in geography and the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University before coming to UBC. His research interests include urban housing, neighbourhood change, issues of home ownership, racial discrimination and mortgage lending. Elvin is teaching introductory and advanced courses on urban geography and is reviving the Ur-
Research

New Technique for Dust Measurement

Ian McKendry and Annick Maletto, MSc’02 have recently developed and tested a new technique for measuring the size distribution of dust particles in the lowest kilometre of the atmosphere. Knowledge of the distribution of fine particles in the atmosphere is important because they are known to influence human health and also play a role in influencing visibility.

Very small particles are thought to have the greatest effects on health and visibility. The novel solution of our two intrepid researchers to the measurement of fine particulate was to deploy a miniature instrument (aerosol spectrometer) on a large tethered balloon. The balloon is raised and lowered by electric winch to heights of about 800m above ground to give vertical profiles of the particle size distribution. This new technique proved highly successful during field studies in the Lower Fraser Valley in 2001.

One important result was the observation of layers of particulate matter moving about the Lower Fraser Valley at night. This technique has aroused considerable interest among researchers using remote sensing to examine particle concentrations in the atmosphere (i.e. lidar – essentially laser radar). Given these initial successes in the Vancouver area the instrument will be used in a field study in Christchurch New Zealand in July 2003 and in Birmingham, England in August 2003.

Weather balloons fitted with equipment are used to measure dust particulate in the atmosphere. Of course, it’s always more fun on a sunny day.

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ban Studies Program in the Faculty of Arts. Merje Kuus received her doctorate from Syracuse University in 1999 and taught at George Mason University before coming to UBC. Her interests lie in the political geography of Europe, particularly eastern Europe and the enlargement of the EU and NATO. She teaches courses in political geography and contemporary Europe. Jim Glassman received his doctorate from the University of Minnesota in 1999 and was an assistant professor in Geography at Syracuse University before coming to UBC. His research and teaching specialties focus on the human geography of southeast Asia and, in particular, the political economy of Monsoon Asia, especially Thailand and the other newly industrializing countries of the region. All of these new faculty members have greatly invigorated the department with their enthusiasm and energy, and I am pleased to report great progress with new course proposals, and the submission of exciting new research proposals, many of which have since been funded.

Our faculty members received some significant accolades over the past year. Professor David Ley received a Trudeau Foundation Award, one of only four given in Canada, and the only one awarded to a UBC faculty member. The award is for three years initially, and is designed to promote work on democratic values and human rights, citizenship and social equity, and human interaction with the environment. These themes have been cornerstones of David’s research and teaching. Prof. Derek Gregory was awarded a Distinguished University Scholar award by UBC. This five-year renewable award is in recognition of outstanding scholastic achievement, and is part of a new UBC initiative to retain distinguished faculty. It seems to be working since Derek is still with us! Other notable honours: Trevor Barnes was the 2002 recipient of the CAG Award for Scholarly Distinction in Geography; Mike Buzzelli received the CAG Award for the best dissertation on Canadian geography; Margaret North was the 2002 recipient of the Canadian Geographic Literacy Award of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society; Ian McKendry won a Faculty of Arts Killam Teaching Award; and Sally Hermansen and Graeme Wynn were recipients of UBC AMS “Just Desserts” award for services to students in the department. In other news, David McClung’s NSERC Industrial Research Chair was renewed for a further five years to support snow avalanche research; David Edgington was invited to assume a three-year directorship of the Centre for Japanese Research within the Institute of Asian Studies; Ken Denike received the Service Award of the BC School Trustees’ Association and Dan Hiebert will soon be taking over from David Ley as director of the Metropolis Project. Our congratula-

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Metropolis Project

The Metropolis Project was renewed for a second five-year term in 2002. The Vancouver Metropolis Centre is one of four Centres of Excellence funded by the federal government to examine immigration and urbanisation issues in Canada. It is an interdisciplinary research programme, based at UBC Geography since its inception in 1996, and involves faculty from the three largest BC universities. In April 2003, Dan Hiebert will replace David Ley as UBC Director. Some 6 to 8 graduate students in Geography are presently conducting thesis research on immigration issues. Please refer to the Project web site for a listing of more than 120 working papers which have been published Project research so far (http://www.riim.metropolios.net/).

Understanding River Morphology Key to Research

Professor Mike Church and a legion of graduate students continue to work on the Fraser River, where a range of management issues has provided a challenge to do some new science. The gravel-bed reach of the river between Laidlaw and Mission presents the problem of persistent aggradation of the gravels that the river spits out of the Canyons upstream. As the bed of the river rises, so do water levels. That, of course, has residents of the region and public safety officials worried about changing flood hazard.

Church’s group has been working for some years now on refinements of the sediment budget for the reach so that the real magnitude of the problem can be appraised. Result: not so serious as feared (the actual gravel transport is modest), but gravel tends to pile up in certain places, producing locally high water levels. That finding has led to new research on the growth of the bars and deformation of the river channel by PhD student Darren Ham. An apparent solution to the whole problem would be to remove gravel from the river — the aggregate industry is actually anxious to do so. The problem is that the gravel movement is the key to the maintenance of salmon habitat along the river. Manipulation of the gravel budget could threaten the viability of one of the richest riverine ecosystems anywhere in the world. PhD student Laura Rempel has been studying this ecosystem and its interaction with the river morphology, leading to new insights for fishery management in the reach. MSc student Erica Ellis is studying flow and morphology of the side channels, where fish spend a lot of their time.

In the estuary sand transport is the problem. Church and his collaborators – including Dr. Ray Kostaschuk from the U. of Guelph and postdoc Dr. Paul Villard have been studying the sand dune formation, while PhD student Jeremy Venditti has conducted an experimental study of dune inception and growth.

All of this work has generated a massive data base. We probably know more about lower Fraser River now than we know about any comparable river reach in the world. This resource of information is attracting international interest, including colleagues from Sheffield and Loughborough in the United Kingdom who have joined in a project to model sediment transport in the river mathematically. Which means we learn even more about the river.

The work is supported by the BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans, BC Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, Fraser Basin Council, and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. Reports on the river from the UBC Geography group are on the web at http://www.geog.ubc.ca/fraserriver.

The Oldest Head Ever?

Mike Bovis, the real head
Geography Students Association
Maintains the Spirit

Geography Students Association started this term off in fine form with our annual weekend ski trip. This year, we went to Silver Star, near Vernon, and spent three full days skiing, boarding, tobogganing, partying, and watching endless movies on the long bus ride.

The ski trip made for a better start to the winter term than we experienced in September: during the first week of school the two nicest couches from the undergrad lounge were stolen. A big project for this year has been to replace these couches, and some of the other ‘ratty’ lounge couches. Last month, we returned home after a trip to the many furniture stores in Richmond with four black vinyl couches from The Brick. They are now in constant use, and the lounge looks great!

The last month of term has been extremely busy for the GSA. March 1st saw the Second Annual Geography Field Trip. This successful trip to the Squamish area was attended by two dozen students and professors, and was both fun and eye-opening. We were lucky to be joined for the day by Profs. Daniels, Hermansen, and Bovis. Their knowledge and enthusiasm allowed us to link our studies with the real world.

As soon as we recovered from the Field Trip, Career Night was upon us. Five UBC Geography alumni came back to talk about their careers and work experiences in Geography. The event was very well-attended, with 65 students coming out to listen to Leslie Gilbert (BA ‘86), John Paul Rankin (BA ‘92), Dan Lerner (BA ‘00), Katrina Ao (BA ‘01), and Michael Morsen (MA ‘97) talk about their careers in planning, treaty negotiation, software marketing, community mapping, and housing policy development. The talks were followed by wine and cheese and an opportunity to chat and network.

And, of course, this year’s graduating students went out with a bang. The Geo Gala was held March 27 at gorgeous Cecil Green Park House. The evening was a wonderful end to our years at UBC Geography, with appetizers, drinks, door prizes, awards, a slide show and dancing.

– Dawn Mooney, GSA President

Geography Graduate Student Society

The year started off as usual with a field trip tour of Vancouver and the North Shore, followed by the ‘ice-breaker’ party at the Vancouver Rowing Club to welcome incoming graduate students and new post-docs. Other social events that serve as venues for priming the grapevine include gatherings at Koerner’s Pub in the Graduate Student Center and the regular GeoPit beer garden sponsored by the Geography Students Association.

A number of other activities are equally crucial to career development, such as the series of professional development seminars organized for PhD students. We have been particularly active this year in forming reading groups, and as always Home Seminars provide an opportunity for us to present our research in an informal and supportive environment.

More formally, master’s students present their research in the annual Spring Symposium, while this year two completing PhD students were invited to give talks at
New Undergraduate Courses

Geography 412
This course, proposed by Karen Bakker, examines water management from a human geography perspective, with a focus on developing countries and cases of ‘water stress.’ Emphasis will be placed on policies for improving water access and water quality, and reducing water poverty.

Geography 471
A new course on applied GIS has been developed by Brian Klinkenberg in response to strong demand. In the course, students review applications of GIS in fields such as landscape ecology, crime analysis and health geography, and attain proficiency with GIS programs used by specialists in those fields (e.g., CrimeStat, which is widely used by law-enforcement agencies across the USA). Students will learn how the analytical power of GIS is used to solve practical problems in a variety of disciplines.

Geography 472
Advanced Cartography/Data Visualization, is proposed by Sally Hermansen and reviews the literature of cartographic design, data visualization and map use which in turn provides the students with a foundation for the design of final projects, many of these being local community mapping projects.

Geography 407
This new advanced biogeography course, Vegetation Dynamics, was proposed by Lori Daniels and examines themes such as disturbance, climate change, and human impacts on vegetation. Students will gain hands-on research experience by collecting data and tree-ring samples from local forests then learning analytical techniques to reconstruct forest history.

A 447 Off-Campus Research Project

Following a very positive experience last year with Geog 448 (Directed Studies), I decided to undertake an off-campus research project for my final year as an undergraduate.

Under the supervision of Karen Bakker and Sierra Legal Defence Fund Lawyer, Randy Christensen, I am currently researching BC’s drinking water legislation for a report to be published this spring. My analysis of the legislation, and its adherence to the recommendations made during the Walkerton Report, and to the Federal drinking water guidelines, has given me the opportunity to explore a possible career in Environmental Law.

The prospect of being published is very exciting, and participating in this course has enabled me to confirm my desire to work in this field, as well as to meet other influential people currently involved in water issues.

– Lilina Leysenko

Lilina is one of three geography students completing off-campus research projects this year. If you are aware of projects that could benefit from and applications of geographic skills and analysis please contact Karen Young at 604-822-2020 or young@geog.ubc.ca.

Geography 379: Field School in Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto Japan

Geography professor David Edgington has organized this field trip for May 2003 as part of a continuing field-studies course in Human Geography. The course will allow students to study the historical and contemporary development of a major region in western Japan “on the ground.”

After several classes at UBC between January and March, course members will spend two weeks in Kyoto. In addition to visiting this ancient capital, there will be side visits to metropolitan Osaka and the modern port of Kobe. Students will experience a rich blend of historical culture and modern technology, and will complete a small research project focusing on aspects of urban life in western Japan.

Problems of contemporary urban governance and the challenges now facing urban policy makers at the dawn of the 21st century will also be explored.

Hire Education Arts Co-op Program

If you think you can hire a Geography co-op student in your workplace, please contact
Sally Hermansen (sallyh@geog.ubc.ca) for more information, or go to the Arts Co-op web site (www.arts.ubc.ca/co-op/).

GEOGRAMME Spring, 2003
As a geographer who studies migration and refugee issues, I often wonder if academics are more like refugees and displaced persons than we realize. I am about to step into my first academic position, the golden wish that too many hope for and too few are granted. I did not like the uncertainty of being on the academic job market; nor have I liked the more tenuous aspects of life in graduate school. Sure, parts of it were wonderful: the people, the freedom, the poverty. As I traipsed around to job interviews, I found it ironic that even employers in the field of geography would not give candidates a little time to acquire a sense of place in the locales they were visiting. That is what I yearn for now. I want to be part of a community for more than just a few years. I want to vote, to join community groups, to get to know people who may be my neighbours and friends for life. Mind you, I know that my

graduated three times from UBC: a BA in Geography and History in 1996, a BEd in secondary Social Studies in 1997, and an MA in Geography in 2001. After teaching ESL for a while, I’ve now found a job that combines my interests in human rights, citizenship, multiculturalism, transnationalism, detective stories, and Latin America: I’m a refugee protection officer with the Canadian government, assisting in the process of deciding refugee claims. Basically my job is to screen each claim carefully, identify the issues that will be important at the hearing, prepare background research on country-of-origin conditions (and sometimes on the specific claimant as well), question the claimant and any witnesses at the hearing to see if the claimant’s story hangs together, and then make my observations on the strengths and weaknesses of the claim to the decision-maker. It’s an amazing job: every day I encounter the big, global, abstract issues (e.g., racism, civil war, people-trafficking, oppression of women and minorities, etc.) face-to-face in the individual lives of claimants. It’s a job that engages my mind and my soul. And it’s a job I feel well-equipped for as a result of the skills and knowledge I learned in UBC geography.

– Geoff Rempel (MA’01)

– Alison Mountz PhD candidate

**Stay In Touch Online!**

We have set up an electronic mailing list for geography alumni for announcements such as field trips, special lectures and the *Geogramme* (which would save us mailing costs). Please go to the Geography Alumni web site (www.geog.ubc.ca/alumni) where you will see the option to enter in your email address to receive Geography announcements and the *Geogramme* online.
For the second year, the Geography Students Association organized a field trip in the Lower Mainland. This year’s trip, called ‘Enticingly Earthy,’ included Squamish and its surrounding region. An enthusiastic group of 21, including three department professors, Mike Bovis, Lori Daniels, and Sally Hermansen, headed off early on Saturday, March 1, anticipating a day of fun-filled activities.

Our first stop was Lighthouse Park. Dr. Daniels led the group around the trails, exploring the trees of the old growth forest, while Dr. Bovis, in his own unique Vanna White style, pointed out the trees under discussion. Then we headed up the Sea to Sky highway with stops at Lions Bay and Porteau Cove. Along the way the group was enlightened about the geomorphology of the region and the tragic past of the highway.

In Squamish we were met by a representative of the Nexen Inc. industrial site, an old chlorine processing plant now undergoing a three-year environmental remedial clean-up. This may become the site for the passenger ferry terminal if the proposed 2010 Olympics goes ahead at Whistler. From the Nexen site we took a tour of the trails in Squamish’s estuary network while discussing the larger role of estuaries and issues of conservation and preservation. This then led us onto a city tour hosted by the Chamber of Commerce and two of Squamish’s city planners, who explained the comprehensive downtown development plans.

Eventually the discussion turned to the first private university in Canada, the Sea to Sky University. It is a unique undertaking, one which the developers hope will attract the minds of the world’s best. Finally, after a long day on our feet, the group headed over to the Howe Sound Brew Pub for a well deserved round of refreshments!

This trip would not have been possible without the dedication and support of the professors who joined us, and the very generous and enthusiastic people we met in Squamish. Next year we hope to have even more involvement from the undergrads, grad students, professors, and department staff.

Feel like you missed out on a good time? Well, to make sure it doesn’t happen again, keep your eyes open for next year’s trip. If you have any suggestions for a trip, contact me at amyspencer@hotmail.com or talk to any other member of the GSA.

– Amy Spencer
Where are they now?

1950s
Owen Jones BA’53 and his wife are spending time building ‘habitat for humanity’ homes at many locations throughout Canada and the US.

1960s
Peter Fournier BA’61, is currently living in Ottawa and is President of the International Gas Users Association.
Ken Martin BA’64, is back teaching at BCIT after some 30 years in the trucking industry in BC.
Richard Lundeen BA’69, has recently opened his own management consulting firm in Toronto specializing in public service restructuring.
Arlene Gawne BA’69, MA’74, sells homes in Las Vegas, NV and is a summertime wildlife photographer in Africa. “Thanks to diverse training under wonderfully eclectic geography professors at UBC, I’ve enjoyed a rich array of careers and a fascinating life. If any of you contemporary students are wondering if geography should be your major, I heartily recommend it.”

1970s
Ken Tunnicliffe BA’70, is the Manager, Property and Development, for Granville Island.
Paul Kariya BA’75, has recently been hired as Executive Director of the Pacific Salmon Foundation. Previously he was CEO of Fisheries Renewal BC.
Ian Thomson BA’75, teaches Earth Science and Geology in Gibsons, BC and recently fathered a baby girl.
Philip Suckling PhD’77, is Professor and Head of the Geography Department, University of Northern Iowa since 1991 where he and his wife Cheryl (BA’79) have four daughters, one of whom is currently working on her MA in Geography.
Tom Walker BSc’79, is making good use of his geography skills working for Mitra Imaging Inc.

1980s
Margaret Miller (née Dallyn) BA’80, has recently moved to Winnipeg. Previously she worked in Calgary as draftsperson in the oil and gas industry.
Bruce Martin BA’86, MA’89, is a Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Lethbridge, and Adjunct Professor of Earth & Atmospheric Sciences (a.k.a. Geography) at Taylor University College. He is also involved with the City of Lethbridge social planning department working on proposals to fund a new shelter for the homeless.
Greg Young BA’88, is married with two children and works with Raymond Letkeman designing resort-related projects, such as the redevelopment of Whistler Creekside, as well as volunteering on trips to design schools and orphanages in developing nations. “My classes in Urban, Physical, Social and Economic Geography continue to serve me well! Kudos to the faculty.”
Kathleen Laird-Burns BA’89, lives in Victoria with her two sons Cole and Quinn where she has a Therapeutic Horticulture business that brings people and the garden together.

1990s
Jonna Ebel BA’90, BEd’91, teaches History and Geography in Ontario, running historical geography tours for the Board of Education.
Kim Ferguson BA’96, is working for the BC Assessment Authority in Vancouver.
Van Le BA’97, is completing an MSc. in Environmental Science at Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage, Alaska.

2000s
Megan Stubbs BA’00, is still living a European adventure, having settled in Denmark, studying hard to learn Danish while working at Ikea.
Susan Jesson BA’01, is working for the BC Conservation Foundation.

Donations

Donations over the past year by geography alumni to the Geography Alumni Scholarship Fund and the Geography Alumni Operating Fund.

Over the past 10 years or more, Geography Alumni have donated more than $100,000 which now finances five perpetual scholarships of $1,000 each for the leading students in the their third year of the BA and BSc programs. During this past year, 68 Alumni donated a total of $9,230. We are particularly pleased to publicly acknowledge the generous donations of $1,000 each from Mingko Woo, Hamilton Ontario; John Stager, UBC Geography, and Joan South, Victoria. In addition, a donation of $500 each came from Ann Pickard, of Coquitlam, Ian Hayes, Toronto and Tom Walker, Waterloo. Sums of $200 or more were donated by Harold Kenney, Prince George, Ian Thomson, Gibsons, Heather Kendrick, Calgary, and Mildred Ruggles, Duncan.

Please note that in addition to the Scholarship Fund, there is also an Endowment Fund which supports student travel awards, partially funds field trips and brings in visiting speakers.

A very hearty thanks to you all who made donations to these accounts. Your gifts are greatly appreciated. If you wish to make a donation this year, please see the instructions on the insert to this newsletter.

J. Lewis Robinson