A little more than two years ago, when I was the sole candidate for the departmental headship, I was asked to give a talk outlining my plans for the next four or five years. In response I said that my experience, and Robbie Burn’s wisdom, indicated that the best laid plans gang aft a-gley. Little did I know how prophetic those words would prove to be.

The last year has been a fairly tumultuous one for UBC as the bright promise inspired by a new university president evaporated into anxiety over the discovery of a significant budget deficit. Some $36 million later (and the adjustments and claw-backs continue to be made and discussed) we contemplate a significant recalibration of plans for the future – a recalibration that will be even greater as the institution is forced to adjust (especially in the next five years) to impacts produced by the abolition of mandatory retirement at age 65.

In the middle of all this, I am happy to report that the department has fared rather well. Although we lost one of three faculty positions advertised in the fall to budget cuts, we expect to make two promising appointments to begin in 2008. One of these is a mid-career scholar of world-renom for whom we hope to secure a Canada Research Chair in human geography and the second is a highly promising physical geographer with expertise in biogeochemical cycling, climate change issues and human-environment interactions.

We were also happy to welcome Dr. Andreas Christen and his family to the department in July 2006. Dr. Christen comes to us from the Berlin University of Technology with a PhD from the University of Basel on Atmospheric turbulence and surface energy exchange in urban environments. He is a fine researcher who is already involved in a number of international field experiments in boundary layer meteorology and climatology. He is stepping into Tim Oke’s large shoes (vacated by retirement in December 2006) and contributes to our teaching program in climatology.

On his inauguration in September 2006, President Toope announced a program to bring approximately eighteen post-doctoral teaching fellows to UBC. As a result, two outstanding young teachers, Michele Koppes, a quaternary geomorphologist from the University of Washington, and Dawn Biehler, an environmental historical geographer from the University of Wisconsin, will join the department for 2007-2008. Each will teach nine credits “in conjunction with” a senior faculty colleague (or colleagues) who will serve as mentor(s). Michele and Dawn’s contributions will help to meet important teaching needs next year, and their presence will add a great deal to the intellectual vibrancy of the department. Both these young women strike me as wonderful additions to our community. They are significant young scholars in their own right and I trust that we will collectively do our very best to assist them in making propitious starts to their careers.

The success of our hiring surge that began less than a decade ago is being reflected in the granting of tenured appointments to Juanita Sundberg, Karen Bakker, Jim Glassman and Marwan Hassan (all effective July 2006) and Matthew Evenden (July 2007). Karen, Jim, Marwan and Matthew have also been promoted to associate professor.

Department members continue to garner an impressive harvest of awards and accolades. Michael Church and Simon Dadson (M.Sc. 2000) received...
A Reflection on Professor Tim Oke
By Iain D. Stewart, PhD graduate student

O n the occasion of Professor Tim Oke’s retirement, we have opportunity to ponder and appreciate an extraordinary career. It would be an impossible task to condense all that Tim has done during these five years as a professor of Geography into a single page, but it would be a disservice not to try.

Here in our department, in office 234, Tim Oke has become a marvel in his field. For nearly four decades, he has taught courses in Atmospheric Science, Micrometeorology, Agriculture and forest Climatology, Urban Ecology, and Urban Meteorology. He is founder of the UBC Atmospheric Science Program and of the International Association for Urban Climatology, and he served as head of the Geography Department from 1991 to 1996. He is an honorary fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, the American Meteorological Society, and the Guggenheim Fellowship Foundation of New York.

A domain dear to Tim, Urban Climatology has seen no greater impact across more than a century of discovery than the two hundred scientific papers and eight books he has authored on the subject. For this remarkable contribution, the International Association for Urban Climatology honored Tim with the 2004 Luke Howard Award. That should be the inaugural winner of this prestigious award—in naming the founder of this field of study, Urban Climatology—could not be more fitting.

But perhaps more telling than any tribute, publication, or citation is Tim’s devotion to his students. Two years ago, on a spectacular September afternoon, I met Tim for the first time. I was a nascent graduate student standing before this giant of geographers.

As I stepped into office 234, I was overcome by a sense of calm and repose: curiously, I felt neither intimidated nor threatened by this giant. His humility, and his passion were unmistakable. His presence seemed to transmute the room into a figurative one. If you haven’t discovered it yet, go find and find it for yourself—down the hall, in office 234. You’ll know exactly what I mean when you get there. Best wishes, Tim, for a happy and healthy retirement.

Steve Douglass
Graduate Student
Dave McClung’s High Mountain Adventures

By Dr. Dave McClung

In July and August, 2006, I visited Mongolia. The first part of the trip involved mountaineering in NW Mongolia in the heavily glaciated Altai Range. Here, I climbed the highest peak in Mongolia and three other high peaks including Naran Uul on the border of Mongolia, China and Russia. I also visited a valley with 10,000 Bronze Age petroglyphs. The second part of the trip was 2400 km across the steppes and Gobi desert by BMW motorbike, horse, four-wheel drive and a 4WD vehicle. A highlight was visiting the dinosaur diggs where Roy Chapman Andrews found the first dinosaur eggs in the 1920’s. I believe this is called “Old School Geography” I will give an invited lecture on Mongolia at the Institute of Asian Research this fall.

Graduate Student Report

By Derek van der Kamp, Josh Josh Caukins, Roza Tchoukaleyska

The past academic year began with a trio of social events in September. First was the meet-and-greet at Thea’s Lounge in the Graduate Student Centre. Next came the Graduate Student Potluck, organized by the social committee and held within the rustic setting of the UBC farm. Frisbees were thrown and good food was had, but this event was also a chance for the dedication and hard work of our top teaching assistants to be acknowledged with the department’s TA awards. Sara Koopman received the Human Geography award, while Nira Salant received the Physical Geography award. Koopman received the Human Geography award, and held within the rustic setting of the UBC farm. Student Potluck, organized by the social committee.

Tri-mentoring Program

By Sally Hermansen

Geography participated for a second year in the UBC Mentorship program sponsored by the Faculty of Arts and Career Services. Twenty alumni were matched with fifty 3rd and 4th year students. One of the alumni mentors, Ken Elliot (BA ’80), writes: ”Both of the students I mentored were very keen to pursue graduate studies in environmental sustainability. I’d encourage other alumni to respond positively if contacted for this program. It’s very helpful to young geographers to have the benefit of our experience and contacts.” The tri-mentoring program will continue next year; if you live in the Lower Mainland and would like more information on the program, please contact Sally Hermansen: sallyg@geog.ubc.ca.

Geography Student Association Report

By Jessica Klug

This year the Geography Students’ Association was composed of a small group of dedicated students. In September, we put a lot of effort to boost our membership numbers and were quite successful with the GSA booth that we set up during AMS Clubs Days. We excelled in our social events and were able to just about a wonderful initiative—a journal of works by geography undergraduates. In an attempt to reinforce the Geography community and encourage greater interaction, the GSA held popular monthly social events in the geography lounge. Each of the beer gardens was special in its own way, including September’s Back to School BBQ, the Halloween Movie Spooktacular, February’s Trivia Night, and the March Mass-Wasting basketball tournament. We were a hit for undergrad, graduate, and post-grad students, as well as faculty and alumni (including a newly headache-pain coming back to solve the glory days)!

In the fall, we invited faculty to facilitate information sessions about graduate schools for human and physical Geography, as well as planning programs, in order to help graduating students decide on their next steps. Unfortunately, too few members meant we were unable to hold ski or field trips this year. But the GSA executive made other positive steps by holding a bake sale fundraiser towards the end of the first term that raised $150 for the Vancouver Food Bank.

We are proud we revived the idea of having an undergraduate journal this year. We received paper submissions for it throughout the year and anonymous versions were read by a group of volunteers who then chose the best pieces for publication. We called the journal Trail Six in honour of the nearby path to the beach, and we were excited to hold a release party on April 5. Print copies will be in limited supply, but we will post an online version for all to enjoy.

The school year has flown by. We celebrated our achievements at this year’s Geo Gala in March and once more at the April 5 BBQ, beer garden, and Journal Release Party! We always love to hear from fellow geographers, and if any questions or suggestions ever come to mind please contact us at ubgajournal@gmail.com or keep up with us at: http://www.ams.ubc.ca/clubs/gsa.

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Chapters: The Elements of Applied Avalanche Forecasting (which Dr. Mc

Profession Development Division of the BC Teachers’ Federation. He has won many accolades including his selection as BC Social Studies Teacher of the Year, 2001.

In June, Bill Rapuano R79, M74(Planning) retired from his position as a planner for the City of Burnaby, where he got to apply many of those lessons he learned in Geography. He wishes to thank his many mentors in Geography, in particular Dr. L. Robinson for stimulating his interest.

Canada and Arctic North America: An Environmental History

By Eve Canada: The Future of Canada’s Water

By Karen Bakker

The book is organized from the Wisconsinan Ice Age and ending in the present, it encompasses themes such as trade, human settlement, climate change, logging and mining as well as the impacts of economic development on northern communities. The book is organized into five major sections, each marking a significant set of environmental transformations: ice ecology and people; contact and its consequences; settlers in a wooden world; nature subdivided; and industrial nature.

It draws on the work of historians, geographers, anthropologists, archeologists, climatologists and others. Accompanying the text are several maps by the departmental cartographer, Eric Leinberger, and numerous photographs which document the patterns and processes of environmental transformation in Northern North America. The 325 page work is the first comprehensive interdisciplinary environmental history of Canada.

Living Sustainably in Spannocchia, Italy

By Tenny Bache, B’06

L

I’m very thankful for the three months I spent this spring as an intern on an 1100-acre pastoral farm called Spannocchia, in the Chianti region of Tuscany. I worked with seven other interns, learning about sustainable agriculture techniques and participating in an Italian language and culture immersion program. The farm grows organic wheat, rice, vegetables, grapes, liver, and olive oil, and has a large number of free-range, rare-breed animals: chickens, sheep, pigs, cows, horses, and donkeys.

The estate is mostly forested with oaks and chestnut trees, with deer and wild boar roaming the property daily. There are a number of ancient ruins on Spannocchia, including a beautiful bridge apparently mentioned in Dante’s divine comedy, and a long-abandoned 11th century monastery that is restored in vines.

All of our heat and hot water came from a low emissions wood burning furnace, fueled by the carefully managed forests on the property. The water we used was drawn from grey and black water systems, and due to composting recycling and composting systems we produced virtually no waste and nitrogen free-course organic meals every night—authentic Tuscan fare, composted.

In addition to my day job as a daydreaming gardener, I pruned olive and grape vines, and learned how to make prosciutto, which was lesson in anatomy and alchemy.

where Are They Now?

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Canada and Arctic North America: An Environmental History

By Graeme Wyse

Graeme Wyse’s beautifully written book considers the story of human–environment interactions across thousands of years and millions of square miles of Canada and Alaska. Beginning with the Wisconsinan Ice Age and ending in the present, it encompasses themes such as trade, human settlement, climate change, logging and mining as well as the impacts of economic development on northern communities. The book is organized

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Eau Canada: The Future of Canada’s Water

Edited by Karen Bakker

As the sustainability of our natural resources is increasingly questioned, Canadians remain stubbornly convinced of the unavailability of our water. Mounting evidence suggests, however, that Canadian water is under threat. Eau Canada is a collection of essays from geographers, environmental lawyers, former government officials, aquatic and political scientists, and economists who argue that weak governance is at the heart of Canada’s water problems. The book seeks to have a policy impact, for example, with the support of the Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation a free copy of the book was sent to every Member of Parliament. It is even being carried in Chapters! So the book speaks well to the ‘Geography and public policy’ debates that have occurred in the discipline recently.

Violent Geographies Fear, Terror and Political Violence

Edited by Derek Gregory and Allan Pool

This collection of essays explores the complexity of political violence in different geographical locations. It seeks to reveal how the critical geographical imagination can illuminate the spaces through which terror, fear and political violence are abroad in the world. Contributors include colleagues Jim Glassman (Imperialism Imposed and Invited); Philippe Le Billon (Aral Transactions); Derek Gregory (Vanishing Points); and Mitchell Gray and Ethyn Wylie (The Terror City Hypothesis). Contributions by former graduate students in the department include Eric N. Olund (Cosmopolitanism’s Collateral Damage) Jennifer Hyndman and Alison Mountz (Refuge or Relocation) and Matthew Fairth (Targeting the Inner Landscape).

The Avalanche Handbook

By Dave McCaug (with Peter Schware)

This new edition (the previous edition sold 40,000 copies) includes new chapters: The Elements of Applied Avalanche Forecasting (which Dr. McCaug says was the result of 15 years spent teaching about human factors in The Geography of Natural Hazards - Geog 316), and The ABC’s for Backcountry Avalanche Forecasting and Decision. McCaug also notes that Chapter 1, Chalet and Effect of Avalanches, comprises new material.

1940’s Gordon Taylor R79, M70 retired from Touron

University Service Commission in CRSA Logistics, Port Coquitlam, who supply exclusive services for a group of primarily Canadi

an retailers that pick their import traffic under an association called the Canadian Retail Shippers Association. Bob works at the head office in Port Coquitlam managing traffic that start at ports in countries from South Korea to Karachi and enters Canada only in the ports of Vancouver and Halifax as ocean shipments. The Willis R777 is director of the Environmental Quality Branch at the BC Ministry of Environment – Joe Rogers R79 is owner, president & CEO of Strategic Real Estate Ltd., one of Canada’s leading tenant mandate real estate brokers. It specializes in market development planning and site acquisition for multi-unit retail across Canada who wish to plan and execute expansion strategies in broad geographic areas. Joe feels that the background obtained from his degree in Geography, combined with business and negotiating training and experience, has been fundamental to building and maintaining Strategic Real Estate Ltd. as a successful business venture.

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a light rail project in Santa Monica ... Susanne Ignatzi BA’97 ME’d’05 acquired a teaching degree and for the last 6 years has been working in the public school system as a high school social studies teacher with the Surrey School District. This year she took some personal leave and joined Utopia Academy’s Vancouver Campus as associate dean of education for the Faculty of Massage Therapy program ... Van Le BA’97 MSES’03 (Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage) is an associate planner with the Municipality of Anchorage working on long range community plans in the Physical Planning Division. She is married and has a one-year-old baby named Jack ... Alexandra Philbrook (Bertram) BA’97 has a 10-month-old daughter, Poppy Adeleine, and enjoys being a stay at home Mom ... David Campbell BSc’99 MSc’05 recently had a baby girl, Nemiah, and has moved to Nanaimo to work for the Ministry of Forests as a Research Hydrologist Geomorphologist.

2000’s Kelvin Chiu BA’00 is studying Medical Dosimetry in Houston, Texas ... Megan Koch (Stubbs) BA’00 married her “great Dane” in Victoria in July and held a second wedding party in Denmark in September. She has started her graphic design education in Roskilde, Denmark, and is pregnant ... Geoff England BA’02, MSc(Town and Country Planning, University College London) is working with the London Borough of Newham as a transport planner. He is engaged to Haley, BA’04 (Geography), and enjoys London football matches ... Jonathan Ho BA’02, BSc(Earth & Ocean Sciences)’06 is working at NAVTEQ, producers of digital map data for car navigation systems. He is still involved with Friends of Wetlands. See his website and maps at johomaps.com ... Julie Robinson BA’02 is a GIS technician with Equity Engineering. She is going to Yukon for a project, and in January was in Argentina as GIS database administrator for Viceroy Exploration ... Jolene Bales BA’03, BEd’06(Minor in Curriculum Development and Instruction) is an SFU Elementary School Teacher with the Vancouver School Board ... Lilina Lysenko BA’03, LLB’06(Program for Natural Resources Law and Policy) is practicing law in the Kootenays. She is working on land use planning issues with the Legal and Lands department of Teck Cominco Metals Ltd ... Scott Pillsbury BA’03 BEd is an elementary school teacher in the middle of doing his masters in Education. He is moving to Edmonton with his fiancé ... Michael Wang BA’03 is a GIS specialist for Ducks Unlimited, Canada ... Jason Hill BA’04 was involved in real estate and is now a pilot ... David C. Taylor BA’04 is completing an MS in Real Estate at Johns Hopkins University ... Ying Yuan BA’04 is working towards an MDiv (Masters of Divinity) degree while working as a pastoral apprentice at South Vancouver Pacific Grace MB Church ... Tiffany Lunday BA’05 is studying for a masters degree in Glaciology at the University of Cambridge, England ... Ashley Perkins (Horne) BSc’05 married Toby Perkins in September, whom she met in geog405, and is working on her MSc with Mike Church ... Angela Hutton BA’06 is completing an internship at the WorldFish Center, Malaysia. She is involved in a project developing GIS maps that relate socio-economic indicators to the status and health of coral reef areas. The goal is to develop a Livelihood Index for coral reef dependent coastal communities ... Rey Smith BA’06 is the labour relations coordinator for Providence Health Care.

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