

**Director's Report  
to the  
Management Advisory Board**

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**Centre  
for the Study  
of Co-operatives**

**Lou Hammond Ketilson  
Acting Director**

April 1998

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# Centre Overview and Highlights

## *The Impact Study*

Centre staff are in the final stages of completing *The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan*. The press conference to celebrate its release and announce the government's increased funding to the Centre was cancelled at the last moment due to a combination of circumstances involving availability of key personnel. It is uncertain at this point if and when it will be rescheduled.

## *Saskatchewan Municipal Government Symposium and Workshop*

On November 21, Centre personnel provided several of the principal presentations for "Conceiving Community," a symposium and workshop held in Regina for key officials of Saskatchewan Municipal Government. This collaboration had been initiated at the request of Deputy Minister Ken Pontikes. The workshop, which was attended by more than seventy participants, was a great success, and follow-up sessions on related topics are in the works. The Centre was contracted to prepare the legacy document based on the symposium, and Nora compiled the final document, which includes complete transcripts of all addresses and comprehensive coverage of the group discussions. It was submitted to the government in early March.

## *Visitors from British Columbia*

In late January, the Centre hosted a delegation from British Columbia consisting of Jan Pullinger (the minister responsible for co-operatives), the chair of the CCA Region Council, Pieter van Gills from VanCity Credit Union, and Ian MacPherson from the University of Victoria. Both co-op and government representatives were most interested in the structure and operation of our Centre, and are considering developing a similar model in affiliation with the University of Victoria.

## *Exploring Organic Alternatives Conference*

Brenda and Michael represented the Centre on the organizing committee for Exploring Organic Alternatives: Meeting the Challenges of Agriculture,

Health, and Community. Held in Saskatoon, 8–10 February 1998, the conference attracted more than three hundred participants from several provinces and states. The Centre helped to sponsor this event along with many partners, including the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the OXFAM Global Agriculture Project, and the Centre for Studies in Agriculture, Law, and the Environment at the University of Saskatchewan.

### *A Trip to China*

On March 28, Murray and Brett left for a two-week trip to China, where they will be travelling for part of the time with a CCA tour of Chinese co-operatives. They will also be going to the Southwest Agricultural University in Chongqing, where they will participate in a five-day workshop on agricultural policy and co-operatives with Peter Apedaile.

### *Financing Community Economic Development Symposium*

The Centre is one of a number of organizations sponsoring a symposium entitled Financing Community Economic Development: Partnerships, Policies, and Practices That Work, to be held 23–24 April 1998 in Regina. Other participants include the Community Development Unit of Saskatchewan Social Services, Saskatchewan Economic and Co-operative Development, PFRA, Western Economic Diversification, and the Saskatchewan Council for Community Development. The Centre is pleased to be a partner in this presentation of innovative economic approaches, including several involving co-operatives and credit unions.

### *More Visitors*

Finally, the Centre looks forward to two visitors this spring: Mrs. Esther Gicheru from the Co-operative College of Kenya, and Professor Sigismundo Bialoskorski Neto, of the Department of Economics, University of Sao Paulo, in Brazil.

## **Items for Discussion**

There appears to be significant interest across Canada for more concentrated effort in co-operative education. Part of this interest comes from people in the co-operative movement, who say that while board members and senior executives are getting good training in the operational features of co-operatives, much more could be done in terms of providing these leaders with examples of what might be called “best co-operative practices.” Another con-

sideration is the large number of requests the Centre receives from people in other countries who want to learn about co-operatives and how they can be used in economic and social development.

The Canadian co-operative model is of great interest to many countries and is one of the strengths that Canada should be developing. With the new internet technology, it is now possible for a group of people across Canada, and indeed around the world, to effectively co-operate in developing educational programs that would harness the skills of a wide variety of individuals. Our objective is to make the Centre the focal point for a new thrust in co-operative education. While the Centre would take the initiative—hence this proposal—we would actively work with others from across Canada and around the world to put the programs in place.

The educational programs to be considered would include the following:

- Executive training for co-op leaders;
- Board training for co-op leaders;
- MBA program at the U of S;
- Agri-business MBA program at the U of S; and
- Education on co-operatives for international students.

It is proposed that the Centre set aside \$50,000 to hire someone for a year to do the following:

- Determine the educational needs of the co-operative sector in Canada in the area of board and executive training;
- Work with educators and researchers across Canada and elsewhere in the world to develop a set of educational programs to meet the needs of the sector. In particular, we want to work closely with the co-operative marketing positions at the universities of Alberta and Manitoba, as well as with Ian MacPherson at the University of Victoria (particularly if Ian's new Co-op Centre is successful in being funded);
- Determine the best way to deliver the programs. Examples include: seminars; internet-based courses; videos; video-conferencing; certificate programs; university courses; and workshops;
- Look at funding models for the programs; and
- Develop a timeline for the implementation of the chosen programs.

The money used for this initiative would cover salary and benefits, as well as travel and other expenses.

# Teaching, Research, Presentations, and Publications

## Murray Fulton

Murray is on sabbatical at the University of British Columbia, where his time is focussed on three main activities: teaching his co-operatives class; writing a text on the economics of co-operatives with colleague Jim Vercaemmen; and doing some reading and writing on state trading enterprises for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. He has also done a number of conference presentations, details for which follow.

### *Teaching*

Murray is teaching Econ. 231, The Economics of Co-operatives, to about a dozen students at the University of Saskatchewan via the internet. He has structured the course as a reading class. Students receive an assignment via e-mail (it is also posted to a web site) and then have a week to prepare an answer, which they e-mail back to him. He corrects the work, often adding comments directly to the file, and returns the marked assignment. The internet is an excellent way of distributing material to all the students at the same time. When one student asks a question, for instance, all students can receive the answer with no extra effort. The course material can be viewed at: <http://webstar.econ.agsci.ubc.ca/webstuff/murray/Econ231/Econ231.html>.

### *Research*

Murray and Jim Vercaemmen are working on a textbook that will deal with economic theories of co-operatives. The goal is to write the book so that all the material is linked with a common framework; five or six chapters have already been developed.

Murray is also working with Bruno Larue (Laval University) and Michelle Veeman (University of Alberta) on a project involving state trading enterprises for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The purpose of the research is to provide a framework for thinking about these enterprises, which are expected to be an important agenda item at the next round of World Trade Organization negotiations.

Murray is also a co-author of the forthcoming Centre report *The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan*.

### *Conferences and Presentations*

9 December 1997: Presentation (with Richard Gray) entitled “Deregulation in the Rail Industry” to a workshop on transportation issues sponsored by the extension agrologist at North Battleford.

12 January 1998: Presentation (with Xiao Yunlai) entitled “Competition, Commercialization, and Market Emergence in China” to Food Markets in China: New Looks/Deeper Understandings conference at the East-West Center in Honolulu HI. The paper examines the development of the fertilizer market in China over the last decade.

4 February 1998: Presentation titled “The Economics of Intellectual Property Rights” to a UBC Ag Econ. seminar.

9 February 1998: Presentation titled “The Institutional Environment of Agriculture and the Implications for Organic Production” to the Exploring Organic Alternatives conference in Saskatoon.

23 February 1998: Presentation titled “The Economics of Intellectual Property Rights” to a group at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Ottawa.

24 February 1998: Presentation entitled “Co-operatives in the Agri-Food Industry: Challenges and Potential” to the Agri-Food Co-operatives into the Next Millennium symposium in Ottawa.

### *Other*

On 28 March 1998, Murray leaves for a two-week trip to China. He and Brett will be travelling part of the time with a CCA tour of co-operatives in China. He will also be going to the Southwest Agricultural University in Chongqing, where he will participate in a five-day workshop on agricultural policy and co-operatives with Brett Fairbairn and Peter Apedaile.

## Brett Fairbairn

### *Research and Publications*

Brett is on sabbatical in Germany, researching the history of German co-operatives from 1933 to the present, building on his earlier research on the preceding periods. This includes co-operatives in Nazi Germany, in Communist East Germany, and in the capitalist order in West Germany, as well as the fate of co-ops since German reunification in 1990. Interesting problems encountered so far concern the position of co-operatives within the Communist system: Did they have enough autonomy to be considered co-operatives at all? Ironically, more co-ops survived and have been re-launched since 1990 in the East than survived in the West—consumer co-ops especially. He has also collected interesting information on the history of housing co-ops in Germany.

While in Germany, Brett is attached to the Institute for Historical Foundations of Politics at the Free University of Berlin, and is taking part in the university's discussion circle on labour-movement history.

Brett is working on four book reviews for academic journals, including a review already submitted to the *American Historical Review* of a book on the history of consumer co-operatives in Germany and England before 1914. (Michael Prinz, *Brod und Dividende: Konsumvereine in Deutschland und England vor 1914*)

Brett recently submitted a report titled "A Preliminary History of Rural Development Policies and Programmes in Canada, 1945–1995" to the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation. It concludes that the largest programmes and the ones with the most impact were not those with "rural" or "development" in their names. The key ingredient for success, and the one most often missing, was the effective participation of rural people. Laura McNaughton assisted Brett with the research for this report.

## Michael Gertler

### *Teaching*

Sociology 110.6: Introduction to Sociology

Sociology 402.3/802.3: Advanced Seminar in the Sociology of Agriculture

### *Research, Presentations, and Publications*

21 November 1997: Centre personnel provided several of the principal presentations for "Conceiving Community," a symposium and workshop held in Regina for key officials of Saskatchewan Municipal Government. Michael spoke on "The Future of Community: Changes, Continuities, and Possibilities."

As provincial co-ordinator for the New Rural Economy project, Michael is responsible for field research in three Saskatchewan localities that have been selected for inclusion in the national study. Under the auspices of the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation, this project will continue for five years.

8-10 February 1998: Presentations entitled "Building Sustainable Communities" and "Organic Agriculture and Community Development" to the conference Exploring Organic Alternatives: Meeting the Challenges of Agriculture, Health and Community. Both pieces will be published in the conference proceedings.

17 April 1998: Michael will be the resource person for CBC Radio's *Noon Edition*, which is hosting a three-part series on rural Saskatchewan.

Michael is also a co-author of the Centre report *The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan* scheduled for release this spring. Supported by Saskatchewan Economic and Co-operative Development, this project updates an earlier study and explores new topics regarding the community development roles of co-operatives.

### *Administration*

Michael continued as a member of the organizing committee for a symposium titled Financing Community Economic Development: Partnerships, Policies, and Practices That Work, 23-24 April 1998, in Regina. The Centre is one of a number of sponsors; see "Centre Overview and Highlights," above, for further details.

He and Brenda represented the Centre on the organizing committee for the conference Exploring Organic Alternatives: Meeting the Challenges of Agriculture, Health, and Community, held in Saskatoon in February 1998. See "Centre Overview and Highlights," above, for more details.

As a member of the co-ordinating committee for the Regional and Urban Development program in Arts and Science, Michael has proposed a new Rural Planning emphasis for students interested in the specialty.

He continues to serve as a member of the research committee for the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation. Several events are in the planning stage, including a spring workshop for New Rural Economy researchers to be held near Montreal, 7–10 May 1998, and the annual rural policy conference, 14–17 October in Nelson, BC.

## **Lou Hammond Ketilson**

### *Research*

Lou is the lead researcher on *The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan*, co-authored with Michael and Murray. The report is due for release this spring. See “Centre Overview and Highlights,” above, for more details.

The paper Lou presented to the International Co-operatives Research Conference in Italy, October 1997, entitled “Innovation and Change in Federative Decision-Making Systems: The Case of CUFIS and the Credit Union System of Saskatchewan,” was chosen for publication in a special issue of the *Review of International Co-operation*.

### *Presentations*

21 November 1997: Lou was a member of the Centre team responsible for the development and delivery of the “Conceiving Community” workshop conducted for Saskatchewan Municipal Government. Her presentation was entitled “Leadership, Participation, Collaboration, and Community.”

6–7 April 1998: With two colleagues from the U of S and Linda Pipke of SCCD, Lou developed and presented a leadership workshop in Regina for Saskatchewan Credit Union system elected officials and management.

### *Administration*

Lou became the acting director for the Centre on the first of January, filling in while Murray is on sabbatical. Along with the various administrative duties

that accompany that position, she has also been busy organizing the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) 26th annual meeting to be held in Saskatoon at the end of May. A national conference for business school faculty, it brings together 350–400 faculty and graduate students for four days. The theme is “Managing in Concert,” with an emphasis on collaborative models for business ventures and business management. The keynote speaker will be the Honourable Janice MacKinnon, minister responsible for Economic and Co-operative Development. Following the conference, Lou will become the president of ASAC, the first woman to hold that position.

Lou continues as a vice-chair of the International Co-operative Alliance Research Committee. She is working with the chair to organize a two-day conference to be held in Paris in October 1998, in conjunction with the ICA Europe Region meetings. The theme of the conference, which will draw participants from all over Europe and parts of North America, is “Women, Co-operatives, and Employment.”

Lou’s administrative duties on campus include membership on University Council, the elected body that governs the university; membership at the university level on the Nominations Committee, and on the Whelan Visiting Lectureship Committee. At the college level, she is a member of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Equity Committee. She continues to sit as a member of the Saskatoon Community Clinic board, participating in the Members Services Committee.

## **Byron Henderson**

Byron has been involved for more than a year in the creation of models and programs for on-line learning, on-line communities, and in the development of collaboration opportunities for the Centre. This work has flowed out of his appointment as visiting scholar with Apple Computer, a position he began as a resident researcher at Apple in the first half of 1997 and which has continued to the present. The research project at Apple, supported by the National Science Foundation, and with which Byron is a founding associate, will continue in 1998 as a nonprofit foundation, which the Centre will join as a partner organization.

During the last six months, Byron has been developing research and partnership connections with the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP), the World Bank, the US Department of Education, the Commonwealth of Learning, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The focus of these efforts is the establishment of the Centre's Community-Centred Technology Programs, which will provide a basis for academic, research, and consulting activities for the Centre in the emerging area of technology support for community development, knowledge management, and information economies.

### *Research, Strategic Meetings, and Presentations*

December 1997: Byron finalized the InContext Project report and model, which is a prototype for a web-based learning environment to explore complex social problems. The project was funded by the University of Saskatchewan and led directly to Byron's work with Apple Computer.

January 1998: Byron met with the head of information technology for the UNDP and finalized terms for a six-month consultancy. Under this agreement, he will work with the UNDP to bring models of on-line community development to UNDP community-technology-centre projects in Egypt, South Africa, and Latin America. This project marks the beginning of a collaboration among the Centre, Apple Computer, and the UNDP to strengthen the community-technology-centre model.

As part of this consultancy, Byron began work in January with the UNDP head of the technology centres project, Mona Afifi. This involved planning and orientation to the research work at Apple.

Also in January, Byron was a speaker at an Apple-hosted seminar for the team of academics from the California State Community College system who are engaged in developing new state-wide methods of on-line education.

February 1998: In early February, Byron worked on proposals for funding, project plans for the UNDP project, and on several papers in the area of information technology and on-line communities.

The last two weeks of February were devoted to meetings in Washington DC with the World Bank, USAID, the US Department of Education, the Morino Foundation, and participation as a speaker at the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Consortium for School Networking. These meetings worked towards formalizing a partnership with the World Bank's World Links for Development

Project, as well as providing an opportunity to present the Apple research project (the Educational Object Economy—EOE) to divisions of the World Bank.

Byron then spent a week working with UNDP partners in New York and forming a new collaboration with the UNDP Sustainable Network Development Project (SNDP). This new collaboration will focus on how the EOE group can support the SNDP work by modelling training programs and content for capacity building in developing countries.

Meetings with members of UNICEF, Soros Foundation, and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) all explored a broad range of partnerships similar to those created with the World Bank and UNDP.

March 1998: Byron attended Cainet '98, the annual meeting of the Internet Society of Egypt, in Cairo, to give a presentation on the collaboration between the EOE and the UNDP in Egypt. The EOE's research work in developing networked communities, shared resources, and business models for the knowledge economy will be implemented within the UNDP's project as the technology centres come on-line within the next few months. At the same time, he met with Egyptian leaders and community organizations with whom the UNDP will be working to create the technology centres in three locations in Egypt.

Moving on to Geneva, he gave a report of the Working Group on Trade and Communications Network Technology to the ICA Communications Committee, which includes the new president of the ICA. He talked about the Working Group and the Centre's programs in community information technology; the way the EOE has supported the ICA with equipment and money; and upcoming projects in Asia. (He has received the initial support of both the UNDP and IBM, as well as the EOE, for a pilot eCommerce and education project involving co-ops in Asian and North America.)

Later in the week he attended meetings of Specialized Bodies and of the group planning a fall meeting of the ICA for the Americas region, where he will be giving seminars on eCommerce and information technology in education.

## Leslie Polsom

### *Research*

Leslie continued to work on the Impact Study, but as she took on a half-time position as reference librarian with the Health Sciences Library at the U of S, her involvement in the project dropped to .3 (FTE). She nevertheless completed the literature review and had extensive involvement with the telephone survey, which went through several revisions and two pretests before going to the survey company for the actual interviewing process. Leslie also co-ordinated the hiring of the survey company and acted as liaison between the company and the Centre. When the completed surveys were returned to the Centre, Roy Dobson and Terence Novecosky were hired to enter the data on the SPSS statistical package, which included compiling the frequency tables and doing the necessary crosstabs. Leslie then moved the information into Word documents, completing any of the necessary statistical tables. Finally, she wrote up the methodology for the survey.

### *Library*

Leslie continued to respond to requests for information regarding co-operatives from around the campus and around the world. Many have come to the Centre via our web site and e-mail, as well as through the regular mail. Examples of external information requests in recent months include: (from BC) co-operative legislation; (from Québec) health co-ops; (from Ontario) history on the first credit union in English Canada; and (from England) producer co-ops and the third sector. Finally, we have had visitors who have spent time looking at Resource Centre materials, including people from China, Maine, USA, and British Columbia.

The library collection has been added to on a continual basis throughout the last few months. We have been adding to the video and journal collections as well as to the book collection. Examples of new journal titles include *The Sustainable Times* (Halifax, NS) and *The Journal of Co-operative Studies* (Society for Co-operative Studies, UK). Examples of recent additions to the video collection include *Stir It Up: The Story of Collective Kitchens*, an NFB title; and two new titles from the CCA—*Help with the Harvest: The Role of Co-operatives in the New Vietnam*, and *From the Margins to the Mainstream: Co-operatives and Development in Indonesia*. Any suggestions regarding material to add to the collection are gratefully received.

Leslie resigned from the Centre in March to accept a position as reference librarian with the Legislative Library in Regina. While she will be greatly missed, this is Leslie's Dream Job and we all wish her well.

## Nora Russell

Since the last director's report in November, Nora has been preoccupied with a number of large projects. She did the final editing and layout work on Peter Apedaile and Zhu Shufang's two papers. "Lessons for Rural Co-operatives Entering the Twenty-First Century" has gone to the *Review of International Co-operation* for publication; *Co-operataive Organization in Rural Canada and the Agricultural Co-operative Movement in China: A Comparison*, a Centre occasional paper, went to the printer in March in order to be ready for Peter, Murray, and Brett to take to China with them in early April.

In late November, Nora attended the Saskatchewan Municipal Government symposium and workshop "Conceiving Community," presented by the Centre and the Humanities Research Unit. She prepared some of the presentation material, took copious notes, and pulled together the legacy document, a comprehensive record of the day's proceedings, including full texts of all the presentations and a synthesis of the group responses from the workshop section.

In order to help raise the profile of the Centre, she prepared promotional displays about Centre people and activities for two events: the Exploring Organic Alternatives conference in February, and FCL's annual general meeting in early March.

The bulk of her time, however, has been spent on the impact study—editing, fact-checking, harassing Centre faculty and staff for inputs, and preparing interim materials for the Co-operatives Directorate. Once all the sections are complete, she still has to pull the whole document together into a coherent whole, and do a final design and layout.

Once the impact study is complete, Nora will be able to get on with a number of neglected tasks, including the winter newsletter, updating *Saskatchewan Co-operatives: A Record of Community Development*, a 1992 Centre publication on the history of co-operatives in the province; writing and editing a booklet with Lou on "Federations and Interorganizational

Relations”; a write-up on co-operatives for the revised edition of Fung’s *Atlas of Saskatchewan*; the Centre’s annual report; and editing and laying out another of the Centre’s occasional papers, this one by Murray and Andrea, entitled “Future Possibilities for Communication Services in Rural Communities.”

## **Rochelle Smith**

The Centre’s first interdisciplinary PhD student, Rochelle Smith, continues to perform class work on the economics and history of co-operatives this term, as well as examining the role of co-operatives in the sociology of agriculture. She is also preparing a review of the draft Social Studies 7–9 curriculum on behalf of the Centre for the CCA. This project is one of a series undertaken through the Saskatchewan Department of Education/CCA Memorandum of Understanding on improving co-operative content in the K–12 curriculum.

## **Brenda Stefanson**

Brenda and Michael represented the Centre on the organizing committee for the conference *Exploring Organic Alternatives: Meeting the Challenges of Agriculture, Health, and Community*, held in Saskatoon 8–10 February 1998.

Brenda continues to be involved with the Co-operative Development Regional Dialogues, organized with the assistance of the Family Farm Foundation.

Brenda began working on secondment with the Agriculture Institute of Management in Saskatchewan (AIMS) in January, and we had hoped that she would return to the Centre in May. In March, however, having been made an offer she couldn’t refuse, she resigned to assume the position of project manager of the program *Managing Technology for Agricultural Information*, the AIMS/AFIF (Agri-Food Innovation Fund) Information Technology Project. We will miss her.

## **Marianne Taillon**

Apart from day-to-day duties as office manager, Marianne is often required to lend her skills to special events and activities. She assisted Lou with the Women in Co-ops forum by contacting potential groups and recruiting them to provide materials and/or set up displays at the conference. She also looked after the registration desk and participated in the conference.

Prior to and shortly after Brett's departure for Germany, Marianne spent hours packaging and arranging for the shipment of equipment and materials for him so they would arrive in time. She also assisted Murray in a similar manner for his sabbatical at UBC, and continues to stay in contact with them while they are away, keeping them up to date on Centre activities and providing secretarial support as needed. Marianne also organized and participated in a conference call for CASC executive in mid-December.

In January she organized the visit of the delegation from British Columbia who came to the Centre to explore the possibilities of implementing a similar centre in Victoria. She has also been busy organizing a visit, in conjunction with Murray Bryck at Sask. Wheat Pool, from Sigismundo Bialoskorski Neto, a Brazilian professor who arrived in early April to do research at both the Centre and Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

Marianne has attended a number of meetings with Paul Wilkinson, Social Services, and his assistant, Catherine, to provide support in organizing the symposium entitled Financing Community Economic Development to be held 23-24 April 1998 in Regina.

Marianne continues to assist Lou in handling communications and organizing translation services for the ASAC conference in June.

## **Karen Neufeldt**

Karen continues to work for the Centre on a half-time basis, providing ongoing support in general office work to Marianne, Leslie, and other faculty and staff. She is instrumental in assisting Marianne with the numerous daily tasks that flow through the office, performing them cheerfully and without hesitation. She is responsible for the phone and fax bills as they come in; for processing the many library and publication orders; for ensuring that

payments from publication orders are deposited to the Centre's operating account; and for keeping up with the mountain of xeroxing the Centre generates. Karen prepared the mailing list and sent out the brochures for the Financing Community Economic Development symposium, which will be held on April 23 and 24. She also works half time for the College of Dentistry.