

Director's Report
to the
Management Advisory Board

Centre
for the Study
of Co-operatives

Murray Fulton
Director

June 2000

Highlights

Co-operative Researchers' Forum

With the intent of establishing a more formal network of co-operative researchers in the province, the Centre organized and hosted a Co-operative Researchers' Forum on 9 May. The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to connect with others doing similar work, exchange information on research projects, identify common areas of interest, and share plans for future collaboration. Participants included Centre personnel, other university academics, representatives from Saskatchewan co-operative organizations, provincial government officials, and policy analysts. The enthusiastic response to the forum has encouraged us to make it an annual event. We would like to publicize it and obtain greater participation from leaders, policy analysts, researchers, and information officers in the co-operative and public sectors.

Staff News

At the top of the list, of course, is the changeover in directorship that will take place at the end of June. Murray's five-year tenure concludes with his move to the headship of the Department of Agricultural Economics on campus; he will continue his association with the Centre as a CSC Fellow. Brett will officially take up the reins as our new director on 1 July. Since he has been with the Centre almost since its inception, we know the transition will be seamless.

The Centre is extremely pleased to announce the appointment of a new faculty member to the position vacated by Lou when she took up her responsibilities as an associate dean in the College of Commerce. Cristine de Clercy, from the Department of Political Studies, will be joining us 1 July. We are all looking forward to her arrival.

Michael continues his leave in Central and South America, where he is researching the role of rural co-operatives in the sustainable development of agriculture and regional economies. We expect him back this summer.

And we have two summer researchers with us this year: Hannes Mesecke, an agricultural economics student from the Humboldt University of Berlin, who is working on a project with Brett comparing German and western Canadian agricultural co-operatives; and Julie Gibbings, who will be assisting Murray with the CCA/CCC-sponsored CARD proposal (see Murray's section).

Visitors to the Centre

The Centre has entertained its usual complement of itinerant co-operative scholars and researchers over the past couple of months. Mario Carrier, on sabbatical in Edmonton from a university research group in Québec, continues to build on his working relationship with the Centre, spending another week with us in late May while conducting interviews in rural Saskatchewan on issues related to democratic governance. We also had a visit from Craig Symes, a policy officer with the Wool and Dairy Branch of the Australian government's Agricultural Industries Division. On June 27 we will host a delegation from the Co-operative Federation of Nigeria who are in Canada researching training programmes, teaching aid techniques, and other forms of disseminating information within co-operative organizations, with a view to improving Nigeria's Poverty Alleviation Programme. And we are expecting a visit sometime this summer from Jim Finch from the University of Wisconsin, who is researching membership and managerial issues in co-ops; and from Steven Keillor, who has written a book on the history of co-operatives in Minnesota.

Teaching, Research, Presentations, Publications, and Administration

Murray Fulton

Teaching

Murray gave a one-week course on the Economics of Co-operatives at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania in Crete, Greece, in May.

Research

Prepared a discussion paper on “Canadian Wheat Board Farmer Advisory Council” for the CWB, co-authored by Nial Kuyek, Tom Halpenny, and Julie Gibbings.

The CARD proposal put forward by CCA/CCC has been approved and the Centre will be actively involved. Murray will be authoring one of the discussion papers and will also be overseeing the NGC pilot project in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. He has had preliminary discussions with Brenda Stefanson and hopes she will be available to supervise the pilot. The work on the pilot will be monitored by a steering committee consisting of (among others) Al Robinson (FCL), Daryl Snider (CUC), Bill Hallick (SARM), Denise Haas (ECD), Bill Turner, Berny Wiens, and Morley Ayars (SAF).

Presentations and Extension

“The Effects of Biotechnology on Concentration and Structure in the Agricultural Inputs Industry,” at the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society Annual Meeting, Vancouver, 1–3 June 2000. The paper is based on a discussion paper prepared for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, co-authored by Dinos Giannakas.

“New Generation Co-operatives: Their Lessons for Development,” to Sunrise Community Futures Corporation, 14 June, in Stoughton, SK.

“Interdisciplinarity,” to a workshop in the College of Law. This presentation corresponded with the publication of a Centre booklet titled *Interdisciplinarity and the Transformation of the University*.

“Challenges for Agricultural Co-operatives in the Next Ten Years,” to a 9 June workshop associated with the Co-operative Chair at the University of Alberta, Department of Rural Economy.

Publications

Interdisciplinarity and the Transformation of the University (Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, 2000).

Administration and Other Activities

Participated in the site visit for the Systematic Program Review for the MBA program in the College of Commerce.

Brett Fairbairn

Presentations

“German Social Democracy and Consumer Co-operation, 1871–1914,” to the annual conference of the International Social Science History Association, Amsterdam, April 2000.

“Co-operative Development and the State: Case Studies and Analysis,” presented to federal Minister’s Advisory Committee on Co-operatives, Ottawa 15 May 2000.

“Perspectives d’un historien sur l’avenir du développement coopératif au Canada hors Québec,” to Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche et d’Information sur l’Économie Collective (CIRIEC) Canada, Association Canadienne-Française pour l’Avancement des Sciences (ACFAS), Montréal, 17 May 2000.

Publications

Interdisciplinarity and the Transformation of the University. Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, 2000, with Murray Fulton.

“Co-operative Values and the Cold War: The Rebuilding and Undermining of the German Consumer Movement, 1945–1955.” *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, forthcoming.

“The Co-operative Tradition in Canada,” commissioned for *Facing the Future: Co-operatives, Civil Society, and the Future of Public Services*, ed. John Restakis and Evert Lindquist. IPAC (Institute of Public Administration of Canada), forthcoming.

“Saskatchewan Wheat Pool,” commissioned for *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains*, ed. David Wishart.

“Economic Development and the New Role of Government,” accepted for inclusion in *Democracy in Saskatchewan: 2000 and Beyond*, ed. Howard Leeson, forthcoming.

Administration and Other

Brett is concluding his term as graduate director in History, preparing to take over as director of the Centre.

Brett participated on behalf of the Sask Archives Board in a proposal to create an Indigenous Peoples and Justice Centre at the U of S. The proposal has passed the first round of the priority determination process.

Michael Gertler

Michael remains on leave in Central and South America doing fieldwork on the roles of rural co-operatives in the sustainable development of agriculture and regional economies. He will be returning to the Centre in August.

Lou Hammond Ketilson

Research is underway on the study of aboriginal communities and their use of co-operative models mentioned in the last Director’s Report. It is a joint project involving CCA, CCC, the Assembly of First Nations, and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Lou is co-principal investigator, along with Ian MacPherson.

And work on the Community University Institute for Social Research, which will involve all Centre faculty, is also ongoing. Lou is co-director of the community economic development module, along with Len Usiskin from the Quint Development Corporation.

Byron Henderson

Byron has just finalized long-term funding to pursue research projects in the area of information technology and its application in various social and

economic settings. AcrossWorld Communications of San Jose, California, will provide complete funding for the development of a program in information technology in emerging markets. Byron's initial work will be to develop an international consortium of academic researchers, industry, international agencies, and policy advisors who will initiate a program of research on specific themes. This consortium will be called the Emerging Markets Forum and its inaugural roundtable meeting will be held on August 21 in Palo Alto, California, with the co-sponsorship of Stanford University's Asia Pacific Research Center. The theme of the first roundtable will be "Ensuring Rural and Remote Telecommunications Access in India." Byron will present the theme paper with an emphasis on co-operative models. Future research will look at technology and economic growth, productivity, and intellectual property. Byron will continue his association with the Centre as a Centre Fellow, Community-Centred Technology.

Nora Russell

Since the last director's report in April, Nora has edited and laid out a new Centre booklet by Murray and Brett titled *Interdisciplinarity and the Transformation of the University*. With the hope of setting minds to thinking creatively, not to mention stirring the pot a little, complementary copies have been circulated widely on campus.

Nora has finally had the time to complete the layout of the Centre's major forthcoming publication, *Canadian Co-operatives in the Year 2000: Memory, Mutual Aid, and the Millennium* (356 pages). It is presently out with authors and a professional proofreader and will go to the printer in July.

She has completed the editing, design, and layout of a series of three Centre booklets based on Murray and Andrea's research on machinery co-ops in Québec. They are awaiting proofreading and printing.

And technical difficulties with a reprinting job also required Nora to do a complete reformatting job on Murray and Andrea's occasional paper, *Working Together* (160 pages), which was created on another system using a font that was incompatible with our printer.

On her to-do list are a newsletter, the annual report, and three occasional papers: the history of the Co-op College of Canada; Rocky's research on the

role and significance of the credit union deposit guarantee corporation in Saskatchewan; and Brenda Stefanson's thesis, "Adult Educators in Co-operative Development: Agents of Change," all of which will need editing, design, and layout.

Nora took part in two professional development activities: the Co-op Research Forum hosted by the Centre, and The Future of the Page Conference sponsored by the university. Nora is also responsible for the director's reports on an on-going basis.

Carol Shepstone

Library

The software for the web-accessible version of the catalogue has been upgraded, greatly improving the display of catalogue records and search capabilities. No software upgrade is without its challenges, of course, and although the catalogue has been accessible for all but one day, a few "bugs" still need to be exterminated. On the bright side, she is developing a close relationship with the software support staff.

In-person requests for information and external circulation are considerably reduced with the end of classes in April. A short intersession class in co-operative education theory brought a brief flurry of activity to the library. Information requests have most recently been generated in-house, or from non-campus patrons such as local co-operatives, credit unions and their affiliates, or more remote users such as students enrolled in co-operative courses at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, BC, or a community development organization in Sydney, Nova Scotia. These remote reference requests also impact the number of interlibrary loans the collection makes.

New Research Projects

Carol contributed an analytical literature review on co-operatives and rural development to the New Rural Economy Project, organized through the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation.

She is currently exploring the development of a database of "alternative" and

“innovative” co-operatives, particularly those situated in urban Canada. If the project is viable, the Centre hopes to create a publicly accessible database of information on these sometimes more obscure organizations.

Web Site

Along with the regular maintenance and postings of Centre publications, Carol reviewed the web site for broken external links and added fifteen new generation co-op links. Carol will concentrate on the addition of co-operative links and ongoing review and editing of the web site during the summer.

Professional Development

Carol participated in a number of professional development activities: a Symposium on Technology-Enhanced Pedagogy at the University of Saskatchewan; the Interlibrary Loan Session at the Saskatchewan Library Association Conference in Moose Jaw; the Co-op Research Forum hosted by the Centre (the library acquisitions mailing list has been sent to participants and other interested individuals); and the Canadian Library Association Conference in Edmonton in June. She also took part in the Computer Science Department’s presentation on the New Zealand Digital Library Project. The open-source software, with its indexing and search capabilities, may be of particular use to the Centre in future projects.

Groups

The Saskatoon Co-op Network meetings are now preparing for co-op week activities. And the Saskatoon Special Library group continues to provide useful local library contacts and support.

Roger Herman

Roger has finished the course work for his Interdisciplinary Masters Degree researching the unique challenges of co-operative management. He will begin the design of his research and data collection later this summer.

He attended the Association of Co-operative Educators (ACE) Institute in St.

Paul, Minnesota, in mid-May and gave a presentation titled “The Impact of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives on Co-operative Education.” He also participated in the Graduate Institute of Co-operative Leadership (GICL) in Columbia, Missouri, later that month, as well as the Centre-sponsored Co-operative Researchers’ Forum.

Roger is currently working on the update of the Sectoral Analysis (1998 data) portion of the Co-operative Impact Study.

Rochelle Smith

Rocky is working on the proposal for her interdisciplinary PhD dissertation and is also gathering research in the process.

She took part in the Centre’s Co-operative Researchers’ Forum, made a presentation to the Graduate Studies Interdisciplinary Colloquium, and continues to serve on the Community Clinic’s board of directors as well as being a member of its Political and Social Action Committee.

Jo Anne Ellis

In addition to her regular everyday office responsibilities, Jo Anne has lent her organizational skills to a number of special projects. For the second time, due to cancellation the first go round, she organized the Co-operative Researchers’ Forum (prepared and distributed invitations, booked space, made arrangements for coffee breaks and lunch, etc.). She ordered new computer equipment as per the yearly budget allocation, and arranged for the dispersal of older equipment around the office. She prepared payroll documentation, office space, and computer use for Julie Gibbings, our summer researcher. She is in the process of arranging and overseeing office moves and shuffles (telephone, payroll arrangements, keys, etc.) in preparation for the change of directors and the arrival of our new faculty member, Cristine de Clercy. She is also making the administrative arrangements for Cristine’s appointment, including such things as documentation and her computer account.

Jo Anne was responsible for all the arrangements for the June board meeting, reception, and dinner, preparing the minutes from the last meeting and pulling together the customary information packages for board members.

She has almost finished the self-imposed Herculean task of rekeying the 356-page *Making Membership Meaningful*. Once that is complete, Nora will do some rudimentary formatting in preparation for burning it onto CDs so it will once more be available to the public, who continue to ask for it.

Jo Anne is also making preparations for the Centre's fiscal year end.

Karen Neufeldt

Karen continues to work for the Centre on a half-time basis, providing support in general office duties to Jo Anne and Carol, and other faculty and staff as required. She is also responsible for running the office when Jo Anne has an EDO or is otherwise away. In addition to her regular office duties over the past few months, which include reception, paperwork, filing, xeroxing, invoicing and mailing publication orders, as well as invoicing telephone, fax, and xerox bills, Karen has been assisting Jo Ann with all of her special projects listed above. She also continues to be an enormous help to Carol in the library, reshelving the hundreds of returned items and keying in skeletal records for backlogged items in preparation for cataloguing. Karen continues to work half-time in the College of Dentistry.

Hannes Mesecke

Hannes is an agricultural economics student from the Humboldt University of Berlin who came to Brett's attention through contacts made when he was on sabbatical in Germany last year. He arrived May 1 to work as a summer researcher on a comparison of German and Canadian agricultural co-ops. We are hoping his research will become a Centre occasional paper.

Julie Gibbings

Julie has been hired as a summer researcher primarily as an assistant to Murray with the CARD project (see Murray's section above). But her usefulness has already led to her secondment to various other projects as well.

We look forward to working with both our summer assistants.

