

Director's Report
to the
Management Advisory Board



Centre
for the Study
of Co-operatives



Brett Fairbairn
Director



April 2002



The Centre for the Study of Co-operatives
is an interdisciplinary teaching and research institution
located on the University of Saskatchewan campus in Saskatoon.
It is supported financially by the co-operative sector

Credit Union Central of Saskatchewan
Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
Federated Co-operatives Ltd.
Co-operative Trust
The Co-operators
and the CUMIS Group

the Government of Saskatchewan

and the University of Saskatchewan.

The university not only houses our offices but provides in-kind
contributions from a number of departments and units—Agricultural
Economics, History, Management and Marketing, Political Studies,
and Sociology—as well as financial assistance with operations
and nonsalary expenditures.

We acknowledge with gratitude
the ongoing support of all our sponsoring organizations.

Overview and Highlights



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Grant



Co-operatives Secretariat Research Grants



Mouvement Desjardins Research Project



The Seminar Series



Publications New and Forthcoming



Staff News



Visitors

▲ Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Grant

Centre personnel were thrilled to learn at the end of February that our proposal to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada had been successful. Not only that, we were awarded the full amount we had requested, a rarity, and our proposal was ranked first in Canada out of an initial applicant pool of fifty-eight. The research project, titled “Co-operative Membership and Globalization: Creating Social Cohesion through Market Relations,” will explore the extent to which co-operatives reflect or contribute to social cohesion, or a common sense of identity, in the communities where they are located. The three-year project will involve fifteen academics from seven disciplines and nine universities across Canada and into the States, the UK, and Australia, as well as dozens of co-operatives and community partner organizations. An initial planning session involving co-applicants was held the weekend of 23 March, and plans for a conference in the fall are in the early stages of development.

▲ Co-operatives Secretariat Research Grants

The Co-operatives Secretariat, Government of Canada, approached the centre early this term with a general research proposal around agricultural co-operatives. We responded with two suggestions, and received a \$10,000 grant for each. Roger is researching if and how social cohesion factors into the choice of organizational form by producer groups pursuing value-added agricultural ventures, and Murray is working on co-operatives and farmers in the New Agriculture. Both reports will be complete by the end of April. With an additional grant of \$1,500, the Secretariat requested a set of brief studies of successful co-op value-added ventures, for which we hired Kim Sanderson, a former MSc student in Agricultural Economics.

▲ Mouvement Desjardins Research Project

The centre frequently fields questions regarding the Mouvement Desjardins, which grew out of the credit union system in Québec. We decided it was time to embark on some comprehensive research of our own on the subject, which is well documented, but mainly in French. To this end we hired Diane Reid, who is bilingual, to prepare an overview of the movement’s history,

concentrating on the period since the 1960s. Her work is scheduled to be finished by the end of May. See Diane's section near the end of this report for more details.

▲ The Seminar Series

There have been five seminars since the last director's report in November. Centre Scholar Marj Benson's December presentation, "Conflict, Co-operation, and Culture," was based on her experience pioneering a law class in multiparty conflict resolution. In January, Jason Doherty, a graduate student in Sociology, gave a talk titled "A Marxist Political Economy Approach to the Atlantic Canadian Consumer Co-operative." Centre Scholar Len Findlay encouraged us to think creatively about "The University as Co-operative" in February. Cris talked to us in March about "Genetically Modified Foods and the Interests of Co-operatives." And Centre Scholar Isobel Findlay gave our last scheduled seminar in April titled "Remapping Economy, Society, Culture, and the Implications of the Postmodern and Postcolonial for Co-operative Organizations." The series will continue once term starts in the fall.

▲ Publications New and Forthcoming

The centre has two new major publications since the last director's report. The first is Lou Hammond Ketilson and Ian MacPherson's *Report on Aboriginal Co-operatives in Canada: Current Situation and Potential for Growth*. Although the various groups involved in an advisory capacity to this project have printed bits and pieces of the document for their own purposes, the centre is the only place where the entire report can be obtained in print. We quickly sold out the first printing of 70 copies and are about to embark on a second printing of 150 copies, which Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has agreed to pay for. The second is Centre Scholar Marj Benson's law casebook titled *Conflict, Co-operation, and Culture: A Saskatchewan Context*, a centre occasional paper. Like Lou and Ian's report, this book sold out 90 copies in no time. Nora and Marj are planning significant revisions based on papers submitted by this term's students in her class on multiparty conflict resolution before we reprint.

Forthcoming of note is Brenda Stefanson's *Adult Educators in Co-operative Development: Agents of Change*, an occasional paper, which is currently in design and layout stage. And we have another booklet in the works, Ann

Hoyt's *Up a Creek with a Paddle: Excellence in the Board Room*. Ann is a professor in the School of Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The booklet is based on her keynote address to the Association of Cooperative Educators Institute last August.

Please see Nora's section for more details about activities in the Communications Department.

▲ Staff News

Things have been remarkably stable in this area for a change, and there is very little to report. Murray has been on a six-month administrative leave since the beginning of January, dividing his time among France, Denmark, and Greece, where he will be teaching his annual course on co-operative management at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania in Crete. Murray will be back in June.

We have two new researchers in the office—Diane Reid, who is working on an English-language overview of the Caisse Populaire Desjardins from 1900 to the present, and Armando Lessa, who is working with Michael on his large research project, *Integrated Diversification: Farmers' Market Co-operatives and Sustainable Regions*. Both Diane and Armando will be with us until the end of May.

▲ Visitors

Herr Ulrich Werner, from the Stuttgart-based Southwest German Co-operative Federation, who visited the centre a year ago, was back in Saskatchewan on 1 March. He met with Warren Crossman of CCA, and travelled with Brett to Prince Albert to make further arrangements for the visit of a delegation of about fifteen German journalists and five German co-op leaders, who are scheduled to come on 16–17 September 2002. They will have a programme of presentations at the centre on 16 September and will travel to PA on the 17th to visit the credit union, community clinic, and co-op store. Currently it is planned that a film crew will accompany them to make a series of short video documentaries about the network of co-operatives in PA and their role in the community.

Teaching, Research, Publications, Presentations, and Administration

Brett Fairbairn

▲ Teaching

History 288.3: Co-operatives in the World

This class is a survey of the spread of co-operatives outside Europe in the USA, Canada, Australia, Israel, Japan, and developing countries. The class has a record enrolment this term of thirty-three students, drawing strongly from students in International Studies and Education, from various Arts and Science departments, and from students who have an interest in food, agriculture, fair trade, and community issues.

History 899.6: A Special Topics Class in rural social history, postcolonialism, and postmodernism

Brett continues to supervise a number of graduate students. One of them, Chris Garrish, has completed a thesis about the rise and fall of co-operative marketing in BC agriculture. He successfully defended his thesis, titled “Okanagan Fruit Growers and the Abandonment of Orderly Marketing: Land-Use Change, Single Desk Selling, and the Coming of the Agricultural Land Reserve,” on the morning of 22 March.

▲ Publications

Academic—Published

“Economic Development and the New Role of Government,” in Howard Leeson (ed.), *Saskatchewan Politics: Into the Twenty-First Century* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 2001). (Peer-reviewed.)

Review of Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 2000), in *German History*, 20 (1) (2002), pp. 130–33.

Academic—Forthcoming

Co-editor (with Omer Chouinard) of a Special Issue of *Économie et Solidarités* on *L'Économie sociale au Canada hors Québec*.

“How ‘Social’ Are Co-ops? Tensions, Transitions, and the Social Economy of Co-operatives in Canada,” *Économie et Solidarités*.

“Cooperatives and Economic Transformations in the United States and Canada,” chapter for volume edited by Chris Merrett of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (contract signed).

“‘Betweenness’ as Characteristic of the Teacher-Scholar: Interdisciplinarity, Internationalization, and the Research-Teaching-Extension Intersection,” submitted for the proceedings from University of Saskatchewan “What Is a Teacher-Scholar?” Symposium held 9 November 2001.

“A Century of Prairie and Saskatchewan Farm Co-operatives: Philosophy, Organization, and History,” submitted for the proceedings from the TGGA Centenary Symposium held at the University of Regina on 25 November 2001.

“Self-Help and Philanthropy: the Emergence of Co-operatives in Britain, Germany, the USA, and Canada from the mid-19th to mid-20th Century,” submitted for a volume on Philanthropy and Patronage in 19th-century Germany, the USA, Britain, and Canada, edited by Thomas Adam, to appear with University of Indiana Press (contract signed).

Other Publications

“Making the Grade,” in USDA *Rural Cooperatives* magazine January/February 2002, pp. 8–11. (on co-operative education)

▲ Presentations

“Co-operatives: Organization and Leadership,” to TGGA Centenary Symposium, University of Regina, 25 November 2001.

▲ Other

Brett is a director and chair of the Saskatchewan Archives Board; editor of the CASCnet listserv; and a member of the College of Reviewers, Canada Research Chairs programme, for 2001.

Murray Fulton

Murray is currently on administrative leave at L'Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique in Toulouse, France.

▲ Research

Murray is working on papers in the following areas: The Gray Market for Fertilizer in China; The System-Wide Effects of Genetically Modified Foods; Innovation Race in a Horizontally Differentiated Mixed Oligopoly: The Role of Co-operatives; Leadership, Agency, and Member Commitment in Co-operatives; Leadership Quality and Competition; The Role of Co-ops in the Provision of Quality; and Co-operatives and Farmers in the New Agriculture.

For the latter, he received \$10,000 in funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The project looks empirically and analytically at the structure of the new agriculture—what some refer to as the industrialization of agriculture—and the role of farmers within it. Specifically, the research will examine the greater role of information and co-ordination within the agricultural industry, the need for farmers to become more integrated and vertically co-ordinated within food systems, the potential for co-op models of accomplishing this, and reasons why farmers do or do not adopt such models.

▲ Publications

Academic—Published

With K. Giannakas, “Agricultural Biotechnology and Industry Structure,” *AgBioForum*, 4 (2) (2001), pp. 137–51. Also available at <http://www.agbioforum.org>.

▲ Administration

Murray's term as acting associate dean, College of Graduate Studies and Research, ended 31 December 2001.

Michael Gertler

▲ Teaching

Sociology 206.3: The Community

Sociology 402/802.3: Advanced Seminar in the Sociology of Agriculture

Michael is also supervising two MA students and is a committee member for four PhD candidates.

▲ Research

Michael continues to work on his CUISR-funded project titled "The Economic and Social Importance of the Saskatoon Farmers Market Co-operative in the City and Region," co-directed with Diane Martz from the Department of Geography. Under the title "Integrated Diversification: Farmers' Markets Co-operatives and Sustainable Regions," the centre has provided Michael with a bridging grant of \$2,000 to facilitate completion of the first phase of this work and to support the preparation of funding proposals to expand the project to include farmers' markets in other parts of the province.

Co-investigator for SSHRC-funded project, "Co-operative Membership and Globalization: Creating Social Cohesion through Market Relations," under leadership of Brett Fairbairn.

Michael is also a co-investigator for a proposal administered through the Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, which, if successful, would support further research on co-operatives in Chile and Costa Rica that he began during his recent sabbatical year. The Letter of Intent for the project, entitled "Globalization, Regional Sustainable Development, and the New Economy," has been accepted, and \$26,530 in funding has been received for the development of a full-scale proposal under SSHRC's Initiatives on the New Economy program.

Michael has agreed to act as a research advisor for a proposed project submitted by Saskatoon's Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-operative to the Community-University Institute for Social Research. The proposal is to study similar youth projects across the country and to investigate options for combining programming in the arts, trades, recreation, and the environment.

▲ Publications

Academic—Forthcoming

With J. Jaffe, "Victual Vicissitudes: Consumer Deskillling and the Transformation of Food Systems." Invited contribution under external review for *The Sociology of Biotechnology*, edited by Michael Mehta. U of T Press.

▲ Presentations

"Production Co-operatives," to the Territorial Grain Growers Association Centenary Symposium, 25 November 2001, University of Regina. This paper will be published in the symposium proceedings.

Presented results of Farmers' Market patron survey to Saskatoon City Council, 17 December 2001.

"Tenure Matters: Social Impacts of Foreign and Non-Resident Land Ownership," to the Saskatchewan Farmland Ownership Law: A Time for a Change conference sponsored by the Centre for Agriculture, Law and the Environment, and the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Saskatchewan, 18 February 2002.

Guest Seminar, "Closing Circles: Towards a Social Ecology of Sustainable Rurality," to the Department of Sociology and Social Studies, University of Regina, 1 March 2002.

Presented results of Saskatoon Farmers' Market study to a CUISR "Brown Bag Luncheon," 7 March 2002, in Saskatoon.

Presented a member-vendor survey to the Saskatoon Farmers' Market AGM, 18 March 2002.

"Neighbours, Partners, and Co-operatives: The Organization of Sustainable Rural Economies," to the SSHRC-funded workshop titled Rural Studies of Canada: Critique and New Directions, University of Guelph, 22–23 March 2002.

▲ Interviews

Studio guest for the CBC “Noon Edition,” 15 February 2002 on the subject of the social impacts of proposed changes to farmland ownership laws in Saskatchewan.

Interviewed for an article entitled “Another Way of Looking at Rural Revitalization” which appeared in the 18 March 2002 issue of *Sask Ag and Food’s Farm and Food Report*. The article was based on a report by Michael, J. Jaffe, and L. Swystun titled *Beyond Beef and Barley: Organizational Innovation and Social Factors in Farm Diversification and Sustainability*, which was prepared with support from the Saskatchewan Agriculture Development Fund.

This *Farm and Food Report* piece led to an interview for CKBI, Prince Albert’s “Agricultural News,” 18 March 2002.

In conjunction with Statistics Canada’s release of the 2001 Population Census, 12 March 2002, Michael did six live radio interviews for CBC (Montreal, Windsor, Sudbury, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Whitehorse) and a taped TV interview for CFQC in Saskatoon. The topic was factors underlying recent demographic changes in rural and urban Canada.

▲ Administration and Other

Michael is chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Department of Sociology, for 2001–02.

He is a member of the Administrative Committee, International Studies, College of Arts and Science, U of S.

He is a member of the Endowment Committee of the Rural Sociological Society.

And he is chair of the Science Liaison Committee for Prince Albert National Park.

Cristine de Clercy

▲ Teaching

Political Studies 203.6: The Government of Canada

▲ Research

Cris and a colleague (Doug Ihrke, U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) are working on a comprehensive survey instrument to study municipal officials and politicians. The study explores leadership attitudes among local government politicians and briefly probes how participants view the role of co-ops in their community. To be sent out later this spring, the survey builds upon the authors' expertise in studying political leadership, and may also provide the foundation for a larger independent survey concerning political attitudes about community co-ops. Some of the methodological work undertaken for this survey will be useful in the centre's major research project on social cohesion and globalization.

Drawing upon the knowledge generated from her large study of the interest-group debate concerning GM food policy, Cris is working on the implications of this issue for the co-op sector. Part of this study was presented in a Centre Seminar Series talk in March, and another will be presented to the Canadian Association for Co-operative Studies annual meeting in Toronto this May.

Co-investigator for SSHRC-funded project, "Co-operative Membership and Globalization: Creating Social Cohesion through Market Relations," under leadership of Brett Fairbairn.

▲ Publications

Academic—Published

Review of Jerry L. Mashaw, *Greed, Chaos and Governance: Using Public Choice to Improve Public Law*, *Canadian Public Administration*, 44 (3) (Fall 2001), pp. 378–80.

Booknote concerning George M. Guess and Paul G. Farnham, *Cases in Public Policy Analysis*, 2nd ed. *Canadian Public Administration*, 44 (3) (Fall 2001), p. 386.

Academic—Submitted

With Peter Ferguson, "Legislation That Doesn't Matter: The 2000 Elections Act Amendments and Opinion Poll Reportage," journal article submitted for review to the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*.

▲ Presentations

“A Survey of the Interest Group Debate on GM Foods and Its Implications for Canadian Co-operatives,” Centre for the Study of Co-operatives Seminar Series, 4 March 2002.

With Peter Ferguson, “Policy Induced Change in Mediated Campaign Information,” presented to the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, San Antonio, TX, 14–18 November 2001.

With Doug Ihrke, “Leadership Credibility and Administrative Innovation in Canadian and American Local Governments,” presented to the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, San Antonio, TX, 14–18 November 2001.

▲ Administration

Organizer of eight-member panel on “Studying Political Leadership: Methods and Models,” to be convened at the Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Toronto, 30 May–1 June 2002.

Lou Hammond Ketilson

Lou is a Fellow of the centre, currently on leave to perform administrative duties in the College of Commerce. Nevertheless, she remains active in working on topics related to co-operatives.

▲ Teaching

MBA 898: Independent Readings Course, “Women in Management” with PhD candidate in Women and Gender Studies.

Lou is committee chair for two MBA students and on the committee of one other. She runs the MBA program in the College of Commerce and recently lead the successful completion of revisions to the program, which have been endorsed by Commerce faculty and are now moving through the university’s approval process.

▲ Research

Co-investigator for SSHRC-funded project, “Co-operative Membership and Globalization: Creating Social Cohesion through Market Relations,” under leadership of Brett Fairbairn.

▲ Presentations

Overview of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives and presentation on “Incorporating Co-operative Principles into Business Strategies,” to Credit Union Central’s Fall Delegates’ Meeting in November 2001. This was a follow-up to an initial presentation made to CUC senior management in October, and will culminate in two workshops delivered to the April annual meeting.

Presentations concerning the *Report on Aboriginal Co-operatives* to the Ministers Advisory Committee on Co-operatives and also to representatives from a number of federal government departments working on Aboriginal files, Ottawa, February 2002.

▲ Administration

Lou continues her term as associate dean in the College of Commerce, which, in addition to general administrative duties, includes responsibility for graduate programs and the directorship of the Centre for International Business Studies.

She is on the President’s SSHRC Committee, the University IT Committee, and is the university co-ordinator of the Community Economic Development module of the Community-University Institute for Social Research.

Nora Russell

Since the last director’s report, major activities in the Communications Department have included:

- ▲ print supervision for Lou and Ian MacPherson’s *Report on Aboriginal Co-operatives: Current Situation and Potential for Growth*; we sold the first print run of 70 copies in a matter of weeks and Nora is in

process of ordering another 150 copies; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has agreed to pay for the printing costs, allowing us to keep any profit on sales

- ▲ editing, layout, and print supervision of Centre Scholar Marj Benson's 240-page law casebook, *Conflict, Co-operation, and Culture: A Saskatchewan Context*; as with the above item, we sold out 90 copies in about three weeks; Nora and Marj are already working on a substantially revised second edition, which will include input from this term's class in multiparty conflict resolution
- ▲ completed editorial work on Brenda Stefanson's *Adult Educators in Co-operative Development: Agents of Change*, which will be an occasional paper; this is back from the author with her revisions and is now in design and layout stage
- ▲ design and layout of a two-page promotional piece on the centre's website for distribution to our sponsoring organizations
- ▲ redesign and production of new covers for our booklet series
- ▲ design and print supervision for poster for SSHRC project; organized distribution to co-applicants and partners
- ▲ co-ordinated organization of press conference for announcement of the SSHRC grant

Smaller projects have included:

- ▲ with Brett, gathering ideas for possible contributions to forthcoming encyclopedia of Saskatchewan
- ▲ preparing specs, obtaining quotes, and doing editorial and production budgets for a proposed update to Brett's 1989 history of FCL, *Building a Dream*
- ▲ the same for booklets and brochure for proposed "Celebrating One Hundred Years of Co-operation" project to tie in with the Saskatchewan Centennial Celebrations in 2005
- ▲ with Roger and Carol, helping to develop the proposal for the centre's contribution to the above
- ▲ preparing a design template for Roger's thesis
- ▲ doing layout and design for one of Lou's slide presentations
- ▲ assisting Michael with same

- ▲ preparing pdf files of original Impact Study for Sask Econ and Co-op Development
- ▲ pulling text for *Realizing Communities*, now out of print, from old PageMaker files and reformatting in Word for class use
- ▲ preparing ads for centre seminar series, and invitation to Ian MacPherson's presentation in late March
- ▲ assisting Michael with proofreading and formatting for his Farmers' Market vendor survey
- ▲ edited Brett's research report for inclusion in board package

Reprints:

- ▲ *Against All Odds: Explaining the Exporting Success of the Danish Pork Co-operatives*
- ▲ *Rural Co-operatives and Sustainable Development* (two reprints)
- ▲ *"An Educational Institute of Untold Value": The Evolution of the Co-operative College of Canada*
- ▲ *Research for Action: Women in Co-operatives*

In her role, with Carol, as co-employment equity co-ordinator for the centre, Nora has attended two recent workshops, the first on Treaties and Education and the second on Aboriginal Cultural Awareness.

Nora has a number of items awaiting her attention. Rochelle Smith's occasional paper on the Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation (editing complete) seems to be in limbo for revisions with the author, who is currently giving priority to her dissertation. Other items include Hannes Mesecke's paper comparing western Canadian and German agricultural co-operatives, which will be an occasional paper; Karla Radloff's paper on student co-operatives in North America, which will be the first in the Centre's new series of research reports; Chad Haaf's two papers related to NGCs, which will be booklets; and Ann Hoyt's *Up a Creek with a Paddle: Excellence in the Board Room*, based on her keynote address to the Association of Cooperative Educators Institute in Puerto Rico last August.

Carol Shepstone

▲ Library

The library has been a busy and often crowded spot in the centre over the last few months. Brett's class in the history of co-operatives has been making great use of library resources and seeking considerable assistance on an eclectic range of topics. A brief visit to the class to introduce them to the library seems to have been quite successful and Carol is looking forward to a new rush of students beginning their next assignment.

In addition to U of S student inquiries, there have also been many requests for information from students and researchers from other academic institutions in Canada and internationally, including Malta, Michigan, Korea, and an undisclosed country in Africa. Requests from the co-op sector as well as other interested organizations have added to the mix. Areas of particular interest have been NGCs, co-operation and conflict resolution, community development and co-operatives, member perception in co-operatives, housing co-operatives, and patronage dividends.

Internal research related to the work of Centre Fellows and Scholars has also kept Carol well occupied. Some of the projects have included GMO research, co-operative statistics for transitional countries, examples of alternative and sustainable co-operative innovations, social cohesion and co-operatives, co-operative governance, and the history of co-operative philanthropists. In total, Carol has answered approximately 115 reference and research questions over the last four months.

The largest group of recent library users has been the current class of history students, yet despite their focus on primary sources, many of which cannot be borrowed, circulation in the library has been quite healthy, with more than 330 items borrowed since the last report. Potential fine revenue for overdue items took a huge leap recently when the date on Carol's computer somehow reset itself to 1902, resulting in a \$1,233 fine for a book borrowed for only one day! This glitch should be resolved over the next month as the last of the books borrowed in 1902 are returned. In the meantime, Carol enjoyed the excitement of the short-lived potential boost to the book budget.

▲ The Web Site

The website has been very popular lately, with many reference questions originating with an initial visit to our website resources. Students and researchers have learned more about centre activities by visiting the site, and have found it an important source of co-operative information.

Along with questions about NGCs, artisan co-operatives and community development, housing co-ops, co-ops in Australia, and forestry co-ops, the website has also generated much interest from other universities and like-minded research centres. The University of Victoria, in support of their new course in co-operative studies, is currently using the NGC section of our site as part of their official course materials. The centre's site has also been included in an electronic resource bulletin published by Simon Fraser University (SFU), which highlighted the *Report on Aboriginal Co-operatives* and the NGC material in particular. The publication is distributed to SFU Business and Economics faculty as well as to BC business libraries, including the University of Victoria, and numerous public library business information departments.

The website and centre research also received kudos from Kate Targett, the Information Services Manager with the Plunkett Foundation, a UK-based organization that promotes rural co-operative development. Kate said she is "a regular trawler of your excellent website" in her search for co-operative information and is always pleased with "the solid work that emanates from your centre."

Some of the most recent additions that web visitors to the centre might enjoy are two key documents on the state of co-operatives in Saskatchewan, the 1998 report *Economic and Social Importance of the Co-operative Sector in Saskatchewan* and the 2001 update, *An Economic Impact Analysis of the Co-operative Sector in Saskatchewan: Update 1998*.

With the public launching of the .coop restricted top-level domain name, the centre purchased three new .coop names that we intend to run simultaneously with our current usask address. These new addresses (newgen.coop; usaskstudies.coop and coop-studies.coop) will provide added visibility within the new .coop community and beyond as the .coop domain expands in popularity. The centre has also registered the name socialcohesion.coop, which will be used for the new website Carol is currently developing for the SSHRC-funded project. The site will provide a location for the dissemination of

information about the project to the co-operative community, interested researchers and students, and to project partners and co-applicants. It will be an important communication link for project participants, providing a venue for the exchange of ideas and the gathering of project feedback, as well as a central repository for project documents, news, and events.

▲ Research

Following the success of the SSHRC application, Carol has been working on many of the “next steps” for this project, including writing the application for ethics review submitted to the U of S Committee for Social and Behavioural Science Research, doing budget revisions and development, and organizing meetings for upcoming planning sessions.

Carol has also prepared the applications to the U-Step program, which provides funding for summer student research assistants. The centre has submitted three applications: one proposing research into the history of northern co-operatives and government policy; a second to research current and potential archival holdings related to co-operatives in Saskatchewan; and a third to hire a student to collect data and update the 1993 community-based land trust model publication, *Community Based Land Trusts for Saskatchewan Agriculture: Feasibility Study and Final Report*. The latter is undertaken in partnership with one of the original authors of the report, Bill Brown of Agricultural Economics at the University of Saskatchewan.

Carol is also currently supervising Diane Reid, the researcher working on the Mouvement Désjardins project. She has also been working with Roger and Nora on developing the proposal for the co-operative centennial exhibit. This has included outlining the cost considerations for the web-based portion of the project and researching the potential for GIS (geographic information systems) mapping as a method to deliver Saskatchewan co-operative information over the web. Other upcoming research includes a joint project with the University of Saskatchewan Archives to curate a virtual exhibit based on the archives’s recent acquisition of Saskatchewan Wheat Pool papers.

▲ Professional Activities

Carol continues to serve on the Provincial Multitype Library Board exploring library sector co-operation in Saskatchewan, and as the Saskatchewan direc-

tor for the Special Libraries Association. She is also an active member of the Saskatoon Special Libraries Network and continues to take advantage of virtual and on-campus educational opportunities. Her most recent professional adventure took her to Emerald Lake, BC, where she spent five days in the woods with forty other librarians, participating in the Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute, a professional development intensive for Canadian librarians.

Roger Herman

Roger was recently awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Co-operatives Secretariat to research if and how social cohesion factors into the choice of organizational form by producer groups pursuing value-added agricultural ventures. The report should be completed by the end of April.

He continues to work on research for his Masters thesis titled “The Diffusion of Innovation in Saskatchewan Agriculture,” which is examining producer-owned terminals, community-based hog initiatives, and New Generation Co-operatives.

He developed a proposal for “Celebrating One Hundred Years of Co-operation” to tie in with the Saskatchewan Centennial Celebrations in 2005 and is awaiting word on funding possibilities from a number of quarters.

Roger has also been involved in a number of other activities. He gave a guest lecture on New Generation Co-operatives to students taking AgEcon 498 titled “Current Issues in Agricultural Law.” He has joined the CUISR conference-planning committee, which involves him in ongoing meetings for a conference in 2003 on community-university partnerships. He attended the recent “Profiting from Agricultural Change” conference in Saskatoon, and he continues to respond to inquiries related to new generation co-operative development.

Roger is participating in the planning of a second “Co-operative Think Tank” with various American co-operative counterparts. This follows up on a similar event held last summer in Medora, North Dakota, which involved a variety of academics and co-op development practitioners from across the US. Roger was the only Canadian participant.

And he continues to be responsible for the co-ordination of the centre's seminar series, which, since the last director's report, has seen six presentations on a variety of subjects from Centre Fellows and Scholars.

Patty Scheidl

In addition to regular day-to-day responsibilities as the office manager, Patty has been kept extremely busy over the past several months with a wide variety of activities.

On an ongoing basis, she maintains the Centre's monthly financial statements as well as the various research accounts, ensuring that balances are accurate and all invoices are paid. In connection with these duties, she has been gathering materials and preparing application forms for new research accounts (e.g., Aboriginal Cultures and Co-operation, The Role of Farmers in the New Agriculture, and Integrated Diversification: Farmers' Market Co-operatives and Sustainable Regions), as well as completing transactions and closing out a number of accounts, transferring remaining funds into the centre's general account.

She has made travel and hotel arrangements for upcoming conferences for centre personnel, as well as for the co-applicants involved in the SSHRC meeting held in Saskatoon on the weekend of 22–23 March. In addition, she has handled room bookings and organized a number of meetings for centre staff, as well as making arrangements on an ongoing basis for the management advisory board meetings.

She has been handling correspondence regarding the CASC scholarships and inquiries about publications, obtaining quotes from suppliers for computer-related materials, and making all the necessary arrangements for hiring researcher Diane Reid (filling out forms, arranging office space, acquiring keys, etc). She has also assisted Karen in the preparation and dissemination of the monthly seminar series announcements.

Karen Neufeldt

Karen continues to work for the Centre on a half-time basis, providing support in general office duties as required. Her regular duties include reception,

paperwork, cash reports, filing, xeroxing and printing, invoicing and mailing publication orders, keeping track of stock for reprint possibilities, as well as invoicing telephone, fax, and xerox bills. These past few months have been particularly busy in terms of processing publications, with combined sales of more than 150 copies of the *Report on Aboriginal Co-operatives* and Centre Scholar Marj Benson's *Conflict, Co-operation, and Culture* moving through the office. Karen is also responsible for sending out the monthly seminar series announcements, updating the database, whatever mailouts are required, and helping to prepare packages for the advisory board meeting. She continues to help Carol in the library, reshelving returned items, keying in records for backlogged items in preparation for cataloguing, labelling, and copying material for the vertical files. Karen also works half-time in the College of Dentistry.

Diane Reid

Diane will be with us for four months researching materials on the Mouvement Desjardins, which grew out of the credit union system in Québec. The seventh largest financial institution in Canada, Desjardins is also a social movement and a powerful instrument of economic development. Being fluent in French, Diane has been able to access the considerable research material in the area. The final outcome of the project will be an English-language overview of the Caisse Populaire Desjardins from 1900 to the present, with a focus on structure, centralization, government lobbying and investment strategies. The research will be useful to students of co-operatives and history, as well as to the credit union movement in Saskatchewan and elsewhere in English Canada.

Diane graduated from the U of S with honours in History and Russian in 1989 and has been a member of various co-ops from Steep Hill and Saskatoon Co-op to the Caisse Populaire for more than twenty years.

Armando Lessa

Armando is working with Michael on the Farmers' Market project. With an MSc in Agronomy from Brazil and a PhD in soil science from the U of S, he has a variety of background experience in Brazil and Canada, including work

with the Rural Extension Program and the Federal Agricultural Research Institution in Brazil and with PFRA in Saskatchewan. Most recently, he spent six years in Brazil as a professor in the Master Program of Agroecology both teaching and conducting research, focussing on on-farm research and the design of agroecosystems, usually associated with NGOs and farmers' associations in co-operative work. Armando will be with us for the next couple of months.