



IGU-Commission for Geographic Education

August 2005 Newsletter

See <http://igu-cge.tamu.edu/>

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1. CHAIR'S REPORT - Lex Chalmers

It is (almost) a year since we met as a Commission before the 2004 IGU Congress in Glasgow. At that Commission meeting we set our goals for the 2004-2008 period. Given that it is a year since Glasgow, but less than a year until we meet again at the Regional Conference in Brisbane, this Newsletter is a timely review of progress, and a prospectus for what we now need to do.

1. Membership. One of our targets for the 2004-2008 period was to bring new members on to the Steering Committee in order to build institutional knowledge and a capacity for the Commission to operate into the future. Many of you will know that we have four new Steering Committee members; Professors Sibylle Reinfried (Germany), Wang Min (China), Yoshiyasu Ida (Japan) and Joop van der Schee (Netherlands). Joop joins us in part to ensure continuity for the 2004-2008 Olympiad Task Force. We should have a Tunisian delegate so we can establish a base for a Commission meeting at the 2008 Commission, and (on behalf of the Commission) I will make further enquires about a suitable delegate.

Margaret Robertson, the Secretary of the Commission (margaret.robertson@utas.edu.au) maintains the list of Commission members. We are indebted to Margaret for this activity, and on-going interest in our activities is directly sustained through the Newsletter support that Margaret provides. Commission Newsletters will be available on the Commission website from August 2005.

Sarah Bednarz (s-bednarz@tamu.edu) has done a wonderful job on upgrading the Commission website, and we would encourage you to do two things. The first is to log on to the site at <http://igu-cge.tamu.edu/> * and to make sure you bookmark it for further reference. You are welcome to promote the site to colleagues interested in Geographical Education. The second thing you should do is to send messages directly to Sarah about items/material you would like to see considered for inclusion on the website. These might include links to relevant geographical education sites. * Thanks to Jongwon Lee for helping with the web site. Jongwon is a research assistant working with Sarah

2. Funding. One of the issues that continues to concern the Steering Committee is funding. The allocation from the Executive to each of Commissions of the IGU is \$600US per annum. This support is used with Steering Committee approval, but it does not pay for much. Meeting expenses are significant, and the Steering Committee will shortly consider the level of support the Commission can give to the Brisbane Organizing Committee. I have undertaken to seek additional funds from sponsors, and I remain aware that many Steering Committee members and other members of the Commission remain active only by generating their own financial support. Thank you for your continued commitment to the Commission.

3. Charter. One of the major targets for the 2004-2008 Commission is to update the foundational Charter for Geographical Education, originally so well crafted by Hartwig Haubrich in 1992. Members of the Steering Committee were involved in a review in early 2005, and the first revised draft will be placed on the Commission's website at the end of July.

You are invited to review this and feed comments back to me for inclusion in the second revised draft in October, 2005.

4. Olympiad. The Commission strongly supported the establishment of an IGU Task Force on the Olympiad for 2004-2008 (see http://www.geolympiad.org/what_is_igeo/), and this support was influential in establishing the Task Force. The Commission added Joop van der Schee (as the joint Chair of the Task Force with Henk Akone) to the Steering Committee. Despite some concerns, the Task Force is strongly supporting the Olympiad event in Brisbane, and Kathryn Berg (as the local organizer) has already made considerable progress with planning this event (see <http://www.rgsq.org.au/olympiad.htm>) A more detailed report appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

5. Projects. We were pleased to hear that the 2004 IGU submission to ICSU, prepared by Margaret Roberston and Ron Abler, has been funded in 2005. Margaret has been busy on this exciting project in the Northern summer, and a more detailed report appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The Commission welcomes proposals to involve the membership, and conference/meeting promotion is one of the things we undertake to do. There are some proposals 'in development', but members should think about how the Commission could assist with the development and promotion of their projects or meetings.

6. IRGEE. John Lidstone continues to edit and produce the International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education for the Commission. The value of this journal to the Commission is considerable, and members should insure that it is available in as many libraries as possible. A more detailed report appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

7. Brisbane. For a number of us in Australia/New Zealand our recent focus has been on what we need to do in the next 12 months to set up a successful Symposium in Brisbane. Recently the Chair of the Organizing Committee (John Lidstone) met with a core group of colleagues and put in place some strategic plans for the 26 June-2 July 2006 Symposium, with the scientific sessions on Tuesday (am) to Thursday (pm). A more detailed report is elsewhere in this Newsletter, and the Symposium website is at http://www.office-logistics.com/igu_cge2006

The Commission will also support three sessions at the IGU Conference for those who are able to attend both the Symposium and the IGU Regional Conference. Conference themes will be advised shortly, and suggestions about priorities can be forward to me.

I trust you find the Newsletter informative, and hope that you can give some priority to planning for the Commission Symposium in Brisbane in late June, 2006.

Lex Chalmers

Chair, Steering Committee (lex@waikato.ac.nz)

2. IGU-CGE SYMPOSIUM 2006, BRISBANE

The 2006 Symposium of the Commission will be held in Brisbane, Australia. We will begin with a reception on the evening of Monday 26th June and scientific sessions will continue until Thursday 29th. On the evening of the 29th, those who wish to will fly north to visit Sugar fields, the Great Barrier Reef, littoral and upland national parks and see the huge changes taking place in North Queensland. We will return on Sunday evening in time for registration for the Regional Conference which begins on Monday, 1st July, 2005.

Registration and Call for Papers are now open. Please see www.office-logistics.com/igu_cge2006 now to see more details.

Field trip places will be limited, so please book your place immediately!

We look forward to welcoming you to Brisbane in June 2006.

John Lidstone (Conference Convener)

3. IGU BRISBANE WEB SITE - <http://www.igu2006.org/>.

4. 2006 BRISBANE OLYMPIAD

Questions about the International Geography Olympiad should be addressed to one of the co-chairs of the Task Force: Joop van der Schee (j.vanderschee@ond.vu.nl) or Henk Ankoné (h.ankone@slo.nl) or to the local organiser, Kathryn Berg (rgsq@admin.org.au).

Please visit the website at www.geoolympiad.org for more information on the Olympiads in general.

The IGU Olympiad Task Force had a successful meeting in Budapest in July 2005 to prepare the 2006 Olympiad in Brisbane, Australia. The local organiser, Kathryn Berg, is working hard to make the 2006 a great success. Task Force members are Henk Ankoné (The Netherlands), Wieslaw Kosokowski (Poland), Kevin Winter (South Africa), Kathryn Berg (Australia) and Joop van der Schee (The Netherlands).

The 6th International Geography Olympiad will be held in Brisbane **from 28 June to 3 July 2006** under auspices of the IGU Olympiad task Force.

This Olympiad is being organised by the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Inc. and the Australian Geography Teachers Association Ltd.

The aims are to:

- Stimulate active interest in geographical and environmental studies among young people;
- Contribute positively to the debate about the importance of geography as a senior secondary school subject by drawing attention to the quality of geographical skills and interests among young people;
- Facilitate social contacts between young people from different countries and doing so, contribute to the understanding between nations.

Participation:

- Each participating country will send a team of four students and two adults.
- The adults must be involved in geography teaching or geography in education in their country and must be able to speak and write English.
- Teams should be preferably selected through a national geography competition.
- The students should be students of secondary schools. Their ages should be between 16 and 19 years on 30 June 2006.
- The official language of the Olympiad is English. Students must be able to answer the questions in English. Non native speakers will get extra facilities.
- The Olympiad will consist of three parts: a written response test, a multimedia test and a substantial fieldwork exercise. Students complete most of the tests individually. The Olympiad assignments will be chosen and prepared by committees under the supervision of the IGU Olympiad Task Force.
- The top medals will be awarded to students during the Opening Ceremony of the IGU Regional Conference.
- Participants will be housed and the tests conducted in the facilities of Brisbane Grammar School.
- Teams are also invited to give a presentation about a geographical issue in their country.
- During the Olympiad excursions will be organised for the teams. If desired an optional tour at extra costs will be organised after the Olympiad
- The Olympiad programme has been structured so that adult representatives will be able to attend one day of the Commission on Geographical Education Symposium if they wish. This will be on Thursday 29 June and will be at extra cost.
- Participating countries will pay *all travel costs* for the students and the adult representatives that make up their country's team. Each participating country will also pay a fee to cover the local costs. The *fee is A \$ 350 per person* (just over 200 euro as at 8 July 2005), that is A \$ 2100 for a team of four students and two adults. The fee will be used by the local organiser for accommodation, meals, awards and excursions during the Olympiad.
- Countries that wish to participate must apply by *3 January 2006*. A maximum of 20 countries will be accepted. Countries that took part in the previous two Olympiads (Durban 2002 and Gdynia 2004) have right to entry to the Brisbane Olympiad if they apply by the deadline. At this moment there still is the possibility to participate.

5. PROJECTS

5.1 Geographical Perspectives on Sustainable Development:

Networking Local Area Partnerships with Teachers and Young Scientists – Margaret Robertson

See <http://celio-igu.educ.utas.edu.au>

The Home of Geography was the recent host for the first phase of the 2005 IGU project titled Geographical Perspectives on Sustainable Development: Networking Local Area Partnerships with Teachers and Young Scientists

Funded by ICSU and supported by the Geographical Education Commission, the Australian Academy of Science, LEAD and the Thai Australian Embassy, the project funding is enabling geographers located in 10 countries to work together for the purpose of developing teaching and learning materials to be used in schools and universities. The first set of materials is due for publication late 2005. Initially published in English the plan is for the materials to be translated into other languages. It is also the hope of the project team that other contributors will expand on the case studies to include many more regions around the world.

This exciting project is truly international in scope and aims. The 2005 participants are:

- Margaret Robertson (Project Director)
- Shyam Asolekar (India)
- Gabriel Bautista (Argentina)
- Niko Berouchashvili (Georgia)
- Manuela Ferreira (Portugal)
- Hugo Romero (Chile)
- Alvaro Sanchez-Crispin (Mexico)
- Chanchai Thanawood (Thailand)
- Shaohong WU (China)
- Morris Chauke (Sth Africa)

At their recent meeting in Rome the participants prepared the background for three local area projects within each of their respective countries. This total of 27 projects will provide a wealth of rich case study material of local, regional and national issues. Issues range from managing water in large cities such as Beijing and Buenos Aires to logging, fishing and tourism in Mexico, water conservation in Chile, deforestation in Georgia, sewage disposal and water pollution in India, attitudinal change water usage in rural South Africa, sustainable tourism and disaster management in Southern Thailand and forest fire management in Portugal.

The outcomes of this project will be available via the website initially. A book is planned to coincide with the IGU Brisbane 2006 conference.

More information can be obtained from

Margaret Robertson (Project Director)
Email: Margaret.Robertson@utas.edu.au

or IGU Secretary General Ron Abler (Project Manager)
Email: rabler@aag.org

6. PUBLICATIONS

6.1 IRGEE – John Lidstone (Co-Editor)

Irgee continues to attract high quality articles and thanks are due to the many reviewers who devote so much time both to providing the Editors with advice and to making suggestions to authors, many of whom do not have English as their first language, on how to make their papers even better.

We are always interested in receiving books for review - Please contact Prof Sarah Bednarz who is our Reviews Editor- and book reviews - particularly of books that are published in languages other than English and of which the Angloworld may never otherwise become aware.

Similarly, we are always seeking people willing to co- ordinate Forum sections on aspects of Geographical and Environmental education about which they are particularly passionate or about which they feel others should or could be interested.

6.2 Book Editor's Report – Sarah Bednarz

As the new book editor for IRGEE I would like to request that all CGE members let me know when their books/publications related to geographical and environmental education are released so we can be sure to have them reviewed. It would be most helpful if you forwarded my name and address to your publisher as Review Editor. In addition, please alert me when you come across books you feel should be reviewed by IRGEE. Although our reviews are in English, if you find books and monographs in another language and would like to review them, please let me know and we can discuss this. I am well aware that there is a worthwhile literature in geography/environmental education in French, German, Chinese, and Japanese in particular. I look forward to your suggestions.

Many Thanks, Sarah Bednarz, Dept. of Geography, MS 3147 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843-3147

6.3 New book for release at the 2006 CGE conference

Williams, M. and Lidstone, J. (eds.) "Geographical Education in a Changing World: Past Experience, Current Trends and Future Challenges?" GeoJournal Series. Springer: Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

6.4 Robertson, M.E. & Williams, M. (Eds) (2004) *Young People, Leisure and Place: Cross-cultural perspectives*. Nova Scientific, New York, 240 pages. ISBN: 1-59454-029-2

6.5 UNIVERSITY OF LONDON INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND IGU PUBLICATIONS. Please send orders to: Andrew Powell, School of Education, Kingston University, Kingston Hill, Kingston on Thames, KT27LB. Email: A.Powell@kingston.ac.uk

IGCGE British sub-committee Research Forum Series

- **Research Forum 1 : Textbooks (1998)**
Edited by Ashley Kent. Chapters by Michael Williams, Bill Marsden, David Lambert, Simon Catling. Price: £4
- **Research Forum 2: Information and Communications Technology (2000)**
Edited by Ashley Kent. Chapters by Patrick Wiegand, Ken Tait, Deryn Watson, Liz Newcombe, Nick Foskett, Martin Bradshaw Price: £4
- **Research Fora 3,4,5,6: Issues for Research in Geographical Education (2004)**
Edited by Ashley Kent and Andrew Powell. Price: £15

The Challenge of the Global Dimension in Education (2004)

Edited by Ashley Kent and Alun Morgan.

A mini lecture series to commemorate the centenary of the Institute of Education. Papers by David Hicks, Audrey Osler, Tim Brighouse. Price: £5

Geographical Education: Expanding Horizons in a Shrinking World (2004). Edited by Ashley Kent, Alastair Robinson and Eleanor Rawling.

Commissioned book for the IGUCGE Glasgow 2004 Symposium.

Published by the IGUCGE with the Scottish Association of Geography Teachers. Price: £15

Geography and Citizenship Education: Research Perspectives (2004)

Edited by Ashley Kent and Andrew Powell

Papers from the IGUCGE London Symposium in April 2003. Price: £15

7. OTHER ITEMS:

7.1 HOME OF GEOGRAPHY - Message from the Director, Giuliano Bellezza

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

A few days ago we sent you the first issue of the IGU e-Newsletter: this communication tool will be circulated quarterly. Each issue may be easily downloaded also from the IGU (www.igu-net.org) and the Home of Geography (www.homeofgeography.org) websites.

The next issue, which is expected to be circulated next October, will include a special, ample session on the Home of Geography organisation and activities. As you may already know, the

Home of Geography is widening its operational area by means of the financial contribution we received from the Municipality of Rome and from a local Bank.

All of you are kindly invited to send us any material that could be of interest to the world geographers' community: we'll be happy to include it in the next issue. I hope many Commissions, Task Forces and National Committees will use this channel to diffuse information on their activities. Thanks to the IGU e-Newsletter, even those institutions that already have their own websites may reach a larger number of people.

Please note that the publishing material should be conveyed to the Home of Geography by September 10, 2005.

Also on behalf of Markku Löytönen, President of the Home of Geography, I would like to thank you very much for your collaboration.

Best regards,

Giuliano Bellezza
Director, Home of Geography

7. 2 ADVANCING GEOSPATIAL SKILLS IN SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES – Sarah Bednarz.

Sarah Bednarz and three colleagues at Texas A&M University have obtained funding from the National Science Foundation Graduate Teaching Fellows in K-12 Education initiative for a project entitled *Advancing Geospatial Skills in Science and Social Studies*. It is a partnership among geoscientists and other spatial science faculty at Texas A&M University, the local school district (College Station Independent School District), and the regional educational authority, Educational Service Center VI. Its purpose is to prepare and connect geospatially skilled graduate and advanced undergraduate students, termed *Fellows*, with science and geography/social studies teachers to develop students' spatial thinking and problem solving through geospatial technologies such as GIS, GPS, and Remote Sensing. The project will also provide Fellows and Teachers with the knowledge and skills to conduct action research to assess and measure the success of their efforts to promote students' spatial thinking and mastery of geospatial technologies.

Initial research indicates that most graduate students, although technologically savvy, do not have well-developed or articulated spatial thinking strategies and skills. This project will provide them with training to hone their spatial analysis skills and to communicate those skills and related knowledge effectively to others. The Fellows will work with teachers and students in grades 6 through 12 approximately 15 hours a week to create, use, and evaluate materials and strategies to enhance spatial thinking, an emerging and critically important field with implications for school-to-workforce issues. The Fellows will also be expected to participate in a series of biweekly seminars during the academic year on spatial thinking, technology applications, and instructional strategies and in a 10 day summer training for participating teachers as co-learners (teacher-research, pedagogy of spatial thinking) and mentors (geospatial technologies, spatial thinking and analysis). The project began June 1, 2005 and will last for three years. Initial evaluation results will be presented in Brisbane next July.

For additional information, please contact Sarah Bednarz at s-bednarz@tamu.edu