

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

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

**Murray Fulton
Director**

June 1997

Centre Overview

With teaching and marking responsibilities now behind them, Centre faculty and staff are able to turn their attention more fully to various research projects and extension activities.

In April, the province's Economic and Co-operative Development Department approached the Centre about undertaking an update of the 1991 study, "Economic Impact Analysis of the Co-operative Sector in Saskatchewan." While it is true that co-operatives play a vital role in the economy of the province, they also contribute significantly to developing leadership and identity within Saskatchewan communities, and have many other side effects on community vitality. The Centre will expand the scope of the earlier report to include the social sphere, and make a more detailed examination of the economic impacts. The new study is titled "The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan." Lou, Murray, Brett, Michael, Leslie, and summer researcher Roy Dobson are all involved in the project, which is expected to take several months to complete. The study will include a provincial-level statistical analysis, four or five regional community studies, and a survey of community leaders. CCA (Sask Region) has been asked to participate. As part of the Centre's on-going commitment to generate background material for policy development to a wide range of organizations, the final report, due in November, will provide critical information for decision makers in government as well as in co-operative and community groups.

As the Annual Report mentions, the Centre's research and extension activities have shifted during the past year to reflect the monumental changes occurring in the global political and economic environment. The Centre is increasingly being asked to help groups deal with fundamental changes at every level, and is making significant efforts to identify areas of the economic and social sectors where co-op values and principles could be applied to good effect. A concrete example is the Elbow/Loreburn initiative undertaken by Prairie Centre Credit Union. What began as a single issue of a credit union closure has evolved into a more general social and economic community development strategy, with the communities concerned coming together to look for collaborative and co-operative means of resolving the problems for the benefit of the whole area.

Murray, along with Brett, Brenda, and Nora, met on 13 May with representatives of Prairie Centre Credit Union, Sask Council for Community Development, Sask Economic and Co-operative Development, Credit Union Central, and PFRA to discuss community economic development and how it could be carried out in the Elbow/Loreburn/Strongfield area. The objective of the meeting was to establish core (universal) principles that are critical to community development processes and, more specifically, to develop a process shell for customization and use in Elbow/Loreburn/ Strongfield. The hope is that this process will provide a model that can be used elsewhere to guide communities in creating, implementing, and sustaining local development plans. Ideally, the process should maximize community participation and commitment, and be applicable to every area of community infrastructure, whether it be retail services, recreation, health, education, governance, transportation, housing, etc. The process should allow for individual community customization, yet be firm on the elements critical to success. Murray and Brett have met subsequently with Prairie Centre to rework and add refinements to the initial community development process draft document that came out of the May meeting. It will be presented to the steering committee for the communities in question on 18 June. Murray and Brett will be working further with Prairie Centre in the future.

April was an extremely busy month at the Centre, with the organization of a spring study tour to the States, a community economic development conference, two internal seminars, and two groups of visitors from Sweden.

In conjunction with the Sask Council for Community Development and PFRA, the Centre organized a five-day study tour of New Generation Co-operatives in North Dakota and Minnesota from 1-5 April. The touring group (which included thirty people from various sectors and organizations within Saskatchewan, a farmer and university researcher from Sweden, a rural development specialist from Manitoba, and a student of co-operatives from Gabon, Africa) visited more than a dozen NGCs. The trip provided a unique opportunity to learn about new generation co-operatives that have been operating for some time. A highlight was attendance at the international conference "From Europe to the Prairies: A Conference on Co-operatives in Economic Development" at Southwest State University in Marshall, Minnesota. The conference examined how European farmers, their co-operatives, and rural communities are responding to changing world markets, international competition, and environmental pressures on production. It also looked at how Europe's experiences differ from or are influencing similar developments in North America. Murray and Brenda were presenters, along with other key authorities from the US and abroad.

Together with the Department of Social Services, Saskatchewan Council for Community Development, and the U of S Extension Division, the Centre organized a conference on community development in Saskatoon and Regina on 10–11 April. Focussing on such topics as CED and women, CED accomplishments in a northern community, support networks, and private and public roles and resources, the symposium also included reactions from government and community officials. The keynote speaker was Dr. Stewart Perry, who has worked extensively in community economic development in both Canada and the United States since 1967. Other speakers included Melanie Conn from WomenFutures in British Columbia; Joan Corneil, Economic Development Officer for the Great River Lakes REDA; Brenda Stefanson from the Centre; and Dave McIlmoyl, general manager of the Kitsaki Development Corporation in La Ronge. Marianne and Karen did a great deal of work administering conference mailouts and registrations.

Centre faculty and staff were heavily involved in The Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation (CASC) conference in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1–2 June. Both Brett and Lou presented papers, Marianne attended as CASC's administrator and treasurer, and Andrea organized the program (see more details under each participant's write-up). CASC is planning to try to expand by drawing in more American researchers for next year's annual meetings in Ottawa.

Byron has been a visiting scholar at Apple Computer in California for the past three months working on various projects involving technology in education and the community that forms around educational software. See Byron's write-up for more details.

Visitors to the Centre

In early April, Karin Hakelius, a researcher from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala, and Patrick von Corswant, a farmer from Gotland, came from Sweden to participate in the study tour of NGOs in North Dakota and Minnesota. Karin later presented a seminar at the Centre on Swedish farmer co-operatives based on her PhD dissertation, "Co-operative Values: Farmers' Co-operatives in the Minds of Farmers," for which Lou Hammond Ketilson was the external examiner.

May 9–13 the Centre hosted another five visitors from the Swedish co-operative sector: Mats Ellingsen, executive director of a co-operative health and social care centre in Eskilstuna; Kristina Svensson, a municipal politician;

Lasse Nygard, director of Riksbyggen, a co-operative housing organization; and Per Fontin and Leif Josson, who are both involved with the Co-operative Development Agency of Dalarna. Their visit, co-ordinated by Lou, took them to a number of co-operative organizations in Saskatoon, as well as to a full morning's presentations at the Centre.

June 18–19 we are hosting a delegation of agricultural economics professors from Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova on an Economic Development Institute/World Bank sponsored tour. They will be at the Centre on the 18th for a full day of seminars, and on the 19th Centre staff will take them on a tour of Saskatchewan co-operatives, including the AgPro Elevator, Sask Wheat Pool, Prairie Centre Credit Union, and Lou's brother's farm.

Finally, we have just agreed to host a group from China for a week in mid-July, and have had inquiries from a researcher at the Consumers Co-operative Institute of Japan who would like to visit as well. Plans are tentative at this stage; complete details will be in the next director's report.

Research, Presentations, and Publications

Murray Fulton

"Co-operative Structures and Objectives: Lessons for North American Farmers." Presentation given at the conference "From Europe to the Prairies: A Conference on Co-operatives in Economic Development," 4 April 1997, at Southwest State University in Marshall, MN. To view the overheads used for this presentation, see: <http://dief106001.usask.ca/CoopStructure/CoopStruct.html>.

"Institutional Framework for Agriculture: Is It Sufficient for Alternative Agriculture?" Presentation at the "Workshop on Alternative Agricultural Field Crops" held at the University of Saskatchewan 7 April 1997.

"Railways, Competition, and the Hold-Up Problem." Paper presented at the conference "Economics of World Wheat Markets: Implications for North America," 29 May–1 June 1997. Written with Richard Gray, the paper argues that there is a lack of competition in the provision of rail services. Since new firms are unlikely to enter the fray, new forms of competition are required, and serious consideration must be given to allowing operating companies to use the existing track. The paper examines the case of Railtrack in the UK, which is undertaking this approach to competition.

Made a presentation to Entrepreneurs 2000, the REDA in Rosetown, on New Generation Co-ops.

Consultant, with Brett Fairbairn and others, to Prairie Centre Credit Union concerning design and implementation of a model community-development process for the Elbow/Loreburn area (meetings 13 May 1997 at Wanuskewin and 27 May 1997 at Diefenbaker Centre).

Will chair a session on transportation at the conference "Farming for Profit," 22-24 June in Moose Jaw.

Brett Fairbairn

Six-month sabbatical leave approved for January-June 1998. Hopes to go to Berlin to complete research on a history of the German co-operative movement up to the present day. Will not hear about funding for this until July.

Recently appointed director of graduate studies for the Department of History. The department has more than fifty MA and PhD students; Brett is in charge of admitting them, setting up their programs, classes, and thesis committees, shepherding them through their programs, and arranging examinations.

Member of organizing committee and session chair at the "Symposium on Community Economic Development," Regina, 11 April 1997.

Met with a variety of groups concerning follow-up to and implementation of the "Report on the Role and Mandate of the Extension Division." This included presentations to the Senate-Council Committee on Public Service and Extension and the Advisory Committee on Distance Education, as well as an address to the University of Saskatchewan Senate on 26 April 1997.

"Co-operative Alternatives for Public Services," a national research project sponsored by the Canadian Co-operative Association, Conseil Canadien de la Coopération, and Institute of Public Administration of Canada. Brett presented a paper entitled "Co-operative Alternatives" to five regional roundtables of co-operative and government officials in Moncton, NB (9 May 1997); Regina, SK (26 May 1997); Québec, PQ (9 June 1997); Victoria, BC (13 June 1997); and Toronto, ON (23 June 1997). Brett was also involved in the organization of the Saskatchewan roundtable.

Consultant, with Murray Fulton and others, to Prairie Centre Credit Union concerning design and implementation of a model community-development

process for the Elbow/Loreburn area (meetings 13 May 1997 at Wanuskewin and 27 May 1997 at Diefenbaker Centre).

“The German Economy as Subject and Object of Historical Change, 1917–1997.” Major paper presented to experts in German history at the Third International Colloquium on Modern German History, University of British Columbia, 22–25 May 1997.

“The Social Economy and Co-operative Alternatives for Public Services.” Paper presented to the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, June 1997.

“Principles of Organizational Restructuring in Rural Organizations: Co-operatives,” a chapter in *Changing Rural Institutions: A Canadian Perspective*, ed. R.C. Rounds (Brandon: Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation, 1997).

Democracy in the Undemocratic State: The German Reichstag Elections of 1898 and 1903 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

Michael Gertler

Involved with the Centre’s major research project, “Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan,” under Lou’s direction.

In Toronto 1–2 March to attend midyear meetings of several Rural Sociological Society committees involved in hosting the annual conference, “Global Competition and Communities,” in Toronto 13–16 August.

Meeting of Prince Albert National Park Science Liaison Committee, 11 April, Saskatoon. Michael serves on this committee, which provides oversight and advice to park officials regarding research activities in and around PANP.

Participated in “Revitalization for Rural Communities,” the spring workshop of the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation, 7–11 May, Nipissing University, North Bay. This was the official launch of CRRF’s New Rural Economy Project (NRE). As chair of CRRF’s Research Committee, Michael has been active in the start-up of the national NRE project, and has raised the profile of co-operatives and co-operation in the study. The Centre will be involved in portions of this project, initially collecting NRE data at two Saskatchewan sites selected for “The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan” study.

“Biotechnology and Social Issues in Rural Agricultural Communities.” Paper

presented to National Agricultural Biotechnology Council Conference, "Resource Management in Challenged Environments," 2 June, Saskatoon.

Lou Hammond Ketilson

Lou co-ordinated the activities of the visitors from the Swedish co-op sector who were with us for five days in early April. In addition to a full morning of presentations at the Centre, followed by an informal information session from them during lunch, they visited the Community Clinic, the Saskatoon District Health Board, Judith Martin and Paul Wilkinson from Social Services, Kate Waygood from City Council, and Lenore Swistun of the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op. Lou also organized a number of their social activities but was hard-pressed to keep up with their enthusiastic pace.

Chaired session entitled "Co-operatives in Action: But Where are the Women?" Joint session between Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation and the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada annual meetings, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1 June 1997. Also presented a paper in this session entitled "Struggles for Equity: The Saskatchewan Co-operative Women's Guild."

"The Identification of Potential Market Segments for Home Banking Services." Joint paper with Colleen McMahon and presented by her to Marketing Division of the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada annual meetings, St. John's, Newfoundland, 2 June 1997.

Re-elected 2 June to the executive board of the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, a national association of nine hundred business school faculty and graduate students. Lou will hold two positions: v.p. membership and incoming conference chair, responsible for chairing the national conference in Saskatoon in June 1998. Following the conference she will become president of ASAC.

Lou is co-ordinator of the Centre's study, "The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan." The interim report is due in August and the final report at the end of November.

Lou is also working on a study of community clinics in Saskatchewan, which will develop detailed descriptions of the five community clinics in the province, including information regarding organizational structure, elements of consumer control, governance structures and processes, the size and nature of the membership, the variety of services and programs provided, and the process by which the clinics are funded.

Byron Henderson

Following an invitation from the Advanced Technology Group of Apple Computer, late in March Byron began a three-month residence at Apple as a visiting scholar working on a project called the "Educational Object Economy" (EOE). This project is investigating new approaches to building component programs for use on the Web in the field of education. The expectation of the participants, who are drawn from industry and education, is that this model of interaction among educators, software developers, and institutions (such as publishers, technology companies, and agencies), and the community that forms around educational software, is the one most likely to emerge as dominant in the coming ten years. Byron has been dealing with the community formation issues surrounding the model.

The project, supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF), has given rise to two new grant proposals to the NSF. Byron has been part of the team preparing these proposals and will be on the advisory board of at least one of them. The proposals involve creating a three-year steering body to assist in the development of the EOE model, and the localization of EOE strategies in minority communities. Should these grants be approved, Byron will be a participant in at least one of the projects.

While at Apple, Byron was also invited to join the advisory board of a group called the Education for All Technology Center (EFATC), which is a partnership of UNDP, UNICEF, Apple, and the People's Computer Company (a technology nonprofit). This group will generate projects for implementing educational technology in the developing world. Its first workshop will bring together educators and developers from this sector (India and Turkey are two examples) to teach them about component architectures for building educational software for their local communities. The workshop will take place in San Jose in late July or early August of 1997 and Byron will be a participant with the support of UNDP.

Byron's proposal to the ICA for the creation of a Working Group on Collaborative Technologies for Trade and Communications was approved by the ICA board in June. The group, to be selected shortly, will study the introduction of technology to help co-operatives communicate with their members and with other co-operatives, and to support their trade activities. The first meeting of the working group will take place 16 September in Geneva.

The ICA has also invited Byron to be a guest speaker at a joint meeting of the ICA with the ILO in Geneva in September on the topic of technology in education. Jim Spohrer, Distinguished Scientist in Apple's Advanced

Technology Group, will attend the meeting as well to speak about the collaborative work in co-op education that he and Byron will be pursuing in the coming year.

Finally, Apple Computer and Jim Spohrer in particular, have initiated a collaborative project with Byron on the topic of Community Centred Technology. This project will look at various aspects of community formation on the Web and localization of educational technology in disparate world communities.

Brenda Stefanson

Brenda co-ordinated the tour of New Generation Co-operatives in North Dakota and Minnesota in early April (see details in "Centre Overview," above, and a more personal account in the summer newsletter, *CSC Developments*, forthcoming). She was also a presenter at "From Europe to the Prairies: A Conference on Co-operatives in Economic Development" at Southwest State University in Marshall, Minnesota.

Partnerships for Effective Community Economic Development Symposium, Regina, 11 April. Presentation titled "Networks of Support for New Generation Co-operative Development."

"Breaking Barriers: Building Co-operation for the New Millennium," Association of Co-operative Educators (ACE) Institute 1997, 30 April to 4 May, Toronto. Presentation on panel titled "The Next Generation of Co-operative Education." While there, Brenda was surprised but pleased to receive the 1997 Reginald J. Cressman ACE Award Recognizing Commitment to Staff Development. ACE is an international professional organization established to help educators develop their professional capabilities and increase the effectiveness of co-operative education. The news release on the award cited the Centre as being "a leader in developing and using new education, research, and extension techniques, particularly in working with community development and new generation co-operatives. The Centre uses not only a well-recognized, highly respected faculty, but also academic staff, research associates, office staff, and technical support staff, providing them with opportunities for professional growth as well as leadership in co-operative education and development activities. An example of this work was evident in the presentation at the 1997 ACE Institute by Brenda Stefanson on new techniques in delivering co-operative education. William Nelson, executive administrator of ACE...said through the leadership of the Centre's director, Murray Fulton, the human resources of the Centre have grown, personally and professionally, to the benefit of the entire co-operative community."

Report on the spring study tour and on co-operative development in North Dakota and Minnesota. Presentation to Agriculture Caucus, 17 June, Regina.

Also made a number of presentations on New Generation Co-operatives:

March:

Poplar Grove Marketing Club, Wolsley, March 12

Hog Production Information Day, Wishart, March 17

April:

Frenchman Valley RDC, Hog Production Information Meeting, April 10

Northwest Community Futures, North Battleford, April 16

RM of McKillop Spring Ratepayers Meeting, Strasbourg, April 17

May:

Long Lake REDA, Nokomis, May 8

Andrea Harris

Andrea continues her work with Murray on "The Role of External Agents in Fostering Industry Development," slated for completion at the end of June. She presented her research findings at the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation conference in St. John's, Newfoundland, in early June. She also organized the conference.

Marianne Taillon

Apart from her day-to-day duties as the office manager, Marianne is often required to lend her skills to special events and activities. She took part in the NGC Spring Study Tour to North Dakota and Minnesota, assisting Brenda throughout the week. She was also responsible for helping to organize the tour, preparing the brochure and handling the mailout beforehand, dealing with registrations, arranging for meals and accommodations, and contacting tour participants regarding the follow-up meeting on April 29. In addition to this she: handled registrations for the Community Economic Development Symposium in Regina on 11 April; organized the conference call for the CASC scholarship committee and will be sending out letters to unsuccessful applicants this week; helped Lou with the itinerary for the Swedes 9-13 April; organized the World Bank Tour visit to the Centre and visits to AgPro and Prairie Centre Credit Union on June 18-19; attended the CASC meetings in St. John's, Nfld., where she took minutes at the annual meeting and presented the financial report; and planned the Centre retreat for June 23-25.

Karen Neufeldt

Karen works for the Centre on a half-time basis, providing on-going support in general office work to Marianne, Leslie, faculty, and staff. In Marianne's absence on the NGC tour, Karen had responsibility for the office and looked after taking registrations and sending out invoices for the CED Symposium on April 11. She dealt with all the documentation from the CASC scholarship applicants, photocopying endless piles of paper and preparing packages to courier to committee members prior to the conference call. She is responsible for the phone and fax bills as they come in, and held the fort while Marianne was away for a week at the CASC meetings in St. John's.

Leslie Polsom

The arrival of additional shelving in April completed the reconstruction and move of the library. We are now settled in our new location and looking for ideas about what to hang up for decoration.

Since the beginning of March Leslie has received several requests for information from around the campus and around the globe. Many of these have come via our website. Graduate students from York University, Université de Sherbrooke, and Washington University, for example, have contacted the Centre library for help with various projects.

From 26 May to 13 June Leslie has been supervising Angela Callbeck, a library technician student from SIAST doing her work placement at the Centre. Angela has been a great help with the many technical duties required in the running of a library. This has included work on the pamphlet file, acquisitions work, cataloguing, and processing of materials.

In the middle of May Leslie began a part-time position under Lou's supervision as a researcher on the update to "The Economic Impact Analysis of the Co-operative Sector in Saskatchewan" (1991). The current study will look at both the social and economic impact of co-operatives in the province. Included in the study will be an update of the statistical profile of Saskatchewan co-operatives, a survey methodology, and interviews in selected regions of the province.

Laura Turner

Laura successfully defended her thesis entitled "Encouraging and Sustaining Innovation in Federative Co-operative Systems: The Study of CUFIS" in May. She is now gainfully employed in a supervisory position with Kimberly-Clark Inc.

Roy Dobson

Roy began working at the Centre as a research assistant in May 1997. He will be with us for the summer. He recently completed an MBA with the successful defence of his thesis titled "The Effect of Equity, Payment Factors, and Direct Care on Support by Physicians for Wellness Activities in Saskatchewan." He is working under Lou's direction on the Centre's major project, "The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan," and also on Lou's study of Saskatchewan's community clinics and their role within the health reform process. In addition to his work with the Centre, Roy has completed a study protocol for the Institute of Health and Outcomes Research in Saskatoon, which will measure the cost-effectiveness of rehabilitative services for automobile accident victims in Saskatchewan.

Nora Russell

Nora came to the Centre in March as a writer, editor, and researcher, and has taken over Byron's responsibilities while he has been at Apple. Since March she has edited, designed, and laid out two director's reports, the annual report, the summer newsletter (*CSC Developments*), and another of the Centre's series of booklets (Brett's paper, "Balancing Act: Crown Corporations in a Successful Economy"). She also participated, with Murray, Brett, and Brenda, in the community development process meeting on the Elbow/Loreburn initiative at Wanuskewin on 13 May. She recorded the day's proceedings, synthesized and edited everyone's comments, and prepared two versions for participants: one a detailed, blow-by-blow account, and the other a general treatment of the community development process as it arose from the discussion. Murray and Brett later came up with revisions and additions specifically for presentation to the Elbow/Loreburn steering committee, and Nora prepared the final document.

On her to-do list are writing, editing, design, and layout of another booklet, this one with Lou on "Federations and Interorganizational Relations"; editing "Lessons for Rural Co-operatives Entering the Twenty-First Century" by Zhu Shufang and Peter Apedaile for the *Review of International Co-operation*; editing and layout of "Co-operative Organization in Rural Canada and the Agricultural Co-operative Movement in China Compared," by Zhu Shufang and Peter Apedaile, for the Centre's occasional papers series; updating *Saskatchewan Co-operatives: A Record of Community Development*, a 1992 Centre publication on the history of co-operatives in the province; and a write-up on co-operatives for the revised edition of Fung's *Atlas of Saskatchewan*. She is also responsible for all aspects of prepress preparation and print supervision.