

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

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

**Murray Fulton
Director**

November 1997

Centre Overview

With the fall term well underway, life has returned to what passes for normal here at the Centre. Although teaching and administrative responsibilities are keeping faculty extremely busy, you will see from this report that research and publication, presentations, conference activity, and extension work continue at a phenomenal pace.

The Retreat

Late in June, we managed to isolate a forty-eight hour period when everyone at the Centre was available and retreated to Rose Bush Acres near Watson for an intense and productive critical review of the year's activities and a look to the future. Each person brought the group up to date on his/her activities; we discussed high and low points and identified areas that need attention and modification; renewed our commitment to the Centre's original vision and mandate; and discussed ideas for new directions that could profitably be undertaken. The retreat proved once again the importance of keeping the lines of communication in good repair. It was also refreshing to note that the spirit of co-operation that infuses this place still manages to keep the group of people who work here at least close to the same wavelength.

The Impact Study

Since June, Lou, Murray, Brett, Michael, Leslie, and summer researcher Roy Dobson have been heavily involved in work on an update of the 1991 study that examined the economic impact of co-operatives on Saskatchewan. We have expanded the scope of the earlier study to include the social sphere, and have made a more detailed examination of the economic impacts. Two interim reports have been submitted, including the provincial statistical analysis, which is more or less complete, the literature review, and drafts of the questions for use in community interviews, the leadership demographics survey, and the telephone survey. Some interviews have already taken place and we expect to complete the interviews and the telephone survey within a couple of weeks. The final report is due the end of November.

The Open House

There has been talk for some time about doing an open house, and we finally pinned down a suitable date—November 5—the day of the next directors'

meeting, so we would be sure to have the directors on hand. Nora is responsible for organizing the activities and has spent most of the last month working on information and display materials. Everyone else has been very busy preparing their own individual contributions. Since the purpose of the event is to educate our guests about who we are, where we are, what we do, and the extent of our outreach, we decided to do more than just a come-and-go wine and cheese. So people will get a real sense of where we work, we intend to make use of our entire office area, as well as the Dief Centre lounge and the board room. There will be displays, poster sessions, computer demonstrations, Brenda's video on new generation co-ops, individual displays outside each faculty and staff office, and a tour of the Resource Centre. We will also be providing each visitor with a presentation folder containing information about the Centre's history and background, teaching activities, research, presentations, and extension work, and a list of Centre publications.

New Directions: Community-Centred Technology Programs

Byron's association with Apple Computer has led to a number of new directions for the Centre, all of which grow out of previous Centre work. We have been working with information technology from the Centre's inception. We have published, designed, created databases, private networks, and public websites, all in the context of working with co-operative organizations and communities. As a direct result of that experience, the Centre is now working as a partner with Apple Computer in its Educational Object Economy project, and Byron will be developing programs with Xerox in the coming year. He also initiated the International Co-operative Alliance's Working Group on Trade and Communications Network Technology and is working on research with the nonprofit consortium CommerceNet. In addition, work is beginning with the UN Development Programme on information technology for international development. To all of these partnerships and alliances the Centre brings a strong background in technology, education, organizational theory, and community practice. For more information, please see Byron's section below and his attachments at the end of the report.

A New Face at the Centre

Graduate student Rochelle Smith came to the Centre this fall after nineteen years in the public sector. Her most recent position was Senior Co-ordinator, Policy and Program Development, in the Co-operatives Directorate of the Saskatchewan Department of Economic and Co-operative Development. Research for her dissertation will focus on co-operatives in transition. Rochelle is the Centre's first interdisciplinary Ph.D. student.

Visitors to the Centre

The Centre continues to attract international attention, as witnessed by the extraordinary number of extremely interesting visitors during the past few months, who have added significantly to our world-wide linkages. June 18–19 we hosted a delegation of agricultural economics professors from Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova on an Economic Development Institute/World Bank sponsored tour. They were at the Centre for a full day of seminars and then Centre staff took them the next day for a tour of Saskatchewan co-operatives, including the AgPro Elevator in Saskatoon, Prairie Centre Credit Union in Rosetown, and Lou's brother's farm.

In mid-July, Hideo Ishizuka, visiting researcher at the Consumers' Co-operative Institute of Japan in Tokyo, and lecturer on Social Policy and Co-operatives at the University of Shinsyo in Nagano, came to see us. He met with Murray and then spent some time doing research in the library before moving on to FCL and the Saskatoon District Health Board.

In mid-August, we had a visit from Byron's colleague at Apple, John Lilly, a member of Apple's Advanced Technology Lab and the technical manager of the educational technology project Byron continues to be involved with. John is a specialist in human/computer interaction and spent a day at the Centre discussing technology advances in education and the development of software for use in communities. He gave a presentation on Apple's EOE project (see more details in Byron's section), we talked about our work, and we discussed common ground in the areas of community and education, and the technology that supports both.

In late August, we received two visitors from France who had spent the past year studying co-ops in the United States. Sask Wheat Pool was responsible for their Saskatchewan itinerary. Denis Camaret represented a financial company affiliated with French grain farmers. The company offers strategic advice and investment to agrifood companies, especially wheat co-ops, to help them adapt, transform, and become more competitive. Pascale Debord is a researcher in animal production, also looking at examples of how North American businesses are modernizing, and what France can learn from it.

September 15–19 we hosted a delegation from the China Association for International Exchange of Personnel (CAIEP), the Ministry of Agriculture, and the All-China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives on an Agricultural Co-operative Study Tour of Canada. This was a major undertaking for the Centre as we were responsible for them for an entire week. Highlights of their visit included a tour of the Matador Ranch in the south of the

province, Prairie Centre Credit Union, and FCL; a full day of presentations by Centre staff; a morning of presentations and discussions by Dan Ish on co-operative law and by Murray on computers in learning and business; and another morning of presentations by the Chinese delegation to Centre staff and representatives of other co-op organizations. All in all, it was an exhausting but stimulating exercise. The Centre will likely be involved in a return tour by a number of Canadian co-ops to China.

The Canadian Co-operative Association's 1997 speaking tour, which is focussing this year on CCA development work in Vietnam, brought us two visitors from Vietnam on October 22. Dr. Bui Quang Toan is director of the Centre of Agricultural Extension Volunteers, based in Hanoi, and Paul Sinnappan is a CCA consultant for the Asia Region, based in Malaysia. Their presentations centred on the unique success story of how farmers in Vietnam's poorest regions are applying Canadian co-operative know-how to make the transition from war and poverty to peace and prosperity.

The CCA is also sponsoring a Mongolia and Canada Co-operative Study and Exchange Mission 1997-98, which yielded seven visitors from Mongolia in late October, including the secretary of state and the officer in charge of co-operative law from the Ministry of Agriculture and Industry, the president of the Farmers' Association, president of the National Association of Mongolian Agricultural Co-operatives, a member of Parliament, and deputy governor of the Mongolia's Central Bank. Murray met with them and did an abbreviated version of our overview of co-ops in Saskatchewan.

Research, Presentations, and Publications

Murray Fulton

Research

Murray is working in a number of areas. Along with Harvey Brooks (U of A), Richard Gray and Kathy Baylis (U of S), and Ken Perlich (Sask. Ag and Food), Murray is working on a project to document and model the basis between port position and the local elevator for a number of different crops in both Canada and the United States.

He also continues to work on transportation issues. His current focus is on alternative organizational forms, such as joint running rights, that could be used in the railway industry to ensure competitive service and price.

Since writing a paper on intellectual property rights this summer, Murray has begun to think more about this area and how it applies to agriculture. Along with Peter Phillips (Van Vliet Chair, Dept. of Agric. Econ.) and George Khachatourians, Murray submitted an application to the Western Grains Research Fund for funding in this area.

Presentations

Murray made a presentation to Special Croppportunities IV (July 21–22 in Saskatoon) on “Trends in Saskatchewan Agriculture and the Role of New Generation Co-operatives.”

He made three presentations at the American Agricultural Economics Association’s Annual Meeting in Toronto this summer in late July. They were: “The Economics of Intellectual Property Rights: Discussion,” “Market Power in the Provision of Rail Services for Grain Transportation,” and “Land Values and Expectations.” The paper on property rights will be published in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* in December.

Murray prepared a paper titled “Co-operative Development and Collective Action Options for Saskatchewan in the 21st Century” for the Department of Economic and Co-operative Development. Copies of this paper are available on request. An important element of the paper is a focus on the new economic and social structure that is currently emerging and how and why co-ops fit well into this new structure.

He presented a paper titled “Future Possibilities for Communication Services in Rural Communities” at Prairie Forum (2–3 October in Brandon, MB). The paper was written by Andrea Harris and Murray. Copies of this paper are available on request.

Teaching

Murray is currently teaching three courses: AgEc 310.3: Intermediate Micro Theory; AgEc 842.3: Industrial Organization of Agriculture, which has a substantial co-operative component; and AgEc 898.3: Co-operatives, which is being taken by Rochelle Smith.

Murray is currently working with two PhD students and three MSc students. At the PhD level, Dinos Giannakas is examining misrepresentation in agricultural policy, while Ken Belcher is working on an economic and ecological model that can be applied to various subregions of the province. At the MSc level, Kathy Baylis is looking at the basis level in grains and oilseeds, while Don Lysyshyn is looking at the role of co-ordination in the development of

the wild boar industry. Xiao Yunlai is examining the development of the fertilizer market in China over the last eight to ten years. Another MSc student, Julie Kennett, completed her research this summer into grain quality—her thesis focussed on two case studies, one of which was Warburton's contracting with Manitoba Pool Elevators for specific varieties of Canadian wheat.

Other

Murray is beginning to prepare for his six-month sabbatical, which begins in January. He will be going to UBC to work on a textbook on the economics of co-operatives. He will also be teaching his Econ 231.3 course on the Economics of Co-operatives here at the U of S while he is at UBC. The course will be taught using the internet.

Murray, along with Rochelle Smith (see write-up below), Brett, and Michael, submitted an application to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for funding this fall. The application focusses on how co-operatives are responding to the changes currently underway in Canada's social and economic environment.

Murray also spearheaded the development of a Letter of Intent to the Networks of Centres of Excellence program. The Letter proposes the development of a network to do and share research on participatory organizations. The Letter argues that participatory organizations—such as co-ops—are needed to create value in the new economic and social environment Canada is now entering, and to mediate the changes that are occurring. A copy of the Letter is available upon request.

Brett Fairbairn

Research

Brett completed his work this summer with the national Co-operative Alternatives for Public Services (CAPS) Project, Stage One. As part of this project, he prepared a resource paper on co-operatives as an alternative to the delivery of public services, presented it at regional roundtables across Canada (including one in Regina), and participated in national planning meetings of the CAPS core organizing group. A proposal for stage two of the project is underway. Brett is a member of the Saskatchewan follow-up committee.

A piece of research done some time ago was published recently in booklet

form as Brett Fairbairn, Lou Hammond Ketilson, and Peter Krebs, *Credit Unions and Community Economic Development*, Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, August 1997.

Brett has received a grant of approximately \$8,000 from the Canadian Restructuring Foundation (CRRF) to survey and analyze rural-development programs in Canada since 1945. He will use the grant to hire a research assistant, Laura McNaughton, to collect material and interview key informants. This is a preliminary study, part of whose purpose is to develop a proposal for a full-fledged historical study. The research is part of CRRF's "New Rural Economy" project, with which Michael Gertler is also involved.

Brett is making preparations to go to Berlin, Germany, from December 1997–December 1998 to work on his history of the German co-operative movement. His work will involve bringing his research up to the present day (his previous research ended with 1933), putting co-operatives into the context of the political culture of the twentieth-century Germanies, and beginning to write a book manuscript. His time in Germany is partially funded by a half-sabbatical from the University of Saskatchewan, and by an Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Research Fellowship.

Teaching

Brett has been teaching History 287.3: Origins and Development of Co-operatives in Europe, a new class that resulted from splitting his previous second-year history class into two half-classes. He hopes that, as it becomes better known, the half-class format will permit more students to include co-operative history in their schedules. In this, the first year of the new course, however, enrolment is disappointing at six students.

Brett is also teaching 898.3 special-topics classes to two students associated with the Centre this fall, Brenda Stefanson and Rochelle Smith.

Brett served as an examiner for the theses of two U of S M.A. students this fall. One of these theses, by Cathy Holtslander in the College of Education, was a biographical study of Annie Hollis, an important leader in the Saskatchewan farm and co-operative movements in the 1920s.

Extension, Consulting, and Applied Research

Brett and Murray participated in developing a community-development process on behalf of Prairie Centre Credit Union in the Elbow-Loreburn-Strongfield area, in May and June.

He wrote the front-page article for the "Co-ops Week" newspaper supplement in Saskatoon again this year.

He is acting as a resource person for the provincial Department of Municipal Government, designing a series of workshops for senior departmental staff on the themes of the nature of community and what strengthens community.

Administration and Other

Brett is very busy as Director of Graduate Studies for the Department of History (the department runs a program for fifty M.A. and Ph.D. students) as well as a member of the department executive, as a member of the Committee on Programs of the College of Arts and Science, and as a member of the Ph.D. committee of the College of Graduate Studies and Research.

Brett was recently appointed by order-in-council as chairperson of the Saskatchewan Archives Board for a two-year term.

Michael Gertler

Research and Presentations

Michael continues to be involved in the Centre project, *The Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives in Saskatchewan*.

He also continues to serve on the Research Committee of the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation (CRRF), where he has helped to start up a national study on the "New Rural Economy" (NRE). To date, CRRF and the NRE project have received funds from SSHRC, Human Resources Development Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, among others.

Michael has been helping to develop a research theme on co-operation and co-operatives in the NRE. During the October 15-18 conference, titled *Toward a Working Landscape: Revitalizing the Rural Economy*, he spoke on "Co-operatives in Saskatchewan" in a session on *Collective Forms of Economic Enterprise*. The conference was held in Prince Edward Island under the sponsorship of CRRF and the Institute for Island Studies.

Publications

"Sustainable Communities and Sustainable Agriculture on the Canadian

Prairies," forthcoming in John Pierce (ed.), *Community Perspectives on Sustainable Development*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

"Urban Reserves and Community Development: Some Social Issues" forthcoming in Laurie Barron and Joseph Garcea (eds.), *Aboriginal Urban Development Centres in Saskatchewan*. Saskatoon: Purich Publishing.

Michael is also co-editing a book with three US colleagues—Thomas Gray, Lawrence Busch, and Pat Mooney—*Agricultural Cooperatives in an Uncooperative World*. At the 1997 annual meetings of the Rural Sociological Society, Toronto, August 13–16, draft chapters were presented in sessions organized for that purpose. Michael presented a version of his chapter: "Somewhere Under the Rainbow: Agricultural Co-operatives and Sustainable Rurality on the Canadian Prairies."

Teaching:

Michael is teaching two courses this term: Sociology 110.6: Introduction to Sociology and Sociology 204.3: Rural Sociology.

Administration

Along with Brenda and Murray, Michael has been helping to organize a conference on "Exploring Organic Alternatives: Meeting the Challenges of Agriculture, Health, and Community." The conference is to be held in Saskatoon, February 8–10, 1998.

Along with Brett, Michael is helping to organize a second provincial symposium on Community Economic Development. This is scheduled for February 27, 1998, in Regina.

Lou Hammond Ketilson

Research

Lou is co-ordinator of the Social and Economic Impact of Co-operatives Study. We have submitted two interim reports and should have the study complete by early December. Roy Dobson was employed to complete the economic impact portion of the study. Leslie Polsom has been working on the social impact and community leadership portions of the study.

Lou is also working on a Community Clinic study. Roy Dobson began to

gather information on the five community clinics in Saskatchewan. In connection with this, he completed a review of the literature on Community-Based Models of Health Delivery and Technology for the contract that Lou and Byron have with the United Nations Development Programme.

Lou was invited to join a research team comprised of two researchers at UQAM in Montreal—Jean-Pierre Girard and Marie Bouchard—and one at Laval University—Yves Comeau. The group has submitted a proposal for funding to the National Health Research and Development Program to examine the Efficacy of Community-Based and Co-operative Health Organizations in Canada.

She participated in the ICA International Co-operative Research Conference, The Co-operative Advantage in Civil Society, in Bertinoro, Italy, October 3–4. Her paper was based on the case study of CUFIS completed by Laura Turner for her MBA thesis entitled “Innovation and Change in Federative Decision-Making Systems: The Case of CUFIS and the Credit Union System of Saskatchewan.”

Presentations

Lou made presentations to both the Ukranian/Russian and Chinese groups who visited the Centre during the summer.

She conducted a workshop in Regina in August with senior managers of Credit Union Central to assist them in identifying their research needs for the development of their Member Services Action Plan for the Future.

She was a member of the planning committee for Saskatoon co-operatives and credit unions who brought Coro Strandberg, president of VanCity Credit Union, to Saskatoon to do a seminar on Social Investment for Community Betterment, and her presentation to the Co-operative Week Luncheon on the same topic. Lou also wrote an article for the “Co-op Week Supplement” on the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility and Co-operatives.

Lou is a member of the planning committee for the upcoming Women in Co-operatives Forum, Moose Jaw, November 7–8. She will be making a presentation to the forum that looks at the opportunities and barriers to women’s participation in co-operatives.

Teaching

Mgt. 345: Business and Public Policy, team-taught with Lynne Pearson.

Comm. 101: Introduction to Business, team-taught with Larry Haiven, Mehran Hojati, and John Brennan.

Administration

September and October have been very busy with activities associated with producing and distributing the Call for Papers for the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) Annual Meeting to be held in Saskatoon in June 1998. Lou is the conference chair and is responsible for all aspects of organizing this conference for approximately 400 business-school faculty. She continues in her capacity as V.P. Membership for ASAC as well.

Lou is a member of the Saskatoon Community Clinic Board and sits on the Member Services Committee.

College of Commerce committees for the 1997-98 term includes the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the College Equity Committee.

Lou is an elected member of the University of Saskatchewan Council. Her university level committee responsibilities for the 1997-98 term include the Nominations Committee of Council, the Whelan Visiting Lectureship Committee, and the Advisory Committee for Business and Management Programs, Extension Division.

Lou continues to be a member of the Management Board of the Prairie Region Health Promotion Research Centre (PRHPRC). This Centre has just been named as the co-ordinating unit for a \$3.3 million CIDA project to enhance training for health workers in Mozambique.

Byron Henderson

Community-Centred Technology Programs

The Community-Centred Technology work of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives is in its formative stages. It came about as a practical recognition of an emerging theme in our work. For many years the Centre has assisted co-operatives to understand and evolve their organizations, membership structures, economic basis, and market knowledge. When network technology made its general appearance in these organizations, our Centre began to research network methods and technologies as well as to study how large-scale organizations such as co-operatives might integrate these technologies into their businesses. This work led to the creation of private and public

networks, world wide web capacity building, and innovations in educational software. The latter work led to the Centre's Communications Director, Byron Henderson, taking a resident position as Visiting Scholar with Apple's Advanced Technology Group, working with them in building on-line communities for component educational software. That relationship continues with Byron now a Research Associate with Apple's Educational Object Economy Project, of which he was a founding member. He is actively involved in the dissemination of the EOE to the international community through his involvement with co-operative organizations, particularly the International Co-operative Alliance.

Byron works extensively with the International Co-operative Alliance, as Chair of the ICA Working Group on Trade and Communications Network Technology (a group that he formed), as a member of the ICA Communications Committee, and as a frequent speaker and consultant to ICA organizations in the area of technology and trade and distance education.

The Centre is currently under contract to the United Nations Development Programme to develop a collaborative website for researchers and participants in community-based technology projects in rural health care for the developing world, as well as a study of a community-based approach to implementation of technological support for health care in India. This is a project undertaken in partnership with TechDev, a San Jose based foundation for technology and development, of which Byron is a founding director.

Most recently, Byron has begun a partnership with Xerox Corporation and CommerceNet to develop research into the emerging use of information technology within the world-wide co-operative sector.

Three areas of the Centre's long-term work will serve as the core focus of the Community-Centred Technology Programs. These are education, health, and trade. In addition to its work in international trade and technology through the ICA, and health research with TechDev and UNDP, the Centre is developing several projects in on-line education for specialist education, higher education, and collaborative education with Asian and North American partners.

For more information on these topics, and details about his most recent trip, please see Byron's attachments at the end of this report.

Presentations and Articles

"The Internet, Intranets, and Extranets: Strengthening Community Identity

Using Networks," Presentation to the ICACC/ICA Europe Communications Seminar, Budapest, October 1996. Pdf copy:
<http://dief106001.usask.ca/byron/presentation.html>

"Is Education about to Change?" Article in *Members*, the magazine of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Spring 1996.

"The Educational Object Economy, Co-operative Community-Building and Modernist Innovation," Presentation to the Advanced Technology Group of Apple Computer, June 1997.
<http://dief106001.usask.ca/byron/owen/start.html>

"Inside Apple—Unlikely Owenists," article in *Members*, the magazine of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Autumn 1997.
<http://dief106001.usask.ca/byron/Owenists.html>

"Handheld Computers in Rural Health Care in Developing Countries," Presentation to the ICA International Health Committee, Geneva, September 1997.

"Business Opportunities for Co-operatives in Internet Commerce," luncheon presentation at ICA General Assembly, Geneva, September 1997.

"Releasing the Components of Education," presentation to the ICA Global Human Resource Development and the ICA Communications Committees Joint Seminar, Overcoming Geographical Barriers through Electronic Networking and Distance Learning, Geneva, September 1997.
<http://dief106001.usask.ca/byron/ica.ilo/entry.html>

"EOE Neighbourhood Communities," Apple Research Paper.
http://trp.atg.apple.com/FMPro?-db=PapersDB&-lay=papers&-format=papers_detail.html&PaperID=9&-find

Roschelle, J., B. Henderson, J. Spohrer, and J. Lilly. "Apple's Educational Object Economy," in *Technos*, upcoming December 1997.

Upcoming Presentations

EduCom 1997, Minneapolis, October 1997. Presentation of Apple's Educational Object Economy project.
<http://www.educom.edu/web/confsemi/confsemHome.html>

Advanced Distributed Learning Meeting, Washington DC, November 1997. Presentation of Apple's Educational Object Economy project.

WorldBank. 1998 World Development Report Meeting, keynote speaker on "Object Methods for International Development," Cupertino, November 1997.

<http://www.worldbank.org/html/fpd/technet/wdr98/world.htm>

Bootstrap Institute Fall Seminar, Washington DC, November 1997.

Presentation to Networked Improvement Communities Seminar.

<http://www.bootstrap.org/alliance/nov97events.htm>

Brenda Stefanson

Research and Extension

Brenda has been busy with the production of a resource kit: *New Generation Co-operatives: Opportunities in Agricultural Processing*. The kit contains a twenty-minute video describing the NGC concept with testimonials from people involved in co-operatives in North Dakota and Minnesota. Additional information in the kit includes the Centre's booklets; *New Generation Co-operatives: Rebuilding Rural Communities* and *New Generation Co-operatives: Responding to Changes in Agriculture*. The resource kit will be very useful in disseminating information on co-operatives and assisting communities in the formulation of collective strategies to solve problems and exploit opportunities. Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food Rural Service Centres and Economic and Co-operative Development Regional Offices will have copies for the use of their constituents. Additional copies are available for \$20 plus GST and handling from the Centre or AIMS.

The NGC resource kit will soon be available in cyberspace. Brenda is working with Caroline Kristian to build a website where people can read the two booklets, view segments of the video, listen to the members talk about their co-operatives, and follow links to other information. This project will extend the information to a wider audience and provide access to more indepth information.

Funding to produce the video and resource kit and to build the website was generously provided by AIMS, the Agriculture Institute of Management in Saskatchewan under the Canadian Farm Business Management Program through a federal/provincial agreement between Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

In July, Brenda travelled to Vermillion, Alberta, to talk about NGCs to the Canadian Boer Goat Association Annual Meeting. The meeting resulted in

continued interaction with the producers of Boer Goats as they work through the process of industry development and take steps towards the formation of a co-operative.

Over the last few months, Brenda has met with a number of producer groups to discuss new generation co-operatives. These groups include: grain producers looking for a model to enable diversification through livestock production; bison producers considering membership in the North American Bison Cooperative; chicken producers; and egg producers.

Brenda is currently working on a joint project with the Family Farm Foundation of Canada. Co-operative Strategies for Rural Saskatchewan is a research and extension project that will incorporate the research on NGCs with the extensive body of research on other types of co-operatives including: housing, health care, employment, and others. Community groups across Saskatchewan will be engaged in discussions around the relevance of co-operatives in the modern context.

Darryl Amey and Brenda Stefanson are co-chairs of the upcoming conference: Exploring Organic Alternatives: Meeting the Challenges of Agriculture, Health, and Community. The committee has been meeting frequently to plan the conference, which will be held in Saskatoon, February 8-10, 1998.

Andrea Harris

Andrea has been busy finishing a two-year project funded by the Agricultural Development Fund. The study examines the role of external agents in industry development, using a theoretical framework based on New Institutional Economics and a number of case studies of emerging agricultural industries in Saskatchewan, western Canada, and the US. The study concludes that external agents can play an important role in promoting industry development by encouraging and facilitating co-ordinated action by industry participants. A rough draft entitled "Working Together" was completed at the end of June; a final version will be available within the next month.

In September, Andrea prepared a paper entitled "Future Possibilities for Communication Services in Rural Communities" for presentation by Murray at the Prairie Forum conference in Brandon, Manitoba, October 2-3. The paper examines alternative strategies for communities faced with the possibility of declining telecommunications service due to recent industry deregulation and will be published as a Centre working paper.

Andrea is also currently working on a project entitled "Agricultural Co-operatives: An Information Project." The project is funded by the Canada /B.C. Farm Management Program, with in-kind contributions from the Centre. Two manuals and a website are being prepared to provide information regarding the development of agricultural co-operatives to BC producers and agri-business consultants.

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. During the past few months she organized the Centre retreat at Rose Bush Acres; handled communications and organized Centre activities and tours to various co-operatives around the province for the many visitors who came through this summer and fall; helped Lou with her ASAC conference materials package and with organizing her trip to the ICA research conference in Italy; helped Rochelle et al with the grant application to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada; helped Lou with the organization of the Women in Co-operatives conference coming up in November; and offered moral support and other invaluable help with details large and small to Nora and her work on the open house.

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. She is responsible for the phone and fax bills as they come in, works one half-day a week in the library processing orders, does the mountains of xeroxing the Centre seems to generate, and holds the fort whenever Marianne is away. She helped Nora cheerfully and efficiently with a number of tasks associated with the open house, and Marianne with various mail-outs, publication orders, and miscellaneous tasks as they arose. Karen also works half time for the College of Dentistry.

Leslie Polsom

Leslie has responded to requests for information regarding co-operatives from around the campus and from around the globe. Many of these requests have come to the Centre through the WWW site, e-mail, as well as through the regular mail. Examples of external information requests in recent months have been: vegetable/market gardening co-ops for patrons in both British Columbia and Manitoba, joint ventures and Credit Unions for a patron in Ontario, and worker co-ops and the disabled for a patron in the Maritimes.

It is interesting to note the growing interest in the province of Saskatchewan concerning housing alternatives, including housing co-operatives. This interest is reflected in the number of organizations in this province, approximately five, who have contacted me for information within the last few months. Finally, we have had several visitors to the Centre who have spent time looking at materials available in our Resource Centre.

The library collection has been added to on a continual basis throughout the last few months. Most recently, we have acquired two graduate theses, "Federative Decision-Making Systems: The Case of CUFIS and the Credit Union System of Saskatchewan" by Laura Turner and "A Challenge to Tradition: Co-operative Farming in Saskatchewan, 1944-1960" by Dion McGrath. Any suggestions regarding possible material to add to the collection are gratefully received. On average, one hundred items were used monthly by faculty, staff, students, and other researchers.

In the middle of May, Leslie began a part-time position as a researcher with the Centre's study, *The Economic and Social Impact Analysis of the Co-operative Sector in Saskatchewan*, commissioned by the Department of Economic and Co-operative Development with the Saskatchewan government. At this point in the project, interim reports have included an economic profile of Saskatchewan co-operatives (completed by Roy Dobson), community profiles of the selected interview sites, a literature review, interview questions to be used in the community interviews, and a telephone survey.

Nora Russell

Nora has been extremely busy with the Centre's information materials and publications over the past few months, writing, editing, typesetting, and supervising the printing of the summer newsletter, *CSC Developments*, as well as four new booklets: *Credit Unions and Community Economic Development*; *A Conversation about Community Development*; *Balancing Act: Crown Corporations in a Successful Economy*; and *New Generation Co-operatives: Responding to Changes in Agriculture*.

She also edited two papers by Peter Apedaile and Zhu Shufang: "Lessons for Rural Co-operatives Entering the Twenty-First Century" and "Co-operative Organization in Rural Canada and the Agricultural Co-operative Movement in China Compared." One is destined for the *Review of International Co-operation* and the other for the Centre's occasional papers series.

She did preliminary editing, design, and typesetting for the two sections of the interim report on the social and economic impact of co-operatives on

Saskatchewan, a 100-page document that still requires a great deal of work in terms of final editing, layout, etc., once everyone has finished their interviews and responded to the interim report.

Nora has been working like a maniac organizing and preparing materials for the open house to be held November 5. Activities associated with this have included designing the invitation; preparing a new presentation folder for the Centre; designing a shell page for materials to be included in the presentation folder; writing and preparing all the material for the package; designing and preparing all the headings and materials for the general displays, as well as common headers for individual faculty and staff presentations. Marianne and Karen have been invaluable aids in getting the invitations out, dealing with RSVPs, making calls for display units, arranging for the food, and doing xeroxing for the presentation folders.

Once Nora has recovered from the open house, her upcoming tasks include the final editing and layout of the impact study; updating *Saskatchewan Co-operatives: A Record of Community Development*, a 1992 Centre publication on the history of co-operatives in the province; synthesizing and editing the presentations of the Chinese delegation who were with us for a week in September; writing and editing another booklet, this one with Lou on "Federations and Interorganizational Relations"; a write-up on co-operatives for the revised edition of Fung's *Atlas of Saskatchewan*; and editing and laying out another of the Centre's occasional papers, this one by Murray and Andrea, entitled "Future Possibilities for Communication Services in Rural Communities." Nora is also responsible for all aspects of prepress preparation and print supervision.

Rochelle Smith

Rochelle came to the Centre in the fall of 1997 after nineteen years in the public sector. Her most recent position was Senior Co-ordinator, Policy and Program Development, in the Co-operatives Directorate of the Saskatchewan Department of Economic and Co-operative Development. Research for her dissertation will focus on co-operatives in transition, in particular, the development of an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of member-based organizational behaviour and decision making. Rochelle is the Centre's first interdisciplinary PhD student.