

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2004

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1. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING RURAL CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Date	Event	Contact
3 – 6 July, 2004	Rural Geography Research Group: Second Meeting of Anglo-German Rural Geographers <i>Rural Multi-functionality: perspectives from policy-making, implementation and practice</i> , University of Exeter	ojwilson@dmu.ac.uk h.buller@exeter.ac.uk
25-30 July, 2004	XI World Congress of Rural Sociology, Trondheim, Norway.	www.irma-world.org/XI
15-20 August, 2004	RGS-IBG Annual conference held in conjunction with the World International Geographic Union (IGU) conference, Glasgow <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainable rural systems (Guy Robinson)• Critical reflections on theory in Rural Geography (Keith Halfacree)• New and Emerging Researchers in Rural Geography (Matthew Offord and Jessica Sellick)• Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: Developing Scotland's Rural Spaces (Rhys Evans)	g.robinson@kingston.ac.uk K.H.Halfacree@swansea.ac.uk matthew.offord@bbc.co.uk , or js0820@bristol.ac.uk . highmiler@supernet.com R.D.Fish@exeter.ac.uk
16 September, 2004	ESRC Transdisciplinary Seminar Series on Sustainable Farmland Management: International Dimensions on Sustainable Farmland Management, University of Exeter	
2005	RGRG British-Spanish Rural Conference, UK venue	

2. RGRG DISSERTATION PRIZES

The Rural Geography Research Group offers annual dissertation prizes.

Undergraduate Dissertation prize, 2004.

The prize is available to students who have completed an undergraduate degree and produced a dissertation in a subject area related to rural geography. The relevant examination board for the degree may nominate **one** candidate each year and should arrange for **one** copy of the dissertation to be sent to the dissertation prizes officer of the Rural Geography Research Group **by the 31 July 2004** (address below), together with full contact details of the nominee and the nominating institution. Submitted dissertations will be considered by a panel of assessors comprising members of the RGRG Committee. The winner of the prize and the institution will be notified by the end of December 2004 when submitted dissertations will be returned.

Three prizes are available: 1st prize: £75; 2nd prize: £50; and 3rd prize: £25.

Masters Dissertation Prize, 2004.

The deadline for the submission of dissertations for the RGRG Masters Dissertation Prize is **31 January 2005**. The prize is available to students who have completed a taught Masters degree and produced a dissertation in a subject area related to rural geography in the year 2003-2004. The relevant examination board for the degree may nominate **one** candidate each year and should arrange for **one** copy of the dissertation to be sent to the dissertation prizes officer of the Rural Geography Research Group (see below), together with full contact details of the nominee and the nominating institution. Submitted dissertations will be considered by a panel of assessors comprising members of the RGRG committee. The winner of the prize and the institution will be notified by the end of the academic year 2005, when submitted dissertations will be returned. The award is **£100**.

Please submit dissertations to: Dr. Carol Morris, Centre for Rural Research, Department of Geography, University of Exeter, Lafrowda House, St. German's Road, Exeter, EX4 6TL.

Undergraduate Dissertation Prize winners in 2003

There were ten submissions for the RGRG Undergraduate dissertation prize for 2002-2003:

John, Ruth 'Mexican hometown associations in Napa, California' (Pembroke College, Oxford)

Massey, Emma 'Food for thought: the changing balance of power between fruit and vegetable farmers and the UK supermarkets they supply' (University of Durham)

Cookson, Giles 'Agrarian capitalism: a case study of community conflict in the 'moneyed' landscape of Askrigg, North Yorkshire' (University of Cambridge)

Vickerstaff, Katie 'An analysis to determine whether urban and rural characteristics affect asthma in England' (University of Newcastle)

Dickinson, Joshephine 'Inspired living: rural gentrification and middle class rurality' (Kings College, London)

Giddings, Robert 'Village children's perceptions and experiences of social space and amenities within the adult constructed rural idyll' (Plymouth University)

Cordwell, Chris 'Counterurbanisation and the reasons for migration into East Devon' (University of Gloucestershire)

Makinson, Ruth 'Has there been a significant improvement in the youth labour market in rural areas in recent years?' (University of Edinburgh)

Dudeney, Clare 'Sustainable tourism in Antarctica: current status and future prospects' (University of Lancaster)

Mitchell, Jason 'When gays are spatially scattered they're invisible: the formation and expression of gay male identities in non-urban communities' (UCL)

Dissertations were assessed by: Carol Morris, Nigel Walford and Darren Smith.

First prize was awarded to Jason Mitchell (UCL). Jason's dissertation concerned the construction and performance of gay male identities in non-urban contexts. Based on in-depth interviews with non-urban gay men and participant observation of gay social groups, the research offers a critique of implicit assumptions about the ways in which gay men express and perform gay identity. It suggests that gay identity is not only constructed in opposition to heterosexuality but also by the transmission of gay knowledge between gay men, thereby preserving the gay-straight dualism. The research also demonstrates that gay men do not experience space as 'aggressively' heterosexual, as suggested in previous studies, and that they are usually not aware of the sexual power relations within their communities. Instead, non-urban gay men are revealed as fully integrated within their communities and perform identities based around an 'alternative lifestyle'.

It was felt that the dissertation addressed a challenging research topic which it handled in a sensitive and insightful manner. It was well-balanced, thorough, and demonstrated a significant measure of reflection and auto-critique. The empirical findings were presented in an interesting and thoughtful way, leading to some innovative interpretations. The assessment team felt that there were some potentially publishable elements within this account.

Second prize was awarded to Emma Massey (Durham). Emma's dissertation addressed the highly topical issue of the changing relationship between British food retailers and their supplier farmers, studied in the light of recent interest in retail geography. It is based on in-depth interviews with representatives from each of the Asda, Waitrose, Safeway, Sainsbury's and Tesco and a number of the farmers who supply them with produce. The research reveals that rather than being a straightforward transfer of power from supplier to retailer, the changes in the relationship between these two sets of actors involve many different factors, ranging across different scales, including the communication networks connecting farm to supermarket distribution centres, government planning policy and global competition. It suggests that the transfer of power has not been entirely one-way, despite the overall balance of power tending towards the retailers.

This research was judged to be an original and ambitious piece of research demonstrating a good measure of initiative on the researcher's part as they engaged with particular types of institutional actors. A thoughtful title, genuinely *in-depth* interviews, a well-balanced structure, and mature reflection all contributed to the positive assessment of this dissertation.

Third place was awarded to Chris Cordwell (University of Gloucestershire). Based on census analysis and a household survey in three East Devon villages, this dissertation explores the causes of counterurbanisation. Emphasising the importance of micro-level evidence in understanding and theorising the process of counterurbanisation, the research finds that the motives of migrants both accorded with and diverged from those revealed within the existing literature. The assessors felt that this dissertation had clear aims, and was tightly structured while at the same time being exploratory in nature. Its meticulous attention to detail was also noted.

In response to an invitation to contact the RGRG with news of their post-dissertation progress, we have heard from Jason Mitchell and Emma Massey. Jason is currently engaged in full-time employment as a researcher for a television production company. However, response to his dissertation has encouraged him to consider writing a piece for GayTimes or a similar

publication on the subject matter, which would hopefully incorporate some follow up work (although it would no doubt be quite journalistic). Jason has an intention to return to academia at some stage, possibly to pursue the topic that he examined in his undergraduate dissertation. Emma Massey is currently completing an MSc in Rural Estate Management at the Royal Agricultural College and has accepted a job as a trainee rural chartered surveyor.

Carol Morris (University of Exeter).

3. ASSISTANCE WITH VALIDATION OF THE NEW RURAL AND URBAN DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

The Countryside Agency has invited comments on the methodology and results behind the new classifications of rural and urban areas. The rural and urban area classifications project has been co-sponsored by The Countryside Agency, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Office for National Statistics, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government. It seeks to classify geographic areas according to rurality or urbanity.

The validation is being conducted through the following website:
<http://www.rural-urban.org.uk>

The website provides both background information and details the methodology used to classify rural and urban areas. The results of the consultation process, which ended on 14 May, 2004, will help to finalise the methodology. The resulting classification will then become a standard throughout Government. Please address any questions to: Justin Martin, Research Officer, The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham. Email: Justin.Martin@Countryside.gov.uk

4. RECENT CONFERENCE REPORTS

4.1 AAG Annual Meeting, Rural Session, Dark Ruralities, Philadelphia, 15-19 March, 2004.

A number of British rural geographers went to the Centennial AAG conference in Philadelphia this March to present papers in an RESSG sponsored session entitled "Dark Ruralities". The session, convened by Jo Little (Exeter) and Mike Woods (Aberystwyth) sought to look at examples of the rural as anti-idyll through non-idyllic, contested and strange ruralities, hidden from mainstream representations and, on occasion, overtly challenging them. Jo Little presented a paper that drew on recent research in the UK and in New Zealand to reveal undercurrents of fear and discourses of danger that characterise some womens' experiences of rural places. Henry Buller looked at imagined rural beasts and their place within contemporary depictions of wild rurality, while Kate Brace and Michael Leyson explored the images and narratives of dark rurality revealed in their analysis of the film "The War Zone". Two other papers completed the session: Chris Bates' investigation of occult cultural landscapes in the Stroud valleys, where the dark and the hidden emerge as strategies for concealment, but also exclusivity; and Mike Woods' re-appraisal of the dark side of social capital, an often benign term that is frequently used to imply potential but may also conceal retrenchment and exclusion. Together this was an interesting theme session and one hopes that

the contributors will take their work forward under this ‘dark’ umbrella. What was surprising however was the extent to which this session, and the papers presented in it, stood apart from the central debates at the AAG, a conference otherwise dominated by political ecology and urban economic geographies. Depressingly, rural geography did not rate a mention in the conference handbook’s thematic index. One was struck, as one has been in previous AAGs, not only by how particular is our own British conception of rurality but also how fundamentally different are our analytical approaches to the study of rurality.

Henry Buller, University of Exeter.

4.2 RGRG Postgraduate Conference: The Practice of Rural Geography, 13-17 May, 2004, Varese Ligure, Genoa, NW Italy

This year’s RGRG Postgraduate Conference was held in the small town of Varese Ligure, in the rural province of Liguria, NW Italy. Delegates from six British Universities, as well as from the University of Genoa (Italy), met at this three-day conference to discuss ‘The Practice of Rural Geography’.

The conference opened with a session that explored the use of theory in rural geography. Dr. Richard Yarwood (University of Plymouth) led the session, provoking lively discussion about current trends for theory in rural geography, as well as the relationship between theory and methodology. The first session was followed by a lunchtime fieldtrip to the nearby village of Porciorasco. The delegates ate lunch on an abandoned terrace, before some of the group made a short walk to a ruined bridge, while the rest explored the houses and farm buildings of the depopulated village.

Back in Varese Ligure, Dr. Mark Riley (University of Exeter) chaired the afternoon session on ‘Sources and Methods in Rural Geography’. Briony M^oDonagh (University of Nottingham) opened by exploring how sources and methods used in historical geography might be applied to rural geography. Her paper examined the interconnections between theory and methodology, as well as offering an exposition of the particular sources available to those researching medieval and later landscapes. The second paper continued the theme of reconstructing rural landscapes. Kate Taylor (University of Kingston) outlined sources for reconstructing the agricultural environment of the 20th century, demonstrating how aerial photography and the National Farm Survey can be combined in order to model the impact of WWII agricultural practices in the South Downs. Matthew Offord (Kings College London) presented a paper which examined issues of social exclusion, local government and governance in rural Cornwall. Angela Medland (University of Plymouth) concluded the session with a paper that outlined her research on the practice of stag hunting and the construction of ‘rural’ identities, focusing in particular on the potential ethical problems of her research.

After dinner, Professor Charles Watkins (University of Nottingham) presented a paper which examined the relationship between cultural geography and landscape history, in the context of Ligurian agriculture. He explored how landscape historical research into the Ligurian terrace systems might inform future management practices in the region.

On the second day, Professor Diego Moreno and Dr Roberta Cevasco (both of the University of Genoa) led a field trip to the Aveto valley. The excursion sought to introduce delegates to the cultural landscapes of the Ligurian

region, and the programme focused around two main themes: food production and landscape history/change. As such, the day included visits to see local cheese production at both the factory and the individual farm scale, and to various semi-natural and man-made landscapes, including beech woodlands, charcoal pits, and grazed lands. Delegates were given the opportunity to sample a wide variety of local produce, and the weather remained fine throughout the day.

The third day opened with more papers from postgraduate speakers on the theme of 'Sources and Methods in Rural Geography'. As the discussant, Dr. Stewart Barr (University of Exeter) introduced an eclectic trio of papers. Picking up on the theme of the local food served at the Albergo Amici and on the field trip, Jane Ricketts-Hein (University of Coventry) introduced her research on the relocalisation of food supply systems in England and Wales. She offered a brief overview of the geographies of local food networks, the indices she had used to map such geographies, and preliminary comparisons between three case-study counties. Marian Parish (University of Plymouth) discussed the possibility of combining insights gained from feminist, psychoanalytical and film theory in order to examine issues of landscape, gender, sexuality and narrative in Anthony Minghella's 'The Talented Mr Ripley'. Kostas Baginetas (University of Nottingham) concluded the paper sessions, examining the implications of interdisciplinary approaches to sustainability in agricultural landscapes, and in particular the interconnections between theory and practice.

After another lunchtime fieldtrip, this time to see the prehistoric jasper quarries at nearby Lagorara, Dr. Susanne Seymour (University of Nottingham) chaired the final session of the conference. She led a wide-ranging discussion on the relations between public policy and rural geography, focusing in particular on the impact of 'the cultural turn' on rural geographic research.

The conference as a whole provided an excellent forum for all those involved to reflect on the variety and depth of research in rural geography, and the two postgraduate-led sessions, in particular, underlined the diversity of sources and approaches available to those studying rural landscapes. The weekend also provided an opportunity to gain an international perspective on research on the British countryside, as well as learn more about the Italian landscape. All in all, this year's RGRG postgraduate conference was a highly successful international event, which one would hope will be repeated in future years.

Briony McDonagh, University of Nottingham



RGRG Postgraduate conference in Italy (Photo Mark Riley)

5. FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

5.1 RGRG Second Meeting of British-German Rural Geographers, Rural Multi-functionality: perspectives from policy-making, implementation and practice, University of Exeter, 3-6 July, 2004.

This meeting will focus on rural geography research into the multifunctionality of rural areas from policy-making, implementation and practice perspectives. It will comprise paper sessions; a workshop session aimed at developing relationships and opportunities for future collaborative research in Britain, Germany and the wider EU; and, a one day fieldtrip that provides a chance to view and experience rural development in a remote rural area in England. Like the first meeting, this meeting provides an informal forum for debating and sharing ideas. Papers from postgraduates and researchers beginning their academic careers are particularly welcome.

Papers that relate to one or a number of the following areas (specifically with regard to Britain and / or Germany, or other EU countries in comparison with Britain and / or Germany) will be presented.

- The rural economy
- The rural environment and amenity
- Rural policy, governance and regulation
- Rural actors, networks and agency.

For further information, please contact the conference convenor: Olivia Wilson - email ojwilson@dmu.ac.uk or Henry Buller, University of Exeter – email H.Buller@exeter.ac.uk

5.2 XI World Congress of Rural Sociology, 'Back-to-the-land' in the 21st Century, Trondheim, Norway, 25-30 July, 2004

The aim of this Working Group is to explore the characteristics, motivations, actions, consequences and theoretical significance for rural studies of individuals and groups moving to live within rural environments who fit poorly, or not at all, with the dominant 'counterurbanisation' model that is expressed,

albeit highly unevenly, within a very large number of 'developed' countries. Anecdotal and limited research evidence suggests something of a resurgence of 'back-to-the-land' type projects - including self-build settlers, permaculture exponents and organic smallholders' in a range of countries. Indeed, we may now be able to go as far as to posit that they form an integral part of an emergent, if conceptually and empirically disputed, 'post-productivist countryside'.

Further information available at: <http://www.irsa-world.org/XI/program/workshops.html#24>

5.3 Rural Geography Research Group at the 30th Congress of the International Geographical Union, Glasgow, 15-20 August, 2004

The 30th Congress will take place at the Scottish Exhibition Centre in Glasgow and in the nearby Moat House Hotel. These venues together form the largest integrated exhibition and conference centre in the UK. The RGRG are organising FOUR sessions.

Session One: Sustainable Rural Systems: Economy, society and environment comprise the three main dimensions of sustainable development, but too often they are considered separately. This Conference Session will include papers relating to the interaction of the three dimensions in the context of rural systems, and thereby will embrace a wide range of topics. These will include:

- globalisation and re-regulation in sustainable food production
- conservation and sustainability
- the development of sustainable rural communities
- sustainable rural-urban interactions
- examinations of sustainability relating to issues of social welfare, exclusion, employment and provision of rural services.

There will be opportunities for papers to address the basis for both sustainable and unsustainable development with respect to these topics, the remedial policies being pursued, and evaluations of these policies. Both general and case studies from a variety of rural systems in Developed and Developing Countries will be welcomed.

Organiser: Prof Guy M. Robinson, School of Geography, Kingston University, Surrey UK. 020 85472000 (g.robinson@kingston.ac.uk).

Session Two: Critical Reflections on Theory in Rural Geography: In a review paper in 1980, Paul Cloke described rural geography as having a 'Cinderella complex', feeling dowdy and unloved since it had fallen from its erstwhile central place within the discipline of geography. However, as perhaps Cloke anticipated, Cinderella did eventually go to the ball and she lived happily ever after. Is this the story of rural geography over the past quarter century? More specifically, has the marriage of rural geography to Prince Theory been a successful one? The aim of this session is to explore critically and reflectively the place of 'theory' within rural studies today. How has theoretical insight been deployed within rural geography? Where has this been successful and where has it been more problematic? What is the legacy of such pivotal theory-led movements as postmodernism and the cultural turn to rural geography?

Organiser: Dr Keith Halfacree, Department of Geography, University of Wales Swansea, Swansea SA2 8PP (K.H.Halfacree@swansea.ac.uk).

Session Three: New and Emerging Researchers in Rural Geography: Organised by the Rural Geography Research Group / Postgraduate Forum:

This session offers new and emerging researchers the opportunity to present their research in a non-threatening and supportive environment. The session is open to postgraduate students presenting initial findings from their first research projects. Papers have been invited on any aspect of rural geography. For further information, please contact Matthew Offord matthew.offord@bbc.co.uk, or Jessica Sellick js0820@bristol.ac.uk.

Session Four: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: Developing Scotland's Rural Spaces:

Much work is, and has been done on the development of Rural Scotland. Rural Scotland is the location of many of the dreams and aspirations of urban Scots and a prime factor behind the creation of the Scottish Parliament, and reform of feudal land tenure. Rural Scotland is a place of small communities learning to use the current system of grant development to regenerate their communities and economies, to turn what was formerly peripheral disadvantage to locations of desire. Rural Scotland is a place where large experiments in alternative energy generation are about to take place. Rural Scotland is a place where contemporary regimes of environmental regulation, restoration and sustainable management are taking place. It is also a place of local and indigenous identities, constructed from the encounters between the historical necessities of diaspora and the global economy and culture of the 21st century. From Community Woodlands through culture economies, to farm diversification and farmers markets, research on rural Scotland both comments on, and contributes to new discourses of sustainability, local democracy and rural regeneration. Research on any aspect of modern rural Scotland, from the historical geographies of its roots through new discourses of interdisciplinary scientific management of fragile environments is invited to participate in these sessions depicting rural Scotland in the 21st Century.

Convenor: Dr. Rhys Evans, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Mountain Studies, Perth College, UHI, Crieff Rd, Perth, PH1 2NX. 01224 481 328 or 01738 877 761. highmiler@supanet.com

Consult the Congress website – www.meetingmakers.co.uk/IGC-UK2004 or contact Vicki Grant on igc2004@meetingmakers.co.uk or Lorraine Craig on l.craig@rgs.org

5.4 ESRC Transdisciplinary Seminar Series on Sustainable Farmland Management: International Dimensions on Sustainable Farmland Management, Streatham Court, University of Exeter, 16 September 2004

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

The School of Geography at the University of Nottingham in conjunction with the Nottingham Institute for Rural Research, and the Centre for Rural Research at the University of Exeter, is co-ordinating an ESRC transdisciplinary seminar programme aimed at broadening and deepening discussion about the idea of sustainability as it relates to processes of farmland management. The series is running between 2004 and 2005. This third seminar in the series addresses sustainable farmland management

within an international policy and practice context. The organisers invite contributions and participation to explore two key issues:

1. The implications of evolving international agendas on sustainable farmland management in the UK. How will reforms in the Common Agricultural Policy, and more generally, wider global systems of regulation and governance assert influence on UK farm landscapes and their management? What are the benefits and trade-offs for the idea and practice of sustainable farmland management? How should the national policy context manage and respond to these processes of change?
2. Lessons from other countries in managing farm landscapes for sustainability. What lessons can the UK draw from the theory and practice of sustainable farmland management in North America, mainland Europe and elsewhere? How might this work challenge or extend our definitions/conceptualisations of the processes at stake? How have these ideas been played out in particular empirical contexts, and to what extent could examples of best practice be implemented in UK context?

The organisers would very much welcome your participation in this Seminar. You may wish to participate by offering to present a paper, preparing a poster or contributing to the discussion. Financial support to cover travel expenses is available to speakers and postgraduate participants. Offers of papers, in the form of a short abstract and title, should be made by 30 June, 2004 to the Seminar Co-ordinator, Dr Robert Fish, Department of Geography, University of Exeter, Exeter Tel: 01392 263912; email: R.D.Fish@exeter.ac.uk. Further information on the Seminar Series can be found at:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~lgzwww/general/news-events/>

6. NEW BOOKS

WALFORD, N. & EVANS, N. (Eds.) (2004) *Innovation in Rural Areas*, Proceedings of the Fourth British-French Rural Geography Symposium, University College Worcester (May, 2002), RGRG, La Comité National Français de Géographie: Commission de Géographie Rurale, Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand. ISBN: 2-84516-243-X.

This volume presents research papers from the fourth British and French symposium of rural geography held at Worcester in May, 2002. Authors from Britain and France examine theoretical and policy innovations in social, economic, environmental and agricultural geography between and within the two countries. The papers are organised into four sections: natural spaces, regional development and innovation, advising agriculturalists and farm diversification. The book is essential for staff and students of rural geography and European change. Copies cost £15.00 (including postage and packing) and can be ordered from the Rural Geography Research Group by completing the form on the back cover or by contacting Dr Nigel Walford, School of Earth Sciences and Geography, Kingston University, Penrhyn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, KT1 2EE.

7. POSTGRADUATE STUDENTSHIP AT KINGSTON UNIVERSITY - COMMUNITY-BASED RURAL PLANNING: EVALUATING RECENT INITIATIVES IN THE UK

Two distinct elements can be recognised in the development of the UK's planning system: one 'top-down' based upon statutory land use planning and, more recently, 'bottom-up' community-based initiatives. The latter have grown in importance since the development of voluntarism and local initiatives under the Thatcher government, with encouragement for a series of 'bottom up' community-based planning-related activities under New Labour. Examples include the encouragement in recent planning legislation of Local Action Plans for individual parishes, and longer-lived initiatives such as village appraisals and village design schemes. These can be compared with new statutory planning measures that include the maintenance of Local Plans within the development planning process.

There is wide scope for investigation of the development of community-based planning, including the impacts of such activities, their scope and extent. In particular, key issues to be addressed include the degree to which individuals participate in 'bottom-up' initiatives and the way in which power is exercised in developing local plans, appraisals and design schemes. There is also scope for considering the broader context in which such initiatives are crystallising, notably the much-vaunted 'third way' policies of New Labour. Another background to the research is the assertion stated recently by Owen and Moseley that the two different approaches to tackling planning problems in the UK are coalescing following new planning legislation.

Research in this area can be facilitated through detailed case study investigation, focusing upon different parts of the country and investigating different types of community-based initiatives. Detailed interviews with key informants would be a central component of such research, involving local citizens, parish councillors, office holders in local organisations, and planning officials. There is a solid body of research in rural geography and rural planning upon which to build, but with sufficient scope for the project to be both distinctive and to produce findings of practical significance.

Interested parties can find further details on the Kingston University Website: http://www.kingston.ac.uk/geog/research/projects_geog_2004.htm. Deadline for applications is 24 June, 2004. Please contact: *Prof. G.M. Robinson and Dr. A.L. Hughes*, School of Earth Sciences and Geography, Kingston University, Penrhyn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, KT1 2EE.

8. ITEMS FOR AUTUMN 2004 NEWSLETTER

Articles, letters and comments and other items for inclusion in the Autumn Newsletter should be sent to: Stephen Essex, RGRG Newsletter Editor, School of Geography, University of Plymouth, Plymouth, PL4 8AA by 30 September 2004; Tel. +44 (0)1752 233080; Fax: +44 (0)1752 233054; e-mail: s.essex@plymouth.ac.uk.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The RGRG, like many other research groups, is making increasing use of electronic means of communication.

Update your email address!

Email is increasingly used to distribute the bi-annual Newsletter and urgent items of news throughout the year. Although email addresses are now available for about half of RGRG members, several appear to be out-of-date. If you have changed your email over the past few months or have recently gone 'on-line', please send your new address to Stephen Essex, School of Geography, University of Plymouth, Drake Circus, Plymouth, PL4 8AA. email: sessex@plymouth.ac.uk

The **RGRG Web site** (<http://www.geog.plym.ac.uk/ruralgeography/default.htm>) has been up and running for a few years. If you have any items that you wish to have posted on the RGRG web site, please contact Stephen Essex (University of Plymouth) preferably by email: s.essex@plymouth.ac.uk.

Innovations in Rural Areas

Published and edited by

*The Rural Geography Research Group,
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British Geographers*

&

*Comité National Français de Géographie:
Commission de Géographie Rurale*

January 2004

This volume presents research papers from the fourth British and French symposium of rural geography held at Worcester in May 2002. Authors from Britain and France examine theoretical and policy innovations in social, economic, environmental and agricultural geography between and within the two countries. The book is essential for staff and students of rural geography and European change. Copies can be ordered from the Rural Geography Research Group by completing the form below

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Total Cost @ £15.00 each inc P&P £_____

Please make cheques payable to the 'Rural Geography Research Group' and return this form to:

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