



RGRG Newsletter: [Http://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg_newsletter/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg_newsletter/) Summer 26th June 2012

[Http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Research+and+Higher+Education/ResearchGroups/Rural+Geography.htm](http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Research+and+Higher+Education/ResearchGroups/Rural+Geography.htm)

Your 2012 summer newsletter includes:

1. **RGRG** sessions at RGS-IBG Edinburgh 3-5 July 2012 & **AGM 5 July Session 3 (Thurs 13:10 to 14:50)**
2. 2010 ug dissertation prizes
3. Late report on 2011 Transitions sessions
4. Books & Publications
5. Feature: Howie on sustainable livelihoods in Vietnam
6. Humour: GEORge joins the Jubilee Flotilla
7. News



Images: BBC, The Journal, Uni-Edinburgh/S. Wright (above)

At the RGS-IBG annual meeting in Edinburgh, 3-5 July 2012, RGRG events peak Thurs 5th July. Below are details of rural sessions. Our AGM is 5 July Session 3 (13:10 to 14:50). It's the plenary timeslot at 13:10 between our 'Scaling' sessions. Grab some lovely haggis and come discuss RGRG matters and vote on offices.

Please email reports and photos from 2012 events to bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com

Best wishes, Bruce
Editor, *RGRG Newsletter*
www.durham.ac.uk/b.a.scholten

1. RGRG sessions & AGM at RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2012



3-5 July 2012, University of Edinburgh
Security of geography/geography of security, chaired by Chris Philo

Links:

- [Http://www.rgs.org/WhatsOn/ConferencesAndSeminars/Annual+International+Conference/Annual+international+conference.htm](http://www.rgs.org/WhatsOn/ConferencesAndSeminars/Annual+International+Conference/Annual+international+conference.htm)
- Programme:
<http://www.rgs.org/NR/rdonlyres/6EC1FA2A-5B00-47B7-8BC5-136BC6CED509/0/AC2012programme30512.pdf>

RGRG secretary Carol Morris confirms the RGRG sessions below. Sessions are five 20-minute presentations including questions. (Check Winter 2011 RGRG Newsletter for abstracts.)

New and Emerging Rural Researchers (1): Rural Development and Farming (RGRG). Tuesday 3 July, Session 2 (11:10 to 12:50). Convenors: Stacey Coppock (University of Nottingham) & Daniel Keech (Southampton); Chair: Sarah-Anne Munõz (University of the Highlands & Islands)

Recognition, redistribution and power: the concept of Food Sovereignty in Bolivia and Ecuador from the perspective of Political Geography. Benno Haupt (University of Kiel, Germany)

Impact of cooperative membership on farmers' uptake of technological innovations in south-west Nigeria. Oluwasun O. Kolade (London South Bank University); Michal Lyons (London South Bank)

The role of trust and social capital in increasing the response capacity of farmers towards bovine tuberculosis. Rhiannon Fisher (Countryside and Community Research Institute)

Agri-tourism in the global south: sustainable development and the ecological landscapes of Mumbai-Pune region. Rohit Madan (Cardiff University)

Community scale organisation gives Northern Ghanaian smallholders access to farm vehicles Imogen Bellwood-Howard (King's College London)

New and Emerging Rural Researchers (2): Rural Economy and Society (RGRG). Tuesday 3 July, Session 3 (13:10 to 14:50). Convenor(s) Stacey Coppock (University of Nottingham) & Daniel Keech (University of Southampton); Chair(s) Keith Halfacree (Swansea)

Exploring counterurbanization in a post-socialist context: case of Czech Republic. Martin Šimon (Charles University, Czech Republic)

Popular Rurality – The success of German country magazines (Landzeitschriften)
Christoph Baumann (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany)



Community Sponsored Social Integration Initiatives for Immigrants in Rural Ireland
Shane O'Sullivan (Mary Immaculate College, Limerick)

New and Emerging Rural Researchers (3): Rural Policy and Planning (RGRG). Tuesday 3 July, Session 4 (15:20 to 17:00). Convenor(s) Stacey Coppock (University of Nottingham) & Daniel Keech (University of Southampton); Chair Keith Halfacree (Swansea).

Mental Health Services and Social Inclusion in Remote and Rural Areas
Clare Daly (University of the Highlands and Islands)

Presences and absences: reviewing the third sector and volunteering in rural Scotland
Mike Woolvin (Scottish Agricultural College)

Planning for Demise: The Restriction of Adaptation and Change in Rural Areas
Andrew Grayson (University of Sheffield)

Participatory Mapping of Health Indicators and Services as a Tool for Anticipatory Co-Planning
Sarah Bowyer (University of the Highlands and Islands)

Is there Proof in the rural pudding? - Has the mechanism of rural proofing become effective and inherent in policy development process in England?

Sonja Rewhorn (University of Chester)



Landscape discourse and the social politics of rural wind energy
Rebecca Eastman (University of Plymouth)

(Cartoon: *The Journal* 5 June 2012)

Rural Stayers in the Mobile Countrysides (RGRG).

Wednesday 4 July, Session 3 (13:10 to 14:50). Convenors: Tialda Haartsen (Groningen) & Keith Halfacree (Swansea); Chair: Tialda Haartsen.

Decoupling land, farm and place: recombinant attachments of globally-engaged family farmers
Michael Woods (Aberystwyth University), Lynda Cheshire (University of Queensland, Australia) & Carla Meurk (University of Queensland, Australia)

Rural stayers, rural leavers, urban migrants
Dianne Looker (Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada)

Highly qualified rural stayers: motivations and strategies of young graduates returning to their home region
Patrick Rérat (University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland)

Why do I remain in the rural?
María Jesús Rivera (Public University of Navarre, Spain)

Beyond representations and into everyday life:
exploring why and how British migrants stay in rural France
Michaela Benson (University of Bristol)



(Foreign Policy Blogs 2011)

Land ownership, governance and the delivery of sustainable rural development (RGRG).

Wednesday 4 July, Session 4 (15:20 to 17:00). Convenors: Jayne Glass (Perth College University of Highlands and Islands) & Rob Mc Morran (Perth College University of the Highlands and Islands). Chair(s) Jayne Glass. Discussant: Jayne Glass

Governing the Forests: Evolving relationships between public policy and private management in English woodlands. Clive Potter (Imperial College London) & Charles Watkins (University of Nottingham)

National identities for sale? Might economic opportunities outweigh ethno-national allegiances to pave the way for Northern Ireland's first national park?
Jonathan Bell (Queen's University Belfast)

Duality of Land tenure systems and irrigated agriculture models: is schizophrenia a good way to develop the Office du Niger area in Mali? Adamczewski Amandine (CIRAD, France), Jean-Yves Jamin (CIRAD, France) & Jean-Philippe Tonneau (CIRAD, France)

Land as a community asset: community empowerment?
Tim Braunholtz-Speight (University of the Highlands and Islands)

'Working Together for Sustainable Rural Communities': comparing and contrasting different models of land-based stakeholder cooperation and rural governance – lessons from case studies of community and private landownership in the Scottish Highlands. Convenor(s) Annie McKee (The James Hutton Institute) & Rob Mc Morran (Perth College University of the Highlands and Islands)

Scaling the Food Security Challenge (1): Politics, Policy and Practice (RGRG/ DARG).

Thursday 5 July, Session 1 (09:00 to 10:40). Convenor(s) Moya Kneafsey (Coventry University), Ruth Little (University of Sheffield), Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield), Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge), David Nally (University of Cambridge). Chair: Ruth Little.

The Codex Conspiracy; globalized conspiracy theories, social movements and food in-security.
Matthew Reed (Countryside and Community Research Institute)

Peasants, Pastoralists and Participation in Policy Processes: Civil Society Engagement in Global Food Security Governance. Jessica Duncan (City University, London)

Beyond production efficiency? Climate change mitigation for UK agriculture in a context of food security. Isobel Tomlinson (Birkbeck, University of London)

Biofuels and the emerging political economy of agriculture in Senegal
Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge)

Supermarkets and urban value chains: rethinking the developmental mandate
Caryn Abrahams (University of South Africa)

Scaling the food security challenge (2): the roles of producers, consumers, and communities (RGRG, DARG). Thursday 5 July, Session 2 (11:10 to 12:50). Convenors: Moya Kneafsey (Coventry University), Ruth Little (University of Sheffield), Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield), Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge) & David Nally (University of Cambridge). Chair: Moya Kneafsey

Irrigators in the Firing Line! Producers' Responses to Policy Change in Australia's Food Bowl. Guy M. Robinson (University of South Australia, Australia & past head of RGRG)

Reconnecting the local: situating food at the heart of sustainable community development
Daniel French (University of Glamorgan) & Suzanne Jenkins (University of Glamorgan)

Serving society? The role of soup kitchens and soup runs in urban social order
Jane Midgley (Newcastle University)

Food banking as community resilience? Negotiating localised scales in discussions of food security in the UK. Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield)

Coping with food insecurity in a European metropolis: The effects of current economic crisis in food consumption in Athens. Sophia Skordili (Harokopio University, Greece)

RGRG AGM: See you there!
Thursday 5 July, Session 3 (13:10 to 14:50)



Scaling the food security challenge (3): Critique and Research Agendas (RGRG, DARG). Thursday 5 July, Session 4 (15:20 to 17:00). Convenors: Moya Kneafsey (Coventry University), Ruth Little (University of Sheffield), Hannah Lambie-Mumford (University of Sheffield), Ivan Scales (University of Cambridge), David Nally (University of Cambridge). Chair: Ivan Scales.

Food security agendas in UK research: a preliminary investigation of sites and spatial imaginaries.
Susanne Seymour (University of Nottingham) & Carol Morris (University of Nottingham).

The Food Security Meme
Jonathan Cloke (Loughborough University)

Panel Discussion: Isobel Tomlinson (Birkbeck, University of London), Paul Milbourne (Cardiff University), Stephen Hinchliffe (University of Exeter), Geoff Tansey (independent writer and broadcaster), Marisa Wilson (University of the West Indies), Julia Wright (Centre for Agroecology and Food Security / Coventry University), Drawing on the papers presented in the previous 2 sessions plus the opening paper in this session, the rest of Session 3 will be devoted to a panel discussion which will focus on drawing out critical perspectives on policy and research agendas for food security both in the UK and internationally.

Key questions to be considered:

- Where should geographers focus their research agendas around food security?
- What, in particular, can geographical perspectives contribute to current debates about food security?
- What are the latest policy imperatives and who is driving policy agendas around food security?
- What are the critical alternatives to current dominant food security paradigms?

Securing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods in the Global North and South (RGRG).

Thursday 5 July, Session 5 (17:20 to 19:00). Convenors: Bruce Scholten (Durham University) & Daniel Keech (University of Southampton). Chair: Bruce Scholten

Re-engaging with the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework: Livelihoods of self-settled refugees in the Global South. Charlotte Ray (Coventry University)

Integrated Soil Fertility Management and maize commercialisation in Northern Ghana. Imogen Bellwood-Howard (King's College London)

Rural social enterprise in England and Germany: Continuity, connectedness and the commercial revival of traditional orchards. Daniel Keech (University of Southampton)

Cooperative Dairying in the Global South: Better incomes for smallholders & women. Bruce Scholten (Durham University)

Exploring the effectiveness of social capital as a strategy for sustainable rural livelihoods. Sharon Flanigan (The James Hutton Institute) & Keith Matthews (The James Hutton Institute)

 **Don't forget! RGRG AGM**
Thursday 5 July, Session 3 (13:10 to 14:50)

2. UG DISSERTATION PRIZES 2011



Cheques may already be in the mail

On May 30, Keith Halfacree sent us the 2011 dissertation prize list, and Gareth Enticott is sending cheques to winners. Quality was so high that two 3rd prizes were awarded. *Aspirations*, the top winner, hints of Amartya Sen's 'capacities' and human development index (HDI), according to one judge (your editor), who recently returned from a dairy conference in Nairobi. Random chats with people on the streets and farms of Kenya echo a new generation's high aspirations and impatience to improve governance and move ahead.

1st Samuel Slatcher, Durham University, *'Aspirations' as development's missing link? An illustrative study among young people in rural South Africa*, £50

2nd Katherine Keogan, University College London. *Affordable housing and fragile communities: lessons from a proposed development in an English coastal village*, £40

3rd Hannah Stocks, University of Leeds, *Second homes. Investigating local perceptions and impacts on communities in Cornwall*, £30

3rd Katharine Ford, University of Nottingham, *A common cause? The making and remaking of a cultural landscape in Frisby on the Wreake*, Leicestershire, £30

3. Report on RGS-IBG ac 2011 session: Geographies of Transition: The role of food (RGRG/PERG).

Convenors: Geoff Wilson (Plymouth, UK) and Colin Sage (Cork, IE) c.sage@ucc.ie

Editor's note: This report arrived after the Winter 2011 deadline but remains timely. Wilson's book was noted in RGRG News Winter 2011 and Sage's is below.

This call attracted eight papers, divided into two sessions Wednesday afternoon. In the first session, chaired by Colin Sage, Geoff Wilson (picture below) presented a paper on 'Food relocalisation and community resilience'.

Although resilience is a contested concept, Geoff argued that it might best be regarded as adaptive capacity, and he illustrated possible pathways, which are developed in greater depth in his 2011 book *Community Resilience and Environmental Transitions* (Earthscan).

The following speaker, Rebecca Sandover (Exeter), presented 'Community groups, growing veg: reskilling and reconnection'. Rebecca described her experiential gardening methodology which gave her great insight into the challenges and constraints facing allotment growers in Somerset.

Next was Paul Cleave (Exeter) who offered a nostalgic but insightful analysis of the role of iconic food products as banners for a regional culinary tradition, with imagery constructed for the tourism industry. The case of Devon clotted cream was used to demonstrate the way a high quality product could be vulnerable to changing tastes and shifting norms.

The final paper in this session was presented by Wendy Miller (Plymouth) on 'The political ecology of local food in SW England'. Wendy explained how her socio-metabolic regimes approach helped her to tie together the role of local food projects in contributing to a range of capitals (social, human, natural etc) in urban communities. This triggered useful discussion that took us into the refreshment break.

In the second session, chaired by Geoff Wilson (on the right), the first speaker was



Colin Sage (above) who addressed the central role played by food in understanding geographies of transition. He argued that at a time regarded by many as volatile, uncertain and complex, food growing offers a practical contingency for personal empowerment and social mobilisation.

The question Colin posed is whether food social movements will lead to a Millenarian End Times thinking or offer a route toward progressive demands for structural change.

Mike Goodman and Jim Ormond (King's College, London) presented on 'Absurdist sustainabilities in a time of transition' which addressed carbon labelling of food in the UK.

Mike and Jim argued that the measurement of carbon had more to do with disciplining their supply chains than with fundamentally altering the products or practices of corporate food manufacturing and retailing.

Indeed, they warned of the dangers posed by corporate food in framing the narrative of sustainability in terms of carbonism for the purposes of burnishing their green credentials.

Joe Smith (Open University) then presented a paper, jointly written with his colleague Petr Jehlicka, which highlighted the fact that in Eastern Europe there is a much higher level of food self provisioning by households than in the West. While this emerged under state socialism as a coping strategy, it now offers a practical demonstration of 'Actually Existing Sustainability'.

Joe concluded their thoroughly engaging paper by arguing that we (in the west and in our discipline) have been insufficiently attentive to such developments in Central and Eastern Europe and might fruitfully learn from these food self provisioning practices.

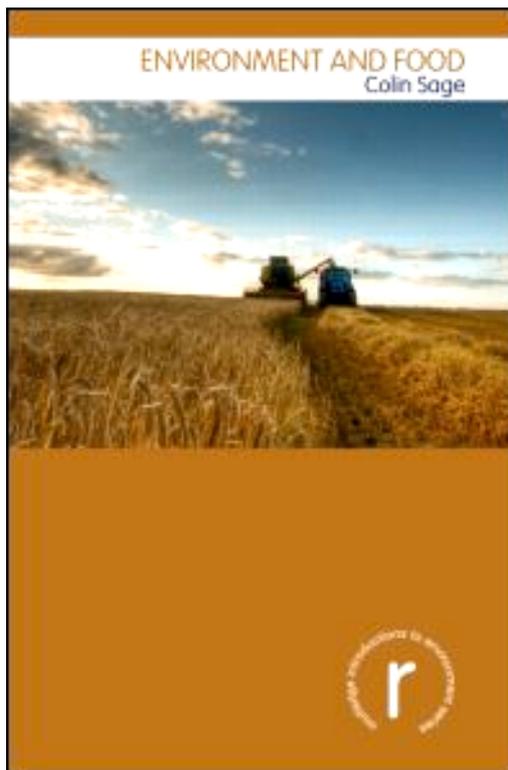
The final paper of the session was given by Kevin Morgan (Cardiff) who spoke on the role of social enterprise in sustainable food systems. Kevin made a powerful case for the need to re-appraise social enterprise initiatives and he used a number of examples, including those associated with the Making Local Food Work programme. Kevin's paper gave a strong sense of optimism and, notwithstanding the

obstacles, there was enormous potential for social enterprise to win a greater share of public procurement contracts and help re-establish the priority of delivering to social need rather than corporate profit. This triggered a vigorous and fruitful discussion which brought the session to a close with general consensus that this had proven to be a very successful theme which was well attended and with excellent presentations. The convenors would like to thank all of the contributors to the session.

- Colin Sage (& Geoff Wilson)
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4. BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

REF 2014 (Research Excellence Framework) is approaching. Send book & pub news to the editor.



<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415363129/>

Environment and Food

By Colin Sage

Published July 2011 by Routledge – 320 pages
Series: Routledge Introductions to Environment:
Environment and Society Texts.

Paperback: 978-0-415-36312-9: £24.99
Hardback: 978-0-415-36311-2: £72.00
eBook: 978-0-203-01346-5:

Routledge says: This timely book provides a thorough introduction to the inter-relationship of food and the environment. Its primary purpose is to bring to our attention the multiplicity of linkages and interconnections between what we eat and how this impacts on the earth's resources.

Having a better idea of the consequences of our food choices might encourage us to develop more sustainable practices of production and consumption in the decades ahead. Although human societies have,

over time, brought under control a large proportion of the earth's resources for the purpose of food production, we remain subject to the effective functioning of global ecosystem services. The author highlights the vital importance of these services and explains why we should be concerned about the depletion of freshwater resources, soil fertility decline and loss of biological diversity.

The book also tackles some of the enormous challenges of our era: climate change – to which the agri-food system is both a major contributor and a vulnerable sector – and the prospect of significantly higher energy prices, arising from the peaking of oil and gas supplies which will reveal how dependent the food system has become upon cheap fossil fuels. Such challenges are likely to have significant implications for the long-term functioning of global supply chains and raise profound questions

regarding the nutritional security of the world's population. Taken together the book argues that a re-examination of the assumptions and practices underpinning the food system is urgently required. *Environment and Food* is a highly original, inter-disciplinary and accessible text that will be of interest to students and the wider public genuinely interested in and concerned by the state of the world's food provisioning system. It is richly illustrated with figures and makes extensive use of boxes to highlight relevant examples.

Colin Sage is Senior Lecturer in Geography at University College Cork, Republic of Ireland (<http://publish.ucc.ie/researchprofiles/A010/csage>).

AAG 2009 & RGS-IBG 2010 rural sessions in IJAS special issue:
<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalJournalofAgriculturalSustainability>

Technological and social dimensions of the Green Revolution: connecting pasts and futures

Guest editors:
Pratyusha Basu & Bruce Scholten

International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability

Volume 10, Issue 2, 2012
DOI: 10.1080/14735903.2012.674674

Cover photo: This 50 year-old, fuel efficient Massey Ferguson tractor is in the mix of tools for ongoing agricultural revolutions in social and technological innovation (Scholten 2005 at UC Santa Cruz farm).

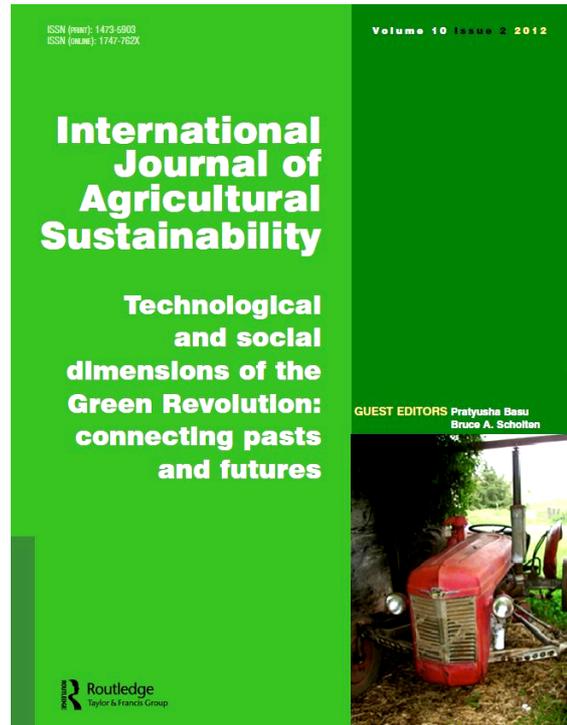
The issue's focus is the technology-society nexus, and articles consider how new agricultural inputs and technologies interact with existing social divisions (e.g. land ownership and identity). One interesting aspect of the issue is that it considers places not traditionally associated with the Green Revolution – Guatemala, Swaziland, Malawi, Nepal – as well as an early site for Green Revolution studies – India – showing the Green Revolution is part of the global experience of being rural.

Articles follow debates over seeds (GMOs in Guatemala by James Klepek), underutilized native varieties in Nepal (by Peter Andersen), social consequences of uneven access to fertilizers in Malawi (Marie Javdani), irrigation in Swaziland (Alan Terry), and the Rome hunger summit (Lucy Jarosz). The article on India (Basu & Scholten) links Green Revolution crops to livestock ownership, highlighting how GR outcomes are situated in a wider rural development landscape.

The issue reflects on 'sustainable intensification' (as studied by *IJAS* chief editor Prof. Jules Pretty and others in the Royal Society). This is akin to GR pioneer MS Swaminathan's 'evergreen revolution', i.e. ways to feed 2 billion more people by 2050 without converting additional forest to farmland - a concern as forests mitigate climate change. It presents practical problems to be solved and reveals heretofore ignored synergies. Ultimately, optimal solutions to population and climate problems will not rely on either technology or social participation alone, but combinations of both.

Dr. Pratyusha Basu is Associate Professor at the Department of Geography, Environment and Planning at the University of South Florida (<http://gep.usf.edu/faculty/pbasu/>)

Dr. Bruce Scholten is Honorary Research Fellow at Durham University Geography Department (www.dur.ac.uk/b.a.scholten/)



Jamaica: a rural memoir of the pre-Independence era

<http://www.amazon.com/Busha-Benjie-Peggy-Rankine/dp/9768189444>



Busha Benjie

By Peggy Rankine

Cover by Annika Lewinson-Morgan

- Perfect Paperback 340 pages
- Language: English
- ISBN-10: 9768189444
- ISBN-13: 978-9768189448
- Price c.£30/\$45 plus shipping
- Contact : edwinc120y@yahoo.com
- Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 5.3 x 0.8 inches

Background for this selection. *The editor's brother-in-law, Lindley, has been telling him of his uncle's mid-size dairy farm in Jamaica – and this book written by his mother – Peggy Rankine. Busha Benjie is the sort of tale to lure geographers into participatory research.*

The publisher notes: It describes life on a typical estate and creatively seeks to weave into the story Jamaican culture as it relates to religious beliefs, dress, food, and the values and attitudes of people in parts of rural Jamaica. Peggy Rankine's inspiration to write this story originated from her childhood experiences of estate life where her uncle was the 'Busha', and from stories told by her grandmother who, as a child, lived near an estate and had relatives employed as sugar boilers, coachmen and farmhands in the cultivation of cane, bananas, coconuts and in cattle rearing.

The author could later, as an adult and as a social worker in the depressed areas of rural Jamaica, relate her experiences to the discontent of some workers and to the prejudices in society. In creating the main characters Benjie and Paul, with their strong bonding and deep fraternal love, Rankine makes an attempt, she says, to "bridge the social gap."

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Next newsletter features books by:

J. Pickerill & L. Maxey (eds.) (2009) *Low Impact Development: The Future in our hands*, Wordpress: <http://lowimpactdevelopment.wordpress.com/>

L. Maxey, R. Laughton, O. Rodker & Z. Wangler (2011) *Small is Successful: Creating Sustainable Livelihoods*. Ecological Land Cooperative, London: www.ecologicaland.coop/projects-small-successful



 Olympic Torch, Durham City, 17 June 2012 

5. FEATURE: Better livelihoods to sustain an ecosystem in Vietnam

By Charles Howie



The author with six foot long straw from last year's rice crop, the depth of flood water here. Between floods farmers grow cassava.

Vinh Phuoc Commune in An Giang Province, just inside Vietnam's border with Cambodia, is the last location in this part of the Mekong Delta for growing long-duration, low-yielding, flooding rice using only natural fertilisers brought in by the annual flood waters.

Until 40 years ago all rice in the delta grew this way, producing just one 2 tonne/hectare (t/h) crop a year. Now fields are enclosed by dikes, and farmers grow three crops a year of high yielding varieties (HYVs) of rice with artificial chemicals, each harvest giving 5-7 t/h, a ten-fold increase in productivity within the lives of many farmers.

An Giang Province is Vietnam's foremost producer. In 2009 it grew nearly 10% of the country's rice, providing food security and surplus for export. Now that the old system has almost disappeared, with barely 100 hectares left, I felt honoured when staff at An Giang University asked me to help find a way to maintain what is left of this ecosystem. I saw the importance of maintaining organisms in the flooding system, some of which may flourish in the future, as the climate changes. There are

multiple reasons to sustain this ecosystem, not the least of which is that these fields can serve as a base line for measuring changes to soil fertility in the Mekong Delta, just as the fields at Rothamsted, have done in Hertfordshire for 150 years.

However, since the land law of 1993, Vietnamese farmers have user rights to their land, and could decide to build a dike and change their system at any time. So far, they have chosen to maintain it. But for how long?

The original idea was to consider tourism and education as supplementary incomes. But when we visited, farmers gave us rice to take away, and this was a revelation. The rice is pink with a distinct nutty flavour, quite delicious. Urban consumers have become richer, and are already coming to Vinh Phuoc to buy this rice – perhaps reasoning that it is free of artificial chemicals.

Organic status might be ambitious; no one knows what chemicals the flood waters bring in. Instead, we are working with the agriculture department of the province to attempt to develop a brand name for the rice and sell it at a premium. We applied for funding from the UK's Bilateral Fund for Vietnam, so we could make a full assessment of trends and resources. Unfortunately we weren't successful, but we continue to seek funding.

Along the way, I gave all the data I had to masters students in International Rural Development at the Royal Agricultural College, and asked them to find a solution to the problem. After a morning's workshop I shared their presentation with staff in Vietnam.

This exercise is the first time I have actually been involved in 'development' at an individual village level, and it offers rich learning experiences.

Those blithe words 'sustainable development' mean a lot more than previously when you must consider the economic context at the household level, as well as the environmental situation, and place them within the social and political context for any 'development' to be 'sustainable'.

Floating rice
(Bong sen)

Normal rice
(Tai nguyen)



Dr. Charles Howie is Visiting Fellow, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester (chowie@rac.ac.uk). He is also Adviser, Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources, An Giang University, Long Xuyen, Vietnam.

6. HUMOUR: GEORge joins the Jubilee Flotilla



GEORge, our sub-editor, is a mix of new and old worlds.

Educational reformers try in vain to persuade him of transparency in the American system, with student transcripts detailing individual module marks.

Yet George clings to the magister-ludisque tradition of degree classes. Nothing gets George's blood racing more than board of examiners' meetings, tussling over the marks of bright young sparks, on the razor's edge between second and third class degrees.

Not that George has no interests outside his department. He is also a royalist who's read every book by Niall Ferguson and David

Starkey. It puts a strain on his marriage, as his wife is a New England Yankee with republican instincts. But that doesn't stop George. He likes to feel part of history.

Somehow George got his section head to arrange BoE meetings around the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. He travelled to London with his kayak for the River Thames Flotilla on 3rd June 2012. With fresh batteries in his radio, he raised the aerial high enough to run Union Jack bunting stem to stern.

BBC posted photos of the Flotilla (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-18314569>). Unfortunately, we don't spot George in them. If you have any news of our diamond geezer, please contact the editor.



GEORge is a sporadic feature making light of time & space

7. NEWS: Geographies of Food and Agriculture Specialty Group (GFASG)



Gina K. Thornburg, doctoral candidate in geography at Kansas State University, has co-founded a new AAG group that overlaps rural RGRG interests. She explains that the food focus of GASFG includes allergies, nutrition and the political economy of food chains. You may also know Thornburg copy edits the *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, and participated in our memorable British, Canadian & American Rural Geographers' meeting based in Spokane, USA, July 15-20, 2007. To learn more about GFASG email: gkt@ksu.edu.

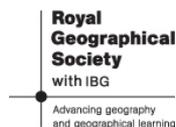
RGRG Newsletter invites your contributions to the Winter 2013 edition!

Deadline 15th November 2012. Please send reports and photos from RGRG linked events anywhere, advice, awards, book reviews, features, fieldwork, jobs, poems, whatever you deem important, to

Editor: bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com



[Http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Research+and+Higher+Education/ResearchGroups/Rural+Geography.htm](http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Research+and+Higher+Education/ResearchGroups/Rural+Geography.htm)



Thanks! to Steven Allan, Web Coordinator at Durham University Geography Dept.

