

STAFF AND STUDENTS

Ian Candy left the Department on the 31st of January to take up a new position in the Geography Department at the University of Loughborough.

Welcome **Mark Stephens** who will be working as a Research Assistant with Jim Rose for 9 months as of 31.1.05. Mark successfully completed his PhD with the Department in September 2004 on the topic of Late Quaternary palaeoenvironments at the Great Cave of Niah, Sarawak, Borneo.

Sean Pyne-O'Donnell successfully defended his PhD thesis. He has three months to complete some minor revisions, and then he will be awarded the PhD. The title of his thesis is 'The factors affecting the distribution and preservation of microtephra particles in Lateglacial lake sediments'. The examiners were Professor Valerie Hall (Queen's University Belfast) and Dr. Viv Jones (UCL). Sean is currently working on a NERC-funded project, investigating the tephrostratigraphy of marine sediment sequences from the North Atlantic sea floor, and is contracted for that work until July, 2005.

David Simon and **Katie Willis** visited Street Child Africa's offices in Thames Ditton on 14 February for a joint supervisory and research strategy meeting with Patrick Shanahan in relation to Ruth Payne's ESRC CASE PhD.

Mary Dengler's on-line discussion forum for the MSc Sustainability and Management core course (GG5300: Principles of Environmental Sustainability) was used as a best-practice example at an Education Development Centre Seminar on Learning and Technology (February 18th). For more information please visit the on-line discussion forum at <http://discussion.rhul.ac.uk/>.

OUTSIDE ENGAGEMENTS

David Simon attended the professorial inaugural lecture by Jonathan Rigg, entitled 'Muddled spaces, juggled lives: rethinking rural development in Southeast Asia' in the Geography Dept., University of Durham, on 23 February.

Tim Unwin was a guest of the FCO at a reception for participants in the G8 and Broader Middle East and North Africa Education Planning Meeting in London on 23rd February.

On Friday February 25th, **Rob Imrie** met up with architects from DH Architects to discuss research plans and to give a seminar paper on 'architects and the codification of their practices'.

Jay Mistry was a guest panelist on Radio 4's Home Planet, aired on the 8th February 2005.

Jay Mistry examined a PhD by Pamela Vass on the 15th February at the Geography Department, King's College, supervised by Dr Mark Mulligan. The thesis was entitled 'Plant diversity and spatial discontinuities of the Albany Centre in the south-eastern Cape, South Africa' and the external examiner was Professor Martin Kent of Plymouth University.

Jay Mistry gave a talk at the Institute of Americas on February 24th entitled 'Indigenous fire management in the cerrado of Brazil: the case of the Krahô of Tocantíns'.

David Simon was the intercollegiate examiner for the MPhil to PhD upgrade viva of Fiona White ('Democracy, civil society and South Africa 's new social movements') at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies on 18 February.

David Simon attended the first working meeting of the RAE 2008 Sub-panel on Geography and Environmental Studies, in London on 25th February.

PUBLICATIONS

Felix Driver, 'Commentary on American empire: Roosevelt's geographer and the prelude to globalisation', *Political Geography*, 24 (2005), 251-55.

VISITORS/MEETINGS IN THE DEPARTMENT

Dr. Alasdair Unwin gave a lecture to the Third Year students doing ICT4D on 17th February focusing on e-Health and in particular on his work with Roll Back Malaria in Kenya and Tanzania.

Tony Bebbington (School of Development and the Environment, Manchester) visited the Department on 21 February and presented the CEDAR Annual Lecture on 'Inside Foreign Aid, revisited: development agencies and their geographical consequences in the Andes and Indonesia'.

Jennifer Blumhof, University of Hertfordshire and LTSN-GEES presented the Department of Geography Seminar on Thursday, 10th February. This was a Workshop on 'personal development planning' and was aimed at Geography staff.

Bronwen Edwards and **David Gilbert**, presented the Department of Geography Seminar on Thursday 24th February. The title of the seminar was 'Planning Piccadilly 1959-1974: Citizens, pedestrians and consumers in London 's West End.

Ailsa Winton, Dept of Geography, Queen Mary, University of London presented the CEDAR Seminar on the 7th of February. The title of her presentation was 'Conflict breeding conflict? State and non-state responses to youth gangs in Central America'.

CONFERENCES-FIELDWORK-OVERSEAS

Ed Derbyshire attended the 'Drylands 2004' conference organized by the BGRG at the Geological Society, London, on 4 February.

Ed Derbyshire worked at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris 7 - 10 February. He attended a meeting of the Management Team of the proposed International Year of Planet Earth on 7th, conferred with the United Kingdom's Ambassador to UNESCO concerning the future role of the IGCP in UNESCO's Science Sector on 8th, was received by Iceland's Ambassador to UNESCO to discuss the International Year on 9th, and attended, by invitation, the final day's meeting of the Scientific Board of the IGCP on 10th.

Rob Imrie organised a seminar with the Coin Street Community Builders for students on GG3052 and the MA in Cultural Geography (Research). The visit to Coin Street (South bank, London) took place on February 25th and included a discussion of the issues relating to urban regeneration of the South Bank and a guided tour of the area.

Jay Mistry carried out training workshops on participatory water monitoring and evaluation in Georgetown and the Rupununi District, Guyana, as part of the Darwin Initiative Sustainable Management of the Rupununi project from the 8th-28th January.

David Simon attended the international workshop on 'Adjudication of land disputes, legal pluralism and the protection of land rights in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire ' at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies on 18 February.

In his role as trustee and management committee member, **David Simon** participated in a 1-day workshop on the crisis for education in Zimbabwe and potential responses by the Canon Collins Educational Trust for Southern Africa, at the Trust's offices in London on 26th February.