

GUEST EDITORIAL

Paul Dalziel

Professor, AERU, Lincoln University, P.O. Box 84, Lincoln University Post Office,
Lincoln 7647, New Zealand.

The 34th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Regional Science Association International (ANZRSAI) was held Rydges on Swanston Melbourne, 7-10 December 2010. At the conference academics, policy advisors and practitioners presented a broad range of research on diverse aspects of regional development. This special issue of the Association's journal contains five of the presented papers, selected from an original list of 23 papers that were submitted to the conference's double-blind refereeing process. The theme of the conference was 'Innovation and Regions: Theory, Practice and Policy'. The papers in this conference issue were selected for the quality of their research and the importance of their research question.

Before the five papers, this special issue begins with the citation read by Tony Sorenson at the Conference Awards Dinner to accompany the presentation of an ANZRSAI Distinguished Service Award to the retiring Editor of *AJRS*, Professor Christine Smith. The ANZRSAI Policy Document allows the Council to grant a Distinguished Service Award to an ANZRSAI member who has served the field of regional science or regional development practice with distinction through either its administration or through a substantial contribution to regional analysis, regional policy formulation, or the practice of regional development. This Award is very rare; since being instituted in 1999/2000, it has been awarded only once, to Tony Sorenson. In 2010, the Council decided to make a second Award and asked Professor Sorenson, to prepare the citation published in this issue. The announcement of the Award was warmly applauded at the dinner.

The first paper in this issue is the opening keynote address delivered by Professor Brian Dabson is Vice President of the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI), Director of the RUPRI Rural Futures Lab, and Research Professor at the Harry S. Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri, Columbia. He is Board Chair of the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and a member of the Community Affairs Advisory Council at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. His paper examines the origins of President Obama's place-based policy initiative in the United States and the implications of this approach to rural America. This provides a framework for emerging thinking in the United States around the idea of "rural regional innovation."

The second paper is a second keynote address delivered by Professor Robert J. Stimson. Professor Stimson was invited to prepare this address in recognition of his being made a Fellow of the Regional Science Association International in 2010, the first Australian scholar to be honoured with this high distinction. Professor Stimson is Director, Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network (AURIN), University of Melbourne and Professor Emeritus at the University of Queensland. He is an analytical human geographer and regional scientist,

specialising in urban and regional analysis, development and planning and research into human spatial behaviour. His paper provides an overview of Australia's changing economic geography over the last two to three decades, highlighting the changing nature of the socio-economic divides that have occurred, and speculating on what might lie ahead.

The third keynote address at the conference was made by Dr Daniel Rutledge is a senior scientist with the Sustainability and Society Team in Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research in Hamilton, New Zealand. His research uses the principles and theories of landscape ecology and complex systems analysis to better understand coupled human-natural systems, develop multi-scale models to explore future scenarios of development, and integrate new knowledge and methods into policy and decision-making, especially related to spatial planning and land-use/cover change. Dr Rutledge was invited to prepare a paper based on his address for this special issue, but had to decline due to other commitments.

The third paper in this issue was the winner of the ANZRS AI Award for Best Conference Paper, which is judged from the papers eligible for publication in the refereed proceedings of the conference. In 2010, the editor of the refereed proceedings selected a short-list of three papers based on two criteria: the significance of the paper for current or prospective regional and urban problems and policy issues; and its analytical merit in contributing to understanding regional or urban structure and change. The three short-listed papers were sent with all identification of authors removed to ANZRS AI Council member, Dr Robyn Eversole. Dr Eversole wrote:

“Of the three papers, there was not a clear standout – each had its strengths and its weaknesses. However, returning to the criterion of a paper that makes an important contribution, I feel that one of the most important contributions that can be made to our field is to learn how to present technical and scientific detail in a clear and coherent fashion. This is a rare skill. I felt that the winner provided us with a carefully guided safari into the intricacies involved in calculating people's locations across time and space – in theory and practice – and some explanation as to why this is important from a policy perspective.”

The ANZRS AI Award for Best Conference Paper 2010 was awarded to Shelby Canterford for her article: “Locating people spatially: 2006, 2010, 2100 and 2:36pm on Friday”. Her paper reports on developments in the National Exposure Information System (NEXIS), which is a significant project being undertaken by Geoscience Australia. In particular, the paper focuses on the population aspects of NEXIS and recent work on estimation methods for the present day over any geographic extent.

In previous conferences, ANZRS AI has offered Academic Thesis Awards, alternating between doctoral and masters theses. It has become more difficult to arrange this competition and to attract a range of entries, and so for 2010 the Council offered an ANZRS AI Award for Best Conference Paper by a Current or Recent Student. To be eligible for this Award the presenter needed to be a current full-time student, or to have graduated since the beginning of 2009. There were eight entries for this award.

Again the editor of the conference's refereed proceedings selected a short-list of three papers, using the same criteria as for the Best Conference Paper Award. The three short-listed papers were sent with all identification of authors removed to ANZRS AI Council member, Ann Hodgkinson. The Council decided that the two short-listed papers not selected as the final award should be highly commended. The Highly Commended Awards for a Conference Paper by a Current or Recent Student, 2010, were awarded to Matthew Campbell-Ellis and Karim Mardaneh.

The ANZRS AI Award for Best Conference Paper by a Current or Recent Student, 2010, was awarded to Ralph McLaughlin for his article: "Metropolitan Growth Policies and New Housing Supply: Evidence from Australia's Capital Cities". This is the fourth paper in this special issue.

The Conference Awards Dinner also announced the winner of the John Dickinson Memorial Award, which was established during 1996 in memory of the John Dickinson and his outstanding contribution to regional science. The winner is determined by the Editor of the *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies*, for the article in the journal published over the previous twelve months that best represents the linkages between the theory, policy and practice of regional development. Professor Christine Smith determined that the recipients of the John Dickinson Memorial Award for 2010 would be A. J. Brown and J. A. Bellamy for their article: "In The Shadow of Federalism: Dilemmas of Institutional Design in Australian Rural and Remote Regional Governance". Their paper appeared in volume 16(2) of the journal.

The final paper in this issue is a paper that attracted more discussion than any other at the conference. It was authored by the first recipient of the ANZRS AI Distinguished Service Award, Professor Tony Sorensen. The title of his paper was "Quantum Dreaming: The Relevance of Quantum Mechanics to Regional Science". The paper aims to explore the application of quantum concepts in geography and economics, an endeavour that has ebbed over the last decade after considerable interest in the last two decades of the twentieth century. In order to do this effectively, it sketches both the general flavour and specific concepts of quantum physics in a very engaging manner.

Before closing this editorial, I should note that the conference took place at the end of a year in which three senior scholars of regional science community passed away. This was acknowledged with a minute's silence at the opening ceremony of the conference in respect to the following three giants of our field.

Professor Walter Isard died in November 2010, just before our conference. Walter was in many ways the father of regional science. At the annual meetings of the Allied Social Science Associations in 1954, Walter organised a conference program of 25 papers; during which 60 scholars endorsed the idea of forming a separate association named the Regional Science Association, with Walter as its first President. Four years later, Walter founded the Regional Science Department at the University of Pennsylvania, as well as the Journal of Regional Science.

In his obituary, David Boyce comments that Walter soon expanded his horizons to Europe and Asia. In 1960, he visited many research centres in

Europe where he organized sections of what is now named the Regional Science Association International. The first European Congress was held in 1961 and sections of the RSAI were subsequently established in many countries throughout Europe and Asia as well as our own Australia and New Zealand section in 1971. The Association now has about 4,500 members worldwide. Walter also founded the Peace Research Society, later renamed the Peace Science Society.

Also in November 2010, Professor Andy Isserman died suddenly after collapsing during a game of basketball. Andy gained his Ph.D. in regional science from the University of Pennsylvania and had a distinguished career in the fields of urban planning and agricultural economics as a professor at the University of Iowa, West Virginia University and the University of Illinois. Walter pioneered methods for analyzing and forecasting economic and demographic change. His activities in regional science were extensive and he was well-known to many ANZRSIAI members.

Shortly after our PRSCO conference, Professor Rod Jensen died in August 2009. Rod was one of the earliest founders of regional science in Australia, and was particularly influential in the development of input-output modelling. He was President of ANZRSIAI from 1983 to 1986. Rod played a leading role in ensuring regional science in Australia was strongly connected with international scholars. In 1990 he was elected President of Regional Science Association International, the first Australian to hold this position. The PRSCO conference last year included two special sessions on input-output modelling in honour of Rod Jensen. During those sessions, many of his former colleagues and students spoke appreciatively of Rod's scientific contributions and leadership.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank the members of ANZRSIAI who were involved in the organising of the conference. I would particularly like to thank Paul Collits, who was the conference convenor and contributed in countless ways before, during and after the conference to ensure it was a success. I am also very grateful to our executive officers, Hazel and Greg Jones, who every year ensure behind the scenes that the conference runs smoothly.