

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Issue 1: January, 2012

Coordinator's Notes

Hello ENVS Alumni!

Welcome to the first edition of the Acadia Environmental Science Newsletter! A lot has happened in ENVS over the past year. Linda Lusby retired in June 2011 after being heart and soul of the program for so many years, we wish her the very best. We are now an accredited program with ECO Canada and our numbers continue to increase with 61 majors in 2011. Since the program's inception 172 students have graduated with degrees in Environmental Science. As you can see from the last page of the newsletter many students are in contact and are doing well in their respective careers and lives.

We strive to maintain the high quality of the program even in the face of current fiscal challenges. Much of the core program has remained the same; however a new course in environmental contaminants was added in 2008. Innovation and flexibility are important components of the program and

we are always interested in your perspective on how we can accomplish this. Consider contributing to our newsletter in the future.

In addition, we are in the process of setting up an Environmental Science Scholarship Fund to help facilitate study and scholarship for future ENVS students at Acadia. When the Fund is established we will let you know and urge you to consider a donation (no amount is too small).

All the best!



*Dr. Ian Spooner—
Coordinator of
Environmental Science
Program*

Prof. Linda Lusby Retires

On 16 June, Linda Lusby was one of a dozen professors recognized at the Annual Summer Assembly, upon the occasion of her retirement from teaching. Linda has taught at Acadia since 1983, and in his remarks about her, Rob Raeside noted she has given over 40 different courses across three faculties, taught all the courses offered in Environmental Science, and worn the greatest variety of shoes in doing so (according to one of her teaching evaluations!)

Linda was our first professor in Environmental Science, upon its establishment in 1995, and was the first chair of the Department of Earth and

Environmental Science, when it formed in 2007. Outside Acadia, she was the first Nova Scotian to chair the Standards Council of Canada, and for a while maintained an office overlooking Parliament in Ottawa, and an office overlooking the back door of Elliott Hall at Acadia, as she commuted almost weekly between Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Linda has nurtured over 170 graduates through the Environmental Science program, has taught over 1500 students in various ENVS courses, and regularly obtains glowing comments about how she has opened students' minds to the impact of the environment, science and society on each other.

We wish Linda all the best in her retirement!



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Special points of interest:

- Prof. Linda Lusby Retires
- ENVS Scholarship Fund
- ENVS program Accredited



*Linda Lusby - Professor of
Environmental Science*

Professor Updates

Nelson O'Driscoll: Nelson was promoted to Associate professor this year and as director for the Center for Analytical Research on the Environment (CARE) many students were trained and several collaborations were strengthened with St. Francis Xavier University, and Memorial University through the shared NSERC CREATE graduate program. Graduate student Samuel Edmonds graduated as did two honours BSc students (Amy Buckland Nicks and Amy Larkin) with theses

Ed Reekie: Ed started the year with a trip to Malaysia to visit two colleagues who work on the ecology and conservation of mangrove forests. These coastal forests are critical for stabilizing sediments, protection against storm surges, and as nursery areas for a wide variety of fish species. They are home to a number of interesting animals including the Malayan water monitor lizard (up to 2 m long!), proboscis monkeys (the males have a huge nose that is supposed to be attractive to

Rob Raeside: Rob continued this year as department head, ensuring classes get taught, money gets spent (or should that be saved?), and students get into (and out of) their courses. He is increasingly involved on the national scene with the Council of Chairs of Earth Science Departments, and authored a paper on student enrolment, retention and job prospect trends at a special session at the AGU meetings in San Francisco (unfortunately he didn't get to go there this time!) he

all examining mercury accumulation in invertebrates and songbirds. Nelson welcomed two new PhD students (Erin Mann and Lili Arsenault) both of whom are examining mercury cycling in the Arctic in collaboration with Mark Mallory at Acadia and researchers at UNB (Karen Kidd) and Memorial University (Susan Ziegler) funded by the Northern Contaminants Program. Nelson also was involved with the Global Mercury Conference which took place in Halifax this past sum-

mer and has a new book on mercury published this Christmas by John Wiley and Sons.

females), hornbills (the old world equivalent of toucans) and archer fish (they shoot water droplets at insects above the surface of the water to knock them down into the water where they can be eaten). In Malaysia, mangrove forests are managed for the production of charcoal. These management practices conserve many of the ecosystem functions provided by these forests, but also significantly reduce the species diversity of these forests. Research in Ed's laboratory focused on two projects this past year. The first examined the effect

of the predicted increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide on plant growth and development. Leanne Easson (BIOL), Sarah Sweet (ENVS) and Marion Sinclair-Waters (BIOL) were involved in this project. The second project examined the impact of fungal endophytes on growth and water use by white spruce and involved two ENVS students, Emily Walker and Victoria Postlethwaite.

has also spent the year as chair of Science Atlantic, formerly APICS, the regional group that oversees many of the student conferences in the Atlantic provinces, as well as other initiatives to ensure networking and collaboration among the universities.

Most of his travels were administrative this year, with trips to Calgary and Ottawa to attend meetings of the heads of Environmental Science programs and Earth Science programs, and to

mer and has a new book on mercury published this Christmas by John Wiley and Sons.



*Dr. Nelson O'Driscoll—
Canada Research
Chair*

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*Dr. Ed Reekie—
Professor of Biology*

Sydney, Moncton and Halifax on behalf of Science Atlantic. He did manage to take a week off in summer to visit Baltimore and Washington and attend the International Congress of Vexillology.



*Dr. Rob Raeside—
Professor of Geology*

Professor Updates

Ian Spooner: Ian Spooner has been working with Hilary White (M.Sc. Geology) and Dewey Dunnington (B.Sc. ENVS) on lake projects in the Amherst-Sackville region. Hilary and Dewey are both investigating environmental change in coastal wetlands using lake sediment records and spent over a month at the Beaubassin Field station in Aulac doing field work. They made a video of the work, you can check out at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrV-kgLokX0>. Dewey presented his research at the Atlantic Universities Geoscience Conference in October

John Murimboh: John returned from sabbatical this fall and is enjoying a return to teaching after a productive year in Ottawa working with researchers at the National Research Council (NRC). John is continuing his work as one of the primary labs for the Atlantic Path Research Initiative. John's work within this research team

The K.C. Irving Environmental Science Centre provides infrastructure support for both faculty and students of Environmental Science at Acadia. This past year ENVS students played key roles in many collaborative and cross disciplinary projects. All the Acadia Farm transplants were started in the research greenhouses, Dewey Dunningham, 2011 played a key role with the farm. Amy Buckland-Nicks, 2011 with the Water Watch Acadia group approached us regarding the use of bottled water on campus. Through their efforts we

and won the best paper award, and he successfully defended his thesis in early December! Ian has also been working with Allison Healy and co-supervisor Dale Hebb (Kentville Agricultural Station) conducting honours research on nutrient loading in small streams in the Thomas Brook watershed near Aylesford, NS. Allison successfully defended her thesis in December.

Ian continues to tackle problems associated with the Bloody Creek Crater south of Bridgetown. He works with Peter Williams (Dean of Science) and Mariella Nalepa

examines the exposure to arsenic to Nova Scotians and its potential as a contributing factor for cancer. John also supervised several undergraduate and graduate student projects this year related to this work. John continues to teach introductory chemistry and environmental analytical chemistry as part of both the environmental

became the first building on campus to ban bottled water. This project was in conjunction with a SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) project involving engineering and business students that will see a revival of water fountains and bottle filling stations on campus. Environmental Science students are great catalysts for change and collaboration...a great combination for both business and research. We took part in the ENVS field school providing some hands on field experience in forestry. Students had the opportunity to see an original Acadian Forest old

(B.Sc. Hons) trying to figure out how such a geometrically pristine crater ended up on the South Mountain. Mariella presented her preliminary research at the AUGC and won best poster award.

This coming summer Ian hopes to head back to northern British Columbia to retrieve some instruments.



*Dr. Ian Spooner—
Professor of Earth &
Environmental Sci-*

science and environmental geoscience programs.



*Dr. John Murim-
boh—Professor of
Chemistry*

growth hemlock forest. Standing among trees 1m in diameter in this part of Canada always spurs lively and appropriate debate. Special thanks to Claire Kellock for taking part in orientation as an Eco-Leader. We were sorry to see Linda retire and hope that she will be replaced soon....may not be that easy.



*Peter Romkey—
Director of Irving
Centre*

Student Happenings

Students Attend AUGC 2011

Ten senior students attended the 61st Atlantic Universities Geoscience Conference, held 20-22 October 2011 in Memorial University, St. John's, NL. After a Meet & Greet session and the CSEG Challenge Bowl on Thursday night (and no doubt a first visit to George St.), the conference participants took part in field trips to various parts of the Avalon Peninsula, including Signal Hill, Bell Island, Flat Rock and (via the core lab) the Jeanne d'Arc Basin. Saturday was the conference proper, with 17 papers and 4 posters presented. Winner of the Poster Award was Mariella Nalepa,

an honours student in Geology at Acadia, for a poster on "Investigation of the form and age of the Bloody Creek Crater, southwestern Nova Scotia", and winner of the APICS (Science Atlantic)-NSERC Award was Dewey Dunnington, honours in Environmental Science, for his paper on "Tracking Late Holocene Environmental Change at Long Lake, New Brunswick-Nova Scotia Border Region, Canada".



Dewey Dunnington and Mariella Nalepa at AUGC conference

"The ENVS program at Acadia gave me a multidisciplinary perspective in addition to a solid background in Geology."

- Dewey Dunningham

Students Attend Impact! Conference

Monica Reed and Kelli Armstrong, two students in Environmental Science, recently attended the 2011 IMPACT sustainability conference in Guelph, Ontario. Monica writes: "The 2011 IMPACT Sustainability Conference was an incredible weekend full of learning, engaging, and connecting. It was an educational and empowering event that I will draw inspiration from throughout the course of my life. The conference metamorphosed my views on sustainability, shedding light which has allowed me to see the feasibility of sustainable societies. I learned about business, and social sustainability, areas I have not focused on much previously. I was also able to share my knowledge pertaining to environmental sustainability, as well as enhance it. The speakers,

academics, and industry professionals contributed hugely to the success of the conference. I would have to say that the most inspiring aspect of the conference was connecting with the other 164 attendees. Gathered together was a group of young people from across Canada who all share my passion for the natural environment and sustainability within our society. Seeing others who are so devoted and successful, each in their own right, was truly lifting. We now have a cross country network of peers which we can all look to for advice, ideas, and inspiration."



Monica Reed and Kelli Armstrong

"The IMPACT! Conference was the most incredible thing I have experienced in my college life"- Kelli Armstrong

Where Are They Now?

I remember it as an oppressively hot day, overcast and humid. We were standing in our driveway on Prospect Street, wired, exhausted and jubilant. As if making it to graduation weren't enough, my two roommates and I had even survived it. We'd parted ways with our friends, said goodbye to our professors, and even fit in one last visit to our favourite Wolfville establishments. The last duffle bag was crammed into the station wagon with the engine running. A chapter of our lives was closed and we were off, wondering in silence what was to fill the overwhelming emptiness that was supposedly our future.

Four years have passed since we pulled out of that driveway, and I can happily say that the future hasn't been so empty after all. On that May afternoon, with Acadia quickly receding in the rearview mirror, I decided it was time to enjoy what I had spent four years studying - rocks, plants, water and ice. Wishing Nova Scotia a fond farewell, I exchanged the salty Atlantic air and endless tidal flats for the towering, snow-clad peaks of the Rockies, and spent the summer living in a log cabin without electricity while serving tea at the Lake Agnes Teahouse in Banff National Park. It was during those months spent at the teahouse that I became addicted to hiking and the mountains and re-confirmed why I chose to study Environmental Science.

Inevitably, the summer days became shorter, the larches grew yellow and my teahouse days came to an end. I left the Rockies for the Coast Mountains and arrived in Vancouver that fall with all my belongings on my back and the desire to apply what I had learned at Acadia. After getting settled, I was fortunate to find a job as a hydrogeologist at Rescan Environmental Services Ltd., an environmental consulting company in downtown Vancouver. Although I expected it to be much more conventional than teahouse living, I found the life of an environmental consultant very exciting. I feel as though I spent more time on the drill rig, flying in helicopters and sampling water at mines all over British Columbia than in Vancouver itself.

Although I enjoyed the challenge and responsibility of my job, I soon missed the academic environ-



Mount Rainier, WA

"I left the Rockies for the Coast Mountains and arrived in Vancouver that fall with all my belongings on my back and the desire to apply what I had learned at Acadia."

ment. In 2009, I started my graduate degree (MSc.) in the Geoscience Department at the University of Calgary under the supervision of Dr. Gerald Osborn. Even though oil and gas is all the rage in Calgary, I decided to follow my interests and study Quaternary Geology. My project focused on constraining the age of latest Pleistocene and Holocene glacier fluctuations at Mount Rainier, mainly by examining lateral moraine stratigraphy and proglacial lake sediments. Rappelling down lateral moraines and coring lakes at Mt. Rainier will remain an unforgettable experience, and I will always be thankful for the lessons learned from some amazing academics along the way. Even though the idea of a third field season on the volcano was certainly enticing, I managed to buckle down and finish my thesis in time for convocation this past November.

After graduation I was hired as a technician in the Geoscience Department at U of C. It has been eye-opening to learn about what happens 'behind the scenes' to make a department run smoothly and I'm even learning a thing or two about petroleum and engineering geology. The position ends this coming summer, and I have decided to explore what northern Canada has to offer and move to Whitehorse, YT. Plans beyond that? Well, I guess I'll have to send an update when I know.

- Mary Samolczyk (class of '07)

E.S.S.O. (Environmental Science Student's Organization)

The last year has been a positive one for E.S.S.O., the Acadia University Environmental Science Student's Organization. We have hosted a number of different events, created a new, permanent logo for the Environmental Science program at Acadia, took a trip to the Morton Centre and much more.

Some of the events this past year have included our annual Relay for Life department team, an open mic night at the University Club, snowshoeing, assassins, a graffiti themed house crawl and some members of E.S.S.O. participated in a hike to Cape Split with the Fletcher Geology Club, as well as many more exciting events.

In late October E.S.S.O. visited the Morton Centre, the department field research station, located near Lunenburg. The trip was a success, introducing new students, as well as reacquainting old ones with the property and the vision of the Morton Centre.



This year the club, with the help of professors and students, designed a permanent logo to be used by E.S.S.O., as well as the Environmental Science program at Acadia. The logo was created to be a symbol for the ENVS program and a way in which people will be able to recognize the program.



ENVS Students at the Morton Centre: Nicole, Dewey, Erin,
Randal and Drake (from left to right)

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PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH

If you have an item of interest, or any news of your activities (or those of your classmates), please let us know. We will try to incorporate as much as possible into future newsletters. Did you write an annual newsletter at Christmas or have a great picture? Send a copy to Dr. Spooner or Dr. O'Driscoll at the Department of Earth and Environmental Science

ian.spooner@acadiau.ca or nelson.odriscoll@acadiau.ca

Random Alumni Updates

Ryan Smith (Class of 2001):

Completed a Master's in renewable resources in Edmonton and then worked as an environmental planner for a couple of years. Completed medicine at the U of Calgary and is now in London, Ontario completing residency in anesthesia

Nina Pindham (Class of 2004):

Worked for Paul Martin and the Liberal Party for some years. Then for the UNDP in India before working as a visiting scholar at Cardiff University's BRASS research centre. Worked as research assistant and Arabic/French translator to Lord Bingham, the former Senior Law Lord. Pursuing a Master's in International Human Rights Law at Oxford.

Adrian Beck-Oliver (Class of 2004):

Moved to Cincinnati interned with outdoor environmental education classes. Since 2005 has been working with The Fund for the Public Interest, a national non-profit organization that runs grassroots campaigns for the Sierra Club, Human Rights Campaigns, Environment America, the State

PIRGs, and Progressive Future.

Erin Dowd (Class of 2002):

Working as a mining technologist making sure that all the upcoming mines are as environmentally friendly as possible. Applying for graduate school.

Scott Lister (Class of 1997):

Worked as a District Manager with NS Environment in Bedford. Is currently working for Conservation Ontario as a Drinking Water Source Protection Technical Specialist.

Jeremy Heath (Class of 1996):

Married to Jennifer and father to Jocelyn Jade (2 years), Jordan (4 years), and Jesse (7 years).

Chris Greene (Class of 2003):

Finished a masters in Spatial Analysis at Ryerson doing database and GIS work with a group called LEAF (Local ENhancement and Appreciation of Forests). Currently pursuing a PhD in the Environmental Applied Science and Management doctoral program at Ryerson.

Andrea Rivers (Class of 2007):

Pursuing a M.Sc. in for-

estry working under a forest / energy/ environmental policy prof doing work with natural resource policy and governance in western Canada.

Justin Dollimont (Class of 1999):

In Fort Mac working with a geotec company called Terracon Geotechnique.

Ngaio Lacey Richards (Class of 1998):

Finished a PhD in wildlife forensics at Anglia Ruskin University, in England.

Tony Pesklevits (Class of 2002):

Living in Smithers, BC. Working for the Integrated Land Management Bureau.

Chris Baird (Class of 1999):

Worked with small environmental consulting firm on Phase I ESAs, as well as Phase IIs, construction. Currently is Technical Director of larger company and is in charge of work concerning the U.S. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Julia Beresford (Class of 2008):

Completed Certified Environmental Practitioner in Training (CEPIT). Environmental Scientist with AD Williams Engineering (Yellowknife).