

## Geo-News

# Distinguished Geographers

This edition of Geo-News is devoted to awards received by distinguished New Zealand geographers. At the Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Geographical Society in September 2004, Brian Lynch and Euan McQueen, prominent members of New Zealand's public service, and former Presidents of the Society, were awarded the 'Distinguished New Zealand Geographer' Medal. They were the first geographers outside the academy and the education system to receive the Society's most prestigious award.

In March 2005 Professor William Clark, Professor of Geography at the University of California, Los Angeles, and an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand, was selected to receive the 2005 Decade of Behaviour Research Award. This award recognizes excellence in the behavioural and social sciences for research that has made an impact on policy contributed significantly to solving social problems.

The citations delivered by Professor Richard Bedford, Honorary Treasurer and member of the New Zealand Geographical Society's Council, are reproduced below, along with some information on the Decade of Behaviour and the contributions made by Professor Clark.

## **Brian John Lynch and Athol Euan McQueen**

Seventeen years ago Brian Lynch and Euan McQueen jointly authored the concluding chapter to a collection of essays commemorating 50 years of geography as a separate university discipline (Holland & Johnston 1987). Their paper, 'Geography in Public Policy: The Changing Role of the State' issued a challenge 'for the trained geographer who, as private citizen or public servant, wants to help influence the country's future through the formulation and management of policy' (Lynch & McQueen 1987: 339). The reforms

of the 1980s had opened up many new opportunities in the transformed state sector environment where 'the skills inherent in the geographer's craft and much of the discipline's present-day content are relevant to policy making' (Lynch & McQueen 1987: 342). In their view, 'geography's diverse and pragmatic character ... permits it to embrace much of the substance of policy making'.

Brian Lynch and Euan McQueen, have been instrumental in making geography as much a part of the natural constituency of the public policy domain as some other disciplines. They have shown by their actions and their arguments how geography can make a substantial contribution to the increasingly complex and sophisticated area of public sector decision-making. It is thus entirely appropriate during the Society's 60th year to award both Brian and Euan the 'Distinguished New Zealand Geographer' Medal – the New Zealand Geographical Society's highest honour – in recognition of their outstanding contribution as geographers to the development of New Zealand.

Let me illustrate a few aspects of this contribution by reference to each of their careers. I will follow the old practice of putting age before beauty and begin with Brian – he completed his Masters degrees in History (1958) and Geography (1962) at the University of Canterbury while Euan, a Victoria graduate, completed his BA in Geography in 1958 and his Diploma in Teaching in 1963. His MA in Geography (also at Victoria) followed in 1966.

### *Brian Lynch*

It is appropriate to begin with Brian Lynch, a graduate of New Zealand's oldest Geography Department at the University of Canterbury where he completed Masters degrees in History (1958) and Geography (1962). After three years of secondary school teaching, Brian joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 1964 where he was successively, Careers and Special Projects

Officer (1969–71), Deputy High Commissioner in Singapore (1971–74), Head of Asian and Pacific Division in Wellington (1974–77), Deputy High Commissioner in London (1977–81) and Assistant Secretary of the Ministry before moving to the Ministry of Transport as Deputy Secretary in 1982.

Reflecting on his experiences in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brian observed: 'Movement, moment, place and people was what it was all about'. He certainly had plenty of movement and was part of some significant moments. Two of the latter while he was Head of the Asian Division at MFA were the building of the first tentative relationship with Beijing and extricating New Zealand from Vietnam (it fell to Brian to send the codeword advising the New Zealand Embassy it was time to pull out). As Head of the Pacific Division from 1976 to 1977, his significant moments were establishing the new Pacific Forum as a going concern, and dealing with the challenges of establishing the new Pacific Forum Line to improve sea transport and trying to make more cost-effective the parlous air links between the scattered small island states and the metropolitan countries on the Pacific rim.

It is not surprising that he moved from Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Transport in 1982 – rationalizing shipping and air transport in increasingly competitive national, regional and international environments was a major challenge facing New Zealand through the 1980s. Brian was Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Transport until 1992 – a decade during which the whole structure of air, rail, road and sea transport was corporatized and eventually privatized as part of the state sector restructuring. The first six years of his term as Deputy Secretary of Transport overlapped with his period as President of the New Zealand Geographical Society. Brian followed Euan in this role and chaired the Society's annual Council meetings between 1982 and 1988. It was during his Presidency that the discipline celebrated its 50th anniversary and the Lynch-McQueen (1987) challenge was issued to geographers to play a greater role in public policy-making.

As both Brian and Euan were demonstrating in their own careers in the field of transport

development (Euan was with New Zealand Railways from 1969 to 1988), geographers had to move beyond a tendency to recommend policy changes. As they stressed, 'the task is unfulfilled if ideas are not put forward on how those changes could be implemented' (Lynch & McQueen 1987: 347). Geographers had to do more than make 'gestures of concern on particular topics'. What was needed was 'well-informed understanding of broad development issues ... through continuity of interest and consistent high performance in the contribution to the policy process' (Lynch & McQueen 1987: 347).

In 1992 Brian embarked on a new phase in a career that has had at its core promoting New Zealand's economic development: he became Chief Executive of the Meat Industry Association, a position he held until 2003. It was for his work in assisting the meat industry to rationalize and adjust to a very different commodity chain in the post-subsidy open market conditions of the 1990s that he was made Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in June 2004. His reflections on the restructuring of the meat industry through to the mid-1990s are contained in an investigation by 70 geographers into the nature and results of the state-led transformation of New Zealand society and economy from 1984 (Le Heron & Pawson 1996; Lynch 1996). Lynch (1996: 142) summed up some developments during this 'period of turbulent change': 'While production levels have been maintained, processing capacity has fallen by 25% and employment by 40% in the past decade. As a result of plant closures and improved operating efficiencies, companies that were once household names have left the industry and been replaced by nearly three times as many, mainly smaller companies. In 1986 eleven processor and exporting companies operated forty-five plants; in late 1994 thirty-two companies operated sixty-one plants.'

While he was Chief Executive of the Meat Industry Association, Brian played a major role in debates about the implications of trade liberalization for New Zealand's food industries. A 'google' search on Brian Lynch reveals reference to many of his speeches, including the one that launched the New Zealand Trade

Liberalization Network in October 2001 – a business-led network dedicated to ‘securing better market access, no subsidies and better trade rules whether for agricultural exports, manufactured products or services’ (Lynch 2001). Brian was the foundation Chairman of the Network; a role he continues to perform. He is also Chairman of the New Zealand Food Industry Foundation and the New Zealand Horticulture Export Authority, is a Senior Adviser and Alternate Member on the New Zealand Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Business Advisory Council, is a member of the New Zealand Institute of Directors, a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Transport and Logistics and, as if he did not have enough to do, was President of the Rotary Club of Wellington between July 2003 and June 2004.

In addition to the roles mentioned above, in 2004 he became Director of the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs where, to use his own words, ‘now in my dotage, a preoccupation is with the influence that exposure to external events has on the moulding of New Zealand’s character and identity’ (Lynch, pers comm. 29 September 2004). If this is what being in one’s dotage is all about, then I am not sure why it is assumed that age brings with it a tendency to slow down. ‘Movement, moment, place and people’ remain what it is all about for Brian Lynch, and he feels that ‘training in the geographers’ craft applies just as much to the miscellany of things he is now engaged in as it has to his careers in Foreign Affairs, transport and the meat industry. It gives me great pleasure therefore, on behalf of the Council of the New Zealand Geographical Society, to award Brian John Lynch, a true practitioner of the geographers’ craft in the public arena, the ‘Distinguished New Zealand Geographer’ medal.

#### *Euan McQueen*

Euan was destined to be a geographer – he was born in Auckland early in 1937, the year that George Jobberns founded geography as a separate discipline at the University of New Zealand’s Canterbury College. His anniversaries thus mirror those of the discipline; as already noted he made a major contribution with Lynch

to the book marking the 50th anniversary. I am sure he will be nobbled for something to mark the 75th anniversary in 2012.

Euan is a Wellington man – he went to school and university there and has spent most of his working life based in the city. He did spend three years on the other side of the Cook Strait: one at the Christchurch Teachers College (Secondary Division) followed by two years as an Assistant Master in Waimate High School (where in his CV notes he was also a school and charter bus driver). However, like Brian, he left teaching after a very short period and moved into the public service, initially in the Department of Industries and Commerce where he spent six months as Personal Assistant to W.B. Sutch. There was then a period of six years lecturing on economic and industrial geography in the Department of Geography at Victoria University between 1963 and 1969. During this time he contributed a regular series of articles on development in New Zealand to *Pacific Viewpoint* – a series that ranged widely over regional issues, changes in the transport system and the massive transformation of rail in New Zealand. Euan’s experiment with a career in academia did not end with his appointment to the staff of New Zealand Railways in 1969. Throughout his career he has maintained a close relationship with Victoria University, especially the Department of Geography, where he offered guest lectures for the best part of 30 years.

The move into Railways in 1969 was perhaps not surprising. In 1966, while on the staff at Victoria University, Euan was a consultant to the then Minister of Railways, the Honourable J.B. Gordon. In 1968 he was co-opted onto the Forestry Development Committee of the National Development Conference, with responsibility for reporting on transport in the development of forest industries. His 19 years with New Zealand Railways covered the period of transition from the ‘old’ state-owned railway system to the New Zealand Railways Corporation in 1984 and the initial preparations for privatization in the late 1980s. I will not try and review the many roles Euan had during his years with Railways: he was a very

prominent 'change agent', moving from an initial position in research and development, through leadership of planning and staff development activities initiated by the Management Services Division of which he was a foundation member, to chairing several committees and panels aiming to develop a cohesive and modern railway system, to authoring the first Strategic Plan for NZR in the early 1980s, negotiating the withdrawal of suburban trains in several parts of the country and, from 1979, being Assistant General Manager for Finance and Administration (later Corporate Services, after restructuring in 1984). In 1988 he took early retirement from NZR at the grand old age of 51 because (in his words) 'as restructuring progressed the job became less demanding'.

Throughout his time with New Zealand Railways, Euan maintained a regular annual lecturing commitment with the Geography Department at Victoria University. And in 1971 he was the first New Zealander to be invited to be Visiting Fellow in the Geography Department at the University of Auckland. Euan spent 11 years on the Royal Society's National Committee for Geography between 1972 and 1983, and was President of the New Zealand Geographical Society between 1975 and 1981. In a highly stimulating Presidential Address to the 10th New Zealand Geography Conference and the 49th Australia and New Zealand Association for the Achievement of Science (ANZAAS) Congress in Auckland in 1979, he observed that the real strength of geography lay 'in its potential to allow development of the art of synthesis to a high degree' (McQueen 1979: 10). He went on to say that 'this ability to synthesize must include the knowledge and appreciation of the skills of other disciplines, and when to bring them into use (by their own practitioners)'. He was not very interested in hearing how geographers could do everything; this required a degree of intellectual humility, and an awareness that there is so much that one does not know that can be provided by people with other training. McQueen's First Law, as articulated in 1979, is that 'the real significant of an individual's statements on any subject varies in inverse proportion to the

square of the number of times his professional discipline is mentioned in the statement' (McQueen 1979: 11).

As a New Zealander who has consciously observed, participated in and discussed the processes of change, growth and development in New Zealand for four decades, Euan is clearly someone who does not like to coast along when the hard yards have been won. Between 1988 and 1991 he was General Manager of the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust that had been set up in 1977 under its own statute to protect open space. Euan's job was to restructure the operations of the Trust and when this was completed he moved on to pursue a wide range of interests through self-employment in railway heritage (Chairman of the Rail Heritage Trust of New Zealand from 1991, university lecturing (Honorary Lecturer at Victoria University, 1990–93) the Chartered Institute of Transport (elected Fellow in 1976 and an active participant through to the present, gaining the Norman Spenser Memorial Award for services to the Institute and the transport industry in 1989), chairing New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) panels considering proposals for university degrees, and acting as a consultant for many years to the Land Transport Safety Authority, Tranz Rail Ltd, and Transit NZ.

Running along side these commitments and activities was continuous representation on local bodies since 1993: the Wellington Regional Council (Councillor, 1993–2001; Appointed Member, Wairarapa & Rural Services Committee, 2001–), the Central Regional Health Authority (1994–98), and the Greater Wellington Health Trust (2001 continuing). Just to fill the odd idle moment in these years of 'movement and moment', Euan wrote two books – the first in 1998 as a tribute to W.W. Stewart, a painter of railway subjects from the 1920s to the 1970s, and the second, currently in press, *Rails in the Hinterland*, an illustrated commentary on the changing railway landscape since the 1950s. As he noted in a typically wry McQueen comment: 'Most of the photos are from my own collection. Hardly a train appears; it is the railway landscape which has always interested me. [The book] should

descend upon a startled public (both my friends) about May next year'.

Key qualities that Euan seeks in the well-trained geographer are outlined in his 1979 Presidential Address. They include 'the ability to listen intelligently, to read widely and critically, to debate with good humour and without arrogance, above all to be intellectually honest, to admit ignorance but to know how to seek and answer; to see ignorance and arrogance in others, and to counsel rather than instruct and bully, and to appreciate that other societies, and groups within one's own society, can legitimately hold different views on the one topic' (McQueen 1979: 11). Euan McQueen certainly possesses these qualities. He has used his training as a geographer to bring realism to decisions about some of the momentous changes in New Zealand's late 20th-century history; he has maintained constant contact with his discipline throughout his careers in railways, heritage trusts, consultancy, and public service on local bodies. He is, without doubt, one of New Zealand's most skilful practitioners in the application of the geographers' craft to helping define the development options for New Zealand's future. It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Council of the New Zealand Geographical Society, to award Athol Euan McQueen the 'Distinguished New Zealand Geographer' medal.

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## Professor William (Bill) Clark, FRSNZ, FAAAS

Professor W.A.V. Clark, currently Professor of Geography and Statistics at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), is one of New Zealand's most distinguished geography graduates. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand, and has recently been the recipient of three very prestigious awards in the United States. These include election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2003), recipient of the 2005 Decade of Behavior Research Award, and election to the National Academy of Sciences (2005).

The Decade of Behavior (2000–2010) is a multidisciplinary initiative that is focusing 'the talents, energy and creativity of the behavioral and social sciences on meeting many of society's most significant challenges' (Decade of Behavior, Washington DC). Behavioral and social scientists are encouraged to bring their research results to the attention of policy makers and politicians with a view to informing the public policy process about the Decade's five major themes:

- improving health
- increasing safety
- improving education
- increasing prosperity
- promoting democracy.

In 2005 the Decade of Behavior Research Award focused on the theme of democracy. Professor Clark's research on urban residential

mobility and change, desegregation, immigration and ethnic diversity has been influential in both behavioral science settings as well as in the policy realm through expert testimony in key US court cases. To be considered for the Award, several of the seventy-five endorsing professional societies and academic affiliates had to recommend candidates. As the recipient of the Award, Professor Clark will be invited to present his research at a congressional briefing on Capital Hill.

Professor Clark is one of the 72 new members elected to the US National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in 2005. Election to the Academy is in recognition of distinguished and continuing achievements in original research and is considered one of the highest honours

that can be accorded a scientist or engineer. The Academy membership is comprised of approximately 1,900 members and 350 foreign associates. The Academy is a private, non-profit, society of distinguished scholars engaged in scientific and engineering research, dedicated to the furtherance of science and technology and to their use for the general welfare.

The New Zealand Geographical Society extends its congratulations to Professor Clark on these outstanding achievements. He is the first New Zealand geographer to be honoured by such prestigious awards.

*Richard Bedford  
Hon Treasurer, NZGS,  
15 April 2005*

### **IGU 2006 BRISBANE 3–7 July, 2006**

The IGU Regional Conference in July 2006 promises to be a landmark event for geographers in the Asia-Pacific region. With its theme “Regional responses to global changes: a view from the antipodes”, it will focus geographical attention on the pressures that complex global-scale processes exert on environmental, social, cultural and economic resources at regional and local scales, with special reference to tropical zones in Australia, southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.

The Brisbane conference is also the occasion of the next joint meeting of the Institute of Australian Geographers and the New Zealand Geographical Society. Planning for a challenging programme of keynote addresses, Commission and Study Group symposia, general paper sessions, excursions and tours is well advanced.

A detailed outline of the conference will be published shortly in the Second Circular. This will be available on the conference website [www.igu2006.org](http://www.igu2006.org) early in August.

Contact points for further information on the conference are:

Chair of the Organising Committee: Professor John Holmes, University of Queensland ([j.holmes@uq.edu.au](mailto:j.holmes@uq.edu.au))

Chair of the Programme Committee: Professor Nigel Tapper, Monash University ([nigel.tapper@arts.monash.edu.au](mailto:nigel.tapper@arts.monash.edu.au))

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Member of the Organising Committee: Professor Richard Bedford, University of Waikato ([rdb@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:rdb@waikato.ac.nz)).