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TGRG: page[1]

The Transport Geography Research Group, which now has almost 160 members, continued throughout 1998 to function as the principal focus of UK transport geography. The year began in January at the RGS/IBG annual conference, held by Kingston University on the Guildford campus of the University of Surrey. Professor Brian Graham (University of Ulster) and Dr Julian Hine (Napier University) convened an all-day session on Mobility, Leisure and Lifestyle. An interesting and wide-ranging array of papers addressed issues including: mobility impairment; mobility and social justice; lifestyle and travel behaviour; mobility and leisure. The intention was not simply to address the perspective of the mobility-rich but also discuss the impacts of mobility impairment on access to goods, services and leisure activities for an extensive array of social groups defined by the axes of differentiation that characterize western societies. The various papers demonstrated the complexity of the issues surrounding mobility, leisure and lifestyle, not least because of the multiplicity of spatial, temporal, socio-economic and political variables involved. They demonstrated, too, that an integrated transport policy should not simply be about modes, but must also address the myriad ways in which transport and mobility impact on issues of social justice and lifestyle. The presentations isolated many of the contradictions and tensions which exist in these processes and contributed significantly to the RGS/IBG Conference theme, 'Changing Places'.

In her Report presented to the Annual General Meeting of the TGRG, also held at Guildford, the Chair, Ms José Smith (University of Salford) urged members to continue using the *Journal of Transport Geography* as a primary outlet for their researchers. She noted that a group of six US and 13 UK transport geographers have been involved in the preparation of the second edition of *Modern Transport Geography*, edited by Dr Brian Hoyle (University of Southampton) and Dr Richard Knowles (University of Salford) and due to be published by Wiley in autumn 1998. The book, the royalties from which will accrue to the TGRG, adopts a thematic approach with chapters on transport policy, control, environment, urban and rural transport, recreation and development. It also covers all the major transport modes, including air transport, freight transfer and multimodal systems. At the AGM, Dr David Halsall (Edge Hill University College) retired as TGRG Newsletter Editor; Ms Smith recorded the Group's gratitude for all his efforts during a three-year tenure of office.

In March 1998, the TGRG held a joint meeting with the Transport Speciality Group of the Association of American Geographers. This was part of the 94th Annual Conference of the Association of American Geographers, held in Boston, Massachusetts. The success of this venture, efficiently co-organized by José Smith and Ron Sheck (University of South Florida), well demonstrated the validity of the TGRG's belief that the dynamics of transport geography can be substantially enhanced by improved international communication and interaction. Ten North American and UK transport geographers contributed papers to two sessions, one concerned with urban transportation and social justice, the other with urban transit and transportation. In addition, TGRG members also participated in an excellent all-day urban transit field trip around Boston, again organized by Ron Scheck with the able support of Keith Ratner (University of Denver). This examined (and participated in) the bus, light rail, heavy rail and streetcar services that provide intermodal linkages throughout the Boston Metropolitan Area. The TGRG is very grateful to both Ron Scheck and José Smith for all their efforts in making this first joint endeavour so successful, and also to the RGS/IBG for its grant towards the travelling expenses of UK participants.

The final meeting of 1998 took place in September at the RGS in London. Following the success of the two Postgraduate Seminars held in 1995 and 1996, it was decided not to organise a further meeting in 1997 as the pool of potential contributors had become somewhat depleted. It proved possible, however, to reinstate this event in 1998; a successful session of four papers on various aspects of transport geography was followed by a workshop and debate on the British Government's 1998 Transport Policy White Paper. Again, the TGRG is grateful to the RGS/IBG for its financial support of this Seminar, while the postgraduate papers have been submitted for the Group's Postgraduate Prize to be awarded at the TGRG AGM in January 1999. That will take place at the University of Leicester RGS/IBG Annual Conference at which the Group is organizing an all-day session on 'Transport Futures', jointly convened by Dr Steven Cassidy and Ms Smith.

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[1] Transport Geography Research Group of the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers.