

# Churchill Chatter

Churchill Fellows Association of South Australia Incorporated

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## Returning Fellow *Lorraine Edmunds*



Luckily I'm not superstitious. Otherwise I might have caught an early flight back to Australia and abandoned my Churchill Fellowship. Within three weeks of arriving in Canada I had been placed in an isolation ward in a southern Alberta hospital where I remained for several days. I had witnessed the awesome spectacle of a low-pressure system that produced several hurricanes, one touching down about 20km from my hospital bed. Then as I arrived in south-eastern Newfoundland, tropical storm Chantelle was rampaging across the Avalon Peninsula, my destination.

As the tempest in my body gradually subsided and States of Emergency gave way to the earliest days of recovery for several Newfoundland communities, I sensed that the next six weeks were going to be unforgettable.

When I left Australia for Newfoundland I knew that I was bound for a province facing serious challenges, that I would meet people for whom adversity was nothing new. I believed that Newfoundland and Labrador had lessons to share particularly about community capacity. I was right.

I visited Newfoundland and Labrador to study how rural communities, devastated by the collapse of the northern cod fishery in 1992, have been able to utilise their natural and cultural heritage as a springboard for recovery through tourism development. Tens of thousands of fishermen and plant workers lost their jobs when the fishery closed. I met with community organizations, regional economic boards, regional tourism associations, federal and provincial parks agencies, heritage interpreters, business-people, travellers and youth. As we talked about the challenges facing my own home community in South Australia's Flinders Ranges it became clear how much common ground we shared. Out-migration of our young people to find work leaving an ageing population behind, shrinking services as the cost of their delivery becomes prohibitive, the reduced capacity of traditional industries like fishing and wool production to sustain regional economies, are all shared challenges. And for both populations, the hope that tourism will provide a more diversified economy and a sustainable future.

I discovered a people of inspirational resilience and legendary hospitality. I learned of innovative programs and policies that were delivering new opportunities for youth, women and displaced fishermen. I saw world-class interpretive facilities and experienced storytelling at its best. I found a province with a Cultural Policy, where artists and artisans, writers and storytellers, musicians and actors are critical components of the tourism industry. I met school children who were running their own businesses, part of the innovative 'Youth Ventures' program that aims to develop a youth entrepreneur culture. I learned of collaborative partnerships between communities, management agencies and research institutions in which cultural and natural places are protected whilst creating new economic opportunities for host communities. I saw inspiring examples of what is possible when local people are provided with training and employment opportunities in fields they could never have imagined they could succeed in. *Continued p 4...*

CONGRATULATIONS  
TO  
DAVID HOBBS  
(2002 Churchill Fellow)

Recently awarded a Fulbright Professional Scholarship.

The aim of David’s Fulbright Scholarship will be to develop and evaluate an effective protocol for delivering optimal Functional Electrical Therapy (FET) for children with cerebral palsy (CP).

Full media release detailing David’s proposed study included

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THANK YOU

To all Fellows who have offered assistance with billeting and to the Fellows that have volunteered their time to assist with the organisation of the Convention.

If you would like to be involved or can accommodate and interstate Fellow please contact Loris Glass— there is still plenty of work to be done!

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COMMITTEE  
POSITIONS

Prior to the next AGM (mid 2008) the committee will be calling for nominations from Fellows to join this lively team. All positions will be appointed at the AGM. Please consider joining the committee.

Positions being vacated by current incumbents include:

- Editor
- Membership Secretary
- General Committee Members

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# Why a National Convention of Churchill Fellows? *Loris Glass*

Why have Churchill Fellows organised themselves into State associations? What are the benefits of remaining connected now that your Fellowship is over? And why ramp it up another notch by organising a national convention? These are questions that visiting Fellows from New Zealand also hope to find answers to by joining with Australian Fellows in Adelaide in October as they currently don’t have such organisations.

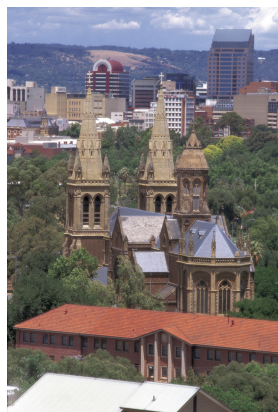
If you’re reading this you are already connected with other Fellows through your state newsletters. The Churchill Associations are alumni that provide the opportunity for you to remain connected to a privileged group of people who have been the recipients of an award that has opened doors and, in many cases, changed lives, either yours or those who benefited from your study. We have all had a wealth of learning through our Fellowship experiences. As a past Fellow you can now welcome new Fellows, celebrate their success, share their stories and learn from their experiences too. We share a desire for excellence, a passion for creativity and innovation and have learnt that *“difficulties mastered are opportunities won”* (Churchill).

The Churchill Fellows Associations also raise funds towards the provision of additional fellowships. The dinners and various activities are opportunities to give back, to connect the past with the future and build a matrix of understanding and support in the community.

But why a national convention? This gives us a bigger stage to promote, celebrate and enjoy the benefits of being a Churchill Fellow. While the program may look somewhat like a typical tourist circuit of all things ‘Adelaidian’, the focus will be uniquely that of Churchill Fellowship learning, past and present. Expect to be surprised at every venue as you hear, feel and see the stories of how Churchill Fellows’ study has changed the landscape of many household names and places.

In the course of a fun weekend we will be continuing the work of promoting Churchill Fellowships to the community and raising funds for future additional fellowships. Holding a national convention provides a perfect media event to promote Churchill Fellowships to the public as well as extended time for networking with each other. The national office has provided very generous support so the weekend activities are all very heavily subsidised; we want to enjoy your company, to share your stories. So far we have a steady flow of Fellows registered — some have attended before and know they’re in for a treat so don’t miss this one too. Share South Australia’s hospitality and be part of the excitement. Make sure you beat the early bird deadline of 1 June!

REGISTER NOW AT [www.churchillfellowssa.org.au](http://www.churchillfellowssa.org.au)



## Editors Desk...

This edition of Churchill Chatter profiles returning Fellows — Lorraine Edmunds and Malcolm McInerney. Both reports are imbued with the passion that is synonymous with returning Fellows! Both Fellows asked me to cut and paste as required but I felt the energy in both reports needed to remain as authored.

Congratulations to David Hobbs (2002 Churchill Fellow) on his award of a 2008 Fulbright Professional Scholarship. We look forward to hearing from David when he returns later in the year.

The planning for the National Convention is going full steam ahead with venues booked, caterers locked in, and registrations now flowing in. Take advantage of the early bird special by registering before 1 June 2008. It promises to be a fun and interesting long weekend.

In March the South Australian Churchill Fellows Association website went live. If you haven't already logged on please do so [www.churchillfellowssa.org.au](http://www.churchillfellowssa.org.au). Our thanks go to Graeme Adcock who has been the driving force behind this.

I have been producing the newsletter and managing the members database since 2004 and while I have a long way to go to match Frank Caspers previous record of 25 years I have decided to step down at the next AGM as other commitments are making it extremely difficult to keep up. I also think the newsletter could do with a refresh and would benefit from new eyes! If you would like to take on either of these roles I would appreciate hearing from you ahead of the AGM. The newsletter is prepared using Microsoft Publisher and the membership database uses Microsoft Access.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

**Rebecca Knol**  
Editor  
([verticordia@bigpond.com](mailto:verticordia@bigpond.com))

## Returning Fellow *Malcolm McInerney*



Rarely does an individual have the opportunity to be totally indulgent and just head off to explore an area of interest with virtually none of the everyday encumbrances of daily life. My 2007 Churchill Fellowship provided the opportunity for me to go to places I wished to visit, talk to people I wanted to talk to about something that has dominated my life over the last decade and most importantly try to find answers to questions of utmost importance to my teaching. In short the Fellowship provided the opportunity for me to totally immerse myself in the world of spatial technology

and teaching at a level I could not possibly do in Australia. Such an indulgence was a wonderful opportunity on a personal and professional level to learn, experience and pander to an area I find fascinating and evolving. As a classroom teacher such an opportunity was something I could only dream about prior to being awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2007. I am very indebted to the Churchill Trust for making it all happen.

My project was to investigate the use of spatial technology in education at the system and school level. The project involved the exploration of materials used and methodologies employed to ensure successful classroom implementation of spatial technology by teachers in Hong Kong, United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

The 6 week trip all went to plan and I met many great teachers, bureaucrats, lecturers and spatial industry personnel, all working towards the same goal; to have spatial technology introduced in a meaningful way into classrooms. For those uninitiated, spatial technology refers to technologies such as geographic information systems, global positioning systems, satellite imagery, flythroughs such as Google Earth and aerial photography which we all use and which impact on us everyday. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century such technologies are at the core of our perception and overall understanding of our living space. From the satellite images on the weather report, to the GPS in the taxi, to the simulated fly through on the news of a bombing raid in Iraq, to the map in a documentary showing the spread of bird flu in Asia, spatial technologies shape our view of the world.

The conundrum for me on my fellowship was the question: why is this all-pervasive technology in our everyday life not showing up in all Australian classrooms? Maybe those overseas have the answer and are doing it already? I would love to report that I found the answer in some part of the world in my travels, but I can't. However what I did find is that we are doing it as good, if not better than elsewhere and the issues we face with the introduction of the technology in schools are the same worldwide. While the affirmation of what we are doing was a positive realisation from the trip, the most valuable outcome is that my travels have helped create a face to face worldwide network of passionate educators in the area of spatial education which will I am sure go towards a common approach to implementation in schools. Emails are good but nothing beats meeting people face to face and sharing a coffee, drink or meal! The other major learning from the trip was the realisation that there is limited research on spatial literacy around the world. Cont p4.

Such knowledge gives those in geographical education in particular a wonderful opportunity to take the ball and run on this very important aspect of education and provide a valid rationale for the use of spatial technology in classrooms.

The Fellowship also gave me the opportunity to promote spatial technology across Australia by developing the spatialworlds blog for my trip. If anyone is interested in reading a day by day account of my fellowship go to: <http://www.spatialworlds.blogspot.com>. The blog has had over 400 hits across Australia by teachers interested in spatial technology and will be an ongoing initiative. On the learning front, new resources were gathered, curriculum development ideas explored, data delivery options investigated and teacher training alternatives discussed. *Continued p4....*

## 2008 Fellows Selection Update

*Christine Morris*

As you are aware applications for Churchill Fellowships close on the last day in February each year. This means that the selection process for the 2008 fellows is currently underway. This year the Churchill Fellows Association has a representative on the selection committee, chaired by Justice Robyn Layton. The process is a rigorous one with all applications sorted into several categories including education, health, industry and arts. The selection committee has experts in each category and they are paired for the initial short listing process. These two members receive all of the applications in their category and assess them individually, meet together for a discussion and then recommend a short list to the whole committee. The whole committee then meet to discuss all short listed candidates from all categories and make a recommendation on who will be offered interviews. In this discussion highly commended candidates are also reviewed again to ensure the committee is well informed about all candidates who may be suitable for interview. Interviews will be conducted at the end of April when South Australian recommendations will be sent to Canberra for the final selection.

As a first time member of the committee I have been very impressed by the rigorous process. The quality of the applications was varied with many excellent proposals and some that were for personal interest. Having read so many applications, I would recommend to any potential applicant that they have a well thought out dissemination process and an ability to implement their knowledge, as well a defined benefit to the community. I have thoroughly enjoyed the process and I am looking forward to the day of interviews and final selection of some excellent Churchill Fellows.

## Returning Fellow

*Malcolm McInerney cont...*

All of these aspects will be incorporated into the planning of spatial technology implementation by the Australian Geography Teachers Association and other geography teacher associations in Australia in the near future.

To conclude my discussion on the fellowship findings, my interviews and visits made it clear that there are only two real impediments to introducing spatial technology into schools.

These are the areas of:

1. Teacher and education authorities exposure to the area of spatial literacy and the use of spatial technology in society in general and the opportunities created by the technology in a vocational and citizenship sense.
2. The area of teacher training in the technology and the associated pedagogies required for successful use in the classroom. In short the key to the implementation of spatial technology in schools is the development of a spatial technology awareness programme amongst teachers, followed by a well constructed and achievable professional development programme. This programme must deal with the teaching methodologies required to use spatial technology in the classroom and in turn must address the issue of 'risk taking' teacher behaviour (the teacher being comfortable at not being the expert but a facilitator of the technology) and the need to develop peer supportive classroom methods of instruction.

On a personal level the highlights of my fellowship beyond the spatial education project were walking across the Brooklyn Bridge in the rain and fog on a lazy Saturday morning in New York, being on Hong Kong Harbour at night, children enjoying Halloween in Toronto, walking through London's Hyde Park early in the morning, the White House in the rain at night and the train to Southampton on a cold and wet London morning. These are but a few of those magical moments one has when traveling and just wandering with no particular purpose. What a luxury and yes, all so spatial. I should map it really!

Remember if you are interested in spatial education in your local school or elsewhere just contact me on my spatialworlds blog at <http://www.spatialworlds.blogspot.com>. As I said in my report, awareness of this field in the general community is one of the greatest impediments to implementation in schools. Every young person studying should be accessing and using spatial technology in their learning.

## Returning Fellow

*Lorraine Edmunds cont...*

I discovered a people informed by adversity but empowered by cooperation and commitment that is now taking them forward as they build a young tourism industry in their wildly beautiful province.

Leaving Newfoundland I shared the first sector of my flight to Vancouver with a cabin of mostly male youth bound for Fort McMurray, the oil sands capital of Alberta. Such is the scale of youth out-migration that special flights have been created to transport young workers from their island home to the mining fields of eastern Canada. I sensed no keen anticipation in the young people around me, instead a ponderous resignation. Hopefully a vibrant tourism industry will go some way to providing Newfoundland youth with choices in the years ahead.

With handsome revenues flowing to both governments from robust oil and mining sectors it makes good sense to invest now in rural and regional development. By investing in road networks and harbours, supporting training programs particularly those that will raise industry standards and lead to increased private sector investment in tourism, and by helping rural communities to develop, protect and celebrate their natural and cultural assets, governments will be investing in the long-term sustainable future of what is set to become the world's largest industry sector by 2020. This is happening in Newfoundland. As a 2006 Churchill Fellow I will continue to advocate for a comparable commitment from my own governments.