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The IDRC Alumni provides opportunities for former IDRC employees to maintain personal and professional links, and supports continuing dialogue on development issues.

Bulletin

No. 56 January 2019

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Thanks to Michèle Wilson for Translation.

Wish to support the IDRC Alumni Association? Contributions can be made annually or over a three-year period:

1 year	\$25
2 years	\$45
3 years	\$65

Cheques payable to the **IDRC Alumni Association**.

Return to: Kim Daley, 452 River Rd, Ottawa, ON. K1V 1E7

Electronic transfer is also possible for Alumni across Canada and in other parts of the world who have Canadian accounts. For details contact Gerald Bourrier <bici@sympatico.ca>

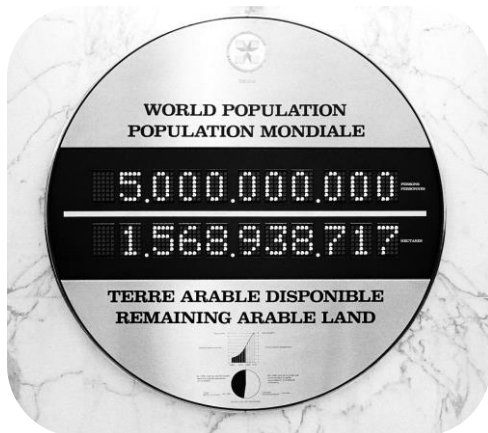
From the Chair

Rob Robertson

Billions Ago

In international development the role of communications is crucial...disseminating results to users, maintaining support from the tax-paying public, raising money from private donors. Communications specialists labour long and hard at creating messages that really sparkle, describing the problems and proposing the solutions.

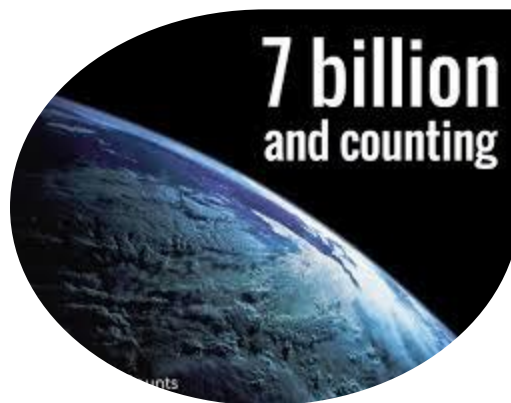
At IDRC one of the most effective messengers took a different form than the usual book or video or web site. The Resources Clock was a big silver circle that constantly recorded the increase in population and the decrease in arable land, ticking away night and day. Affixed to the wall at 250 Albert St. it drew the attention of passing visitors to two of the pressing development concerns of the day, overpopulation and the earth's endangered ability to feed itself.



The clock's biggest day was one Saturday morning when it recorded the arrival of person five billion, with the President of IDRC standing with children under bright TV lights, underlining the future challenge of population growth for kids around the world.

To me the arable land component was less effective. Not everyone knew what a hectare was, and despite their diminishing number it seemed to me that the earth still had a heck of a lot of hectares left.

That Saturday was about 2.6 billion people ago. The earth now adds over 80 million people each year. Sadly, the Resources Clock is not with us to record that growth. Apparently the software was tricky and difficult to maintain. The clock did not make the trek to 150 Kent St. and our colleagues in administration don't know its fate. But sight unseen in a warehouse, or a basement, or an attic is it still trying to tick away the silent warnings that enlightened many a few generations ago?



Celebrating IDRC's 50th

Jean Lebel



The sight of IDRC's 50th anniversary on the horizon in 2020 has us reflecting on the road that brought us to where we are today. No one knows that legacy better than you – the Centre's alumni – and it is my pleasure to connect with you as IDRC approaches this milestone anniversary.

I had the opportunity to work alongside many of you during the 20-plus years I have been with IDRC. Those earlier years feel like just yesterday but somehow represent nearly half of IDRC's history.

Your work for IDRC laid the groundwork for the Centre's commitment to innovative research for development. This commitment is as strong today as ever and driven by the Centre's *Strategic Plan 2015-2020*. This plan focuses IDRC's investment through three strategic objectives: invest in knowledge and innovation for large-scale positive change; build the leaders for today and tomorrow; and be the partner of choice for greater impact.

Stories that demonstrate how the Centre is delivering on these objectives are published regularly at idrc.ca and promoted through social media and IDRC's e-Bulletin. They inspire me and I'm sure they'll inspire you.

The themes, challenges, solutions, and even specific grantees in those stories will likely be familiar to many of you. For instance, we published a story about Tony Muhumuza when he was appointed Uganda's national economist for the United Nations Development Program. His master's and PhD in economics had been supported by IDRC grantee the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), which IDRC helped to found in 1988 and continues to support. Muhumuza told us how his effort to apply economic research to policy was eased when he learned how many other senior colleagues in Uganda are also AERC alumni. It is clear in this example and so many others that the Centre's work is built on decades of experience and learning.

The fact that 2020 marks the 50th anniversary and the launch of IDRC's next strategic plan makes it an opportunity to celebrate what we have accomplished together and to usher in a new era.

IDRC's impact is only possible because its employees are its best asset, and always have been. With a new collective agreement in place – a first for IDRC – the Centre and its employees are well-positioned to perform well through 2020 and beyond.

To say that I am proud to serve as IDRC's president only begins to describe my gratitude for leading an organization with such a proud history and bright future. Having been appointed to a new mandate earlier this year, I am committed to building on the past and planning for the future.

Your involvement in the 50th anniversary is vital towards ensuring that it draws the attention of Canadians and people worldwide to the Centre and the value of development research. Stay tuned for opportunities to get involved.

An invitation: Alumni were there

The organizing committee seeks your input and experience.

- Tell us a powerful story of IDRC's impact.
- Racontez-nous des anecdotes sur vous ou sur d'anciens employés.
- Identify external people who may wish to provide testimonial.
- Prêtez-nous des objets liés à l'histoire du CRDI.

Complete the form today or send an email to
50@idrc.ca

The invitation was on display at the Alumni Luncheon in November 2018.

Two Alumni shared thoughts following the reunion.

"I am so grateful to have been, even in a very small way, part of IDRC's contribution to making AIDS and factors influencing sexual behavior better understood.

The inter-divisional approach of bringing together health science, social science, information science and communication was the inspiration of Richard Wilson I believe.

The IDRC focus on *sexual health* was an important one – in fact I believe that IDRC might have been the first to use that phrase. I remember the amount of discussion that went into how best to phrase the Centre's focus on human sexuality as it pertained to AIDS research. The 'sexual health' niche that IDRC carved out for itself in the struggle against AIDS was pretty unique."



Pat Trites



"In 1989 IDRC organized on behalf of CIDA and WHO the fifth International AIDS Conference in Montreal; IDRC's President, Ivan Head, chaired the event. It was the first conference with a theme: *The Scientific and Social Challenges of AIDS* to underscore the social and economic dimensions of the pandemic in addition to the scientific and clinical aspects. \$2 million from CIDA enabled the participation of researchers, patients and patient groups from the developing regions."

Claude Paul Boivin

In 1989 Canada hosted the fifth International Aids Conference with the theme *The Scientific and Social Challenge of AIDS*. CIDA provided the funding and IDRC the administration under the leadership of Claude-Paul. Ed.

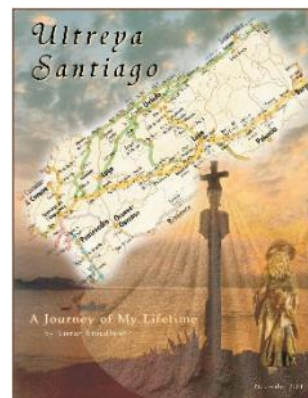
Alumni are invited to use information appended to the Bulletin to nominate projects to celebrate the Centre's 50th.

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Alumni in Print

Kerry Broadbent

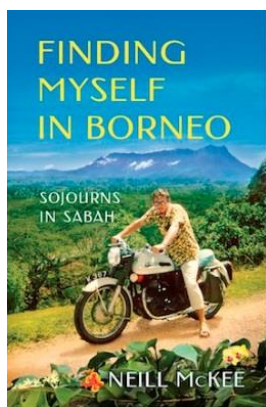
Kerry died in 2015 and is remembered in the [Alumni Bulletin No. 42 March 2015](#). It has come to light that in 2002 Kerry made the pilgrimage, the [Camino](#), and wrote about the experience. Kerry's wife Peggy encouraged him to share the work on the internet. He declined or never got around to it. Peggy has agreed to share [Ultreya Santiago: A journey of My Lifetime](#) with Alumni.



“Acknowledgement: This short account of my pilgrimage along the Camino Frances from Burgos to Santiago de Compostela in the month of September 2001 is dedicated to my family; in particular, Alison-Marie, Andrew Bruce, and Jonathan Patrick, so that when they read it later in their lives they may come to have a greater understanding of their grandfather and what drove him at 65 years of age to fulfil a dream to return to Spain, the scene of happy memories of his youth, and walk 600 odd kilometers to the Shrine of St. James the Apostle. I am particularly indebted to Peggy who not only put up with my obsessive planning and preparation for over a year, but also actually encouraged me to go.”

“Foreword: A star appeared to a hermit in the skies above Galicia sometime in the 8th century. The hermit ‘followed’ the star’s beam and it led to a stone sarcophagus, the contents of which were later determined to be the remains of James the Great, fisherman, son of Zebedee and cousin of Jesus. James was one of the first apostles and later became Patron Saint of Spain. The field of the star – Compostela, as it became known – developed into the third main Christian site of pilgrimage, after Jerusalem and Rome. Pilgrims flock along several paths or ‘caminos’ from different parts of Europe. The most popular route and the one described here is the Camino Frances, or French route, which begins in either Vezelay or Le Puy, crosses into Spain over the Pyrennees, and over the high plains and mountain ranges of Northern Spain before reaching Santiago de Compostela, or St. James in the Field of the Star”.

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Neill McKee



Finding Myself in Borneo: Sojourns in Sabah

“An honest and buoyant chronicle of a young Canadian man’s adventures during 1968-70, while teaching secondary school as a CUSO volunteer in Sabah, Malaysia (North Borneo). Travel with Neill McKee on his unique journey through vibrant Asian cultures as he learns the craft of teaching, the Malay language and local customs, and gains many friends in his small community. He climbs the highest peak in Southeast Asia—Mount Kinabalu, has a love affair, and navigates Borneo’s backwaters to make his first of many documentary films... McKee travels by freighter to Indonesia, where he discovers the scars of that country’s recent genocide, a contrast to his hilarious motorcycle journeys in Sabah with his American Peace Corps buddy. They make a hallucinogenic discovery—North Borneo is, indeed, J. R. R. Tolkien’s famed Middle-Earth of *The Lord of the Rings*! The enterprising duo establish the North Borneo Frodo Society, an organization Tolkien joins. McKee's second Sabah

sojourn and other return trips offer the reader the opportunity to match the early anecdotes to what in fact happened to the land and people who touched his life, and he theirs”.

I love it. It has so many qualities that the usual memoir lacks. Neill McKee is honest about himself, not in any way self-absorbed, but he shares his opinions with attractive openness...

—Clyde Sanger, Author and Journalist, Ottawa, Canada

Neill McKee joins a rare band who dare to write about what they brought to volunteering and, realized much later in life, what they received, learned and cherish...That McKee was able to return to Sabah a number of times after his volunteer years, offers the opportunity to match the anecdotes to what in fact happened to the people who touched his life, and he theirs. That is an opportunity and courage I envy. —Christopher Smart, Returned CUSO volunteer, Ottawa, Canada

To buy the book click on [Neill's author website](#).

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Rachel DesRosiers Alumni Award

This year the **Rachel DesRosiers Alumni Award** will be a partnership with LACRO who will cooperate with [Grupo Sofía](#), researchers in Peru working to draw attention to gender issues in the social sciences to promote greater participation of women in knowledge production and dissemination, debate and policy making.



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The David and Ruth Hopper and Ramesh and Pilar Bhatia Canada Fund



The Institute for Philippine Culture at the Ateneo de Manila University (Manila, Philippines) has [announced the first two fellows of the Field Research Fellowship](#) program supported by the David and Ruth Hopper and Ramesh and Pilar Bhatia Canada Fund.

John Toribio, a graduate student in the MA Communication program, hopes to contribute to localized research, the development and improvement of communication studies in his locality, and advocate for

social change and media literacy. His thesis will explore the links between media, youth, and violence.

Justine Torres, a graduate student in the MA Anthropology program, specializes in environmental law and policy, and sustainable development. Her thesis will use anthropological perspectives to study the histories and relationships of humans and animals in the Anthropocene epoch.

The Geoffrey Oldham Memorial Scholarships



To date, £110,000 has been raised enabling 11 Oldham scholarships. Students with the first four awards began their Masters at the University of Sussex in October 2018.

Mr. Junaid Ahmed Noor, Pakistan, MS Marisa Yamamoto, Japan, Mrs. Aida Baizura Binti Mohd Nor, Malaysia, are enrolled for [Sustainable Development MSc](#); and Mr. Rodrigo Ignacio Balbontin Miranda, from Chile, studying [Science & Technology Policy MSc](#)



A thought from Aida....

"The Scholarship has enabled me to pursue my academic interest and my personal ambitions to transform the governance of my country [...] I am forever indebted to the Scholarship Committee for the opportunity given for me to study in the field that was so close to Professor Oldham's heart."

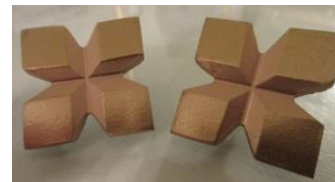
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Gallery



Photos from the Alumni Luncheon 2018 are available on the IDRC [Alumni Facebook](#) page or [here](#).

Memorabilia: Pauline found this collection of mementos. Are there more out there to share?



IN MEMORIAM



Aida Du Bois
1954-2018

Aida worked at IDRC from 1999 to 2013. Her positions included Program Assistant in the Programs Branch, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Communications, Secretariat Coordinator in the Communications Division and Grant Administrator.

Aida passed away in September 2018 following a courageous battle with a debilitating illness. A full obituary is found [here](#).

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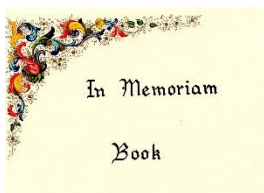


Francine Dumas (née Bélanger)
1949-2018

Francine Bélanger (née Dumas) passed away suddenly on 9 November 2018. Francine was at the Centre from 1976 to 1993, for the most part in the Library and the Information Sciences Division, at different times with Ronald Archer, Shahid Akhtar, John Woolston, and Jean de Chantal. After working as a Secretary and Executive Secretary, she was promoted to Operations Assistant. She left the Centre for the Ministry of Justice, keeping in touch for several years with friends in the Division. Francine is remembered as a professional and dedicated individual, discrete, efficient and poised. On the personal side she was a pleasant, helpful, even-tempered and very private woman. She will be missed.

Former colleagues and friends

The IN MEMORIAM book on line



The [Alumni In Memoriam Book](#) is found on the [IDRC Alumni Website](#).

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Bulletin Archive on Line



Past issues of the [IDRC Alumni Bulletin](#), from the first edition in January 2003, are available on the [IDRC Alumni website](#). Bulletins for 1 to 26 are either English or French. From 27-39 they are bilingual and from 40 on, either English or French.

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*Don't be shy? Join IDRC Alumni on Facebook:
at "IDRC Alumni" group and / or "IDRC" page.*



<https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/556623107712593/>

What are IDRC's top 50 stories? Help us decide for the Centre's 50th anniversary.



IDRC will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2020. One way the Centre will mark the occasion is by highlighting the most memorable and compelling successes that have defined it since 1970. These stories about the Centre's impact in the world will be presented online and/or in a commemorative coffee table book.

As IDRC alumni, we're calling on you to help us identify the 50 most important, exciting, and profound stories that emphasize the Centre's critical role and value in Canada's efforts to improve lives around the world. In a few lines, tell us which people, projects, and results best represent IDRC's achievements and milestones since 1970.

Please submit your ideas using the [Survey Monkey link](#) by **February 28, 2019**.

We value all of your ideas, but note that given the volume of submissions we expect to receive, not every story will be selected as a 50th anniversary highlight.

The story selection committee can be reached at 50@idrc.ca.

Thank you for helping to make IDRC's 50th anniversary truly memorable,

Joanne Charette, Vice-President Corporate Strategy and Communications; Liane Cerminara, Senior editor; and Chris Mason, Senior writer