

## Editorial: Thank You, Gordon Hodgson!

What could be a more appropriate topic for an editorial than an editor? This month, after four years of dedicated and extremely creative service, Dr. Gordon Hodgson steps down as academic editor of *Arctic* and *Information North*. His tenure in this position has been notable in many ways and caps a career in government service and academic life that has touched hundreds of graduate students and aspiring *Arctic* authors. As an innovative research chemist, space scientist, director of the Kananaskis Centre for Environmental Research, Presbyterian Church elder and activist and career counsellor to scores of friends, Gordon Hodgson has touched the lives of many with his Socratic philosophy and his devastating wit.

At the Arctic Institute Gordon has worked long hours (after retiring from his teaching and research duties because he wanted more time for his personal writing, photography, antique car restoration and volunteer activities!) to carry on the magnificent tradition of the journal *Arctic*. During his editorship the journal became more broadly multidisciplinary, began to carry a masthead editorial and carried on and expanded the scope of special dedicated issues. Volume 40, Supplement 1, 1987 — the so-called Baffin Island Oil Spill (BIOS) issue — is today widely held to be the state-of-the-art publication on arctic oil spill containment and cleanup. Its 279 pages make it one of the largest *Arctics* in 41 years of publication, and its recent use in helping with the Prince William Sound oil spill illustrates its relevance to government and industry. The scope of the BIOS issue, its meticulous review and its practical contribution to the world of work are tributes to Gordon Hodgson's editorial style and capability.

Lest we thought the BIOS issue would be achievement enough for special issues during his tenure, Gordon Hodgson also initiated the production of the Fortieth Anniversary Special Issue in December 1987. This *Arctic* has now found its way into numerous political science and northern studies classrooms as a textbook and continues to outsell all other back numbers. Its reminiscences by past executive directors, its "Forty Years of Northern Science" summary papers by distinguished northern scientists, and its guest editorial by Thomas Berger will retain their relevance for many years to come with a diverse readership. But perhaps the most interesting article in the Fortieth Anniversary Special Issue is tucked away on pages 321-345 and is co-authored by Roman Harrison and Gordon Hodgson. Entitled "Forty Years of *Arctic*: The Journal of the Arctic Institute of North America," this paper (which, of course, was peer reviewed, in the appropriate *Arctic* manner) enabled Gordon Hodgson and his graduate student summer assistant Roman Harrison to present an encyclopedic content analysis of the journal for its readers. The special issue also includes a comprehensive key word cumulative index and a northern chronology for the years 1947-87 (in which he surreptitiously managed to

insert my birthdate, much to the enjoyment of my mother, who telephoned from Vancouver to ask why this detail was included as a significant northern event!).

More recently Gordon Hodgson has edited the first volume of the new Komatik Series, entitled *Gathering Strength*, by Dr. Frances Abele. Once again in this venture, our editor's deft hand and the joint efforts of his publications colleagues have moved the Institute's publications forward to find a broader audience and to serve the northern public as well as the predominantly southern-based northern scientific community. Preliminary sales and gratis distribution of *Gathering Strength* have indicated the wisdom of this approach and have led us quickly to the consideration of Komatik number 2.



Gordon Hodgson contemplating retirement.

In the trenchant editorials appearing over his by-line, Gordon Hodgson has written his thoughts on arctic sovereignty, the need for a Nobel prize for arctic socio-economic studies, the desirability of creating a circumpolar university and a comprehensive northern on-line library system capable of text retrieval and delivery. All of these editorial opinions have struck cords in the readership, leading to an unprecedented volume of letters to the editor. Some of his readers have thought that he overstepped his role as an academic editor, and some have heartily cheered him on in his quest for rethinking old dilemmas. Whatever the response, *Arctic's* readers have come to expect the editorial airing of complex northern issues, and the editorial page will continue under the leadership of our new editor, Dr. Karen McCullough. This in itself is perhaps the most fitting tribute to Gordon's efforts on our behalf. As a creative force resident

at the Arctic Institute over the past four years, Gordon's favourite legacy, I suspect, will be that editorial page!

Dr. Karen McCullough, a 12-year subscriber to *Arctic*, a distinguished arctic archaeologist (and author of *The Ruin Islanders, Early Thule Pioneers in the Eastern High Arctic* [1989]), research associate of this Institute and recent editorial assistant to Gordon Hodgson and Ona Stonkus, takes over the editorial tasks armed with Gordon's enthusiasm and concept of academic service to the broader public. Gordon, for his part, has not really retired — we now welcome him as an honorary research associate and look forward to his ongoing presence in our Calgary offices. I suspect we may

even look forward to occasional letters to the new editor of *Arctic*!

Many thanks, Gordon, from the board of directors of the Institute, from all of the researchers whose careers you have touched over the years, and from your colleagues here at the Arctic Institute of North America.

*M.P. Robinson*  
*Executive Director*  
*Arctic Institute of North America*  
*Adjunct Associate Professor*