

## Good-bye

Outside my 11th floor office window in the MacKimmie Library Tower at the University of Calgary, a broad Chinook arch is shaping up on the western horizon. Soon a warm wind will blow down across the prairie and sweep away the vestiges of cold air that arrived with Hallowe'en night last Sunday. Once again Calgary will switch from the onset of winter to a delayed Indian summer, causing the predictable melt of snow and ice and the rehangings of winter coats and hats. Ebb and flow; comings and goings; time for a change. Me too. After 14 years as executive director of AINA, I shall be moving on at year's end to become the president and chief executive officer of the Glenbow Institute, Calgary's own museum, archives, library, and art gallery. From the Arctic to the great Canadian plains I will move my energy, focus, and mind. But I will not forget all the lessons learned, and I will endeavour to apply them close to home for all their worth and benefit.

The North has given me friendships, beauty, clarity, scholarly breadth, an egalitarian commitment to participatory methodology, humour, and above all a sense of purpose rooted not in personal gain, but in service. From Fort McPherson, Inuvik, Kluane Lake, Yellowknife, Iqaluit, Rovaniemi, Lovozero, Jona, and Murmansk I have learned the essential skills of my craft. As a writer on participatory action research, co-management, the legal duty of consultation, cultural land use and occupancy mapping, and NGO management, I have shared the wisdom of others, pushed (kindly, I hope) for social change, and tried to leave clear tracks for others to follow.

At the Institute's 54th anniversary celebrations on 1 October 1999, 150 friends gathered in Calgary to welcome the third millennium and to reflect on the past achievements of AINA. Collectively we remembered our founders and McGill in Montreal, our research agenda shifts in the 1950s and 1960s, the move to Calgary, the connection to a new, young university, and our growth to re-embrace circumpolar scholarship. As I looked out on the crowd of students, faculty, board members, staff, research associates, corporate sponsors, and friends, I felt the spirit of all those who had gone before, and the energy of those yet to arrive. We were and are all united in the cause of geographically oriented interdisciplinarity, the love of polar knowledge, and the joy of its communication. We have managed to publish *Arctic* for 52 years; our database ASTIS has over 46,000 citations stored online; both of our field stations are still active after 30 years of use; scores of students are enrolled in our Northern Planning and Development Theme School; and Professional Services keeps on developing new community clients. Thirty-six research associates conduct their work under our auspices. How many other Canadian NGOs can claim this record or collective sense of purpose? We are truly building on the shoulders of giants, and no one is more conscious of this than I am.

So, dear readers of *Arctic*, our select audience of 1800 individuals and libraries, I leave you with this message: share this news with peers and colleagues. The Arctic Institute of North America's future depends on maintaining the growth of its subscriber base, database users, community and corporate clients, undergraduate and graduate students, field station principal investigators and field school instructors, and friends. We can never take this support for granted; we know we have to work hard and well to maintain it. This we believe we do; this also we know we have done.

In the future I hope that Canada finds the national will to create a polar science policy. In the absence of such a policy, we are destined for more piecemeal solutions to polar research issues, and to incomplete attention to circumpolar and bipolar responsibilities. In a world ever more global in outlook, and electronically connected in communication pathways, we must also acknowledge that knowledge has been broadly democratized. E-mail flows daily from Aklavik to points east, west, and south, and fax transmission is possible to the Russian Sami's national office in Murmansk. In such a world, national northern research policies must exist. In Finland, the U.K., and the U.S.A. they do. They give order to the e-discourse and form to research in the office and on the land. It is time for Canada to follow suit.

I bid the *Arctic* readership good-bye, and thank you for your support of AINA during my tenure at the helm. May the next executive director have as much challenge and as much fun.

*Mike Robinson*  
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