HINFormation

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are now well into our summer term and there is lots of activity around the School. This newsletter has been delayed to bring you information about the surprise international colloquium we held to honour Jochen Moehr who is retiring on June 30th after 19 years at UVic.

Colleagues and friends from around the world joined us on June 3rd and 4th to pay homage to Jochen Moehr the scientist, teacher, mentor, colleague and friend. The full program is available on our website along with the abstracts from the various sessions.   The international field of health informaticians was well represented by well-known names and friends. Dr. Edward Shortliffe presented a very interesting keynote reflecting upon successes as well as barriers that have been encountered in health information science from an American perspective. Dr. Reinhold Haux presented a second keynote address looking at these issues from a European perspective.

Other well-known colleagues who flew into Victoria to attend included Karl-Ernst Biebler, Hartmut Dickhaus, and Otto Rienhoff (Germany); Christian Kaijser (Sweden); Arie Hasman (The Netherlands); Stephen Kay, Nick Gaunt and Jean Roberts (UK); Vimla Patel, Yuri Quintana and Randy Miller along with many others (USA). Many HINF alumni were in attendance including Toby Walrod ('97) and Tim d'Estrube ('02) who came all the way from Japan and UK respectively to attend. Perhaps most amazing of all, we were able to keep the entire event a secret from Jochen, until the moment he walked into the conference room and figured out what we had been working on over the past year! Thank you Jochen for all that you have done for the School of Health Information Science!

Our faculty is increasing on July 1st. Elizabeth Borycki will join us as an Assistant Professor for two years and will be teaching HINF 230, 280 and 461. Scott Macdonald will join us as an Associate Professor with tenure. Dr. Macdonald will also be the Assistant Director of the Centre for Addictions Research of BC at the University of Victoria. The addition of these faculty should enhance our program in preparation for the changes and updates in the curriculum which will be in place in September.

I hope you have a good summer and I am looking forward to an exciting new academic year coming up!

Andre Kushniruk

Jochen Moehr 1985 – 1995
by Denis Protti

On January 28, 1982, I mailed a letter to a dozen or so medical informatics leaders from around the world – people who I had either met in the 70's or who had published papers about the role of computer technology in medicine and health care. Many of you will recognize their names: Homer Warner, Scotty Pratt, Don Lindberg, Morris Collen, Octo Barnett, Ted Shortliffe, Peter Reichertz, John Anderson, Francois Gremy, David Shires, Roger Cote and others. I asked them all for advice on our proposed curriculum for a 4-year undergraduate degree in Health Information Science.

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One of those "others" was Dr. Jochen Moehr, head of the Medical Informatics program at the University of Heidelberg and Heilbronn in Germany – a program which he had created in the late 1970's.

I still have a copy of the 5-page letter he wrote to me on February 19 which arrived on my desk on March 2, 1982. It was by far the most detailed, helpful and thoughtful response I received. It was the start of something great.

His letter triggered an immediate response from me and we began corresponding on a regular basis. Needless to say, Jochen Moehr significantly influenced my thinking about what it meant to develop an academic program in the newly emerging field of Health Informatics. Though we had yet to meet, Jochen's mark was on the curriculum document which the Senate of the University approved in January 1983.

In the fall of 1984, I went to meet this Jochen Moehr in person in Heidelberg. He picked me up in Geneva where I was attending a WHO meeting and gave me my first taste of a German autobahn. I recall stopping in Bern on the way from Geneva so that he could search out a few bookstores to see if he could find any old hunting books

Upon my return to Canada, we continued to communicate but now by e-mail. I recall Jochen saying a few years later that we would not have been able to work out the details of his coming if we had not had e-mail – a small piece of evidence that relates to the theme of our Colloquium!

In the summer of 1985, Jochen was invited to Victoria. We wined and dined him and showed him around. We called on friends like Ken Thornton to take him to lunch to the Faculty Club to convince him this was a good place to both work and live. He gave a number of seminars which were superb. His command of the English language impressed everyone.

In December 1985, My wife and I went back to Heidelberg to 'sell' Jochen and his family and encourage them to come to Canada. We were warmly received and hosted; we promised to treat them as well if they decided to come.

When he committed to join us in 1986, Jochen was the first good news story we had to tell after surviving the very serious economic pressures facing our School in the mid 1980s.

We hired Jochen at a time when there was a strong "Canadians first policy" at the University. We had to build a case that there was no Canadian who could match his skills, experience and knowledge. It was not a hard job – his impressive record spoke for itself. Jochen was attracted by the newness of our opportunity and vibrancy of the team we had. He was particularly impressed with the co-op education aspects of our program. It was not hard to convince the Dean and University Vice-President Academic that he was the man for us.

Having Jochen with me here gave me the strength and courage to face my German colleagues such as Otto, Reinhold, Jupp, who were cross with me for stealing him away from Germany. Nonetheless they remained valued colleagues.

Jochen dove into our School's development and curriculum with passion and zest. He took on 3 difficult courses in our curriculum; course he alone could teach – we had no else around to cover the subjects he taught.

Jochen was a strong supporter of the School retreats we held 2-3 times a year – often in his home where we ate the finest of German sausage and bread and drank good German beer; on occasion we were treated to Schnapps. He established the tradition that if a retreat or party was to be held in our home, he insisted that we have baked beans on the menu – a tradition which still stands to this day.

I will never forget his passionate arguments that we change the name of the School to Medical Informatics. I recall in a similarly vivid way, his concurrence with the majority view that it was too early to change the School's name and his strong support

of the group's decision. It was but one of many indications of his dedication to the School and not to himself – a characteristic I have always admired in him. We did not agree on everything but we never let it get in the way of our visions and our friendship.

Jochen has always been much more established in the international community than I was. As a result, he was very instrumental in our hosting an IMIA working conference on Education in 1989. There were over 300 attendees from around the world. It was in its day and is still considered one of the largest gatherings outside of the tri-annual MEDINFOs. Don Lindberg who was President of IMIA at the time referred to it as a Mini Medinfo. The model we used has since been replicated a number of times by other IMIA working groups.

In the early 1990's we came very close to seeing Jochen being awarded a prestigious NRC chair which would have freed him up to devote his time to research. It failed only because of the comments of one reviewer who said Jochen was not known in Canada. Well, we sit here with living proof that such a comment most definitely would not be the case today. There is probably no other HI/MI researcher better known across the academic community in Canada than Jochen Moehr. The many representatives here today from other Canadian universities will be an ever lasting tribute to the impact that Jochen has had in the research community in this country. He should be proud of what he has accomplished in bringing our research communities together.

Jochen has always been a strong supporter of international learning and regularly encouraged our students to go study in Germany and elsewhere – often facilitating and helping them find opportunities. In return he has attracted many students from Germany to come and study here in Victoria – in fact one is here today.

Jochen has always been an ardent supporter of graduate studies and the richness that graduate students bring

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to a department. He was the first to take advantage of the University's "Graduate Degree by Special Arrangement". He has been our most productive generator of graduate students. He supervised our first PhD and has seen two other PhDs graduate. He has supervised eight Masters level students and has five in the pipeline right now – most of them here with us today.

I can say without hesitation that the success of our School has a great deal to do with Jochen Moehr. We were indeed blessed when he agreed to join us 20 years ago.

In closing, my wife and I have come to know Jochen not only as an outstanding scientist but also as a dear and cherished friend. From the many visits with our families to EXPO '86 in Vancouver to the special Chinese fish dish with his father here in Victoria, we have shared many happy moments with him in our homes, in opera houses, in restaurants and on hiking trails. Thank you for coming into our lives Jochen.

Denis Protti

Jochen Moehr the Scientist – 1995-2005

by Andre Kushniruk

The period between 1995 and 2005 was an extremely productive and important period for Jochen Moehr. This was the time period in which I first came to know Jochen, initially in 1995 through his work in setting up and supporting the health informatics arm of the pan-Canadian research collaboratory HEALNet (Health Evidence Application and Linkage Network). It was through this network that many of us in this room working in health informatics in different areas of Canada came to know of each other's work, and began to be influenced by Jochen, and as a consequence a wave of serious collaborations were initiated across the country, many of which still continue today. Jochen's role in HEALNet was instrumental in that he spearheaded the health informatics side of HEALNet and worked both

diligently and relentlessly to make sure that health informatics flourished in this cross-country research collaboration and in Canada in general (a collaboration which involved universities, hospitals and healthcare organizations from coast to coast). Jochen served in a number of scientific roles within HEALNet, including as theme leader for health informatics1995-1998, leader of the Information Retrieval and Synthesis Tools group from 1998-2002 and also within HEALNet, he served as cochair of the Canadian Health Informatics\Research Agenda Initiative. All of us were impressed by his enthusiasm and dedication to making sure health informatics was properly represented in Canada, and it is now clear that without his leadership during this critical period, the health informatics scene in Canada would not be what it is today. Jochen was supportive of both theoretical and applied health informatics research which laid the foundation for a considerable amount of subsequent research and collaborations, including my own.

From my first recollections of Jochen in 1995 I was most impressed by his ability to think deeply and soundly about complex health care problems and also by the leadership he provided to all of us who were working in the area. Jochen was supportive of new ideas, extremely supportive of his and others' graduate students and was instrumental in initiating and supporting a wide range of collaborations across the country that were beginning to emerge at that time. In particular, Jochen was always supportive of new and innovative approaches to health informatics, especially through his work related to areas including healthcare information system design and evaluation. Jochen co-edited (with Vimla Patel) a seminal International Journal of Medical Informatics special issue devoted to key projects in HEALNet. His paper "Evaluation: salvation or nemesis of medical informatics?" which appeared in a special issue of Computers in Biology and Medicine, represents

much of the work he was involved with during this period through HEALNet and related projects and shows the insight and clarity of thought he possesses which helped guide health informatics in Canada during the 1990's. Through his work in evaluation, Jochen argued for an eclectic approach to evaluation in health informatics, pointing out its essential importance and role for furthering and advancing the field of health informatics as a science through consideration of both process and outcome in assessing impact of systems. During this period Jochen continued to contribute to provide a strong influence in the area of research in health information education, publishing a variety of articles in this area and synthesizing his knowledge and wisdom in this area that grew from his earlier experiences in Germany and Canada in helping to set up the School of Health Information Science in the 1980's.

Throughout the past ten years Jochen also continued to participate in and provide key leadership to a variety of international efforts in health informatics, through his work in the International Health Evaluation Association, and his work through all the major international health informatics associations, including IMIA and AMIA. Jochen's interest in supporting new and innovative approaches in health informatics also extended from evaluation of health information systems to study and application of use of new collaborative learning technologies that began to appear in the 1990's. Throughout his teaching career, Jochen has been at the forefront of adopting and successfully applying new computer-based approaches to supporting education in health informatics, as evidenced by his innovative approaches to teaching a range of courses here at the University of Victoria. Jochen has also been willing to share his interests, knowledge and excitement for our field through numerous national and international presentations and through his support of collaborations in health informatics. One presentation

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that comes to mind when I think of Jochen was a presentation he gave describing the results of his work in evaluation of the BC Telehealth program. This body of work also exemplifies the approach to evaluation that Jochen conjures up in my mind when I think of him (including the images of Jochen and Chris as they traveled throughout British Columbia on this year-long venture, which took them to remote areas of Canada and eventually overseas to put their BC work in context). While many others were attempting to deploy telehealth applications in seemingly haphazard ways, Jochen applied his typical scientific rigor and approach to identifying what approaches actually worked in the real world of telehealth in northern areas of Canada. This work also exemplified Jochen's unique ability to think deeply about highly relevant scientific problems as well as to considering important social problems from both a deeply principled theoretical perspective as well as a highly pragmatic manner at the same time.

Jochen's contributions over the past ten years have been substantial and highly influential, as evidenced by his numerous well-cited publications and presentations and innovative research projects. His leadership during this period is well known to all in health informatics in Canada, as well as outside of this country, and he has been admired by many of us who came to know him during this period. To this day Jochen remains a devoted scholar and mentor to many of us. I was particularly happy to be able to come to the University of Victoria and work and learn from him. I look forward to continuing to work with him, through our joint interests and passion for health informatics in the coming years as he assumes his role of Professor Emeritus in the School of Health Information Science.

Andre Kushniruk

STUDENTS

Congratulations to Shannon Gibson, this year's recipient of the COACH Founding President's Award.

Medical School After HINF

I left the Health Information Science (HINF) Program to enter medical school this past September. It has been a whirlwind adventure and one that I truly feel that the HINF program has prepared me well for. One of our classes in medical school is called Doctor Patient and Society where we learn about health law, medical ethics, community, & the structure of the Canadian Healthcare System. I feel very fortunate to have had my exposures in HINF because I believe they allow me to contribute thoughts and ideas from Co-op experiences as well as from HINF classroom discussions that my medical school classmates appreciate.

Medical School has been a difficult yet extremely rewarding experience. Since starting I have had the opportunity to take part in delivering a baby and I work with a family physician once a week where I see his patients and work on my interview and physical examination skills. Medicine has been a long time dream of mine and my experiences in HINF helped me reaffirm my desire to become a doctor. My goal is to mesh both of my backgrounds in the lifelong practice of medicine. I see myself pioneering health informatics initiatives by being a part of working groups and in quality improvement initiatives throughout my career. I see the immense value in responsible technology to achieve better patient satisfaction and health outcomes.

Currently the UBC medical program has three sites. One in Vancouver, one in Prince George and one here in Victoria. Video conferencing allows us to remain one class with three geographical locations. Health Informatics has made this a reality. We currently use the BC Health telecommunications network to learn

everyday. Technology is very much a part of training new physicians in this province and it is amazing to be a part of this.

Before attending UVic I did a degree at McGill. Throughout my educational career I have had the fortune to attend three Universities including UBC. I feel that the quality of education that I received at UVic was top notch. The two years that I spent in Victoria allowed me to develop into the student and person that I am today. I recently made a trip to Victoria and it was such nostalgia when I set eyes on the campus & the UVic bunnies. I am attempting the ambitious goal of completing my HINF degree concurrently while in medical school. Regardless of the outcome, I am grateful to be / have been a student of Health Information Science at UVic.

Jamila Madhani

June Convocation

June 10 saw Monica Balicki, Alicia Brazier, Victoria Brown, Gloria Chao, Vincent Chung, Tristan Davis, Cori Durando, Silvia Fazekas, Fraser Hacking, Shaina Hood, Jane Kong, Natalie Kroschinsky, Sarah Lupton, Katie Mackle, Lisa McKay, Jamil Merchant, Teresa Rafter, Eduardo Rotenberg, Megan Stepushyn, and Amber Wenstob join the ranks of our alumni. Congratulations and good luck to all of you.

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A HINFer's Tour of the Health Informatics Conference Circuit

In May of 2004 the COACH eHealth conference was held in Victoria and, along with most of the students in my cohort, I was a volunteer. Over the course of the past year I have had the opportunity to participate in several conferences as a member of conference staff, a student volunteer, and an attendee. During my final co-op I was part of the Infostructure Standards team at CIHI and assisted in the organization and planning for the HL7 and Partnership for Health Information Standards conferences. These two conferences were held consecutively over a week in Montreal. In February, Julia Claridge, a fellow HINF student, and I volunteered for the HIMSS Annual Conference in Dallas, Texas. Finally, after completing my exams in April I returned to Toronto and volunteered for both the HL7 and Partnership conferences again, and then attended the eHealth conference. In total, I have spent 27 days at seven conferences in 4 cities over the past year!

Health informatics conferences are an amazing forum for professionals and experts to come together and share experiences and provide unique perspectives on the field. I have found it interesting to hear the same general themes of clinician engagement, ensuring interoperability through standards, and the need for upper-level management support emerging again and again. These conferences have shown me that the health informatics community in Canada is relatively small, and there is an overwhelming atmosphere of collaboration and support among the group. It is also amazing to see the number of people who have also graduated from the HINF program and the immediate camaraderie among HINFers!

Attending the HIMSS conference in Dallas was an amazing experience. Julia and I attended the conference as student volunteers and were provided accommodations, meals, and admission to the conference. In exchange, we spent about a half of each day working at the tote bag booth distributing conference materials to the attendees, and were free to attend sessions and tour the exhibit floor the rest of our day. The conference itself was unbelievable, there were over 23,000 attendees and 700 exhibitors, and the convention centre was over a mile long. Julia and I attended a special student session where CIOs from major US hospitals spoke about how to succeed in the field, we met with vendors from a myriad of companies on the exhibit floor, and listened to Dr. David Brailer, the US National Health Information Technology Coordinator, speak about America's plan to implement an EHR. Many of the most memorable moments in Dallas did not occur in the convention centre though. Each evening we attended vendor-sponsored events and we quickly learned that health information professionals know how to have a good time! In the true spirit of Dallas, Julia and I did some line dancing, watched a shooting contest in a bar, saw a Tanya Tucker concert, rode a mechanical bull, and probably had a few too many shots of tequila!

The Canadian conferences also provided many unique experiences. It was incredible to attend sessions by both UHN and CIHI where work that I had completed as a co-op student was being presented. I was also amazed when Richard Alvarez recognized me from one of Denis Protti's classes and chatted with me about my future plans. I attended the CHIMA working group meeting as a note-taker and by the end of the day I was actively involved in the discussion and have since agreed to do some volunteer work for the organization. At the Partnership conference I had dinner with several executives from Canada Health Infoway who readily answered my questions about their vision for an EHR. I even had the opportunity to create a poster presentation based on a paper I had written for HINF 410 and presented it at the eHealth conference. It was exhilarating as a student to speak with many of the major players in the field and have them show sincere interest my thoughts and future career. Attending these conferences has allowed me to become part of the health informatics community and provided me with so many unique experiences that do not exist in the classroom or on co-op.

I would strongly encourage current HINF students to volunteer at health informatics conferences. For more information on how to become involved with any of the conferences I have been a part of feel free to email me at **katiemackle@hotmail.com**.

Katie Mackle

ALUMNI

There is another addition to the Watkins household. Isabelle Grace Watkins was born 5/5/05 in Plano, Texas. Isabelle's big sister Jessica is very excited, and is helping her mother by changing diapers and comforting Isabelle when she cries. I am still working at Capital One ("what's in your wallet"), but have moved into a new role as the program manager of software development in the western region. I am also in the midst of completing my MBA at Southern Methodist University, focusing on strategy and finance. My new toolset has come in real handy in the last year as I have been heavily involved in the acquisition of Hibernia Bank and two other finance companies. I hope that everyone from the class of 97 is doing well.

Scott Watkins

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Hello all,

I have been working in London again since July '04 for a management consulting firm 'Quo Vadis', who specialise in Health Informatics. Currently, we are doing a lot of work with the National Program for Information Technology (NPfIT) as well as private heath care clients in Sweden, who is part of the NHS GC4 contract to reduce waiting lists in the UK.

Hope everyone is doing well, and I hope to be in touch in the future!

Kindest regards,

Jeanette Carlson ('04)

Congratulations

Congratulations to Heather (Davies) MacBeth ('97) on her March 6th wedding.

******

Shelley Browne (Sadgrove '98) had a 7lb. 5oz. baby boy on March 30th, named Evan.

Bits and Bites…

Goldie Luong ('03) is now the Manager, Information and Business Systems Home and Community Care, Vancouver Island Health Authority

*****

Helen Ryan ('00) is working for Providence Health Care.

*****

Mei Yeung (Yu '98), is currently working with Ross Mattingly ('97) as an analyst on the Radiology Inform-ation System at Vancouver General Hospital.

*****

Jiahui Yao ('04) has moved to a new position as a Decision Support Analyst with Decision Support Services, Fraser Health Authority starting April 1st

*****

Xu Zhang '04) just started a 6-month contract job as a System Analyst with the Interior Health Authority based in Kelowna.

******

Kathleen Sun ('01) has accepted a position with Deloitte Strategy & Operations/ Health IT practice starting in late June.

She will be working with Irene Podolak on a clinical transformation project in Winnipeg Monday - Thursday, and continue to live in Vancouver the other three days.

******

Jeremy Smith ('99) has accepted a new role as a Partner at Sierra Systems here in Victoria.

Turning 30 – Let's Party!

Jeremy Smith and Kathleen Sun (shown above) celebrated their 30th birthdays together on February 5, 2005 with a big birthday bash at Lucy Mae Brown in Vancouver.

Amongst the 75 guests included HINF alumni Andy French (who also celebrated his 29th birthday), Jordana Dodeck, Phu Vu, Susie Van der Valk, Vanessa Lafaille, Amanda Sinclair, Crystal Janicki, Adrienne Cousins, Kevin Lonergan, Carole Chow, Aman Nurmohamed and Elisa McIntosh. Thanks to all those who travelled from Calgary, Edmonton and Victoria to attend! For a look at some pictures from the party check out:

http://hinf.ca/gallery/30Birthday

Jeremy Smith B.Sc. ('99 HINF) has been selected to receive the 2005 Distinguished Alumni Award in the category of Lifetime Achievement

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Carolyn Green and Marie Campbell presented "Reading the Board Quality Report: Who knows how?" at the Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign May 6th.

*****

Craig Kuziemsky and Francis Lau's paper 'A Grounded Theory Guided Approach to Palliative Care Systems Design' was accepted for publication in a special edition of International Journal of Medical Informatics. The special edition is revised papers that were originally presented at the Information Technology in Health Care: Socio-technical Approaches conference in Portland last September. The paper was co-authored with Drs Fraser Black and Michael Downing of Victoria Hospice Society.

*****

Morgan Price has announced his engagement to Angie Bull. A date for the nuptials has not been set.

CIHR

The CIHR Health Informatics PhD/Postdoc Strategic Training Program (CHPSTP) held their third annual workshop in Halifax, NS, May 25 – 27. During the three days, trainees and mentors had the opportunity to discuss their research, meet in their mini-cohort groups (focus on knowledge management, e-health or primary care informatics), and connect with practitioners and industry representatives. Information about the CHPSTP can be found at: **http://web.his.uvic.ca/chpstp** .

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COURSE UNION

The Student Union would like to congratulate the recent graduates on their successful achievements. We look forward to hearing about your endeavours so keep in touch! We would also like to wish all the first-time co-ops good luck on their work terms! Be sure to keep us posted on your experiences via your online weblogs.

The spring semester saw another successful pub crawl take place, a bowling "meet and greet." A big thanks to everyone who participated in and helped to organize the events. We've also helped the summer students start classes on the right note by equipping them with a locker and Frisbee to keep everyone relaxed between classes, and have held a BBQ bash to welcome everyone. Plans are already in the works for a superhero party, rooftop volleyball, camping trip, tubing, road rally, and more!

Be sure to check back into the Student Union website, HINF.com, and the Student Union Board from time to time. We'll be expanding the scope of the site and the resources it offers over the summer. As always, pictures from the latest gatherings and information about upcoming student union events can be found there.

The HINF Student Union would love to hear from anyone who wants to help out and volunteer for exciting events that build student alliances. Anyone is welcome to participate in the Student Union social events, as it's a great way to meet other students in a non-academic setting, and to get to know your fellow HINFers better! Get in touch with Ramina, Gavin, Greg, or Ken on campus if you have any questions.

Have a great summer!

Ramina Dhillon & Marc Huot

FACULTY

Former HINF 330 instructor, Gail Poole reports, "Last summer I organized and hosted the first extended family reunion in Richmond for descendants of my Polish great-grandparents. People attended from across Canada, from Massachusetts, Missouri, Minnesota, California and Oregon.

"In September, I took a 1-month locum post in Cambridge, England at Addenbrookes Hospital in my old profession as a speech pathologist. I followed this with 3 weeks of travel in England. This spring I have accepted a 1-month locum in Belfast at the Ulster District Hospital, after which I will travel within Ireland.

" T'is a grand way to see the country and meet the people.

"Thank you again for providing the opportunity to work with your students."

Gail Poole

Papers and Presentations

Adjunct Assistant Professor and HINF alumnus, Jim McDaniel, presented a paper about the South Caucasus Health Information Project at the IEEE Wireless Communications & Networking Conference (WCNC) in New Orleans on Thursday, March 17.

The paper is entitled: "Implementing a Wireless Application in a Developing Country" authored by J.G. McDaniel and E. Slawecki. For further information - http://www.ieee-wcnc.org

The South Caucasus Health Information Project (SCHIP), which was funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and managed by the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH), began in September, 2001 and finished in June, 2005. The aim of the project was to strengthen health reform in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia through the appropriate application of health information

technology and information management strategies. SCHIP focused on the development of long-term, sustainable tools for health reform, including the development of a computerized health information system (HIS). Jim and former HINF director, Paul Fisher, have been working on this project for the last three years.

For more details about the project, see http://www.csih.org/what/schip/schip.html

*****

Adjunct Assistant Professor Rob Tornack was in Singapore May 25 – 27, presenting a case study "*Defining E-Governance Structures for an EDRM Project in the Public Healthcare System*" at the Electronic Document and Records Management for the Public Sector: Improving the Effectiveness of Public Administration Through Managing Change, Relationships, Communication & Culture In-line with EDRM and E-Government Initiatives conference.

*****

Francis Lau has had the following papers accepted: .

• Lau F, Protti D and Coward P. "A Review of Information Management Practices in Health Ministries." To appear in June 2005 issue of *Health Care Management FORUM*.

• Pai H and Lau F. "Web-based Electronic Information Systems for Prostate Cancer Patients." To appear in summer 2005 issue of *Canadian Journal of Urology*

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Elizabeth Borycki

The School of Health Information Science is pleased to announce the appointment of Elizabeth Borycki for a two-year term faculty position commencing July 1st 2005.

Elizabeth Borycki will be an Assistant Professor in the School of Health Information Science. Elizabeth's background is varied. She has worked in both the private and public sectors. In the public sector, Elizabeth has worked as a Clinical Nurse Specialist and Short Term Emergency Program Coordinator. As a Clinical Nurse Specialist Elizabeth implemented provincial guidelines for the assessment and management of pressure ulcers across four facilities for the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. Because of her work in this area she was later invited to participate in an expert panel at the provincial panel where she contributed to the development of a *Toolkit for Implementing Best Practice Guidelines* that has received national and international recognition. Prior to implementing best practice guidelines Elizabeth was a Short Term Emergency Program Coordinator at Seven Oaks General Hospital where she evaluated the emergency services of the organization. In the private sector Elizabeth worked as a Disease Management Specialist in the pharmaceutical industry where she developed a comprehensive, evidence based disease management program. The program was implemented and evaluated in a seven site randomized clinical control trial and subsequently led to the publication of a textbook entitled *Comprehensive Management of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease*. More recently, Elizabeth has worked as a Health Information Specialist at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto where she participated in requirements gathering, testing, implementation and evaluation of health information systems aimed at supporting clinician practice and decision-making and for Saint Elizabeth's Health Care as a consultant, developing content for an online educational program for health professionals.

Presently, Elizabeth's main research interests include: Clinical Informatics, Organizational Informatics, Disease Management Informatics, Knowledge Translation and Organizational Change, Geroinformatics and Patient Safety in health care. She is conducting a range of innovative studies examining the impact of computerized patient record design and implementation on health professionals work. This has included an examination of the organizational impact of such systems. She has also been a key investigator on a series of influential studies examining the impact of information technologies on introduction of error in health care in conjunction with collaborators in the Division of Clinical Informatics at Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York.
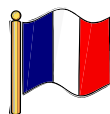
In summary much of Elizabeth's work has involved developing, testing, implementing and evaluating electronic technologies and health care programs, guidelines, educational programs and patient records.

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John Horne has been appointed Adjunct Professor in the School of Health Information Science where he has spent the last year on sabbatical from his post as Chief Operating Officer, Health Sciences Centre, and Professor, Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Manitoba.

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On July 12th we will be saying goodbye to Pierre LeBeux who has spent the last six months with us on sabbatical from France.

Serendipity and Health Informatics . . . Looking Back

Should I? Is this really a good idea? Some people strongly encourage me to! So be it.

Looking back on the eve of retirement, a few encounters in my professional life really stand out, such as my first meeting with a Xerox machine. It happened in October 1965, on the xth floor in Presbyterian St. Luke's Hospital in Chicago, where I had just started post doctoral research. What a marvel it was! Able to spit out a picture of whatever was placed on top of it, every 20 seconds or so! And what a change from the way I had come to know literature research in the preceding four years while working on my doctoral dissertation in Marburg!

Marburg is a venerable university not far from Frankfurt, founded as the first protestant university, by one Philip the Magnanimous, Landgrave of Hesse, in 1527 during the life time of Martin Luther. The town of slate covered wood frame buildings (the one I initially lived in dated from 1609 and collapsed in the seventies) is assembled around a hill, topped by a castle. The university is scattered throughout the town and its environs.

Here, literature study had involved biking over steep cobble stone roads to the University Library for perusal of the National Library of Medicine's Index Medicus: two to four thick, heavy volumes for each year and one for each month of the current year, all of which had to be shared amongst those eager to use them. Once articles of potential interest had been identified, it was usually a matter of mounting the bike again and heading somewhere else across town in order to get to the libraries of one of the 20 to 30 medical institutes or hospitals that housed the journal containing the article. There one could – if one was lucky – read the article and make a few notes for further perusal in one's research. My dissertation, produced at the end of four years' work, sports 42

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pertinent references – a feat that was considered commendable at the time.

That Xerox machine in Chicago changed all of this. It took a lot of the tedium out of literature study and even made it fun. After two years I went home with hundreds of copies of cherished articles.

By comparison, my first encounters with computers – real honest to goodness "electronic brains" that is – were far less impressive. The first such encounter must have been around 1962. The University of Marburg had been donated a Zuse Z22. That was a machine produced by the German Computer pioneer Konrad Zuse. It was a "2nd generation" computer the production of which had started in 1957. It filled an entire room, and its 600 vacuum tubes not only produced substantial heat, but they also tended to hum with the frequency of the cycles executed. Programming was done in machine specific code; input was effected via a punched tape; and the main storage medium was a magnetic drum.

So, here it was, the machine of the new age. With a few fellow students, I took a week's course in machine language programming. We basically gave up after this brief exposure. The instructors told us they were working on a new approach: creation of something called assembly language, which would make it possible to program using words! They also made the machine hum a popular students' song glorifying Marburg. We went home, shaking our heads.

This was not the end, however. A year later, I ran into problems interpreting some experimental results of my doctoral research in clinical chemistry. With the help of my supervisors, Drs. Ellen and Fritz W. Schmidt, we obtained help from a mathematician at Bayer AG, who not only had access to a computer but also knew how to use it. Dr. Dettmer cracked the problem of finding coefficients for some processes we had observed through some iterative calculations and generated the values we needed for interpretation of our

results. The value of computers became instantly more tangible.

I continued, however, to do most calculations for my dissertation using a slide rule. My parents had invested in a good one. It cost at least DM 50 – in those days probably $15 US! It had a wonderful smell of new, expensive plastic, and one only rarely had trouble with the slide getting stuck. I continued to use this device in Chicago for my clinical chemistry research until I was given a mechanical calculator that was able to not only do additions and subtractions, but by an intricate mechanism of successive additions and subtractions, could actually do multiplications and divisions! To do a t-test involving two sets of, say twenty results, took a mere 1½ hours! But that was only the first pass. One had to do it twice in a row, in case an error had crept in during data entry – and if the results differed, you had to do it a third time. That's five hours for a single t-test!

In those days I also took a course in statistics and in Fortran – but the gap between Fortran and the solution of my calculation challenges in clinical chemistry was too large, and the overall work load – small wonder – too heavy to employ the computer appropriately. Only when I was back in Germany in 1968, continuing to work with the Schmidts at a brand new Medical School in Hanover, and with a new system, was I able to take the next step. I was able to convince the Schmidts to acquire a new wonder, the 'Olivetti Programma 101', a computer the size of a type writer! This beauty cost only a little over $3,000 US – probably around 12,000 units of the German currency – and had essentially the functionality of today's programmable scientific calculators – minus any pre-programmed statistical or other functions. With its help, it was possible to reduce the time it took to calculate simple statistics to the time it took to enter the data. I shortly became the computer nerd in residence. But more than that, it showed that mere mortals could actually use such a device to advantage! And that certainly whet my appetite for more.

Shortly thereafter, in 1969, I was drafted to mandatory military service – from my perspective a totally unnecessary exercise which included 4 weeks of basic training and 2 months service (during which I had to produce 360 bona fide doctors' signatures every 4 days on documents over the content of which I had no control whatsoever – an act disgustingly reminiscent of forced perjury.) The task, however, was usually accomplished in 20 to 40 minutes, and the upside of it was that it afforded me time to pursue computing. Without the maligned military service, I might never have found the self composure to break out of the gruelling clinical work routine of a resident being at work or on call for 36 out of every 48 hours.

At this time, Dr. Peter Reichertz took up a position at Hanover Medical School as the first Professor and Director of a Medical Informatics unit in Germany. He offered a course in PL/1 which I promptly enrolled in. Through Peter, I was for the first time exposed to non-numerical applications of computers. His programming examples were built around patient demographics, patient registries, etc. This was enough to illustrate that there was really a vast, an as yet unfathomable potential to this new field, and I decided to join him in his new department in 1970.

I tell this story not only in the hope of being mildly entertaining, but also to illustrate what degree of admiration people such as Dr. Morris Collen deserve, people, who not only grasped the potential of computers some two decades before my 1970 conversion, and without benefiting from mentors pointing them in the new direction, but who also immediately proceeded to build lasting structures on these principles, employing the new technology.

I also tell it to show how spoilt or blessed we are nowadays, depending on one's perspective. We can access literature from our home environment or anywhere else, any time we choose. We not only have a choice of multiple packages for doing sophisticated cal-

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culations, but also for data gathering, and, perhaps most importantly, for the design and construction of programs and systems, for their management and evaluation.

Given how easy most of these tasks are nowadays, should we not at least invest enough diligence and intelligence, to use these methods in the most appropriate ways, such as not calculating the means and standard deviations of nominal variables? Should we not at least invest the time to make sure our literature searches are complete and produce a valid and trustworthy basis for our work? Should we not at least try to build on the existing program libraries and extend their usefulness with our work?

What followed for me after 1970, was a decade devoted to defining and getting a grasp of this new field, which we called 'Medical Informatics' (in English) from the beginning. A tour of the US in the fall of 1970 provided me with an overview of the state of the art from encounters with many of the great US leaders in the field. This tour left a lasting admiration for our pioneers and served as an invaluable orientation for priorities in our subsequent work: systems analysis, systems engineering and the development of application independent informatics tools.

In parallel, we seriously pursued the definition of educational programs for this new field. These education programs were a reflection of the contributing paradigms of the day, i.e., medicine and computer science conjoined in such a way that the specific needs of medicine were met by systems that were usable, useful and used in medicine. Systems engineering, biomedical engineering and medicine were strong elements.

I understand others may address my transition from Hanover to Heidelberg, to heading a dedicated educational program for Medical Informatics there, and subsequently to the University of Victoria. It may be worth mentioning however, that after having worked for 1½ decades in and on the German paradigm of Medical

Informatics education and teaching, I felt ready for something new. And it was Professor Denis Protti, who provided a glimpse of a new slant to the then old theme.

Denis had come from a more business-oriented, administrative perspective, and had developed an educational program with a strong component and emphasis on communication and interpersonal interaction. I readily saw the value of this orientation and admired the ways in which Denis embarked on incorporating it into the new program in Victoria, and thus decided to join him.

That was in 1986. Since then, almost two decades have passed. Recently, our program here has undergone another transformation. A renewed, young and spirited faculty is ready to realize this and carry the torch to new horizons. The work of Dr. Francis Lau and Dr. Andre Kushniruk particularly lets me look with high anticipation towards the future. And to all my colleagues, those who are here already and those who will hopefully join the School of Health Information Science in the near future, I extend my best wishes for every success.

In summary, I look back with gratitude and thanks to all the many people who have provided inspiration, guidance and challenges – the mentors and colleagues in Marburg, Chicago and Hanover, faculty colleagues and staff in Heidelberg, Heilbronn and Victoria, and the many students, in particular my graduate students, who often provided solutions, where I had mere inklings and ideas. We university teachers are blessed with intelligent, motivated and critical students, and we should cherish every moment of it. But I am also sure that the field of Health Informatics is in good hands at the School of Health Information Science in Victoria, and in Canada in general, and so I contently look forward to retirement, confident that if not foresight, serendipity will pitch in to lead us to success.

Jochen Moehr

Jochen's Entry to Surprise Colloquium……..

Testimonials

The two day surprise colloquium culminated in a gala dinner at the Ocean Pointe Resort where Jochen was regaled with stories and testimonials from various people and was presented with a Festschrift (a collection of writings published in honour of a scholar).

Here is a sample of some of the testimonials……………

"Along with others, I look upon you, Jochen, as a model professional and professor. In addition to being an inspiring teacher and mentor, you are a busy writer and author, having made many seminal contributions to medical informatics."

Morris Collen

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"I have great memories of being at Chris and Jochen's home with Japanese visitors at an IHEA Victoria conference for a most memorable evening. I can witness here also the genuine warmth of the fellowship, the particular epicurean hospitality and the bonhomie which will surely continue to grace Health Informatics socially and professionally."

Andrew Grant

"As the discipline of health informatics keeps apace with rapid developments of technologies and organizations, knowledges and methodologies, your passion for the whole smorgasbord keeps your perspective flexible and fresh. It is an inspiration."

Carolyn Green

"As the formal date of such retirement approaches, I want to express my sincerest appreciation for the consistently scholarly and top professional collaboration and liaison I had with you over the years – as a member of the numerous and internationally scattered committees and groups that brought us together – often to collaborate on delivering a professional end-product, or to reach a consensus in a scientific and professional argument before some action could follow. Your clarity of thinking, knowledge, hard work and fairness, have always characterised you. I always admired that in you, and will miss that."

Salah Mandil

"Jochen was one of the most inspiring and influential professors I had during my university education and he will be sorely missed. His expertise, enthusiasm and support have guided my education and development as a professional significantly. I feel most fortunate to have been taught by one of the leading experts in health informatics field. In particular, I continue to regularly utilize principles from his Quality Improvement class to complete my current projects. Jochen is truly unique because as a student I felt that his dedication to his research was truly equalled by his dedication to teaching and his students. He is well known amongst his students as being an outstanding mentor and also for being a graduate supervisor who will truly go to bat for his students."

Kathleen Sun

"I can think of no one more worthy of recognition for their contribution to advancing thinking in health information research than Jochen Moehr. His insight, and advice contributed immensely to the success of an Network of Centres application, to form an network focused on health information research. He was able then, and later to reconcile differences of opinion, in a manner that always contributed to improved outcomes."

Ron Yamada

Photographs from June 3 and 4 courtesy of Mahmood Tara

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Steven Huesing is shown above presenting Jochen with a plaque on behalf of IMIA for his many contributions. In addition to the many accolades he received, Jochen also was presented with the AMIA Leadership Award.

Jochen Moehr,

School of Health Information Science
University of Victoria

In appreciation of service,
1986 - 2005

[Additional pictures follow that were not included in the printed newsletter]

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