Welcome
A Unique Moment: Regions and Regionalism in Australia
The concern for regions and regional development has a patchy history in Australia. The nation is dominated by its major capital cities, with over 60 per cent of the population living in the five capital cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Hobart. More than 40 per cent of Australians live in Sydney and Melbourne alone.

The distribution of the population, and the peculiarities of the Australian variant of federal government has meant that both the broader community and governments have not developed an enduring focus on spatial patterns of development and wellbeing. Discussions of regional issues in Australia have focussed on the challenge of decentralisation of economic activity away from the major urban centres and governments have tended to wax and wane in their enthusiasm for the topic.

Over the last year, the Australian Government has expedited a number of processes already in train – including the establishment of Regional Development Australia Committees and the introduction of new funding programs – and undertaken new initiatives, including the production of regional expenditure estimates as part of the Federal budget process.

Critically, the Australian Government’s engagement with regional issues reflects emerging priorities within the Australian economy and polity. In the last two decades of the 21st Century Australia undertook an ambitious program of economic liberalisation that resulted in substantial growth in the services sector, reduced tariff barriers and encouraged the development of a more export-oriented economy.

The metropolitan regions expanded in response to new investment and national economic growth. In the 21st Century Australia’s mining industry has boomed as a consequence of burgeoning demand from China and India. Some 62 per cent of Australia’s national income now comes from mineral exports, in May 2011 the Australian Bureau of Statistics announced that national income had fallen for the first quarter of the calendar year because of the impact of Cyclone Yasi and associated rains, which flooded mines in Queensland and record breaking floods in Western Australia which had similar impacts in that state.

The export boom in mining has created a new set of dynamics in regional Australia, with rapid population growth in mineral-rich regions such as the Pilbara of WA and new investment across the landscape. This growth has been accompanied by a range of social and economic challenges, including social dislocation associated with the reliance of fly in/fly out mining systems; critical shortages of housing; infrastructure gaps; skills shortages – despite high wages; and, political dispute over who should reap the rewards of the resources boom.

Critically, regions and regionalism in Australia occupies a unique moment in Australia’s political history: circumstance in the form of the 2010 election result have delivered political leverage to non metropolitan Australia at exactly the same time that growth imperatives have swung away from the city to ‘the bush’. Informed commentators suggest that this current economic boom – the third since 1900 – is likely to last longer than either the wheat boom of the mid 1920s or the ‘golden age’ of the wool industry in the 1950s. In all likelihood the current growth imperatives will have long term impacts on the distribution of population and economic activity across Australia, which in turn will reshape the policy and polity landscape. We may well need to become used to an Australian political landscape where regional issues can no longer be ignored where the spatial consequences of development are an enduring feature of social, economic and community life.

Professor Andrew Beer
Director
Oxfam Trailblazer Sydney Cinema Fundraiser

Oxfam’s Trailblazer has the reputation for being Australia’s toughest charity walk. Teams of four have 48 hours to cover 100km of steep and uneven track from the Hawkesbury River down to Mosman on Sydney Harbour. One third of individuals who commence the walk are unable to complete it, and 25 per cent of teams fall by the wayside.

But the real point of the Trailblazer is to raise money for Oxfam and the many worthwhile programs it supports globally. This year Andrew Beer will be taking on the track with four mates from Adelaide (David Beer, Andrew Culley and Richard Drogemuller) and is looking for your support. The team has set itself the goal of raising $7,000 for Oxfam.

The team’s major fundraising event will be a movie on Sunday 24 July at 2.30pm at the Capri. The movie will be Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2, and will be screening just 11 days after its national release. Tickets are just $20 for adults and $16 for children under the age of 16. Adult entry tickets will include a glass of wine upon arrival, prior to the screening at 3.30pm. Persons wishing to support this important endeavour can book and pay for their ticket in one of three ways:

a) Book and pay online at: www.trybooking.com/Booking/BookingEventSummary.aspx?eid=11291
b) Send a cheque to Andrew Beer c/o the Discipline of Geography, Environment and Population, School of Social Sciences, University of Adelaide, Adelaide 5005; or
c) Ring Andrew on 0409 696 485 to reserve a place and pay on the day.

Your support would be much appreciated, both by the team members and those who receive the benefit of the Oxfam programs.

Congratulations

Professor Andrew Beer has been made an Academician of the UKs Academy of Social Science, effective from 2011. This award reflects his contribution to Social Science in the UK and internationally.

Professor Andrew Beer et.al. – Category 1 research grant success – an ARC Linkage grant entitled ‘Emerging from the Shadows: The evaluation of intervention strategies to reduce social isolation amongst the aged’.

Forthcoming Book

Housing Transitions Through the Life Course: Aspirations, Needs and Policy
Andrew Beer and Debbie Faulkner with Chris Paris and Terry Clower
Available to order at: service@dadirect.com.au
Available from June 2011.

Housing remains one of the fundamental cornerstones of contemporary life.

It provides us with shelter, access to shopping opportunities and other services, it provides a place for rest away from the world of work, it is the environment in which we raise our children and for many of us, it makes a powerful statement about who we are and what we want to achieve in life.

But has the relationship between housing and the population remained unchanged? Did earlier generations use their housing in the ways we do, or did housing perform other roles that we may now have lost sight of?

Drawing upon a range of data from Australia and other advanced economies, Housing Transitions Through the Life Course examines the changing relationship between households and their housing in the 21st Century. It investigates the processes of demographic and attitudinal change, as well as tracking shifts in economic processes and the operation of financial markets.
Upcoming Conferences/Events

IAPS International Network Symposium
Jointly organised by IAPS-CSBE and Housing Network
Continuity and Change of Built Environment – Housing, Culture and Space Across Lifespans

Date: 10-14 October, 2011
Venue: Daegu, Korea
www.iaps2011symposium.kr

Regional Studies Association Conference
Localism: Sufficient and fit for purpose?

Date: 3 November, 2011
Venue: University of Manchester Conference Centre
To Register and submit an abstract:
https://eiemea.certain.com/rsa/getdemo.ei?id=1010023&s=_50K0Y5W2F

Regions – Quarterly magazine of the Regional Studies Association – next edition is due for publication in August. Andrew Beer and Selina Tually have made contributions to this edition.
http://rsa.informaworld.com/srsa/title~content=t713699363

Visitors to the Centre

Dr Terry Clower, Director of the Centre for Economic Development and Research, University of North Texas will be visiting the Centre from 24 June until 1 August 2011.

Terry has an extensive track record of publications in the areas of urban development, urban transport systems, economic development and housing research. While based at CHURP he will work with a number of researchers on issues relating to the performance of regional housing markets, housing for older persons and the economic roles of regional cities.

The Centre looks forward to having Terry in Adelaide.

Australasian Housing Researchers’ Conference
Adelaide, 8-10 February 2012

Following on from the 5th highly stimulating and successful AHRC in November 2010 in Auckland, the Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning (CHURP) at The University of Adelaide is pleased to announce it will be hosting the 6th AHRC in February 2012. The conference will bring to Adelaide Australasia’s brightest minds in housing research. CHURP is particularly excited to host this event as the AHRC was launched in Adelaide in 2006 and it is great to bring back to Adelaide this successful, well respected and informative event.

Further information on conference venues, key note speakers and the call for conference papers will be announced soon.

Events Attended by CHURPies

Andrew Beer attended Can We Have It All?: Thinking Barossa on Friday 1 April at Peter Lehmann Wines. Keynote speakers Tim Horton, Commissioner for Integrated Design and Professor Randy Stringer, advocate for World Heritage Listing of working agrarian lands and agricultural collaboration, with a learned panel, debated the topic "services, affordable housing, viable agriculture, rural environments: can we have it all?"

Andrew Beer attended the RSA Annual International Conference ‘Regional Development and Policy – Challenges, Choices and Recipients’ at Newcastle University in April. He also attended the City University of Hong Kong Symposium ‘New Generational Fissures? Shifting Demographics, Economic Change and the Housing Trajectories of Young People’ in May.

Debbie Faulkner presented to a community cabinet meeting at The Heights School, Modbury Heights which was addressed by Prime Minister Julia Gillard defending her controversial carbon tax in May.

Coming Soon…

The official launch of CHURP
Tuesday 15 November, 10 am – 12 pm
Venue: Innova 21, University of Adelaide
Publications


Welcome Onboard to:

Laurence Lester has been appointed as a Senior Research Fellow (part time, one day per week). Laurence holds an honours and masters degree in economics and a PhD in applied econometrics. He has an extensive list of journal articles, working papers, conference papers and funded research reports as well as broad experience in research and teaching at universities in Adelaide. He previously held a prestigious post-doctoral fellowship with the Australian Health Inequities Program (AHIP), a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funded grant to build research capacity at the intersection of public health, epidemiology and labour economics. At present he is also a chief investigator on an NHMRC Strategic Award and a lecturer at Flinders University. Laurence also spent several years in senior positions with the South Australian Department of Treasury and Finance. Laurence’s current research interests include micro-econometric modelling applications to social welfare and health of disadvantaged people in Australia.

Dr Julie Franzon as an Associate Researcher. Julie is a Lecturer in the Discipline of Geography, Environment and Population at the University of Adelaide.

Mawson Lakes Fellowship Program

The broad purpose of the Mawson Lakes Fellowship Program (MFP) is to establish a commemorative project between South Australia and Japan, growing out of the collaboration on the Multi-Function Polis and focusing on urban innovation and innovative urban development practice.

The Mawson Lakes Fellowship Program is sponsored by the South Australian Government, three of the State’s universities (Flinders University, the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia) and MACAJ, a consortium of leading Japanese companies. It provides three scholarships each year for South Australian postgraduate students interested in urban innovation and innovative urban planning and development practice to study in Japan for six months. In turn, three Japanese students are given the opportunity to study in Adelaide.

http://www.adelaide.edu.au/mfp/

Contact us

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Please send items of interest to:
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Best Wishes for a Happy End of Financial Year!