

From the world of society

Society activities

Kaarina Tervo-Kankare

Year 2013, the 50th anniversary of society

The year 2013 was the Society's 50th anniversary. The founding meeting of *the Geographers' Society of Northern Finland* was held on October 25th in 1963 at the Department of Geography, University of Oulu with Professor Uno Varjo acting as the initiating force. In 1977, the Society's name was changed into its current form, *the Geographical Society of Northern Finland*. The *Yearbook*, was originally called *Pohjois-Suomen Maantieteellinen Vuosikirja Nordia* and it was established in late 1967. *Nordia Tiedonantoja* was established few years later, in 1970.

Besides organizing the Society's regular meetings (April 10th and November 23rd) and publishing activities, the Board of the Society decided to devote the entire year of 2013 to celebrating the Society's 50th anniversary. The celebrations included events and the publication of a special issue called of *Nordia Tiedonantoja: Jublakirja* to honour the semi-centennial Society. The Society participated in organizing the Amazing Oulu Race in collaboration with the geography students' guild, Atlas. The main celebration of the Society took place October 4th as Jubilee Seminar and Dinner. The Seminar was organised in collaboration with the

Department of Geography's Alumni Day and attracted more than 100 participants to the University of Oulu's Saalastinsali. The celebratory Dinner gathered 50 members and friends of the Society in Teatteriravintola in Oulu City Theatre. At the Dinner, the Department of Geography and Teijo Klemetilä received honorary certificates for their collaboration and active work for the Society. Moreover, Professor Matti Häkkinen was given the Honorary Membership of the Society.

Forthcoming 2014

During the Society's 51st year, the Board will focus on the ongoing development and regenerating processes which aim to maintain the Society as a vital and active scientific society. One important conversation piece in the development process has been the future of the Society as a publisher. This aspect is further discussed in the Editor's Pen section.

Besides the regular meetings (spring meeting on April 24th and autumn meeting in October/November), where members' attendance and opinions are highly appreciated, the members are welcome to attend excursions and other events organised by the Society. It is also worth stating that the Geographical Event of the year, the Maantieteen päivät, will be held in Oulu on October 30th-31st. Put it in your calendars!

From the editor's pen

Ossi Kotavaara

In the academic publishing the words, 'international' and 'impacts' hold central roles. The Web of Knowledge, Scopus and the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies with its Publication Forum Project play a significant role in the daily lives of academic geographers. The members of the Geographical Society of Northern Finland (GSNF) face these issues mainly as readers and writers, but the society is also an active publisher. However, as indexed international journals are outlined to be the main forum in publishing (geographic) research, our small society's series face a challenging competition concerning the acquisition of articles.

In several coffee break conversations concerning the future of publishing, four themes seem to be strongly present: competition of good-quality research (articles), visibility among the academic audience, the flexibility of editing and the economic realities. How GSNF and Nordia can compete with international forums? The first issue may be the most important one. To bargain with quality is not a solution. NGP Yearbook seems to have taken steps towards specialising in northernness and northern issues, which is logical for a journal published by a geographical society located in the North. Perhaps there is room for a journal emphasising in northern issues, particularly

in times when (geo)political, social and environmental issues in the North and in the Arctic are more interesting than ever?

Three other aspects are easier to deal with. Second issue relates to the scientific forum's needs to reach (also new) readers. Some benefit could be probably gained with open access. Thus, we should ask ourselves whether Nordia should take this step and how far? It would be nice to hear from the members about this theme at the society's regular meetings. Thirdly, in publishing the final rush is almost a standard rule. By developing more flexible editing procedures we can save time, effort and money. With present word processing software and series' specific templates, writers may easily finalise the layout of their reports etc. during the writing process. Fourthly, the economy is a crucial issue for a non-profit society. Editing is mainly based on voluntary work, so how can we decrease costs? In GSNF publishing, printing and delivery generate most of the costs. Thus, it is relevant to ask, whether our readers are approaching the end of era concerning the printed material and entering the new standard of electronic reading?

Finally, I would like to remind that the Nordia Tiedonantoja bulletin might be used more as a forum for geographers working in other sectors e.g. development, decision-making and the private sector. Sometimes the ordered case study or master's thesis could be condensed to scientific report and published in academic series.

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