

**Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre
Malaspina University College**

Annual Report 2006-7

Overview

This report covers the period from April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007, during which the Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre at Malaspina University College has continued its activities on a number of fronts. The translation of Malaspina's *Essay on Beauty in Nature* has been completed and published by Edwin Mellen Press; other research projects are continuing; the project of cataloguing resources is finished; and numerous initiatives to enhance local and international collaboration have been undertaken.

Personnel

Department

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|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Director: | John Black | Liberal Studies and Philosophy |
| Researchers: | Oscar Clemotte | Philosophy |
| | Bill Weller | Physics and Engineering |
| | Lisa MacLean | Liberal Studies |
| Collaborator: | Ana-María Donat | Modern Languages |
| Honorary Associate: | Russell McNeil | Liberal Studies and Physics (retd.) |
| Student Assistant: | Lorill Ireland | |

Institutional Relationships

The Centre continues to operate independently of yet in collaboration with other research groupings at Malaspina University College. The Director of the Centre continues to sit on the Institute for Coastal Research Steering Committee, and this engagement has resulted and will result in a number of useful collaborations. Of particular interest are the ongoing project to publish through ICR the proceedings of the 2006 Symposium on George Vancouver held in Victoria, and the initiation of the Biosphere Conversation Series in collaboration with ICR, the Institute for Practical Philosophy and the Clayoquot Field Station in Tofino.

Research Projects

Meditation on Beauty

Oscar Clemotte and John Black's translation of Malaspina's *Meditation on Beauty in Nature* has now been published in Canada, Britain and the United States by Edwin Mellen Press. A contextual Preface was provided by Prof. John Gascoigne of the

University of New South Wales, and the book received a very positive review from Glyndwr Williams, Prof. Emeritus of History, Queen Mary, University of London.

General Theses on Physics

Bill Weller last year produced the Latin text of this, the only work published by Malaspina during his lifetime, which consist of an axiomatization of Newtonian physics. He and Russell McNeil are continuing the project of translating this from Latin into English.

Pictures of an Expedition

Lisa MacLean, a printmaker and art historian in the Liberal Studies Department, joined the Centre in January 2006 to pursue a project involving the critical analysis of images made by the artists of the Malaspina expedition. Of interest are the ways in which European documentary artists depicted First Peoples, their artefacts and their customs, and the possibility that these involved distortions in the service of various political, economic or ideological ends. This ongoing project may be expanded in the future to include a comparative study of the images generated by the Malaspina and Cook expeditions.

Other Projects

Collaboration with the Maritime Museum of British Columbia

The Centre last year participated in a consulting capacity in a website development project with the Maritime Museum of British Columbia in Victoria. The project, which deals with early European exploration of the Pacific Northwest, is still approaching completion after encountering some unanticipated technical difficulties.

Further, the MMBC hosted a symposium on George Vancouver, organised by Barry Gough, in April 2006, with the Centre, the ICR and the University College as co-sponsors. The Director of the Centre chaired one of the panels, and the Centre financed and arranged the printing of programmes for the symposium. Negotiations have been undertaken with the ICR with the goal of publishing the proceedings of the symposium.

Resource Catalogue

Research Assistant Tonja Henigman last year completed the cataloguing of the Centre's resources, and that part of the Library's Special Collection which pertains to the Centre's mandate.

Biosphere Conversation Series

AMRC has co-sponsored, and contributed to the organising and financing of, the first in a series of symposia on philosophy and the environment. The symposium itself took place in April 2007, and will be included in next year's Annual Report.

Public Events and Other Activity

Public Guest Lecture

The annual guest lecture was given by Dee Longenbaugh, historian and cartographer from Juneau, Alaska, on the subject of *Russian and Spanish Encounters in 18th century Alaska*.

International Collaboration

In July 2006 John Black again visited the Centro di Studi Malaspiniani in Mulazzo, Italy, for consultations with Director Dario Manfredi on the *Meditation on Beauty in Nature*. Also present were Alexandre and Danielle Giuntini-Malaspina, two of AMRC's benefactors, with whom John and his wife Constance Kovalenka visited a number of historic Malaspina castles in Lunigiana.

Newsletter

The Centre continues to produce a short electronic newsletter. Its archive is at: web.mala.bc.ca/black/amrc/Newsletter/newsarchive.htm.

Alexandro Malaspina Liberal Studies Award

As a way of honouring Alexandro Malaspina's broad range of intellectual achievement, the Centre supplied seed funding for a student award, to go to the Liberal Studies BA major student who shows the greatest commitment to and achievement in interdisciplinary study, with need and general academic performance as tie-breaking factors. Through donations from Liberal Studies faculty, alumni and audience members at the Department's regular Music of the World concerts, the endowment has now reached the minimum for matching funds from the University College.

Funding

No additional funding has been received during 2006-7.

Respectfully submitted,

John Black
Director
Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre
April 22, 2007