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Maria Elisa Christie

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Dr. Gregory W. Knapp is a recipient of CLAG's Outstanding Service Award for 2004. This honor is due to his exceptional service during his five years as Executive Director of CLAG (1992-1997), as well as his service editing the organization's newsletter (1992-1994), the *Yearbook* (2002), managing the website, serving on the Board of Directors, and organizing a CLAG meeting (2000). The award also recognizes his broader service to Latin Americanist geography as a textbook co-author, department chair, and mentor to students.

When Greg became Executive Director of CLAG in summer 1992, the organization faced many challenges. It had a membership, a publication series, and a series of international meetings, but costs had been exceeding income and many were urging retrenchment. With the invaluable help of outgoing chief operations officer Tom Martinson, Greg moved CLAG's headquarters from Auburn, Alabama to Austin, Texas, where he forged partnerships with the University of Texas Press and what is now the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS). Greg worked out an agreement whereby the Press eventually took over management of the membership roll and distribution of the *Yearbook*, while LLILAS provided office space, storage for publications, and other help. Bankruptcy was averted, membership stabilized, and Greg made sure that the *Yearbook* continued to be published and distributed on schedule. Greg also edited the Newsletter from December 1992 to December 1994. When he finished his directorship in 1997 the organization was financially sound and flourishing. During this period he also co-authored with Cesar Caviedes a textbook on South America which helped present the work of many CLAG members to a broad student audience.

After leaving the directorship of CLAG, Greg continued to support Latin Americanist geography from his position as Chair of the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas (1996-2004). During his chairmanship, the Department hired eleven geographers, six of whom work in Latin America. This faculty in turn will surely inspire students to participate in and support CLAG in the future, as Greg has for so many years.

Greg organized a very successful CLAG meeting in Austin in 2000. In 2002, he edited a special edition of the CLAG Yearbook which was published in book format, *Latin America in the Twenty First Century: Challenges and Solutions*. This has become the best selling publication in CLAG history, and is now in its second printing.

Greg is a veteran of the progressive cultural and environmental movements of

Berkeley of the 1960s; he was arrested as a supporter of People's Park. During Nixon's invasion of Cambodia he participated in the reconstitution of the University as a focus of opposition to imperialism, working with British economic historian and Berkeley visiting professor Rosemary Thorpe to write a critique of US banks in Latin America. His defining experience as a Latin Americanist was however a three-month field course through Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala in 1976 led by an eccentric marine biologist who was convinced Maya stelae contained hidden data on the fruiting patterns of tropical trees. The teacher force-marched the students through the forests and littorals of Mesoamerica, in tune with his philosophy of making students learn through suffering; he mixed complaints about his failed marriage with insights into tropical biology. By the end of the trip, everyone but Greg had fled the program, but Greg had fallen in love with the region's natural and cultural diversity! He has retained a love of fieldwork, as well as an appreciation for originality and creativity, ever since.

Ultimately, Greg's contributions to CLAG go well beyond his hard work in service to the organization and his research and publications. As one of his graduate students—who not only survived his infamous *Latin America: Culture, Environment, and Development* seminar with its thousand page reader, but completed a dissertation under his tutelage—I know that among Greg's outstanding service is his teaching and mentorship to students of Latin America. He has been teaching the University of Texas at Austin's largest freshman class on Latin America for twenty years! Although a cultural/political ecologist, he enjoys encouraging students to "be themselves" and question all sorts of conventional wisdom. He loves working with students on innovative projects, has supervised the theses and/or dissertations of twenty Latin Americanists (13 of them women, and seven of whom are now themselves teachers in higher education), and is currently advising graduate student research in Mexico, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Peru.

I want to thank Greg personally and on behalf of all of us here for his hard work and dedication in service to CLAG. I know you will all join me in wishing him the best as he returns to full time teaching and research. ¡Que disfrute la próxima etapa de su vida! ¡Felicidades!