



The Iron Post



Saskatchewan Association of Geomatics Technologists

Fall 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To the Membership:

Over the past year a total of three (3) regular Council Meetings and one informal meeting were held to deal with matters of the Association. One of our primary goals over the past few years has been the implementation of our Continuing Education Program (CEP). This is in keeping with policies being developed by almost all technical and professional organizations including the legal surveying and engineering professions.

Council has had some concerns over the past couple of years in our ability to encourage membership to turn out and participate in our AGM and have hopes that tides will once again change. For this AGM we have, as in the past couple of years, amassed some great door prizes and we are looking forward to the chance to mix and mingle.

This year, Saskatchewan's Centennial has brought the opportunity to give a special award and recognition to a couple of our dedicated members Trevor Hammer and

Paul Perron. I would like to congratulate them on their awards and thank them for their years of commitment to the Association.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some the people who have contributed to the SAGT over the past year. To Jim Wicks, CGT for his efforts in arranging and dealing with all the details in setting up this annual meeting; to Paul Perron, CGT for his continuing efforts in looking after everything that needs to be looked after as Secretary/Treasurer (which is a lot) and to all the Council and Committee members who have contributed to the Association over the past year attending meetings and taking time to deal with Association matters. I would also like to give special thanks to our SLS Advisors Mike Waschuk, SLS and Guy Graig, SLS for their continued interest, support, knowledge and dedication to our organization. Regards,

Carl Jaworski, CGT
President SAGT



Trevor Hammer receiving Centennial Award

IMPORTANT TO ALL MEMBERS

It is each and every member responsibility to make sure that their information that the Association has is up to date. Address, phone number, email and employer need to be current in order for us to contact you. There is Association information on our web page (www.sagt.sk.ca) that is important to you, so please check it out often. Now that the Association has adopted a program of continuing education, it is the member's responsibility to earn their point and to submit them on time. The Association is willing to put on seminars to help everyone get some of their point. The members have to give ideas for seminars that might interest them.

A TRIBUTE TO SURVEYORS

By: Namrata Shrivastava C.G.T.

How often have you passed by the Town of Chamberlain and noticed a sculpture of a giant surveyor watching over Highway 11, now also known as the Louis Riel Trail?

Created by Don Wilkins, an artist and a veteran farmer of Girvin, this monument commemorates the role of the land surveyor in preparing the west for an influx of settlers in the late 1800's. It is one of a series of monuments placed between Lumsden and Hanley. Typically, each monument has a replica of a Red River cart that is accompanied by one other prominent figure representing some aspect of the history of the province.

Indisputably, to realize the economic potential of a virgin land, an orderly survey is a prerequisite. In the context of the Canadian west, the Dominion Land Survey System is an outstanding example. Thompson, through his publication "Men & Meridians" best described the DLS System as:

"It is one of the most outstanding accomplishments of the Canadian government in early post-Confederation years. It is an example of a uniform plan of survey over an immense area; the project is unsurpassed for precision of execution, permanence of marking and absence of subsequent litigation over property boundaries"

In August 1869, shortly after the federal government had purchased Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company, cabinet authorized Lieutenant Colonel J.S. Dennis to develop a suitable system of survey to subdivide newly acquired land. This resulted in the checkerboard pattern of sections, townships and ranges that we are familiar with today.

The system extends from the Lake of the Woods in Ontario to the Pacific Ocean and embraces more than 200 million acres. It is the largest block

of land ever surveyed under one single system in the world. The accomplishment of surveyors in the orderly settlement of this magnitude will probably never be equaled again.

In addition to the DLS System, the surveyors played an important role in the Riel Rebellion. As soon as the word of hostility was received in the spring of 1885, members of the Association of Dominion Land Surveyors' formed the Dominion Land Surveyors' Intelligence Corps also known as Land Surveyors' Scouts. The corps was designed to be used for information purposes as to trails and routes and generally to act as intelligence men or as scouts or as mounted rifles as might be desired.

The surveyors had good reason to feel that they could play a deciding role in the North-west campaign. During their annual field work in western Canada, they did not simply measure out the land but made extensive notes on the topography and resources of each particular region. They were also experienced travelers on the open plains and rolling parklands, laboured under difficult and hazardous conditions, and had dealings with both Indian and Metis during the course of their work. Their service during the Riel rebellion included action at the final battle at Batoche and is summarized by Thompson as follows.

"The activities of the corps in 1885, in the estimation of their commander, proved the special adaptability of men of the surveying profession. They were able to participate effectively in military operations and to care for themselves resourcefully in a new and somewhat unknown country. Most of the men forming the corps had experience in prairie transport and camping as well as in the use of firearms."

When you pass by this landmark the next time, just do not think that it is only a work of art; the surveyor's statue is indeed a silent witness in the testimony of the settlement of the west that

A TRIBUTE TO SURVEYORS (Cont)

brought the socio-economic prosperity of the land of the living skies. If you take the time to pull off the highway for a closer look you may read the plaque that states:

“In 1872 the Canadian Federal Parliament passed the Dominion Lands Act as a precursor to land settlement in the West as a great economic opportunity. Essentially, the American system of square mile survey was adopted. As the land survey progressed westward, anxiety and unease quickly spread, particularly so among the French Metis settlements along the south branch of the Saskatchewan River. Many Metis

had migrated from the Red River area during the 1860’s and 1870’s. They held their established custom of the river lot system, 8 chains wide and 2 miles long, and on this basis developed farms and communities. The perception persisted among many Metis that their river lots would be readjusted to the new system and possession title would be lost to them. The failure of local, federal and territorial authorities to appropriately address these concerns were at least partly responsible for the North West Rebellion of 1885 – The Riel Rebellion.”



Paul Perron receiving Centennial Award

AGM 2005 REGINA



Awards and Door Prizes presented at the 2005 AGM in Regina