

President's Report ACMLA Annual Conference 2003

It is hard to believe that another year has passed since our last meeting in Toronto. I am looking forward to another successful conference in Victoria with our colleagues from the Canadian Cartographic Association and the Canadian Association of Geographers. Thanks to Lori Sugden for all of her work on the organizing committee and to Cheryl Woods and Alberta Wood who assisted Lori with the program. As I have mentioned in previous communications to the membership, I am always impressed by how such a small association manages to achieve so much, due to the dedication of all of our members.

Library and Archives Canada: One of the most significant events of this past year was the announcement of the merger of the National Archives of Canada and the National Library of Canada into a new organization, Library and Archives Canada. Bill C-36 to create the new organization was recently tabled before the House of Commons. I was pleased that our Association was included in the consultation process which Mr. Wilson held with a number of organizations in early 2003. I was able to underline our concern that maps and spatial data be covered by legal deposit as well as our interest in cataloguing, digitization and preservation of the Archives rich cartographic resources. It is too early to assess the impact of the new organization on what has been the defacto "national map collection" but we will continue to provide input on behalf of our members.

GIS and Spatial Data: The Depository Services Program for Maps has now officially been underway for a year and from the feedback I have received, most members are extremely pleased with their access to the National Topographic DataBase and related products. I know here at the University of Ottawa, the NTDB data has been extremely well-used. As always there were a few wrinkles to work out after the launch of the program but I believe most of them have now been successfully resolved.

It has been encouraging to see how much Canadian geospatial data is now becoming accessible. The Government of Manitoba is to be applauded as the first provincial government to make their data available freely on the internet. Even Environment Canada is slowly opening the doors to their data, albeit more slowly than we would like! Our members have also had considerable success with the local and regional governments.

James Boxall has agreed to chair the newly created Working Group on Geospatial Data. The group has been established to identify and document existing geospatial data agreements between data producers and map libraries; compile and maintain a list of regional contacts/data producers; identify and recommend priorities for acquisition and negotiation of geospatial data and negotiate on behalf of the Association and lastly, maintain the content of the web site related to the geospatial data such as a list of existing licenses/agreements, list of contacts, tutorials/documentation related to using/acquiring geospatial data.

GeoConnections: We continue to monitor the progress of GeoConnections, through participation on the Management Board and the Policy Node (see separate report).

Promotion: As noted in our 3 year business plan, we identified the need to promote the Association and the work of map librarians to the wider community. With three other

members of the Association, I gave a presentation on GIS in Map Libraries to about 25 public and school librarians at the Ontario Library Association Superconference in January. It was encouraging to see how much the interest in GIS is expanding outside map libraries and cartographic archives.

In terms of GIS literacy, the Association was a co-sponsor of GIS Day 2002, an ESRI led initiative to promote an understanding of GIS. Carol Marley is working on guidelines for a Student Papers Award to encourage library and archival school students to write on cartographic themes. The winning paper will be published in the Bulletin.

The Association provided a small amount of "seed" money to support a two day workshop for library assistants in Ontario which is being organized by Cathy Moulder. The objectives of the workshop are to provide an opportunity for map library assistants to meet and establish a network of contacts with their counterparts and to provide educational sessions and training especially on GIS related topics. I know that we will look forward to a report on the workshop in one of the Bulletin issues.

At last year's meeting, Richard Pinnell agreed to review our objectives with the intention of adding references to GIS and geomatics. We will have an opportunity to review the changes at our AGM. A new membership brochure has been designed by Heather McAdam and will be available shortly on the ACMLA website. Now that the brochure is in PDF format, it can be easily amended after we review our Association objectives at our Annual General Meeting.

International Cartographic Association: Alberta Wood has ably represented the Canadian cartographic community as Vice President of ICA representing Canada. Our Association has submitted several of its bird's eye view for the Canadian map exhibit for the ICA meeting to be held in South Africa later this year. I also submitted a summary of our Association activities during the past four years for inclusion in a special issue of *Geomatica* which is now in preparation for the ICA meeting.

Last words: And lastly, let me take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support during my two terms as President. I would also like to thank my fellow executive members for all their efforts for our Association, especially Susan Jackson and James Boxall who will be leaving the Executive.

Respectfully submitted:

Grace D. Welch

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President
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