

# REGIONAL GROUP NEWS

## KAWARTHA-HALIBURTON REGIONAL GROUP

THE KAWARTHA-Haliburton Regional Group has held two business meetings since the last report in the Quarterly. The group also enjoyed a summer social which consisted of a tour of the Darlington Nuclear Generating Plant, followed by a BBQ hosted by Merrill Brown.

At the fall meeting a dinner was held in honour of John Pierce upon his retirement. Tom Lyons gave an account of John's accomplishments and a brief history of his career. It was noted that a long list of surveyors have either articulated with John or had worked with John in his firm over the years. Tom presented John with a framed copy of a poem entitled "Ode to an Old Surveyor".

There were a number of guests present at the meeting to honour John. They included, Red Petzold, Fred Pearce, Lorraine Petzold and Jack Sylvester. All related humorous stories they had witnessed or heard about John, but all praised him for an outstanding career as an Ontario Land Surveyor. Lorraine presented John with the official Association Retirement Certificate and an O.L.S. pin and congratulated him on behalf of the Association.

John thanked the speakers and others present for such a warm reception. He said that he is now quite content to sit back and enjoy his pension cheques.

The winter meeting was held on January 11, 1985. Much of that meeting consisted of listening to and discussing the various platforms presented by those running for a position on council. The other main event was the election of new group officers. The new board is Ted Friel as Chairman, Curry Bishop as Vice Chairman and Eric Ansell as Secretary-Treasurer.

Eric Ansell, O.L.S.  
Secretary-Treasurer

## NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL GROUP QUARTERLY REPORT

THE MOST recent meeting of the N.E.R.G. was held in Sudbury on Saturday January 26, 1985 at the Senator Hotel. Thirty-six members were in attendance and the meeting was chaired by Bob Hawkins. Area directors presented their reports - Martin Kupferschmidt for Muskoka-Parry Sound-Simcoe, Dan White for Sudbury-Manitoulin, Dave Urso for Algoma and Alex Osborne for Nipissing. Each area reported on their fee schedules and reported on discussions about copyright. Bob Meisner gave a report from Council with reference to several items - The Surveyors Act, Deferred Monumentation, The A.O.L.S. Office, Liability Insurance, Budget, Discipline, and Copyright. Dan White reported that the N.E.R.G. Constitution vote had produced 27 ballots in favour and 2 against and the Constitution was declared passed. After a break for lunch, letters from candidates for Council were presented and two candidates - Don Norris and David Searles, addressed the group. As well the group was addressed by Vice President Harry Whale. The N.E.R.G. Executive was elected with the following serving for 1985 - Chairman: Bev Cook, Vice Chairman: Bill Bolan, Treasurer: Peter Bull, and Secretary: Dan White. The 1985 Area Directors will be as follows:

Muskoka, Parry Sound, Simcoe - Eero Halinen  
Sudbury, Manitoulin - Bob Holder  
Algoma - Dave Urso  
Nipissing - Alex Osborne  
Cochrane - Bob Boyd

Don Norris spoke on the MNR Retracement program and Alex McLennan addressed the group on the subject of the Mining Act. As well there was discussion and action in the form of motions on the following items - the complaints procedure, no contest for the position of Vice President and beer for the Welcoming Party at the A.O.L.S. annual convention. Members of N.E.R.G. are reminded that the next meeting of the Group will be held in North Bay on Saturday, April 27, 1985.

Anne Cole  
N.E.R.G. Reporter

## REPORT ON BUSINESS PRACTICE

BY R. D. TOMLINSON, O.L.S.

THIS IS Bob Tomlinson again from the Business Practice Committee of the South Central Group.

Nothing much has transpired this year as yet so I will tell you a little about what has happened in my own practice as far as collecting accounts is concerned. A great deal of study has been done in the last 4 years as far as fee guidelines are concerned in order that we can make a decent profit for our companies, pay fair wages and draw a reasonable remuneration for ourselves.

One big drawback is the old problem of bad accounts which has plagued business from day one. It makes me angry when I see these people get away with not paying their accounts by the use of devious methods. I myself have worked for clients for years who have fallen upon hard times and were forced into bankruptcies leaving me with unpaid accounts. These people had always been good payers and good clients who never pinned me down to low prices. These people I can sympathize with but those who reappear under new companies use the Bankruptcy Act to their advantage. In order to protect ourselves from this practice we must check them out as individuals and make them sign a personal undertaking for the company much the same as the bank does when you require a loan for operating expenses. The worst are the culprits who make a practice of not paying whether they sign agreements or not. Most deals hinge on closing dates when the money is to be transferred and the money is held by the solicitor on closing. These accounts in my experience are paid. We do not always have solicitors in the deal at the beginning or the clients handle the job of getting the survey themselves. Now some people say "Get the money up front first". In inquiring around the profession I have found very few surveyors who follow this practice.

Some people will bring in one-half, which I think is fair. When I tell people that they must sign an agreement and bring in a deposit some go elsewhere for their service. I have to admit I have been beaten on many occasions. I have used collection agencies which works more often than not. However, they take a considerable percentage of the money collected in fees. Collecting some money is better than no money at all. A lot of

people have the ability to postpone payments when you deal with them yourself. When they receive a notice from a collection agency most people will pay because they do not want to damage their credit rating but not even collection agents ruffle those aforementioned "culprits". A particular case that happened to me was: a friend of mine referred me to his cousin who wanted to sever a small island he owned into two parts. This case is some years back so any reference to locations and events are not going to be specific in order that the innocent be protected. He came in, ordered the job and we made a deal that payment would be made on approval of the R-Plan by the Registry Office. When the job was completed I informed him and sent him the invoice and copies of the unregistered R-Plan. There was no response from him. I then telephoned him and still no payment. He had the severed portion for sale and had had little response. If I had held the R-Plan back much longer it would have passed the condition date of the severance and he would have lost it. When I asked my lawyer for advice he stated that in order to collect I should register anyhow because if goods are held for payment there is little chance of persuading a judge to find in your favour. I im-

mediately sped off to the Registry Office and registered the R-Plan. I then sent the account to a collection agency. It appeared to me that my client was waiting for a sale first before paying me.

He objected to paying me saying that I allowed the severance to lapse in not registering and he filed a counter claim for damages. We then went to court and much to his surprise I produced the registered copy. The Judge found in my favour plus costs.

This case was in small claims court and the costs were kept down. After paying my solicitor and the fact that I only got the costs that the judge awarded I had only about two-thirds of the original account. With all the extra time I spent, I earned my fee over again. However,

we must not be afraid to go after our accounts. The judge, having been in business, knew what this man was up to. This client was a business management consultant and knew what he was doing.

I hope in sharing my experiences with you we can come up with solutions in collecting accounts without too many costs. Ever since I have asked people to come to the office to pick up their surveys I have been well paid. However if they do not receive the goods you end up with a survey you certainly do not need. If someone decided not to pay after the job is done then you have time and expense on your hands. In my opinion we have a lot of study to do in the matter of accounts in business practice and would be thankful for any input you may have on this matter.

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