

Report to the 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
FIG Congress in Washington, 19-26 April 2002

**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR  
HISTORY OF SURVEYING AND MEASUREMENT**

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2001**

This year the officers met at irregular intervals usually at the RICS offices in London and also in Brussels at Jan de Graeve's residence on 1<sup>st</sup> December. The activities of the Institution during the year are summarised below:

**1. The Struve geodetic arc from near Hammerfest to Ismail**

This project divides into three distinct sections:

- a. The finding, checking and remonumenting of a selection of points in each of the 10 countries concerned. The position to date is that three countries have more or less completed their work, several are well on the way and just two or three are, for mostly financial reasons, slow with progress.
- b. The sifting, indexing and copying of all relevant documents (possibly 10,000 items) in the Struve Archive held in St Petersburg together with the three volumes of Struve's report which are now very rare. An appropriate person has been identified to carry out this work and funds are being sought to make it viable. A grant from the RICS Education Trust is a fine start but more will be required to complete the task.
- c. When the remonumentation is complete and the points hopefully accepted by UNESCO it is proposed to run a GPS scheme through all of them to have a comprehensive comparison with the original work. An appropriate person has been identified and an initial estimate submitted. After the GPS it is hoped that the results, together with the original data, will form a good research project.

Now a dossier on the scheme is being compiled for submission to the European Parliament. (see below).

**2. Finance**

The Institution is fully self-supporting as it gets no grant at all from FIG. Thus finance for this major project is being raised in various ways. An initial sum was granted by the FIG Education Trust to start off part (a). Recently a grant from the RICS Education Trust was specifically for part (b). To raise our own finance both for administrative costs and to assist with this project we have produced a reprint of 1688 edition of *Geodaesia* by John Love and so far around 750 of the 1000 printed have been sold. Work is now in progress to do the same with the 1657 edition of *The Compleat Surveyor* by William Leybourn in the expectation that it will be available at FIG in Washington.

After the FIG Congress in Brighton in 1998 a CD version was made of the Historical exhibition that was mounted there. This is still available.

Additionally a recent meeting held in Brussels with a Representative of the European Parliament. She was very enthusiastic that funding could possibly be available from several different sources. To progress this a dossier on the position to date is being compiled complete with background information, photographs, maps, coordinates and all relevant details. This could well be of over 100 pages. The basic scheme was introduced to UNESCO some long while ago by Jan de Graeve and the present dossier, mainly compiled by Jim Smith, will form the basis of the final submission.

### **3. Abbé de LaCaille**

In March 2001 Jim Smith attended CONSAS in Cape Town where he gave a presentation to commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the visit to the Cape by LaCaille at which time he measured an arc of the meridian.

### **4. Sir George Everest**

In May 2001 Jim Smith attended the FIG WW in Seoul and on the return journey stopped off at Hong Kong where he gave two presentations on the life and work of Sir George Everest. The first was to the local surveyors and the second to the local branch of the Royal Geographical Society. In conjunction with this he had a slot on the local radio. The talk was also given at four venues in the UK.

### **5. The Peru arc**

On May 21<sup>st</sup> David Wallis and Jan de Graeve attended a one day symposium at the University of Toulouse on *La Condamine et la Mesure de la Terre*. M de Graeve lent a part of his personal library for the exhibition relating to the measurement of the arc in Peru. A paper by Jim Smith on the arc measurement by the Academicians from Paris was read by David Wallis and Jan de Graeve presented, in French, an introduction to the arc measured by Struve and its preservation. A CD ROM containing all the papers is available from the Bibliothèques de l'Université des Sciences Sociales, Toulouse 1

### **6. Annual conference**

As there was very little response from the Korean Organising Committee of the Seoul FIG WW it was not felt possible to arrange a conference on historical topics in the Far East. Instead Jan de Graeve organised a two day event in Brussels Nov.30 and Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> 2001. Titled Survey History from Roman Times to the end of the Middle Ages it attracted some 60 participants. Speakers were Prof.essors Ph.Godding, Hosam Elkhadem, David King, Chouquer, Jan de Graeve and MM. Mosselmans, Lavigne, Klaus Grewe and John Brock. The audience represented France, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Australia, USA, UK and Belgium. The study of Roman techniques, of rare texts and of cadastral systems were the main topics in addition to a text of 1451. This text, which is the earliest text that defines the profession of land surveying, relates to the land surveyor- valuer in Brussels and was translated and edited by Jan de Graeve and Jean Mosselmans.

A special exhibition was organised by the surveyors association of Brussels (UGEB) for its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1876-2001). 135 original and replica items from Roman times through the

Middle Ages were displayed in the Royal Library of Brussels. A catalogue prepared in French and Flemish by de Graeve and Mosselmans is available at 15 Euro + p/p.

## **7. Publications available**

The I.I.H.S.M. has the following publications available for purchase:

- *Geodaesia*. John Love. 1688 edition. \$50
- *The Compleat Surveyor*. 1657 edition. Due out in time for Washington Congress April 2002. Price not yet known.
- CD ROM of the exhibition held at the FIG Congress in Brighton in 1998. Details from D A Wallis on e-mail [WallisConsult@compuserve.com](mailto:WallisConsult@compuserve.com)

## **8. Looking forward**

Jan de Graeve attended the ACCO meeting in Copenhagen in November 2001 where arrangements for the Congress of 2002 were finalised. At that Congress in Washington in April 2002 there will be one day of historical sessions with the theme of Surveying & Mapping the Americas. At the same time there is expected to be three exhibits with an historical relevance held in conjunction with the trade exhibition.

Jan de Graeve  
Director, I.I.H.S.M.