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BC Land Surveyors: Here's to the Next 100 Years!

Welcome back! This edition takes a look at BC Land Surveyors, who are celebrating their 100th Anniversary throughout 2005.

In 1891 the BC government passed the first *Land Surveyors Act*. Surveyors appointed under that first Act were permitted to use the designation PLS: Provincial Land Surveyor. In 1905 the Corporation of Land Surveyors of the Province of British Columbia was formed. This professional body was given the right to examine applicants for membership and qualify successful candidates to use the BCLS designation.

Published in November 2004, *Surveying Northern BC* by Jay Sherwood—Caitlin Press Inc., Prince George, BC—is a wonderful photojournal of the survey adventures of Frank Swannell. Through a series of very interesting pictures, the book follows Mr. Swannell's surveying of the north-east and some of the north-west parts of our immense province, from 1908 to 1914.

From the publisher's Website, <http://www.harbourpublishing.com/book.php?id=521>, we know Swannell's photos include "portraits of First Nations people, settlers, and other well-known people in the region, plus images of well-known historical routes such as the Grease Trail and Yukon Telegraph Trail... [and] the many modes of transportation of the time,

including sternwheelers and stagecoaches."

Swannell opens a window to the surveyor's life in those times—battling snow, rain, and cold in unfamiliar territory, with few roads to follow. Those men of great character and fortitude were our early explorers, charting the regions and creating rights of passage for our future roads and utility services. They surveyed the communities that appeared suddenly as people rushed to find gold. Surveyors gave a semblance of order to the small towns that would later become the larger centres in our province.

We want assurance that we are getting a specific piece of land.

I invite you to flip forward a few pages and read what Joyce Helweg, our Notary in Vanderhoof, has to say about the early surveyors who lived and worked in that part of BC.

For most of us, the land we own—our home, our cottage, the commercial building that houses our place of business—is our most significant asset. We want assurance that we are getting a specific "piece of land." It is important to know the exact dimensions (size does matter!) and that the property has been physically surveyed, identified, and registered in the Land Title Office. Dave Bazett, President of the BC land surveyors, speaks to that process in his article on The Merits of Due Diligence.



It is the surveyor that has provided us with the comfort that we know exactly where our land is situated, the size of the property, and the location of the building within the boundaries of the lot.

It is the surveyor who takes on the task of travelling through the giant forest land of British Columbia to design the path for the hydro electric and natural gas transmission lines.

It is the surveyor who will spend days living outside, working to provide location and structure for a new logging or transportation corridor.

Certainly the amenities have changed for the surveyor of today, but the job is just as difficult and challenging. The equipment has changed dramatically—with GPS and a multitude of computers, high-tech printers, and software. Today the surveyor is involved in the survey of large urban developments and in providing survey structure for big multi-family strata developments and condominium buildings.

And he or she is just as comfortable in a suit as in a flannel shirt and jeans.

Notaries and surveyors work together in many communities in BC, to provide buyers and sellers with assurance that the location and size of their most precious asset, their land, is precisely as they expected.

On behalf of all BC Notaries to all BC Land Surveyors, thank you for what you have done for British Columbia. We look forward to the next 100 years! ▲