

**Report for the 27<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
FIG Working Week in Athens, May 2004**

**International Institution for the History of Surveying & Measurement  
Report on Activities 2003 – 2004**

**1. Meetings in 2003**

At the General Assembly in Paris the IIHSM was honoured to present the opening address at the French Ministry of Finances Saloons. Jan de Graeve gave a brief summary of the events in 1878 at the Trocadero and how FIG was founded by France, Belgium, England, Spain, Italy and Switzerland with the USA represented. The documented history of FIG by Dr Ahrens was of considerable assistance.

The IIHSM together with the Belgian delegation prepared a display of the 1878 documentation and that of the subsequent congresses of 1900, 1910 and 1928. All the Reports and Congress papers of the last 125 years were available and exhibited.

An exhibition on “Arc Measurement” prepared by the IIHSM for the 250th anniversary of the expeditions by the French Academy of Sciences, and first displayed at FIG Toronto in 1986, was presented again.

A one day seminar under the chairmanship of David Wallis had 6 technical contributions and a visit to the Galleries of the Institut Géodésique National - IGN, in Saint-Monde, to view their historic instruments. The viewing was under the guidance of Mr d’Hollander.

In July 2003 Jim Smith had a paper presented on his behalf at the International Association for Astronomy Congress in Sydney. The topic was Arc measurement.

During September 2003 Jan de Graeve and Jim Smith attended the Conference on the History of Surveying organised by Bob Linke and John Brock and held in Sydney. The day of interesting papers was appreciated by a knowledgeable audience.

**Struve Geodetic Arc**

The main efforts of the IIHSM was again concentrated, as it has been for the last ten years, on the Struve Arc. In September 2003 Jan de Graeve attended a Struve conference in Minsk (Belarus) where there were delegates from all 10 countries through which the Arc passes.

After years of searching Jan de Graeve was finally able to obtain an original set of the two volumes by Struve detailing his work and these joined other major acquisitions that have been added to his ever growing library of books on the history of surveying.

Three working meetings were held in Brussels to finalise the submission to UNESCO. At one of these we were honoured to be joined by Peter Stott from the UNESCO International Heritage HQ in Paris who was able to give considerable guidance on the form of the submission.

At the end of January 2004 it was finally possible to present the submission to UNESCO and this was formally done by Jarmo Ratia (Director, National Land Survey of Finland), Pekka Tättilä of the same organisation and Jan De Graeve (Director, IIHSM). The handover in Paris was the culmination of major efforts by numerous people not only in the ten countries

affected by the arc but also from elsewhere. To all of whom our sincere thanks are given and not least to Seppo Härmälä of Finland for putting the idea forward at FIG Melbourne in 1994. There will now be a wait until mid 2005 before the outcome is known.

Further details were given in a Press Release, a copy of which is on the FIG web site.

### **Forthcoming events**

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|----------------------|---|
| 5 June 2004          | History of Surveying and Land Tenure in the Cape Province 1814-1913. Workshop to be held in Cape Town   |
| 7-8 June 2004        | A gathering in Port Elizabeth to celebrate both the 125th anniversary of the beginning of the Arc of 30th Meridian and the 50th of its completion.  |
| 12-17 July 2004.     | Jan de Graeve will be attending a Conference of the International Study Group on History and Pedagogy of Mathematics to be held in Uppsala, Sweden.   |
| 27-29 September 2004 | Struve Meridian Arc - past, present and future. Conference to be held in Chisenau, Moldova  |
| FIG WW Athens.       | For this two historical sessions are planned with five papers. Jan de Graeve had also hoped to make a presentation on a Euclides Manuscript of the 13th century - apparently the third oldest known, but at the moment he has insufficient free time to complete the translation and study of it. |

### **Publications**

There are still copies available for purchase of the reprints of *Geodaesia* of 1688 by John Love and the *Compleat Surveyor* of 1657 by William Leybourn.

Each volume is \$50 + postage & packing.

Interested purchasers should contact Walt Robillard, 1601 Berkeley Lane NE, Atlanta, GA USA 30329. or by e-mail [robw@mindspring.com](mailto:robw@mindspring.com)

### **Liaisons with other like bodies**

Efforts are in hand to further relations with the International Cartographic Association and the International Study Group on History and Pedagogy of Mathematics with a view to enhancing awareness among the various bodies of each others interests.

### **Jan de Graeve**

March 2004