

International Institution for the History of Surveying & Measurement

Report of Activities 2006-2007

1. Congress in Munich

One and a half days were devoted to the History of Surveying. A good selection of papers on a wide range of topics was enjoyed by over 50 delegates. This was held at the LVG (Bavarian Survey Department). A visit to the in-house museum was greatly enjoyed, particularly so the store full of lithographic stones – 27 000 in all.

A visit was organised to the Survey display at the Deutsches Museum and this was followed by a special display of the 50 rarest historical surveying books. This was prepared by Jan de Graeve in the Deutsches Museum Library and was officially opened by FIG President Holger Magel. The display remained for two months and was visited by 1700 people after the Congress.

For the Congress the Group produced a 2007 Calendar using some of the etchings illustrated in the rare book display. Jan de Graeve prepared a 150 page description of the book exhibit which was offered to all delegates on a CD. Whilst all delegates received a copy of each of these items unfortunately no delegate or organisation ordered copies in bulk. Thus the effort to raise money for future work through the sale of these items did not materialise. Hence financing of the extension of the Struve Arc World Heritage Monument into Africa will require external funding.

2. Working week in Hong Kong

Efforts were made to get local interest in running a History session(s) in Hong Kong but unfortunately all efforts came to nothing. Even a trawl of some other S E Asian countries did not produce sufficient offered papers to warrant the effort.

3. Working Week Stockholm 2008

Unlike for Hong Kong where we found zero interest, with Stockholm it is different. This is particularly because it is one of the 10 countries that has part of the Struve World Heritage Monument. It is certainly expected that one or two days of historical sessions can be organised and the possibility of a visit to some of the Struve points is being investigated.

4. Struve World Heritage Monument

Work is progressing on the translation from French to English of the two volumes written by Struve detailing the work on the Arc. This runs to almost 1000 pages. The Norwegian Survey Department has financed the translation relating to some of the content that refers to that

country and it is hoped that other of the ten countries will assist similarly so that the work can be completed.

As mentioned in the last Report, in June 2006 Norway held inauguration ceremonies for two of its Struve Arc points. Both Jan de Graeve and Jim Smith were able to attend in Alta and Hammerfest. Unfortunately neither were able to get to the similar event held in August 2006 by Sweden. Jan de Graeve was at the time attending historical events in Australia organised by John Brock and colleagues. Jim Smith, whilst expecting to go to Sweden had to cancel because of the airport chaos at Heathrow that coincided with the event. This was based in Haparanda and included a visit to points as far as Hammerfest. Some of the other countries including Moldova and Latvia held similar ceremonies. Norwegian and Swedish colleagues invited Vitali Kapjug to the annual Struve Conference in Sweden.

Work continues slowly on efforts to extent the WHM to include the 30th Arc in Eastern Africa, but we will be forced to find external funding.

5. Future events

The Group will continue to strive to improve the image of the surveyor through conferences and exhibitions.

J de Graeve expects to attend the Conference in Quebec in the autumn of 2007 and give a series of talks in Poland in October 2007.

There is an exhibition “Evolution from agricultural measurements to the decimal system”, planned for 15 February to 15 March 2008 in Braene l’allend, South of Brussels.

Jan de Graeve
March 2007