

PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

Mesdames et messieurs, bonjour et bienvenu a la septieme congres de l'Association Canadien de Preservation du Bois. Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 17th annual meeting of the Canadian Wood Preservation Association. We have not met in Montreal since the inaugural meeting in 1980, and we are very pleased to be back in this beautiful and vibrant city. This is also the first year that we have provided simultaneous translation of the presentations. This allows speakers who are more comfortable in French to make their presentations in their language of choice and allows all delegates to hear all presentations in the language they are most familiar with.

The Board of Directors has worked very hard to develop a program that we hope you will find both educational and stimulating. We also hope you will make opportunities to meet old friends and make new ones during the next few days.

The program this year focuses on "What the customer wants". It begins with our Keynote presentation on some of the recent discussions and decisions on requirements for durability of treated products. While based on the New Zealand experience, it has a lot of relevance to the Canadian situation. The program ends Tuesday afternoon with the symposium on this topic, with a number of specifiers of treated wood discussing their needs in treated wood products.

Considering this conference theme, it is appropriate to reflect on the Canadian Wood Preservation Association and what you, the "customers" of CWPA, the members of the association and attendees at our conventions want, of the association.

When the CWPA was first conceived and established 17 years ago, the founding directors had a concept of an organisation that was different from most existing wood preservation groups such as AWPA and IRG. The CWPA was more inclusive, catering to pest control operators and those interested in short term wood protection in addition to those involved in the pressure treating industry. The organisation has tried to keep this inclusiveness by ensuring that these industries are represented on the Board of Directors and in the annual meeting program.

The primary function of the evolving Association is to provide a forum for transfer and discussion of technical information relevant to the industry. This is accomplished through the two yearly newsletters and the annual convention. The CWPA has never developed into a standards setting organisation as the AWPA did and the current function as an information broker will be the main function of CWPA unless we make fundamental changes to the objectives of the organisation.

A unique feature of the Association is the program planning for the annual meeting. The Board of Directors develops a program theme and a list of appropriate speakers and topics along the decided theme and over a broad range of topics that could be of interest to the

entire membership. There is some room for papers proposed for presentation by authors, but much less than in other organisations. Does this format work for you , our customer?

The CWPA has remained largely a volunteer organisation with minimal paid support from a secretariat and primary responsibility for operation and organisation of the annual activities borne by the Board of Directors. So far, this system has worked well, allowing us to develop an adequate surplus of operating funds without having to raise membership and attendance fees for many years. However, as a volunteer organisation, it is inevitable that the organisation of our events will not always be as smooth as in those groups with a substantial paid secretariat.

I do not imply by the above comments that I personally feel that the CWPA needs to change its mandate and operation. The Association “works” for me. However I do want to stimulate your thoughts on how you think the Association could be improved. Please make your opinions known to me and the rest of the Board. Also we welcome your personal involvement and hope you will join the Association if you are not already a member. We also welcome your contributions to our newsletters and we are always open to new Board members, if you are willing to give some of your free time to this Association.

Again, I thank you for your support of the Association through your attendance this week and I hope that you will find this meeting personally rewarding. Thank you.

Paul Cooper
President