



IN THE TRENCHES

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From the President's Desk

Greetings LICO Members,

As I start my term as president of LICO, I would have to say I'm honoured to hold this position and I will do my best to serve you.

I would like to thank Jamie Turvey for his commitment and dedication as president for the last two years.

Another great convention is behind us, well attended and with a great line up of speakers. I hope everyone was able to make it. I'd like to thank my wife, Dana, and Matt Williams' wife, Alisia, for organizing the spouse/guest program this year. Please reach out to them if you have any suggestions for next year.

Discussions have been coming up frequently about catching a non-licensed contractor in the act. Remember, we as contractors can help out by capturing them on camera. There should also be a geo tag in the photo allowing for a time stamp. This may help Andy Kester reduce steps by not having to give another warning.

Willy has predicted an early spring. The temperature has been hovering around the freezing mark in the month of February, causing a lot of freezing rain. Let's hope it gets it out of its system so we can all have a little more time to work this spring.

Have a great spring,
Jason Van Gorp

That is one good thing about this world...there are always sure to be more springs. *L.M. Montgomery*

The earth laughs in flowers. *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Spring, a lovely reminder of how beautiful change can be. *Unknown*

Spring is the time of plans and projects. *Leo Tolstoy*



Highlights from the 61st LICO Convention, Jan. 22 – 24, 2019 - Franklin Kains, Convention Coordinator, LICO

This years convention has come and gone and another successful one it was.

During the two days of the conference itself, there were a number of most interesting presentations. Jacqui Empson Laporte of OMAFRA talked of the changing views of society towards draining of farmland. This was followed by a video presentation of Dr. Chris Winslow of Ohio State University who talked of the serious problem of the algae blooms in Lake Erie. He outlined the significant contribution that farmland runoff is making to these blooms and what is and can be done about it. Following his presentation, Mel Luymes introduced us to a controlled drainage demonstration project, which is to be installed in Huron County this year. This system will be on rolling rather than flat land and it should, among other benefits, reduce the release of nutrients to the waterways. Mel invited everyone to come to the field day on June 15th to watch the installation. These three talks from the convention as well as several others will be posted soon on the LICO website.

On Wednesday afternoon there was a lively roundtable discussion on the emerging issue of winter wheat roots plugging tiles. The discussion was led by Matt Williams (Williams Drainage) and Peter Johnson (LICO environmental advocate). They both presented their experiences and solicited observations from the contractors attending.

At the banquet, an Honourary Life Membership was bestowed upon Jim Tait of Grand Valley for his years of innovation in the drainage industry and his service to the association. It was presented by Peter Darbishire. Photo right - Peter Darbyshire, Jamie Turvey and Jim Tait.



At the convention, the DSAO presented their McNeely-Taillon Award to John Johnston, former Drainage Coordinator at OMAFRA (photo below left). In addition, they awarded both Sid Vander Veen (photo below centre) and John Johnston (photo below right) Honourary Membership to DSAO for their contribution over the years to the field of municipal drainage.



The conference tour this year was to Labatt Brewery . There were 53 participants who enjoyed watching beer being made, over 2,000,000 bottles per day. The tour was moved to Tuesday afternoon to allow for travel home on Thursday afternoon

By the numbers, there were 254 registered for the convention, similar to last year's record attendance. Both the banquet (at 273) and the lunch on Wednesday (at 300) drew the largest numbers ever. All 28 booth spaces were taken up which is an indication the convention is drawing more suppliers than ever to exhibit.

The Flipside of Precision is an Old Standby - Paul Mahon, Ontario Farmer, Jan. 22, 2019

For 20 years we have talked a lot about precision cropping. That is, precisely delivering the right amount of inputs to a small block of cropland, to optimize the profit.

It requires satellites, precision application equipment, yield maps, multiple years of observation, rear-looking guesswork, and apparently the accumulation of reams of data that only a few keeners really get. And a burgeoning discussion about to whom the data belongs.

The results have been there, but not really. Our rows are straighter. There is less operator fatigue. The overall inputs budget has probably shifted down a few percentage points, while the yield may have gone up. All in all, has precision farming really found its place in two decades, or will it ever? I don't know; it does not enthuse me as a game-changer. Yet it gets promoted so much.

As technology goes, has it set the world on fire? In the time that we have been talking precision farming, many other things have occurred. Precision farming did not save this year's crop from the dead loss of toxin and harvest issues. Not that it was supposed to.

Meanwhile, an old technology has just plowed along with little fanfare. Most farmers tile drain whenever they can, because it is probably the best return on an investment you can make in farming. It is conceptually the flip side of precision farming, long-term technology that works away automatically on the underground square.

People have been tile draining for 50 or more years, and although there has certainly been a technological evolution in how it was installed, not much has changed.

Farmers themselves have led a second wave of tile draining in the past 10 years, tiling at a tighter interval because obviously the original spacings on tile left areas between where the benefit was lessened.

I just find it ironic that farmers have been going gangbusters with tile, with hardly any help from the experts. The amount spent on tile must exceed the amount spent on precision cropping. There are no seminars on tile and precious little research. Is there even a tile specialist beyond the very capable installation companies?

I don't recall ever having anyone pitch me on tile drainage, in a mailbox otherwise full of funeral prepayment, prostate exams, timber sales, and discounts at Foodland.

We all know tile drainage is going to pay off, we just know. We have always known.

It is also a 100 per cent tax write-off in the year the work is done, which is nothing to sniff at. It is farming's last great tax incentive, which, to be honest, is more of a historical happening than a business strategy.

There is SOME research on tile, mostly its effect on runoff and also, some research continues to see if tiles could ever be used effectively to deliver water back to the plant roots during dry times. It seems to me that is an idea we have been talking about as long as precision farming.

An item in last week's paper mentioned a new Huron County research project involving tile and control gates that shut off the drainage systems when they aren't needed, thus sub-irrigating a crop. It has worked before on flat land but this project will look at tile laterals on precise contours with a 0.1 per cent grade to allow the control gates to work.

Well, I almost wept that I got to print an article on tile drainage!

OMAFRA Report - Tim Brook

Greetings!

This is my first report for "IN THE TRENCHES" as the Drainage Program Coordinator, having started in the role on January 7, 2019. At the LICO Convention in January, I had the privilege of meeting many of you, as well as 'introducing myself' during some of the meetings. We may have previously met at the Primary and Advanced Drainage Courses that I taught between 2012 and 2017 or in the field during an inspection with Andy Kester. If we have not met yet, I am sure we will interact at some point in the future. I am looking forward to working with the drainage industry. If you need to contact me, I can be reached as follows:

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Agricultural Tile Drainage Installation Act Courses:

- The Primary Drainage course was offered twice this winter from January 14 to 18, 2019 and January 28 to February 1, 2019.
- The Advanced Drainage course was not offered this winter but if interested, please contact Ridgetown College so that they can gauge demand for a future offering of the course. Contact Loree Elgie at 519-674-1500 ext. 63273 or lrelgie@uoguelph.ca.

Inspections: The following is a summary of 2018 (actual) and 2019 (planned) inspections by OMAFRA under the Agricultural Tile Drainage Installation Act.

Inspection Year	Inspection Type					
	Machine	Business	Operator	Complaint	Routine	Unlicensed
2018 (actual)	11	5	8	0	2	1
2019 (planned)	4	3	15	1	0	1

Licensing: Please remember to

- Keep your personal home address updated so that we can ensure that your operator licence renewals are sent to the correct location.
- ensure that any machines purchased are properly licenced by OMAFRA prior to using in the field.
- To let OMAFRA know if you sell a machine to either another contractor or outside of Ontario so that we can update our licence computer system.

Passings

HODGSON, Dean - Dean Joseph Hodgson was born in the Sarnia General Hospital, the son of Jack M. and Blanche (Rollins) Hodgson on August 7th, 1933 and passed away on December 12th, 2018. Dean considered himself the Maple Leafs #1 fan. He also closely followed the Blue Jays, Lions and Tigers. Dean loved to skate and did so into his 80's, walk, read and debate (about anything). Agriculture was his vocation and he farmed his own land from 1960 - 1990 but continued his interest in agriculture and drainage, especially Lambton County and the Rainy River District to the very end. As a young man Dean worked with Marshall and Milway, Ontario Land Surveyors and felt the basics he learned in those years guided him through the many pursuits he followed in the rest of his life. Dean was involved in farm drainage for over 40 years (1962 - 2004) as an owner, operator and drainage inspector. Draining the land and solving problems was a passion. Farming, drainage and friendly people were the focus of his life and he attempted to enjoy every minute of every day. Dean always enjoyed the simpler things in life and so, as he said, "luckily never required much money", though he never married he was always happy with whatever he had. Some of his happiest years (and toughest) were spent on his Emo cattle farm in the Rainy River District between 1978 and 1990 while paying 22% interest. At Emo he also served as municipal Drainage Superintendent for eight municipalities and enjoyed working with Councils and farm groups. Dean was also involved with Emo minor hockey for several years. During these years in the Rainy River District he often said he worked with, "some of the finest people in the world" who made even the cattle business seem enjoyable. In his later years he was the author of several small books on Lambton County history. He considered himself an amateur historian and was a member of the Lambton County Historical Society for several years and the recently formed Sarnia Historical Society. Dean was predeceased by his parents Jack (1974) and Blanche (1987), brother-in-law Ray Tomlin (2000), his brother John Hodgson (2012) and sister Donna Hodgson (2018). He is survived by two sisters Della Tomlin of Sarnia and Judith and her husband Geoff Sutherland of Kelowna, BC. He is also survived by Shelley, David and Dean Sutherland along with several other nieces and nephews. Memorial donations made to St. Joseph's Hospice or a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family. **"The family wishes to thank the entire staff at St. Joseph's Hospice for their compassionate care and a special thanks to Jim Maw for all the help he provided us at this time"**

JOHNSON, David - David George Johnson (March 2, 1943 – January 13, 2019): It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of David Johnson, age 75, from a rare and aggressive neurodegenerative disease called PSP. Born at Claremont, to the late Melvin and Laura (Ormerod) Johnson. Beloved husband for 54 years of Joyce Lewis, and loving father of Sherry (Joe Burns), Brian (Adrienne), Dwayne (Barb), Brendon (Janice), Denise Clarke (Geoff) and Mathew Johnson (Lindsay). Proud grandfather of Marshall, Cameron, Drew, Evan, Sara, Riley, Nathan, Carter, Owen, Keegan, Jasper and Kayla. Loving brother of Carol Davidson (Harold), Gordon Johnson (Ruth), and Helen Bradley (Guy). David graduated from the Ryerson Institute of Technology as a Civil Technologist, then continued studies to become a civil Professional Engineer. He did engineering work for more than 45 years in Stratford and had his own firm, Johnson Engineering Consultants. He retired in 2013 when his eldest son, Brian, took over the company. David and Joyce were married in 1964 in Stouffville. They began married life in Milverton, and later moved to Stratford in 1972. David was dedicated to his family and his community. He served on Milverton village council for 7 years, and as president of the Stratford Children's Aid and Stratford Kiwanis Club, as well as accepting various roles with Central United Church. His efforts have been recognised with the 2004 Ontario Volunteer Service Award for over 30 years of volunteer service. He also received the Legion of Honour for 25, 30, and 35 years of service, the Mel Osborne Fellowship Award and a Lifetime Honorary Membership from the Stratford Kiwanis Club. David was well-known for his friendly nature, curiosity, sense of humour, enjoyment of travel, willingness to help out, and above all, his love for his large family. David's family would like to thank the staff of Knollcrest Lodge for several years of special care. As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to Sleeping Children Around the World, PSP Society of Canada, Heart and Stroke Canada, or Diabetes Canada.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 21 - 23, 2020

LICO Conference

Best Western Lamplighter Inn

591 Wellington Rd,

London, Ontario N6C 4R3



June 15, 2019

Huron County Drainage Day

Passings

MYSLIK, Vicki - 67, lived her life with a grace that is so rarely seen. Always thinking of others and not wanting a fuss, she focused on her family's best interests before her own.

On Feb. 27, 2019, after a 10-year battle with breast cancer, Vicki passed away peacefully with her husband Jim by her side.

Victoria Louise Anderson was born on Sept. 19, 1951 in Oshawa to the late John and Marcia Anderson. Her name was fitting as she always had a love for the British royal family, waking up early most recently to catch Harry and Megan's wedding. She is survived by two loyal older brothers Donald Anderson (Gwynn) and David Anderson (Mary Ann). Vicki moved to Toronto after graduating high school and worked for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food where she met her loving husband James Myslik. It was a chance meeting at the Canadian National Exhibition that led to a 40-year fairytale marriage and the birth of two wonderful daughters Amanda, 36, and Jaime (John), 32.

After short terms at two other ministries, her wish to become a stay at home mom came true with the birth of her daughters. Living in Guelph she made every day an adventure. She volunteered for countless field trips and was a leader at various levels of Girl Guides, to ensure her daughters had as many opportunities as possible.

First diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008 she was in remission until 2017, when the disease returned. Never complaining and never accepting worry from her family, Vicki lived each day on her own terms. This past summer Vicki and her family travelled to Newfoundland, rounding out family vacations to all 10 provinces. Recently her family grew to include a future son-in-law John Heil, grand-kitty Grace Kelly, and equine friend Charlie Brown. Vicki left this world more loved than she could ever have known and will be missed each and every day.

Special thank you to Dr. Hood, Dr. Robinson, Dr. Kuk, Helen and the rest of the staff at the Guelph General Hospital and Hospice Wellington.

As per Vicki's wishes cremation will take place, with a private family interment at a cemetery in Guelph, followed by a celebration of life for friends and family at a future date. Anyone wishing to offer support can make donations in memory of Vicki to the Breast Cancer Society of Canada or Hospice Wellington.

A tree will be planted in memory of Victoria L. (Vicki) Myslik in the Wall-Custance Memorial Forest, University of Guelph Arboretum. Dedication service, Sunday, September 15, 2019 at 2:30 pm.