

Annual Report – 2013

Our first full year under our new society name representing the broader scale of our boundaries has seen positive feedback from members of the community and our local society members. We continue to build on the uniqueness of practicing in Northwestern Ontario through continued development and updating of our new website, and focused marketing.

This year the members voted to re-elect Chair, a role I am pleased to continue with as we work to strengthen the local society, its members and community awareness of the role architects play in their communities. Also elected this past year to Secretary-Treasurer was Andy Puiatti, intern architect. Andy brings dedication and energy to the role and together we worked with local city planners to envision the Urban Parkette project described in the OAA Special Funding section and available for viewing on our society website. We have also formalized the societies meeting schedule to occur the third Thursday four times per year in February, May, August and November. This past fall we were also thankful to have OAA President, Bill Birdsell and Executive Director, Kristie Doyle visit our society where we had the opportunity to go through the agenda and share our societies issues and concerns in the Mariners Hall at the *Bight Restaurant* on Thunder Bay's waterfront. We look forward to and welcome the next President's Tour in Thunder Bay.

Our Society continues to sponsor a \$500.00 award for an arts student participating in the Lakehead University Juried Art Show, showcasing the fine arts program student works. We have lost our architectural technology diploma program at our local community college, after two years of discussions and brainstorming with College Administration, members of the local architectural and engineering community and previous college graduates. We are deciding what to do with another \$500.00 award we used to provide to the top graduating student of the Architectural technology program.

OAA Special Funding

Significant enhancements to our local society website and the introduction of our "**Urban Design Award**" had been made possible during the past year through the OAA Special Project Funding. To highlight the new award we have added a new page to the website titled "**In The Community**" where we will be highlighting the awards as well as members participation and contributions to community involvement and initiatives.

Through the generous funding of the OAA Special Funds, this past year our society has taken the Urban Design Awards program to an exciting new level. The funding was received to provide a commemorative tree and bench through the City of Thunder Bay's Urban Forestry program, dedicating the tree and bench to an urban park in recognition of the recipient of the Urban Design Award. Last year, Special Funding was provided to award to three separate recipients and the challenge that we faced was determining where to locate the commemorative trees and benches within the cities urban parks.

After correspondence and meetings with the City Parks Department, society members felt that the additional funding should be put toward enhancement of an urban space where the additional trees and benches would have more significant an impact. In the end we decided to turn our attention to an Urban Parkette located in front of Thunder Bay's main performing arts theatre and at a prominent intersection along one of the cities newly defined Urban Image Routes.

Urban Design Award

“Reflecting excellence in architecture and urban design - recognizing a local business / property owner who has renovated, built or developed a property (building or landscape) that provides a positive contribution to the quality of our built urban environment.”

NWOSA Members vote on a project deserving of their “Urban Design Award” the Spring of each year. The recipient of this award will have a Tree and Bench with a Plaque recognizing their projects positive contribution to the built urban environment installed in an urban setting chosen in cooperation with the City of Thunder Bay Parks Division.

This Award recognizes a building or group of buildings that contribute to, and support, an urban design initiative. The nomination may be for an individual building or group of buildings, of high architectural standard, which achieve urban design excellence through their unique relationship with their immediate surroundings because of siting, massing, and pedestrian amenities. The building(s) will also contribute to defining a special relationship with the neighboring urban fabric.

In an effort to recognize all three 2012 recipients in an installment within an urban setting – NWOSA executive (Cory Stechyshyn | Andy Puiatti) worked with City of Thunder Bay Parks representatives (Werner Schwar | Brad Doff) to select an urban location that would benefit from an installation of several trees and benches.

The city owned land adjacent the Magnus Theatre at the corner of Red River Road and Algoma Streets was chosen for its highly visible location adjacent the live performance theatre and its presence along one of the city’s most historical image routes, the former Dawson Trail. This July six trees and a park bench were installed in recognition of the 2012 recipients as the beginning of a much grander vision for this strip of land.



A parkette design is being developed through the volunteer efforts of NWOSA members and Werner Schwar (also a Landscape Architect) that will see the installation of several more trees, benches and other soft and hard landscape elements, public art and interpretive elements to recognize this urban strip alongside the Red River Road Image Route.



I am looking forward to another two years as Chair of the Northwestern Ontario Society of Architects and promoting architecture within our region.

Our year-end 2013 financial report is attached.

Best of success to all Societies and members in 2014,

Cory R. Stechyshyn, OAA
Northwestern Ontario Society of Architects – Chair

