Summer Seminars

THE FIRST SUMMER SEMINAR WAS held at Alberta College in Edmonton from July 3 to 10, 1962, immediately prior to the second annual conference. The planning committee consisted of Mel Sillito, Tom Atkinson, Gene Wasylyk and John Cherniwchan. The seminar was designed for elementary teachers facing implementation of the "new math" curriculum following the provincial authorization of the textbook series Seeing Through Arithmetic. The conference was a success with 157 teachers attending; a further 50 teachers had to be turned away. Of those who attended, 67 stayed in the College at a cost of $28 for the week. The registration fee was $5, which included MCATA membership. Lecturers Merrill Hill and Ray Cleveland were provided by the textbook publishers, W. J. Gage and Co. The six local instructors were N. Purvis, H. Ross, J. Kirkconnell, H. Oldham, E. Palmeter and J. Kirkpatrick.

In July 1963, a junior high seminar was held in Edmonton, and an elementary seminar in Red Deer. Both seminars were one week long.

In 1964, junior high seminars were held in Edmonton, Red Deer and Calgary.

In 1965, no MCATA summer seminars were sponsored, in view of the special summer short courses offered at both provincial universities.

In 1966, following the 1965 publication of Alberta Education's "Review of Secondary Programs," the Department of Education and the University of Alberta sponsored summer seminars for secondary teachers with a focus on background mathematics. The council executive decided that teachers needed work

on teaching techniques as well, so one-week seminars were planned for the first week in July: the elementary seminar was in Edmonton and the secondary seminar in Red Deer. Fees were set at $10, plus membership. The elementary seminar, directed by Joan Kirkpatrick, was held at Concordia College, where most of the 175 teachers attending stayed in residence. Merrill Hill was again the major speaker, courtesy of Gage. The secondary seminar, held in Red Deer and directed by A. Evanson, had three local teachers conducting sessions for the 61 teachers who attended.

In 1967, the executive planned one-week seminars in Calgary, Edmonton and Medicine Hat, including elementary, junior high and secondary levels at each centre. The seminars were to be held the first week in July at no cost to MCATA members. During the executive meeting planning discussion, it was suggested that the Department of Education should assume the responsibility for providing courses in the teaching of mathematics, for all teachers, and if necessary that courses be made compulsory! No report was available on which seminars were actually held.

Early in the 1967–68 school year, the executive conducted a questionnaire to ascertain teachers' needs and interests to get direction for organizing summer seminars for 1968. No details of the results are available, but, in March 1968, the executive decided that summer seminars were no longer serving the function intended, in view of the large number of teachers attending university summer sessions.

The next summer session was held in July 1974, again in response to curriculum changes—this time the

introduction of the metric system. Joan Kirkpatrick directed a metric workshop for elementary teachers from July 3 to 5 at Concordia College in Edmonton. The workshop sessions were conducted by the elementary mathematics consultants from Edmonton Public Schools. About 100 teachers, mostly from rural Alberta, attended.

Film Circuits

BETWEEN 1964 AND 1972, FILM circuits provided a major source of members and money, as well as a service to members.

Math 341

Math 341 was a mathematics course at the University of Calgary, developed by Sid Linstedt. The course was originally on videotape for use on TV. At the annual meeting in April 1963, the executive was directed to investigate the possibility of obtaining the "TV series on mathematics." At the 1964 annual meeting, the executive reported that the videos not only were expensive but also could not be enlarged enough to be useful for viewing by a large group.

In September 1964, Allan Gibb proposed that the course be put on 16-mm films and circulated throughout the province to centres where at least 15 people interested in junior and senior high mathematics would meet once a week to study two or three of the films. The executive approved this plan, and Len Pallesen was empowered to put the proposal into effect. Len was a fast and efficient worker: by November, 50 films were ready, and 14 centres were set up to view the films. The plan was for MCATA to break even on the venture, but, in September 1965, the net balance in the film account was over $2,200! The records do not indicate the viewing fee, but it did include MCATA membership.

In the first year of the project, MCATA gained hundreds of members, boosting the membership to a record 501. Needless to say, the executive decided to make the films available for the 1965–66 year. Applications went out to all superintendents and to all secretaries of the ATA locals. Len again coordinated circulation. That year, there were six viewing centres (Edmonton, Calgary, Grande Prairie, Cold Lake, Jasper and Edson), and the balance in the film account in August 1966 was over $2,300.

During 1966–67, three viewing centres were organized. Marshall Bye became film coordinator, and a committee was set up to view the films and break them into smaller sets so that teachers would not be tied down to a long series. However, there was little interest in viewing the films in 1967–68, and the executive meeting minutes of April 1968 were the last to mention the Math 341 films.

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