

Fred Tarlton

1962-63 *President*

1963-64 *Past President*

THIRTY YEARS IS A LONG TIME, and I do not remember much about my year as president. I do recall that I spoke to the Council on School Administration at Red Deer and that they surprised me with an honorarium. I thought that a good way to spend it would be to bring greetings from the executive to a math seminar in Grande Prairie. Unfortunately, all I remember about the trip is that after doing my little bit on Monday morning at the start of the seminar, I found that the town had the habit of closing down on Mondays, and I spent a rather uninteresting day

looking at piles of tent-caterpillar moths which covered the streets almost like snowdrifts. These were probably the aftermath (pun not intended) of the miles of bare trees we had seen on our way from Edmonton.

I was involved in other meetings and seminars. At one of them, Tom Atkinson, Harry Johnson and I were consultants for the different grade divisions, along with Lloyd Dulmage, who gave the keynote lectures, and I remember that Tom almost insisted that I change my name to Dick so that the three of us would be Tom, Dick and Harry.

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It's easy to identify people who can't count to two. They're in front of you in the supermarket express lane.

June Henderson,
Nashville Banner

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Tom Atkinson

1962-63 *Senior High Representative*

1963-64 *President*

1964-65 *Past President and Editor*

1967-68 *Editor*

MY FIRST INDICATION THAT AN organization called the Mathematics Council of The Alberta Teachers' Association existed occurred in 1962. Someone phoned me to ask that I be the high school representative on the MCATA executive.

I assume that the ATA, at its Annual General Meeting (AGM), now known as its Annual Representative Assembly (ARA), had previously passed a resolution leading to the formation of subject area specialist councils. I assume also that

some executive members were drafted [appointed] because I have no recollection of having been elected to any position.

I recall the names of only two persons (besides me) on the MCATA executive in 1962-63: John Cherniwchan, teacher at Salisbury High School; and ATA staff advisor Mel Sillito. I am sure there were others, but my memory fails me.

In that year, we held several executive meetings where we discussed possible areas of influence of the

Council. I do not recall any definite sense of direction being established.

In the following year, two changes occurred. One affected the immediate activities of MCATA; the other affected my career. The first change was the authorization of new textbook series to be used in teaching elementary school mathematics in Alberta. Though three series were authorized—one by Ginn, one by Addison-Wesley and one by Scott-Foresman—only Scott-Foresman's *Seeing Through Arithmetic (STA)* caused any commotion. MCATA faced its first challenge: to help teachers adjust to using STA and to help parents understand its characteristics.

The second change affected me personally and MCATA indirectly. I was asked to be president of MCATA, and, at approximately the same time, I was invited to join the staff of the Department of Elementary Education in the Faculty of Education. Because I felt secure and content in my position at Victoria Composite High School, I was reluctant to move to a different venue. The dilemma was solved temporarily by my taking leave from Edmonton Public Schools and becoming a sessional instructor at the university for one year. (I served two years as a sessional instructor before being appointed to a tenured position with the university.)

While I contemplated the challenges in summer 1963, another problem arose in my mind. What might be the implications of my being president of an ATA-sponsored council while being part of teacher education at the university? I shared

my concern with Dean Coutts and was relieved to learn that he perceived the dual role as a positive factor. In subsequent years, I was surprised and pleased by the degree of cooperation among the several institutions concerned with education in Alberta.

The extensive contributions of Joan Kirkpatrick (now Joan Worth) to MCATA began in 1963–64. As a teacher in the Demonstration School housed in Corbett Hall, she used STA and helped other teachers and parents to understand the series.

Len Pallesen of Calgary became president in 1964–65. The ATA had obtained a set of films explaining the structure of the so-called "new mathematics." Under Len's direction, MCATA developed a circuit whereby the films were sent to numerous centres in rural Alberta so that teachers could assemble during the evenings or on weekends to promote their own inservice education. I remember the year 1964–65 as a busy one in the life of MCATA.

Gradually, I withdrew from the Council's activities. I recall the presidencies of Ted Rempel and Al Neufeld. I remember the sponsorship of regional meetings of NCTM, one in Calgary and one in Edmonton. Somewhere along the line, the *MCATA Newsletter* came into existence, and I am sure that George Cathcart had a hand in developing it.

I recognize that MCATA has played a strong role in mathematics education and undoubtedly continues to do so. My participation in it is but a tiny blip on the radar screen of recollections.

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 When you aim
 for perfection,
 you discover
 that it is a
 moving target.

George Fisher
