

WITH ONE VOICE

A History of Municipal Governance in Manitoba



Gordon Goldsbrough

For the Association of Manitoba Municipalities

AMM SET TO

celebrate

10th anniversary 8 page Pull-out section



Photo Captions

Below: Joe Masi, Executive Director of the AMM, receives the Centennial Organization Award from The Honourable John Harvard, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba on April 23, 2006.

Above: Inaugural meeting of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, March 14-15, 1905

One anniversary becomes two

Celebrating a 10 year anniversary is a significant achievement for any organization. For many, one decade in existence marks the first real milestone and suggests longevity. It seems that if you have made it to 10 years the possibilities are limitless – 25 years seems suddenly within reach, or even 50 years...maybe even a century!

A couple of years ago, the AMM began to think about how we would mark our own upcoming 10 year anniversary. Since the amalgamation of UMM and MAUM back in 1999, time has passed swiftly as we have continued the work of our predecessors as one united association, much like the original association that was formed back in 1905. While many years in between were spent operating successfully as two distinct organizations, we have indeed come full circle over the last century, and returned to one organization representing all of Manitoba's municipalities.

This fact was brought to our attention back in 2006 as thoughts of our 10th anniversary were just beginning to form. Dr. Gordon Goldsborough, then the President of the Manitoba Historical Society, contacted the AMM to inform us that we would receive a Centennial Organization Award from the Society. This award recognizes non-profit groups that have operated continuously in Manitoba for over 100 years in various areas, including politics. Dr. Goldsborough was well-aware of the activities of the AMM, not only because of his involvement

with the Society, but through personal history – his great-grandfather, John Fletcher Goldsborough, was a delegate at the inaugural meeting of the UMM back in 1905. Dr. Goldsborough even wrote an article about that meeting for *Manitoba History* magazine, which was reprinted in *The Municipal Leader*.

Is it any wonder that, somewhere between receiving the prestigious Centennial Award in 2006 and beginning to plan in earnest for our 10th anniversary in early 2007, we had the ambitious idea to write a history book? Suddenly we weren't just celebrating 10 years – we had a century to worry about! During which, of course, one organization became two and then one again – driven by powerful and passionate men and women with a need to make a difference both in their home communities and province-wide. The UMM, MAUM and AMM have all played a part in shaping Manitoba's growth as a province, and the AMM board of directors felt strongly that this is a story that needs to be told.

Thankfully, our association with Dr. Goldsborough has become a valued friendship, and he agreed to research and to write our history book. This book – which we have aptly titled *With One Voice* – is a gift. It is a gift from Dr. Goldsborough to the AMM, from the AMM to our members, and from our members to future generations of men and women who, like you, will be driven with a need to make a difference.

Read on for a brief look at some of the research that we did to prepare for the writing of the history book, along with a sneak preview. We also introduce you to our author, Dr. Gordon Goldsborough.





Photo Captions

Above: Many municipal officials follow their parent's footsteps into municipal office. Percy Beachell (above) is a former Reeve of the RM of Rosser, as is his son, Alan Beachell.

Below: Back, L to R: Glen Carlson, Marg Hodgson, Rick Borotsik, Stu Briese - Front, L to R: Manson Moir, Les Magnusson, Alan Beachell, Jim Knight, Ed Peltz - AMM office, June, 2007

Let the reminiscing begin

The most time consuming part of any writing project is almost always the research. It is also perhaps the most enjoyable. Meeting face-to-face with the people who were "there" is exciting, to say the least! One of the first research activities we planned was a meeting with former presidents of the AMM, UMM and MAUM. We tracked down as many as we could (and missed a few, unfortunately) for a day of questions, answers, and reminiscing that took place in June, 2007.

One of the questions we asked of the group was, "Why did you become involved in municipal politics?"

Not surprisingly, a few themes are very evident in their answers:

- To make a difference, to be part of a "progressive" community, to put back into the community, and to provide a voice.
- A number of people asked me to let my name stand for Reeve. My father had been on council for many years.
- I was asked. It was an opportunity and I accepted it. I felt that if the people wanted me there then they had the right to expect me to do a good job. I took this as a responsibility to the trust that they placed in me.
- I really thought I could make a difference.
- Had several people ask me to be involved. I was working with and for people and dealing with all sorts of issues.
- A group of people convinced me to run for council.
- I became involved in municipal government because a person I respected in the community who was the mayor told me I should get involved... He believed in my ability, probably more than I believed in my own.
- My father was involved in municipal politics for years, so I had some knowledge of what was involved. I really enjoy being part of the solution to people's problems.
- I felt that I could make a contribution to our community – making it a better place to live, work and play. I always felt the decisions we make should be in the best interest of our community as a whole.





Photo Caption

Above: Pictured: On stairs, L to R: Bill Linden, Stuart Briese, Bud Birch, Jae Eadie - 2nd row, L to R: Alan Beachell, Al Ducharme, Manson Moir, Rick Borotsik - Front row, L to R: Art Dyck, Ed Peltz, Dave Harms, Larry Walker, Margaret Hodgson, Jack Nicol, James Knight, and Ray Sigurdson

Lunch and laughter

A look back at the past isn't just about research. It's about the efforts of many people, and the gratitude we feel today for the work those people did during their time of service. In appreciation for their many years of dedication to the AMM, UMM, and MAUM, the AMM hosted a past-president and honorary life luncheon on May 22, 2008. Our guests were treated to a wonderful lunch, a visit with old friends and colleagues, and a walk down memory lane.

Our emcee for the day was President Ron Bell, who told those assembled, "Change does come to municipal associations, but don't think that the role you played hasn't been noticed – it has. You laid the foundation for where we are today and where we are going, and we can only hope that our current and future board members can be as effective as you were. Once again, thank you."

Our guests graciously shared their memories – some funny, some heartfelt, and all precious. Here is a sampling:

"The most rewarding, and most satisfying, level of politics that I've been involved in is that of municipal politics, and I share that today with all of you who are still involved or were involved with municipal politics, that we will always be able to take that satisfaction with us, that at that level, we DID make a difference."

- Rick Borotsik, MAUM Past-President, AMM Honourary Life Member

"I've attended a lot of the conventions of the AMM and I feel so good when it is one organization speaking with one voice. I can see the results now and there were some people having questions – should we merge or shouldn't we – but I think 10 years later, when we see the end result, we wouldn't want it any different."

- Art Dyck, AMM Honourary Life Member

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"When I look out at the crowd and I see some of my close friends, we travelled many miles together. I know stories!"

- Jim Knight, UMM Past-President, AMM Honourary Life Member

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"Regarding the plaid jackets (formerly worn by UMM directors), I can honestly say that the first time I put mine on, was probably the proudest time I ever had."

- Bud Birch, AMM Honourary Life Member

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Judie and Bud Birch look through a photo album.

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"Believe it or not, not only does my jacket still fit, but my pants still fit!"

- Ed Peltz, UMM Past-President, AMM Honourary Life Member

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Plaid jackets - UMM Convention, 1981 - L to R - Jim Knight, Reme Depape, Howard Nixon, Dave Harms, Ray Howard, Manson Moir, Joe Van de Polle, Ray Sigurdson, Alan Beachell, Mike Antonation. Photo by Eva and Howard Nixon

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"We are all friends, and that is something that you can never put a value on in any organization – the friendships that you've developed over the years."

- Manson Moir, UMM Past-President

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UMM Past-Presidents Manson Moir and Dave Harms

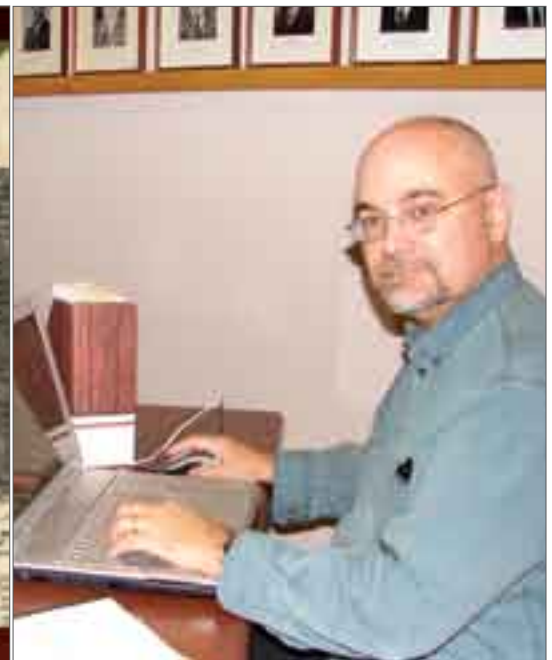
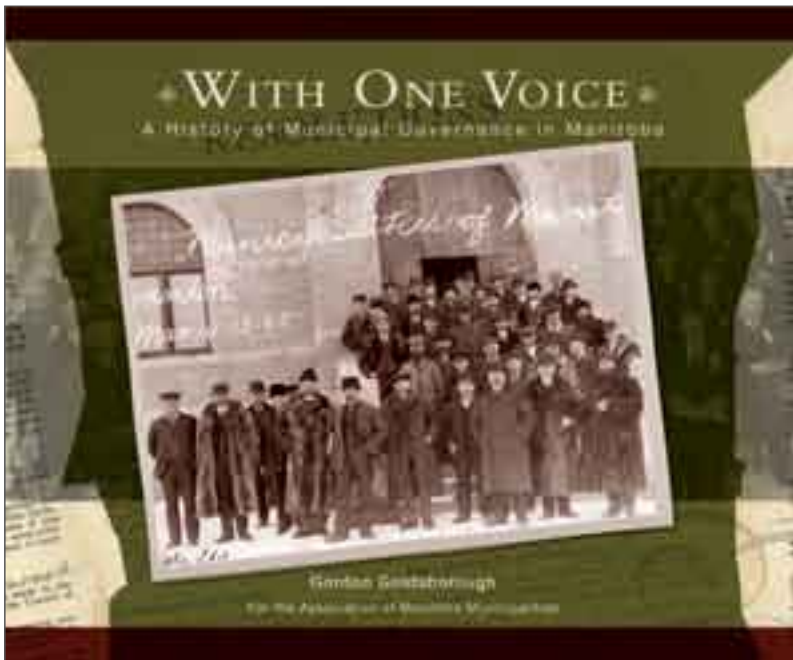


Photo Caption

Above Right: Gordon Goldsborough, Author of "With One Voice", puts some finishing touches on the book at the AMM office.

An author at work

Gordon Goldsborough is a member of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Manitoba, and Director of the University's Delta Marsh Field Station on Lake Manitoba. He is a water quality specialist concerned with the impacts of humans on lakes and wetlands. He is the Chair of the Lake Manitoba Stewardship Board, a member of the Manitoba Water Council, and a representative for Canada on the International Joint Commission's International Red River Board.

Besides his scientific interests, Goldsborough is involved in the Manitoba heritage community, being the webmaster and a Past President of the Manitoba Historical Society, an editor of Manitoba History magazine, and a member of the Management Committee for Dalnavert Museum (in Winnipeg).

With such a full slate of responsibilities, we asked Gordon why he decided to take on the ambitious task of writing *With One Voice*. Not surprisingly, his natural love of learning played a key role in his decision. He told us, "I am interested in Manitoba history generally, and have learned so much about our province that I didn't know before as a result of the research I did for this book."

A keen interest in municipal governance played a part as well. Gordon stated, "As I maintain in the first chapter, municipal government is most important level of government; the one that affects us most directly. By comparison, the roles of the federal and provincial government are more abstract."

Because Manitoba has such a long and storied history of municipal governance, beginning in the late 1800's (which is the starting point of *With One Voice*), one would think the topic may be well-documented in the record books already. Not so. "Surprisingly, municipal governance has never been examined in any substantial way by earlier books on Manitoba history," Gordon explains, "which is another reason why the project appealed to me."

A final reason for taking on the project is closer to home for Goldsborough. He has personal connections to municipal affairs. "My grandfather, Joseph Goldsborough was a long-time municipal councillor in the RM of Macdonald. And my great-grandfather, Fletcher Goldsborough, who was the Reeve of the RM of Macdonald, attended the founding meeting of the UMM in 1905."

WITH ONE VOICE

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Excerpt from With One Voice: Councillors, Reeves and Mayors

The chair of a municipal council can have any of several titles: Reeve, Mayor, or Head of Council. Reeve derives from the Anglo-Saxon word “gerefa” for “head of household or steward;” while Mayor is a softened form of “major,” derived from the Latin *magnus* meaning “greater or larger,” a recognition of the Mayor’s greater power compared to Councillors. Traditionally, Reeve has been used in rural municipalities whereas a Mayor was found in a village, town, or city. In the early days of the UMM, they wielded different powers. A Mayor had the authority to veto by-laws, resolutions and other measures passed by the council, but a Reeve did not.

Early in the twentieth century, anyone wishing to stand for election had to ... be a British subject (born or naturalized), male, over 21 years old, and able to read and write.

Today, the *Municipal Act* allows the terms to be used interchangeably. The title of Reeve is not well known outside Manitoba and, recently, the heads of council for several RMs adopted the title Mayor. Regardless of title, Reeves and Mayors preside over meetings of council, providing leadership and direction, working closely with their Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). In the past, they have held additional responsibilities. The 1873 *Municipal Act* specified that Reeves (and Mayors) would be *ex officio* Justices of the Peace. This could—and did—lead to problems, such as the case of Winnipeg Mayor Frank Cornish who, upon election in 1873, was arrested by his opponent’s supporters on a charge of public intoxication. Later, at court, Cornish was read the charge against him. He pled guilty, left the prisoner’s box, took his place as magistrate, fined himself \$3.00 or seven days in jail, gave a lecture on the evils of liquor, then concluded that, given the prisoner’s excellent moral character, the fine would be remitted.

The qualifications to serve as a municipal councillor, Reeve or Mayor have changed through the years. Early in the twentieth century, anyone wishing to stand for election had to reside in the municipality they would represent or, if non-resident, they had to indicate (in writing) their willingness to accept office if elected. More importantly, they had to own land, worth at least \$100, in the municipality. And they had to be a British subject (born or naturalized), male, over 21 years old, able to read and write. English or French were the implied languages of communication although, in municipalities where most of the residents were new immigrants, this requirement was difficult to enforce. An anonymous Anglophone settler, writing in 1906 to the *Western Municipal News*, described the situation at Ethelbert, where most of the population was “Galician” (Ukrainian) and the municipal council consisted of:

“... four Galicians and one Canadian. Added to this, the Secretary-Treasurer is a Canadian who can only speak English ... most of the Galicians can only speak in their own language, and the Canadians can only speak English, hence neither side can follow or understand the other and it is only by the help of the Reeve, also a Galician, who speaks both languages that a deadlock is avoided ... All resolutions are written first by the Secretary-Treasurer in English, then read to or handed to the Reeve who, in turn, translates to his countrymen. Then ensues the discussion in Galician, after which the Reeve asks by name for a mover and seconder; having got them, the resolution is passed by a series of nods, etc. Then the Secretary-Treasurer writes it up and reads it over to the council, which few understand, and that By-law is passed, for weal or woe. The councillors, by the way, come just as they are in their homespun clothes, and smoke during the meeting a most pungent, evil smelling tobacco, grown by themselves, called homestead tobacco. What makes the matter worse, very few of these men can barely sign their own names. Hence they are entirely unfit to serve in the council ...”



Photo Caption

From left to right: Fall 1995 issue of *Keystone Municipal News*; February 1953 issue of *Western Municipal News*, Final issue of *Mirror on the Urban Scene*, Winter 1998; and *Municipal Leader's* Premier Issue, April 1999.

A look back at the *Municipal Leader*

Has it really been 38 issues? Yes it has – back in April of 1999, the inaugural issue of *The Municipal Leader* was born. The amalgamation of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities and the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities called for an amalgamation of their respective magazines as well. *Keystone Municipal News* and *Mirror on the Urban Scene* were special publications in their own right, as was their predecessor, the *Western Municipal News*. But times were-a-changing and a new magazine fit right into the proactive approach of the new association.

At the time, Managing Editor Terry Ross of Craig Kelman and Associates, the publishing company that has looked after *The Municipal Leader* for all these years, noted that "...we hope it will be the premier municipal magazine in Canada." Terry's prediction has indeed come true, as *The Leader* is not only one of the most informative, but certainly one of the most attractive publications to cross our desks each quarter. If it is true that a "picture is worth 1,000 words" then each photo-filled issue of *The Leader* is an impressive read indeed.

Over the past 10 years we have included special reports covering virtually all the hot topics affecting our members, from Manitoba's roads, to greening of municipalities, to economic development, to housing, to water and wastewater, to municipal technology, not to mention all things infrastructure. Each issue has something special to offer our readers. Each issue we also receive submissions from experts on municipal law and insurance, invite a number of guest writers to submit articles on important topics, and round it all out with stories written by AMM staff on everything from policy issues to member profiles. Finally, each issue includes a popular pictorial known as "Candid Camera" – featuring photos of our membership working, relaxing, and learning at AMM's many events.

We hope you enjoy the "look back at *the Leader*" on our cover this issue, the recap of our 10th anniversary activities, our preview of our upcoming 10th Annual Convention (it's going to be spectacular!), and all the other features we offer you each issue. Here's to another 10 years!