



2005 TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

“SURVEYING INSTRUMENTATION: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE”

Richard L. Elgin, PhD, PLS, PE
Rolla, Missouri

Dr. Richard L. Elgin will speak on the evolution of surveying equipment using a slide show that features his 600-piece collection of early American surveying equipment. A serious collector and researcher of antique surveying equipment, Dick illustrates the full range of American compasses, from early (late 18th century) plain compasses through vernier, solar and late (early 20th century) "railroad" compasses. Also included are transits, beginning with one of the earliest (Young, c. late 1830's) and progressing through to a solar transit. Dick's collection also has in it calculating devices, pocket compasses, levels, sextants, and one of the five existing W. & L.E. Gurley dividing engines. In this slide show, Dick reviews his collection, speaks of his experiences collecting equipment, gives biographical information about the makers represented, discusses technical aspects of some of the pieces shown, illustrates how the equipment has evolved since about 1780, gives information about the value of such equipment, and gives pointers on how to get started collecting surveying equipment.

1:30 – 2:30 PM
Tuesday, May 3, 2005
Conference Room 503

USGS Mid-Continent Mapping Center
1400 Independence Road
Rolla, MO