

# SaGES 2025

Mike Thomson, BCIT Surveying and Mapping – 1979

**Surveying and Geomatics Educators Society**

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS

- › The Request:
- › *It's not a terribly demanding keynote address*
- › *It's more a less a light-hearted 30-minute icebreaker*

**SaGES**

Not: **Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons**

# Me In Surveying

- › **1979 BCIT Surveying and Mapping**
  - Magna Cum Laude
- › **1979 Control Surveys – Canadian High Arctic**
- › **1981-1983 BCLS Article Student (LSIT)**
- › **May 1983 BCLS #634**
  - Gold Medalist
- › **1983-1993 Private Practice BC Land Surveyor**
- › **1993-2007 City of Vancouver (City Surveyor 2000-07)**
- › **2007-2019 Surveyor General of BC**
  - 2017 ESRI – SAG (Special Achievement in GIS) Award
- › **2020-2025 ABCLS Board of Management**
  - 2023 Champlain Award Winner
  - 2025 Life Member #85

# Me Outside Surveying

- › **Married 1993**
- › **Children**
  - **Nathan (April) 30**
  - **Erica (Chandler) 28**
    - › **Dr. Erica Thomson (PHD)**
- › **Divorced 2003**
- › **Basketball**
  - **On Floor Referee 1979 – 2019**
  - **2000 Sydney Olympics**
  - **Currently**
    - › **Canada West Supervisor of Officials**
    - › **FIBA – Referee Instructor**
      - **2019 Men’s World Championships**
      - **2023 Men’s World Championships**
      - **2024 Paris Olympics**

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# Learning

**I HAVE HAD MANY TEACHERS**

**I HAVE MADE MANY MISTAKES**

## What I Learned

# DOING HARD THINGS

**“Doing hard things” is a habit that must be practiced, or like any habit, it will be lost.**

**A happy life is not a life without struggle,  
it’s a life with meaningful struggle.**

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## What I Also Learned

**The seats you choose in class  
can decide your life.**

**(But I digress)**

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What You Do

# YOU DO HARD THINGS

“Doing hard things” is (well) hard. It is even harder when you’re doing them alone.

The Mission Critical Goal:

**Improving Society Through Geomatics**

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# Educators are Service Providers



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TODAY'S THEME IS

**THANK YOU**

**For all that you do.**

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SURVEYING

**I BELIEVE**

**I REALLY DO**

# VALUE - SURVEYING

Countless wars have been waged and millions of lives have been lost - belonging to one social network or another.

Tribal, Regional, National or Religious

# VALUE - SURVEYING

How many deaths in BC  
are a result of boundary disputes?

- › In BC the land title system is how we maintain an orderly system of land administration
- › Legal surveys underpin the land title system – they are foundational.
- › Wealth is created by our system of land administration.

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**WE NEED YOUR PROGRAMS**

**WE NEED YOU**

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# TODAY'S ALTERNATE THEME

Becoming is better

Than being

-Carol S Dweck

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## What it means

Allowing ourselves to learn and expand our capabilities over time enables us to become the best versions of ourselves.

# RED QUEEN'S PARADOX

**Running faster and faster  
just to stay in the same place**

- Through the Looking Glass – Lewis Carroll  
(Biology: species must constantly adapt and evolve .....  
to simply survive against other evolving organisms.)

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MY PARADOX

Livelong Learning  
VS  
Continuous Improvement

# ALLURE

The allure of continuous improvement lies in narrowing the gap between potential and achievement.

## MY PARADOX – PART 2 - Retirement

Retirement: the act of leaving one's job  
and ceasing to work.

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## The Truth about Retirement

The number of people older than you  
never goes up it only goes down.

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What remains.

I have between 250  
and 450 million seconds left

What to do?

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## What's Next

You are never too old  
to set another goal or to  
dream a new dream.

- C. S. Lewis

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What's Next

**Today might be the best chance  
you have to take action.**

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**BE GOOD  
BE BETTER  
BE THE BEST**

**You deserve it – your students deserve it.**

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Closing

**THANK YOU  
FOR ALL YOU DO TO MAKE  
THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE  
THROUGH GEOMATICS**

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QUESTIONS?