



THE SIDWELL COMPANY

map news



Representative Gary Clark (left) points out project area to Bob Sifferd, Topographic Production Supervisor.

SIDWELL MAPS UNIVERSITY SITE AT ANCIENT CITY OF MECCA

To 800 million faithful, it's the holiest of cities. Five times daily they face toward it and kneel in prayer.

To Sidwell, however, it represents a unique challenge as the company's first Saudi Arabia mapping project.

The city is Mecca, ancient capital of the Moslem world. Located in the western part of oil-rich Saudi Arabia, it represents a sharp contrast of the old and new.

While sophisticated aerial photogrammetry is used to design a multimillion dollar university, Bedouin nomads and their camels continue their centuries old search for new grazing land.

The aerial photography and mapping provided by Sidwell covers a 2600 acre area west of the city and will be used for planning and design of the King Abdul-Aziz University. The engineering design is being done by a major Chicago consulting firm. Their recommendation to use Sidwell's mapping expertise paved the way for final negotiations which found President Lou Rex and Sales Representative Gary Clark traveling to Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.

For those of us unaccustomed to world travel, it's interesting to note that the end of the work week comes on Wednesday in

Mecca. This means that their weekend is the same as our Thursday and Friday. But that's not the only difference. Liquor is taboo in this strictly religious country and there are no movie houses. On weekends the central market shuts its doors and most shops are closed.

Even though this desert location is out of the ordinary for Sidwell, the mapping is right at home. Like any engineering mapping project, aerial photography will be the first step. Two photography scales will be used: one for topographic mapping and one for preparing a watershed analysis map.

The usual photo problems of tree foliage and snow cover are nonexistent in this arid region; however, swirling dust storms can sometimes delay photographic flights.

Since there is a very limited amount of man-made detail in the area, the mapping control will be targeted. The targets consist of five-foot long sections of contrasting color plywood laid out on each side of a control point. The result is a ten-foot "X" which is easily seen on the aerial photography. In addition, two hundred points will also be established as permanent concrete monuments for later

engineering use.

Analytical aerotriangulation will be used to extend the basic control network before the actual mapping begins. Then, topographic maps with half-meter contours will be drawn at a scale of one centimeter = five meters (approximately 1" = 41.7'). Cross sections will also be taken in selected areas.

In addition to site maps, a watershed analysis map will be prepared. This may sound like a needless item, but a sudden downpour on barren desert hills can easily develop into a raging torrent with no place to go. The watershed map will help assess the impact of any sudden rainfall in the project area.

Government projects are noted for their red tape and this one is no exception. There are visas and passports to obtain, letters of invitation to be secured from the Kingdom and permits of all kinds to be filled out. Because of its politically sensitive nature, all aerial photography is strictly controlled. In addition, entry into the City of Mecca is forbidden to non-Moslems. To help ease the frustrations of government regulations and daily living, the religious Moslem's standard reply is, "God willing, tomorrow."



SPRING IS COMING

One of these days (soon, we hope) the snow cover will melt away and signal the start of another spring aerial photography season.

Bob Meiborg, Sidwell's Aerial Services Manager, says this spring flying season will be a busy one because the time interval between the snow melt and the leaves coming out on the trees is likely to be shorter than usual.

He suggests planning ahead so that the aerial photography needed for mapping will be sure to get onto the flight schedule.

Bob says that many people do not realize that aerial photography represents a relatively small investment in the overall cost of a project and that once the photography is taken, it represents a permanent record of ground conditions which allows mapping to be done at a later date.



Tom Collins checks the quality of diazo print of an aerial photo.

DIAZO PRINTING AN IMPORTANT SERVICE

"In an average year, we print more than 500,000 diazo copies of the tax maps, topographic maps and aerial enlargements we produce."

This figure from Sidwell's Printing Supervisor, Tom Collins, reveals that printing is a very important part of the mapping services provided by The Sidwell Company.

Tom explained that all original tax and topographic maps and most of the aerial enlargements sent to the Printing Department are prepared on reproducible polyester film. This is done for several reasons. First, the material is dimensionally stable; that is, the maps will not stretch or shrink and lose their accuracy. In addition, the polyester is extremely durable and will not tear or wear out like regular paper. Most important, the material is reproducible. This feature allows an unlimited number of paper prints to be made from each master map.

Most of the printing is done in connection with Sidwell's tax mapping services. After a project is completed, a specified number of diazo prints are made of each original tax map and aerial enlargement. The prints are bound and used as work copies by the various county offices.

All prints are produced on two Bruning

875 diazo print machines which consume more than 600 gallons of anhydrous ammonia each year. In the diazo process, sensitized paper is exposed by light through the map and developed by the powerful ammonia vapor.

In order to make diazo prints of aerial photos, it's necessary to first screen the original enlargement. The screen, consisting of a pattern of small dots, allows light to pass through dark areas and assures proper exposure.

Aerial enlargements are often printed together with tax map information to make a composite print. To prevent image slip between the two originals, Sidwell has developed a special registration pin which passes through the diazo machine without damaging it or the maps.

Most diazo prints are run on standard 24 lb. or 32 lb. paper in sizes from 8 1/2" x 11" up to 42" wide. For special uses, however, prints can be made on sepia paper, an inexpensive translucent paper used for overlay applications; on clear polyester film with the map image in any one of a dozen colors; or on heavy duty, plastic coated paper ideal for field use.

Regardless of what material is used, diazo printing is a valuable service for Sidwell clients.

JERRY JOHNSON SPEAKS TO COUNTY TREASURERS



Jerry Johnson, Sidwell Tax Map Sales Manager, was the featured speaker at the Treasurer's Meeting during the recent Illinois County Officials Conference.

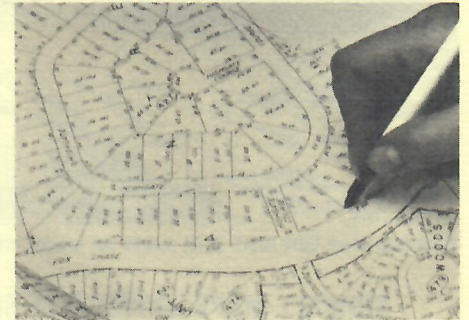
Jerry's presentation described the importance of good tax maps and how they are prepared by Sidwell.

CONVENTIONS SCHEDULED

Sidwell's aerial photography, tax mapping and photogrammetric mapping services will be discussed with officials and engineers attending upcoming state and regional conferences.

These meetings include the Illinois Assessors Workshop, Illinois County Officials Spring Conference, the North Central Regional Association of Assessing Officers Convention and the Illinois Professional Engineers Conference.

We hope to see you there.



COOK COUNTY ATLAS AVAILABLE

The new 1979 edition of the Cook County tax map atlas is now available for those requiring up-to-date property information.

The atlas contains 1"=200' scale reduced copies of the official Cook County tax maps and shows every parcel of property in the county.

In addition, each 11" x 17" map page contains parcel boundary lines, dimensions, subdivision boundaries and the permanent real estate index number used on all tax bills.

The maps are available in a complete set of ten volumes covering the entire county. They are also available for a single township or bound into a volume covering approximately three townships.

For more information, contact Mr. Harris, c/o The Sidwell Company.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY SIDWELL MAPPING SERVICES . . .

Write to The Sidwell Company, 28W240 North Avenue, West Chicago, IL 60185 or phone (312) 231-0206