



COMMENTARY

“The Voice of Manitoba Farmers”

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“The Bert Hall” Celebrates KAP History

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This week, Keystone Agricultural Producers commemorated a piece of its history, while we celebrated a new location and looking forward to a new year. In recognition of his contribution to the creation of KAP, we officially named our boardroom *The Bert Hall*.

The point of the namesake has two purposes. The first is to recognize Bert Hall and his dedication to KAP's early development, and the second is to link with the “community hall” spirit that continues to drive KAP to this day. Community halls are at the heart of Manitoba's social fabric, and serve as a meeting place for people and ideas. KAP's goal is to grow as a farm organization where farmers representing our diverse industry come together from across the province to share their knowledge and opinions, to ensure agriculture in Manitoba continues to grow & prosper.

There were a number of challenges in the road ahead back in 1983, when Manitoba farmers were developing ideas for a farm organization that would represent and promote their interests. It was clear that an organization was needed, and a group of dedicated volunteers took on the task of creating a new farm policy organization for the province.

This group was led by Bert Hall of Manitou. He chaired the Committee on Farm Organization Structure, which held 25 meetings across the province in January 1984 to consult with producers. The Committee was given a clear mandate from the grassroots, so it finalized a proposal for the new organization in March 1984, and Bert led a second round of consultations in April, where memberships were accepted and a provisional executive was selected.

Bert chaired the as-yet-unnamed organization's first General Council meeting in June 1984. Out of ten possible choices, delegates selected Keystone Agricultural Producers. Bert was asked to remain as the provisional chair until KAP's first annual meeting, where elections would be held for its first president.

On January 14, 1985 Bert Hall opened KAP's first annual meeting. Delegates from across the province, and over 120 visitors, were in attendance for this historic occasion. Bert's immeasurable contributions to the formation and early successes of KAP were

recognized by its first president, Jack Penner, and continue to be the cornerstone of KAP today.

Mr. Hall's namesake is now proudly displayed in our office, along with a plaque that explains his part in our organization's history. As we welcome new members and young farmers to our events, it's our hope that they will be able to learn more about the foundation that KAP is built upon.