Ron Belgrave fits a circle into a square and wins $4,500
Intro

Did you know that we have our own "Pompeii" right here in British Columbia, except it's buried under metres of water not volcanic ash? Or that someone ignited N.I.T.R.O. in the North Island District Office? Ever heard of an exploding flugel horn?

All this and more is inside thanks to staff contributors who took time out from their busy schedules to send in some great words and pictures. Thanks also to some pretty wonderful people who allowed us to talk to them (and take pictures too).

Wanted

Road Runner is your magazine. The stories, news and views are all yours. That's what an employee news magazine is all about. We want to hear from you. Tell us what you want to see in the Road Runner. Your suggestions are more than welcome, they're wanted.

That's not all that's wanted. We need pictures, pictures and more pictures of ministry staff in action. Don't just send copy, include a picture (with cutline). Pictures are what everybody wants to see. To communicate, they should show some type of action or character. There's more.

For "In the Field"... Districts we need you. We want to get to know you. And drop us four or five lines on what's happening in your part of the world and don't forget the pictures.

"The Reflector"... there's some wonderful "I remember when" stories out there waiting to be told: anecdotes about working with the ministry... a look back at our highways, bridges, tunnels and ferries or highway operations back "in the good old days." We'd love to share them with staff. It's our history.

"Fan Mail"... Send us the letters you receive thanking you for your help.

"It's Your Serve"... Let us know what you're doing to improve service—to the public and to us too. This is your chance to brag.

"Equity Barriers"... this is a tough one. We want to hear from those who've experienced an "equity" barrier (read Peter Ash's story P. 25 for an example). It will help us to start "seeing" the barriers that are invisible to some of us.

"A Day in the Work Life"... we want articles and pictures on "jobs" in the ministry, so we get to know what's available, what's happening.

"On the Road"... trips you've taken, an experience on the road working for the ministry. Use your imagination for this one.

NEXT ROAD RUNNER DEADLINE:

November 13, 1992 Inland Ferries will be in the "Spotlight" and featured throughout.

To all the ferry crews: We'd love some action pics and quips.
A Brave New World

By T.P.A. (Terry) Pouter, Manager, Management Services, South Coast

In response to the ministry's direction to decentralize, develop business units and borrow certain concepts currently prevalent in the private sector, Seymour Young, Regional Manager, Professional Services, South Coast, put into motion a unique concept—a Management Services Team.

Other regions generally have a ratio of 1:1 between Project Managers and Project Technicians. Fall of 1991, Young recognized the business potential for forming an "elite" professional team—Manager, Project Technicians, Financial Technicians and a System Analyst—that would work on a "fee-for-service basis." The unit's mandate is to provide technical, financial and administrative support to Project Managers, Field Offices, Business Unit Managers and Professional Services within the region.

As a "business unit" in its own right, it has shown great success in "billing" other business units for services rendered. Since its inception, the hourly billings have grown from zero to 52%. The team forecasts that a very active marketing strategy—now in place—would increase billable hours by a further 10 per cent by fiscal year end. Clearly an indicator that some aspects of decentralization are paying large dividends.

It's a seasoned team with diverse backgrounds that has been selected for this project. The project management section of the team: Jay Dunbar with 18 years in the Paving Branch, Nicolas Reidl with eight years and Linda Husband with 12, both in the Construction Branch and Keith Story with seven years in paving, construction and contract management. Iris Schoen—currently completing her CGA—keeps the financial management records for the business unit and its clients, and the team is led by yours truly.

"Project Management is a dynamic process and the opportunity to participate in multi-million-dollar projects—from developing the concept through the different stages of construction to assisting with the closeout reports—is truly an exceptional and invigorating opportunity," says Jay Dunbar.

The normal career development of team members would seem to be enhanced given this exciting opportunity. It is becoming a solid training ground for the unit's members to develop the prerequisite skills to be appointed to positions of Area Manager, Project Managers and Construction Supervisors.

Typical of the projects, team members assist Project Managers with the largest bridge construction project on the South Coast Region since the Alex Fraser Bridge—Stave River Bridge.

Jerry Bynack, Project Manager and Linda Husband, Project Technician, adjusting the project schedule for Scott Road in Surrey.

Nicolas Reidl, Project Tech, reviews traffic plans for the Mill Creek Project.

Iris Schoen working on a specialized spreadsheet application.
Enviro News & Views

A new column. We’ll highlight our environment-friendly works here. We invite you to send in short “brag” articles and pictures on this subject as well as your suggestions for recycling, reducing waste, etc. Address them to the Editor, Road Runner, Headquarters.

News—
Ministry Buys a Still

A still? In our ministry? And what has this got to do with the environment? Plenty.

At present there are drums of used solvent stored around the province waiting to be disposed by incineration or some other method. It’s all waste material. The Purastill S-15 has been acquired by the ministry to provide an environmentally sensitive alternative to other means of disposal.

“This still will reduce the waste to a very small volume as well as allow us to reuse most of the discarded solvent,” says Joe Benning, Laboratory Chemist, Geotech Lab, HQ.

Solvents used by the ministry include toluene and chloroethylene. The bulk of what is now being stored is chloroethylene based and was used in the geotechnical labs for asphalt testing.

“We’ll take a small sample and do an in-house distillation with lab equipment to determine if there’s more than one waste component present. Once the contents have been identified, then the still will be used to process larger volumes. The purity of the product will then be checked by spectral analysis to determine if further distillation is required.”

I asked Joe if it was a “real” still.

“Yes, it’s a ‘real’ still. The model we have is capable of producing up to 20 gallons per day and will process waste solvents with boiling points up to 320 degrees Fahrenheit.”

Joe Benning demonstrates the ministry’s new still: “It will allow us to reuse most of the discarded solvent.”

In Memorium

The Deputy Minister, Vince Collins, wrote to the parents of Shannon Guyatt on behalf of all ministry employees, expressing condolences on the death of their daughter, who was found slain June 17th, 1992.

Vince says, “I spoke for all staff who knew and worked with her when I said that we will miss her warmth and energy. She was a dedicated employee of the Information Services Branch—part of a team providing support to Executive Branch. She also had many dealings with the regional secretaries in setting up new systems.”

Counselling sessions were offered by the ministry to all staff affected by the tragedy.

Shannon’s memorial service on July 4th overflowed into the streets. Many ministry staff, including Vince and Assistant Deputy Minister, Gordon Hogg, attended.

No suspect has as yet been charged. The police continue their investigation.
Cycling B.C. '92

Move over cars, trucks and campers. Here come the bicycles. The ministry’s Policy Branch began investigating cycling issues in June, 1990 with the goal of formulating a bicycling policy. In August, an “Interim Cycling Policy” was finalized and is now being implemented in our ministry. Bicycles will now be considered in the design phase of every road/bridge upgrading or new construction project.

(The “Interim Cycling Policy” was developed through input from all who have a role to play in making bicycling a viable transportation alternative: bicycling associations, politicians, Motor Vehicle Branch, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, B.C. Transit, policing authorities, education proponents, municipalities and regional districts. We call them the “players.”)

In September, the Policy Branch visited the regions to introduce staff to the cycling policy. The next step is to get all the players together to make sure everybody’s prepared to make their business to accommodate bicyclists.

To do this, Policy Branch has developed a special conference—Cycle B.C. ’92, Focus on the Future—October 28th and 29th at the

Simon Fraser University downtown Vancouver campus.

The conference will get the “players” to begin looking at ways to address the issues:

- Bicycle paths or bicycles sharing the road
- Bicycle facilities (e.g., secure lock-up/parking facilities in shopping areas, on ferries, etc.)
- Bicycle-friendly rules of the road
- Education for drivers.
- Promoting cyclotouring in B.C.

There’s more, much more to be ironed out. The conference is just the beginning. Everyone—Transit, Ferries, Education, etc.—has to be involved in directing revisions before the “interim policy” can become the definitive “British Columbia Cycling Policy.”

The first revisions are planned for the fall of 1993. We hope to see some of you at the conference. Watch for a report on it in the next Road Runner.

Home for Lost Soles

By Tom Parkin, Public Information Officer, Vancouver Island Region

Many remote roads in B.C. seem to have their own character, perhaps in reflection of those who use them. Holberg is no exception. Built by the Forest Service, now maintained by the ministry, this gravel route meanders west of Port Hardy to the village of Holberg on northern Vancouver Island.

In 1989, a cedar snag on the right-of-way at km 18 sprouted an unusual fruit on its trunk—shoes, many cast off by footsore hikers returning from Cape Scott Provincial Park at the end of the road, where the trail is known for its mud.

Footwear from all walks of life are nailed to this “Home for Lost Soles.” A sign imitates verse on the Statue of Liberty, New York Harbour:

Give me your worn, full of holes,
Your mangled tongues, yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your hoity soles.
Send these the hiel-less, face-lose to me,
I lift my eyes towards more fitting goals.
Introducing NITRO

By Mike Proudfoot, District Highways Manager, North Island

IT’S DYNAMITE.

North Island District clerical staff have developed N.I.T.R.O. (North Island Team Re-Organization), a work distribution strategy that aligns District Clerk duties with the geographic boundaries of Area Managers and Development Approvals Technicians.

The fuse was lit last summer when the “Enforcer,” Bruce Welsh, Manager, Organization and Classification launched the province-wide District Clerk cross-training initiative.

North Island District faced the challenge. Leading the troops with strong rhetoric, but from a safe distance, were Mike Proudfoot, District Highways Manager and Bill McEwen, Finance and Administration Officer.

The hardened office support staff of Karen Scherr, Dorothy Burgess and Sue Pauwels struck a team to formulate and execute strategy.

Specialists were recruited. Claire Sollitt from Central Island District spear-headed Development Approvals System (DAS) training. Financial Management Information System upgrading was secured afield. Hired Equipment Tracking System briefings were conducted on-site by Karen and Operations Assistant Martin Madelung. Quality Assurance Program systems skills were taught by Dorothy and Martin, while the intricacies of ministers’ reference correspondence and DHM support skills were explained by Sue.

Joined in December by Elaine Ownes, new Senior District Clerk, the initiative reached a peak. By early March, the cross-training mission was complete, the target secured.

While cross-training shrapnel was still flying, Dan Bowen, Senior District Development Technician was establishing development approval territories to correspond with those of Area Managers. Communication and co-operation were quickly enhanced.

In an explosion of inspiration, this concept was carried even further when Karen suggested that division of territory include administrative staff as well.

Still in fighting form, the clerks met yet another challenge. By striking an alliance with an area manager, a development tech, and one or two other draftees, each clerk took responsibility to deliver the entire work compliment of the “cell.” Daily application of every aspect of a Clerk 3 job description continues to keep the North Island District clerical team a force to be reckoned with.

So does N.I.T.R.O. work? “N.I.T.R.O. blew me away,” says Mike. “There is no one better to determine how to deliver service than those who do it.”

“We might be onto something here that other districts will consider,” adds Bill.

Elaine agrees, “N.I.T.R.O. works; it benefits staff, improves service and provides a model for others to follow. We couldn’t resist the challenge.”

“I’m excited with the concept of having the entire clerical staff fully utilizing the DAS program,” says Dan. “Peaks in development approvals volume are more efficiently addressed.”

And Karen has the last say: “We’re pleased everyone is willing to give the idea a try. We were quite concerned that resuming specialized duties wouldn’t allow adequate exposure to keep our skills updated.”

If you are interested in a better bang for your buck, try N.I.T.R.O. (Call North Island District for details.)

IT’LL BLOW YOU AWAY!

Sue Pauwels (front right) oversees the ceremonial ignition of NITRO. Sue performs all clerical duties for “cellmate” (left to right) Mike Proudfoot, DHM; Rod Mochizuki, Area Mgr. Bridges; Cheryl Squair, Area Mgr. Trunk; Bob Hall, District Tech, and Lane MacDonald, Development Technician.
Your Fan Mail

Good Samaritans

Just wanted to drop you a note to thank you (Jeff Wisman, Area manager, Prince Rupert and Carey Crosley, Office Assistant) for being such good samaritans when my companion and I went off the Highway (16) in my Rolls Royce this past June. You managed to calm us down and turn a very upsetting incident into one that was bearable and we appreciated your kindness and understanding.

Charles P. "Lash" Larrowe
Professor, Michigan State University

Expedience

Thank you to Doug Kirk and staff at (Nicola) District office for their expedience in alleviating some of the problems concerning the intersection of 97C and 5A South at Aspen Grove.

Pat Lunzman Area Director

Good Sense & Initiative

My appreciation and sincere thank you to Gord Russell (MoTII radio room, Region 5).

On July 23, 1992, I received a phone call from Gord to inform me of a potential disaster situation developing in Dease Lake. The Esso Service Station had caught fire and could easily spread to the nearby forest and through the community.

Due to Gord's heads-up call I was able to put an eight-man, structural fire-fighter team together and put a 442 squadron on alert—to fly the eight man team in and standby for a potential evacuation of the community.

Had the situation developed into a major disaster requiring full-scale evacuation, Gord's good sense and initiative would have saved me invaluable organizational time. This in turn could have been translated into lives saved.

Rod Salem, Manager, Terrace Zone
Provincial Emergency Program

Friendly Faces

The Ministry of Transportation and Highways office in Courtenay has provided the greatest source of government and industry co-operation that we have found on the entire 500 kilometre length of the (Vancouver Island Natural Gas) pipeline project.

I personally have to single out Dan Bowen, Chris Olynk and Jerry Leet for their extra efforts and particularly lan MacDonald for both his office assistance and his on-site construction and reclamation inspection services.

The Courtenay office of the Ministry of Transportation and Highways has many friendly faces, whose assistance and good nature has enabled our very complex project to be a success.

S. Masterton, Senior Lands Agent
Pacific Coast Energy

Exemplary Efforts

To Neville Hope (Regional Director, Vancouver Island Region): our thanks for making qualified individuals of this calibre available to work as part of the Vancouver Island Highway Project.

Our appreciation for the exemplary efforts made over these past several months by Dennis Dodsworth, Regional Project Manager, Don Couch, Regional Project Supervisor and crew, to bring the construction of the first phase of the Lands End Interchange to a successful completion. Without the ingenuity and common sense that they have demonstrated on this project, it would have been substantially more difficult for the Project Management Team to accommodate the wishes of B.C.F.C. (BC Ferries), the municipality and local residents.

Grant Ritchie, Vancouver Island Highway Project Manager, U.M.A.

Tremendous Co-operation

We have completed the first phase of the major reconstruction of the Swartz Bay ferry terminal. Integral to this project was the coincident development of the Swartz Bay highway, access and egress ramps, and changes to several intersections. Completion of these were critical to the Ferry Corporation's service plan for this summer.

Through the construction of this project, starting with public hearings and ending with construction activities, the Corporation has enjoyed tremendous co-operation from your (Vancouver Island Region) staff responsible for this project. Clearly, without their support we would not be enjoying the improved traffic management we now experience.

My deepest thanks to those who committed to and helped with this project.

Frank A. Rhodes, President
British Columbia Ferry Corporation

Inland Ferry Review

The ministry is taking a close look at inland ferry operations. Efficiency, safety, service—all this and more will be included in the review.

Ministry "marine" top brass and private sector specialists are now touring the province, stopping in at each of the 16 freshwater ferry routes. Their route takes them from the Bamfield Island Ferry in the Lower Mainland to the Kootenays, the Cariboo and up to the North West corner of the province to the Usk and Francois Lake ferries.

This review was not prompted by any accidents or specific concerns about safety or service. It was initiated purely as an exercise to ensure the effectiveness of our marine operations.

In the next Road Runner, we'll introduce you to the review team and take you along on their tour.
IN THE FIELD

REGION 1

Team-Building Conference

Team building and communication were the themes of our region's 1st Annual Admin Conference. Eighty staff attended and learned how to identify personality styles—to enhance their interpersonal skills and understanding of co-workers. An added bonus, financial advice from The Investors Group. Senior managers also gave presentations on their areas of responsibility and how they interface with other business units. This introduced everyone to the unique services this ministry offers. A very successful, rewarding event—hopefully the first of many.

Thailand Visits

An 8-member delegation from the National Economic and Social Development Board visited the South Coast Region, August 23-26. They received briefings on highway infrastructure and planning in the region (including the Greater Vancouver Regional District "Transport 2021" initiative) and toured the Cassiar Connector, the Alex Fraser Bridge, the Richmond East-West Freeway and the George Massey Tunnel.

Flugel Horn Explodes

A new computerized, gas-powered explosion system will be installed above the Duffey Lake Road this fall as part of the Howe Sound District's avalanche program. The French-design GazEx system is the first of its kind in Canada. Explosions are set off in a concrete-mounted exploder—shaped like an inverted flugel-horn—high on Blowdown Peak. District avalanche technician, Scott Aitken says the new system will mean fewer road closures in the area this winter.

Kids Plant Trees

Grade 5 students from 50 Vancouver and Burnaby elementary schools will plant 5,000 trees (October 5 through November) at the Cassiar Connector through a program voluntarily co-ordinated by Vancouver and Burnaby Rotary Clubs.

REGION 2

Sorry, We Missed You

Two events were missed from the Transportation Week calendar in the last Road Runner. June 10, South Okanagan District office held an open house and an outdoor display in an empty city lot nearby.

One of the event organizers, Trudy Boutwell, District Clerk, and Charles Hutchins, Area Manager Roads and Ron LePage, Project Technician were part of the organization team too along with everyone at the district office. "It was really appreciated by everyone who came. We had a good response, especially with the equipment display."

Also, South Okanagan District sub-office held an open house, June 12. Lynda Lochhead, Development Approvals Technician said, "We had a display board with pictures of roads and bridges 20 years ago and what they look like today. We also featured the Photolog Videodisc system, which was very popular.

"All staff pitched in and flipped hamburger patties, cut onions and served pop. I credit the great team effort for the success of our project. Our clients gave us good reports. We hope to do it again next year."

100-Mile Car Rally

South Cariboo District Office, at 100 Mile House, celebrated Transportation Week by hosting a 100-mile car rally with 100 individual instructions to be followed. Event organizer, Area Manager Dan Dobson said they had a lot of community support for the event, particularly from local radio stations, RCMP and White Line Road Maintenance Ltd.

"Whiteline contributed toward the advertising, offered their vehicles and let us use their yard as the marshalling point. Uniformed RCMP made their presence known at the marshalling area (a reminder that the event was for fun but not a 'party') and even entered two vehicles.

"We had 15 different entries—everything from families to drivers and dogs. It was strictly a mileage event. The only timed portion was along a forest road where participants were to go 30 km/hr for two kms, 20 km/hr for three and so on. Penalties were given to drivers clocking in over or under the 'critical time'."
Getting ready to "rally" from the marshalling point—Whiteline Road Maintenance’s yard.

It was such a success the event will become an annual tradition, Dan says. A perpetual trophy was purchased and presented this year to a local principal and his wife. Plaques for 1st, 2nd and 3rd for both drivers and navigators were also awarded.

Dan thanks all who contributed, especially those who manned the checkpoints.

Red Caboose Circa 1926

Okanagan-Shuswap is pleased to announce that considerable improvements have been underway to the Craigellachie Rest Area 24 km east of Sicamous. The developments include safer highway access, better parking and a new facilities building designed to reflect the ambience of where the Last Spike was driven home. One of the attractions: beside a small gift shoppe will be a 1926 caboose donated by the CPR. Thanks to Steven Morrise of CPR, Al DeSimone, Area Manager for Sicamous says, "All works will be completed early next year."

REGION 3

Helping Challenged Kids

Kootenay Boundary District staff used their heads and their hearts to help physically and mentally challenged children. The military was searching for training opportunities for their recruits, the Main River Wilderness Camp required improved access and the ministry just happened to have a bailey bridge in storage (still usable even though it doesn't meet today's highway engineering standards).

To install the one-lane bailey bridge, Art Prodeahl, Bridge Area Manager, Kootenay Boundary District (who initiated the project) and Alexa Karlicki, EIT, from region office, worked with personnel from the 44th Field Engineer Squadron of Trail, along with members of Reserve Engineer Units from Western Canada and the United States.

Sappers Bridge (as it was called) was opened on August 22, 1992. It replaces a worn suspension footbridge. Supplies can now be driven instead of carried into Main River Wilderness Camp and access for service and emergency vehicles is much improved.

Art Prodeahl, Bridge Area Manager, Kootenay Boundary and General DeSimone, pound in the last spikes.

Camp children cheer their first crossing.
REGION 4

Road Accesses
New Campground

Six hundred people came out to open Murray River Road August 3, 1992 which links Tumbler Ridge with the new Kinuseo Fall Campground in Monkman Park. For all you campers, the campground offers 42 sites for tents and RVs—with picnic tables and fire rings—and is equipped with water, wood, toilets and wheelchair accessible facilities. Stan Glydysz, DHM, South Peace District says, “The (forest resource) road was the result of co-operation between several provincial ministries (MoTH Forests, Parks) and industry. It provides economic, industrial and recreational benefits to the people of B.C.”

REGION 5

2nd Annual Golf Tourney

We held our 2nd Annual Regional Golf Tournament in Terrace on August 15th. It’s played as “best ball” which makes it a little easier for some of us rookies.

The winning team: staff members Terri Fick and Ron Chadwich and staff family members Rick Kirkwood and Dan Duncan.

Many other prizes—some for bizarre categories such as closest to the tree—were awarded and everyone got a goody bag including macadamia nuts from the president of Nechako Northcoast Maintenance, John Ryan’s farm in Australia.

Big thanks to Dave St. Thomas, Project Manager and Marilyn Marshall for organizing another successful tournament.

Driest in 50 Years

Stan Gladys, DHM, South Peace District reported that the Peace area is the driest it’s been in 50 years. Very serious water rationing is in effect. Stan says that certain operations such as dust control have had to be curtailed. (We hope it starts raining “cats and dogs” in the Peace River country.)

Kids and Contractors

When the Horsefly Elementary Junior School approached Caribou Road Services (Central Cariboo) for assistance in helping students to raise money for a school trip, the contractor gladly obliged...by putting the kids to work! The students were offered a two-month-long paid contract to pick up litter in the area. The kids went on their year-end field trip and the highway rights-of-way in the area never looked so good. A win-win situation for all! Our hats are off to you.

Celebrating Transportation Week

There was no shortage of friendly, smiling faces to greet passers by during the National Transportation Week display at the Dawson Creek Mall. Nearly all South Peace staff participated at some point. Meanwhile, outside the mall staff of Peace Country Maintenance showed off several pieces of their highways equipment. The big draw though proved to be the ministry’s 1929 Chevy dump truck.

Spirit of Transportation

In the spirit of National Transportation Week, our region employees engaged in a war of tricycles.

On a sunny afternoon in the back lot of the geotechnical building, during lunch hour, four teams of enthusiastic tricycle riders gathered to test their speed and agility. Regional Director Jon Buckle managed to curl his legs around his tricycle frame and helped wheel his team into third place. Public Information Officer, Jane Sparkes, captained the winning team.

Other National Transportation Week celebrations included a mall display in Terrace and another in Smithers as well as a parade in Prince Rupert and a NTW Poster Contest.
Children from nearly every community in the North West participated in this year's poster contest, organized by three district office and a sub-office. "The kids really enjoy this contest and even learn a little about transportation and MoTH," says Eric Becker, Area Manager, Bulkley Nass District.

Area Manager, Eric Becker awards a "winner" in the NTW Poster Contest.

Fred Seychuk rides a 1920 grader in the Bulkley Valley Fair

Bulkley Valley Fair

Bulkley Nass District was a big winner at the fair this year, they won 2nd place at the parade in the category of commercial entry and 1st place for best booth at the fair.

For the third consecutive year, Smither's staff pooled their creative talents to come up with a parade entry and an informative booth for the fair on the theme of "Western Days." The parade entry was a 1920s grader pulled by a truck-horse (they took a highway's pick up and gave it a mane, ears, tail, halter and reins). Also part of the entry was a big grader and snow plow provided by Bulkley Valley Maintenance who shared in the second-place honours.

The display booth had a beautiful hand-painted mural depicting transportation modes of the past to present day.

Congratulations to everyone in Bulkley Nass District and to BVM.

Region 6

Open House Draws 500

Over 500 people (including six dozen school children, at least 15 invited retirees and MoTH staff from other areas) toured our regional office open house held June 12 in celebration of National Transportation Week. We showed off our expertise and highlighted our environment, employment equity and work safety programs.

Thanks to everyone for making the day such a success.

3-D photo log/computer demonstration was a hit at Region 6 open house.
IN THE FIELD

MoTH's a Picnic

July 18th South Island district office had a very successful office picnic (our first) thanks to Dave Boon, Area Manager, who let us use his Shawnigan Lake property. Over 40 people came and enjoyed swimming, water balloon fights, hamburgers (rustled up by John Marriott, Area Manager) and rides in Dave's Cessna. Dave is retiring next year, but he said we could use his property anyway, anytime. We plan to make our "family picnic" an annual tradition.

Car Rally and Scavenger Hunt

On a sunny Saturday afternoon, August 22, we held our first car rally-scavenger hunt. Ten cars braved the route around Nanaimo (from region, Central Island and North Island) but only nine finished. A search party revealed nothing but all agreed, nine out of ten wasn't a bad survival rate. (Finishers enjoyed a picnic at a local Nanaimo park.)

Congratulations to Joyce Pool, Secretary to Regional Director, for coming in a narrow first over speed demons Rob Howat, Regional Approving Officer and Nicole Hollberg Office Assistant in region office. Our illustrious leader, Regional Director, Neville Hope scraped in third last earning the title "mentally confused and prone to wandering in car rallies."

Thanks to Barb and Kent Thomas who spent hours going over the route and thinking up clues with their twisted minds. The social club made $30 out of the venture which means the next rally will be even bigger and better.

HEADQUARTERS

Celebrating Summer

Safety Branch employees invited all staff to join them, June 22, in celebrating the arrival of summer by coming to work dressed for the sun (shorts, sandals, etc.). A sunshine cart, pushed by Leah Glick-Stal, brought cookies and cakes to brighten up the day even more.

(Yes, the sun co-operated.) Thanks for the memories.

Tacky Tourist Day

August 28, staff in Finance and Administration wore their best "tackiest" tourist clothes and competed for "de' merit prizes awarded by Deputy Minister Vince Collins, Public Affairs Director Dick Melville and Service Excellence Project Manager Ray Mau. Who says we don't have fun at HQ?

Marnie Fudaruck (left) and Cindi Smit — both from Contract Admin — "pucker up" for Tacky Tourist Day.
Teamwork Wins Road Test

Headquarters took up the corporate challenge for the Province ICBC Road Test on July 17th and won—for the highest participation. Event organizers wanted to know our secret. The answer: we've some pretty great coaches—our Road Test Branch Reps and their Directors too—and good team players on our side. Seven branches had 100 per cent participation: Construction, Highway Planning, Internal Audit, Major Projects, Policy, Properties, Safety. Each received a cake to recognize their teamwork.

Special recognition to Construction Engineering Branch; they had 100 per cent participation, plus the highest average score with 18 perfect scores. They were presented a framed picture of their "winning team" with a congrats from Dan Doyle, ADM, Highways Operations. Rodney Chapman, their Director said, "The staff who worked together and shared information received the perfect scores. It says a lot for the power of teamwork."

We plan to challenge the regions next year; so be ready.

Signs of Other Times

Betty Nicholson, Manager, Communications (Public Affairs) helps Neil Vickers, Traffic Research Officer show off one of 19 signs designed by MoTH that were installed along the Alaska Highway in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

New Head of Audits

Alex Mackie, Director, Internal Audit Department has accepted a temporary position as A/ Director, Operations, Internal Audit Branch, in the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations September 1 to March 31, 1993. Alex leaves us after four years—since the Internal Audit Department was first established in our ministry September 1988.

Dan Ho, currently A/ Director of Operations at the Internal Audit Branch, Office of the Comptroller General, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations, will be sitting in for Alex while he's away.
The Highway that Disappeared

By Tom Parkin, Public Information Officer, Vancouver Island Region

Recently, Nanaimo Regional Development Technician, Dean Anderson showed me an old provincial Highway and Travel Map (1930) listing an unnamed and unnumbered road as a trans-provincial route "among the scenic highways of B.C. The map lied! In 1930, you wouldn't have found it, except on this map, and you won't find it today either—even on a map.

"The Bend" was a hairpin curve of the Columbia River which flowed north from Golden to meet the Canoe river, then south past Revelstoke. A gravel road of the same name followed the river right round the inside of this turn.

Yes, the "Big Bend" Highway did exist. Like Dean Handley, DJH in Selkirk District, I grew up in Revelstoke, and travelled the "Big Bend" as a boy. Few parts of it were scenic—I recall its roadside evergreens hanging pale with dust, back-seat monotony, and force-feedings of green Gravel to keep down breakfast.

It's rare to lose a highway. But we did . . . . when the Mica Creek Dam flooded the area between it and Donald in 1973. (A further 85 miles was lost under a lake created by the Revelstoke Dam not long after.) By then though, the road had already fallen into disuse.

A faster route, the Trans Canada Highway over Rogers Pass, opened July 30, 1962. Those of us wanting to visit the East Kootenay no longer needed to grit our teeth over 300 kilometres of gravel, washboard, and S-curves. This was a relief, but mention of the "Big Bend" now brings pleasant scenes to my mind.

Along the route, the best way to mark progress in the unvarying hinterland was by creek crossings and mile posts.

Not far out of Revelstoke was Silvertip Creek, a double-drop falls through a notch above the road. The perspective from a wooden bridge near its spray-soaked foot emphasized the cascade. My dad sometimes stopped the car to appreciate the view.

Near 17-mile, the highway passed a subsistence farm belonging to family friends—the Grants. They began homesteading there in 1941, but the original lease dated to 1887, at a time when a pack trail was the transportation connection around the Columbia River.

In Grant's garden I learned to play the bagpipes. In 1962, when I was still too small to manage my own set, old Jim (who piped his regiment toward WWI battlefronts) would shoulder and blow his pipes. I faced him, fingering the chanter to make music. I can still hear the last notes of Highland Laddie echoing at dusk from forested slopes across the river. Once—a long way off—a wolf answered.

The northernmost point of the road was Boat Encampment, once a camping place for voyageurs paddling the Canoe River. Boat Encampment was also the location of the opening ceremony of the "Big Bend" on June 30, 1940. So why did a map show the road existed in 1930?

A flip through our ministry annual reports hints at why we might have thought the road could be drawn in in advance.
Grant's place, Boat Encampment, and other scenes of my childhood now lie under many metres of water from the Mica and the Revelstoke Dams. This activity under the Columbia River Treaty resulted in MoTH building the current Nakusp-Mica Creek Highway 23 on higher ground.

Today, a concrete span zips vehicles past Silvertip Falls at a higher level and this pretty piece of nature is lost to most drivers. Little do they realize they're following a route of fading memories—the "Big Bend"—the highway that disappeared.

O’ Wooden Head

A ministry employee, Pete Fuoco, became a “wood”-be celebrity while working on the “Big Bend” Highway.

Pete (who retired in 1975 as office manager in our South Okanagan District office) was timekeeper/first aid man on the “Bend” in 1940. He is now 81 and lives in Penticton.

“I was working at 80-mile, when returning to my tent after an evening with the blacksmith, I noticed this cedar stump on the edge of the right-of-way seemed to have facial features,” he said.

“As a youth, I liked to horse around with Plasticine, making figures. So, I got this idea of emphasizing what I saw in the wood with an axe.

“It wasn’t meant to be classic art, just a pass time. It took me a day to make each ear. The hat was built of a sawed-off hollow log, with a brim of one-inch lumber. The whole thing stood close to eight feet high.

“When the top brass came over from Banff for a pre-opening inspection, I thought they’d tell me to get rid of it, but instead this Mr. Walker gave instructions to cut it off and move it up to Boat Encampment for the opening ceremony.”

Thus “Wooden Head” became a roadside attraction, and possibly MoTH’s earliest reminder to drive defensively.

When the Mica Creek flooding began, “Wooden Head” was trucked to Revelstoke. He now sits on the east bank of the Columbia River beside the Trans Canada Highway surely one of the oddest pieces of highway heritage in B.C.

Ol’ Wooden Head as he appeared back in the forties—a highways artifact (art-in-fact) made by a ministry employee now retired, Peter Fuoco.

Photo: BC Archives
Candice Little, Finance and Admin Officer from Lakes District, sent in a list of Service Excellence performances in answer to Region 4's "Excellence" challenge.

She says, "These are initiatives implemented in our district over the last two years that are now just the way we do business. We find little things make a big difference such as a policy from the Admin Team to meet customers at the counter as soon as they arrive and to answer the phone within the first three rings."

* A Public Communication Record system to record and report on public concerns was developed. Thanks to all staff, who keep up the system, no concerns slip through the cracks and we've a database to draw on when contacting clients who've had past concerns.

* To create a "friendly" community profile, we participate in events such as the Burns Lake and Houston Trade Fairs. We've also a board in the reception area that shows staff, including Francois Lake Ferry crew, and their positions.

* We extended office hours—8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and through lunch. And, we've a phone-answering device so the public can call us 24-hours a day, leave a message or get our Regional Radio Room contact number (for emergencies), the number for the Road Report and, when applicable, the latest load restrictions.

* Visitors to the district for scheduled meetings are posted on the "in/out" board so everyone knows who to expect at the front counter. And, we've reserved the parking spots closest to the front door for customers only.

And from the Francois Lake Ferry Service Rep, Lorne Macnab.

* A service questionnaire was conducted one and a half years ago and consideration is being given to repeat the process. (Lots of valuable information came from the first one.)

* All crew members have first aid training.

* The ferry schedule is printed on plasticized business cards and distributed to the public.

* Tours of the Omineca Princess are conducted by crew members for school or community groups.

* All crew members have name tags.

* Greeting cards were printed from "The Crews of the Francois Lake Ferry" to send to regular customers on special occasions or as get well greetings.

Ronald Belgrave, Trades Journeymen-Electrician, Electrical District, South Coast won $4,500 in the provincial government’s Suggestion Awards program. He came up with the idea for an adapter which allows the placement of a new style round electrical junction box (to control traffic lights) over top of the bottom portion of an "older style" square junction box. This "bright" idea saves the ministry time and money. Plus, the traffic light will no longer have to be shut down to replace the junction box. Thanks Ron. Most of us would never even think to try fitting a circle into a square hole. Ingenuity and imagination pay off.

Warren Painter, Technical Assistant 3, Design Section, Central/North East Region won $100 for his suggestion to provide every government office a standard emergency evacuation brochure on computer disk which can then be custom tailored to suit individual site needs.

Ron Belgrave fits a round junction box into a square one.
Workshop Works

On June 3rd, Highway Safety Branch at headquarters held a one-day workshop in Richmond for their primary ministry clients (mainly district technicians and traffic/planning engineers). Sixty-eight people attended.

A survey of participants was overwhelmingly positive. The workshop worked to communicate much needed information but, and more importantly, it provided the perfect "getting-to-know-each-other" opportunity to share ideas and concerns.

The presentation was video taped for future viewing and distribution. Now that's what we call service . . . excellent!

200% Club Members

Tracy Cooper, DHM, Central Cariboo District, has the honour of being the first 200% Club member for his work in compiling the Ministry's 1992/93 Annual Performance Agreements. (See article on page 27) Tracy's nominators said, "His zeal and energy throughout this project was reflected in the enthusiasm and support it received in the end."

Kathy Arbanas. Records Management Clerk, Planning Services Branch, HQ, is the second 200% Club member. It was her willingness to go the "extra mile" and research material that is not normally available, that won Kathy praise from her fellow workers.

Norm Reed, Vancouver Island Region, no matter how hectic the day he remains calm, pleasant and helpful. He provides extraordinary service to all."

Roger Hlina. District Project Technician, Central Cariboo District did more than make sure installation of a culvert in Namiah Valley was completed on time and within budget. He rolled up his sleeves and pitched in with the manual labour and drove to the site on a weekend to add the finishing touch.

Raelyn Scott, who appeared in our last "It's Your Serve," had a spot reserved in the 200% Club by her pay-list clients. David Robertson, Supervisor Purchasing and Postal Services, HQ said, "Pay clerks are under a great deal of pressure. In spite of this, Raelyn always found time to answer my questions and help with problems."

Jerry Gerrard. Project Planning Technician, Highway Planning Branch always takes the time to talk with members of the public (and to make them feel good) about issues related to the Vancouver Island Highway Project.

Sandy Whitcroft, Cathy Silver, Margaret Hegglund and Kim Commodore, Geotechnical clerical staff at HQ, are a winning team nominated to the 200% Club for their accuracy, efficiency, supportiveness and willingness to help whenever they can.

Lorill Garner. Receptionist, Major Projects was nominated for her "never-out-of-work" cheerful attitude to staff and her helpfulness in serving the public.

Val Spencer. Accounting Operations Officer, Thompson Okanagan Region is very special, say her nominators. She makes people feel good about coming to work.

All members to the club receive a 200% mug, a Road Runner pin and more. To nominate someone to the 200% Club—for employees who make the difference—contact your Service Excellence representative.

Kathy Arbanas (right): "I just can't get over it," John Coombs, Manager Information Transfer in Planning Services Branch checks out the 200% mug as Jo Sinclair looks on.
Serving Each Other Better

A personal perspective by L.M. Wagar, Manager Operations Region 4

We talk a lot about Service Excellence and Service Quality these days and we immediately picture our external clients—the property owner, the frustrated motorist, the person at the counter, etc. But, most of our communications are with each other—our supervisor or employee, fellow staff members, someone at headquarters or district. These communications should also be made from a “customer” perspective.

How often have you been frustrated by the type of communication you have received from someone inside the ministry? Have you considered how you would do it better; how you could offer to be of better service?

This applies to everyone, at all levels, including supervisors asking themselves, “How can I be of better service to my employees.” What do we do as managers if it isn’t to provide a work place and an environment in which our employees can deliver their services? If we do this, then we are providing services to them.

Traditionally, our structured bureaucracy tended to dictate policy, procedure and rules to lower levels. Now we suggest that policy and guidelines are provided to assist in setting a framework in which we can do our work, but we are “empowered” otherwise to deliver it.

This is quite a shift. It demands that we reverse the old phrase from “What are you doing for me?” to “What can I do for you in order for you to achieve your goals?” In other words, “HOW MAY I BE OF ASSISTANCE?”

So, when was the last time you heard someone at region ask you that question? How about one of the headquarters branches?

Is a report card necessary, or might we assume that our shift in thinking needs some serious attention? Is it fair to say that in order for us to practice Service Excellence with our external customers, that our internal communications MUST also be excellent?

Yes, it is not enough to be of assistance to outside customers; we must also be of assistance to each other. Let’s treat each other as customers and really get serious about Service Excellence.

They Did It Again

Wayne Keiser and his Electrical District crew (South Coast Region) did it again. The cost/time saving initiatives we told you about in the Spring Road Runner weren’t enough.

Used to be that relamping involved 50 man hours to patrol for “dead” lamps, etc. and then a further 250 man hours to install new lamps during daylight hours—about four weeks of work.

Now, relamping is done at night, when traffic doesn’t interfere and the preventative streetlighting program—previously done separately—is done at the same time. The result, relamping and preventative maintenance now takes 2.5 to three weeks to complete leaving staff time available for other things.

So, a Traffic Signal Patrol was initiated to ensure all aspects of traffic signals are operating correctly and items such as twisted signal heads, bent visors and burnt lenses are caught before being reported by the public.

Congratulations again to the Electrical District team. They increased service to the public dramatically without increasing costs.

The South Coast Electrical crew (seated left to right) Eric Broz, Tony Hryko, Don Kanski (left to right), Mark Walters, Ric Mikoski, Phil Lalley, Carlo Tura, Bob Brett, Ron Belgrave, Pat Purdy, Keith Caza, Bert Jansson, Ron Rhode.

Thanks to Rick Janzens, in Purchasing and Postal Services, for this graphic.
ON THE ROAD...

To Get to Know You

As told by Sharon Varley, Supervisor, Correspondence Unit

Between April 8 and June 10, Barb Harrison, Executive Administrative Co-ordinator and I hit the road to introduce Area Managers to the process of writing minister's letters.

The objective was to give our clients hints on how to save time and effort and to find out what we could do to make the process easier for them. Much more was accomplished.

We talk to our clients on the phone all the time. But after meeting them, we now have a more open dialogue. And we come back with a few great suggestions which we've implemented. One example: if a region has produced a letter on a general issue it should be circulated to the other regions for the sake of consistency in reply and efficiency.

It didn't take us long to realize, here (district/regions) is where it's really happening. This is the front line. Our Area Managers and their support staff are under a lot of stress, as much as we are at headquarters.

In the end, we were most impressed with the dedication and warmth of our front line staff as well as the immensity of this province. Each region and district has a huge area to look after with its own unique concerns.

Our tour started in Kamloops. The presentation was set. (Barb and I spent the night before, in our hotel room, looking through our records to identify local issues to use as examples at each meeting.) The first issue on the agenda was winter sand. I'd no sooner said this when everybody started talking at once. Our formal presentation immediately turned into a question and answer period. It wasn't the plan, but it worked perfectly.

Next stop, Prince Rupert. This was a homecoming for me because I grew up on an island nearby—Digby Island. I don't know if it was my nostalgic mood, but both Barb and I came away feeling very good after this session. Everyone was so open. We made solid connections to build on.

Prince George was our first experience with a microphone. It was too high for me which meant my nose, not my mouth, was aimed into the “mike.” I had to stand on my toes so I was a little flustered. But we felt everyone with us and all went well. Afterwards, Gwen Gordy, Regional Stenographer graciously showed us around the office and introduced us to region staff. Everyone expressed an interest in us and what we did; we felt honoured.

For Region 6's presentation we didn't have to go far—just down the road to the Grand Pacific Hotel in Victoria. It was a large audience but by now we were relaxed with our presentation—thanks to all the support we'd been given so far. This group gave us a momento of the occasion. “A Proclamation: Province of British Columbia.” We framed it and have it hung over our photocopier. Thank you.

Last stop, Revelstoke. This was a treat. We traded some good information and were made to feel very welcome by all, especially Nancy Fletcher, Receptionist. (We were extremely impressed by Nancy, Barb and I agreed that she was one individual who personified all that was Service Excellence.)

We wanted to do a presentation in South Coast region but as they were between Regional Directors it was inconvenient at the time.

But we'll be back—Region 3 has already asked us to return this fall to talk with project and other managers. We look forward to getting back on the road to get to know you, what you want and how we may help you.

Thanks to all who gave us feedback. We now have a better understanding of our roles in this process and yours too.
Going, Going... Gone

Over the last two years now, I've seen them on the fifth floor at headquarters, in the office behind the Correspondence Unit. They come and go—every six weeks, a new face. There was Brian, Doug and Katheryn—Dave, Reg and Ellis—and the list goes on.

I was curious. Where did they come from? What exactly did they do? And where did they go when their six weeks was up?

They're called DHMs (District Highways Managers) in Training and they work for Dan Doyle, ADM, Highways Operations. That much I knew.

Meet Barbara Thomas. She was the DHM in Training through July and into August. And she volunteered to answer all my questions.

Barbara came straight to the ministry from U.B.C. where she'd earned a Bachelor of Applied Science. "I'm Regional Traffic Engineer with the Vancouver Island Office right now, but I began my career at headquarters traffic section, five years ago. So the first week I came down, it was like old-home week. Meeting people I used to work with; going to lunch."

She didn't apply for the DHM in Training position because it's never posted. Her Regional Manager recommended her.

"I'd suggest that, if you're interested, you let your manager know."

"The position is rotated; people are accepted from each region as well as headquarters which is an excellent idea.

Staff from the regions and districts get to know what it's like to work in headquarters. And staff at headquarters get to know what it's like working in the field."

Barbara says, being DHM in Training is very good experience and she recommends it to anybody with the interest. It's not just what you do (everything and anything, depending on Dan's needs, acting like an Executive Assistant—writing letters, compiling and following up on briefing notes, preparing briefs)—it's more the opportunities the job offers.

"It's an opportunity to work with the executive team as well as to get to know Dan and have him get to know you and your work."

But it's also about getting to know the ministry better. "I thought I knew the ministry. In the region, I routinely deal with the same people and the same issues. Here I can explore other areas; I work with an entirely different circle of people. It's broadened my scope."

Where does Barbara go from here? "Back to being Region 6, Regional Traffic Engineer—for now," she says. (To date, four of the DHMs in Training have become District Highways Managers.)

Barbara left and in stepped Wayne Soglo from Geotech in HQ. As with all the DHMs in Training, she brought a breath of fresh air, and a surge of new enthusiasm and energy. Thanks for sharing your story Barbara. And good luck.

To nominate candidates for the DHM in Training position, supervisors call Veronica Walsh, Highway Operations Department at 387-3260.

"The intent, at this time, is to select candidates from the Excel program, particularly those who've expressed an interest in DHM as a possible career choice," says Veronica.
DHMs in Training

The first DHM in Training (when the temporary position was created in 1990) was John Bodnarchuk, Engineering Tech, New Westminster. He left after 10 months, having won a competition for DHM, Kootenay Boundary.

Before John, three others were seconded to be Acting DHM in Training while the job's incumbent, Judy Stokes nee Gollington (now Manager, Finance and Administration, Highways Operations Department) was away: Mark Pratt, Area Manager, Fraser Valley; Pat Trippell, Area Manager Bridges, Central Island (Acting DHM at times too); and Frank Hart, Area Manager Roads, South Cariboo.

Mark says, "I had fun. It was a really good group of people to work with. At one point, we stayed up all night getting together a huge briefing book for the minister." Pat says, "It was an eye opener. It's difficult to relate to the job without sitting in the seat." "I enjoyed my short stay and appreciated the people I worked with. I found the experience extremely rewarding," says Frank.

After John, the position became a 6-week secondment to give as many people in operations as possible a chance to work with Dan Doyle, ADM, Highway Operations. Here's the list of DHMs in Training since 1990 and their comments (those we could catch up to) on the experience.

1990

• Brian Barker, Regional Operations Technician, Vancouver Island Region.
• Ellis Bowes was a Terrain Analyst for Vancouver Island Region and is now A/Gravel Manager and Aggregate Terrain Analyst for that region: "I found 940 Blanchard a very dynamic, demanding environment. The people were very likeable and function extremely well under pressure. It was great to put faces to the names of executive and other HQ staff and to find them so approachable and helpful."
• Dave Foster was an Area Manager, roads in Nechako District and is now an Area Manager in the Okanagan Shuswap District: "Challenging. I got to know a lot of new and very interesting people."
• Reg Fredrickson was Regional Operations Technician in Central/North East Region and is now DHM of Nechako District: "A valuable experience in terms of future career growth. It broadened my perspective and contacts."
• Greg Galpin, Area Manager, South Island District: "It was good to see how things worked from the HQ perspective."
• Bruce Mackay was Roads Area Manager in South Peace District and is now DHM of Skeikline District.

1991

• Rob Buchanan, Senior Terrain Analyst, Geotech, HQ: "Go for it. It provides a whole new insight on how the ministry operates."
• Doug Elliot, Area Manager, Nechako District: "I recommend it for anybody, even those not aspiring to be an DHM and especially those working in the regions and districts because it lets you see the flip side of the coin for a change."
• Kevin Higgins was project manager in the North West Region and is now DHM of Robson District: "I had fun. When I got back I gave an impassioned speech to region/district staff to get them to appreciate the heavy load staff at HQ carry."
• Greg Lawrence, District Technician, Central Kootenay (at the time of this writing A/DHM Central Kootenay): "Very worthwhile. I enjoyed it immensely and hope many more people have the same opportunity."
• Malcolm Makayes, Area Manager, Thompson District: "It's a real credit to ADM of Operations, Dan Doyle, to ensure there's a position like that available to give people knowledge and experience of our ministry's operations."
• Bill Ogden, Area Manager, South Okanagan Princeton Sub-Office: "The opportunity to work as DHM in Training has been the highlight of my career with the ministry. I quickly gained a greater appreciation for a dedicated executive and staff that under tremendous workloads always found the time to make me feel a part of their team."

1992

• Mac Godo, Program Planning Engineer, Highway Engineering Branch, HQ: "Enlightening. It really gave me an appreciation of the amount of work that goes through the 5th Floor at HQ."
• Brian Horel, Area Manager, Nicola District. Elkhart: "For me, the best part was gaining a broader perspective of how the ministry works. I dealt with diverse issues from around the province. Every area has its unique concerns."
• John Marriott, Area Manager, South Island District: "Good learning experience. Great bunch of people. I was lucky to be there three months. I think all should have three months too as well as the chance to work in other HQ operations branches."
• Wayne Soglo, Geotechnical Operations Branch Manager, Drilling Service, HQ: "A positive experience. My regular job is very specialized. It was good to see the ministry as a whole and to make new contacts. From my perspective though, I would also like a follow-up secondment to a district."

Rob Buchanan, Sr. Terrain Analyst
Geotech, HQ.
Leading into the Future: Human Resource Development

A s summer slowly gives way to autumn, we share our vacation memories, file them away, and gear up for the challenges of another winter season. We re-connect with our co-workers and ready ourselves to tackle plans made last spring. For many of us, autumn brings a renewal of energy and drive—the perfect time to take stock of where we are and where we want to be in the future.

In April, the ministry's "Priorities for Action" strategy was circulated to all staff. In the next four issues of the Road Runner, I will be reviewing each of the six goals in "Priorities for Action" to report on the ministry's progress toward fulfilling them.

This article, "Leading into the Future: Human Resource Development" introduces the series. It updates what is being done in the area of human resource development focusing on managerial roles.

Times are changing—faster than ever before. "Priorities for Action" provides the direction each of us will need to adapt to these changes. As a team, we can do it but not without effective leaders. We need managers/directors who support and encourage staff as well as further develop our "Priorities for Action" so we're prepared for the corporate and transportation challenges of tomorrow.

This year, two new programs have been created to identify and groom those who will be leading us into the future.

Managing Diversity

Canada is a country of diverse people. Even those of us who share the same 'roots' and the same language often have unique perspectives. It's important to our corporate culture that we recognize these differences as well as attract a workforce that represents all people. It will keep us competitive and in touch with the needs of our clients.

For this reason, I've instructed Personnel Services Branch to develop a special program to help managers better understand and utilize the strengths of individuals and hire for diversity.

The first Managing Diversity sessions are scheduled from the end of September into October. They will provide an awareness of the barriers (discrimination) faced by aboriginal peoples, visible minorities, women and persons who are physically and mentally challenged. Suggestions will also be given for practices and strategies to encourage rather than stifle diversity.

For all her work in developing the program, I thank Virginia Clark in Employee Planning and Development, Personnel Services Branch. She will report on the results of the training sessions in the next Road Runner.

Discrimination—

when you treat someone as part of a group (women, chinese, blacks) rather than an individual — is no longer acceptable in today's working world, particularly in government.
Excel Program

The Excel Program for management development is now underway. During the spring and summer, teams of managers and directors have been working to refine developmental plans for nominees, and the Management Development Steering Committee has met to review recommendations and endorse participation throughout the ministry.

In this, the debut year of Excel, we welcome twenty-three participants to date. These people have been nominated by their supervisors, based on sustained successful performance, and have completed both self-examinations and assessments relating to their career aims as managers in the ministry. They, and the management teams who support them, have earned our respect and support. Congratulations to them all.

Our first Excel group has eight participants who are preparing for first-level management positions, 14 preparing for middle-level management and one for a senior position. Participants range in level from Clerk 3 to Management Level 5. All three departments (Administrative, Operations and Planning) are represented and participants come from all over the province.

As you can see, Excel is truly a ministry-wide initiative, accessible at all levels and locations. Each participant will be following an individualized development plan, up to 20 months in length, which may include courses, assignments and/or special projects—all designed for a successful career in management.

If you’re not familiar with the details of the program, I encourage you to contact your local Personnel Services Manager, or call direct to Russ Spilsbury, the Excel Program Manager at 387-7800. Information packages for employees and their supervisors are readily available and nominations are welcomed at any time of the year.

Excel is based on a planned partnership between the ministry and individual employees which involves mutual commitment. Through this partnership, we can ensure that management challenges of the future will be met by a team of skilled, resolute and effective leaders.

On behalf of the ministry executive, I wish every success to our first Excel group and extend a welcome to future participants.

Violence and Inequity

Taking Action—it’s a guide containing educational information on violence against women (children too) and inequity that everyone should read. As Kenneth Georgetti, President of the B.C. Federation of Labour stated, “Men have to start taking responsibility for their own behaviour and for the behaviour of other men around them. Women in the labour movement and in the community are demanding a dramatic social change—and it means a change in us.”

This little guide, published jointly by the B.C. Federation of Labour and the Women’s Research Centre, is full of information, some of which is very difficult. Prejudice, child abuse, sexual abuse, wife battering—what it’s all about and how to help someone who’s experiencing it. Case histories are included.

Your Employment Equity Committee representative has a copy of Taking Action. It’s also available through the HQ library or, if you want, you can order your own personal copy for $3.00 from: Susan Foxcroft, B.C. Federation of Labour, 4279 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C., V5G 1H1 (Telephone: 430-1421).
Fifteen for Opportunities '90s

So far this year, fifteen have been inaugurated into Opportunities '90s—thanks to the hard work of Employment Equity Representatives and the cooperation of managers and directors. Without these individuals, there'd be no opportunities.

We tracked down five of the program participants and asked them to share their experience.

"It will be hard to return to my desk," Dedra Critchlow (Regional Financial Clerk, Region 3, seconded to the Regional Geotech and Materials Lab for three months) admits.

Dedra was introduced to many aspects of Geotech life: from sampling with the drill rig to monitoring Quality Assurance on a highway patching grinder.

Dedra is hoping to return to the Geotech Branch and wishes to thank everyone for all they did to make her time there an experience to remember. "It's a great crew. They never said it's over her head; they took the time to explain everything."

Darlene Petrie, Clerk 3, Finance and Admin, Region 2, was seconded for three months to the Development Approvals Branch.

She says, "I've got very supportive helpful bosses, Lee Dodds, Approving Officer and Pete Puhaltto, Regional Manager Planning. And great co-workers too, Dave Labar and Karl Klingbeil. They're teaching me what you need to know to work in a regional approvals office—legal property descriptions, the B.C. mapping system and more.

"I've asked them a million questions. I think I'm driving them nuts. But they haven't lost patience yet.

"I'm going on my first field trip ever, up to 100 Mile House to learn what district does before the approvals get to region. It's great. I'm really enjoying myself. Thanks."

Deanna Young isn't sorry she left her desk as District Clerk in North Cariboo to hit the road for four months as a Stockman-Sealcoating. We caught up to her in Vanderhoof.

"It's certainly a different way of life. I work out of an office trailer. We hook up to the phones and services at a local motel and we're in business. Usually about two or three weeks later we pick up everything and move on to another job.

"It gives a person a whole new perspective and appreciation for what life is like on a field crew. It's not the easiest one. It means living out of a suitcase, away from home and family for months at a time. Also, plans can change at a moment's notice. But the Project Supervisor and crew are able to shift directions immediately and carry on. I'm impressed."

Deanna says that she does everything a general field duty officer would do: keep track of project costs, contractors hours, payroll and travel expenses as well as order parts and pick them up.

"I love it. It's a great job and I get to see a lot of the country. Many thanks to Ken Cullen and the crew for giving me this opportunity."

Debra Zink, Contract Administration Clerk in Region 1 was already taking technical courses at B.C.I.T. when she was offered a secondment to the region's Construction Branch.

"Opportunities '90s gives me the chance to get hands-on experience instead of just reading it out of a book. I want to do everything and anything. I'd like to thank the crews. They've been very patient and taken a lot of time out to help me."

Denise Willment, Region 1 Receptionist says she wants to change career directions but doesn't know which way to go. This is her second year in the program. This year she's enjoying three months in the Geotech Asphalt Lab. "Opportunities '90s lets me try a number of technical careers. I may never have moved in this direction if it wasn't for the program."

As part of the Quality Assurance Program, Dedra Critchlow measures the depth of old (grinded) asphalt to ensure it meets standards outlined in the maintenance contracts for profiling.
EQUITY BARRIERS: Is it all in the Mind?

Peter Ash, Administrative Officer, headquarters says yes, it's in our minds and since we all have the power to change our minds we can all make a difference to employment equity. Peter gives us a personal glimpse at the barriers we've put in his way and tells us how we can break them in our quest for employment equity. We encourage others to speak out and let us know about personal equity barriers they may have faced. Send them to the Editor, Road Runner; Public Affairs Branch, headquarters. Anonymity will be given if requested.

Doesn't everyone deserve a chance? Ever wonder how someone—who in your mind you consider less fortunate—gets along? Yes, it takes a bit more will to challenge the world with a recognizable disability.

Well I woke up one morning and I'm a paraplegic: "Shit!" Now I can't do my old job because I can't access stairs. And the 'normal people' (if there is such an entity) tell me that I should do this or that. They poke me, prod me, analyze me, test me and generally tell me what to do and where to go. All the time I'm thinking that I should be telling them what to do and where to go.

I've heard most of the excuses for errors and all of the apologies from the so-called experts, only to learn to laugh at their programs and plans. Many people go around with their head in the sand when it comes to anything that is different; they only look as far as they know instead of reaching out for the unknown, taking the path least traveled.

I have had my car seats torn. I have been dropped down stairs. I have had non-functional lodgings booked (which, ironically, caused me to miss an Employment Equity meeting and to waste 20 hours driving). And the list goes on. All of this by people who insisted they knew what they were doing and went ahead in spite of my protests and advice. If the general and corporate public are ever going to realize and understand the simplicity of dealing with something that is different, they must honestly bridge the gap and put effort where words don't do the job.

The only true way to learn is to wear the other's cap—which is impossible. But an honest effort counts. Asking questions is another way to learn.

Some people are afraid they may look or sound foolish asking a relatively simple question, so they don't, and they do end up playing the fool.

The minimal amount of adjustment and knowledge required to really and sincerely help other people is a lot less than most would think. As it turns out, someone finally asks me what I would want to do, where I would like to do it... and all is well.

One must live with a humorous outlook on life so that a smile can still be raised, even when the most unhearing person insists upon offering assistance from the most unknowing ability.

So, the next time you meet someone you think needs your assistance, the best thing you can do is first, ask that person if they really want your help, and second, listen to them for their advice as they're most likely more knowledgeable of their predicament than yourself.

All it takes to help take some of the challenge out of the lives of others is to ask the professional—the person you are about to do something for. Yes, it takes a big will to handle the attitude that others know more about you, than you do yourself.
Communicating Without Bias

Government employees are to use gender-inclusive language in all work-related communications. Communicating Without Bias is your guide. Get it. (A supply has been sent to each HQ Branch and each region and district.) And read it.

Our Premier, the Honourable Mike Harcourt introduces the publication: “The Government of British Columbia is committed to creating a fair and equitable work place, with equal access to employment for everyone regardless of gender, race or disability.

“..."To reach that goal, we must continue to find new ways to remove barriers and eliminate discriminatory practices that keep us all from reaching our fullest potential.

“The government’s gender-inclusive language policy is an important step in that direction. This policy is designed to ensure that all government communications truly reflect the changing world in which we live.”

New Classifications

After nearly two and a half years of work, approval to implement the Scientific Technical Officer series (STO) was received from Government Personnel Services Division on July 31, 1992.

This series, while being new to our ministry, was first introduced for use by the Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks in 1988 and now covers approximately 740 Transportation and Highways employees. The effective date of implementation is January 7, 1990.

This project involved the negotiation of “benchmark” positions with the B.C.G.E.U. and the subsequent evaluation of all positions at the Engineering Aide 3, Engineering Assistant, and Technicians 1 through 4 inclusive.

By now, all employees affected will have been notified of their new classification. The payroll section has been working very hard to do all the calculations and tracking of employees which are necessary to prepare the pay forms. Employees saw the new rate on their August 28 cheque. It is anticipated that the retroactivity will appear on November’s cheque.

The second phase of this project calls for the inclusion of Technical Assistant 3 and 4 positions in the Scientific Technical Officer Plan, effective August 1, 1993. This will involve the updating of the job descriptions for all TA 3 and TA 4 positions and they will then be evaluated against the Scientific Technical Officer Plan.

More information on this will be sent out as it becomes available.

Sometimes Small Is Better

Meetings of the recognition committee could almost be held in a phone booth. This is not a large committee (now six people as two members resigned due to job commitments). But it is quietly working behind the scenes to put a ministry-wide employee recognition program into place.

The committee proposed a multi-faceted program that was approved by the executive this spring. Components include:

- performance recognition to celebrate individual or team accomplishments, such as extra effort or consistently performing at a high level over a number of years
- a ministry suggestion awards program that, for the most part, would run separately from the provincial government suggestion awards program
- service awards, separate from the government program, to honour years of service with the ministry
- retirement recognition (from the ministry, not just from the government).

These components will be implemented in stages, as the groundwork for each is completed.

Why a recognition program? The committee was formed last fall after the Organizational Health Inventory Report and a wellness committee report found that employees want more recognition.

You will read more about the program components in Road Runner as details become available.
Agreements Cut Bureaucratic !&??

We all know what's expected of us in our jobs. Or do we?

Expectations have changed over the years. Decentralization, Service Excellence, Priorities for Action, Employment Equity—how do we support the ministry's mandates as well as do our job?

This summer, for the first time, written agreements between the office of the Assistant Deputy Minister of Highways Operations, Dan Doyle, and the regional directors, outline exactly what's expected in ministry operations.

"Annual Performance Agreements for 1992/93 were worked out co-operatively, between my office, the Chief Highway Engineer and the regions and professional services divisions," says Dan. "They define very specific outputs of performance (expectations), give a basis for measuring these outputs and a business plan for delivery of more effective and efficient programs."

The agreements include everything from the mandate and mission of regions and branches to elements from management’s Priorities for Action: Employment Equity, Service Excellence and minimizing the administrative process.

There's no need to guess anymore. Each agreement acts as a map to be followed for the year and gives employees a powerful tool to help them reach individual and collective ministry goals.

"These agreements represent a change of direction for the ministry—one that takes a less bureaucratic, more businesslike approach to the way we make and implement decisions," says Dan.

"This is just the first round. There will be others and, hopefully, the agreements will be more comprehensive as we improve our goal-setting skills."

It was teamwork that made this project such a success, adds Dan.

"Thanks to everyone in the regions and my staff—Veronica Walsh, my Executive Secretary; Judy Stokes, Manager of Operation's Finance and Administration; Monica Day, Judy's secretary and DHM Training, Brian Hotel (Area Manager from Nicola District)—for their contributions."

"Special thanks to Gordon Smith and Greg West in headquarters Print Shop and Tracy Cooper, DHM, Central Cariboo District. Tracy joined us at headquarters to do the unenviable job of compiling and producing the contracts."

For his efforts, Tracy was nominated the first member of the ministry's new 200% Club (see article page 17).

---

Dr. Strangeglove Returns

All you Peter Sellers fans are saying, it's Dr. Strangelove not Strangeglove. Yes, Dr. Strangelove is the dreaded doer of dastardly deeds in the movie of the same name. Our Dr. Strangeglove is a student—Michelle Kozyriak—returning to the Central/North East Region geotech lab in Prince George for the third summer.

"It's a fun way to earn enough money to get me through another year of university," says Michelle. And who knows, I may end up doing something like this if the opportunities are there."

Dr. Strangeglove—Michelle Kozyriak—at work in the lab.