“Inland Ferry System is... sound and being run by dedicated personnel”

Rear Admiral Yanow
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**Intro...**

**Share-the-Road-Runner Program**

We'll keep bringing you the Road Runner but to meet cost cutting commitments, it is now only one colour and we're printing less copies. Until further notice, that means we're on a share-the-Road-Runner program, as suggested by one of our own "MoTHONians." Thanks for the idea.

In this issue, catch up on the latest and greatest. Find out about the "Stena Danica affair." See what the Gas.Ex exploder we've been talking about looks like. Meet the people who operate the MV Omenica Princess. Learn about "dynamic pile driving." All thanks to staff who sent in so many stories we couldn't use them all. We've reserved space in the Spring Road Runner for them.

**Take Your Best Shot Contest**

We need good in-action shots as on page 23, Growing Roads??!!? of our people working. So, to get you going, we will give the photographer of the best shot in the next issue a surprise prize. PIOs excluded.

Deadline for the next Road Runner, February 26, 1993

**In Trust**

Many people throughout the ministry have enquired about a "Memorial Fund" for Shannon Guyatt's (who was slain last summer) son Jason. Shannon's parents have responded by establishing a "Continuing Education Fund" for Jason.

Contributions are confidential and can be made in a number of ways. By cheque: please make payable to "Mr. C. Underwood in Trust for Jason Guyatt" and forward to one of the contacts below. For details on cash, anonymous or other contributions, consult the contacts below. Donations can also be made directly through any Canada Trust branch in B.C. by quoting Branch #200 and Account Number 552394.

*Your generosity is appreciated by the entire family.*

HQ Contacts:

Marilyn Wargo, Personnel Services Branch, 387-7822
Barb Romanaki, Personnel Services Branch, 387-1483
Jeanne Pittman, Public Affairs Branch, 387-7788
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Peter James, Information Systems Branch, 387-0144

Cover photo by Bill Dunn
Story p.27
On the Road
Making Friends in Africa

By Margie Sinclair, Kelowna Sub-Office

It was a "field trip" of a lifetime. I spent 18 days at a bush hospital in Uganda and went on safari in Kenya.

I didn’t plan the trip. A friend who works at a hospital and orphanage in Uganda (which Margie supports) invited me to visit. Being an adventuresome person, I jumped at the opportunity.

The adventure started after flying from Kelowna to Vancouver to London to Nairobi, Kenya ... then on to Entebbe, Uganda. Driving the roads in Africa was an experience I’ll never, EVER forget. The roads were like riverbeds; driving was on the opposite side of the road.

Driving an unfamiliar vehicle on an equally unfamiliar road (saying to myself “Is this a road ... Wow, look at those holes ... Watch out folks.” and in first gear all the way I ran into (not literally) a Uganda road crew. And, at great risk, snapped a picture to bring back to MoTH.

I forgot to ask permission first. When I snapped the picture, the response from the crew was unprintable, not in English any way.

Actually, I found the people very friendly. Now that I’m back home, I realize what a wonderful opportunity I’d been given to live and work with native Africans rather than just being a tourist.

Another thing I realize: we are privileged to live in Canada and to have such a good road system.

Island Trust
New Deal

“It’s a civilized change in direction,” commented one Vancouver Island newspaper.

Our minister, Art Charbonneau and Chair of the Islands Trust Council, Carol Martin, signed an agreement November 12th which provides unique standards for Gulf Island roads. The agreement was made in response to residents’ concerns that roads being built for new subdivisions were straight, treeless and with wide ditches replacing the winding, tree-shaded lanes once characteristic of the islands.

“We also are establishing a consultative process between our agencies,” said Charbonneau. “We have set up a formal process for planning and administering most aspects of road transportation, which allows input by advisory committees on each island.”

“I’m pleased Islands Trust and the ministry are working together to ensure road construction and maintenance on the islands is compatible with Trust’s legislated mandate to preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area,” said Martin.

Two EITs Awarded

Congratulations to Maurizio T.L. Ponzini and Dennis J. Nadon — two of the ministry’s Engineers-in-Training (EIT) who both received achievement awards from the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia.

Maurizio was recognized for having the greatest potential in the Civil Engineering class at the University of British Columbia and Dennis for the greatest potential in the Computer Engineering class at the University of Victoria.
“Wee” Jimmy Davison and the Robson Ferry

By Tom W. Parkin, Public Information Officer, Vancouver Island

The devastating floods in British Columbia in the spring of 1948 are well remembered by Fred Thompson, now working on Nanaimo’s regional design team. That year he was 11, and living in a home on the bank of the Columbia River at Robson.

“My family had to move to Nelson for three months to live with my grandmother. We lost many of our belongings to the fast-rising water. The basement was filled with silt, frogs and tree stumps.”

Fred’s recollections were triggered by an aerial photograph of his former home, located just downstream from a ministry cable ferry. As readers can see (picture below), vehicles weren’t able to get on the ferry during the high water. The ferry powered itself along a single cable which wound around a drum in the central powerhouse.

Captain at that time was “wee” Jimmy Davison, whose career extended from 1919 to 1951. Short in stature, but never in words, the diminutive Scot exemplified service excellence. Fred recalls how he ran his ship:

“At night, pedestrians signaled the ferry on the far side by flashing a light on a pole. The skipper would come over to get you. He would also back up for foot passengers if you arrived just after he had left. This was greatly appreciated as it could be very cold waiting in rain, wind or snow.”

It was also likely Jimmy who once fished Fred out of the drink: “I was with a bunch of eager beavers going to a matinee in Castlegar. I was jacking around and fell off the apron. Someone threw me a life ring and pulled me aboard.”

That was scary, Fred admits, but another concern of the ferry operator was viewed as fun by the kids: “There was a tug called Elko, that used to tow log booms between the Arrow Lakes and a mill downstream. If the river happened to be low, and the ferry mid-stream, occasionally the tug would snap the ferry cable. When this happened, the tug had to rescue the drifting ferry. It never happened when I was aboard, but I always wished it would.”

The Robson ferry was decommissioned in 1988, ending 69 years of service at the crossing. Today, drivers reach the far side via Hugh Keenleyside Dam or Highway 3A. A bridge has been designed to span the Columbia near the old crossing, with construction to start in January 1993.

Castlegar/Robson cable ferry during 1948 flooding on Columbia River—vehicles weren’t able to get on the ferry.
The Stena Danica Affair

A toothsome tale in which Al Rhodes, retired acting deputy minister and admin ADM, fondly (and humorously) remembers Minister Bob Strachan and the “Stena Danica” import duty affair (back in the days when B.C. Ferries came under the Department of Highways).

In the late 1960s, it was evident that the demand for ferry service necessitated additional vessels. As a “quick fix,” the government made a policy decision to purchase a vessel and to modify it to end-loading so that it could operate at the existing docks. Following a search for available vessels, the “Stena Danica” was purchased from its Swedish owners with the understanding with the Federal government that it would be exempt of import duties and taxes.

However, to comply with federal regulations it was necessary to pay the duty on entry to Canada and to seek a remission by formal application. The federal government reneged on the previous agreement and as the amount was substantial, multiple discussions ensued.

With the change in government in 1972, R.M. (Bob) Strachan was appointed as Minister of Highways. He undertook the task of recovering the amount in question and arrangements were made to visit Ottawa and present our case.

The minister, myself and two others from the Ministry of Finance arrived in Ottawa in the late afternoon and following dinner we visited a lounge in the Bytown District. Mr. Strachan had a penchant for Scottish songs and he led the singing into the wee hours of the morning. We eventually retired but the night was short! My telephone began ringing before 7:00 a.m.

The meeting progressed in true federal fashion with the Revenue Minister (Stanbury) and his army of assistants, lawyers and accountants, always promising but never delivering. We did have some light moments however, for every time I looked at my minister he would tap his teeth with his index finger.

Bob Strachan, a true politician, had arisen early to polish his appearance and his knowledge of the tax problem prior to our 10:00 a.m. meeting. In his haste, he had dropped his dentures into the sink and when he picked them up they were in pieces. He had already arranged by telephone to have them repaired by a dental mechanic, but having exhausted his cash the previous evening he didn’t have fare.

He was soon on his way to the mechanic’s office and his dentures were fixed in time for the meeting.

The meeting progressed in true federal fashion with the Revenue Minister (Stanbury) and his army of assistants, lawyers and accountants, always promising but never delivering. We did have some light moments however, for every time I looked at my minister he would tap his teeth with his index finger.

Bob Strachan, always a gentleman and diplomat, later moved to the new Ministry of Transportation and Communications and subsequently retired to accept the appointment as Agent General in London, England, an appointment which—in my opinion—he really deserved.

Al retired in 1985, after 45 years service in the provincial government.

Inland Ferry History

Most North Americans take the ease of travel in the 90s for granted. It used to be a challenge to get to town for supplies—sometimes even dangerous, especially if you had to cross a river or lake.

Log rafts and aerial baskets were the first ferries in B.C. When rivers froze, ice bridges were created. Sometimes, there was a ferry operator. Most often, the raft or rigging was left for those wishing to cross to use themselves.

Frank Clapp, a retired ministry employee, tells all this and more in an interesting booklet that traces the history of B.C. inland ferries. If your office or branch doesn’t have a copy, and you’d like a couple, please call your Public Information Officer.

Free cable ferry that once crossed the Columbia River between Revelstoke and Arrowhead. Picture taken in the early 60s.

Photo from Provincial Archives
IN THE FIELD

REGION 1

Grassroots Action at its Best

Commuters on the Cassiar Connector witnessed a strange phenomenon in October and November: children clad in ministry safety vests planting trees.

The project: the Rotary Heritage Forest. The result: the largest urban reforestation project ever undertaken in the City of Vancouver—the planting of almost 6,000 trees by students from 42 elementary schools in Vancouver and Burnaby. The effort, co-ordinated by the Vancouver South Rotary Club with the support of 11 other clubs in Vancouver and Burnaby, received widespread sponsorship from the private and public sectors.

The Rotary Heritage Forest was dedicated at a special ceremony, November 3rd. Hats off to the Rotary Club for making this tremendous initiative possible. Very special thanks to Vancouver South Rotarians Donna Worrall, Clive Justice and Cecil Prowse—they made this project happen.

In 2010, as you drive through the Cassiar Connector and see the new forest growth, please think of this Rotary-inspired undertaking and say, “Thank you.”

Children planting trees along Cassiar Connector

Halloweenie Day

The office was alive with gremlins, ghosts, witches and other chilling characters when staff celebrated Halloweenie Day on Friday, October 30. Capping the festivities was a Halloweenie (hotdog sale) lunch hour. The sale helped raise cash for our social fund. Congrats to our very social Denise Willment for organizing yet another, this time eerily, successful event.

Highways Breaks Bread With Media

by Stan R. Kravetz Communications Centre Operator

Stalls ... debris spills ... motor vehicle accidents, are quite often the order of the day for Lower Mainland commuters. Rush hour ... for the Communications Centre is calls from radio station traffic reports, be they high overhead or firmly on the ground. Mornings and afternoons, dedicated men and women hit their speed dialers in a round of random checks for traffic flow updates on major Lower Mainland routes and bridges. Calls to the Communications Centre are in rapid succession with most radio stations calling approximately every 12 minutes.

Friday, October 16, yours truly, with colleagues Keith Winsor and Kim Seale, rolled out the welcome mat for a luncheon date with the reporters. Preparations began after morning rush hour with Keith’s infamous clam chowder, with buns and butter on the side. The first of our ten guests arrived at noon, with the rest not far behind. For some of the media, this visit allowed them a first-hand opportunity to see the work done in the Communications Centre.

“Service Excellence” was at the forefront: Communication Centre operators and traffic reporters work hand-in-hand to provide accurate traffic information to the public. They are, indeed, friends of the hundreds of thousands of rush hour commuters in the Lower Mainland.
Meeting our Clients

October and December saw Tom Tasaka and his Barnet/Hastings People Moving Project team hold meetings with interested residents and merchants on the Hastings Corridor and in Port Moody. Barnet/Hastings is a first for the ministry: new lane capacity will be dedicated to high-occupancy vehicles (transit and carpooiers) during morning and afternoon weekday peak periods.

November, Doug Hyde and his team held a drop-in on U.S. Election Night to show our plans to upgrade two intersections in Burnaby along Canada Way. An interesting piece of trivia: Burnaby, home to our region office, became a City in September, 1992, in honour of its Centennial year.

November also took our Senior Planning Engineer, Maria Swan, to a public forum organized by the North Delta Ratepayers Association to discuss future plans for the extension of Nordel Way through Delta, Surrey and into Langley.

This input helps us move to a “win-win” situation between people directly impacted by our projects and the need to resolve outstanding transportation problems in the region.

REGION 2

Safety and Consultation

Standing at the base of the Mara Lake slide site, looking up, you’ll see tons of rock, dirt and debris sitting precariously, waiting to fall. Something had to be done, which is why Highway 97A has been under daily road closures since mid October. The road closures were not initiated without public consultation.

Two public meetings were held at both ends of the project to discuss road closure options. Extensive advertising and bulletins have helped lessen disruption to the community and travelling public.

The area has a history of slides and road closures lasting several days. The most recent slide in 1990 closed the road for three weeks. MoTH’s latest work is a $1-million effort to prevent further slides. Over 100,000 cubic metres of material is being removed from the hillside. The project requires blasting the larger rock, carving out a catch-basin at the bottom of the slide area and then pushing debris from the top of the slide down to the catch basin where it is trucked away to a disposal site. Approximately 80 working days have been designated for this work.

REGION 3

Welcome Back
Electrical District

The beginning of November, Region 3’s electrical services (which had been privatized along with maintenance services), rejoined the ministry. The Kootenay region was the only region where highways electrical services was contracted out. BEL Power had a three-year contract which ended October 12th. All former BEL Power employees are now part of MoTH and will be based at the regional office in Nelson.

True to Scale

A local hobbyist—Ben Eales of Alternatek Model Makers, New Denver—did a scale model of the proposed Castlegar Robson Bridge for a public open house, November 26. It was so true to scale that one man was amazed to see his house with his car parked in front—not only was the house a match but the color of his car was correct too.

“I think it’s just great,” Castlegar resident Burt Campbell said (in a local newspaper). “I think the Ministry of Transportation and Highways) met the concerns of the community.”

The Castlegar Robson Bridge project is currently out to tender. Rocky Vanlerberg, Project Manager said, “The ministry has prepared two bridge designs—one in concrete and one in steel—so that both industries could bid on the project.”

Ed. Note: SCI Engineers & Constructors Inc. of Calgary were awarded the contract.

IN THE FIELD
EDUCATING TOMMOROW'S ROAD USERS

Students in Quesnel are showing a growing interest in Highways operations, due to our friendly staff in North Cariboo office.

Last fall, we participated in Career Days at Quesnel Senior Secondary. This fall, the school’s Physics 11 class wanted to study the motion characteristics of the Marguerite reaction ferry. Dan Keeler, Bridge Area Manager was only too happy to arrange a field trip that would be a valuable learning experience.

The students were so enthusiastic a planned 10-minute in-class presentation took an entire 55-minute period. At the Marguerite Ferry site, Engineering Section set up a Total Station Survey instrument to measure the velocity of travel as the ferry tacked across the Fraser, taking readings at five second intervals. The actual velocity of the river was then measured by dropping a piece of styrofoam into the river and clocking it as it passed by known, measured distances. The students took their data back to school to complete their experiment. Their teacher, Mr. Law, is thinking ahead to another project to study vectors for stresses associated with a Through Truss bridge.

North Cariboo office has also taken students from Maple Drive Junior Secondary for a tour of the Quesnel River Bridge. Now another elementary school has been in touch with Dan to discuss a field trip. In a town the size of Quesnel, good news sure travels fast.

A HORSE'S "TALE"

As part of a planned upgrade of Mile 80 rest area, North Peace District used horses instead of machines to clear timber for nature trails. This was done to minimize damage to a unique spruce forest.

NORTH END TRUCK ROUTE OPENS

This arterial route to serve new industrial developments in the Williams Lake area opened to much fanfare November 14th. Here's what the newspapers said: "A beneficial addition to Williams Lake." "Good job guys." "High-tech beauty." "An impressive stretch of road." "A vision facilitated by the Department of Highways supervisor Tracy Cooper (DHM, Central Cariboo) and his crew."

The project features the latest in road building including the "Great Barrier System"—a guardrail energy absorption terminal designed to collapse on impact.

A bit of trivia: the North End Truck Route was the first project to really utilize the project team concept from inception to completion. There were 75 team members.

Tracy said, "It proved to me that project management is the only way to go on projects of this size."

Congratulations to the team including Virgil Swanson from Regional Design group who kept everyone on track, Dennis Davis from Planning who made sure the project fit into the grand scheme of things and Randy Wenger from Properties who handled some delicate negotiations with the sawmills.

Tracy Cooper, DHM, Central Cariboo beside the "Great Barrier System."

LITTLE UPDATES SCORE BIG

Ron Wiebe's (Public Information Officer, Region 4) construction updates help the RCMP, ambulance drivers and the public and earned him a place in the 200% Club. The one-page updates are bulk mailed to citizens in affected rural communities and delivered to the RCMP, 911 emergency dispatch, Ambulance, CNR and bulletin boards in the area. The first edition comes before construction begins and usually locates the project on a map, describes what work will be done, warns of any road closures that may occur and provides alternate routes. Following editions include notices identifying firm road closure dates and a "thank-you-for-your-patience-road-users" note.

Ron Wiebe.
REGION 5

Come On Down

Regional office and Skeena District hosted an open house, November 10th. The purpose was to exchange information. We wanted to inform people about what we do to keep them moving on the highways and bridges and we wanted to hear what people had to say about how we're doing. Every department made a presentation. Even our local maintenance contractor, Nechako North Coast, pitched in.

REGION 6

New Quarters

In September, Vancouver Island surveyors were happy to receive new quarters at Parksville after spending many years cramped in field trailers. Standing outside their new office at Pine Tree Centre, Highway #4 are (left to right): George Der, Dave Purvis, Jack Mawle (the crew’s supervisor), Bob Reading, Dave Rich, Norm Urquhart, Bob Wylie, Lee Purvis, Dan Kells, Ron Holz, R. Robinson, Ken MacKenzie, Ross Ford, Gary McNutt, Steve Reid, Dave Smart, Andrew White and Barr Fisk. Bill Quinn was missing at the time the picture was shot.

Two Take Flying Leap

It started as a “macho” challenge for regional computer wiz Jack Chiu, but after an initial sky dive at Victoria International Airport, he leapt into the program feet first. Last June he went on an automatically-opening chute jump at 3,000 feet. Jack is now up to six jumps, just two short of his first free-fall.

Jack was so enthusiastic about the experience, he convinced public information officer, Tom Parkin to try one of the “tourist specials” offered by Ultimate High Parachute Club. Tom went way, way up—to 10,000 feet for a one-time tandem fall. For this, he was harnessed to a dive master who did all the work. Tom’s words on exiting were, “If only mother could see me now.” (He has a video of the 30-second free-fall for those interested in trying it.)

The finance group had a bean counting contest in their display—the prize was a region sweatshirt.

Three hundred people toured the building and the media came too. But the biggest plus was that the open house offered an excellent opportunity to get to know co-workers better and to learn what they do. Everyone involved now has a new respect for their co-workers and the work they do. Congratulations to all.

IN THE FIELD

Road Runner Winter 1992/93
Logo by Darius

Darius Kanga (Manager, Research & Development, Planning Services Branch) loves working with stained glass. He brought his hobby to work when he designed and built a replica of the ministry logo—so perfect a match in colour and of such fine workmanship, he attracted regular visitors to his office to admire it. When the executive invited him to showcase it at a meeting, Darius donated the piece to the ministry. Darius is now designing a lamp which will incorporate the logo into its shade. We asked if he’s taking orders. He said, sure. Thanks Darius.

Howling Success

Safety Branch sent out an invitation to “dress up” for Halloween and approximately 200 ghosts, goblins and what nots came. It was a haunting affair. The first 120 costumed guys and ghouls who visited Safety Branch received a Halloween pencil. At afternoon coffee the helpless public was surrounded by pirates, witches and dwarfs as employees spilled into the HQ building courtyard for prizes and treats.

The ghouls at the minister’s office—left to right Heidi Reid, Muriel Scott, Jackie St. Dennis (kneeling) and Patti Haire.

Marathon Men

Three HQ staffers completed the 42 km Royal Victoria Marathon on October 11th: Al Moir, Senior Manager, Financial Planning and Reporting; Ian Matthews, Major Projects Technician and Ken Carter, OA, Branch Manager’s Office, Finance and Administration Branch. Congratulations. “Ian came in at three hours and 38 minutes. Al Moir, celebrating his 40th birthday took three hours, 50 minutes,” said Ken.

“It took me longer. I hadn’t done enough training in the beginning. I came in at four hours, 30 minutes.” Better training next time Ken.

Well Fair

The HQ Well Fair, October 26 and 27, fared very well. Over 300 attended. Good information was shared, apples were consumed and prizes were won. Two of the fair’s participants comment. “It was very informative, if you wanted to spend the time. There were knowledgeable people willing to answer any questions on health, exercise, eating habits, stress, etc.,” said Fabiola Owen. “Lately some of my coworkers have taken to calling me the ‘Fatboy’, so I hope to put the Weight Watchers cookbook that I won as a draw prize to good use,” said Steve Barr.

Community Fund Goal Smashed

We aimed for $33,000 and collected $38,000 for the Provincial Employees Community Fund Campaign. Five branches had 100 per cent participation. Each will receive a certificate for their efforts (along with four other branches that pulled in 80 per cent participation) but we had their directors compete in “tricycle playoffs” to see which branch would win the grand prize—lunch with the executive. It was close but “Gregarious” Gregg Singer (Major Projects) kept the pressure up and managed to squeeze by “Rocket” Rodney Chapman (Construction) at the finish line. Third place finisher was “Bashful” Bob Buckingham (Finance), followed closely by “Magical” Mike Kent (Environment), “Dynamic” Dick Melville (Public Affairs) won for the best-dressed competitor.

“Gregarious” Gregg and “Rocket” Rodney...
Your Fan Mail

Cycling Conference Organizers Praised

I found the Cycling B.C. '92: Focus on the Future conference to be quite useful, both in terms of further educating myself, as a cycling advocate, and in the opportunity it provided for planners, engineers, politicians and cycling advocates to hear each other's point of view and concerns. The organizers, in particular Jordan Alexander—and Danielle Laidlaw of Cycle BC as well—deserve high praise for bringing it all together so well.

Not only did your ministry take the unprecedented step of holding a conference to focus on cycling issues, but it is all the more laudable that the general public had an opportunity to participate—I hope the planners and engineers also felt they benefited from this additional dimension.

I dare to hope, if the conference is a good indication of your commitment to cycling as a legitimate and desirable form of transportation (that indeed cyclists aren't simply a 'bunch of ding-a-longs'), that we shall be seeing many exciting improvements, over the forthcoming months and years.

Volker Bodegom, Vancouver

Resourceful

(A hunter had an uncomfortable experience driving to and boarding the Big Bar ferry. The road was steep and the ferry had ramps that made it virtually impossible to load vehicles having other than standard rear axle overhang. But a resourceful employee saved the day.)

Thomas Zimmerlee was most understanding and patient throughout the process. In addition, I'm sure he worked beyond his normal working hours. If so, he did not make any mention of it. Thinking of the old adage "your work is only as good as the tools provided," I was amazed at the resourcefulness of Mr. Zimmerlee, using old planks and bits and pieces to make it work. As a resident and taxpayer in and of B.C., I take this opportunity to thank this individual for that "extra effort" so seldom acknowledged by most.

Dave Lee, Maple Ridge

Thank you MoTH

In trying to think of ways to say thank you to all Highways people past and present for your friendship, support and contrariness over the past 37 years, I realized there is no better way than using a great friend to all of us—the Road Runner.

I am sincerely grateful to all of you for your well wishes and beautiful gifts presented to me on Friday evening, November 6, 1992. The memories will last forever.

If I had to do it all over again, would I? You bet! Thank you Geoff Warrington.

Working For Youth

Thank you (Mark Stevens, Area Manager, South Island District) on behalf of the young people involved, for your interest and co-operation in permitting us to upgrade the paved area on the grounds of the SANSCHA Hall in Sidney for use by skateboarders. The project was very successful. Police and business owners noted there was almost no hassles with skateboarders using sidewalks and mall areas during the summer. We now have a committee working toward providing permanent recreation facilities. Thank you for helping us prove the urgent need to provide such facilities for the young people. When people take an interest in them, they live up to responsibilities very quickly.

Brenda Hartfield, Councillor, Town of Sidney

Job Well Done

On behalf of residents and visitors of the Resort Municipality of Whistler I would like to extend our appreciation for a "job well done." The upgrading and surface rehabilitation carried out this summer by your ministry along Highway 99 has improved access to this community and added both comfort and safety to all drivers. Special mention should go to the ministry's representatives, in particular, Messrs. Don What (Project Manager, Paving, Region 1) and Fred Palmer (Project Supervisor, Paving, Region 1), for their exemplary efforts in the execution of this project.

Ted Nebbeling, Mayor

Setting the Standard

Thank you (Veronica Walsh, Executive Secretary, Highways Operations Department, HQ) for your professional and efficient management of our recent request for information regarding the status of our subdivision application. While we were prepared to wait on the availability of the Assistant Deputy Minister, it was indeed a pleasure to have such a prompt response, thanks to your initiative. You have set a standard to which all ministry employees should aspire.

Bob Holland, President

quaestor Construction Ltd.

Great Job

I am writing on behalf of myself and the people of Roy Creek Road. We would like to thank you (Robin Storkey, Area Manager, North Island District) for seeing that our water problem was solved. A great job was done. Not very often are things done so well and in such a swift and honest manner.

Linda Leigh, Royston resident

"We Feel Safe on Ferries"

The lake ferries have had a good record. Let us keep it that way. We have had many occasions to ride our ferries and enjoy the trip across the lake. We never cease to marvel at the skillful dockings by the captains and the precise and courteous manner the dock officer and deck hands load and unload the cars . . . and very large logging trucks. They are pleasant and we feel safe. A feeling we've never had when loading on the coastal ferries.

Dawn Penniket, Nelson
Cycling B.C. a Success

The first-ever provincial cycling conference was a great success. In the Legislature, William Hartley, MLA for Maple Ridge- Pitt Meadows touted it as being "the way the provincial government wants to continue to work with the people of British Columbia." Over 200 people attended planners, engineers, environmentalists, politicians, cycling advocates, etc.) and worked together to flesh out an action plan to make cycling a more viable transportation option.

Highlights of recommendations from the conference action planning session include creation of a provincial cycling co-ordinator; education strategies targeting adults, police officers, school teachers and bike couriers, improving existing road and path facilities; developing and promoting route destinations for touring cyclists; enhancing links with other transportation modes; identifying ways to provide facilities for touring cyclists (e.g. storage, parking, showers, laundry).

Special thanks to Jordan Alexander, her support team from HQ policy branch and Kenwood Rayner from Highway Planning Branch, who was drafted (without warning) at the conference. (And to Susan O’Connor too, who in September joined the ministry team working on Transport 2021 with the Greater Vancouver Regional District.)

Task Force Being Formed

What began at the conference will continue. MoTH is chairing a special task force to aid the co-ordinated implementation of the conference action plan. Besides MoTH staff, the task force will include representatives from the ministries of tourism, environment and Attorney General as well as B.C. Transit, cycling associations in Vancouver, Victoria and the Okanagan, the Capital and Greater Vancouver Regional Districts and the City of Kelowna. Representation is being sought from the ministries of municipal affairs, health and education.

Interim Cycling Policy

Following the conference, an interim policy was finalized by Policy Branch. It was released to the public in early January.

Issues in the policy include roadbuilding and maintenance standards as well as cyclist encouragement, education and enforcement. Local and regional cycle-route planning and integration initiatives, such as B.C. Transit’s proposed ‘Bike-and-Ride’ program, are also included.

A year-long monitoring process is now in place to allow the public and stakeholders time to review and comment on the policy. During this period, MoTH will track the development and success of implementing initiatives proposed in the policy. Any comments and issues will be considered during policy revisions in Fall 1993.

If you want a copy of the policy, contact the Policy Branch at HQ—397-5997.

The Road Show

"In September, we went on the road to 'show' regional staff what the interim cycling policy is all about and were 'shown' a thing or two ourselves," said Jordan Alexander, Policy Branch, HQ. "There was a good exchange of information."

Policy Branch’s ‘cycling road show’ consisted of 80 slides—an introduction to stakeholder comments on the February 1992 draft policy and key HQ players. The visual representation of issues covered all areas of project development from bikeway planning and design to construction and maintenance.

The regions, in turn, showed Jordan the glaring differences that exist between regions. An overall blanket policy couldn’t meet them all.

"Cycling issues differ greatly outside the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, and the Okanagan," said Jordan. "In the Kootenays, there’s many kilometres of road with a rock face on one side and a 150 metre drop on the other. This makes adding a metre and a half shoulder to accommodate cyclists quite difficult and costly."

Jordan thanks region staff for making her feel at home and for their good ideas. One individual suggested different types of paving and sealcoating practices could be applied to benefit cyclists.

"Our regions are diverse but we have a common bond. We all work together to serve the public’s transportation needs," said Bruce McKevitt, ADM, Planning and Major Projects. "To this end, we encourage comments to the interim cycling policy released earlier this month.

"Working together, over the next year we can shape a more 'universal' and effective cycling policy and address internal issues such as cycle-route planning."

Jordan Alexander
All around the province, many bridges are being replaced with steel or concrete structures with much longer spans and much greater foundation requirements. That's when MoTH installs new piles—to support bridge abutments and piers.

Here's how it works. Design engineers specify the pile sizes as well as the hammer required to drive the pile in. Based on either computer analysis or dynamic pile formula, a driving resistance is determined. Site inspectors use the driving resistance as a means of quality control. Sometimes things don't go quite as expected, however.

Often, on very short notice, the PDA (Pile Driving Analysis) operator drives or flies to the site with as much electronics and computers as a rock and roll band. One or two of the piles in question are instrumented to measure the driving force in the pile, the performance of the pile driver and the capacity of the pile. Frequently, a comparison of the potential energy of the hammer to the actual energy delivered to the pile can provide an explanation of anomalous (not normal) driving behaviour. By instrumenting the pile, anomalous behaviour can be explained.

"The pile will then be either approved for use or remedial measures will be taken," said Don Gillespie.

Don is one of two operators who are now trained to perform PDA for the ministry. Doug Munich and Don share the duties depending on other activities. Last summer, they also trained Surinder Puir who is now back at school with the Professional Partnership for Graduate Studies Program.

Doug says he enjoys the opportunity to see the province and the challenge of the job. Every job and every site is different.

A Day in the Work Life . . .

"Depending on the situation," says Doug, "we may be lifted by a crane while we stand on a platform or . . . there was one job where they had a crane with a ball and hook on the end. It was the middle of winter and below freezing. The ball was dipped into the water and we sat on it so our pants froze onto it and then we were lifted up."

Both Don and Doug say they like working on construction sites—especially when MoTH personnel are supervising construction.

"The work can be heavy at times. We need between 350 to 400 pounds of gear to do our job. Ministry employees are always willing to pitch in and do some of the leg work, helping us carry the gear to the site," Don says.

Doug and Don would like to thank MoTH site supervisors for their assistance over the years.

(Editor's note: we thank Doug and Don too, for sharing their story.)
Service Excellence Update

From Vince Collins, Deputy Minister

Shortly, you will receive a report on our performance in meeting our Priorities for Action objectives for 1992/93. Here are highlights of accomplishments to date in "Service Excellence." Keep up the good work!

Our "Service Excellence" Goal

The ministry is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in the delivery of quality services to all our customers. In doing so, the ministry will ensure that customer needs are clearly identified and that ministry programs and priorities address customer expectations.

Service Excellence is critical to our everyday operations. It is the glue that keeps us working together—not just for our external customers, but it makes our jobs more pleasant as well. "Service Excellence" supports and develops the human side of government, not the machine referred to as the bureaucracy.

The concept of "Service Excellence" isn't new. You've been working toward it all along. What "Service Excellence" does is empower the staff to change things for the better.

This is my opportunity to assess our progress in fulfilling "Service Excellence" strategies and priorities outlined in the ministry's "Priorities for Action" plan, circulated to staff April 1992. They were lofty, but we're on the way to achieving them, thanks to our "Service Excellence" staff and dedicated reps in the field.

Our Strategies to Meet Our Goal

1) We need to continue to talk about "Service Excellence" to ensure staff understand the concepts and the relevance of "Service Excellence" to the work place.

To this end, our "Service Excellence" reps have worked tirelessly. Between July and October, they supported the "Service Excellence" office in the delivery of awareness sessions. They're also the facilitators of the 200% Club. In the fourth quarter of the year, the "Service Excellence" unit also produced a video. It showed us where we are and our plans for the future. Specifically, the creation of a ministry-wide "Service Excellence" plan of action for 1993/94.

2) Feedback from regional focus groups needs to be analyzed for full understanding of customer demands, and strategies need to be developed in order to respond creatively to this feedback.

Regional focus groups were surveyed last February. The results were circulated to "Service Excellence" reps and managers for discussion amongst staff. Staff responded in many areas. Regional updates to keep the public more informed of all ministry activities were one result. And staff are "talking and listening" to the public more than ever before. This is critical to the success of the program.

3) Further effort is required on developing customer profiles of service expectations and benchmark tests of perceived satisfaction with service levels. This work will be conducted on both internal and external customers.

A general population study was made between August and October. The target audience was 800 public and commercial road users. Further, "Speak Out '92," a survey of staff opinions on "Service Excellence," "Organizational Health" and internal communications was conducted in October. The results of both will be communicated to staff and will help direct the ministry-wide "Service Excellence" plan of action for 1993/94.

4) Where it is not possible or prudent to meet the specific demands of customers, ministry representatives have a duty to inform the customer and explain the reasons.

We've made some good progress on this one. Perhaps the best example is the customer complaint follow-up program first developed at Lakes District and now being employed by others. These types of approaches are exactly what we need in order to stay close to our customers.

Our Priorities for Action

1) Regional and internal management should be driving this priority. Continuing involvement are necessary to long-term success.

2) Every effort has been made to implement service improvements. The priority should be given to management representatives to ensure continued leadership to our long-term success.

Two major initiatives:


2) Planning and implementing a lot of work in identifying customer expectations and meeting or beating these expectations.
Overall, we're on the right track. We are recognized by government as being leaders in "Service Excellence," thanks to staff. But there needs to be more interaction. We need to talk and listen more to our external customers and we must improve the level of communications between departments as well as between staff and their managers/supervisors.

3) The Executive, with input of all ministry work units and feedback from customers through focus groups and surveys, will prepare a ministry-wide plan for "Service Excellence" prior to the end of fiscal year 1992/93.

As you will note under "strategy 3," we completed an 800-sample, road-user survey the results of which will be circulated to "Service Excellence" reps and managers/supervisors in the new year. The next step will be for managers/supervisors to meet with their staff to discuss the results. At this point, staff will be asked to provide feedback. This feedback, as well as the road-user survey findings, "Speak Out '92" findings and plans produced by each work unit in response to "priority 2," will contribute to the preparation of a ministry-wide plan for "Service Excellence" in the 1993/94 fiscal year. This plan is to be produced by April of this year.

S.E. is becoming a part of the community—
as North Cariboo District's student tours help us.

Critiques

Compiled by Ann Adams, "Service Excellence" rep, Public Affairs Branch

"Excellent service has always been offered in this region, but we are aware that we must continue to improve service and product delivery." June Forsythe, Central North East Region.

"I think the great accomplishment of "Service Excellence" has been the opening up of communication between employees and all levels of management. This enables ideas for improvement to be expressed openly and received positively." Marilyn Mineault, South Peace District.

"Identifying customers was an exercise that demonstrated the practical application of "Service Excellence." We had a lot of fun with it and I could see people beginning to understand the intent of the initiative." Christy Kerr, Highway Planning Branch.

"I feel that S.E. in our Branch has helped to boost the morale, but staff have communicated they feel management has to make their support more visible." Sue Harrison, Contract Admin, HQ.

"I'm concerned that peers are coming to me with comments like S.E. isn't going anywhere. S.E. is not simply responding to outside customers in a quick and courteous manner. S.E. has to begin taking care of our colleagues. Team building begins at 'home' and starts off small. I still remain with the understanding that when you recognize employees for a job well done... the investment is well worth the return." Leah Glick-Stal, Highway Safety Branch.

"We are working to keep "Service Excellence" awareness high and are very encouraged by customer feedback. A bouquet of flowers was received recently by Joni Cooper, our Development Approvals Officer and letters of thanks were received by Brian Hammerback, District Technician." Kee Warner and Andrea Smit, Lakes District.
**IT'S YOUR SERVE**

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**Cost-Saving Trio**

By Bill Birney, Information Systems Branch, HQ

The project: to upgrade the operating system software on 38 shared processors (minicomputers), from an old release to the new current release. This was a big job done with a minimum of disruption to our customers. It involved a dozen people, plus assistance from region/district operations staff and three key players: John Fysh, Margo McCormick and Yvon Leduc.

John figured out a way to do the upgrades without our having to physically visit each site, as had been necessary the previous time. He and his staff, Margo and Yvon, did the upgrades remotely, assisted by systems technicians at the regions and by site contacts at the districts and sub-offices.

We estimate savings of at least $60,000 through avoidance of travel costs to the 33 sites. Of course, there were reasons for doing the upgrades, such as better reliability, assured continuation of vendor support, etc.—and these were achieved. However, the real story was the evenings and weekends worked by these people so as not to inconvenience customers (ministry staff) during working hours, and the ingenuity applied to avoiding travel costs.

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**Ferry Workers to the Rescue**

The tradition on inland ferries is to render assistance to any individual in trouble on their waterways. Recently, four crew members on the Kootenay Ferry route were thanked by the public for coming to the rescue on two different occasions.

"Words fail me," said Lyn Price when two crewmates on the Kootenay Lake Ferry route, Al Chalmers and Roger Aubert, assisted her mother, who'd been injured in a motor vehicle accident on the way to the ferry. "Roger was very considerate, helping with telephone calls, offering coffee. Al was sensitive, careful, thorough and humorous," said Lyn.

Larry Watke and Paul Moreau also came to the rescue. Phyllis Trozzo explains in a letter to the ministry: "We want to convey our thanks for the way they responded to Al Trozzo who was in severe pain as he was being transported to Nelson hospital. They have him 100% care, comforting and talking, giving him oxygen and assuring him he was going to be okay."

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**Suggestion Awards**

Congrats to Wendy Isherwood, Data Clerk, Insurance and Claims Section in the Construction Engineering Branch, HQ. She designed a more efficient file retrieval system for her section and won herself $650. Wendy took what was "always the way" (searching daily for files for claims adjustors) and turned it into a "new, more efficient system" (searching on designated days, weekly). Her evaluator from the section, Steve Swanston says, "The changes saved us time...but far more important, is that the changes have taken what used to be a nasty and frustrating job and turned it into a welcome part of the week's routine."

Earl Lund, Chief Highway Engineer (right) presents Wendy her plaque for taking "a nasty job and turning it into a welcome part of the week's routine."
New 200% Club Members

Sherrie Applegate and Lee Constantineau, Bulkley Nass District: both designers/builders extraordinaires

Barbara Armstrong, HQ: goes the extra mile—always

Beth Atkinson, HQ: pleasant and efficient

Linda Ashby, Region 6: performed three jobs at once—willingly

John Brethour, electrical crew, Region 6: great organizational and record-keeping skills

Dan Buckthorpe, Commissionaire, HQ: cheerful, eager attitude

Terry Burgess, Fort George District, Grade "A" public consultation

Andy Bush and Rees Davidson, Bridge Inspection Crew: contagious enthusiasm and extra hours

Ken Canfield (Captain now retired), Kootenay Lake Ferry: for his years of service and giving joy to hundreds of kids throughout our country

Ken Carter, HQ: consistently helpful, happy, willing to lend a hand

Al Chalmers and Roger Aubert, Kootenay Lake Ferry: for helping woman injured in car accident (see Ferry Workers to the Rescue p.16)

Virginia Clark, HQ: high-level quality to Engineers in Training program

Lynda Daniels, HQ: put in 12 to 14-hour days for UBCM conference

Sandra deHoog, Lakes District: goes the extra mile; in early always

Carol Deveau, HQ: regularly works beyond job requirements

Sue Gravelle, Region 4: an asset to the ministry

Jim Guthrie and Noella Resendes, Region 4: arranged 50 percent cost-saving travel

Margaret Heslop, Region 2: developed procedures to ensure key people are kept informed during emergencies through ministry radio room

Liz Kennedy, HQ: created an improved bring forward system

Maxine McDicken, Region 6: thinks ahead to make work place pleasant

Bruce McGormans, Region 6: for Nicol Street project, careful attention to public concerns

Bob Mahler, HQ: gets a "10" for humour and patience in training staff

Nadene Morris, Nicola District: works overtime, takes calls at home

Brenda Nicolson, HQ: fine work in providing autocad drawings

Teresa Nye, HQ: goes beyond duty cheerfully

Bob O'Brien, Central Island: positive to public and staff

Dina O'Donnell, HQ: against all odds, got survey crew a new home

Kim Douglas Tourner, HQ: training support on very, very short notice

Geoff Warrington, (now retired) HQ: outstanding service for 37 years

Larry Watke and Paul Moreau, Kootenay Lake Ferry: caring for customer on route to Nelson Hospital (see Ferry Workers to the Rescue p.16)

Ron Wiebe, Region 4: designed project updates (see Little Updates p. 8)

Wei Wong, Fraser Valley District: helped road user in distress.
**Employee Assistance Program**

It's all about helping people to help themselves. It's confidential and it's free.

**Who is the program for?**

The program provides free, confidential and professional support to help employees resolve problems that affect their personal or work lives. (Yes, your spouse or dependents can apply too because your well-being and work performance can be affected by their problems.) It's your choice but going through the EAP may also be mandatory when work performance is affected.

**What kinds of problems?**

EAP does not deal with all work-related problems. That's what management, personnel and the union are for. The EAP deals with human problems that may affect your work which may include but are not limited to those related to health, alcohol and drug abuse or dependancy, family, marital and financial problems.

**Why is it needed?**

We all have problems. Usually we can work them out. Sometimes though, they become too much to handle and start affecting our happiness, health, relationships or work. When this happens we need support or these problems and the consequences may become worse.

For a problem at home that doesn't affect work, you can refer yourself. If the problem potentially affects your work, your supervisor may suggest you refer yourself. If it's really affecting your work, your supervisor will refer you. In this case you may have a Union Steward present at the meeting with your supervisor. Each referral is reviewed and either accepted or rejected for action. Action would involve counselling through a community resource and EAP follow up to determine if the course was successful.

**And if further assistance is needed?**

On completion of the program, if further assistance is recommended, the employee will be responsible for the monetary costs.

However, MSA (extended health) will now accept receipts for services rendered by doctors registered by the College of Psychologists to a maximum of $200 a person or $500 a family per year. It is subject to a deductible of 25 per cent and co-insurance factor of 80 per cent.

**Where do you refer yourself or an employee?**

It's as simple as calling 1-800-661-2327 (687-4113 in the Lower Mainland) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Review of STO Positions**

A committee to review positions for classification within the Scientific Technical Officer (STO) Plan was formed because there was concern over classification levels assigned to positions as a result of the STO Plan. Members include Miles Webster (chair), regional rep, Reg Fredrikson, district rep and from headquarters: Richard Dixon and Wayne Bobrowsky.

The committee mandate is to provide an advisory role with respect to organizational structure; review duties to determine if positions meet the criteria for the STO Plan; and classify positions. All submitted job descriptions and related information is currently being collected and sorted for review.

Further details will be communicated in the next Road Runner.
Pay Equity Update

Work on the Government Pay Equity Program is behind schedule, however, the bulk of our ministry's workload commitment to the project is complete. Ministry employees have conducted 14 task-dictionary focus groups (comprised of three to five employees each) and worked an average of three days. Additionally, we contributed to a number of focus groups conducted by other ministries.

The task dictionary will provide a data base for the preparation of computer-assisted job descriptions and is scheduled to be complete and operational by spring 1994. Due to the high cost of hardware/software for this program, it may initially be available in a limited number of locations.

Approximately twenty employees were interviewed as part of the process for developing a new gender-neutral job evaluation plan to cover all positions in the BCGEU bargaining unit. The new job evaluation plan is scheduled for completion in the spring of 1994.

To date we have had two pay equity interim salary increases. Further increases are scheduled to occur after the plan has been finalized and will continue at an annual rate of up to one percent of government payroll until equity is achieved.

Deb Brooks, Pay Clerk and
dAndrew Bailey, Asst. Supervisor,
Payroll both from HQ—two individuals who benefited from Pay Equity increases.

NEW SEMINARS

Financial Management Seminar
The seminar is a one-day briefing on the fundamentals of Ministry/Government Financial Management and Control. This session is intended for managers and staff who are partially involved in the financial management process but who do not require detailed knowledge of all aspects of the process.

Financial Administration Workshop
This workshop is a two-day presentation intended for employees who require more in-depth knowledge of the government financial management and control process. It is designed to ensure practical financial policy concerns are addressed.

The above two courses have been scheduled to begin in January. For further information regarding the above noted courses please call Wally Quarry at 387-7811.

Managing Career Discussions
This is a one-day seminar to assist supervisors to effectively conduct career discussions with their employees and is particularly beneficial for supervisors who are supporting a nominee in the Excel Program.

There are five key learning points:
1) career preparation vs planning,
2) understanding the roles and responsibilities of the employee and the supervisor,
3) motivating employees,
4) resources and tools available, and
5) counselling skills to guide career discussions.

This course will begin in early 1993.
For more information please call Russ Spilsbury at 387-7800.

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Thanks for Being There
From Nella Todd, Employment Equity Committee Chair, Region 4

To all who attended and took the time to comment on the Employment Equity Awareness sessions, thank you. Most said they were good, some said they were too long and pacing was slow. We'll be back with sensitivity seminars and will adjust delivery according to your comments.

These seminars were brought to you by your fellow workers. They were designed to make you aware of the historical and current biases that make it difficult to achieve diversity in our workplace. Special thanks to the volunteers.

Don't forget. Equity is not just a pay issue. It's a matter of giving respect and consideration to all fellow human beings.

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For more information please call Russ Spilsbury at 387-7800.

Diversity Training Update

Seven Managing Diversity training sessions were delivered last fall to ministry managers. The initiative raised awareness as well as provided information on employment equity and how to effectively manage diversity.

Two comments received from session attendees: "It increased my knowledge and understanding of employment equity and the laws which govern it" and "I now understand that managing diversity means to integrate cross cultures, not merely assimilate people to my values."

Thank you to those managers who attended and participated. You showed a desire to accommodate cultural differences as well as commitment to our organization and your jobs.
WORK PLACE HARASSMENT

We all benefit from a work place free from harassment. Harassment violates the fundamental rights, dignity and integrity of the individual—and it is against the law. The problem is, most of us don't know what harassment is. We've tried to do this for you as well as to let you know who you can contact if you feel you've been harassed.

Harassment is defined as

- harassment of an individual or individuals on any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Human Rights Act of British Columbia. These include: race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation;
- deliberate gestures, comments, questions, representations, or other behaviours that ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome by the recipient and which serve no legitimate work related purpose.
- harassment does not include actions occasioned through exercising in good faith the employer's managerial/supervisory rights and responsibilities.
- employees, in dealing with other persons in the work place, must treat them with respect and dignity, and refrain from exploiting a work relationship for private advantage or benefit.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome comment or conduct of a sexual nature that may detrimentally affect the work environment or lead to adverse job-related consequences for the victim. It includes, but is not limited to, unwanted physical contact, sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and suggestive or offensive comments or gestures emphasizing sexuality, sexual identity, or sexual orientation.

Who to Call

Employees who believe they have been subjected to overt or implied harassment are encouraged to make their objections known to the harasser. Where this is inappropriate or ineffective, employees are encouraged to seek the assistance of their supervisor, manager, personnel advisor, appropriate representative of their bargaining unit or the Employment Equity Advisor, Carol Leung. These individuals may not have all the answers to your questions but they will know where additional information or assistance is available.

New Language

The Government of the Province of B.C. and the BCGEU have recently agreed to new language, policy, and procedures related to complaints of harassment. The policy and procedures also apply to excluded employees. It is anticipated that, with the cooperation of the P.E.A. and the Nurses' Unions, members of those two bargaining units will also be covered.

First Excel Graduate

Bob Corder, once manager of financial services in Region 6, came into the ministry's Excel program for career managers with a goal—to be a Regional Manager of Finance and Administration. With six months left to go on his planned Excel program, he proved his management competency by winning the competition for Regional Manager Finance and Administration in Region 4.

"Although it's not a huge step for mankind," said Bob, "I am now part of the regional management team, which is a large move for me."

Bob began his career with the ministry 19 years ago, in General Office at HQ. He then moved around the regions and districts, working his way up.

"I started on a personalized, planned management program prior to the official inauguration of Excel. My supervisor, Bonnie Meurs (Regional Manager, Finance & Administration) and Regional Director, Neville Hope sat down with me and plotted a two-year course of training that would lead me toward my goal.

Congratulations Bob

"Excel formalizes a very good process, where two levels of supervisors work with an employee and share their insight as well as their support. It also helps you identify all the opportunities, and there's lots of them in this ministry. I'd recommend Excel to anybody interested in career management."

Bob Corder's wife Sherry, daughter Robyn and son Danny, joined him in Prince George December 6th. "We're all looking forward to new opportunities and meeting new people."

Congratulations Bob. You can "Excel" too, but first you have to be nominated.

Nominees are recommended through appraisal interviews during the career-development discussions.

For more information, call your personnel office or Russ Spilsbury in Personnel Services Branch, HQ at 387-7799.
What is Service Excellence Anyway?

An excerpt from North West Pathways, a personal perspective by Jane Sparkes, Public Information Officer, Region 5

Service Excellence: we've all heard these words (if you haven't you must have your head under a rock). Some see it as "just another one of those ministry programs." Others greet it as an opportunity to change our bureaucratic ways. Some of you may not be clear on what it means and what the ministry program is all about.

It means, in a nutshell, providing the best service possible to your "customers." Ultimately, all of us are contributing services that lead to an end product on the highway, therefore, our external customers are the road users. We also have internal customers we deal with on a day-to-day basis.

Perhaps you already are providing excellent service to your "customers"—that's great! The point of this initiative is to have the ministry as a whole performing excellent service. The "Service Excellence" initiative asks you to take a closer look at and think about what you're doing, who you're doing it for and how well you're doing it. In other words, who are your customers, what services do you provide to them, are they the right services and are they satisfied with those services?

The "Service Excellence" team was organized to take a closer look at the overall ministry services and customers. They've started by doing focus group studies that ask customers their service expectations and current levels of satisfaction with the ministry. The results of this study have been made available to all staff in the ministry. The next step of this research is to do a broader based survey getting an even better picture of customer satisfaction levels. The group is also travelling the province to talk to other work units about "Service Excellence" to motivate staff to think about service and ways of improving it as individuals in our ministry.

So why are we doing this, you ask? In the private sector the motivation is obvious. Satisfied customers are return customers, in other words PROFIT AND SUCCESS.

Over the next few years, ideas will flow and get tried out. Some will succeed and some won't.

In the public sector, as in MoTH, what's the motivation? Our customers can't go to the competition and can't gain or lose money. What are "they" going to do, fire us?!

Well, that's a pretty crummy attitude, eh! The motivation to provide quality service still exists in the public sector, it's just not so bottom line. It's called pride. Personal pride in your work, pride in the organization you work for.

We all joke about our publicly known nickname the "Department of Holidays," but admit it, that reputation is nothing to be proud of. Not too many of us appreciate the sometimes negative comments we receive when we tell people where we work.

What's the motivation? Our customers can't go to the competition, and what are they going to do, fire us?!

Another motivation is, although the public has nowhere else to go for our services, they can sure make a lot of noise if they're unhappy—you've all heard of minister's referral letters and MLA's??

Also, consider what kind of service you expect when dealing with other ministries and government services as a taxpayer. Not so hot sometimes, is it? Keep that in mind next time you're dealing with a "customer."

Finally, we as civil servants have a moral responsibility to provide the best possible service to our "customers" regardless of whether or not there are any repercussions to not doing so.

A few other things about "Service Excellence" that may need some clearing up. The reference to "customers"—it's just a name to call those folks we serve. You may sometimes hear them referred to as "clients."

"Service Excellence" activities—what are they? They are anything that will improve service to external and internal people you deal with. It could be eliminating an unnecessary administrative process that hinders good service, answering the phone after two rings instead of eight, keeping staff around at lunch to help "customers" on their lunch hour, or dealing with a complaint immediately instead of days later. Perhaps one of the best ways we deliver excellent service is by ensuring that our road and bridge projects are the highest quality we can provide. It is the little things AND the big things that will make a difference to the way people view us.

The initiative is still in its infancy. Over the next few years ideas will flow and get tried out. Some will succeed and some won't. The thing to do at this time is think about it. Take the time to evaluate your situation. You may be happy to discover you're doing just great or find there's room for improvement, but you'd never given it much thought. Now's the time for making changes.
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FRANCOIS LAKE FERRY

Location: Crosses Francois Lake, between Southbank and Francois Lake, 24 kms south of Burns Lake in the Lakes District of Region 5

Service: Year-round, seven days a week, with scheduled trips 19 hours a day and on-call for emergencies between 12:30 a.m. and 5:30 a.m.

Number of Crew: 28
Route Manager: Ken Millar

Ship: MV Omineca Princess, 34-car, 200 passengers (Omineca is a Sekanni Indian word meaning “lake-like or sluggish river”)

Ship History: Built at Allied Ship Builders in North Vancouver, the ship was then cut into sections and moved by road (in 22 trailer loads) to Francois Lake. The inaugural run was June 13, 1976.

Route History: In 1916, the government took over a private service here with the Kitexchen—a barge with a one-team-and-wagon capacity. September 1919, the Kitexchen swept ashore during a high wind. It was refloated, but sunk shortly after. The Francois Belle replaced it. As traffic increased, larger ferries were put on the route: the 6-car Francois Lake Ferry (1922), the 16-car Jacob Henkel (1949) and, finally, the Omineca Princess (1976).

Professional Crew
Excellent Ship

Al Thomson has been a captain on the Francois Lake route since 1974. Before then, he'd been a relief mate on the Albion ferry route for about a year and a mate on the MV Needles for six years. So he speaks from experience when he calls the Omineca Princess an excellent ship and its crew, very professional.

"All are dedicated and often work beyond the call of duty. Many start as local relief workers and end up making it their working career. Most are involved in the community. Two, Tony Busfield and Lorne MacNab, put in hundreds and hundreds of hours to get a local volunteer "first aid responder group" going—with help from the B.C. Ambulance Service co-ordinator in Burns Lake. About ten years ago, Tony also organized a volunteer fire department in Southbank.

Mate Norm McGinnis and team—they're training for the world's longest and toughest race in 1995, from Anchorage to Nome Alaska.

"Spotlight On" graphic thanks to Joy Lees, Financial Systems, HQ

Engineer, Herb Frampion

Ken Millar
Route Manager

John Mussich
& Loren Funk
mixing paint

Captains
Al Thomson

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"Spotlight On" graphic thanks to Joy Lees, Financial Systems, HQ
Growing Roads?!!?

By Tom Parkin, Public Information Officer, Region 6

Does he really think that road will grow?
Of course not. Mike Rutledge is sprinkling water on plastic to set it so vehicles can pass over it in minutes. Lost you again? Read on.

Road Runner readers may recall Wallace Libby and Jack Vandenberg from our Spring '92 issue, in a story about cross-hatching. They were 'on the road' again with Mike Rutledge, Norbert Liner, Mike Sestrap and Alvin Timoffee as part of our only thermoplastic crew.

Most of the crew are seasonal employees, foreman Jack and Mike R. are the only full-timers in this Surrey-based centreline operation. All of the crew typically work 11-hour days, taking only every-other weekend off. They do take a week's break around each long weekend, when they have a chance to return home for well-deserved R&R.

Between April and October, they renew intersection markings over the southern half of the province. (Thermoplastic is infrequently used in Regions 4 and 5 because roads there are dirtier and ice blades used in those regions tend to remove the plastic layer.)

Despite their travels and travails, most MoTH employees have never seen this crew in action. Thermoplastic is a process of applying hot plastic to asphalt. It begins when two of the crew on a propane-fired 'mother truck' break up heavy bricks of white plastic with mallets and chuck the chunks into a vat. In one season, they melt some 200 tonnes of the stuff, which is composed primarily of calcium carbonate bulked with glass beads to improve night reflection.

The plastic is heated to 200 degrees celsius before being poured down a chute into a motorized lane-marking machine or manual applicators pushed by Jack or another senior member of the crew. Even these secondary machines are heater-equipped to keep the plastic liquid as it cools very quickly.

As soon as the stop bars, crosswalk edges, turn arrows or centreline marks are down, another crew member brings a sprinkling can, watering the plastic to cool it. It solidifies within minutes, even at Kamloops in mid-summer. As might be expected, there are plenty of funny looks and remarks from passers-by: 'No matter how much you water it, it's not going to grow!'
**WIM Stripping**

*By John Coombs, Planning Services Branch*

WIM stands for Weigh In Motion. It’s a scale that, when stripped across a road surface, can weigh each vehicle axle as it crosses at highway speeds.

The first Weigh In Motion (WIM) strips were installed last summer in various locations around the province including the Coquihalla Toll Booth. When WIM strips are put together with conventional traffic count loops we can measure not only the type and weight of vehicle crossing that section of road, but also its speed.

Direct telephone telemetry is also connected to the site. This makes it possible to see, in real time, the activity on a certain road segment. Together with other WIM installations, it will be possible to put information into a traffic model and measure the use of the road network.

This information will go toward such things as research in road design and construction materials, traffic demand management, traffic forecastings and determining system efficiency.

The initial work in installation and site selection, awarding contracts, etc., was done by Planning Services Branch, research and development team under Darius Kanga. The maintenance and incorporation of this new data source will be the responsibility of Planning Services, information resources group under Michael Trickey.

The thrust for WIM came through the internationally supported SHRP (Strategic Highway Research Project), which is a $150 million long-term project to better understand the conditions and factors affecting the road structures of the major highway networks in North America.

Sandy McMillan, Transitec employee, seals the WIM stripping.

**Aboriginal Issues, Project Director**

Meet Mary Koyl, Project Director of Aboriginal Issues—a new position in the Executive Branch. She comes from the Ministry of Health where she was Executive Director of the Support Services Division. Mary is experienced in working with Aboriginal peoples over a range of high profile policy issues. She has worked with the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations as Director, Aboriginal Land Claims and as Director, Social Policy and Special Projects with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Her role with MoTH is to aid in the resolution of issues between our ministry and the Aboriginal community. Welcome Mary.

**Non-Conforming Sign Removal**

In October, Minister Art Charbonneau announced that non-conforming signs along highway rights-of-way are to be removed by November 13th.

“We have had a substantial number of complaints from the public and municipalities about illegal signs on highway rights-of-way. The time has come to ensure the ministry’s signing policy is adhered to and these particular ones are removed permanently,” said Charbonneau in his announcement.

The only exception is for signs of substantial size (greater than three square metres). These are being allowed to remain in recognition of the owner’s cost to install them. Owners will be advised to apply for a temporary permit not to exceed six years.

“I want to thank all the DHMs and their staff for carrying this campaign through,” said Dan Doyle, ADM, Highway Operations. “It was not an easy campaign. In some areas, public consultation will continue on the issue. But we’ve made a good start toward a resolution to the problem of non-conforming signs on the rights-of-way of our provincial highways.”
**Bridges in Bulk**

There has never been a truer axiom than the one that says "the greatest asset any company has is its own employees."

Roy Buettner, Manager, Bridge Construction, Bridge Engineering Branch proved that when he suggested the branch develop standardized modular bridge parts that can fit together, depending on the site.

With 27 years experience in the ministry, 18 with Bridge Engineering Branch in headquarters, Roy had seen modular bridges designed for other ministries and in the private sector. "There are two unique features in modular bridges," says Roy. "We have standardized bridge sections so specifications can easily be put together, depending on what's needed at the site. In addition, all major components are prefabricated in steel or precast concrete.

"The cost savings are substantial," says Kang Ho, Senior Bridge Engineer. "Reduced costs in design (bridges are standardized, predesigned and prefabricated as much as possible, it's just site specific components must be completed), project supervision (because of reduced construction time) and, actual contract costs (as good as and, in some cases, less than construction costs on conventional structures) make this an excellent program."

"We started work on the project in late 1990," says Chuck Hutchinson, Bridge Construction Engineer, six years with Bridge Engineering and involved in the design and implementation of the project. "Some modular units have been designed and built, and we're continuously working to develop standards for new modulars."

Regional or district staff come to Bridge Engineering with a site plan and geotech report. The headquarters group (with input from Highway Engineering and Highway Environment) puts together the whole package, providing drawings and specifications. All major components for the crossing structure are fabricated away from the site, shipped to the location and connected by means of bolting, grouting and welding.

"While this program is not for all crossing applications, it is a real boon in remote areas," says Chuck. "It's very difficult to get ready-mixed concrete to the site and this method, of shipping pre-fabricated components, is a much better choice. As well, the structure can be built by local hired equipment operators with the ministry purchasing components, a further cost savings. Hiring local equipment operators directly benefits the community.

The Deka Bridge was the first pre-fabricated structure, built in South Cariboo District in 1991. Seven more modular units are under construction this fiscal year, again in South Cariboo, Okanagan/Shuswap, North Peace, South Peace, Central Kootenay and South Island. A further three designs are completed and approximately 15 are presently being considered for construction in the future.

"So far, we've worked on concrete structures," says Roy, "steel beam modules have been developed but haven't been built yet. That's our next goal."

**Gas.Ex Exploder**

As reported in the last Road Runner, this summer Snow Avalanche Programs began work on the installation of a Gas Ex remote detonating avalanche-control system at a high-elevation avalanche start zone near Duffey Lake. Scott Aitken, District Avalanche Technician for Duffey Lake, was the Project Manager for the installation. He had a busy summer.

"Here are the pictures we promised."

**Installing the exploder.**

"Swinging the exploder into place—told you it looked like an inverted flugel horn."

Peter Brett, Bridge Branch Director, has left on a nine month secondment with N.D. Lea Consultants to undertake bridge inspection and repair in Tanzania. Kang Ho will be the Acting Director during Peter's absence (December 7, 1992 to September 7, 1993).
Toy Intersection Educates Kids

By Sham Mahon, Specifications Writer
Traffic Engineering Centre

British Columbia schools will now have help in their efforts to get students home safe and sound, thanks to a little known section of MoTH's Highway Engineering Electrical Section—the Traffic Engineering Centre (TEC) in Victoria. This section has designed and built a travelling display to raise traffic awareness among school children.

The two-part display is an exact scale model (1/32 of actual size) of a typical intersection complete with toy cars, operating traffic lights and working pedestrian push buttons. The display can be operated by an instructor or by the students themselves.

The model operates as a real intersection would. A car approaching the intersection activates a sensor loop under the road and changes the traffic signals. Pedestrian push buttons on the signal poles also activate the signals, complete with 'walk' and 'don't walk' crosswalk signals.

And it has the same cutting-edge technology, traffic-control equipment that the TEC installs in traffic-controller cabinets throughout the province: the latest in rack mounted detectors, mainframes and TEC designed components including pedestrian/vehicle cards, power supply cards, load switches and advance warning flashers.

The display was conceived and built by Dave Trodd (currently the supervisor at the TEC) in 1983 for an electrical conference being held in Victoria that year. It was enlisted into a pilot project in Coquitlam schools. Due to its enormous popularity and success, ten more displays have been built by James Thomson and Associates in Sidney.

Most of these units will be used to educate school children but can also be used for public displays, to educate regional ministry employees to help them effectively respond to public enquiries, and to train ministry engineers and electricians.

The displays are available to all regions upon request. They can be modified by the TEC to reflect any changes each region would like to see in its own display board.

Enquiries concerning the display can be directed to Dave Trodd, Electrical Operations Supervisor at the TEC—387-3493.

The Stockholm Chariot

We saw this in the Saskatchewan Highways and Transportation employee publication—"In Motion."

Apparently, after years of walking behind the oil distributor during crack sealing operations, Stockholm equipment operators, Gerard Toth and Sheldon Raf decided there had to be a better way. Together, they designed what has come to be known as the "Stockholm Chariot" which allows them to sit and steer with their feet while pulled by the distributor.

Materials used in the design include: 4" square tubing (8' long, 188 wall); 12" x 3" Melroe pick up wheels (complete castor assembly, forks, bearings, wheels); two kitchen chairs made to swivel; and round pipe welded to flat plate to bolt on back of distributor.

The "Stockholm Chariot" in action.
The inland ferry standards review committee found that, though the inland ferry system had a good safety record and was basically sound and operated by dedicated people, there was room for improvement in the areas of management, signage, and training as well as safety equipment and procedures.

Al Thomson, of the MV Omineca Princess Francois Lake route, said, “My crew and I were very impressed with the professionalism of the review committee. We found out things about ourselves and our equipment, and identified areas for improvement, which we started working on right away.”

Of the 17 vessels in the fleet, three—the MV Omineca Princess, the Big Bar reaction ferry, and the Needles ferry—received good reports. Ten met minimum requirements and four needed to be brought up to standard. (The Needles ferry was heralded as being an outstanding example of what can be achieved in safety equipment and in professional deportment of operators.)

Though the Albion ferry was one of the four found lacking, “In my opinion, the people who operate the Albion route are excellent,” said Captain Elgin McKillop, seconded for up to one year to the Lower Mainland as District Marine Manager from B.C. Ferry Corporation. “They take their job very seriously and are committed to providing an exemplary service. At first they were hurt but then looked at it in a positive way—things were brought to their attention that would allow them to provide a safer and more effective service to the public.”

The full Inland Ferry Report was given to the media November 18th, along with a schedule that outlined when and where suggestions in the report would be implemented.

“The media sensationalized the report,” said Captain McKillop. “They focussed on the inflammatory words and ignored the fact that inland ferries were in compliance with the Canada Shipping Act.”

The media also made it look like we were ill trained, said Captain Thomson. “This wasn’t the case. The committee introduced some scenarios we don’t usually apply during drills. We’ll be ready for anything next time.”

The public, on the other hand, tended to support “their” ferries. In fact, users of the Albion ferry said they thought what was said was unfair and a little too critical.

Our minister, Art Charbonneau, commended the thoroughness of the review committee headed by retired Rear Admiral Robert Yanow. Other members were Earl Lund, MoTH Chief Highway Engineer, Capt. Ken Millar, MoTH District Marine Manager, John Green, Regional Superintendent, Canadian Coast Guard, and David Matland from BCGEU.

All matters identified as unacceptable standards of safety and emergency procedures are being tackled on a priority basis. In the case of the Lytton ferry, steps were taken immediately so safety equipment and procedures met standards. The total cost to implement all improvements is estimated at $135,000.

Organizational changes recommended in the report will require further review. An annual audit will be made to make sure ferry operations remain safe and efficient.

Copies of the report are available through the ministry library or call your regional Public Information Officer.