

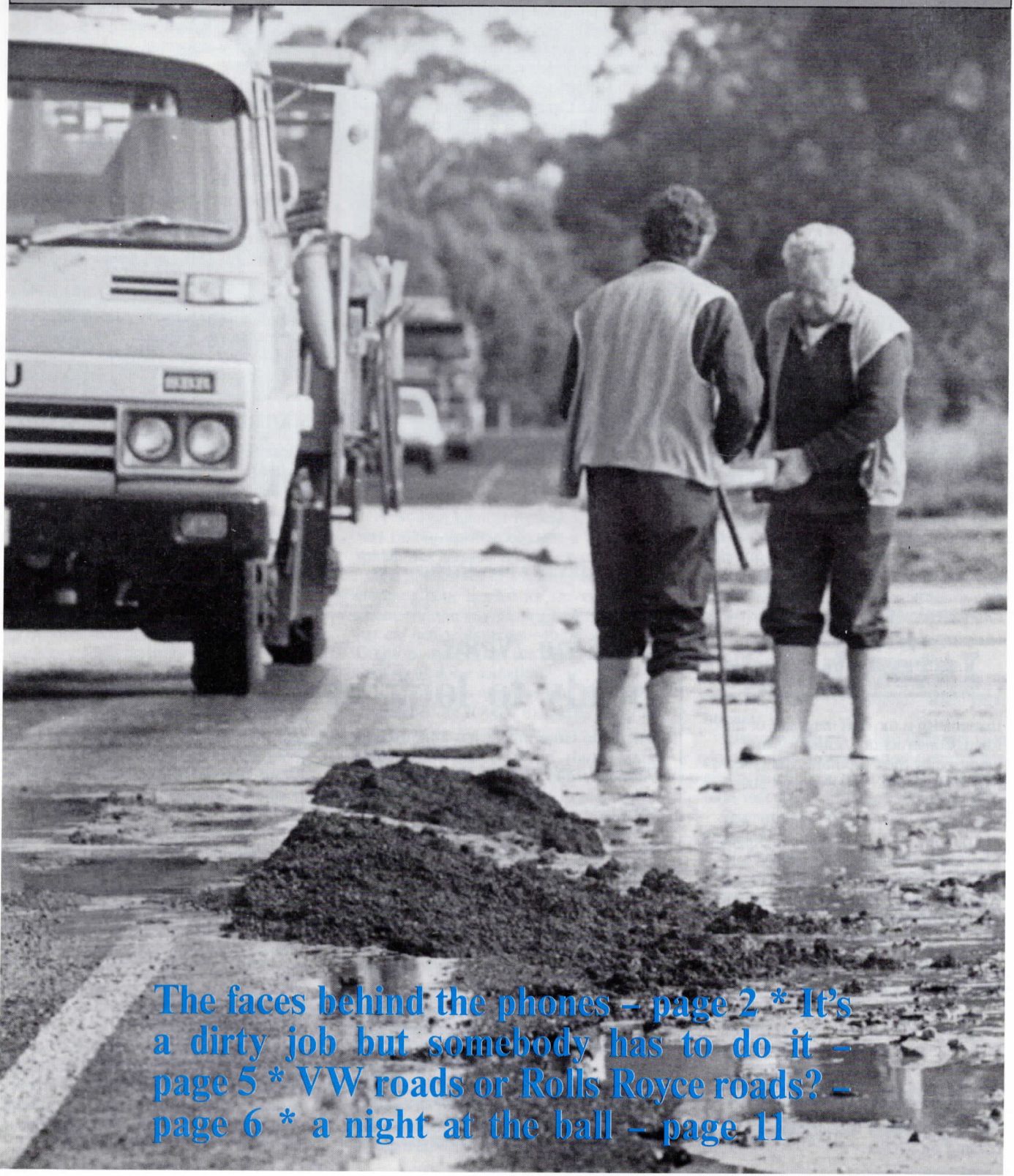
Interchange

Win a free
Champers lunch
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October, 1988, Vol 15, No 2

Tel: 2584, 2160, 2551

Slippery when wet page 2



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Slippery when wet

It was enough to dampen the spirits of the most hardened roadworker. Heavy rains in June lashed the State and in many places RCA crews worked around the clock to keep the roads open.

The Western Highway, between Serviceton and the South Australian border, was covered with floodwaters for several days but Wimmera-Mallee staff nonetheless made sure the mail still got through. They provided a 24 hour service with traffic controllers, signs and flashing lights and worked in conditions which could only be described as "damp".

The Nhill Patrol will be investigating ways of improving culverts on this section of highway, and seen above, dressed for the occasion, are Ron Burnett (right) and Barry Muir working near the SA border.

Photograph: Mail-Times

Interchange

Interchange is the staff magazine of the Road Construction Authority and is produced by the Corporate Affairs section at Head Office, 60 Denmark Street, Kew, 3101.

Editorial staff: Sally Healey (ext 2551), John Allison (2584) and Kevin Fox (2160). Please include detailed captions with photographs: we accept both colour or black and white. Contributions should be typewritten or, if possible, submitted on MS word.

Contributors should appreciate that editorial staff may have to edit material for reasons of space or clarity.

Why don't you call?

Got a funny story? Ring the Diversions column on 2160.

DIVERSIONS

Corporate Affairs section is used to fielding questions and helping with strange and wonderful requests from members of the public on all sorts of matters relating to roads.

August however really stood out as silly season as the following list of TOP 8 SILLY QUESTIONS demonstrates:

* "What is the taxi fare from Ascot Vale to the city at 3 am?"

* "How big is the average size of a caravan park?"

* "What is the phone number for the Thredbo Ski School?"

* "Do people travel further on weekends to use skateboard ramps?"

* "Is there such a street as Condermine Court in Canberra?"—Bank of New Zealand officer trying to track down a bad debt.

* "Who can I talk to about bus stops?"

* "When will the pedestrian footbridge over the Yarra River at Studley Park be repaired?"

* "Is Mickleham Road a stock route?"

SURE-FIRE COMPUTER PROBLEM-SOLVING TECHNIQUE



HIT ANY KEY TO CONTINUE

MOT BULL 1

OOPS...

"works on the approach road between Tooronga Road and Toorak Road leaking on to the South Eastern Freeway," - from RCA Motoring Bulletin 27 July 88.

MOT BULL 2

Journalist Graeme Johnson writing in his column "A Place in the Sun" passed onto readers the following worthy tip from the RCA's weekly Motoring Bulletin: "if your car has a tendency to wander to one side of the road, it may mean incorrect tyre pressures, uneven tread wear or poor wheel alignment," ... or time to hand in your licence he adds!

ROADHOGS?

From Central Gippsland Region comes the tale of a driver travelling along the Walhalla Road who was flashed by an oncoming motorist. As their cars drew level the other driver called out "pigs, pigs!".

Musing that the road was an unlikely spot for a radar trap or breath test station, the motorist took no notice until rounding a bend where upon he was confronted by a herd of prize porkers "hogging" the road.

MAILBAG...

"Dear Sir/ Madam, I would like the lot." - letter to Corporate Affairs from a student at Glengarry Primary School (we're not sure whether they wanted a hamburger or a steak sandwich!). Unable to decide which, we packed and sent a bundle of project material.

Making News

Study to look at country roads

The State Government has announced a major study by the Road Construction Authority into the management and development of Victoria's rural arterial road network.

"The VICROADS (Victorian Rural Arterial Roads Strategy) Study would provide a framework for managing the State's rural and provincial city arterial road network for the next decade," Chairman and Managing Director, Mr Ian Stoney, said on 22 July.

"The study will align with the Government's policies supporting State economic growth through improved transport of people and goods within rural areas and from the country and provincial centres to Melbourne, the ports and interstate.

"The VICROADS Study will have a major emphasis on the interaction of roads with rail, sea and air transport. It will also complement other major transport strategies covering Melbourne's arterial road sys-

tem (METRAS), National arterial roads (NATROV), and the recently released VLine 15-year outlook on country and interstate passenger and freight services (STAP).

Extensive local consultation will take place throughout the RCA's eight rural regions.

"Road user groups, community and industry representatives will have the opportunity to contribute to the study through a series of regional workshops which will continue into October," Mr Stoney said.

Discussion papers will be produced on key issues leading to the development of separate strategies for each Region and an overall Statewide rural report of strategies for developing major highway corridors will be included. Draft reports will be progressively released over the next 12 months with the study scheduled for completion in late 1989.

THE FACES BEHIND THE PHONES



Emergency Services Officers Mal Coulson and Brian Morphett found themselves in the "hot seat" and in the headlines recently.

When the Herald's new transport reporter, Michael Harvey, came in to head office to interview someone from the Emergency Services section for a "light hearted" feature story, Mal and Brian just happened to be the lucky ones in the chair!

For people who ask questions for a living ("What's your rego number?; What colour is your car?; What is wrong with the car?"), they suddenly found out what it was like to have a barrage of questions flung at them.

For two people who handle the absurd every day, it took them a surprisingly long time to remember some of the more odd happenings on Melbourne's freeways. But once they got started, it soon became apparent to Michael that our Emergency Services Officers have a very demanding and unusual job.

For our ESOs, pacifying hysterical motorists, "talking around" runaway children, co-ordinating a search and rescue for an overturned truck load of pigs, controlling life and death situations and disasters, both large and small, are all in a day's work.

Here are some excerpts out of Michael's story:

It was a spider crisis that prompted Mal Coulson's 100th telephone call of the day.

A woman, almost hysterical with fear, was calling for help because a huntsman spider was trapped inside her car.

She had parked in a freeway emergency stopping lane, headed for the emergency phone and she was refusing to get back into her car before someone—in this case Mal Coulson, the ESO at the other end of the line—had done something.

Mr Coulson's response was simple. He dispatched an RACV road crew and, within minutes, the spider menace had been eliminated.

The RCA's Emergency Service had saved another driver.

Mr Coulson's job is to field calls from motorists who cry for help on the special telephones lining freeways. Under a special arrangement he then contacts the RACV which does the rest.

Vehicle breakdowns are behind most of the 40,000 or so calls received each year, but the rest of the calls are a grab-bag of the surprising and well, the bizarre.

Mr Coulson and his four colleagues work in a small room at the RCA headquarters in Kew. One operator is usually rostered on at a time and each handles about 100 calls a day.

If the call is about a breakdown, the operator notes the make of car and the location, the RACV is notified and if an accident has happened, a check is made for

"I've got another one, Mal," muses Brian Morphett (left) to Mal Coulson at Emergency Services, Head Office. It seems that men running out of petrol "in their wives cars" make up a good percentage of calls received at the E.S. headquarters.

injuries and an ambulance called.

But if it's the other kind of call, it's up to the operator's patience and good humour.

Patterns emerge... like the men who ring up after running out of petrol. They always like to have an excuse and the common reaction is to blame their wives.

Operators are often caught up in family arguments.

RCA Emergency Services operator Mr Brian Morphett recalls a tearful woman calling late one night. After an argument with her husband, he had slammed the brakes on, shoved her out of the car and sped off into the night.

And Mr Coulson was on duty one night when a runaway nine-year-old girl telephoned.

For the next three hours, he kept the girl talking while her parents were contacted and a reunion set up.

• continued on page 5

Good Effects



The RCA has received "rave reviews" for two Environment Effects Statements, and the recognition has come from none other than the prestigious 1988 Engineering Excellence Awards.

The Environment Effects Statements for the Eastern Arterial Road and the Ringwood Bypass won an award in the "Engineering Reports, Procedures and Systems" category.

The judging panel reported that they found the presentation "comprehensive, clear and attractive with excellent drawings, schedules and details."

The Excellence Awards are presented by the Institution of Engineers Australia and the results were announced at this year's Annual Dinner in June.

Don Commons, from Road Planning Group, accepted the award on behalf of the RCA.

Don was quick to point out that the Statements were the result of a huge team effort.

"Road Planning is particularly pleased with the results as it involved a concerted team effort from many engineers, technical officers and word processors," said Don.

"But we could not have completed the job without the help of Road Design, Right of Way, Traffic Engineering, Environmental Studies, Materials, Property Services, Dandenong Region and Printing Services."

The Statements were prepared as part of the Eastern Corridor Road Development (ECORD) Study and summarises the results of planning investigations and environmental impact assessments in developing 13.5 km of major arterial roads through Melbourne's growing eastern suburbs.

Long way to go

The Award presentations are well and truly over, but planning and consultation for the Eastern Arterial Road and the Ringwood Bypass proposals are far from over.

The RCA will present its proposals to an independent panel inquiry, convened by the Minister for Planning and Environment, which considers submissions on the Statements and Planning Scheme amendments. If the proposals are approved by the government, then consultation with councils, community groups and others will continue throughout the design and construction phases.

Photo above: Congratulations: some of the large number of Road Planning staff involved in the ECORD Study celebrate the Award with Chairman, Mr Ian Stoney.

Give us a name and win a champers lunch!



The Head Office cafeteria is currently going through some hearty changes. New menus are on the drawing board, and recently we've seen the introduction of longer hours of service plus major kitchen renovations.

Rather appropriately, Grace Licciardo, Caf Supervisor, is keen to promote the new eating environs.

"We want a new name to go with our new image," she told Interchange, "Something a bit more interesting than Head Office Caf."

Here's something to chew over . . .

Interesting . . . exciting . . . appetising . . . if you think you can create a name, we'd like to hear it. And as an incentive, the person who does come up with the best title will win a free champagne lunch for four.

So you gobblers, gulpers and gourmets—get stuck into our great competition today. Send your suggestion or suggestions to Caf Comp., Interchange magazine, Corporate Affairs, Head Office.

Entries must reach us no later than Friday November 4, 1988, and winners will be notified immediately.

(The competition is not open to Cafeteria or Corporate Affairs staff—everybody else is encouraged.)

It's a dirty job but somebody's got to do it

On the surface, it looks like a simple enough task. That is, the annual testing of local soils at Wodonga.

But the hardy breed of staff at Wodonga Project, in Victoria's far flung northeast, know that the job is anything but "simple or straightforward". Surveyor, Ross Stewart, and engineering student, Allan Dunne, will attest to that.



Somebody's got to do it

"Every year we help out Materials Group with these soil tests," explains Ross, "but it is important that site conditions are ideal before any tests can be completed. There needs to be reasonable flat, poorly drained country with suitable silty soils, no trees within 50 metres, and good rainfalls the preceding weeks."

The basic equipment for these intricate tests is a four wheel drive vehicle with a winch.

The basic idea is to drive the vehicle anywhere off the main road looking for a suitable site location. "You know it is a good site because you experience a loss of traction and a slowly sinking feeling. When you can no longer drive forwards or backwards—you know you've got an excellent site." Checking the condition of the soils is usually done by hand and the tests rarely yield any surprises: "It's usually mud".

Extracting the bogged vehicle from the sludge also provides an opportunity for additional soil samples to be gathered: on shoes, clothing, inside the car and so on.

The photographs on this page highlight some of the pitfalls of soils testing, and any



Ross Stewart, Wodonga Project, demonstrating the latest scientific method for collecting soil samples

engineering student who is interested in gaining more information on the topic should contact—during office hours—Materials Branch, not Wodonga Project.

The faces behind the phone from page 3

But there were a few things which, for space reasons, Michael's story did not tell.

Like, for instance, the 44,404 calls taken by the officers during the 1987/88 financial year.

The five ESO's all work 12 hour shifts and are a key part of Victoria's DISPLAN co-ordination group which spearheads organisation of emergency response in state or national disasters.

Among the calls they received last year, 40,282 came from the seven Metropolitan Freeways and of these the majority were attributed to mechanical breakdowns (14,880).

A surprising 4836 people admitted to us that they had run out of petrol on our freeways last year!

The vast majority of calls came from the Eastern Freeway (8430), followed by 6706 from the Tullamarine Freeway.

The Emergency Services Officers perform a wide variety of functions apart from answering distress calls.

At night and weekends they often perform the functions of security officers and switchboard operators and the important role of "recorders", feeding information about public calls and inquiries into their computer.

These figures help our planners to understand the nature of public inquiries, needs and the operation of our freeway system.

Mal and Brian did the RCA proud by flying the flag atop Page 1 of the Melbourne Herald on Tuesday, July 19, 1988.

Overdue exposure for the "hidden" crew at Emergency Services, Interchange thinks.

New computer a winner



Colin Kosky, RCA Direct Works Engineer at Central Highlands, is fairly impressed with the new APM System in use at his office.

And he certainly didn't mind showing it off when two senior South Australian road chiefs visited Ballarat in June.

The American Pavement Management System—that's APMS in engineering circles—is a new computer system designed to assist road managers in their work, and it has been in use in the Central Highlands for some time.

"It helps us maintain roads more economically, and boosts road standards," says Colin.

After analysing the high-tech system, South Australia Highway Department engineer John Statton said he was most impressed with the computer package, and their report to the SA government would "be most favourable".

In the photograph above, Colin (left), demonstrates the package to SA Government adviser, Tom Culshaw (centre left) and Highways Pavement Engineer, John Statton (right). Looking on is regional engineer, Andrew Wall.

Photo: Ballarat Courier.

Access: a new feature where we invite contributions about any matter. Readers can send material to 'Access,' care of Interchange, Corporate Affairs, Head Office. Views expressed in this feature do not necessarily reflect the opinions of RCA management or Interchange editorial.

Quality management... should we be building Rolls Royce Roads or VW Roads?



When Kerry Burke, Manager Bridge Branch, addressed the Senior Management Conference on 'quality management,' he almost brought the Theatre roof down.

So, what caused the normally sedate conference to erupt into a raucous, Parliament-like debate? Excerpts from his paper are reproduced below:

I want to talk about two specific points:

1. does the RCA produce high quality—or good quality?
2. why should we adopt Quality Management?

In regards to the questions of quality, let me remind you of the statement: "Good quality does not necessarily mean high quality. It means a predictable degree of uniformity and dependability at low cost, with a quality suited to the market."

To put this statement into perspective, and to show that high quality is appropriate when consumer demand warrants it, let us look at the classic case of the Rolls Royce and the Volkswagen.

Both the Roller and the VW are consistently suited to their customers' needs.

The question I am asking is: "are we delivering Rolls Royce roads when we

should be delivering VW roads?."

The Scott and Furphy report found that at times the use of inappropriate and prescriptive standards resulted in solutions that were not cost-effective.

The report highlighted such things as design speeds, inconsistency and incompatibility of solutions, and driver ratings of safety and reliability well ahead of speed and travel times. That is, it focussed on our product from a customer's viewpoint.

I can cite other areas of high, low and good quality:

1. the forced acceptance of the lowest tender—sometimes against a background of poor performance on previous jobs;
2. belt and braces specifications based on producer and end product needs;
3. practices of 'inspecting' in quality at each step rather than quality assurance.

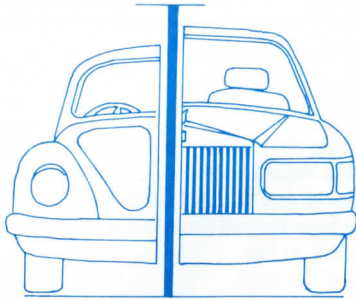
These examples should start a chain of quality management questions including: is the product what the customer wants? is it delivered at the right time? do our customers see us as a dependable supplier of appropriate products?

Hopefully, when we respond to these matters—we don't end up in this category:



Alternatively, I hope we don't lose sight of our role, like a public transport authority which responded to a complaint that its bus drivers speed past queues of people at bus shelters saying: "it was impossible for drivers to keep to a timetable if they kept stopping for passengers".

We need to address the issue of quality



We need to examine the following factors:

- the need to consider total life cycle costs—not just implementation costs;
- the issue of competing with private enterprise for external work—and the consequences of privatization;
- the need for quality assurance programs as these are likely to be included in future Commonwealth road funding arrangements.

If the outcome of any debate leads to questions about the appropriateness of the quality of our product, it naturally leads to my second point: “why adopt quality management?”

My paper outlines what the Japanese

have been able to do in industry. They had a compelling reason to improve their situation following the war—their economy was in tatters and the dreams of a Greater East Asia Co-prosperity were shattered.

Alternatively, America viewed things differently. The nation that had pioneered quality control for the war effort saw themselves as Number One. They were providing relief plans for the rest of the world, exploding Hydrogen bombs to retain military supremacy, and on top of that, winning Nobel prizes.

They saw no immediate competition, and lacked motivation to develop quality and productivity.

The biggest problems facing the average American was how to fill in their leisure time.

The slow rise of the Japanese penetration of traditional markets was explained away as the result of Japanese culture and the lack of balance of their lives. And nothing more.

As we look at the economy today, we might ponder on how Australia has learnt from these two examples. We might also consider the key issue in the recent Button statement from the findings of the Foley Committee: “quality issues are at the very heart of Australia’s economic problems”.

Let us look at the characteristics of an organisation operating under Quality Management:

- there will be a conscious effort to remove waste and error;
- people will recognise that 85% of waste and error is due to the system. That is, management—not workers;
- there will be an effort to work with suppliers to involve them in the process;
- greater job satisfaction and industrial harmony will exist;
- employees will be treated as an asset—not a cost;
- higher quality will be produced at a reduced cost;
- greater customer satisfaction will result in an increased program share.

The key to this is employee involvement following total management commitment to Quality.

I must stress, however, that the major obstacle to Quality Management is likely to be employee cynicism. They may very well ask: “is this just another slick sounding way for management to put the screws on us?”. The actions I have outlined are aimed at overcoming this problem.

– *Kerry Burke.*

RCA Heads Get Together For Lively Debate



“Don’t be shy Peter. . . say a few words.” Is that what Professor Kee of Monash University is saying to Peter Balfe, Manager – Corporate Planning, in the Head Office Theatre?

We’ll probably never share the joke, but it does prove one thing: senior staff conferences are not always made up of lengthy talks and wordy debates.

In fact, this year’s Senior Officers’ Conference in Kew, which attracted 140 delegates, was highly regarded for its lively and sometimes heated debates, stimulating presentations and, as the photograph shows, humor. Professor Kee attended the day two conference in July to deliver a stimulating address on leadership.

The conference was attended by RCA heads as well as representatives from the Ministry of Transport, Victorian Trades Hall Council, and municipal and engineering organisations.

Chairman and Managing Director, Mr Ian Stoney, opened proceedings by urging staff to “let go of their blinkers, their sectional loyalties and their past ways of looking at things”.

Mr Stoney encouraged delegates to focus on what an organisation can achieve through improved business efficiency, better information systems and attentiveness to community needs.

During the conference, held on 13 and 14 July, the RCA Bicentennial Awards were presented to the winners, Victoria Sharp, for her paper entitled ‘Wayfinding in the Environment’, and the RCA’s Jim Winnett and Phuong Truong for their joint paper, ‘Lotus 1-2-3 in Pre-stressed Concrete U-Slab Bridge Design’.

DON’T HOLD YOUR BREATH. . .

A recent report in the Bendigo Advertiser quotes Federal Transport Minister Bob Brown as saying \$35 million has been spent upgrading the Calder Highway but according to the article an additional \$100,000 million needs to be spent to finish the improvements. Based on current funding levels, we can look forward to driving on the newly improved highway sometime around the summer of 2198. Over to you road planning!

Chairman pleased with police inquiry results

A police investigation has upheld the integrity of RCA staff by finding no evidence of corruption, as was stated in State Parliament earlier this year.

“I am pleased with the outcome of the police inquiry which was called after allegations were made in March,” Mr Stoney said.

RCA property inspector Lindsay Henry, who was named in Parliament along with his son Christopher, was cleared by the police inquiry.

Allegations of widespread fraud, graft and corruption within the Authority were also unsubstantiated, police said.

The inquiry has resulted in charges being laid against a former RCA officer and a contractor, based on information which was not available to the RCA’s own internal inquiry held last year.

“The police findings vindicated both the RCA’s actions in initiating an internal inquiry and the outcome of that inquiry,” Mr Stoney said.

In a press statement issued to the media on August 12, Transport Minister, Mr Jim Kennan, said Mr Henry and the RCA deserved an apology for the allegations made against them.



Great team

Dave Sims and John Deere—they're a slick duo when they team up for a job in North Eastern region. Dave is a leading hand operator in the region with more than thirty years of on-the-road experience, and he says his John Deere grader is "the best".

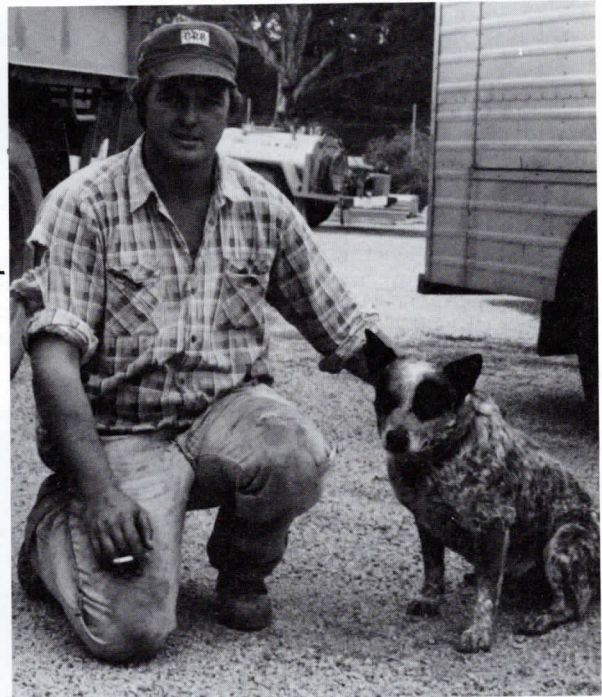
"It's the best machine I've driven," he says. Dave has been behind the controls of the grader for 11 years and he says she's still got a lot of life left in her.

"It should remain in service with me until I retire," he says.

Dave and his machine have joined forces to work on jobs all over North Eastern Region, including the Violet Town Bypass and sections of the Hume at Euroa and Benalla. Dave began with the then CRB as a dozer operator in the Tallangatta area. On the rare occasions when he's out of the machine, Dave likes to train horses.

It's a lucrative pastime as he has already managed to finance a trip to the USA through his winnings.

Photo: Dave and his favourite John Deere Grader



Good Pals

Officially, he's not on the payroll. But the crew at Boundary Bend Patrol, north of Swan Hill, regard "Bluey" as a true blue member of the RCA. "Bluey" is seen here with owner Raymond Forster and is a guard dog at the patrol depot.

Brian the Lion tours US



Brian Doyle, Superintendent of Plant in Central Gippsland, recently returned from a tour of the USA with his wife, Fran—but it wasn't all Disneyland and beaches. Brian attended the International Conference of Lions Clubs where he became officially installed as a District Governor of the organisation.

Brian has been a member of the Lions for many years and as a District Governor is responsible for an area extending from the Mornington Peninsula and the east of Dandenong to the NSW border: that covers more than 80 clubs with 2000 members.

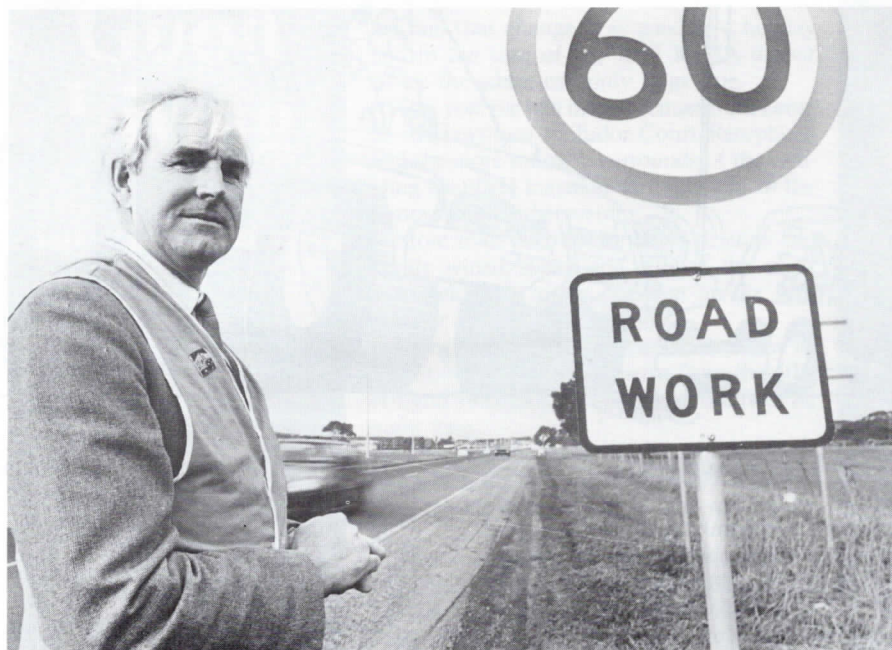
Bevy of beauties at the ball



It was time to show off your daughters at a huge Debutante Ball in Traralgon recently.

And seen here are some proud dads, all from Central Gippsland. From left, Rob

Jones, with daughter Nadine, Geoff Proudfoot, with Allison, and Neil Jones with Elizabeth. Almost 500 relatives and friends attended the function. Photo: Bruce Gidley.



Gravel speedsters : they're a bother

Colin Roy hasn't much time for "gravel speedsters", those infuriating and reckless motorists who burl through roadworks areas.

So he was somewhat pleased recently when police cracked down on such offenders and made more than 40 bookings on a stretch of the Princes Highway near Moriac, east of Winchelsea.

Says the Regional Manager of Barwon: "The public does not seem to understand the reasons for speed restrictions in roadwork areas. The limits not only lessen the chance of drivers losing control but also reduce the extent of road damage".

Colin said that police were called in following a spate of single-car accidents on the highway near the roadworks.

"The job at Moriac is straight and level, regarded by us as nothing out of the ordinary," said Col. "But still motorists were travelling too fast for the road conditions.

"Accidents happen when drivers do not recognise their own inexperience and lack of skid correction skills on gravel surfaces."

Col said that it appeared many motorists did not realise roadworks speed limit signs are legal restrictions. "They're there for the safety of not only motorists but also RCA employees working on the job," said Col.

Job well down



Seen here recently just after completing two new footbridges at Alexandra, west of Eildon, are Bob Firth, Pat Fitzgibbon and Laurie O'Brien. Also in the crew but not in the picture were Dale Young and Adrian Mennan, all of North Eastern Region.

40 Year Man Retires

Ted Ricardo had almost notched up 40 years with the organisation when he retired recently from Northern Region. Approximately 130 field employees and office staff, past and present, were at the regional workshop to wish Ted and wife, Wilma, well in their retirement.

Ted began work in the CRB in 1949 operating a bulldozer before moving to Benalla Division. Working on the isolated Murray Valley Highway, Ted says that in those days he could often work a week "without talking to a soul" (photo next issue).

Harold's Off

After 30 years with the RCA, Harold Mathysz, Supervising Draftsman and cricket enthusiast, has decided to take a walk to the pavilion. Harold began in the Head Office accounts section in 1949 before moving to the then Plans and Survey Division.

Ray's last hurrah



Ray Crisp had been part of the RCA/CRB for the best part of 40 years so it was little wonder that his sendoff in Central Gippsland consisted of a huge throng of 'old timers'.

Our Intraday correspondent, Dawn Newby, reports that the "old brigade outnumbered current staff by two to one . . ." at the retirement held in the depot at Traralgon. Ray began as a cook's off-sider in Bendigo during the era when gangs were camped at sites. That was back in 1949, two years before he moved to the Morwell camp. He evidently took a liking to Gippsland and has been there ever since, working on the Princes and South Gippsland Highways and roads around Mt Baw Baw and Walhalla.

In retirement, Ray says he will dust off his metal detector and dabble in some gold prospecting.

inwards & outwards

Geoff Poliness will be available as the Occupational Welfare Counsellor at Head Office every Friday morning. He will be the temporary replacement for John Boyle who resigned recently to work for the Evancourt Private Hospital in Malvern.

Geoff can be contacted on 2569 or alternatively on (03) 642 1366 at the Interchurch Trade & Industry Mission. Coming up in the seminar series at HO: "Service centres on freeways" with Bob Solly, Manager - Road Design and Traffic, on 3 November.

Joan Tucker finally decided to call it a day and retired from Financial Services on 2 September. A Ledgerkeeper, Joan had accumulated 45 years service with the RCA. She celebrated her farewell at Green Acres Golf Course in Kew.

Merv Williams, Manager Major Works in Operations, retired on 26 August.

Looking fit and tanned is one Ross Helman, who has returned to the Benalla Workshop after a six month stint in Samoa.

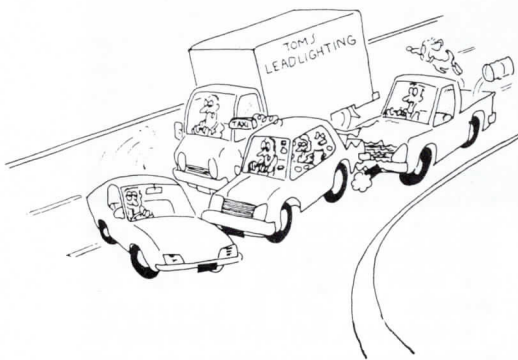
Aussie drivers, it is often said, are amongst the worst in the world. Of course, the people who have often said that probably haven't driven in Mexico City or downtown Istanbul during morning peak.

Nevertheless, life isn't always a Clearway of green traffic lights and it certainly can be said that if bad driving was ever made a competitive event in the upcoming Olympic Games, the Green and Gold contingent would be in with an even chance.

As you will see from the following, many people would easily qualify for the Track & Field events in the...

1988 Bad Driving Olympics

The Individual 2 metre Dasher



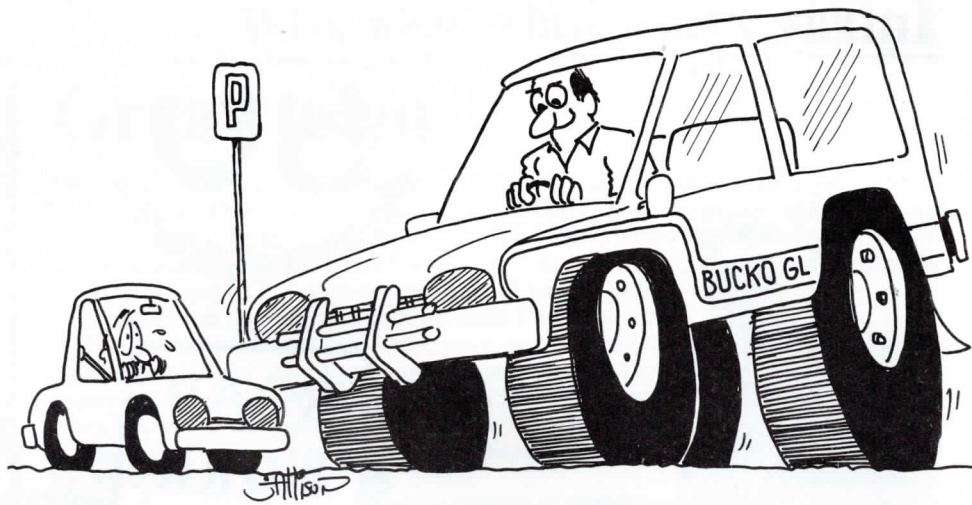
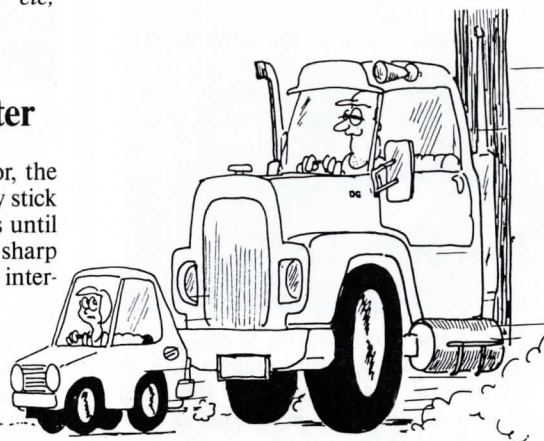
Dashers must perfect the skill of changing lanes irrationally with little or no regard for driver courtesy. They are not allowed to look in their rear vision mirrors and can use indicators only for 2 or 3 seconds to show other motorists what they may or may not be doing.

Qualifiers: owners of Japanese coupes with tacky personalised number plates like Brady or Norma; drivers of small vans owned by 'Dial A Curry Puff'; etc; municipal garbage collectors.

The Marathon Tail-gater

An extremely unsporting competitor, the Tail-gater must be able to tenaciously stick behind a motorist for long distances until finally deciding to overtake on a sharp curve just before a major signalised intersection on a hill.

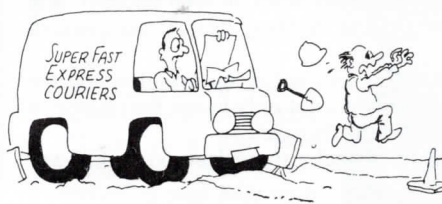
Qualifiers: anything black with GT Turbo Diesel marked on it; drivers of Mack trucks on the Hume Freeway.



The Heavyweight

These drivers mainly squat behind expensive 4-wheel drives with ominous sounding names like Cruncher Hardtop and Rambo Turbo-Diesel. There could be two types of Heavyweight events:

The Snatch: where the Hun-like motorist uses his bulk to intimidate others when snatching a parking bay in shopping centres. Most appropriate training venue for this event would be outside dry cleaners and video stores in Toorak Road.



The Freestyle Dreamer

Freestyle Dreamers are not permitted to concentrate on what they are doing. It would be a demanding event. One needs to be adept in sitting at green traffic lights while staring vacantly into an outdated street directory while in the wrong direction on a one way, no through road.

Qualifiers: drivers of Swedish prestige cars, underpowered early model VWs and courier vans with deceiving names like 'Kwik-Fast Deliveries'; Japanese tourists driving rented cars with NSW registration.

The Jerk: where, armed with mammoth bull-bars, the driver must suddenly change lanes or enter freeways without giving way. Additional points would be scored if he can cut off an ambulance and/or fire truck during an emergency.

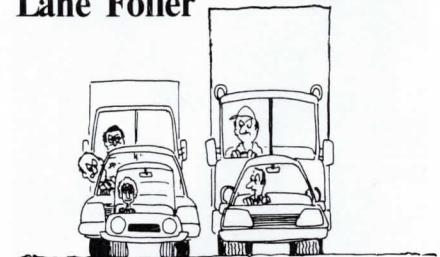
Qualifiers: owners of 4-wheel drives, Volvos, traffic battered 15 year old station wagons full of school kids or groceries; petite, young blondes driving RX-7 convertibles or BMW 320i cabriolets.

The 0.5 Non Compos Medley Finalist

The Non Compos must be able to blend aggression, irrationality and double vision into an unpredictable demonstration of moronic imbecility. The Non Compos Driving event combines several manoeuvres in no set order, but basically encompassing: reversing into a brick fence, stalling, side swiping several parked vehicles, hitting a No Entry sign and finally mounting a roundabout in reverse while trying to avoid ramming a stationary tree in the middle of the median strip which isn't there.

Qualifiers: the most dangerous competitor as this is an open category.

The Long Distance Right Lane Foiler



This is generally an endurance test. The foiler travels along multi-lane highways in the RIGHT lane at a constant, leisurely 35 km an hour. Competitors must be oblivious to abusive language, car horns and flashing blue lights.

Qualifiers: businessmen in late model company cars; farmers in 25 year old Ford Falcon utes; old ladies wearing bowling hats in Morris 1100s; Learners in Datsun Stanzas.

Good Living



HAVIN' A BALL

It's said that change is as good as a holiday and in the case of the 1988 HOSA dinner dance the adage certainly rings true.

This year the ball moved venues from Leonda in Hawthorn to Tudor Court Receptions and the more intimate surrounds of the rambling Caulfield mansion certainly lent to the atmosphere of the evening.

More than 200 RCA staffers, friends and family wined, dined and danced the night away with the music provided by the ever popular Paul McKay Sound.

From go to whoa, the band belted out its repertoire of popular anthems from the 50's, 60's and 70's ensuring a packed dance floor all night long.

Whilst numbers were down slightly on last year's ball, the enjoyment certainly wasn't as from reports received a good time was had by all.

This was especially true for the Central Highlands contingent, namely the Gidleys and Liddles who made the journey down the Princes Highway for the night.

Of the many lucky ticket prizes awarded on the night, Gary Liddle's wife, Meredith, won the big one... a trip for two to Hobart, staying at Wrest Point Casino.

The general consensus was a winning night for all in attendance, and for that we must thank HOSA's hard working crew and especially Bev Thompson, Penny Lamble and Julie Colborne-Veel.



SPRUNG by our photographer: left: the normally refined Manager of Property Acquisition, Dick Sturgess, in a relaxed mood; top right: Derek Trewarne, Property Management Officer, and wife Jenny on the dance floor; right: sharing a meal and a joke are Duncan and Barbara McLeod. Photos: Penny Lamble, Property

Sport

ARRB out for revenge

It was the battle of the big road heavyweights: a table tennis competition between the Australian Road Research Board and the RCA.

And following a good win to the Construction Authority, the ARRB team is out for revenge.

"Our winning side was made up of Materials and Asphalt players," explains Engineer Arie Meydan, "but we were reinforced by Arthur Simmons of Road Planning. Six players represented each organisation."

The 5:4 win to the RCA was eventually clinched by Arthur and Bob Morgan during the last doubles rubber in straight sets. Other players for the RCA included Paul Low, Rob Weatherson and Maurice Rosano. ARRB Captain, Peter Mullholland, is itching for revenge and is organising a return match.

On Your Bike

Six lucky, and hopefully fit, RCA staff members will be pedalling in the 1988 Great Victorian Bike Ride in December. A random draw was made on 3 August and the names selected were Judy Halloran, Secretariat, Andrew Walker, Materials, Stephen Fyffe, Corporate Development, Jim Morse, Metropolitan, Leo Stella, Barwon, and Laurie Haylock, East Gippsland.

The ride this year starts on the banks of the Murray at Swan Hill and ends nine days later in Melbourne, with the longest day ride being 106km between Colbinnabin to Castlemaine. Anybody interested in taking leave to join in for the big ride can contact the organisers on (03) 650 2334. Entries close on Friday November 4th.

Wodonga ready and waiting

Hans Raun at Wodonga Project is convinced that this year's Sports and Entertain-

ment Weekend is going to be 'big'. How big? Well, for starters, there's sporting events to cater for all tastes and skills: tennis, golf, indoor cricket, bowls and squash. To top it off, however, the Project is also organising a range of social functions including a winery tour, visit to the famous Ettamogah Pub, a paddle steamer trip and a fully organised 'night on the town'.

Anybody wanting to know more about the weekend can contact Hans at the Chiltern site office on (057) 26 1582, or 7 292.

Putting you in the picture

Submitting a pix to our Good Living pages? We accept black and white or colour but please make sure they have a detailed caption on the print (written lightly in biro on reverse if possible). All photographs can be returned if requested and we prefer prints to negatives.

New man in charge of bikes department



Photo: the RCA's bike experts, Rob Aitken (left) and Gary Veith.

After more than 12 months as the RCA's Bicycle Facilities Co-ordinator, Robert Aitken has relinquished his role to Gary Veith from Traffic Engineering.

Gary, currently the Layout Design and Investigations Engineer, says he is eager to take on his new position, "I've done a fair bit of cycling and have some feelings for the problems which confront cyclists using our road system," he says.

"I'm looking forward to the challenges which will undoubtedly arise in such a position."

Gary is all too aware that, in Robert Aitken, he has a hard act to follow. Robert has several major achievements to his credit with respect to cycling both on a statewide and a nationwide basis.

As well as representing the RCA on the State Bicycle Committee, he played a vital role in developing policy which will enable pedalpushers to use rural freeways in Victoria.

He also helped initiate a joint consultant study with the Department of Main Roads in NSW into the use of urban freeways for cyclists, and helped produce the technical report "Planning and Designing for Bicycles" with NAASRA. "The job can be physically demanding as well," explains Robert. "I found myself riding a bicycle from Stawell to Port Campbell in the 1986 Caltex Bike Ride when the RCA gave me special leave."

Robert has moved to other tasks within Traffic Engineering and will be involved in the functional review.

If you wish to talk to Gary about bike matters, he is on extension 2341.

Feedback

If you have a comment about an Interchange feature, write to the Editor, Interchange, Corporate Affairs, Head Office.

Article "inaccurate and misleading" says ex-Chief General Manager

Dear Editor,

My attention has been drawn to the article by Mr W Shum in the Winter edition of Interchange, and in particular to the comment that "the lack of forward planning (ie more than the next 12 months) led to the inefficiencies, and the considerable waste".

As a former Chief Planning Engineer of the CRB, and a former Chief General Manager - Planning and Design of the RCA, and on behalf of all the very com-

petent staff engaged on planning activities in the CRB-RCA over the years, I very strongly object to this comment which is inaccurate, misleading and damaging to the professional reputation of myself and all the others involved.

The CRB-RCA has always been regarded Australia-wide as a leader in road planning activities.

I would be grateful if you would publish this letter in full in a prominent position in the next issue of Interchange.

Yours sincerely,
R.T. Underwood
Senior Lecturer,
Dept of Civil Engineering
Chisholm Institute of Technology

Point taken, but I believe Bill's comments referred to "forward planning" being limited by funding arrangements and were not meant as a slight on the staff's abilities as planners - Editor.



Late News

We're looking good

Welcome to the new-look Interchange. We hope this new format is easier to read—it certainly is easier to design.

But looking good isn't the only reason for the change. Our new, more compact format will enable us to produce smaller issues, more often.

This will mean up-to-date stories and timely discussion pieces. Hopefully, it will also encourage people to contribute more.

The Interchange team is aiming at publishing your staff magazine as often as possible—depending on the amount of content supplied. So the sooner we get your contributions, the sooner you will get your Interchange!

Don't forget it is YOUR magazine, so if you have something to say, or an issue you would like brought forward for our November issue, contact Sally Healey (2551) or Kevin Fox (2160).

John Allison, long-time Interchange co-ordinator, cartoonist and scribe is taking a well-earned rest this month. John has decided to add South America to his list of travelling achievements. You can expect a full report on his experiences "South of the Border" in a later issue.

The Classics are still alive!

We will continue to produce a Classics column providing there is sufficient material: send your advertisement (births, engagements, pets for sale, etc) to Classics.

