

Interchange

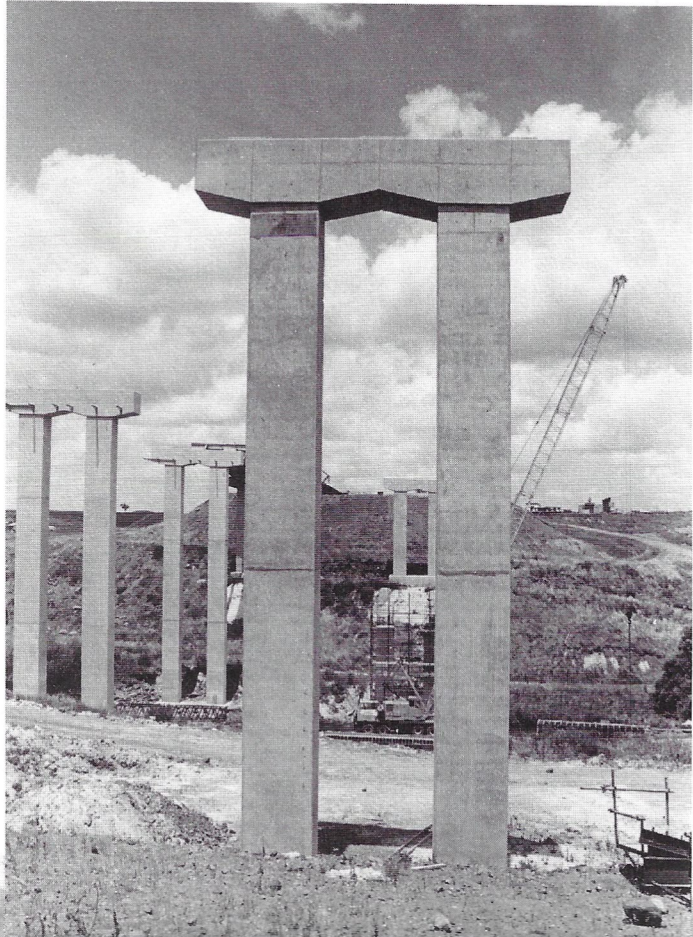
Sorry
we're late
- page 3

Winter issue 1988

The R.C.A. Staff Magazine

Vol 15, No 1

CORPORATE POLICY MAGAZINE



Stonehenge: North of Gisborne

Like some modern day Stonehenge, the towering two-column piers stand majestically across Jacksons Creek. Soon they will carry the deck of the new Calder Highway bridge across the creek, north of Gisborne.

Looming towards the cirrus, the lofty concrete columns are part of one of the largest bridge constructions in Victoria.

'It's maximum height is 31 metres. There's not too many constructions that we do which would come up to that height,' says Geoff Lawrence, supervising engineer.

Geoff is working with other colleagues from Central Highlands Region on the multi-million Bypass of Gisborne, which should be completed in 1989.

From an engineering point of view, it is also quite challenging. The project has been using the incremental launch or 'push-out' technique.

'Beams are assembled at the end in sections or spans, then the deck is poured on. It is then pushed out, and more deck is added.'

Each pier is made up of two columns firmly bedded in the ground.

'Some are up to 24 metres deep,' says Geoff.

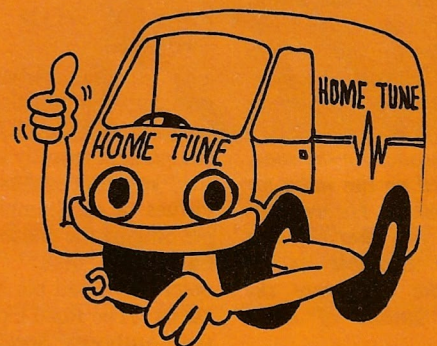
Work began on the project in February 1983.

Checking out progress on the bridgeworks over Jacksons Creek is Bob Cauka, Clerk of Works. (below)

Marching across Jacksons Creek north of Gisborne are the lofty two-column piers which form part of the bypass. Photographs courtesy: Daryl Pinder, Bendigo



Back page: the winner of our
Interchange/Home Tune
competition



The Morwell Rangers?



Diversions

Marching down the Morwell Bypass route: Central Gippsland Regional Manager, Norm Butler (4th from right) and Project Engineer, Gary Liddle (5th from left), lead Morwell Shire representatives on an inspection. The first stage, costing \$30 million, is due for completion next year.

Keeping Track

Every Region has problems with elusive staff members who fail to notify the switchboard of their whereabouts. The girls at Northern think they have the answer. Bernadette, Lisa and Kris have designed the 'Black Star Award' and the concept is simple: if you can't be found you get a Black Star. At the end of each week, the person(s) who have accumulated the most stars is fined \$1.00 which is placed in the 'Star Jar'. Prizes are bought and awarded to the 'goodies' who are 'starless' for the month. 'It's all very straightforward but very effective', says Bernadette.

The winner of the first Black Star trophy in Northern Region was Peter Millar, a supposedly full time engineer and a part-time shop owner.

SUNDAY SESSION...

Northern Region's Ray Foster was roused from his slumbers by the alarm one morning, and, greeting the day with his usual enthusiasm, he cut his lunch, showered, and headed off to join colleagues at the Boundary Bend Patrol Yard.

Upon arrival at the yard he was surprised to find that his offsider, Col Hartland, had failed to materialise.

Assuming Col was crook, Ray set off in the Patrol Truck up the Murray Valley Highway to do an inspection, planning to call in on his partner along the way.

As he headed up the road, Ray turned on the radio for companionship. He was surprised to find that the best offerings available as he twirled the dial were the heavenly strains of hymn music.

It was then that the penny dropped... as they were in col-

lection plates of churches all along the Murray Valley Highway that Sunday morning!!



A staffer from Dandenong Planning Section was carrying out an inspection of a location proposed as an entrance to a property on the Nepean Highway. His initial assessment of the site suggested that the location may have been less than safe... a suspicion rudely confirmed when his car parked adjacent to the proposed entrance was rear ended and pushed into a power pole.

Alaskan authorities concerned at the rising toll of native fauna killed trying to cross roads, have constructed a 'moose underpass' on a new road project in Anchorage. This radical step was taken after it was discovered that the fiercely nationalistic moose were unhappy about having to use existing zebra crossings.

FREEWAY WITH SAUCE...

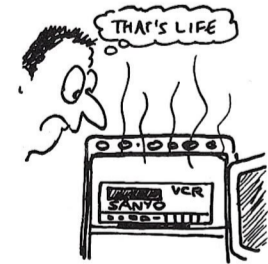
The Bendigo Advertiser's comical columnist Wayne Gregson paid the RCA a fine compliment recently in an article he wrote espousing the virtues of the humble meat pie. Singing the praises of our national dish Wayne described a bad pie he once ate as... 'The Road Construction Authority Special'. According to his analogy, the RCA Special... looks as finely

constructed as the Tullamarine Freeway. It is smooth, has all the curves in all the right places, doesn't have any potholes to speak of and bears one other hidden resemblance.

At first bite the top caves in revealing a cavernous interior and a 150mm slab of black tar-like substance on the bottom... it may once have been meat!, he writes.

Were you frustrated by traffic delays during the long weekend in June? You can thank your lucky stars you don't live in England. According to UK newspapers, a new world record for a traffic jam was set during the British Easter period by motorists returning from the west of England to London. The 193 km long traffic snarl beat the previous 175 km record for a traffic jam between Paris and Lyon in France. That's even long by Tullamarine Freeway standards.

FIJI DIVERSIONS... TALL TALES BUT TRUE FROM SOMEWHERE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC



As unlikely as it seems there are some quiet moments after work for the intrepid band of RCA staffers seconded to work on road projects in far off Fiji. To overcome such moments, Peter Hasset acquired a VCR and mindful of recent burglaries on the island sought a secure place to keep the video when not in use. Ever resourceful, he decided that the warming tray of the oven is the last place a thief would look.

Some days later, Peter returned from a round of golf after work to be greeted by the inviting smell of a pizza his wife Glenda was cooking for tea. He enquired of her as to where she had put the video only to be confronted by a blank stare. Dashing to the stove he managed to rescue a slightly underdone 'video capricosa'. Whilst it no longer has its sharp clean lines, we're assured that the Hasset's 'hot video' still works.

CONVERSATION PIECES...

Still in Fiji, Pat Wood relates the following tales of her encounters with the locals:

Having adopted an 11 year old cat shortly after arrival, Pat sought to buy some Kitty Litter to keep her Polynesian pussy happy. She tried all the local stores with little success and finally went to a large department store in Suva.

'Where's the Kitty Litter?', Pat enquired of a salesgirl. 'She's not in today!', came her earnest reply.

On another occasion, she was passing time in a workshop whilst waiting for some minor repairs on her car to be carried out. Observing a mechanic tinkering with some grease covered machinery she asked: 'What's that you're working on?' 'Datsun Motor,' came the reply. 'Messy isn't it?', said Pat. 'No Datsun,' the mechanic assured her.

From Holt Advertising's recently published Glossary of Management Terms: ANALYTICAL PROJECTION - Guess. FORECAST - Guess. LONG RANGE FORECAST - Wild Guess.



Diversions hotline: 2160

What line is Ken giving Gloria?



'Now...we may put a pier just here, and over there..Is Ken Salter telling Morwell Shire President, Cr Gloria Auchterlonie, how to build a bridge?

This shot was taken at the Morwell Bypass project during an inspection by local Parliamentarians and councillors. Ken is Project Manager at Morwell.

RCA
Road Construction Authority

Interchange is the staff magazine of the Road Construction Authority, 60 Denmark Street, Kew, 3101.

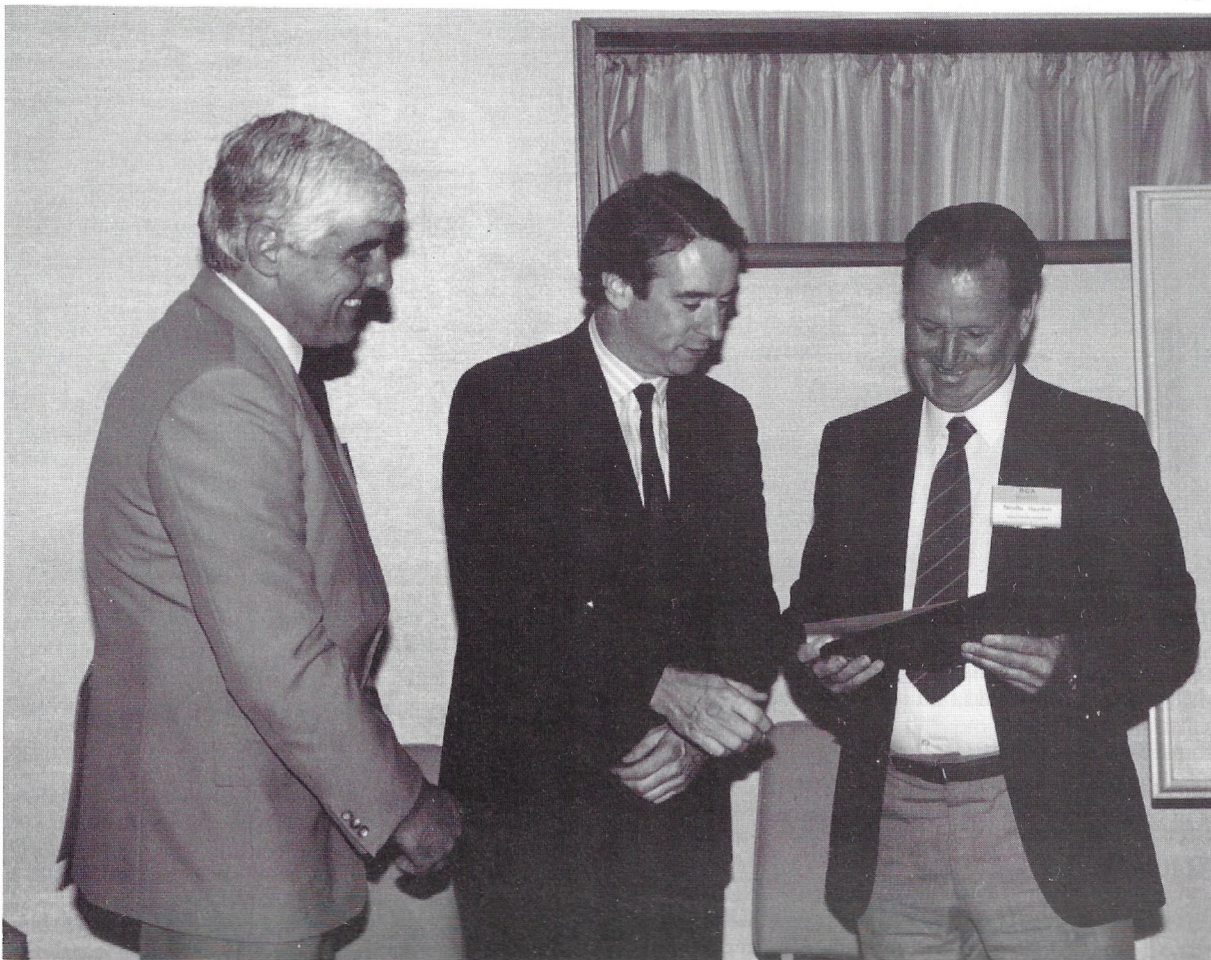
Editorial staff: Sally Healey (ext 2551)
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We accept colour and black and white photographs - please include detailed captions. Contributions should be typewritten and will be returned if requested.

RCA HONOURS THE INNOVATORS



While the highflyers of the international film industry were being honoured with the Oscars in Hollywood earlier this year, a similar but not so public ceremony was taking place at the same time some 15,000 km away, recognising the RCA's special achievers.

Thirteen commendations and three innovation awards were presented by Transport Minister Mr Jim Kennan to RCA staff at a ceremony in conjunction with the opening of the West Gate Training and Conference Centre on April 14.

The RCA Innovation Awards Scheme has been introduced to reward innovations by staff in the pursuit of excellence, effectiveness and efficiency.

One Hundred and twenty eight high standard nominations were received for innovations developed by field, depot and office staff throughout the State.

The four man judging panel consisted of Henry Dunstone, Roadmaster from Central Gippsland, Garry Fraser from Information Services, Andrew Houghton of Corporate Development, and Director - Operations, Reg Patterson.

According to Reg, who acted as MC for the awards presentations, picking the best from the original nominations was no simple task.

Thirteen Commendations were presented along with two special awards, and the highest honour, the William Calder Award for the most outstanding innovation by an RCA staff member.

Neville Haydon, Superintendent of Works from the Bendigo precast yard, took out this award named after the RCA's founding Chairman.

RCA Chairman, Ian Stoney, and Transport Minister, Jim Kennan, with Neville Haydon who took out the William Calder Award for the most outstanding innovation by an RCA staff member

Neville's winning innovation was the design and manufacture of an automatic ligature spot welding machine for precast reinforced concrete piles.

According to judging panel chairman, Reg Patterson, 'the machine has eliminated the laborious and time consuming task of manually tying pile reinforcement, resulting in greater productivity, more economic use of materials and safer working practices.'

In addition to receiving a plaque in recognition of his innovation, Neville was awarded a prize of his choice, in this instance a 2 hp air compressor and fittings for his home workshop. One of eight winners hailing from the Northern Region, Neville and his colleagues came down in a mini bus from all reports it was pretty cramped on the drive home by time they made room for their cargo of framed certificates and award plaques.

An enthusiastic crowd of about 120, including the spouses of award winners, were on hand to witness the presentations in the newly refurbished surrounds of the West Gate Training Centre.

RCA Chairman Ian Stoney paid tribute to all winners and nominees and thanked them for their work which, in many cases, involved a labour of love outside normal working hours.

The RCA Innovation Awards are set to become an annual event recognising achievement and rewarding innovation within the organisation.



"I'll give you the good news first, Godfrey - I'm not the one who's being made redundant."

Interchange



Late News

No, we haven't been taken over by a British media mag-nate, nor have we followed the Sydney trend and fold-ed up altogether.

We do, however, apologise for being late. But we hastily add - there is a reason.

This time, though, it does involve more than just last minute rewrites, composition and printing hold-ups.

Interchange is undergoing a metamorphosis.

Its new approach will include a different format. The tab-loid style magazine as we know it now will still appear seasonally, but will include much greater depth of informa-tion on major topics of interest, feature articles, 'people' sto-ries and changes within the organisation.

A smaller 'Interchange Update' bulletin will be issue bi-monthly to keep staff informed on more personal day-to-day activities such as births, deaths, marriages, retirements, trans-fers and other topical snippets.

This issue of Interchange contains a special centre spread of interviews with staff on their reactions to the New Direc-tions document and the RCA's corporate plan.

Articles such as this are designed to encourage discussion about pertinent topics and to break down barriers between staff and management.

Contributions

If you wish to send us a contribution, please try to have any written material typed or word processed, and all photographs should be well captioned (we accept colour or black and white). Please realise that the editorial staff may have to edit material for reasons of space or clarity - unless the writer specifies that it must be published in full. If possible, contri-butions should be no more than 400 words.

Deadlines

Interchange deadlines, in the interest of putting ideas out on time, will be strictly adhered to. We will publish deadline dates in the next issue.

'Interchange Update' will be issued bi-monthly and con-tributions must be submitted on or before the last day of each month.

If there is a topic you think Interchange magazine (or In-terchange Update) should tackle, or a contribution you would like to make, please contact Sally Healey (ext 2551) or John Allison (2584) in Corporate Affairs, Head Office.

Page 3 people

He'll teach 'em

Neil Mooney, an Instructor Driver at Central Gippsland, has gone back to school - only this time he is playing Teacher!

For the past year Neil has been a consultant instructor with the TAFE College in Traralgon. The part time work has involved Neil in running advanced courses throughout the State.

The TAFE College and the SEC must have heard of Neil's expertise in the trade as both organisations approached the RCA to see if they could tap his knowledge.

'They wanted me to help train some SEC personnel in obtaining heavy truck licences,' explains Neil. 'Now I am involved in running a course for local council grader operations at the Local Government Training Commission.'

Neil says he is enjoying his role as teacher which is a good example to all staff on how promoting one's expertise and knowledge can be used to benefit other sections of the community.



Throwing some light on the subject

Wayne Tonkes and Stephen Key were part of a huge team from Glen Waverley Depot who recently had the huge task of improving the lighting on the new section of West Gate Freeway.

Plant Branch electrical technicians carried out the complex wiring job after contractors had installed 18km of cables to 70 light poles.

Wayne and Stephen were photographed working on a lighting pole on the freeway prior to its opening in December.

A place in the Fiji Sun

The sounds of automatic weapons and the acrid smell from an arsonist torching an Indian owned shop have long disappeared. In their place - a stifling humidity, torrential downpours, a regular passage to the bank to bring in more Aussie dollars for the ladies; and the incessant barking of dogs at night. It has been suggested that the results of living in coup torn Fiji can best be summed up by the rumor that David Wood has increased his smoking from 30 cigarettes a day to 50. He has also been heard to say 'I'm drinking 10 times more beer than I did at home'.

All eight families are well settled in Fiji without any major problems. Bill Farrell may disagree somewhat. After being in Fiji for six weeks it was reported that his personal affects were still on the wharf in Australia - thanks to the Australian unions concern for his fellow Fijian worker. After a blunt telex requesting that the RCA arrange for his affects to be taken off the wharf and airfreighted, Bill received a reply from Peter Hackett (after some fine investigative work on Peter's part) to say that his affects had been on the wharf in Fiji since two days after his arrival. Still, 'flexibility is the keynote'.

Seven of the families have moved into private rental accommodation whilst the Farrells are living in a Government house. The best (and most expensive) house award has easily been won by David Wood with a new 40 square mansion that could cater for all the families of accounts branch to visit at the same time. The downstairs area doubles as a doghouse for David and the group's venue for indoor cricket (which can happen simultaneously). The Lawtons initial concern with the cockroaches moving their furniture at night has been overcome by the 'Flick' man, but Lorraine reckoned that some of the roaches were bigger than Cliff.



• 'So, that's how roads are made.' A curious Geoff Hose inspects a road.

Unfortunately, living in the tropics has had its toll on several team members. Most notably, Peter Hassett and his wife, Glenda, who share Labasa on the Northern Island with 16500 locals - and no other expats. Apart from the lengthy periods that Peter finds it necessary to spend at the Golf Club with the view of making friends with the locals, it has caused problems with their recently acquired video recorder (see story 'Fiji Diversions'). Although his friends may find it hard to believe, on the basis of local radio and press reports it appears that Lyle Grinter has lost weight and become 'Mr Sportsman of the Western Division'. After not playing cricket for 20 years



• Typical scene in Fiji.



he has comfortably moved to opening bat, has become a prominent middle distance runner with the Lautoka Hash, is a star squash player, an improving tennis player and a keen snorkeller. I said you would find it hard to believe.

• Time out for a jog: Bill Farrell, Barry Bromham, John Moylan and David Wood.

Fishing Story

Perhaps the success story of the project to date (excluding work of course) has been the purchase, by the guys in Suva, of a 35 foot former fishing boat. However, like most things in Fiji there is a need to be persistent if you are to achieve your aim. Unfortunately on the boat's maiden voyage under new ownership it broke down and required an embarrassing tow back to the ROYAL Suva Yacht Club. After rectifying this minor problem a knock developed in the motor on its second voyage which, we were reliably informed, would be repaired in a couple of weeks. After 10 weeks the motor had got to the stage where it was thrown overboard (in marine language) and a new Suzuki outboard purchased in its stead. It has since provided many hours of enjoyable boating on the reefs around Suva but has resulted in few fish gracing the tables of the old salts. There is talk that there may be a request for a Mechanical Engineer to work on the Project but aspirants are warned - experience with marine engines will be an essential requirement.

Ann Moylan returned to Leongatha in Victoria to have the Moylan's second child and whilst there was concerned that John 'may fret like a budgie'. His later than normal start to married life has stood him in good stead. Similarly, Barry Bromham is a new man following wife Beverly's arrival earlier this year, but even with the extremely humid and hot weather, there is no sign of the 'elder statesman' doing away with that 30 year old growth.

The project itself has had a slow start by RCA standards as the funding to be provided by the World Bank Loan has not been available. The World Bank was not prepared to recognise a signatory to the loan agreement until there was recognition of the new government of Fiji by its neighbours. The loan agreement was finally signed on 7 January 1988 and it will now be a tight program to complete construction of 107 km of road before the end of 1990.

Regards from Fiji

Geoff Hose

Dubai is nice this time of year

Feeling like a change of scenery? Getting bogged down with routine?

Peter Hackett, from Human Resources, says that overseas opportunities are still available.

The RCA was recently advised that a position was up for grabs in Dubai, one of the more stable regions in the Middle East.

It sounds like the ideal position to get away from Melbourne's bleak winter: one of the qualifications was ability to work in the open and withstand high ambient temperature.

On the Fijian Road

Bill Farrell talks about the potholes, and pitfalls, that confronts the driver in Fiji

One would be amused if it wasn't quite so serious. Only a short drive in Fiji reveals to the newcomer that motoring here is not at all like back home in Oz.

The first thing to hit you, and most probably through the seat of your pants, is the condition of the road surface. It's generally covered with a minefield of cavernous potholes and roughly repaired patches, despite the roadside being mown and manicured (for the benefit of the numerous pedestrians and joggers). Sprayed seals and asphalt pavements are generally poorly executed, with inferior aggregates and excess bitumen, and reseals - well, they're few and far between.

Having successfully negotiated the potholes, ambling pedestrians and numerous roadside vendors, the next hazard will be the first curve in the road. Unannounced curves with speed values far less than the 80 kph open speed limit, combined with some gravity-defying road shapes, create the scene for some wild cornering.

If your car is still on the road, not having run over some stray goat or fleeing mongoose, the next hazard is likely to be one of the numerous smoke-belching open-air buses or tearalong taxis. Both are major hazards to the unsuspecting newcomer as they barge their way through the traffic without the accepted courtesies. It is said of the traffic in Fiji - always expect the unexpected. Turning without signals, left turns from centrelanes, motorists stopping for a chat in the centre of the roadway, jay-walking pedestrians etc., just seem the norm. Overcrowded vehicles such as canopied trucks, chock-a-block with bodies sitting or standing or hanging on by any means, are quite a danger to all but nonetheless a spectacle.

There is a great likelihood you'll be beeped by other

motorists for your driving, whether you're in the right or wrong as horns are prolifically-used by the Fijian motorists.

Once underway it will be a wonder if you can muster more than 40 to 50 kph around town or 70 to 80 kph on the open road. Most of the vehicles are in poor-mechanical condition and rust-ridden, 10 plus years old (new cars attract high import duty, some in excess of 250%), of small engine capacity (most less than two litre) and Japanese by make. Super fuel (leadfree -what's that?) costs about 72 cents per litre (and getting dearer).

There are consolations, however, to be had from it all. Backyard mechanics and panel beaters are abundant and cheap (though the quality of work is a bit of a lottery).

The likelihood of a reckless driving or drink driving charge is miniscule (no .05 - little point as the local yagona or there's plenty of work for road engineers. Nevertheless, a statistic such as 1 fatality per 450 vehicles per annum (that's about 100 deaths per annum for the total population of about 720,000) should be unacceptable to all. It points to major problems across the whole road system - legislation, administration, funding, construction, maintenance, public attitudes and so on.

So you've been convinced that Fiji isn't for you, either by the foregoing or what you've seen or heard on the news? Don't be deterred. Despite its obvious problems, the Republic of Fiji still has a lot to offer. It is a friendly place with tourist accommodation and activities at an affordable price. It has many interesting places not to be missed, least of all a call on your RCA counterparts in Suva, Lautoka and Labasa.

See you soon, or as the Fijians say, 'ni sa moco'.

□

Flaggie on Tour Road Planning

When Flaggie, our intrepid investigative reporter, visited Doncaster Shoppingtown he was impressed to see the attention given by the public to an RCA display for the Eastern Arterial Road and Ringwood Bypass Environment Effects Statements.

Flaggie spoke to Planning Engineers Don Commons and Anton Pommers to find out more about the activities of Road Planning Group.

Flaggie: What is the purpose of the public display and what kind of response have you had?

Anton: The display coincides with the release of the Environment Effects Statements and planning scheme amendment for the new roads and is aimed at informing the public about the effects of the proposals and the factors considered during the investigations. Government approvals to allow the works to proceed will hopefully be granted after public comment is taken into account by a panel inquiry around May this year.

Don: Most people visiting the display were supportive of the proposals and appreciated the opportunity to talk to RCA staff.

Flaggie: The standard of the reports, brochures, display plans and scale model was excellent. The study must have involved a lot of work.

Don: Yes, we placed a lot of emphasis on marketing when preparing the material. Any major project study involving the public requires considerable resources and must be well presented to ensure that important issues are addressed and satisfactorily explained. The studies were carried out under the guidance of Liaison Committees involving council and government agency representatives.

Anton: Whilst the main work was undertaken by a study team from Road Planning Group, considerable assistance was received from Dandenong Region, Road Design, Right of Way, Environmental Services and Property Groups and Printing Section and consultants. Other specialist advice has been received from Materials and Bridge Design Groups. It has been very much a team effort.

Don: A similar study was also completed for a Second Murray River Crossing at Albury-Wodonga. The need to communicate with the public is not confined to Melbourne only.

Flaggie: What other work does Road Planning Group do besides major project studies?

Anton: Besides major studies involving the public, which can run for over a year, we also undertake smaller studies which can be completed in several weeks. RPG maintains a watching brief on completed proposals to determine how they are affected by various changes in land use, government policy etc.,

to ensure they are still relevant when they come to be implemented.

Don: RPG also provides advice on the likely traffic effects and road provisions for new development proposals such as the National Tennis Centre. We have also recently been involved in surveying road access and air travel patterns at the Melbourne Airport to assist the future development of the airport.

Anton: RPG has a specialist transport modelling section, headed by David Ferguson, which provides estimates of travel taking into account future population, land use and road network changes. We are acknowledged as leaders in this area and frequently undertake work for other government agencies.

Graphics Section, headed by David Oliver and Leanne Knudsen, apart from assisting with the RPG tasks, works closely with Corporate Affairs and assists projects and regions in preparing of high quality public reports and displays.

Flaggie: You were saying that planning work may extend for a considerable length of time before projects are accepted, approved, designed and ready to construct.

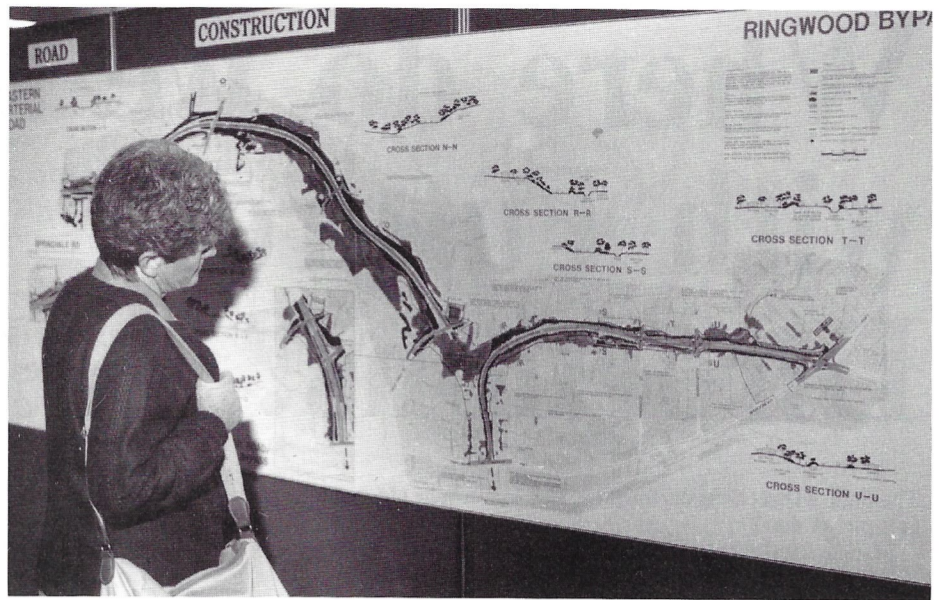
Don: Yes. Good examples are the Eastern Corridor and Albury-Wodonga Studies which have been previously looked at in several major studies and developed over a period of more than 10 years. Projects which have recently come to fruition include SEMARL, Morwell and Melton Bypasses, and the recent decision to widen Punt Road - all of which were commenced by RPG several years ago and brought to the point of public and Government acceptance.

The completion of a major report or a project approval is viewed in the RPG as a major achievement. Staff gain considerable satisfaction knowing that their work contributes to well considered decisions and better defined projects.

Flaggie: How has RPG been affected by the introduction of new technology?

Anton: Our technical officers have developed considerable expertise in the use of Autocad to prepare figures and design drawings and have demonstrated that significant increases in productivity and quality can be achieved.

Staff in RPG have found a wide range



of applications for the data bases and spreadsheets. Some of our staff assisted Right of Way in designing an automated property enquiry answering system for use on major projects. Staff have also successfully utilised methods for down loading mainframe computer files such as RIDGE, SPUR and COGO files for graphical presentation on Autocad.

Flaggie: What challenges does the rest of 1988 hold for RPG?

Anton: RPG has retained essentially the same role within Planning Branch restructure although it will play an increased role in road network performance monitoring. A major difference would be the intended use of multi-skilled project teams to undertake major projects. It is possible that staff from Bridge Design, Road Design and Traffic Engineering Groups will help work in a project team for the duration of a study, possibly alongside staff

• An RCA display: important issues must be addressed and satisfactorily explained. Flaggie, from external agencies.

The team approach has been one of the main strengths of RPG in the past and we hope it will continue in the future.

Don: We have several challenging projects on the books including completion of planning studies for the Western Bypass, the western leg of the Outer Ring road, and Roads 2000, the forward look strategy for rural roads. All of these studies will involve public consultation. Staff currently in RPG should have the opportunity to display considerable initiative and gain a wide range of experience as the studies progress through their various phases.

Flaggie: Thank you chaps for your insight into Road Planning.

All in the family

When Sharon Suares applied for a WP Operator's position at the Central Gippsland office in 1985, she didn't realise she was upholding an impressive family tradition.

Her appointment to the job meant that she became the fourth generation in her family to have worked for the RCA and CRB.

'At the time, I just saw the ad in the local paper and went for the job,' she says — forgetting that not only her uncle, Raymond Kellett, had served for the organisation, but also her grandfather AND great grandfather.

The family involvement can be traced to the early days of the CRB when Jonathon Kellett worked for the Authority. Born in the 1850s, he was one of the gang who sliced a road through the rugged Haunted Hills near Yallourn.

Sharon's grandfather, John 'Jack' Kellett, was born in 1914 and worked all his life with the CRB. It was the era of horse and drag, mattocks, axes and scythes when he joined, and he spent his early working days in the Boolarra district near Morwell.

He met an untimely death in March 1955, following a tragic accident at Hazel Creek east of Warragul.

Jack and his wife, Alma, had four children: Raymond, Barry, Glenys and Lynette (Sharon's mother). 'Jack always talked about the duplicated highway which was going to be built to Morwell, but he did not live to see it,' recalls Lynette.

Raymond joined the RCA after leaving school and stayed several years before eventually moving to Frankston.



• Sharon Suares

Then along came Sharon who kept up the good family name.

Sharon is now an Admin Officer in the Region's accounts department and says out of working hours she likes netball, aerobics, drawing and reading. She is also single and can't guarantee that there are any plans for a 'fifth generation' family member to join the organisation.

• Jack Kellett, left, with Alan Pryde and Stan Page and CRB patrol truck at Boolarra.

Asphalting - The Aussie Way



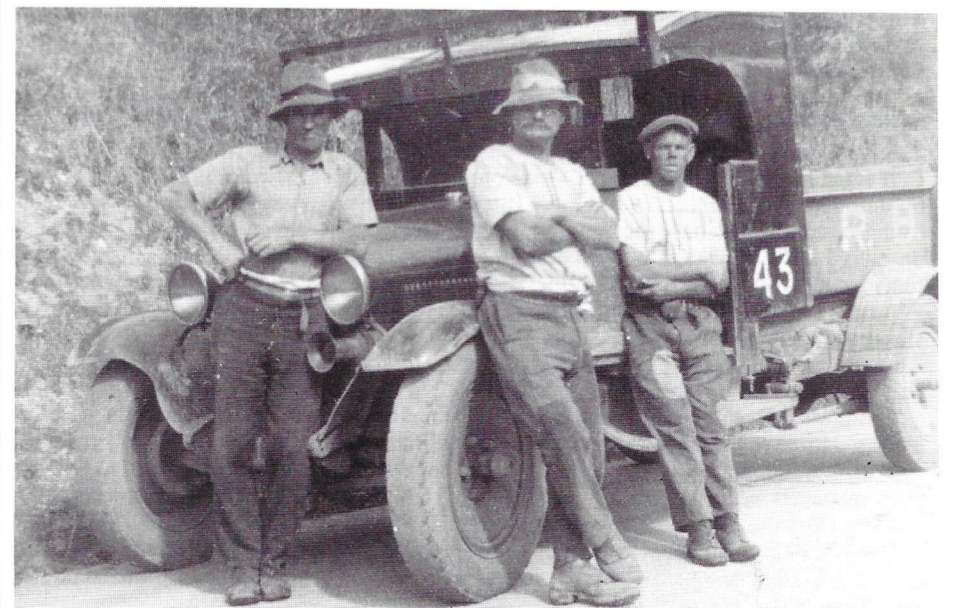
• Engineer Wally Holtrop, (right) brushes up on his Japanese with a visiting engineer.

Armed with a battery of Nikons and Canons, fifteen engineers from Japan were well-grounded in the hard facts of asphaltting when they visited the RCA.

Asphalt Group hosted the group, from the Asahi Rekisi Company, who were keen to be primed up on the basics of design, manufacture and the use of asphalt in pavements.

'They were taken to the MTA bus depot in Doncaster where asphalt was being placed, and then to a mixing plant of Readymix Asphalt at Vermont,' said John Rebbechi, Acting Manager - Asphalt.

From there the gathering returned to Head Office for a discussion on asphalt mix design. John Brandenburg, Experimental Officer with the Asphalt Laboratory, headed an informal seminar with the aid of interpreter, Tsutomu Kurosawa, from a Sydney tourist company.



Where do we stand with Future Directions?

The Future Directions document is well over a year old, but is it out of date?

Management would certainly hope so.

For the plan to be doing its job, people should no longer be talking about the way things WILL change. They should, instead, be aware of the way things ARE changing.

These changes should be a direct result of the actions of staff who have wrestled with the ideals of the document and have come up with their own workable interpretation. Where there were words there should now be action. But is this a reality? Some people and some departments, it would seem, are feeling the effects more than others.

The Aims:

Some of the aims of Future Directions include the 'decentralisation' of decision making, making departments responsible for their own budgets and planning their work practices, encouraging inventiveness and greater involvement from staff, opening up new and more opportunities and providing better communications both inside the organisation and with customers.

From this is supposed to come a more efficient organisation, greater accountability, better customer relations, cost effectiveness and very importantly, a happier and more skilled staff.

Everyone, it would seem knows about Future Directions, but do they understand it and is it being applied? Several methods of communicating the message of Future Directions are being implemented, some more rigorously and visibly than others.

Corporate planner Warwick Bull outlines these methods for Interchange.

1. Seminars and the introduction of action plans are encouraging most staff members to seriously think about their involvement and contribution to the organisation. The recently opened West Gate Training Centre will open up a range of training options.

2. Costs centre management offers greater autonomy and flexibility for departments and requires staff to carefully review their spending practices and their productivity.

3. The introduction of the Performance Appraisal Scheme not only ensures that staff look at their own contribution to the RCA but makes management more aware of the needs and achievements of the people they employ.

4. A new emphasis on marketing can offer staff a sense of purpose and at the same time make the RCA a greater force

Laurie Carlton (Supervising Drafting Officer - Right of Way)

Laurie Carlton prides himself on his ability to 'give it a go'. He takes most changes in his stride; even sees some as a challenge.

But the recent process of corporate change has met with a different reaction from Laurie. 'I have come full circle,' he says, describing the way he initially embraced the corporate plan but later changed his mind.

'At first I was all for it,' he says.

The Future Directions Document was aimed at having a hard look at the organisation and what we wanted to achieve. This was prompted by reductions in funding, staff cuts and the Chairman. Then came corporate planning. It softened the impact of funding cuts and attrition. I thought New Age Thinking was a good reaction, but the cost was prohibitive,' he says.

Laurie keenly grasped the idea of seeking outside work. 'At first I thought ... 'we can make a fortune!'

But it wasn't long before he saw conflicts arise.

'If I had half of my staff on road works projects and half on an outside job, what takes priority? If you take money from a customer, they have the right to expect you to deliver on time. But RCA work is also expected to be finished on time. How do you place your priorities?'

'Also, when you are losing staff, you just can't take on external work,' he says.

Laurie says he has tried to keep up with change, particularly technological advancements in his area.

'Our draftsmen embraced technology even before the engineers.' However he, and the other staff close to him, felt a negative reaction growing, particularly when they saw the good managers being 'sucked dry' on New Age Thinking courses and Corporate Development meetings.

'It was taking them away from their function of getting roads built. They weren't there for their staff and the workers resented that,' he says.

in the market place. This new marketing plan moves towards service delivery (offering the client what he wants).

5. New technology is one of the most visible changes being introduced. It is making the organisation more efficient and cost effective and is opening up opportunities for staff to learn new skills and apply new ideas.

6. Developing a philosophy of questioning the way and why we do things is central to the success of 'Future Directions'. This philosophy can only succeed if it encourages people to examine the way they work and to look for new and better ways of doing things.

But, says Warwick Bull, the message is not necessarily getting through loud and clear. He believes there is a problem in communicating these aims and the problem lies mostly within the middle levels of management. 'There is an inertia at the middle levels which we are trying to break down' Warwick says. 'We must convince managers to look at the way they are implementing these changes. We need to teach managers to manage,' he says. 'One very good thing Ian (Stoney) is doing is breaking down the barriers between head office and the regions - giving regional managers more authority.

'People were very suspicious of these changes at first, they need to be better informed,' he says. But despite the apparent communications blockage, Warwick believes change is definitely happening. 'The organisation is much more open now. Changes are impacting,' he said. He believes the most positive change to date has been with management. 'They have moved away from product-oriented planning to an attitude which considers people to be important and that staff is one of the greatest resources available to any organisation.'

Interchange in this issue tackled the question 'Is Future Directions Working?' We have interviewed several RCA workers for their opinions. Here are those responses.



Kerry Burke (Manager - Bridge Branch)

Kerry Burke has been in charge of Bridge for a little over 12 months, but in that short time change has become more of a way of life than a topic of conversation in his Branch.

'I see my role as changing the direction of this Branch and bringing it in line with the future directions of the RCA,' Kerry says.

He describes the branch as previously having been 'inward looking' and 'having a sense of isolation, with little opportunity to control its destiny. In the past a lot of time was spent dealing with the technical aspects of the job,' he says, and as a result 'the management component was pushed aside because of this technical emphasis.'

There was little opportunity, says Kerry, to empower the staff to make their own decisions. Because of limited delegations, everything landed on the top desk. But all that is changing, and it is hard to tell whether it is because of Future Directions and Kerry's keen grasp of its ideals, or whether Kerry came into the position with an already well developed 'new age' management style of his own. Either way, Kerry Burke has transformed Bridge into an excellent example of what Future Directions is all about. 'When I first arrived, people were generally, but vaguely, aware of our corporate plan. They felt they had been informed a bit, but had not been able to contribute. It was something being carried out by anonymous people at Head Office,' he says.

When action plans were first devised Kerry grasped their potential and instigated a series of staff discussion sessions and seminars.

Most of the staff at Bridge attended the voluntary seminars. 'I took the opportunity to use Future Directions, Natrov, Metras, and other reports in the sessions and the staff did exercises on our products, public demands etc. We communicated about it. We argued through a lot of things. We didn't necessarily convince people, but we presented what we think is important to the RCA and the people of the State. The key for this branch is to move away from just managing bridges to being involved in the management of the road system,' he says.

The strong message he has received from staff is their desire to be more involved in the decision making process of the organisation.



Staff were asked to evaluate on a chart their strengths and weaknesses and list these in order of their importance to the branch.

From this chart it became evident that there was an imbalance in productivity. On one hand there were things that individuals and the branch did well but were not regarded as high priority tasks and other things were classed as important but were not reaching the same standard of excellence.

Identified as needing extra effort were qualities of leadership and accountability, a branch image and innovation, development of appropriate services and products (or meeting customer needs and developing a service delivery approach), customer education, management information systems, training and development and generating external work opportunities.

Identifying these areas of need is the first big hurdle in improving a branch's performance, says Kerry. If Future Directions is working it should be possible to identify examples of change which it has inspired.

This can be difficult, either because no such change has yet begun, or because they are behind the scenes changes, such as a shift in attitude.

But at Bridge, the changes are obvious and 'up front'. 'We have, in this branch, in the last few months, instigated several proposals for joint ventures with private industry. We would have had to seek approval from head office on these proposals. Now we have much more flexibility to make the decisions and carry them through, keeping management informed, of course, on what we are doing.'

'I have set up a three-person training committee in the branch and we have given them priorities, their own budget and guidelines, but what they do and the way they go about it is up to them. All I ask is that they keep me informed of their directions.'

'We also have five people out on short-term swaps with other areas to increase mobility. The first of these was arranged with some difficulty, but has been very successful. They are now arranged on a manager level over the phone.'

Kerry is an advocate of action instead of words. He believes introduction of new technology is one very high profile way of introducing change.

Recognition, reward and encouragement for staff is a crucial part of his style of management.

'You have to establish reward systems, including trust and loyalty and encourage innovation and risk taking,' he says. But with risk taking comes mistakes. How a manager reacts to mistakes can often determine how well staff adopt to change, he says.

'Future Directions is something we needed. It is now up to managers to take up the cause and run with it,' Kerry says.

'Ian (Stoney) is urging people to empower their staff and the staff is keen to be involved,' he said.

When?

?

Future Directions: Why change is necessary

By Bill Shum

To me Future Directions is a document which explains the Corporate Planning process and the need to take a hard look at the organisation - and make changes where necessary for efficiency and effectiveness.

'FD's' was first printed in February 1987 but only distributed to Managers. More copies were printed as it became widely publicised and unions pressured the RCA to distribute it to all employees.

The chairman and Managing Director, Ian Stoney, took on his role with the RCA in July 1986 and proceeded to implement changes both to the structure and to the philosophy of the Authority.

It seems to be a common practice of new managers to restructure their new organisation, shift personnel around and make other changes both to break-up established power bases as well as to see who are the best operators i.e. who can cope with change and who has similar ideas.

It must be said, however, that the RCA was a dinosaur in a business organisation sense. We had a top heavy management structure that was computer illiterate, a lot of outdated and inappropriate management work practices, many staff disappointed in the 1983 restructure in that new titles and salaries only went down the organisation to a limited degree and many lower level staff felt badly done by when promised reviews did not eventuate. But there was fairly high morale and loyalty to the organisation which was a carry-over from the previous decade of CRB activity, a paternal management style but with stability and security.

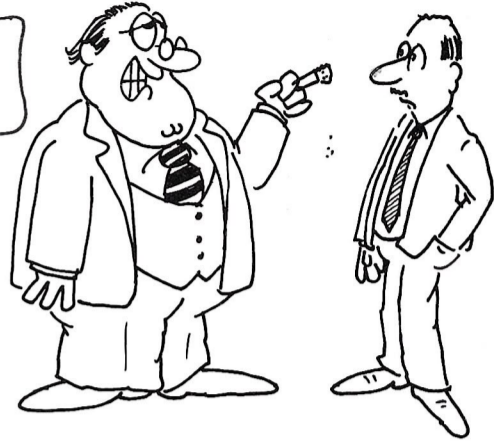
The lack of forward planning, (i.e. more than the next 12 months) led to inefficiencies, and considerable waste, as demonstrated when suddenly a huge increase in Federal funding was granted in '83 for Bicentennial Road development. And we couldn't spend all of it!

The RCA in 1986 was ripe for change; indeed, it was desperately necessary. The dilemma was whether to opt for rapid changes that would upset many and cause much disruption thereby creating inefficiencies, or spend time and effort on preparing people for change (the problem facing management everywhere in this day and age) in order to bring about changes in a productive way.

We actually approached it in both ways - major changes in structure, personnel placement and more importantly,

What has changed?

I remember the Good Old Days...when Consultation Committees only involved managers!



Kevin F. Ryan (Cost Clerk, Dandenong Region)

Kevin Ryan has spent 20 years working for large construction organisations, including Utah Construction/Australia, Thiess Brothers, Ernie Clementson (NSW PL) and CSR. This, coupled with 17 years with RCA, has given him a valuable insight into the workings of the construction industry and also its diverse management structures. Interchange asked Kevin to answer specific questions about Future Directions. These are his responses.

Q. Do you understand Future Directions?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you think the document was aimed at achieving?

A. I'm led to believe it to be a change of emphasis to our established work patterns, new organisation structures and work practices.

Q. What do you believe necessitated Future Directions? (What was wrong with the 'way things were'?)

A. Reforms were required to improve the performance of the public sector so that it could better meet the economic and social challenges that face the country. The private sector recognised this and introduced new technology. There was, in the RCA, nothing wrong with the way things were so far as the employees were concerned. As the tempo increased with the introduction of new technology we would simply add more manpower in an attempt to stem the tide. To maintain active community support, we had to shed our shackles and remain abreast of the private sector.

Q. Has there been an obvious reaction to the new policy? Can you give an example?

A. In its infancy Future Directions had a devastating effect. Rumours were rife, complacency was replaced by anxiety. Good steady public service jobs were in jeopardy. The Country Roads Board was divided into the RCA and RTA. The Authority Board was formed for government direction and immediately augmented development and planning. Consultative mechanisms were put into effect, discussion groups formed and section leaders appointed. Corporate planning processes were taken to the regions to convey major issues arising from change. Resentment to change showed, and amidst all an early retirement package was introduced. This was the Authority's first mistake. They should have held the package off for 12 months or so, as some of those who took advantage of it were in many aspects, people the Authority could ill afford to lose. Hence, progress on change was slowed and targets set for 12 months ago are still ongoing. Whether it is due to lack of direction or expertise, I am unable to ascertain.

Q. How have you reacted, personally and professionally, to these changes? Can you site instances where you have changed the way you operate in response to this policy?

A. My reaction has been very vocal, although I am for change and agree with its concept, I am not happy with implementation. In the initial stages, engineers were successful in having all positions upgraded. Administration, field personnel and technical officers were not as fortunate. They have to go through the long process of reviews. The Authority has become engineer orientated and as outside consultants have reiterated, engineers collectively make poor managers.

philosophy. (The aim was to change our image from 'road builders' to 'managers of the road system', to become market oriented, responsive to change and more efficient and effective in our operation). At the same time we put much effort into preparing people for the changes:

- by the use of **New Age Thinking** (a program designed to help individuals adapt to change and develop a 'pursuit of excellence' mentality).
- the success of this program will only be seen in time, by a commitment to **consultation** as a fundamental part of management's planning process. (FDs being one aspect of consultation).
- by a shift of emphasis in industrial relations from a negative 'us and them', confrontationist mentality to sensitivity and collaboration in establishing guidelines and agreements for mutual union/management benefit.

• Continued next page

Unproductive overtime goes unchecked and classification of personnel are outdated and never reviewed. Housekeeping is not up to standard.

The best project managers have proven to be with private construction enterprises, Utah, Thiess Bros., and CSR; those who have come up through the RCA ranks. I know of such a man presently engaged with Semar! who would certainly meet their private enterprise criteria. Why isn't he, along with similar Superintendants of Works throughout the organisation actively engaged in the formulation of development schemes?

One can only assume that these men and field personnel will not be required in the Future Directions plan.

Administration and technical must also have officers with the calibre and expertise to be a part of development and planning.

While sections are being streamlined and understaffed, all officers should be granted incentives immediately. Reviews should set new guidelines, check that the incentives are sufficient and establish staff requirements for various sections.

Decisions have been reached without prior or proper consultation; field personnel have been completely ignored and are ignorant of change.

What is the human relations area doing for these people?

Should day labour forces become extinct, then engineers of the next decade, without experiencing and learning the know-how of overseers and superintendents of works, will be likely lambs led to the slaughter.

Contractors who now enjoy the trimmings will be in for a great feast.

Q. How do you see these changes affecting your department and the organisation, in the future, say in 5 years time?

A. Within the organisation I have worked with and noted top engineers whose construction experiences and abilities, together with their approach to the organisation have won recognition and promotion.

Hence they are lost to construction at a time when they were solely needed in their regions. I am positive many would have tended for contracted works, but alas with construction workers disappearing at an alarming rate, gang strengths halved, no new blood to be permanently employed, it has become apparent that the Authority has abandoned the idea of tendering for our own works. I forecast within 5 years 90 per cent of the expenditure will be let to outside contractors. Even the maintenance area will be similarly affected. Gradually my section will be eliminated with the introduction of computer pay, direct posting to ledgers of wages, plant and contracts and the costs of what is left of the little day labour and maintenance works.

Q. What is the feeling of other staff, particularly those you work closely with? Do they have a good grasp of the meaning of the document and are they (visibly) implementing its ideas?

A. The staff in my area have the same feeling as I. They continue to follow directions as ordered, work accordingly and hope for some miracle. Some are affected more than others by the uncertainty and a breakdown in health occurs. Construction workers do not know the document exists and rely mainly on gossip and hearsay.

Why did it take so long to set up this consultation committee? Lack of consultation!



Who is the co-ordinator of Consultation? What is the ISCCP? What is consultation?

Co-ordinator of Consultation for the Interim Standing Committee on Consultation Procedures? What, you may well ask, is this all about? More mumbo-jumbo management nomenclature, and it doesn't even result in a usable acronym!

Bill Shum is the bearer of this somewhat long winded title. If you can say it in one go, you get the job says Bill. Seriously, the title comes from the Transport Act 1983, (need we say more) which states among other things that this organisation in the exercise of its functions shall have regard to the achievement of the following objectives:

- "To achieve an efficient and dynamic organisation by implementing appropriate technological and other changes through a process of consultation beginning at the contemplative stage" and
- "to maintain harmonious relations between management, staff and employee organisation through processes of effective consultation and participation in decision making".

Section 33 of the Act requires the RCA to establish a Standing Committee on Consultation. This committee reports directly to the RCA Authority. Section 33 sets out the broad function of the committee:

- "To review all significant planning activities and changes within the Authority in order to determine appropriate and effective consultation procedures".

The Standing Committee is composed of five representatives from RCA management and five representatives from unions - one from each of the unions with the largest number of members in the Authority.

The members of the committee are:

Peter Balfe 860 2597 Manager - Corporate Planning (Chairman)

Andy McGalliard 860 2218 Manager - Road Design Services

Doug Thompson 860 2483 Manager - Finance Branch

Lorraine Benham 860 2683 Manager - Corporate Affairs

Greg Moylan 860 2453 Snr. Industrial Relations Officer

Bill Watton 329 9222 MOA Industrial Relations Officer

John Speight 791 3686 AMWU Organiser

Eric Lowerson 663 6122 AWU Organiser

Greg Mariager 860 2552 APEA Delegate

Gary Battershill 860 2211 ADSTE delegate

The Act also established the position of Co-ordinator of Consultation who works for the committee and has a variety of duties.

- To assist the ISCCP in identifying all significant planning activities and changes;
- to act as executive officer to the committee;
- to monitor the implementation of consultative procedures; and
- to take a leading role in educating management, unions and employees on the principles of consultative mechanisms. This includes providing advice and assistance to managers in setting up appropriate consultative procedures.



The RCA is in a state of change. Plans are being made for the future; they are plans for survival and growth. The RCA needs to be more efficient and effective - it is only through proper consultation that appropriate decisions can be made so that efficiency and effectiveness become reality.

What does consultation mean?

Many people are confused by the term, and quite understandably, as it has been used incorrectly many times in the past: people were told, not consulted. *What has Changed*

Consultation in the Act means giving employees the opportunity to be involved in decisions which affect them at work. It means giving interested parties the opportunity to examine all relevant information, giving them time to discuss it and giving them the opportunity to have input to the decision making process. *And then being told what will happen.*

Managers have no need to fear consultation. They still have the right to make decisions. All this process does is to say - before you make the final decision, let people know what you propose and let them comment. Consultation in this sense reinforces the essential aspect of good professional management - the skill of combining material, equipment and labour resources in the best possible way. *Then ignore them*

Consultation allows managers to tap into the expertise of the workforce enabling them to make decisions which are appropriate and avoid conflict.

How does it work?

The committee is informed of change projects through the co-ordinator. The committee then decides what is significant and sets up consultative committees.

Some of the consultative procedures have had limited success so far due to several factors:

- Pressure of timetables;
- lack of information; *lack of intelligence*
- lack of discussion; *common sense + common courtesy by managers*
- Uncertainty of rights and obligations by both management and employees; and
- A general lack of understanding of consultation...not surprising considering the working environment and traditional RCA decision making processes. *ALL things*

These shortcomings have unfortunately left some people cynical and distrustful. Through greater understanding of consultation these problems can be overcome.

Consultation has benefits for employees and management. Many employees feel greater job satisfaction if they have been involved - both through information sharing and a chance to comment.

Industrial relations can improve as conflict is reduced. Consultation should lead to an environment of trust and understanding which smooths the way for implementation of change.

Misunderstandings can be sorted out early. Consultation can develop a commitment to change and breakdown resistance through understanding.

This commitment is essential to the development of the RCA's policy of flexibility.

It is true that consultation can slow down the decision making process. However, proper consultation can make implementation and adoption much quicker. Overall it's a better alternative.

Bill can be contacted on extension 2259 for further information about consultation and the processes involved.

Future Directions : Why change is necessary

continued from page 7

Future Directions was put together by Corporate Planning Section with considerable direction and oversight by Mr. Stoney. Perhaps its biggest failing was that it was seen by the work force as another document from management, in jargon-filled terminology and too 'airy-fairy'. It has no input from employees at large and therefore many felt no 'ownership' of it or commitment to it. Furthermore, they had, by and large, been working in an environment of strict line management control and were unable to cope with a 'vision statement' type of approach at that stage. Hopefully, future changes will have more input and therefore more ownership by employees in all areas. The Action Plans now being developed must have broad consultation in their design if they are to succeed. Many employees, both line management and 'workers', have been disillusioned by seeing and hearing great promises of 'looking after people as our most valuable resource'. Yet when they look around they often see colleagues being overworked, disadvantaged and laid off with calls for desperately needed reviews and changes at a local level falling on deaf ears.

They notice a philosophy of delegation down the line, to enable decisions to be made locally, perverted into local power plays and other management areas unable to cope with the new power or scared to making the wrong decision.

They see natural attrition decimate numbers in some areas while 'dead wood' continues to hold on to highly paid positions in other areas. Dedicated people have been broken by having jobs changed without explanation or by carrying the work of whole sections when staff who leave were not replaced.

All of these negative aspects of change have undermined morale and weakened the organisation.

Personally, I have supported the proposed changes as necessary for our survival as an organisation. They are based on good management and organisational theory and of course the commitment to developing consultation and improving the conditions of employees is my main concern.

I have been promoting these philosophies in my work with the unions and as an Employee Representative on the RCA board. Now as Co-ordinator of Consultation I hope to be able to further pursue the education of the RCA's management and workforce to the benefits and their rights and obligations in respect of consultation.

Naturally, I am very disappointed in areas where changes have had a negative effect, and fully support those employees who seek redress for their grievances. The processes of change and how to manage them effectively are a recognized problem that needs satisfactory resolution if any of our plans for the future are to be realized.

I feel that within five years or so we will have achieved the goals that are set out in 'FDs' as far as the organisation is concerned. I hope that this will not be at the cost of many employees who are now facing overwork, confusion, stress related illness or a possible shortening or their expected working lives.

For employees it is essential that they maintain a positive attitude to the FD philosophy, keep on with their efforts and support those who are working for their benefit. They must realise that change is necessary and maintain a positive attitude in their criticisms as well. There is an equal obligation



on the part of employees to take part in consultation as there is for management.

For management, it is imperative that the commitment to people and their welfare is seen to be genuine and working, - not a vague generalisation to be paid lip service to and ignore in reality.

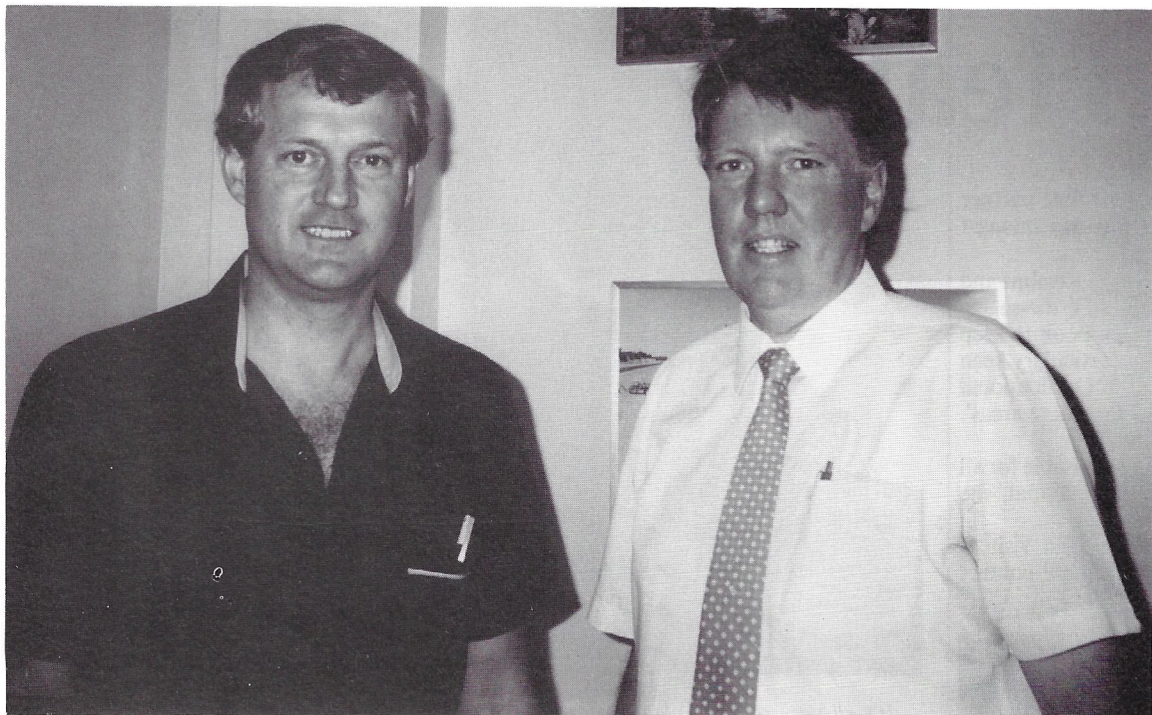
RCA employees are better educated and more aware than in the past. They have a right to be informed and right to make comment. If recommendations are made which are not in line with RCA directions then this must be explained to those making the suggestions.

I look forward to more meaningful and understandable versions of Future Directions which can be widely accepted by all employees, knowing that they have had the opportunity to have some say in it only then will we achieve our aim of becoming a dynamic and responsive organisation.

Bill Shum is the RCA's Co-ordinator of consultation and can be contacted on 860 2259.

PEOPLE

Ray settling in at Gippsland



March was certainly a hectic month for engineer, Ray Bridger. No sooner had he 'wrapt up' the opening of the first stage of the Greensborough Bypass, he was packing his bags and heading for Bairnsdale.

Ray has been Project Engineer on the multi million dollar Greensborough Project, and the first stage was opened on March 3.

He was appointed as Direct Works Engineer in East Gippsland and took up the role just after the official opening function.

Ray joined the RCA in 1969 and has also been a Project Engineer on the Princes Highway widening in Malvern and

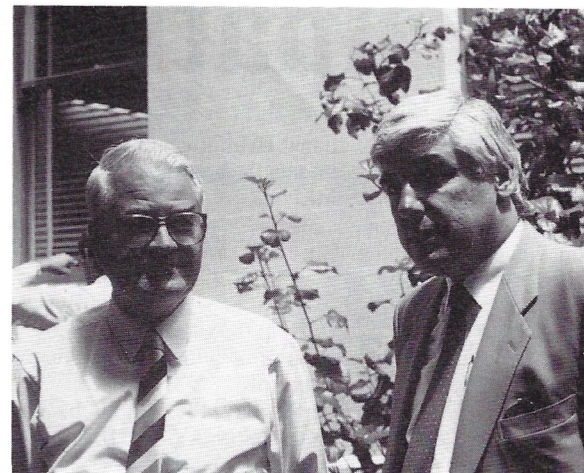
East Gippsland's Regional Manager, John Wilson, welcomes Ray Bridger at Bairnsdale.

Caulfield, Planning Engineer on a number of major rural and urban projects, and Site Engineer on the Hume Highway.

Up until this year Ray has had to be content pursuing his sailing pastime at the Albert Park Lake. However, he may have to adjust his rudder because the nearby Gippsland Lakes comprise some 400 square kilometres of boating waterways.

Ray is married with two children, and says he won't have any problems 'adjusting to country life'.

Ian leaves after 40 years



Ian says farewell to Ian during a send off at Northern Region.

Regional Accounts Clerk, Ian Campbell (left), retired last November after notching up a mammoth 40 years service with the RCA. And saying farewell is RCA Chairman and Managing Director, Ian Stoney.

Ian was appointed Accounts Clerk in April, 1980, but his working career with the organisation can be traced back to 26 May, 1947.

He worked at the Bendigo Divisional Workshop for 15 years where he says 'I thought I was destined to stay so I built my home within walking distance of the depot'.

'As it turned out, as soon as my house was finished I was shifted to the Divisional Office,' he recalls.

'I was not happy.'

From there until 1980 he was an Admin Officer 2 before being appointed to the Accounts position.

A farewell dinner was held with more than 100 of Ian's colleagues.

Meeting people...



Bruce Van Every took on his role of Planning and Design Engineer at Dandenong Region on 7 December 1987.

Bruce had been in Traralgon since March 1981 where he has done 'almost everything', including Municipal Liaison, Major Projects and Planning and Design. He was responsible for the Traralgon Deviation and, more recently, has been in charge of the Morwell Bypass and the planning for highway duplication from Moe River to Moe.

Bruce made the RCA submission to the Driffield Power Station feasibility study and also the Effect on Roads of Timber Extraction.

In his spare time he has won many tennis and squash trophies and also does marathon running.

Who's where...

For your files

The Records Management Section is now part of the Information Services Branch, but still provides a comprehensive consultancy service on all areas of records management. Your contacts are Darrell Ross (policy matters) on 2388, and Glenn Bishop and Ruth Greenwood (computer systems) on 2707.

MIS now IS

Under a new structure of the Management Services Division, MIS is now known as Information Services. As well as Records Management (see above) and the old MIS, the area also embraces administration services, library, property certificates and correspondence registry.

Graeme Goes

Mr Graeme Marshallsea retires on 8 July as Manager Regional Support in Operations Division.

Also calling it a day ...

Fran McLellan, Accounts, Northern Region, retired on April 29 after 23 years.

Des Farrell was farewelled at the BS Depot in Central Gippsland region prior to his retirement after 11 years.

After 29 years service, Pat Tognella, from North Eastern Region, had to retire recently due to ill health.

The amiable Mr Max Baker retired on 27 May. Max has been the Acting Manager Stores and Supplies at Glen Waverley.

Retirement of Patrolman 'Lucky'

Terry 'Lucky' Murray retired earlier this year from the Tallangatta Patrol and about fifty people attended his farewell from the 'CRB' (as Terry would like it still to be known) held at the Stump Hotel, Wodonga. Terry has been employed by the RCA/CRB for twenty two years, the last nine of which he has been Patrolman at Tallangatta.

Terry and Pat together with their three daughters attended the farewell and it is testimony to 'Lucky's' popularity that so many of his friends chose to join them.

The evening was a big success and we all hope that Terry and Pat enjoy a long and healthy retirement in their favorite town, Tallangatta.

The couple will no doubt be seen by passing motorists making use of the facilities in 'Murray's Wayside Stop' on the Murray Valley Highway. Keep an eye out for them! Also, watch out for Lucky as he manoeuvres his new boat on Lake Hume. Fortunately, it's a big lake.

Cosy Threesome



Two's company, but three can be quite cosy. Materials engineers, Alex Lukac and Neville Schmidt, were at a send off barbecue when it was gategashed by a staff

member - from a stripper-gram business. The surprise visit was arranged, we've been told, by 'the girls in the Materials Admin Office'.

Awards at Batman

Michael Inglis, ex-Geelong workshop, took out three awards at the Batman Automotive College of TAFE Award Night in April.

He took out the VACC prize for heavy steam motor mechanics, the Silver Medallion for motor mechanics and the Gippsland field day award in which Caterpillar presented him with a \$3500 tool kit.

Michael worked as an apprentice motor mechanic at the Geelong workshop under foreman, Peter McHugh, from 1983 until this year.

Other awards were presented to Stuart Hobbs and Glen Coulthard (both ex-Horsham workshop), and Ian Kent and Chris Hummer (both 4th year at Glen Waverley).

Our congratulations to all the award winners.



• Michael Inglis. Photo: Geelong Advertiser

Good Living

On The Road With Occupational Health

The RCA's intrepid Occupational Health team, Christina Harvey and her part-time partner Cynthia Williams have been spreading the health and safety message amongst field staff throughout the State.

In May the team paid a visit to Barwon region, giving staff blood pressure checks and demonstrating Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Their visit proved so successful that the girls were invited back to conduct sessions with some of the Regions outlying patrols.

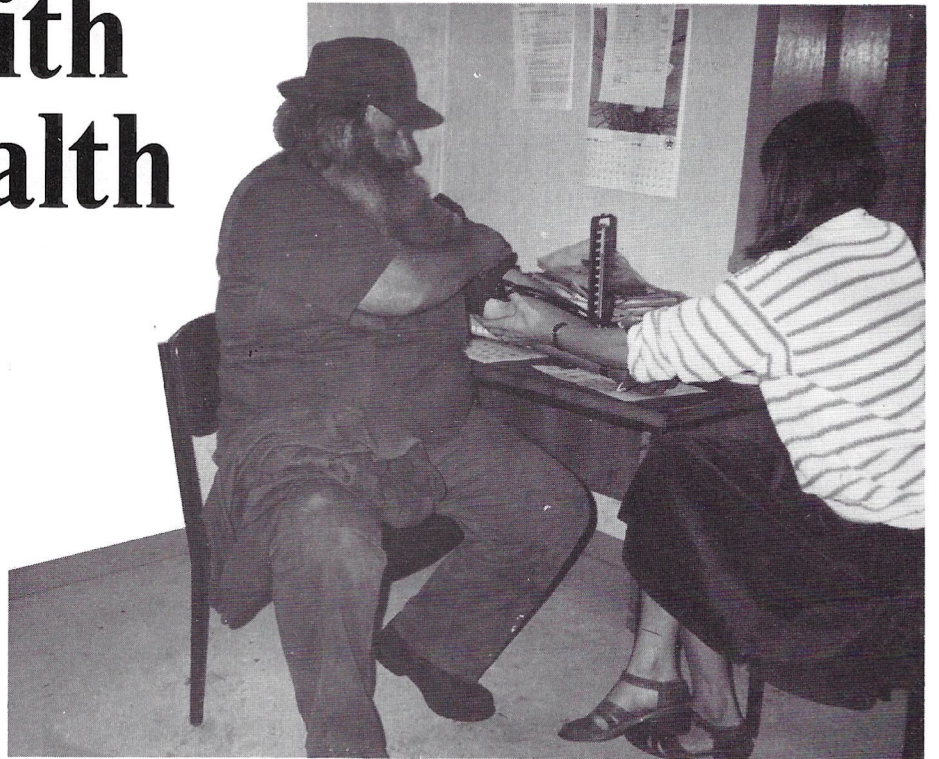
In a session last April at Apollo Bay, the Ocean Road Patrol and Peter Cowan's construction gang benefitted from Chris' advice on diet and exercise, along with blood pressure checks and 'hands on' resuscitation experience using a CPR dummy (see pic). Since that visit,

Chris and Cynthia have touring Regions and Projects statewide promoting the message.

'With our limited staff it's difficult to keep up with requests, but we are particularly keen to promote the resources of Occupational Health Service to field staff in remote areas', according to Chris.

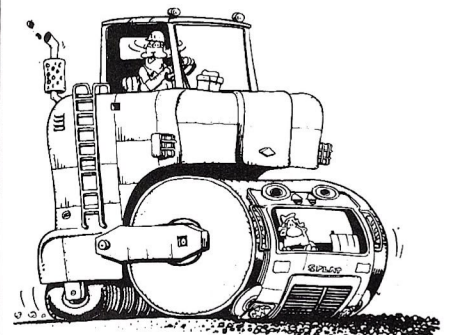
'Blood pressure checks are advisable for all staff and test results remain confidential,' she says.

Staff wishing to organise a field visit to Depots, Projects or Regions should contact Chris Harvey on 2011.

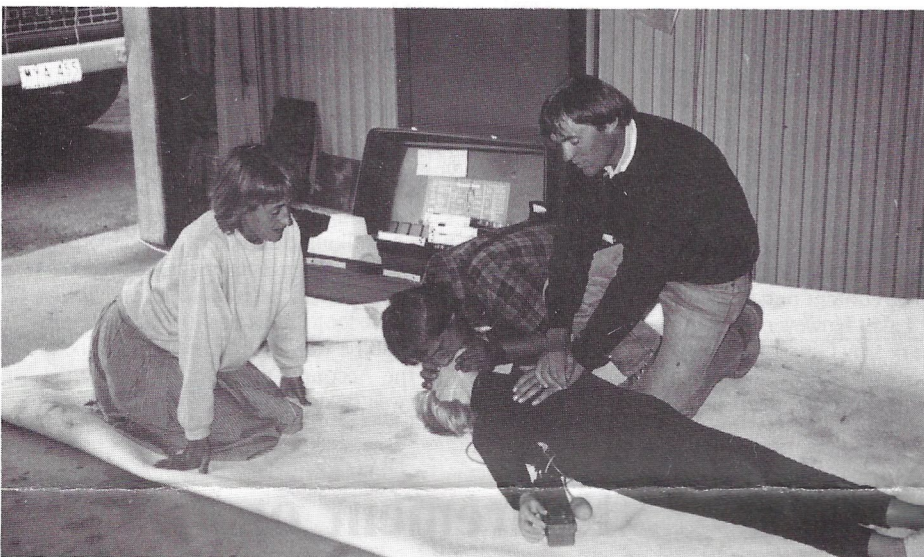


It's all very routine: plant operator, John Jacobson, takes time off at Barwon Region to check his blood pressure

Plant operator, John Dicecco, left, and maintenance supervisor, Doug Thomas, get some practice in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation The 'victim' is not one of the patrol members but a special CPR dummy.



"Now where did that gravel truck get to?"



When Rats Ain't Rats

This article is written with the aim of getting RCA workers interested in the conservation of a tiny creature that bears an unfortunate resemblance to a rat.

The creature is the rare Mountain Pigmy Possum (*Burromys Parvus*) and has been the centre of world-wide attention since its discovery in 1966 - it was previously thought to be extinct.

History records two significant events that relate closely to the survival of the Pigmy Possum.... the last Ice Age and the formation of the CRB/RCA some 20,000 years later.

As the ice disappeared, the Pigmy Possum retreated to the higher country which sustained the climate and alpine vegetation it required for survival. It now only exists in isolated pockets with a slight concentration in the Mt Hotham area which is traversed by the Alpine Road.

With its unfortunate resemblance to a rat, and a habit of occasionally occupying RCA Plant Shelters along the Alpine Road, the little creature has in the past been dealt with rather severely. However, conservation of the species does not stop at merely not killing them: it is important to understand that the heathland around the Mt Hotham area which is essential for the possum's survival is extremely fragile and requires conservation as well.

The Department of Conservation Forests and Lands (CFL) has prepared a report on conservation measures and the RCA rates a special mention for its efforts in providing a culvert for a possum crossing (see Interchange August 1986 'Love Tunnel').

Measures mentioned in the report are largely common-sense but include:-

1. Prevention of soil erosion - especially washing of silt into the habitat which destroys heathland.
2. Erosion control with inert material - not hay which introduces weeds and vermin.

3. Revegetation after roadworks with native grasses. The CFL intends to establish an Alpine Plant Nursery.

4. No fires within the habitat.

5. No poisoning around guardfence and guideposts.

6. No littering which encourages the spread of rodents, foxes etc.

If we follow these simple rules we will make a lot of friends, not only at the Department of Conservation Forests and Lands but amongst an entire population of creatures that definitely ain't rats.

- From our Alpine Correspondent, Geoff King, North East Region



• Mountain Pigmy Possums - not rats!

Pete joins the chain gang



At an informal afternoon tea in Glen Waverley, the amiable Mike Durack was presented with a traditional gift - a ball and chain complete with padlock.

The gift is a stark symbol of incarceration and gloom - and seemed appropriate as at the time Mike was about to

exchange the wedding vows with wife to be, fellow worker Margaret Sheedy.

The ball with chain and ankle piece weighs in at a hefty 40 kilos - but that doesn't include the key because there isn't one.

Mike is the Plant Admin Engineer and Margaret is an Admin Officer at Glen Waverley.

Join the club

Books, cars and sheer support pantyhose.

There are a lot of benefits open to HOSA club members and discounts is only one of them.

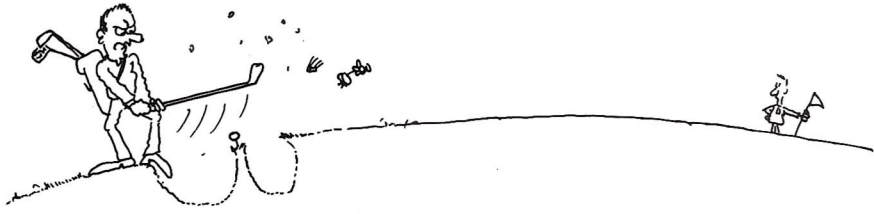
For starters, HOSA can offer you a 10% discount on purchases at the Pages bookstore, 196 High Street, Kew. The store has a wide range of books catering for all age groups, even pre-schoolers as well as a comprehensive selection of games and puzzles.

Members of HOSA should take advantage of the club's association with Stillwell Ford in Kew. The club is now part of Stilwell's exclusive 'Purchase Benefit Programme' which provides, amongst other things, discounts on spare parts and vehicle servicing and access to the VIP card. This card entitles members to receive special attention to ensure the best possible purchase price and trade-in allowance.

You may not be into cars or books, but think about the club's marvellous discounts on hosiery products. You can stock up for winter now on discounted panty hose and socks - if you're a member.

HOSA has also established a price discount scheme with the Billy Guyant chain.

If you want to know more about becoming a member, ring a committee member (Alan Baker on 2345, Julie Colborne-Veel on 2281, Kaye McLeod on 2701, Julie Day on 2657 or anybody listed in the recent HOSA Newsletter).



Be a good sport!

It's on again this year and will be bigger than ever: Wodonga's Sports and Entertainment Weekend.

Get out your desk top calendars, grab a red felt pen, and mark in Saturday 29, Sunday 30 and Monday 31 October.

'That's the Melbourne Cup Weekend and that's when it will all be happening,' says Hans Raun, one of the chief organisers of the successful 1987 event.

Accommodation will be arranged by Wodonga Project, and sporting activities planned include tennis, indoor cricket, squash and bowls. One of the biggest attractions, however, will be the golf which is to be played at the Hume County Golf Club in Albury.

On Saturday, the proposed program takes in winery tours, a visit to Ettamogah Pub and paddlesteamer trips, as well as indoor cricket and squash. Following an organised 'night on the town,' people can prepare themselves for the Sunday activities which include tennis at the Wodonga Tennis Centre and golf.



'For stayers, there will be dinner, dancing and a chance to play the pokies,' says Hans. 'We recommend you take a flexi and return on the Monday.'

Anybody with a query about the event can contact Hans at the Chiltern Site Office on (057) 26 1582. If you are dialling from Head Office, you'll get him on 7 292.

On the ball



In Benalla, hockey and Rupe Cheetham go together. Rupe, the Laboratory Experimental Officer, has been involved in the sport for many years both as a player and coach. Last year he was a member of the Victorian Country Veterans Hockey Team which 'almost won' the Australian Championships in Hobart.

in New Guinea.

Pictured with Rupe is Marianne Evans, (wife of Senior Construction Engineer, Alex Evans) who was also a member of the Victorian Veterans' Team.

sportsdesk

Look out Greg Norman

The Great White Shark is probably looking anxiously over his shoulder these days following Jim Kemp's convincing win at the RCA Inter-regional Golf Day.

Jim topped off an outstanding year on the golf course by shooting an unbeatable 48 Stableford points to lead the ecstatic Materials Group to a well deserved victory.

So impressive was Jim that the downfallen Central Gippsland team, last year's winners, were seen making a discreet offer to sign him up for the 1989 tournament.

Saving face for Central Gippsland was an energetic Ken Salter who won a trophy for the best social performance on the course.

Winner of the ladies trophy was Mary Morgan, of Road Design, with a score of 42,



It wasn't plain sailing for everybody.

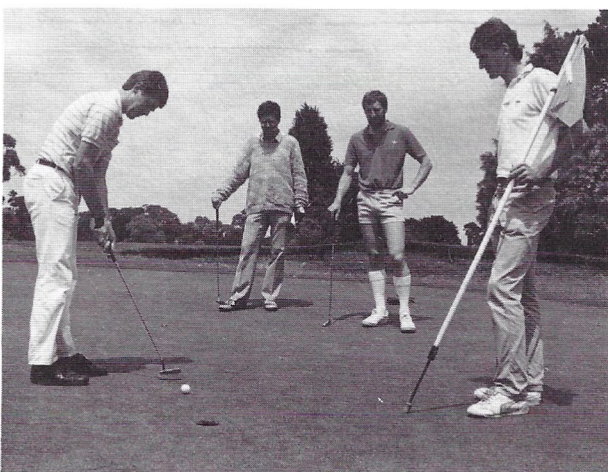
while nearest the pin trophies were collected by Jeff Bennett, also of Central Gippsland, and Gary House of Road Design. Tom O'Regan,

representing Glen Waverley Depot, won the trophy for the longest drive-but he had to wait until the 18th hole to show his style.

Shot of the day went to Joe Bujego, competing in the guest category. He took a lusty swing from the tee at the par 3, 5th hole, and witnessed the ball take off over the green, cross the entrance road, hurtle down the 10th fairway to finally lay to rest on the ladies' tee at the 11th.

Golf anybody?

Anybody interested in playing a round of golf with work-mates can contact Gary House (Road Design) on extension 2387.



One of the many groups seen at the Inter Regional Golf Day.

Tassie too Good

The annual RCA-DMR Tasmania sports challenge took place last February in Hobart with the Apple Islanders completing a clean sweep on the sports field.

The chosen sports for this year's challenge were golf and lawn bowls but according to reports, an additional event, 'boat racing' was added to the program of events on the last night of the 3 day visit.

Representing the Big V on the fairways were Murray Carmen, John Davis, Brian Tindall, Mac Henshall, David Payne, Noel Ransome, Ern Mensforth (ret), and Jim Winnett.

The grass burning bowls team comprised of Reg Marslen, Col Turner, John Gribben, Clive Hamilton and Ern Alexander (all retired).

Accompanying the team were their cheer squad; Alan and Heather Baxter, Shirley Robinson and Ali Boucher whilst wives Kit Gribben, Rose Marslen, Joyce Turner and Anne Winnet came along

to keep their husbands straight on the fairways and unbiased on the greens.

Competition in all sports was tight with results going down to the wire, but alas with the benefit of the home ground advantage, the Tassie Devils prevailed.

Our DMR hosts were more benevolent off the field however with their hospitality and generosity.

Scenic trips for those not competing were organised to Huonvale, Port Arthur and Mount Wellington whilst the cheer squad also had their attention cunningly diverted by a Derwent River Cruise.

Whist the trophies reside on the wrong side of Bass Strait for the present, competitors and companions alike came back with great memories of the keen competition, pleasure and interest.

They look forward to returning the hospitality to their hosts and the trophies to their rightful home next year in the return contest.



Above: a few of the swingers in Tasmania. John Cribben, right, and Ern Alexander, centre, in action in the singles event.

Parisian roads a good place not to be

Driving on French roads, particularly around Paris, was a somewhat hazardous pre-occupation during the country's presidential campaigns in June.

French Cabinet had agreed to cancel the majority of outstanding traffic fines throughout the country as well as release more than 4000 prisoners from jails - all because of a peculiar 'amnesty' arrangement organised by re-elected President, Frank Mitterrand.

The 'amnesty' is one of a number of several privileges that a successful president in France can arrange, but it was not without its headaches. In the final weeks of the election campaign, traffic accidents soared as motorists ignored speed limits, green lights and pedestrian crossings - presuming that they would never have to pay any fines. Travellers thinking of touring France are advised that the 'amnesty' period has now finished and that driving on the congested, polluted roads of Paris is as risky as it ever was.

Got a funny story? Ring Kevin Fox - our jocular Diversions editor - on 2160.

Central Highlands shows how it is done...

Paving the way to success

Central Highlands Region has 'floated' in on its winning edge to take out the most prestigious award in Ballarat's Begonia Festival Street Procession in March.

The Region's winning float depicted the 1900-1920s era, in keeping with the festival theme 'Ballarat, a golden past, a shining future'.

Various pieces of old Country Roads Board equipment, including Australia's first motor grader, were positioned on an RCA truck and presented among some 1200 hand-made crepe Begonia flowers.

This striking entry was enhanced by the presence of 20 RCA employee's children as well as spouses, all dressed in period costume.

The float attracted the 'Mayor's Award' and has won for the RCA Central Highlands Region a trophy which is to be presented at a later date.

Most of the work on the float was done in a social atmosphere.

It took almost 350 man-hours to complete, culminating in a sausage sizzle, where 50 volunteers attached the crepe flowers to the float and bagged the handouts which were distributed during the parade.

One of the project organisers, Alan Harman, said 10,000 brochures and leaflets were handed out by RCA staff during the parade, including 'Spotto' cards, Roads magazines and the new Paving the Way historical brochure. Lollies were also handed out to the children.

'It was a very valuable public relations exercise for the RCA,' said Alan.

'Although we were very successful with our

The award-winning float passes through Ballarat streets on its way to victory. In the foreground, Engineer, Richard Tann, hands out some of the 10,000 leaflets and brochures presented to onlookers at the parade.

entry, receiving the prize for the 'most outstanding entry', the greatest thrill was the enthusiasm shown by the children on and off the float, and after all - that is why we entered,' said Alan.

The motorised grader which featured on the float towed a ripper, also from that period, and some other items of interest were old mile posts and lamps.

RCA staff also handed out leaflets explaining the significance of the grader. They tell how it was introduced by Mr Malcolm Moore who imported the grader assembly from America in 1925 and fitted it to a Detroit Fordson tractor in Melbourne.

'On February 5th 1926, the first length of Australian road ever formed by a motor grader was scarified and graded in a demonstration to Engineers and Road Authorities at Box Hill, Victoria,' the leaflet reads.

'In the same year, the Malcolm Moore Company commenced building these graders. They were the ancestors of the Moore graders we know today,' it says.

Winning the Mayor's Award was of even greater significance in the light of the importance of this year's/10-day Begonia Festival.

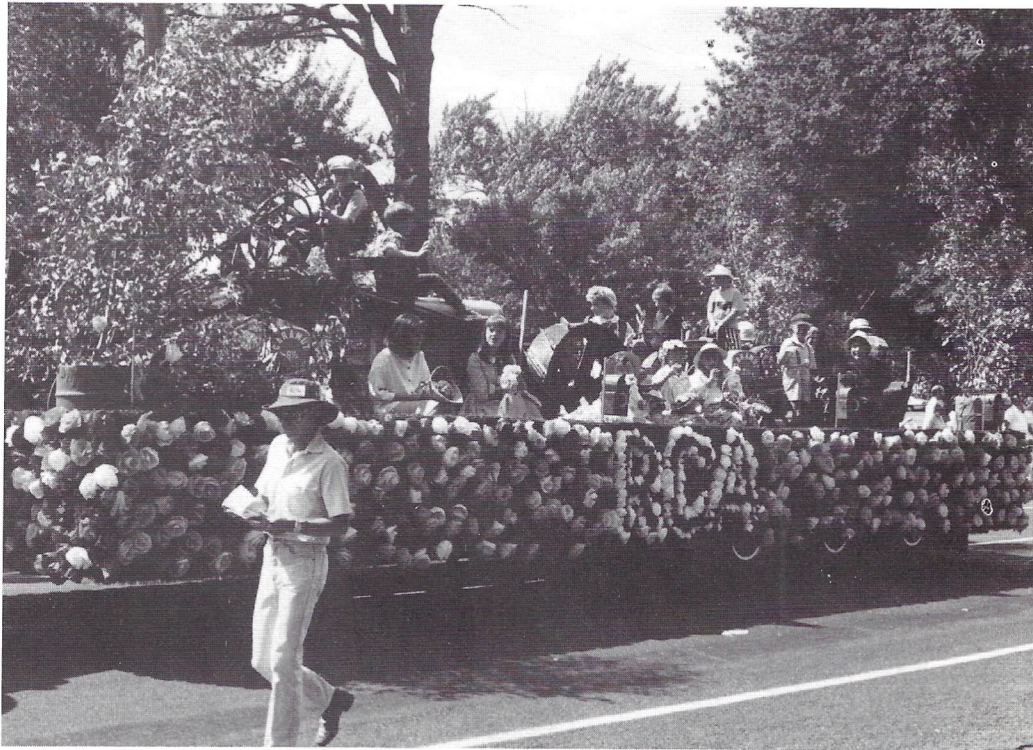
Alan Harman said he wished to thank everyone who gave up their valuable time to help prepare the RCA entry and said everyone involved should be proud of their fine achievement.

These efforts stretched from staff making allowances for his extra workload in organising the project, to mothers and friends making costumes, flowers and other decorations, volunteers giving of their time and talents and the superb job done by the staff member who prepared the truck for the parade.

Interchange believes Central Highland staffers and their families and friends have now set the standard for future RCA involvement in such events throughout the State.

The challenge is now out for head office and other regions to follow Central Highland's winning footsteps.

Congratulations.



Above: the award winning float.



Mother and son Ellen and Brendan Lawrence were two of the crew to man the float for the procession. Ellen and Brendan are wife and son of Engineer, Geoff Lawrence.



A wave for the enthusiastic crowd from (left to right) Ilana Pye, 4, daughter of Instructor/Driver, David Pye, and Rosslynne Gray, 4, daughter of Engineering Assistant, Bruce Gray.

Geoff - and his car are winners!

Geoff Miller is the winner of the Interchange/Home Tune 'auto trivial quiz' - which, you may recall, we ran in our last issue.

Geoff's entry was the first correct one opened and he wins a free maintenance service on his car -- to the tune of \$240.

A surveyor, Geoff, didn't have any problems tackling the answers to the following questions:

1 What is the name of the first freeway bypass which was opened in Victoria in 1961? Answer: the Maltby Bypass (near Werribee)

2 What do the acronyms ALTP and ABRD stand for? Answer: Australian Land Transport Program and Australian Bicentennial Road Development (program)

3 In which Australian capital city would you find the Riverside Expressway? Answer: Brisbane (not Perth, which has the scenic Riverside Drive)

4 What maximum speed limit was recently introduced on most Victorian rural freeways? Answer 110km/hr

5 What is the toll rate for interstate motorists with pool-car vouchers travelling off peak across West Gate Bridge? Most people realised this was a trick question with the answer being 'none'

6 Home Tune's slogan is: 'We Drive Ourselves To Fix Cars ...Perfectly!'



Home Tune's David Streicher, left, congratulates Geoff Miller, winner of the 'auto trivial quiz'.

'We'll visit Geoff either at his home or work to carry out our comprehensive tune-up,' says Home Tune Sales Manager, David Streicher. 'We'll go from the front number plate to the back number plate.'

David says that this also involves a safety check involving brakes, tyres, suspension, exhaust and so on.

Home Tune operates in the Melbourne

metropolitan area with agents in Albury, Ballarat, Bendigo, Healesville, the Mornington Peninsula, Geelong and Warrnambool.

The company does house calls Mondays to Saturdays but also can visit one's place of work -- or even the local supermarket if your REALLY busy.

Interchange would like to thank Home Tune for their involvement in the 'trivial quiz'.

Bruce can help tune your car

Home Tune's representative in Kew, Bruce Foo, works on a car in the Head Office car park. Bruce can be contacted on 846 3888, or you can ring the main Home Tune office on 873 4333.

