Hats off to Fay, paper cups are in at Inco

INCO employees have warmed up to environmental issues these days. On their finger tips.

Hot coffee may occasionally burn the fingers now that disposable coffee cups made of insulating styrofoam have been replaced Inco warehouses. But most Inco people are showing a willingness to make the small sacrifice on behalf of the environment.

"We've had no complaints yet," said Inco Purchasing buyer Ron Porter. "From past experience here, most people at Inco are responsible and are willing to do their part in such efforts."

The recent move to replace styrofoam cups with biologically degradable paper cups at the Inco warehouse is perhaps one of the best examples of how Inco's Environmental Impact Policy has been taken to heart not only by the company, but by employees.

It was Construction Department secretary Fay Poll's concern about the use of styrofoam cups that focused attention on the problem.

"The move is just the most visible example of how people are getting involved," said Environmental Control and Occupational Health Manager Larry Banbury. "We are finding that many ideas and suggestions are being initiated by our employees."

The participation is eagerly sought by the company, he said, to add another element to a general company-wide examination of procedures, equipment, materials and facilities in search of better, cleaner, environmentally-safer ways of doing things.

He said that a multitude of projects are being studied, ranging from such things as shredding scrap paper produced regularly at many of Inco's operations and using the shredded paper for composting material at Inco's tailings area, to finding ways of recycling oil used for underground machinery, equipment and vehicles.

Larry feels the move away from styrofoam cups is not only symbolic of the environmental efforts, but is a significant step forward.

The change comes after a year's search for a good quality recycled paper that was economically feasible.

Recycled paper normally costs considerably more than regular newsprint. Public Affairs Manager Jerry Rogers said that because of Triangle's wide distribution and the company's strong commitment to environmental protection, it was essential that Triangle reflect this heightened environmental consciousness.

"As individuals, we all can make a contribution and we all must get behind the effort to lessen the impact on the environment," said Jerry. "If we don't, the plaques will hang empty and meaningless as last year's calendar. It's an effort that should be actively supported not only by industry and big business, but by every individual as well."

He offered a challenge to every office, plant and mine to make their own paper cups a month here, and are willing to do their part in such efforts."

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Ron Porter agrees. "We go through about 60 cases of the styrofoam cups a month here, and there are 200 cups per case. That comes out to about 1.5 million cups a year that'll be removed from the environment.

"That's not just symbolic. That makes a real difference."

"I don't think our folks will mind the odd hot finger."
Red carpet rolled out for railroad enthusiasts

At Levack/McCreedy:
Do you feel isolated, away from the “action”? 

Red carpet rolled out for railroad enthusiasts

It was just another day at work for the folks at the controls of Inco's rail system, but for three Motorola visitors, it was like kids in a candy store.

"If we would have seen half of what we saw today, we would have been more than happy," said Doug Boyd, a rail buff who was given an all-day tour of Inco's rail system. "They (Inco) were absolutely fabulous the way we were treated. Not all railroads are that cooperative." The company programme from Virginia and two friends, Ian Platt and Peter Jobe, went through rolls of film as they visited "at least half of your roster" of locomotives.

The three visitors said they appreciated, although rail operations were in full swing, did their very best to give the visitors what they wanted to see and photograph. In at least one case, a locomotive was moved to provide better camera angles.

"They took a lot of time for us," said college professor Ian Platt of Ingersoll. "You could say they're busy people, yet they did their best. I hope we didn't get in the way too much.

Inco's system is considered unique in rail industry both for its size and the electric locomotives, according to Toronto Star circulation sales representative Peter Jobe. He describes the Inco electric as "the Whooping Crane" of the train buff world, a major coup to add to his collection of more than 20,000 slides.

"I don't think you'll have to worry about being disturbed by others like us," he said. "We swap train photographs like other people swap baseball cards so others won't have to come here to get their own pictures."

Chasing trains is what the three do for recreation, a pursuit that has them as far as away as Russia, Mexico, and all over the United States and Canada.

With some 200,000 slides (valued at some $40,000 in film alone) in his collection, Doug has been "shooting" trains for 10 years. He's never left the continent, although he hopes to go to Australia in his pursuit of trains as soon as he gets the cash.

Childhood interest

His interest in trains began as a youngster, and he has never lost it. "I liked watching trains as a kid, then went into model trains, then photography. It's kind of a natural progression."

"I travel around and take pictures of trains every holiday for the past 10 years," he said. "My wife went along with me once, but after she had to wait for hours on end while I took pictures, she decided not to go along again.

"Now she tells me to go and have a good time. She knows I only chase trains so she doesn't mind."

Ian grew up in England where "train watching" is a popular activity. "Something like bird watching," he explains. "You look out for different, unusual trains, just like bird watchers."

He's been taking pictures of trains for eight years. He went to Europe this year to add to his collection.

Peter is the most experienced of the group. He's spent most of his vacations in the last 15 years chasing trains, and he can't imagine taking any other kind of vacation. A bachelor, Peter doesn't have to worry about the home front while he's off on his favorite activity.

"Women don't understand. It's hard to explain the love for trains," he said.

Peter tried to join the railway when he was a young man but wearing glasses kept him off the locomotives. His hobby is the next-best thing, he figures.

The three often travel together.

Harold Scott, train conductor, Levack. "I like it here. I've been here, since 1951, with Canadian Pacific for 15 years and after that with Inco. I took the Inco job in order to stay in this area, and I plan to stay here when I retire."

Rod Simard, skip tender, Levack. "You've got to make a living somewhere, and prefer it here. I've been here my entire life and I go into the city as little as possible. I like to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there. It's not for me."

Richard Toosser, Cambrian summer student. "First off I'd like to get a job, period. But if they offered me a job here, I wouldn't mind that at all. I'd prefer working out here near the city. I like to hunt and fish."

Gord Rattu, production miner, McCreedy. "I wouldn't consider changing if I had the choice. I go to Sudbury once a month, and then only when I have to. Usually try to save all the things I have to do so I only have to go in once."

Ron Goudreau, support miner. McCreedy. "I don't like the smells of the city. When I started with Inco 24 years ago, they asked me to move from here instead and I've been here ever since."

Bill Frohlick, support miner, McCreedy. "I've had my taste of the city. Like all young people, I wanted to get away and I went to Toronto and Niagara Falls. I learned what it was like and decided to come back here. I'm perfectly content here."

Andy Cote, garage mechanic, McCreedy. "I've worked out here most of my life so I'm not sure if there is a difference between here and in Sudbury. I live in Azilda, so there's a bit of a drive, but the winters aren't even as bad as they used to be."

"That's one of the nice things about this hobby," said Doug. "The friends you meet."

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Albert Seguin, welder, McCreedy. "I wouldn't move from here if I could. Besides, Sudbury isn't that far away. You have the best of both worlds out here. I worked at Copper Cliff for seven years, but I couldn't wait to get back here."

Barry MacDonald, warehouse storeman, Levack. "I wouldn't move from here if I could. Besides, Sudbury isn't that far away. Things aren't so crowded here, and I don't like crowds. I live in Chelmsford, so it isn't too far into Sudbury and not too far to work."

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Mental toughness is the key

The craziness of those ultramarathon runners

Roily Portelance's getaway weekend in the wilderness isn't for everyone.

But then Roily is a unique individual. The 47-year-old driller at Levack Mine likes pushing his body to the limits of endurance in races up to 100 miles long. Such are the joys of the ultramarathon runner.

Recently this summer, on a cool and cloudy Saturday, Roily and 14 of his ultramarathon colleagues took to the road at 7 a.m. competing in the High Falls 100 km Wilderness Run. On this day, Roily shouldered the double duties of competitor and race director. Months of organizing were behind him and 100 km of highway lay ahead.

Temperatures were cool, skies were overcast and heavy rains pelted the runners at intervals. "Ideal running conditions," said Roily. "The rain didn't hurt us at all. Often in rain you tend to blister, but this rain helped us. It kept us cool and refreshed."

Joining Roily in the field of 14 was Walter Morrison, 52, a maintenance mechanic at Levack Mine. The remaining runners, nine male and three female, hailed from various parts across Ontario, with one from Quebec and another from Michigan.

Retired Levack Mine manager John Smith was official starter for the race.

Of particular interest was the friendly rivalry between Roily and his running mate, Walter. Two weeks earlier, Walter had defeated Roily for the first time during an ultramarathon race in Whitby. A 12-year veteran of the running wars, Roily was anxious to avenge the loss to a man he once considered his pupil.

"Walter only began running about three years ago," said Roily. "But he's improved by leaps and bounds. He's a very dedicated individual. A few years ago I was telling him what to do, but now I don't give him any advice because he's a threat to me. He proved that by beating me in Whitby."

On this day, the two stayed close for the first 70 km, before Walter slowed and Roily pulled away for a third place finish. His time of nine hours, 37 minutes and eight seconds was just under 24 minutes off the winning pace set by Bob Manson of Thunder Bay. Walter finished fourth in a time of 10:11:31.

The final competitor, Celine Bertrand of Azilda, crossed the finish line 14 hours, 44 minutes and 45 seconds after the race had begun. "Within a week I'll forget that I ran this race," said Roily afterwards. "This was not a hard race. A 50 km trail race beats the body up a lot more than a 100 km run on pavement."

Roily's rise to the ultramarathon ranks was a swift one. Normally, competitors progress through the marathon stage first, building up endurance and technique. Roily ran just one marathon race before tackling the greater distances.

"An ultramarathon race is anything 50 km or over," he said. "A marathon is a standard measure of 26 miles, 385 yards."

"A runner in my discipline has to be patient with himself. Mental toughness is the most important asset an ultramarathoner can possess. When you think you're down and out, as you sometimes will during a race, you need a strong mind to pull yourself back into the competition."

As summer rolled on, the ultramarathon action refused to slow down. Roily and Walter faced a September schedule that would make the most ardent running buff cringe in horror.

On Sept. 2, they entered a 40 km run at Halfway Lake, 80 km outside of Sudbury. The next day they boarded a plane for California to begin training for a 100 mile mountain race Sept. 24. The trip home stopped in Hamilton for an 80 km run.

"If you're a sprinter or a racer you're probably no good at this sport," said Roily. "An ultramarathoner plays with a delicate balance because you deplete much of your body's reserves during a race. If you have to slow down to a walk, you do it, otherwise you probably won't finish."
Permanently, Partly Disabled meet challenges

Shifting gears: Inco's disabled carve new niche

At his desk in Inco's Environmental Control office, Jim Patie remembers the pain. That's the one thing the Permanently, Partly Disabled (PPDs have all shared, and for many, it's more than a memory. Another thing they have in common, though, is determination. They went through the long periods of repair, therapy, and convalescence — and became fed up.

Thanks to various benefit and compensation plans, the financial burden was minimized, but that did nothing to stall the drain on their self-esteem. They knew they might never go back to playing, or just didn't want to just yet, so something had to be done.

Indeed, things are being done. Throughout the Ontario Division, exciting chapters are being written about the challenging and worthwhile new careers being mastered by employees who had been classified as Permanently, Partly Disabled. This is one of those chapters.

The Manager of Environmental Control, Larry Banbury, bubbles with enthusiasm when he talks about the people in his crew who came to him in need of a fresh start. "It had nothing to do with charity, "I had no intention of sending them back to the mines. I said, 'just give me another chance.'" Larry insisted. "We had work that needed doing, and these people needed worthwhile activity!"

Courage to start over

Following a 1985 accident that damaged the tissues in his right shoulder, it was three years before Jim Patie was well enough to tackle full-time work. But, it would have to be something completely new, and it wasn't easy for a grown man with a family to face being a greenhorn all over again. Nevertheless, starting in February of 1989, that's exactly what he did, learning to use a computer for the first time. He became one of the early players in Environmental Control's PPD story.

"It took a lot of self-discipline to do all that and still allow some time for my family." When asked if the effort was worth it, Flo replied quickly: "You bet."

The right chemistry

Don Richer just grinned modestly at the suggestion. Phillip Dockery, doesn't that's something of an in-house expert. "By the time I hurt my back over at Divisional Shops, I had already started taking courses at Cambrian College. I had always liked chemistry, so I decided to follow through." Don said.

Doing work he enjoys and is respected for, Richer looks forward to continuing in his job and his career. "It's an important job," says Richer. "We go where we're needed, and we help improve the air we breathe." By the time I hurt my back over at Divisional Shops, I had already started taking courses at Cambrian College. I had always liked chemistry, so I decided to follow through."

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Inco's cruising

Planning a cruise? Why not, we helped build the boat.

The atrium on the 13-deck cruise ship Star Princess gleams with stainless steel, suggesting an aura of grandeur reminiscent of the days of opulent ocean-going liners. The stainless steel balustrades sparkling. Extensive research for the ideal material with which to manufacture these high-quality benefits depend on carefully choosing the right material, and in his right shoulder, it was three years before Jim Patie was well enough to tackle full-time work. But, it would have to be something completely new, and it wasn't easy for a grown man with a family to face being a greenhorn all over again. Nevertheless, starting in February of 1989, that's exactly what he did, learning to use a computer for the first time. He became one of the early players in Environmental Control's PPD story.

Mission Emission

Banbury puts it in context: "We have to monitor emissions continuously for several months at a time. The mobile units were originally used by summer students, but they couldn't stay with us long enough to cover the required time. So we developed our own system. I'm very satisfied with the present arrangement."

"It's an important job," says Smith. "Sometimes we work long hours, especially when it's sunny. But we know we're making a contribution to a cleaner environment. We're expected to monitor stack emissions accurately and report to the meteorological room operator. Then, if necessary, he issues orders to operations."

Fueled with nickel

Auto makers are in a race to find the perfect alternate fuel, a race that may lead to methanol.

Trouble is, while methanol produces less carbon dioxide emissions than gasoline, it gives off much more fuel and aldehydes. Air quality benefits depend on carefully controlling these emissions, and GM Chevrolet's Lumina sedans will be going through trials in California over the next two years. "None of the alternative fuel automobiles' electronic wizardry would result in success without their nickel-containing stainless steel fuel systems to handle the corrosive methanol.

Nickel Landmark

A pyramid-shaped building, the gleaming focus of a 24-building new business centre in London, England, will have a skin of stainless steel. According to American architect Cesar Pelli, the stainless steel cladding will contribute to a feeling of "connection with the 21st Century."

NICKEL NEWS

Inco's annual report wins Financial World award

Inco's 1989 Annual Report has been awarded the prestigious Bronze Award in Financial World magazine's 50th Annual Report Competition. The competition is the oldest and most prestigious of its kind. Its efforts to improve the quality of financial writing and reporting emphasizes the goal of maintaining high standards with the purpose of preparing annual reports for the future.

The competition each year examines a group of more than 5,000 entries and singles out the best annual reports, statistical yearbooks, interim reports, corporate newsletters, and post-merge reports for the competition.
Cambrian students point way to mining's future

Yesterdays' mining equipment: a pick, a shovel and a strong back. Today's mining equipment: brains.

Hugh Ferguson is too young to remember when miners went underground with candles stuck in their hats. But he knows from experience how rapidly mining is changing its face.

"I started with Inco in 1961," said the general foreman of the division's Mines Training Department. "I knew that we are well on our way to replacing men with equipment that will work as well as men."

In fact, it's smart miners working together who can replace the men who once drew employees here. "But those resources which once drew employees have diminished or no longer exist," said Hugh. "Today we aren't interested in those resources that once drew employees for hiring," said Don. "It does not, in any way, guarantee employment upon graduation, nor does it guarantee future employment." Students must be educated, they must be trained in all aspects of safety. The program we run here is well beyond the requirements of government regulations.

Understandably, getting a foot in the door for the attractive mining jobs isn't as easy as it used to be when brawn figured over brains. "Today we aren't interested in anyone with less than a Grade 12 education," he said. "Mining today means handling computers and sophisticated equipment worth millions. Any mistake could be very costly."

And with future technological changes, virtually guaranteed, tomorrow's miners will be more willing and able to adapt to the expected rapid changes.

One example of another's determination provides a wide range of experience as possible can be seen in the allocated hand rotation of the students in almost every major operation in the division.

"It's important that they know what we do here," he said. "These people will be the foremen and supervisors in the next 15 or 20 years. I figure our investment in these kids will pay off in the future. I think it will prove invaluable in the future.

The Inco summer job is no make-work project, and the students do as much hands-on work as possible. "And it involves constant assessment as they work," said Hugh. "Their performance here goes toward their final course marks." Just how popular the course is can be seen by the enthusiastic response recorded by Cambrian. College. Hundreds applied for the approximately 70 openings.

Hugh figures other mining companies will follow suit when word gets around about the quality of the people coming out of the Cambrian course and he hopes Inco can continue supporting the program. "If we don't need all these people today, we are certain to need them in the future," he said.

While Inco can't guarantee students a job, mining as a career is probably as good a bet as anything else. "They'll work smarter and he gets a heck of a lot more done than just a few years ago," says Hugh. In fact, it's smart miners working together who can replace the men who once drew employees here.

Hugh takes such a keen interest in the more than 50 Cambrian mining course students getting on-the-job training here.

"We have an aging work force at Inco," he said. "These people will have to fill the vacancies. Courses like the one Inco initiated at Cambrian will help fill the holes.

The students, the first batch of the Inco/Cambrian Mining and Mineral Processing Certificate Program, spent 16 weeks in a Cambrian classroom before going on a 16-week paid work term at Inco during the summer. The 48-week course will finish with another 16 weeks in the classroom.

Most of the students are in their early 20s, he said, and a vast majority--he guesses about 75 per cent, are local "kids," with parents, relatives or friends who are working or have worked for Inco.

"When I started the amount of training wasn't nearly as extensive as today," said Hugh. "Basically, you knew how to drill a hole. The rest was on-the-job training. When these people start they're qualified drillers and will be able to drill load, blast, bolt and screen and do all the things a modern miner is capable of doing.

As the program's success is realized, more and more students will be attracted to the course as more and more people see the value. "This is why Hugh figures other mining companies will follow suit."

"We are going to have a lot of people retiring in the future," he said, "and many of these people will have to be replaced."

Students in the program study to become familiar with the processes involved in mining and mineral processing, said Don. "The first 16 weeks are spent in the classroom studying mining and mineral issues including safety. The next six weeks are a work term where students work and are paid an applicable hourly rate."

"Not only does this provide valuable experience, it allows them to be sure that this is the industry and environment they wish to work in. It also assesses, as employers, an opportunity to assess students as potential future full-time employees."

"The final 16 weeks are a continuation of classroom studies. The Mining and Mineral Processing Certificate Program was conceived by Inco to address a shortage in the available number of skilled workers.

"Traditionally, Inco has always had a resource somewhere to go to get people for hiring," said Don. "But those resources where once drew employees have diminished or no longer exist."

"The problem is compounded by the increase in the technological aspects of the industry and the increase in hiring standards. New employees must be educated, they must be able to pass aptitude tests, and they must be able to pass pre-employment testing." Students must be educated. "You can't go anywhere without a Grade 12 diploma today. Minors don't take a pick under-ground anymore, they take a radio-controlled unit or a computer. That's the way the industry is going."

Inco approached Cambrian College last year with the idea of establishing a training program that would serve the interests of both the students and the industry. The response was overwhelming.

More than 700 inquiries and applications were received before 70 students were selected to begin the course in January. Before classes started, the students were on a tour of our operations so there were no mis-conceptions," said Don.

The curriculum was designed jointly by Inco and Cambrian personnel and students were selected by Cambrian based on college criteria. The college launched the program on its own initiative with commitment from the provincial government for funding coming later.

The Mining and Mineral Processing Certificate Program is designed to provide entry level employment for students," said Don. "It does not, in any way, guarantee employment upon graduation, nor does it guarantee graduating students will choose to work for Inco."

The ability of graduating students to find work depends greatly on the economic conditions of the time. With that in mind, Don remains cautiously optimistic. "Hopefully, we'll have no market interference with the success of this program. This course is for the betterment of the mining industry not only in Sudbury, but in Ontario and perhaps Canada.
Hats off to Inco offspring

Sons of Inco employees

Inco's independent scholarship selection committee has selected 20 winners from 89 applications received. Fifteen scholarships were awarded to children of Sudbury area employees, three to children of Manitoba Division employees and two to children of employees from southern Ontario and expatriates.

The value of the scholarships was increased in 1989 by approximately 11 percent to $2,500 a year, the first increase since 1980.

The scholarships are tenable for up to four years. Three one-time finalist award winners were also selected this year, one from each area. These $1,000 awards are intended to compensate an applicant who has achieved a level of academic excellence which merits a full scholarship, but who is excluded from winning because the standard of applications is very high which was the case again this year.

Jennifer Lynn Mackowiak
Daughter of Exploration and Technical Services section leader Hubert Mackowiak. Jennifer Lynn is a graduate of Lo-Ellen Park Secondary School and is attending Carleton University. She's striving for a B.A. Honors in Psychology and Sociology-Anthropology with a concentration in Criminology and Criminal Justice, a process she expects to take four years. Jennifer wants to work in pathology with a major police force.

Scott L. Penton
Son of Copper Cliff Mills Superintendent Marty Penton, is a graduate of Lively District Secondary School. He's attending the University of Toronto where he hopes to earn a degree in Physics, an accomplishment that he expects will take him four years. Scott hopes to pursue a career as an engineering consulting firm in the Sudbury area.

Greg Puro
Son of Copper Cliff Mills Superintendent Marty Puro. Greg is a graduate of Lively District Secondary School. He's attending the University of Toronto where he will be taking Physics, Chemistry, Calculus, Algebra, as well as two general Engineering courses. He expects to be in school about five years. Greg wants to pursue a career as a computer consultant or go into business for himself. He wants eventually to own and run his own pharmacy in the Southern Ontario area.

James Howard Seigel
James is the son of Creighton Mine Foreman James Seigel. James is a graduate of Lockerby Composite School and is attending Queen's University. He is taking engineering courses that he hopes will result in a degree in Electrical Engineering. He expects to earn his undergraduate degree in four years, and plans to become an engineer with a big firm, possibly Inco. He wants to work at Creighton . . . or Kamloops.

Steven Sherrington
Steven is the son of Coledale Mine maintenance foreman Daniel Sherrington and a graduate of Levack District High School. Steven is attending the University of Guelph, taking courses in Biology, Chemistry. Calculus, Human Behavior, and Animal Kingdom. He wants to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Kinetics, an ambitious endeavor that he expects will take him eight years. His career goal is to become a family doctor in a Northern Ontario practice.
The Triangle

earn company scholarships

April A. Sparham
April is the daughter of Stobie Mine shift stationary engineer Douglas Wayne Sparham. A graduate of Capreol High School, April is attending the University of Waterloo where she is taking co-op science, majoring in Biology. She hopes to complete here B.A. in Science in just under four years, and wants to go into genetic research or teach after completing her education. April wants to stay in Ontario after she finishes school.

Bonnie Jean Talbot
Daughter of Levack Plant Protection Officer Thomas W. Talbot, Bonnie Jean is a graduate of Levack District High School and is going to Trent University where she is taking English, French courses, and Cultural and Native Studies. She wants here B.A. in English Literature and expects to spend another four years in school to earn it. Bonnie wants to eventually read English literature at Oxford and become an English and Drama professor at the University of British Columbia or Victoria. She wants to live and work in British Columbia after completing her education.

Jeff Zelding
Son of Nelson Zelding, a senior analyst at Sheridan Park, Jeff is a graduate of Bratnalea Secondary School. He is attending the University of Waterloo in Kitchener where he is studying Computer Science with a teaching option.

INCO
Reserved Scholarship Competition for Children of Canadian Employees and Pensioners
1991 Awards

Up to twenty 4-year university admission scholarships will be awarded in the 1991 competition. The awards are valued at $10,000 each ($2,500 annually). Up to five $1,000 finalist scholarships may also be awarded.

ELIGIBILITY
Children of Canadian employees, pensioners, ex-patriates from Canadian locations and of deceased employees are eligible to enter the competition. Candidates must have a strong academic record and be enrolled in a secondary school program of studies required for university admission. Award winners are expected to enter university in 1991.

SELECTION
An independent committee of high school principals will select award winners on the basis of the complete academic record. SAT scores and information supplied by the applicant and the high school will be announced in mid-August.

APPLICATION
The application deadline is April 5, 1991. Application forms and SAT Test material will be available from September 2, 1990 at the applicant's school, or from:

Administrator, Scholarship Program
Inco Limited
Box 44, Royal Trust Tower
Toronto-Dominion Centre
Toronto, Ontario MSK 1N4
(416) 361-7844

SAT TEST
APPLICANTS MUST WRITE THE SCHOLASTIC APPTITUDE TEST ADMINISTERED BY UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOOLS ACROSS CANADA. PLEASE NOTE REGISTRATION DEADLINES AND TEST DATES: TEST DATES IN OTHER COUNTRIES MAY VARY.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES
September 24, 1990
October 22, 1990
December 17, 1990

TEST DATES
November 3, 1990
December 1, 1990
January 26, 1991

APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 5, 1991

Mauri Benjamin Liimatainen
Son of Otto Liimatainen, retired Creighton Mine stationary engineer. Mauri is a graduate of Lockerby Composite Secondary School and a runner-up in the Inco Scholarship competition. He is enrolled in a Cooperative Civil Engineering program at the University of Waterloo in Kitchener and would like to become a professional engineer.

Geoffery M. Pataran
Son of Port Colborne Cobalt Refining supervisor Mark Pataran. Geoffery graduated from E.L. Crossley Secondary School in Fonthill. He is attending Queen's University in Kingston.
Inco welders go to the limit of their profession, prove they are among the best in the country

It may be the psychedelic effect of the eerie green glow that permeates the place, or the figures in sparkling silver space suits and breathing apparatus that appear to be performing surgery with torches on a sheet-covered body.

If you’re not convinced something weird is going on at Inco’s welding shop these days just wait until the Rocket kicks in, throwing 400,000 British Thermal Units of massive flame with a deafening roar.

“If it looks and sounds like a rocket, you probably got something close,” said Bernie Piche, welding supervisor of the welding shop.

The strange happenings began shortly after Divisional Shops successfully bid on a Sulphur Dioxide Abatement program tender to fabricate copper jackets for a furnace of massive copper fusion at an alien assault on the planet Earth.

The strange happenings began shortly after Divisional Shops successfully bid on a Sulphur Dioxide Abatement program tender to fabricate copper jackets for the new furnace, some of them weighing two tons. (See story, Page 10).

For a few weeks, a team of seven of the shop’s 17 welders, periodically disappeared to do some extra training. A fume extractor was purchased and installed, “space” suits ordered and “The Rocket” was set up.

“Things looked like a science fiction movie set around here sometimes,” said Bernie. “It was kind of an eerie place to work at.”

Confront challenge

He explained that while the folks at the welding shops are “some of the best around in their field,” welding the huge pieces of copper was a totally new experience for most of them.

“It’s entirely different from anything we’ve done here before,” he said. “It demands special procedures and equipment.”

The problem is, he said, copper dissipates heat almost as fast as you apply it. It’s like trying to weld water.

Gus Metal-Arc Welding was the answer. It was not a new process, but very complicated, time-consuming and critical. Not only that, but the procedure presented its own safety hazards.

Simply put, the method involves the pre-heating of the huge copper pieces in a furnace to around 1,400 degrees, or just about 500 degrees below the melting point. The piece is then quickly removed from the furnace and welded before it has a chance to cool.

“It’s simple,” said Bernie. “The metal is hot already. Any more heat that’s applied can’t dissipate as fast.”

Special equipment such as rotary devices and jigs had to be installed to move the copper jacket pieces in and out of the furnace and rotate them into a flat position to allow welding.

Although pre-heated, the rapid dissipation of heat was still considerable and some of the pieces demanded as many as 11 separate welds.

“At first, we had to repeat the pre-heating and welding, sometimes as many as five times on a single piece,” said Bernie. “While making one weld, the piece would cool off and had to go back in the furnace before the next weld could be made.”

Problem solving

To eliminate at least part of the problem, the folks at the shop employed heat shields to reduce heat loss.

“You know how a patient is covered with a sheet before the operation?” said Bernie, smiling like a surgeon who just saved a life. “It’s like that. The patient is exposed only in the spot where the operation is done. We did the same thing with the copper pieces. We used heat shields that exposed only the area where the piece was to be welded.”

It worked.

“The heat shields reduced the cooling dramatically,” said Bernie. “Most pieces had to go into the furnace only once.”

To reduce heat loss even more, the shop installed a special 400,000 BTU heating torch, affectionately called “The Rocket” and “Flame Thrower” by the shop’s welders.

Bernie said the Rocket was used to “blast the piece” and get it back to welding temperature without having to put it back into the furnace. “You should hear it,” he said. “It looks and sounds like the exhaust of the space shuttle.”

“Ide the torch looked like a rocket, the welders working around it looked like spacemen.”

We purchased special high heat suits for the job and used special Rachael Airstream Welding helmets,” said Bernie. “The helmets are fed air from a belt-mounted filter-pumping unit. But the work was so hot that we had the visor of one of the five special helmets melt.”

Heat wasn’t the only problem. Fumes from copper welding can create health problems, so a fume extractor had to be installed at the shop.

Being prepared

One of the reasons the job has gone so well is the extensive preparation carried out at the shop. Bernie set up and ran a training program with emphasis on safety as well as copper welding characteristics.

“We practiced on various pieces as well as the copper pieces,” he said.

Bernie said the tests showed excellent results. “It was a confidence builder for the guys around here. Tension tests on the pieces went perfectly.”

The job was begun at the end of May, and by September, over 90 percent of the scheduled 718 welds had been completed.

“So far, we’re right on target as far as our costs and time scheduling is concerned,” said Bernie.

With the welding job nearing completion, he expected no cost overruns.

“And we did it with not a single lost time accident,” he said, “even though it was something that was new for our people. Our guys did the job like professionals.”

That’s probably what Bernie feels the strongest about these days. “We won the job in competition with the outside,” he said. “There were two or three other outside welding shops that put in a bid to do the job, and we did it. I’d say we have some of the best welders in Canada right here in this shop.”
A lot has changed at the Ontario Division in six years and occasionally we’re called upon to present our progress before an audience.

Such was the case in mid-September when the Inco Board of Directors held its first formal board meeting in Sudbury since 1984. As with any infrequent visitor, there was a lot of catching up to do.

These are exciting times for the Ontario Division, with the sulphur dioxide abatement project, the Sudbury Neutrinos Observatory and aerial seeding of stressed lands opening bold, new chapters in the company’s rich history.

Following an evening dinner reception with community and business leaders at Science North, and the formal meeting the next morning, board members enjoyed a guided tour of surface operations in Sudbury.

SO2 project interest

Of particular interest to the board was the progress of our $500-million sulphur dioxide abatement project, so the Clarabelle Mill seemed a logical place to start. Clarabelle is the focus of an impressive mills rationalization program that will see all milling activity consolidated at one site.

New milling technology that will increase rejection of pyrrhotite, the sulphur-bearing portion of the ore, is essential to the SO2 abatement target.

The directors were shown the entire operation, including the SAG (semi-autogenous grinding) mill and the new, large volume flotation cells.

“My impression is that they were very impressed with what they saw and by the scope and amount of work already done,” said Central Mills manager Mick Throssell. “Judging by the quality and quantity of questions they asked our guides, they were all very interested in the changes here.”

Leaving Clarabelle, the directors boarded a bus for a drive around the Oxygen Plant and eventually arrived at the Copper Cliff Smelter.

Peter Ryan, manager of the Smelter Complex, said the visitors saw three stages of smelter history — “the old, the current and the new”.

With massive renovations creating a beehive of construction activity at the smelter, directors witnessed a 1927 structure housing 1980s operations giving way to 1990s technology, said Ryan.

“They saw existing reverberatory furnaces and they saw the new furnace being built,” he said.

Competitive edge kept

“I think they were impressed that we’re going to stay competitive while reducing current sulphur emissions by more than half and that we’re doing all of this while still producing nickel.”

“Board member Chuck Baird, who has been to the smelter more than once, commented on how open and friendly the smelter is now while a dozen years ago it all seemed serious business and hardnosed.”

Following their tour of the smelter, board members drove around the new Acid Plant before going to the Copper Cliff Club for lunch with Ontario Division managers.

Their first stop on the tour after lunch was the Copper Cliff tailings area, where President Bill Clement field questions from media during a brief press conference.

Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Don Phillips and Ontario Division President Bill Clement field questions from media during a brief press conference.

The SAG mill project goes on as board members look on.

Audit committee member Robert Richardson discusses internal audit matters with Internal Audit manager Mike Heapey.

Audit committee member Robert Richardson discusses internal audit matters with Internal Audit manager Mike Heapey.

A reverberatory furnace workman seems undaunted under the gaze of board members.

Following their tour of the smelter, board members drove around the new Acid Plant before going to the Copper Cliff Club for lunch with Ontario Division managers.

Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Don Phillips and Ontario Division President Bill Clement field questions from media during a brief press conference.

Board members inspect Clarabelle’s pyrrhotite rejection circuit.
Subcontractor picks Inco's own to do precision work

Inco's Divisional Shops wins major

In Sulphur Dioxide Abatement project prime contractor Davey McKee put out a worldwide call for tenders to do the precision machining on 400 tons of copper jacket for a new smelter furnace. The winning bid could have been delivered during coffee break.

It came from Inco's own Divisional Shops. "It's one of those times when everybody ends up happy," said John Prudhomme, foreman of the biggest job yet for the Divisional Shops Complex. "The contractor gets his job done at the best price, Inco saves some money on its own half-billion-dollar pollution control project, and our employees are happy because jobs stay right here at home.

"Even the local community benefits," he said. "More than $500,000 in wages stays right here in this community."

The job of machining almost 1,000 huge copper jacket pieces, some of them weighing as much as two tons, tested the flexibility, ingenuity, scheduling skills and cooperation of the approximately 100 tradesmen at the shop. The estimated 9,000 man-hours of work on the project had to be done without sacrificing the regularly-scheduled mines and plants service work that the shop is set up to do.

"It's going to demand a lot of careful scheduling," said John. "But I think it'll prove again that we have some of the best tradesmen in the world right here. Our guys are challenged by these things, they like the challenge. We held information sessions with everyone in the shop before the job began and we got some excellent ideas and suggestions from the people here that have already saved us time and expense.

"I have absolutely no doubt that we can do it," said John. "It's just a little bigger job than we usually do around here, that's all."

He said the work on the copper pieces involves specifications that are about as critical and intricate as work done in any machine shop. "Even the planning for the job was a job in itself," he said. "Maintenance Planning Foreman Ed Kotyluk managed to pull it all together, including planning, ordering materials and preparing the winning bid."

The copper jacket pieces form a critical part of the furnace by dispersing some of the 1,200 degree Fahrenheit of heat away from the firebrick that encases the furnace. The heat is dispersed with water that is pumped through channels precision-drilled into the copper pieces by Div. Shop tradesmen. Divisional Shops began pre-

Machine operator Dan Savarie drills hole in copper slab.

Maintenance mechanic Louis Fantasia as seen through machined hole in copper jacket.
contract for abatement project

The shop submitted their bid late last year and submitted it to contractor Davey McKee. In early 1990 they were notified that their bid was successful.

“We knew we had competition from around the world,” said shops coordinator Bruce Warren, “but we figured we were competitive.”

In fact, says Bruce, squaring off with outside competition is one of the best ways to show that the shop is run cost effectively. “If you can compete successfully on the open market, that means that your regular, day-to-day work is cost effective as well.”

There are minor advantages, he said, such as the proximity of the copper refinery where tons of waste shavings and chips from the machining process are shipped.

“They’ll give us credit for the chips,” he said, “and that’s credited against our costs. We’ve sent about 50 tons of chips to the copper refinery so far, and there will be a lot more before the scheduled completion of the project.”

He credits inter-plant cooperation as another reason for the Divisional Shops’ competitiveness.

It’s not the first time the shops have taken on major outside work. The shops won a bid to do similar work when copper jackets were needed for PT Inco’s Indonesian furnace work in 1984.

“But the job was relatively simple compared to what we are doing now,” said Bruce. “There’s much more machining involved in this job.”

In a continuing effort to stay competitive, the shop has kept abreast of new procedures and equipment. One example is a state-of-the-art $300,000 C-Axis lathe (January Triangle story, Page 10) pressed into service at the shop late last year.

“It was a major factor in our ability to take on the job,” said John Prudhomme. “So far we’ve made just under 3,000 pieces on the lathe and saved at least two weeks compared to what it would have taken without the lathe. On a job like this, two weeks is a major savings.”

Welding is done at Inco’s welding shop in a special process that involves heating the huge copper pieces to about 1,400 degrees and then welding them. Special heat-protective suits are worn while welding is done on the glowing pieces of copper (See story, Page 8).

Some of the credit for the spark that drives the folks at Div Shops, according to John, goes to superintendent Tom Prior. “He’s the kind of guy that sits back and lets it happen. He’s always promoted this kind of competition.”

Is there a well-deserved break when the job is done? Not on your life. A bid on similar work for an Indonesian furnace rebuild is “in the works” now, and the folks at Div Shops are confident they can field the lowest bid on a second furnace to be built in Sudbury.

“With the experience gained through the work we’ve done already, we should be even more cost effective,” said John. “Somehow, we’ve always pulled together here with every challenging job.”
12 September 1990

Trouble with tomatoes

Many insect problems, diseases and cultural practices will damage tomato plants and reduce yield. Seeding tomato plants often have numerous, small holes chewed in the leaves. This damage is caused by flea beetles, Whirlflies and aphids suck juice from plant tissues causing leaves to curl and small, shiny spots on fruit. These insects also secrete numerous, small holes chewed in the leaves. This damage is caused by these are verticillium wilt and fusarium wilt. Symptoms appear on the areas in the garden where stinkbugs overwinter.

In late summer, with warm daytime temperatures, cool nights and high humidities, two soil fungus diseases predominate in the garden. These are verticillium wilt and fusarium wilt. Symptoms appear on the oldest tomato leaves first and rapidly progress upwards on younger leaves to cover the entire plant. Leaves turn yellow with brown patches along leaf margins, eventually the entire plant develops a wilted, dead appearance and inside the main stem, tissues are discolored, immediately to reduce, improve any flower clusters that form after the end of July or fruit will not mature before the first frost.

Finally, rotate your crops in the garden. Plant tomatoes in the same spot only once every 2 or 3 years and do not plant them in areas where potatoes, peppers, eggplant or cucumbers were formerly planted. This will reduce the incidence of soil-borne fungus diseases.

Planting Garlic

Garlic is a member of the onion family, plants grow tall with long, flat leaves. In Ontario, garlic is grown as an annual plant. Garlic is planted in the fall and bulbs are mature the following August. Dormant cloves must be exposed to cool temperatures (between 0 and 10°C) for 2 to 1 months to initiate bulb set. With fall planting, garlic receives the necessary cold treatment through the winter. A whole garlic bulb is made up of 10 to 16 bulbs, segments or cloves. To propagate garlic, individual cloves are planted. Large cloves have a larger bud reserve and will yield a larger bulb at the time of harvest. To prepare bulbs for planting cut off tops and gently break the cloves apart. Do not remove the papery skin from the individual cloves. All of the cloves may be planted except the long, slender ones in the centre of the bulb use them for cooking. Plant cloves with the pointed end up, 8 to 15 cm apart (46 to 60 cm between rows) at a depth of 2.5 to 5 cm.

Garlic will grow in a wide variety of soils. Organic matter such as well-rotted manure or compost should be added to heavy clay or very sandy soils. Organic matter holds moisture and will allow bulbs to expand in clay soils. Fertilizer should be based on soil analyses and recommendations. Garlic, like onions, requires nitrogen. Mix half of the fertilizer in with the soil when garlic cloves are planted. Apply the remainder the following spring. Plant garlic in full sun.

Garlic cloves store best at temperatures of 0°C and humidities between 60 and 70%. Warmer temperatures or higher humidities will cause cloves to sprout or mould.

Different hole in the ground for Crean Hill miners

Almost 50 enthusiasts from Crean Hill Mine turned out to take a whack at a different kind of hole in the ground for a change. It was the Crean Hill Mine Golf Tournament and perfect weather added to the good times.

Organized by Crean Hill engineers Dave Comaliea and Barry Bell, the event saw some accomplished golfers as well as people just out for a good time.

Low gross winner at the event was Mines Exploration geologist Chris Davis, and low net winner was Maintenance Department drill fitter Roy Conley.

On the left, the far left, driller Tom Dolan appears to be taking the same care for the upcoming shot as he would on any underground job. On the immediate left, In-The-Hole driller Jack Simons takes a good swing that sends the ball... and some sand down the course.

Aerial greening gets underway

Fertilized and seeded 125 barren, rocky and windswept acres of Inco property. Until the advent of this innovative, new way of revegetation, the barren sweeps were considered virtually impossible to conventional reclamation methods such as using all-terrain vehicles. But the aerial technique and the daring men in their flight suits seemed to have impetus to a $250,000 revegetation program.

The innovative reclamation expert's dream come true and, if it's successful, could give a new scope to Inco's reclamation strategy for the future.

"It's really exciting to take part in a large-scale reclamation with innovative technology," says Bill Heale, the company's environmental co-ordinator who's piloting the reclamation with the help of Marty Panto, superintendent of the Copper Cliff Mill reclamation and water management. "I don't want to say you'll get it right or fail, but you certainly can see instant progress.

"Added Marty as an Ag-Can rumbled down the runway in a cloud of dust: "It (this aerial seeding) has never been tried on this scale, in this fashion on a similar scale before. When you have thousands of acres to reclaim and you're only hubling at it before, then this is really exciting."

In announcing the pilot project to Sudbury new-cast media, Orea Division president Bill Clement said it will complement Inco's current efforts to reclaim barren outcrops on its Sudbury area lands. The company has also restored more than 1,800 acres in its tailings areas over the past 31 years.

Mr. Clement said the impact of re-greening has already proven significant in improving the quality of life around Sudbury and in boosting the image of the region. Reclamation and re-greening not only revitalizes the area but reduces further soil erosion, helps improve water quality and creates better shooting habitat for wildlife, he added.

Inco awarded the experimental seeding project to Agfic Air Inc., a Canadian aviation firm with international experience in forestry and agricultural protection.

 Pilot Rouleau and Dubois are partners with Stephen Nicholson in the company that has fought locusts in the Middle East, fertilized sugar bushes in Quebec and battled the spruce budworm in Northern Ontario.

On the brilliant, flying days of October, all three are at work at Inco, plotting each fly pass with 1,000 kilograms of lime on the craggy acres behind Clarabelle.

"Our biggest challenge technically is to get a uniform application," says Nicholson, the non-pilot in the partnership. "For us, it's not difficult. It's our whole life, flying. And this is a nice job. It's a safer working environment. We're not working in an urban area."

For Rouleau and Dubois, the troubleshooting re-vegetator is a multi-million dollar business that lets them do what they know how to do best. Fly.

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For Rouleau and Dubois, the troubleshooti...
Newcomers get tips on plan

Inco's new employees are getting an introduction to the company's Suggestion Plan during the one-week orientation program. "We added the Suggestion Plan to the introduction program last year," said Suggestion Plan Supervisor Denis Lepage. "We expect to get more and better quality suggestions and ideas as the new employees get familiar with the advantages of the plan."

At the same time, all new supervisors will receive, as part of their supervisory training, the fundamentals of processing Suggestion Plan submissions.

Speeding things up

It is expected that the additional training and insight into the plan will help eliminate delays and backlogs that have meant extended waits for processing and approval.

Along with this new training program and a new logo adopted by the plan, it is expected that increased awareness will boost participation by employees.

"Generally, ideas are better than they've ever been," said Denis, "and awards paid last year were the highest ever paid in the company's history."

"Award payments have been increasing annually for some time," he said. "It looks like it will continue to increase for some time."

Suggestions processed totaled 1,158 in the last quarter, and 2,031 for the first half, of which 383 (33 per cent) and 634 (31 per cent), respectively, were adopted.

The average award for the quarter was $356 and $261 for the first half.

Marcel Bray with his $10,000 idea: Simple and lucrative.
The smelter of smelters

Most of you will already know that Ambrose Morell was our company’s first president. When he left in 1917 to become a U.S. army colonel, he was succeeded by W.A. Rostock, and Robert C. Stanley became our first vice president. Not long after, around war’s end, Rostock’s health began to fail.

Stanley became the engine of progress, even in the face of declining post-war markets. It was he who recommended the dismantling of the old Bayonne works, leaving all nickel refining to the new Port Colborne plant, and the construction of the $3,000,000 sheet and rod mill at Huntington, West Virginia. Work on the latter began in March of 1921.

By fall, conditions had worsened to the point where the Sudbury operations had to be closed. Proof of stubborn faith in the future, however, the Huntington project continued.

Stanley takes over

Rostock died on February 4, 1922. In March, Stanley became President, and Charles Hammond became chairman of the board. In May, the refineries re-opened, and the Copper Cliff smelter fired up furnaces 1 and 3 on September 1. The rebirth had begun.

If Stanley was the engine of progress, the new board chairman ensured they would drive on a full tank. A wealthy investment banker with his own right, Charles Hammond brought major financial prestige to the company. Perhaps the most famous of his many gifts to the public is New York City’s Hayden Planetarium — which I thrilled to visit 30 years ago.

Expansion is Inco’s “Charleston”

As the Roaring Twenties got into high gear, so did growth at Inco and Mond. In 1923, the emphasis was on finding peacetime uses for the Frood orebody. Perhaps the most famous of his many gifts to the public is New York City’s Hayden Planetarium — which I thrilled to visit 30 years ago.

Between 1926 and 1931, Inco spent more than $50 million expanding its Sudbury operations, over $20 million of it on the smelter alone. And what a smelter this was! Can you imagine doing all that for $20 million bucks — in this age when we can down a million like a salamander? It was a great day to celebrate and support construction.

“Be ready by August!”

Stanley set the deadline, and Agnew stayed in personal contact to make sure it was met — they wanted new products from the new plant by August 1, 1930. The following notes in an old unsigned log book captured the final approach to the deadline: May 20, 1930 — Matte charged into No. 8 converter New Plant today. This is the first converter in use, No. 1 Reverberatory is now being heated and charged. June 1, 1930 — First copper shipment from P.C. handled at Refinery. “First battery of Rotors and No. 1 Reverber furnace started operations June 9th at 10 a.m.”

The buildings, furnaces and converters required 35,000 tons of structural steel, 61,000 cubic yards of concrete, over seven million bricks, and a million and a quarter hollow tiles. New floor space was over a million square feet, on all levels, with a zinc chloride solution under pressure, making it unable to want to use gravity wherever you can; it’s cheap, convenient, and reliable.

Inco leadership

Mr. Agnew was the Inco’s: Triangle has approximately 10 tons of paper for every three issues. To manufacture that much in the normal product of the paper used for the Triangle requires more than 21,000 pounds of moisture-free wood. He said that the 50 per cent recycled paper is the norm, since 180 per cent recycled paper is difficult to handle.

For the customer, a tighter skin for recycled stock is the only significant drawback. For the printer, using recycled stock requires extra care. While with recycled paper, we have to be extra careful to make sure the grain of the paper is correct, for the right direction,” Mr. Haring said, adding that recycled paper also demands special attention in the printing and binding processes. “We’re really quite excited to finally make the move in recycled paper,” he said. “And the quality of the Triangle for our readers should not diminish. That’s the bonus in making this significant change.”

“Thanks for Inco’s green thumb”

Dear Sir,

The Sudbury Horticultural Society would like to express its appreciation for providing a pleasing green display and the Inco Cup as well as funding, so monetary prizes could be awarded as well as expenses met in our annual August Exhibition.

As Mr. Alex Gray (Inco Orderer) has already informed you, the House Bernard property, on 27 Dale Street won the cup for 1990, $50 and the bud vase as top entrants in the Inco Garden Competition. While Mrs. Bernard has been ill for the past few years, this energetic couple still maintains their top quality garden. The Bernards are famous for their collection of dahlias — they are perhaps the largest and most colorful in Sudbury. Mrs. Bernard usually wins the photographic trophy with her pictures of the property.

Again, we offer our sincere thanks for your contribution and Mr. Gray’s talents and time in judging and supplying the display.

Sincerely,

Monsignor Ruth Jenkins, Secretary
Sudbury Horticultural Society

Inco leadership

Hi,

I am very pleased to receive the Triangle, and it is great to see how Inco leads in its field. Now my association with Inco is in Thompson.

Sincerely,

W.M. Mallett, President
Profund Distributors Ltd.
Port stack stands tall on Port Colborne horizon

It'd take a pretty big stack of dollar bills to take it down. An estimated 1,425,000 of them in last year’s figures, say the engineers.

So the last big chimney at the Port Colborne Refinery will stay up for now because it’s cheaper to leave it that way.

And the same chimney company which built it 54 years ago—Custodis Chimney Company—has a yearly inspection and maintenance contract to ensure the almost 6,000 ton structure stands tall without a fall.

Local residents and sailors won’t mind if the stack stays around for a little while longer though, because since 1936 it’s become a local historic landmark and navigational beacon along the shores of Lake Erie.

Dick Corkum, a retired refinery worker who sailed 11 years for Upper Lakes Shipping before he joined Inco, says the stack, which is almost 500 feet (152 m) high, can be seen for at least 15 miles (24 km) out on Lake Erie.

“It’s the first thing you see over the curve of the earth. A good landmark,” he said.

Another local sailor, Scott Belyea, says that many sailors use the stack as a navigation aid.

“Especially those who are regularly transiting the canal...say 60 times a season. At the three mile buoy, the captain or the first mate usually uses the stack to line his ship up with the two-mile buoy and from there, the Lake Erie entrance to the Welland Canal.”

The stack is impressive when seen from land, too. The entire city of Port Colborne uses it as a landmark and it is used as a reference point all over the Niagara Region, says Keith Overend, a local representative of LACAC, the Local Architectural Conservation Accession Committee.

“I live just a few blocks from the refinery. Whenever friends come to visit for the first time, I tell them to head for the stack and the rest is easy,” he said.

“Never has the stack been part of the area’s industrial heritage and has the potential of being designated as a historic structure, although he realizes nothing lasts forever. Particularly when gravity and the elements are working against it.

“Much of the history of Inco is represented in the stack. It must have been quite the engineering feat in its day,” he said.

Jim Berthelme, general manager of Custodis Chimney Co., in Toronto, says the stack “was considered to be a very tall chimney in 1936. Two hundred to 250 was considered to be tall at the time. There aren’t too many of the large variety being built now.”

The stack, which has had 50 feet of brick removed from its top over the years, was built using jump-form technology, with concrete forms being built every seven feet. Newer slip-form methods are now used where the concrete is continuously poured, Berthelme said.

“We usually send a nucleus of about three trained people to a site and hire the rest locally. I estimate it took about 12 men to build the Port Colborne stack in five months. Nine men were hired from the area to attend our ‘chimney university.’ During these Depression years, there was a certain romance about building something tall like a chimney. There would have been no problem finding the men,” he observed.

One of those men was steeplejack Jake Smith. His daughter, Lois Clark, recalls him helping to build and paint the inside of the stack.

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I do not have an image to evaluate.