

SEPTEMBER 2004

# Ingot

ALCAN PRIMARY METAL BRITISH COLUMBIA




For Alcan employees, retirees and their families

**EHS&Q Audit**  
**Quality Management**  
**Institute will be**  
**auditing the risk**  
**management**  
**system at Kitimat**  
**Works and Kemano**  
**from October**  
**18 to 21**

## HOT TOPICS



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Overhead shield wire project successfully concludes. **Read page 3.**



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Sustaining the longevity of the Kemano power house. **Read page 10.**

DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS: *ingot* poses questions and gets some answers

# Thoughtful questions and direct answers

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*ingot* posed a few questions to Alcan's director of operations Paul Henning this month. The answers may not always be what you want to hear but they do provide some insight.

**ingot:** What attracted you to Kitimat Works? What was your primary reason for joining us?

**Paul:** Obviously, our move to Kitimat was driven by Alcan but after our visit in April 2003 we realized that this would present a wonderful opportunity for both myself and my family.

**ingot:** What has been the most significant success for Kitimat Works, since joining us a little over a year ago.

**Paul:** I still feel that we face many challenges and in many areas I'm not happy with our progress, but we have had successes. Casting continues to have both wonderful safety



▲ Paul Henning

performance and productivity in a challenging market place. In Kemano and in Strathcona we are achieving excellent performance also not to mention many of our smaller departments who have gone many years without a lost time incident (LTI).

**ingot:** What do you want to accomplish by the end of the year?

**Paul:** I'd love to see our plant achieve one million man-hours without a LTI. It can still be done in 2004 but it will take all of us to think about our individual workday and tasks with safety at the forefront.

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 Managing human resources at Kitimat Works and Kemano
 

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# Josey Girard

Human resources manager Josey Girard joins Kitimat Works.

**G**raduating from the University of Chicoutimi as a chemist Josey Girard's career path has taken her from the study of elements and compounds to specializing in human resources and building relationships.

Josey's career began in chemical research and development of a special varnish for wood flooring. Once she and husband Guy Jean decided to have children, she changed occupations to teach college students about safety and industrial hygiene, a natural transition for a chemist.

Chemistry and industrial hygiene was the link that led her to apply for a health and safety advisor position with Alcan's Vaudreuil plant in 1996. "As a bauxite and alumina business group, it was a chemists paradise," she laughs.

Health and safety introduced her to labour relations work at Vaudreuil before she was promoted to health and safety coordinator responsible for the entire plant population of 1,200 workers.

Opportunity arose once again on transferring to the Laterriere plant, joining the primary metal group, expanding her skill set as a human resources officer, becoming more involved in staff relations, labour relations and training.

A mere 15-months later, she was promoted and transferred to the Shawinigan plant as human resources superintendent. Within 11 months, she was asked to take on responsibility for Beauharnois as well. "There was a tremendous amount of traveling – 500



▲ Josey Girard

kilometers alternating between plants every week," she recalls. "It was hectic, very demanding but extremely rewarding," she comments.

One of her most rewarding commitments on behalf of Alcan was leading and writing the *Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence and Harassment* for the province of Quebec. "These guidelines were implemented

for the five divisions of Alcan in Quebec only and are linked to our Code of Conduct," Josey explains. "It was a challenge and an enjoyable opportunity."

A rewarding volunteering experience was being 'godmother' in Centraide Activities – a program to raise funds for poor people. "This was very important for me personally because we are very lucky to have good jobs. It was one way that I could help others that are less fortunate," she says.

On accepting a promotion to Kitimat Works, Josey is the newest member of the management team as human resources manager.

What is managing human resources? Josey says: meeting, getting to know and involving people; learning and understanding the history of the plant and the community; sharing and exchanging information to build trust; developing and respecting the personal goals of the people while at the same time supporting the organizations needs and goals.

"People need to be involved and part of the decision making process. By providing leadership, vision and clear expectations, we can attain the goals together to continuously improve," she says.

Josey and Guy and their three children, nine year old Francois, seven year old Etienne and three year old Phillip are enthusiastic about outdoor activities offered in Kitimat. "The children are like sponges, soaking up the English language, the atmosphere and the culture. My passion is gardening, being close to Mother Nature," she concludes.

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**ingot:** When you talk about or describe Kitimat Works to your colleagues, what do you say to them that set us apart; promotes the value of our employees, our plant?

**Paul:** Many things, the people both within the plant and also in the town are fantastic and friendly. Our surroundings are beautiful. From a plant perspective I usually describe our potential. Yes, we have an aging smelter but I can only see us moving forward.

**ingot:** What are the biggest challenges Kitimat Works faces today, by the end of the year, next five years and how can they be met?

**Paul:** We have many. Externally, reducing our environmental impact and exposures will have to be managed better as regulations will only get tighter. Our challenge: how do we continue to operate in a changing world with the technology we have?

**ingot:** What do you think employees believe to be the biggest challenges?

**Paul:** From many conversations I've had with employees, concerns are expressed about the condition of the workplace and vehicles. This is a major issue when discussing progress in the plant.

**ingot:** What is Kitimat Works potential for growth? What is your vision for the future?

**Paul:** We have a strong but changing market place. We are well positioned to serve Asia and the west side of continental North America. Clearly we have to supply our customers and continue to evolve as their needs change. Flexibility and low production costs will be key.

**ingot:** Identify the top three ways employees and the community can help influence future growth?

**Paul:** Focus on ensuring their own safety, continue to work to procedure and

demonstrate how well we can operate the plant when we work together. Similarly, from a community perspective our long-term future will depend on regulatory change and investment. We will need investment to ensure we can operate within future regulations. To capture the level of investment needed, we have to have the right conditions, markets, demand, timing, and of course, confidence of our shareholders. If there is uncertainty in any of these issues, then it is more difficult to secure funding, which includes the current atmosphere locally.

**ingot:** If you could change anything about Kitimat Works, what would it be?

**Paul:** Safety performance.

**ingot:** What is the best thing about Kitimat Works?

**Paul:** Our people.

Alcan, BC Hydro and line crews join forces to replace 50-year-old wire

# Overhead shield wire replaced

The overhead shield wire was replaced for the first time in 50 years, ensuring the integrity of energy and smelter operations in the future.

**W**hat is overhead shield wire? It's a single line wire that is grounded at each tower site to provide lightning protection and is strung above the transmission line conductors from towers 372 to 378 (about one kilometer). These are the towers that employees see running from inside the plant to the Kitimat estuary.

The 50-year-old shield wire had deteriorated to such an extent that it was feared that if lightning did strike, it would

result in damage to the switchyard, transformers and breakers causing power disruption.

Lapointe Engineering project manager Tracy Petley led the project on behalf of Alcan's energy products organization with mentoring provided by power operations team leader Bruce Sheedy.

Working with energized equipment is high-risk. Therefore a tremendous amount of consultation, logistical coordination, communication, safety and emergency procedures and protocol must be followed.

This is why Alcan's transmission line crewleader Trevor James coordinated daily with the BC Hydro linemen and Quantum Helicopter pilots. Communication on work procedures, logistics and power outages during the removal and stringing of the new shield wire were coordinated with the control room crews and line crews, supported by supervisor power operations Andrew Simpson, and coordinator energy and reservoir Alan Brumwell.

Supervisor transmission, distribution and rectifier crews

Bob Walker provided equipment and suspension hardware.

David Gordon and Associates provided environmental management, co-ordination with the Department of Fisheries Oceans and the Haisla Band. As well, Alcan's safety organization, plant protection group and the environmental services group was available during the project.

The project was successfully completed in mid-July, on time, safely and without impacting the environment or causing power disruption to the plant.



▲ BC Hydro crew pulls wire and does dead-end connection at the estuary tower. The first tower in the switchyard-T378 and the last in the estuary-T372 have dead-end connections on each circuit. The balance has suspension hardware installed on each tower and circuit. Photo Tracy Petley.



▲ BC Hydro crew pose in front of one of the line trucks. From left, are **Corey Higgins; Newman Marshall; Dennis McCarthy; Gord Bentley; Brad Nelson; Glen Morrison; Len Nadeau** and **Ryan Monk**. Missing are **Bob Bell** and **Pat Hauck**. Photo Tracy Petley.



▲ Alcan and BC Hydro crews pose with the truck mounted puller. From left, are **David Gordon**, Gordon and Associates Ltd.; **Chul Lee**, Lapointe Engineering Ltd.; Alcan's power operations superintendent **Dave Dhaliwal**; **Ryan Monk**, BC Hydro; Alcan's **Bob Walker**, and BC Hydro's **Newman Marshall**; **Todd Spence**; **Jeff Bebe**; **Ken Brandson** and **Doug Gronsdal**. Standing on the truck, from left, are **Tracy Petley**, Lapointe Engineering Ltd.; BC Hydro's **Pete Kempthorne** and **Ron Gibbons** and Alcan's environmental services **Luc Lachance**. Photo Bruce Sheedy.



▲ Shown in the picture is the guarding on the buss and a hydro truck holding up a traveler to pull the wire along. BC Hydro crewmembers stand in the tower to monitor pulling and to do the dead-end connection. Out of site in the switchyard is the truck-mounted puller to pull in the second circuit. At other locations pole structures were installed to protect the A-area buss and the power lines on Eurocan's haul road and Alcan's dump and access road. Methanex allowed BC Hydro to shut down their line during pulling. Photo Tracy Petley.

Continuous improvement program launches second wave

# New greenbelts hit the streets of Kitimat Works

With continuous improvement projects in hand, greenbelts are looking to add value to the operations.

The rollout of Alcan's continuous improvement (CI) program is continuing at Kitimat Works. Currently, three employees are trained as CI blackbelts, while another 21 received CI greenbelt training in the spring; all are working on continuous improvement projects following the DMAIC (Define Measure Analyze Improve Control) approach.

Yvan Morrisette is one of the three CI blackbelts and is responsible for program growth in Kitimat/Kemano: "Continuous improvement projects can have an impact in all areas of our business, including health and safety," he says.

The CI group reached a key milestone in June, when it conducted its first Kitimat onsite assessment. "We assessed the plant by listening to five different 'voices,'" Yvan explains. "These included the voice of the business, the voice of the process, the voice of the customer, the voice of Alcan's EHS program, and finally, the voice of the employee." At present, CI site assessment is targeting primarily the reduction and casting organizations.

"The program is getting good management support from across the plant," Yvan adds. "From the assessment, we obtained a list of 160 potential CI projects. This list was reduced to 20 projects that offer high value to the business."

These 20 projects will be divided between the blackbelts and new greenbelts coming out of the second wave of training. He points out that the second wave of Kitimat greenbelts received their first week of training in late September.

"We've learned a lot since the first wave of greenbelts received their training. We will pair up greenbelts for new CI initiatives



▲ Continuous Improvement blackbelt **Suzanna Clemente**, far right, and greenbelt **Madeleine Marentette**, middle, present their project – Metal Level Control (4A) – to other greenbelts and superintendents on September 1.

because it makes sense and will help reduce the overlap of having multiple greenbelts involved in multiple projects in each organization," Yvan concludes.

## ACHIEVED TO-DATE:

- **Second wave of Greenbelts training:**  
**Week 1: Sept. 20th**  
**Week 2: Oct. 25th**
- **First CI Networking initiative on Sept. 1st**



## AT-A-GLANCE

### Nechako Reservoir Update



As of September 8, the reservoir elevation was 2,792.41 feet above sea level. The long-term-average (LTA) for this time of year is 2,796.01 feet above sea level. August inflows were 77.6 per cent of the LTA. The average inflow for the May 1 to August 31 period at 68.6 per cent is slightly above the forecasted amount of 65 per cent LTA. Due to hot weather in August the spillway discharges required for cooling flows

◀ **Kenney Dam**

were 50 per cent higher than the LTA.

The fall inflows are generally difficult to forecast and are mainly dependent on precipitation. Reservoir elevation projections up to May 1, 2005 will be carried out at the end of the water year on November 1, 2004.

Spillway discharges are currently set at 30 cubic metres per second and will be maintained at this rate until the end of March 2005.

## Chartered accountants join Kitimat Works

### Balancing life is finding one's equilibrium says chief accountant Judith Trottier. Love what you do at work and love your family and social life – you can't neglect one for the other – this is establishing one's equilibrium.

Chief accountant Judith Trottier joined Kitimat Works in July, after transferring from the newest Alcan facility, Alma, where she was a management accountant. A chartered accountant, Judith began her career with Alcan in 1997, and has also worked at the Laterriere smelter and Energy Electrique.

Judith and her husband Denis Boivin were attracted to Kitimat because they were ready for a 'big life style change'. They also wanted their two children, six year old Alexane and four year old Vincent to learn English and to experience a new culture.

"The bigger the change, the more rewarding the results," she says. "The children are so happy to be living in Kitimat, which reinforced our decision; moving was a good idea."

This family loves the natural beauty of the mountains and has been enjoying camping and teaching their children to fish.

"The outdoor life style is particularly attractive at this point in our family's life. The children are becoming more involved in activities and are ready for adventures. Since arriving, we have camped every weekend and we are excited about introducing our children to skiing this winter," she says.

Finding one's equilibrium at work, Judith is learning all about Kitimat Works and what being the chief accountant means. Beginning



▲ Judith Trottier

her career as a financial accountant, Judith is fully aware of the importance of collaborating with the financial services management team who support the reduction, power operations and utilities, maintenance and casting and wharf organizations.

By providing ad-hoc and month end reporting, budgeting, yearly and long-range planning as well as financial analysis, she is a valuable team member. She is also thankful that her job isn't routine or task-oriented but one that is challenging, where she has the opportunity to share her experiences and offer suggestions to improve the financial processes.

**"I'm thoroughly enjoying working with a knowledgeable team."**

**– Judith Trottier**

Additionally, she is responsible for the accounts payable team and finance accountants – supervision is a new work experience for Judith.

"I'm thoroughly enjoying working with a knowledgeable team. I see my responsibility as a member of the team and to lead, coach, assist and support the team. I may influence the team when I feel there is a need but they are the experts in their area of responsibility and I look forward to developing strong relationships," she concludes.

### Accounting principles and practices is a universal language says reduction management accountant Marie-Krystine Robillard.

Marie-Krystine Robillard joined Kitimat Works in July, after accepting a transfer from Alcan's head office where she began her career in 1998, consolidating financial results for plant operations worldwide, forming the groundwork for Alcan Inc.'s annual report. She also worked in the payroll department as a financial accountant.

Born and raised in Montreal, Marie-Krystine graduated from the University of Sherbrooke, as a chartered accountant. During co-op terms she worked for the National Energy Board in Calgary, a banking institution in Montreal and PriceWaterhouse

**"Once I understand the smelting process, learn the technical terms and visually recognize everything, it will be easier to suggest improvements."**

**– Marie-Krystine Robillard**



▲ Marie-Krystine Robillard

in Quebec City. On graduation, she joined Deloitte-Touche in Montreal, traveling to the Caribbean Island of St. Martin as an auditor.

Traveling appealed to Marie-Krystine at an early age, when she decided to join the American Field Student exchange program, acknowledging her 'roaming spirit' and a desire for new experiences when she lived with a Houston, Texas family for a year.

"Some people do not desire to live anywhere else other than where they grew up. I love new experiences and seeing new places; living out of the comfort zone," she laughs.

Her sense of adventure was a deciding factor that led her and her partner Martin Dussault and their three children – six year old Victor, four year old Jerome and two year old Loik to explore the opportunity of Kitimat.

Marie-Krystine is enjoying the Kitimat experience and the opportunity to learn financial management accounting from a smelter perspective – quite different from her role at head office.

"Once, I understand the smelting process, learn what the technical terms mean and then visually recognize everything, it will be much easier for me to suggest where improvements might be possible," she concludes.

Supervisors, casting operators, electricians and equipment operators...

# Women – take on industrial jobs

In 1974 Kitimat Works was about to welcome a new kind of industrial worker into the ranks – women; Kitimat Works became the first Alcan Canadian aluminum smelter to integrate women into heavy industry.

This October marks the 30th anniversary of Alcan Kitimat Works groundbreaking program to introduce women into heavy industry.

The program was developed in partnership with Canada Manpower, as a result of changes to the *Human Rights Code* in November 1973, requiring companies and unions to provide equal opportunities for minorities.

Out of 200 applications from women, 21 were selected to participate in Alcan's Women in the Workforce program which began October 21, 1974; a second group went through the program in January 1975. They filled entry-level positions in reduction, casting, ingot finishing and production maintenance.

In celebration of 30 years of women working in industrial jobs at Kitimat Works, *ingot* presents this feature—women—their experiences and their jobs.

## A groundbreaking program

In 1975 Marilyn Smith quit her part-time job at the post office and became one of the pioneering women who entered the Women in the Workforce program. Now, utilities serviceman Marilyn responds to ore, oil or fuel spills that require clean up, replaces containment booms in the lagoons and maintains the condition of the dry scrubber courtyards.

"I did it to challenge myself," states Marilyn. "It was different from any other job women had before. Many women were housewives, secretaries or store clerks. Alcan positions paid the same wages regardless of gender and at the time that was a very big deal. In the beginning with some of the guys it was a little tough. Unlike today, there were pin-ups on the walls and we endured catcalls, but lots of the men were happy we were working."

"I wanted to prove that I could do it. I think all of us that entered the program had something to prove. We were so green," recalls Marilyn. "I was 21 and it was totally different and overwhelming. I had to work in the potline basement shoveling ore and bath and it was a dirty and physically demanding job."

## Respecting the metal

There's nothing like the smell of molten metal in the morning—or maybe that's coffee? Casting operator Wendy Silver loves nothing more than a good metal pour.

Wendy worked in Kamano as a janitor for several years before she applied to Kitimat Works in 1980. "A janitor position came up," recalls Wendy. "I had my foreman rip up the application and send it back because I wanted



▲ Marilyn Smith cleaning grates at the B-lagoon to prevent flooding.



▲ In lines 7&8 Shannon Pritchard checks the cruce before taking extra bath out of the pots.



▲ Casting operator Wendy Silver cleans the T-Trough in A casting.



▲ Equipment operator Sarah McLeod in the A1-401 forklift at the wharf.



▲ Plant protection supervisor Judy Mosher participates in high angle rescue exercises.



▲ Instrument mechanic apprentice Heather Bagg works on equipment in the instrumentation shop.

to go the trade's helper route. Eventually, I got a job in casting. What a rude awakening! There weren't a lot of women around."

"You learn to respect molten metal in casting not fear it," says Wendy. "I still get excited over a beautiful cast."

"We're all here for the same job," comments Wendy. "Whether you're a worker in the main office or in casting, a hot-metal driver or director of operations, we're here for the same purpose—to make metal and money."

## Behind the wheel of a machine

At the wharf large vehicles lumber across the pavement carrying extrusion products to a docked ship—behind the wheel you might see equipment operator Sarah McLeod. She operates forklifts, mobile cranes, front-end loaders, dump trucks and the K-3 alumina unloader.

Sarah is one of five women who work in the wharf area and the only female hatch tender. Hatch tending requires her to measure the metal product and the hull of the ship; she then determines the best way to stack the metal inside the vessel. "Its like a giant jig-saw puzzle," says Sarah.

"I'm proud of myself and I don't care how sore or bruised I am at the end of the day, as

long as I feel I've accomplished a good days work," says Sarah.

## Calibrations

Instrument mechanic apprentice Heather Bagg was one of those children who dismantled her toys to figure out how they worked. She works on control systems and calibrates machinery throughout the plant.

"I took one year of instrumentation technology and then was hired as a cell operator in lines 3-5 at Alcan in 2000. I wrote my apprenticeship exam in 2002.

"I think it's important that women become more aware of the trades that are available. There seems to be a perception that trades aren't geared towards women and women don't usually go into trades, but there are a few who do. I think women should keep in mind that trades are an option," says Heather.

## Front gate please...

Not everyday presents an emergency situation but when one arises plant protection shift supervisor Judy Mosher responds.

Judy first started working in the plant as a first aid attendant, but wanting a challenge she transferred to plant protection. "I enjoy plant protection. I find it rewarding when we help

somebody or cleanup a spill or fix something that's wrong. We deal with people's problems—bad news—we handle them all, and manage to make things better," she explains. Besides emergency situations Judy also handles staffing requirements and operations for main gate.

"I think women have done really well at Alcan," says Judy. "I know that the percentages of women in the plant are still relatively less, but it is a place where women can work equally and get paid equally. A lot of jobs are not typically female orientated—I know that's changing. Women have the opportunity to pursue any job."

## Managing relationships

Human resources advisor Tanya Stevenson joined Alcan after working on several projects with Alcan through the Skills Centre. She handles internal and external staffing, workforce management and ensures employees have everything they need to develop to their fullest potential. Tanya agrees with Judy about the evolution of female occupations. "Jobs for women are changing, especially in the last 15 years," comments Tanya. "I don't think women at Alcan are held back and I've never seen any issue with the fact that I'm a woman."

"The women in the 1974 program opened the door for other women to follow. They took a

step and were successful. I don't think life would be the way it is today if women hadn't taken that chance in the 1970s," continues Tanya.

## Blue prints and wires

Wire cutters in hand, electrician Deborah Hoffman, checks the blue prints before fixing another electrical system in the plant.

"I didn't set out to be the only female electrician in the plant, it just happened," says Deborah casually. "I don't want to be treated any different. I don't want to be made an example of. I'm here like everyone else to do a job, and it's not like I'm out to prove anything. Becoming an electrician is just how things worked out in my life."

Working in heavy industry isn't new to Deborah. She worked for Quintette Operating Corporation in Tumbler Ridge for 18 years where she began an electrical apprenticeship and when she was hired by Alcan she was the only female electrician in the plant.

"I like the electrical trades, wiring or trouble shooting. I enjoy finding problems and fixing them," explains Deborah. "You have to have the ability and self confidence to work independently in a trade and be willing to learn."

## Inside the potlines

Tired of low wages paid by waitressing, Shannon Pritchard decided to apply at Alcan. She works as an equipment operator in lines 7 & 8, and says it is a "physically demanding job."

She was hired as a cell operator, then became a stud blast operator, and is now an equipment operator. "We all do the same work," she says, "Working in the lines has made me more open-minded. When I first started I had no idea how to operate any of the equipment."

"It was overwhelming at first," explains Shannon. "I had never worked in industry before. I thought of turning around and leaving but it's second nature now. The crew is good if you ever need help and after working with them for 12 hours a day they're like my second family."

**October marks the 30th anniversary of Kitimat Works groundbreaking 'Women in the Workforce' program, introducing women to industry.**

Making maintenance efforts more effective

# Review places emphasis on inventory management strategy

There are more than 28,000 different parts kept in inventory at Kitimat Works. Knowing where they're stored and whether they're still used is one component in a review of our inventory management strategy.

**A**s an employee working at Kitimat Works, the following may interest you: The folks in the maintenance, planning, procurement and inventory groups are actively working together to improve item descriptions, stock levels, and equipment parts lists.

The transition to the new *Maximo* maintenance management system has not been the easiest one and has highlighted many issues including the way we manage the spare parts inventory at Kitimat Works.

The good news on this topic is that the Maximo User Group has been given the mandate by Paul Henning to address plant concerns about inventory management. The Maximo User Group is an ongoing group with the mandate to continually improve and review interactive processes in an effort to make systems easier for employees to use.

The group met earlier this year to flesh out a project that will identify ways to improve inventory management of spare parts and equipment. A steering committee including procurement superintendent Richard Lovell, maintenance and engineering superintendent Mike Long, labour relations superintendent Kirk Grossmann, power operations maintenance and engineering superintendent Ralph Braun, and plant services superintendent Jacques Brassard will oversee the project.

Because of the project's link with *Maximo*, application coordinator Susan Eisenberger has been named project manager. She'll be working closely with the Maximo User Group and in particular inventory supervisor Liliana Carvalho, chief planner Mark Annibal, works power maintenance management consultant George Weeks, and ARMS Reliability Engineers (for the pilot project).

One of the concerns the user group has identified is a lack of documentation and structure when it comes to inventory management, explains Susan.

To correct this and establish a system that incorporates 'best corporate practices'; four key factors have been identified:

- **Training for users:** long-term training strategy is required to ensure proper system utilization with each upgrade and process development.



▲ Members of the Maximo User Group include, back row, from left, are **Rick Costain, Manuel Pedro, Harry Eisenberger, Brad Loran and Ron Breuker**. Standing in front row, are **Carol Tormene, Rob Stephen, Susan Eisenberger, and Jean-Philippe Mallard**.

- **Standardization of terminology used to describe inventory:**

development of standards for consistent usage of the computerized maintenance management system.

- **Optimization of equipment parts lists:**

develop and review equipment parts lists using standards established by the Maximo User Group.

- **Improved processes and workflow:**

effective utilization of all processes related to inventory, procurement and maintenance.

In recent years, much effort has been made to reduce on-site levels of spare parts and equipment. According to inventory analyst Brad Loran, this strategy has its advantages and disadvantages.

"Reducing the inventory will lower costs, but the downside is that it impacts production because critical parts may not be available when a piece of equipment fails," he points out. "If the part isn't available on-site and if the vendor doesn't

have it in stock, the downtime may have an adverse effect on production."

The trick is to find the right balance so that the right part is in the right place at the right time. Brad visits various maintenance areas in the plant weekly to discuss inventory-related issues. One of the major challenges facing the project and the inventory control group is to ensure that inventory levels are where they should be to maximize equipment uptime.

**TSW is gone!  
Make the most of what  
Maximo has to offer.**

The Maximo User Group agrees that another challenge that will be more difficult to implement comes down to influencing the way people think: to get them to move away from the TSW mindset and make the most of what *Maximo* has to offer.

The positive aspect of this project is the ability to refine new processes and procedures being introduced.

## Paying tribute to Alcan retirees and employees

# Precious memories

WRITTEN BY FRED RODRIGO

**The saying – the older you get, the faster time passes – becomes more of a fact, the deeper you get into the Golden Age, says retiree Fred Rodrigo.**

It is now over 19 years ago that some 100 of us were the first group of Kitimat and Kemano employees to get a "package deal" (early retirement). Hard to believe, isn't it? It is also hard to believe that it is now more than 50 years ago that a group of young women and men went north to get the Kitimat smelter and Kemano powerhouse ready for operations.

The pouring of the first ingot on August 3, 1954, was celebrated again 50 years later on the August long weekend in 2004. The pouring of the two 50th Anniversary ingots was viewed by many on the large screen.

It was a long weekend that will not be forgotten by many retirees, their spouses or widows, who turned out for the occasion. At the pioneers of the 50s reception there were more than 300 smiling faces around the many tables. The retiree's high tea took two sittings to accommodate nearly 650 people.

It was a reunion that brought many old friends and colleagues together, for some the first time since they left Kitimat or Kemano. One of my former co-workers, Noel Lewis-Watt, had left his job at #105 control room and Kitimat in 1956. This was his first visit

back. Interestingly enough, the former electrical, later power operations, seemed to have had the largest turnout at this reunion.

Memory Lane, a collection of photographs that spanned the four walls of the Riverlodge Community room, was truly a trip through memory lane. Everybody who looked at the thousands of photos could be overheard marveling as they recognized faces from many years past. Kudos to the many volunteers who went through all the copies of *ingot* and pasted the pictures on the wall, decade by decade, as well the whole weekend that was put together by the many helpers. Many thanks!

Hundreds and hundreds of retirees and families and other Kitimat residents attended all the events, from the opening ceremony with the Haisla traditional blessing to the closing ceremony three days later. But the biggest, unofficial event was the "visiting"; you could hardly walk a few feet till you were stopped or saw another familiar face that you had to shake hands with.

The big tent, like the one during the 40th anniversary was never empty. The opening

and closing ceremonies, the dances, Karaoke or just the visiting around the long tables and the interdenominational church service were all done under the dome.

The weather cooperated making it easier to move around.

When the 60th festival comes around, how many of the "originals" will be present? But nobody worried about that on this weekend. Many had traveled hundreds or thousands of miles (kilometres?) to be in Kitimat.

It was good to see so many third generations turning out as well; they have to carry the torch to carry on, while we old timers rest on our laurels. Things have changed since that day in August '54 and things will continue to change and so it should. Whether all changes are improvements is another thing, but such is life. We either have to "grin and bare it" or put our nose to the grindstone and shoulder to the wheel and make things better.

So, until the next reunion, luncheon or get-together, retirees will keep talking about the olden, not always golden days but days that will be part of precious memories.



## Vita Bergeron

retired from the safety administrative group. Vita began her career with Alcan as a temporary employee in 1974 and worked in a variety of administrative positions until 1980, when she joined the reduction services department full time. On the occasion of her retirement, a large group of friends and colleagues gathered to bid farewell on September 2. Safety superintendent **Rick Hynes** shared some of Vita's work experiences, relating that her dedication to the company and her 'giving personality' was appreciated, as he presented the official retirement plaque and a Hoselton bear sculpture. On behalf of the maintenance organization where Vita worked for the majority of her career, safety coordinator **Terri Taylor** said it was a pleasure to have worked with Vita, as she presented a seagull Hoselton. Vita and husband Joe are taking up residence in Ladysmith on Vancouver Island and invited everyone to visit.

← **Terri Taylor** congratulates **Vita Bergeron**, left, on her retirement.



## Delta King Trip

During the 50th anniversary weekend all employees were entered into a draw to win a trip for two to stay on board the *Delta King*, a sternwheeler that was a landmark during the construction days of Kitimat Works where construction workers and employees were housed.

At the closing ceremonies on Sunday, August 1, a name was drawn and the lucky winner of the Delta King trip for two was senior cell operator David Wells. "I was at work when I received the call that I had won. I was really surprised and happy to win the trip," says David.

David and his wife, Nancy, accepted congratulations and a travel certificate from corporate affairs and community relations manager Colleen Nyce, left. The couple will enjoy two nights accommodation in a stateroom on board the *Delta King* with complementary champagne brunch and dinner. David can arrange his trip anytime within the next year.

## Obituaries

**Since our last report, the following current and retired employees have passed away. We extend our sincerest condolences to family members, relatives and friends.**

**Harry Donaldson**, aged 84  
Joined Alcan in April 1955  
Retired as an electrician  
in November 1975  
Died on May 13, 2004

**Leon Kawa**, aged 79  
Joined Alcan in January 1957  
Retired as a welding equipment  
repairman in November 1987  
Died on May 30, 2004

**Alvaro Leite**, aged 76  
Joined Alcan in September 1955  
Retired as a building serviceman  
in December 1986  
Died on June 4, 2004

**Josef Klem**, aged 68  
Joined Alcan in October 1959  
Retired as a warehouseman  
in September 1994  
Died on June 24, 2004

**Bob Whitehead**, aged 74  
Joined Alcan in August 1959  
Retired as a toolcrib attendant  
in May 1994  
Died on July 27, 2004

**Frank De Sousa**, aged 73  
Joined Alcan in January 1956  
Retired as a wharf equipment  
operator in February 1985  
Died on August 6, 2004

**Delmek Geddes**, aged 79  
Joined Alcan in May 1968  
Retired as a motor rewinder  
in July 1987  
Died on August 14, 2004

**Antonius Jenster**, aged 80  
Joined Alcan in August 1957  
Retired as a project process  
development technician  
in April 1989  
Died on August 19, 2004

**Antonio Calado**, aged 75  
Joined Alcan in June 1963  
Retired as a senior cell  
operator in June 1994  
Died on September 2, 2004

**Patricia Wilken**, aged 45  
Joined Alcan in June 1985  
Worked as a building serviceman  
Died on September 2, 2004

Multi-million dollar investment at Kemano

# Kemano Asset Improvement Project is one step closer to completion

In a space of only 48 months, Alcan has completed a major upgrade of its 50-year-old generating station at Kemano. New state-of-the-art transformers, high voltage risers and high-voltage cables connecting the powerhouse to the switchyard are a few of the projects that have given the facility a new lease on life.

In 2000, Alcan began implementing its Kemano Asset Improvement Program (KAIP), a multi-year, \$86 million cash injection to revitalize the aging power station and make it reliable for years to come.

Recognizing the scope of KAIP and other upgrade work in Kemano, Alcan struck a strategic alliance with electrical contractor and manufacturer ABB to provide turn-key project management for the electrical components of KAIP and related upgrade projects. ABB has completed work on upgrading the Kemano switchyard, the installation of new automatic voltage regulators and high current SF6 breakers, and the installation of a control system that permits remote operation of the Kemano powerhouse.

According to Don Timlick, APM-BC's director of energy products, Alcan receives several benefits from the ABB alliance: a technical representative is onsite at all times; provides detailed pre-engineering to ensure that project costs are clear, and provides turn-key project management.

Alcan's power team leader Bruce Sheedy and Alcan's onsite project rep Eric Halland works closely with ABB's Gene Lacoste. Recently, ABB and Alcan completed one more KAIP project: the installation of 12 state-of-the-art transformers, high voltage bus risers and 300kV cables that connect the transformers to the switchyard.

Bruce notes that one of the key achievements of this project has been its safety record. In fact, even the Workers' Compensation Board recognized the achievements of one of the sub-contractors working for



▲ Manufactured by ABB, these new state-of-the-art transformers should provide reliable service for years to come.

ABB – Kitimat's own TL&T Electric – for the number of hours worked on the project without a lost time accident.

This is no mean achievement. Bruce points out that much of the replacement work on the risers had to be done while the surrounding buss system was energized. Bruce is especially proud of the work done by Kemano's electrical, technical

and maintenance crews in the development of unique 'keyboxes' and lockout procedures for this project. "The guys were extremely observant when it came to job site safety," he confirms.

Built in eastern Canada, the transformers were accompanied by a factory rep all the way across Canada. "He would meet the train at every stop and check an onboard hump meter (an

impact recorder) to ensure that the transformers, which are built to very tight tolerances, weren't heavily jostled during shipping," explains Bruce.

Each transformer can handle loads up to 132 megavolt-amps (MVA), compared to 95 MVA for the old units. With two generators feeding into a bank of three transformers, this means they're more than capable for what's required of them and their life should be extended.

"The other benefit," continues Bruce, "having only one type of transformer will make maintenance and spare part management a lot simpler."

**Significant investment sustains longevity of Kemano power station and demonstrates Alcan's commitment to continued operations in northern B.C.**



▲ With help from a safety observer on the ground, the driver of this transport truck threads his way into the access tunnel to the Kemano powerhouse.

The aging, paper-wrapped and oil-impregnated high voltage cables connecting the transformers to the switchyard were also replaced with modern cross-linked polyethylene cable. Salvage and recovery technician Danny Siepman was able to recycle the decommissioned cable and other material.

In the end, this project cost about \$20 million to replace the 12 transformers, another \$10 million to replace the cables and \$2 million to replace the risers. It's a significant investment to sustain the longevity of the Kemano power station and demonstrates Alcan's commitment to continued operations in northern B.C.

Give it your best guess; you could win \$100

# ingot Snowflake Contest

Old Man Winter will soon wake from a deep sleep and snow will be falling. Guess the date of Kitimat's first measurable snowfall (at the plant site) and you will receive a \$100 cheque from *ingot*, for a dinner for two at a restaurant of your choice.

In the event that more than one employee guesses the correct date, a winner will be chosen by luck of the draw.

### The *ingot* snowflake contest rules are as follows:

- 1** The contest is open to APM-BC employees only.
- 2** Each employee may submit one guess only.
- 3** Measurable snowfall, at the plant site, will be determined by Alcan's plant protection data. Their opinion will be final.

- 4** In the event that more than one employee guesses the first snowfall date, a winner will be chosen by luck of the draw.
- 5** Telephone entries **will not be** accepted. However, *ingot* will accept a faxed entry form to local 8127 or 639-8127.
- 6** Your entry must reach *ingot's* office at least three days before the first snowfall. Each entry will be dated as it arrives so that this establishes the closing date of the contest.

### Here's my snowflake guess

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Local: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of first snowfall: \_\_\_\_\_

**Clip out and mail entry to *ingot* at mail drop point 272K or fax to local 8127 or 639-8127.**



# MILESTONES

Employees celebrating anniversaries with Alcan

## 30 Years



▲ **Doug Hamilton**  
Technical Support Supervisor  
Reduction

## 25 Years



▲ **Mario Firmino**  
Casting Supervisor

## 20 Years



▲ **Michael Long**  
Maintenance and Engineering  
Superintendent

## 5 Years



▲ **Carey Mann**  
Casting Operator

## Alcan offers Flu Vaccine Clinics for employees

**Dates:** October 20 and 21 **AND** November 3 and 4

**Time:** 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Location:** Building 176 (medical building)

**Cost:** Free

Flu vaccines are offered to all Alcan employees. No appointment is necessary. Employees will be asked to remain in the medical building reception area for 15 minutes following the injection. Contact occupational health nurse Kathie Bock at local 8489 for more information.

## Christmas Party Note:

The 2004 Alcan Children's Christmas party registration form should be returned to Alcan, P.O. Box 1800 – MDP 272K, Kitimat, B.C., V8C 2H2. Children of employees between the ages of newborn and 12-years-old are eligible to attend. Grandchildren of employees are not eligible. Forms are available from the reception desk in building 272, from [ralph.reschke@alcan.com](mailto:ralph.reschke@alcan.com) or by calling 639-8677 and leaving your name and address. **Christmas parties are scheduled December 4 and 5.**



*ingot* is published every last Friday in the month by Alcan Primary Metal - British Columbia, for its active and retired employees and their families. Office telephone: local 8519 or (250) 639-8519 or by email: [cathie.stevens@alcan.com](mailto:cathie.stevens@alcan.com). Our address is:

Alcan Primary Metal - BC, A Division of Alcan Inc.,

P.O. Box 1800, Kitimat, B.C. V8C 2H2. You can also visit us at:

[www.alcaninbc.com/kitimat/index.html](http://www.alcaninbc.com/kitimat/index.html). **Please respect *ingot***

**deadlines for copy, revisions and photographs. The deadline for the next issue is October 8th.**

♻️ Please recycle

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## Fraser Valley Fall Luncheon

**Wednesday, October 20** at 1:30 p.m. at the Savoy, South Fraser Way, Abbotsford  
Please contact Russ McKone at 604-589-6940 or [grmckone@pacificcoast.net](mailto:grmckone@pacificcoast.net), or Fred Rodrigo at 604-530-4695 or [fredrodrigo@shaw.ca](mailto:fredrodrigo@shaw.ca) before **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16.**

## Augmentation of APP – October 1, 2004

Alcan's management has approved a 0.86 per cent augmentation of pensions, **effective October 1, 2004.** The augmentation covers 50 per cent of inflation over the last 12 months. The augmentation percentage will be lower for those who retired less than 12 months ago. A letter and a personalized statement outlining the details were mailed to Alcan retirees or beneficiary recipients on September 17, 2004.