

**Annual Conference 1996  
Marine Highland Hotel, Troon  
10th-12th October**

SWK GLASGOW

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**TRANSPORTATION 2000 - Meeting the Challenge**

Conference Subcommittee: Stuart Hamilton, Bill Samson, John McRobert,  
Ronnie Wilson, James Rodden

**THE INSTITUTION OF  
CIVIL ENGINEERS**

Glasgow & West of Scotland  
Association

Incorporated Engineers &  
Technicians

18 Oct 1996

Sheila

Add to file

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Dear Mr McCafferty,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your after dinner talk thus helping to make the above named Conference a resounding success. Initial feedback from the Delegates indicates that they have found the papers to be both extremely interesting and very informative.

Copies of the Conference Proceedings have been forwarded to the Institution Headquarters in London for placing in the library. I have also been advised that the Transportation Board has expressed an interest in examining the proceedings.

I enclose herewith a copy of the report on the Conference from the Institution magazine "New Civil Engineer" for your information.

It was particularly pleasing to welcome you and your wife to the dinner and ceilidh and trust that both of you enjoyed this informal time with us.

Yours sincerely

*S. Hamilton*

Stuart Hamilton,  
Conference Co-ordinator

**Stuart Hamilton, Conference Co-ordinator  
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J M Cafferty

ICE INCORPORATED ENGINEERS & TECHNICIANS  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
TROON - FRIDAY 11 OCTOBER 1996  
TRANSPORTATION 2000 - MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Chairman, Provost Campbell, Distinguished Guests

Ladies & Gentlemen,

- I was a little surprised when Bill Samson phoned me a few weeks ago to ask if I would consider ~~being~~<sup>be</sup> one of your noted speakers. The brief was to make a short address on the Transport Debate reflecting the views of ICE. *This did not exactly fuel me with enthusiasm*
- I explained that I'd never been noted before and that I couldn't attend the conference because of other commitments.
- In any event, I wondered what on earth a room full of transportation planners could possibly want to hear from a simple bridge engineer? *the fact that* ~~(Actually~~ some of the bridges are *well* ~~really~~ quite complicated. *I did not feel I had anything to my sustainability*
- ~~Apart from anything else, I usually prefer to do it in the dark - with lots of slides.~~
- I agreed to take on the task but only after Bill convinced me that last years noted speaker at Newcastle - a Mr Pigg - was a highway engineer and not a professional comedian as I had at first assumed.
- ~~I'm told that some people find it difficult to spot the difference! - between highway engineers and comedians that is - but I can assure you that some of my best friends are highway engineers.~~
- Never having been noted before, a sign in my local butcher's shop at Bearsden Cross caught my eye - it said "Try our noted sausages"! I went in and bought half a pound of noted pork sausages. I didn't want any ~~of that~~ mad cow disease, I'd rather have a bottle in front of me than a frontal lobotomy! "Mr Lewis", I said, "why are your sausages noted"? He looked at me as though I was mad. "For heavens sake man" he said "if they weren't noted a` the meat would fall out the ends"!

- So, I stand before you with my flies well buttoned ~~up~~, my adjustable cuff links done up tightly, and bicycle clips round my ankles - ~~just in case~~ *just in case anything should fall out*
- I arrived in this condition at the hotel having had to rush here from Edinburgh via my home to change & pick up my wife. I had to put her back down again after a few minutes because I was finding it difficult to get ~~the car door open~~. *my bicycle clips on.*
- When we got to reception, the concierge glared at my bicycle clips and asked if I had a reservation. While I was explaining that I was a friend of Mr Sampson and one of the noted speakers, my wife ~~interrupted and said~~ *came straight to the point. Young man she said,* "Look he doesn't have a reservation. In fact, he doesn't even have a wig wam. Could we just have a room please?" The concierge stiffened, my bicycle clips slipped, and with a ~~tight-lipped smile~~ *on icy stare* he asked ~~me~~ *I said, I'd like to be called* if I would like to be called in the morning. ~~I said~~ *He said,* "Yes please, at about 7.30am". "Right" he said "we'll put you in room 306 - the windows are jammed open and ~~that~~ *hell* will be a strong breeze off the sea all night".
- When I ~~got round to thinking about transportation~~ *eventually* I conjured up a picture of criminals and convicts. Not Transportation planners or Highway Engineers - ~~more~~ *but* Highway Robbers and Cattle Thieves and all who were transported in leaky ships to Australia. And, thinking of Australia, I saw those long straight roads stretching out through the bush ~~which~~ *and dream time* reminded my of the Romans and then the Roman Road ~~the Antonine wall,~~ *and* both of which run from the Clyde, beneath my house in Bearsden and on through Kirkintilloch to the River Forth.
- At school in Kirkintilloch, my friend Tom Hunter always managed, by skilful introduction to turn every essay question he encountered (sea story, travel, adventure, transportation) into one on ~~the~~ *his favourite topic* Kon Tiki Expedition. If Tom were here now that's what he would tell you about. I'm going to tell you a little bit about Kirkintilloch!
- Kirkintilloch (the town with no pubs) lies just to the north of Glasgow and it provides an interesting starting point when considering the impact of transportation ~~on a community.~~

not much less than 2000 years ago

- Following the departure of the Romans, nothing much happened until the 1770's when Smeaton brought the Forth & Clyde Canal from Grangemouth on the Forth to a temporary terminus at Kirkintilloch. By 1790, Whitworth had taken <sup>the canal</sup> it through Glasgow to Bowling on the Clyde. All more or less along the line of the Roman Wall!
- Incidentally, Walker Hamilton, who chaired today's Question Time, told me this evening that he's a little stiff from Bowling, which surprised me, because I always thought he came from Bishopbriggs.
- Scotland's first Railway quickly followed in 1826 and a few years later the Canal began its long decline in the face of new ~~er~~ technology. There was even a privately constructed toll road by passing the town from 1806 to 1881 when <sup>brought it into public ownership</sup> legislation ~~changed~~ <sup>changed</sup>. Various industries thrived but now they have all gone leaving only service industries in their place.
- Then, in the 1960's, Beeching closed the stations just as the Glasgow overspill policy brought hordes of new people who then had to commute to jobs back in Glasgow by car or bus - increasingly by car because the buses were so awful.
- Glasgow temporarily solved its traffic problems by building half a ring road but now travel is ~~again~~ <sup>again</sup> becoming more difficult <sup>again</sup> as traffic congestion, environmental pollution, relocation of business, migration of population and so on reflect an ever increasing pace of change. This pattern is being reflected across the country and while most people opt to travel by car there is an ever growing antipathy to new or improved roads.
- Tree houses now exist in Glasgow as well as in Borneo and Newberry.
- The provision of appropriate, adequate and acceptable transport infrastructure taking account of bus deregulation, rail privatisation, the pro and anti roads lobby and green issues continues to make transportation a political hot potato.
- Consultation and debate are essential but ill informed or biased views or single issue protest groups can distort the debate particularly concerning the future provision of roads.

- There shouldn't, of course, be blind provision of roads to match the estimated doubling of UK traffic by 2025. Demand will somehow need to match supply and that supply will need to be acceptable politically, socially, economically and environmentally.
- Between 1985 and 1993, Germany invested 52% more and France & Italy 30% more per head than we did in the UK on road & rail infrastructure. They continue to spend more and are investing in high speed rail links and so on while we in the UK cut spending *and maintenance*
- The economic success of Scotland have on the periphery of Europe relies heavily on the availability of high quality transportation infrastructure. These are all political issues.
- Land Use planning is in the political field too.

Current policy may have swung against large out of town shopping centres which favour car usage but they are still being built and I have to admit that I use them.

- Social Policies <sup>can</sup> also influence transportation.  
The provision of Light Rail Systems to outlying areas of urban deprivation is unlikely to result in reduction of road traffic whereas targeting areas of high car ownership might.
- The balanced view is, of course, that increased use of public transport is necessary and welcome. But with more than 70% of short journeys being made in private cars, a substantial transfer from private to public transport will require a significant and imaginative change in approach by politicians and operators.
- The environmental debate is healthy but all is not doom and gloom; motor vehicle emissions are improving but perhaps we need draconian measures by governments, or a great technological leap forward to solve this one.
- In the meantime, is it not hugely sensible to remove vehicle emissions and traffic accidents from urban areas by balanced reprovision?
- Well designed roads and bypasses have very positive environmental effects which should not be ignored. They significantly reduce noise, pollution, road accidents and deaths.

- Roads create traffic is the common cry. But., of course, traffic is caused by the demand for personal mobility ~~for business, social or domestic reasons~~. Legislation and policy will not reduce the desire of ordinary people for mobility.
- UK car ownership is much lower than in most of Europe so there is a lot of aspiration and potential demand out there, particularly in the poorer parts of cities such as Glasgow.
- Anyone visiting a City such as Munich cannot fail to be hugely impressed by its integrated, easy to use, clean and comfortable public transport system <sup>with its</sup> including buses, trams, underground, local and intercity trains <sup>and superb</sup> / airports ~~etc.~~. But Munich also has a hugely impressive road and motorway system. All modes of transport are given their place in a balanced integrated system.
- It is obviously sensible that Prestwick Airport should have obtained its own railway station after all these years but incredible that it wasn't there from the start and even more incredible that it is the only Scottish Airport to have a rail connection but, of course, it still needs roads.
- There now appears to be a consensus in favour of balanced, integrated transport systems from the professionals and from all sides of the political spectrum. What we need now is some action and sensible investment. We civil engineers (in fact even big civil engineers) should be <sup>playing</sup> ~~taking~~ a central role in the debate instead of just talking to ourselves.
- Looking further ahead, it may be that the transportation challenge will only be solved by another great technological leap forward - pollution free cars - guided cars <sup>or buses</sup> - perhaps the internet will enable us to shop, bank & work from home - perhaps we will need to start transporting people again. - <sup>perhaps all we will be able to do is price people off the roads by higher taxes & tolls and by banning cars from city centres</sup>
- Ladies and Gentlemen  
As granny said when the grandfather clock fell on the pram - time is on the wain and Bill Barr is waiting patiently to speak.  
I hope that you have found something of interest in <sup>my rambling</sup> ~~what I have had to say~~.

*maybe rambling is how to meet the challenge!*

Ernam & Prue Campbell please accept my thanks  
on behalf of all the guests who have had a most  
enjoyable evening in excellent company  
Thank you and goodnight.

A parting word to those who are staying overnight. The Chef suggested to me during the reception that I should try the big square sausages for breakfast! He said I'd never get better! I think he must be a friend of the Concierge. If you must have sausages for breakfast - take my advice. Go for the noted ones.

John Coffey