

New England University Transportation Center



NE University Transportation Center
77 Massachusetts Avenue, E40-279
Cambridge, MA 02139
Phone: 617-253-0753
Fax: 617-258-7570
web.mit.edu/utc

Principal Investigator:	Per E. Gårder	Co-Principal Investigator:	Thomas C. Sandford
Title:	Professor	Title:	Associate Professor
University:	University of Maine	University:	University of Maine
Email:	Garder@Maine.edu	Email:	sandford@umit.maine.edu
Phone:	1 207 581 2177	Phone:	1 207 581 2183

Final Report

Project Title:

Institutional Memories of Road Design

Project Number:

UMEE21-15

Project End Date:

August 31, 2011

Submission Date:

October 4, 2011

The contents of this report reflect the views of the authors, who are responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the information presented herein. This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Department of Transportation, University Transportation Centers Program, in the interest of information exchange. The U.S. Government assumes no liability for the contents or the use thereof.

The New England University Transportation Center is a consortium of 8 universities funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation, University Transportation Centers Program. Members of the consortium are MIT, the University of Connecticut, University of Maine, University of Massachusetts, University of New Hampshire, University of Rhode Island, University of Vermont and Harvard University. MIT is the lead university.

Background and Objective

Most of the engineers who were part of the design teams planning, designing and building the highways in Maine from the 1950s through the 1970s have retired. Moreover, that was the 'golden years' for highway construction in Maine when most of its limited-access highways were built. The knowledge of how the planning, design and construction of those highways occurred is starting to wane.

The objective of this project was to have influential engineers from the 'golden years' of road construction give seminars where they presented highlights from their careers and to document how large projects in the state of Maine were done and what can be learned from this for future large projects. Three 'top' Department of Transportation engineers, together with people from the contractor side, became the focus of this effort of collecting institutional memories. The three Maine Department of Transportation engineers were:

John Dority, Chief Engineer with Maine Department of Transportation (Maine DOT) until 2009, started working there 52 years earlier and is the embodiment of its institutional memory. During his long career at the Department, he worked on projects literally from Kittery to Fort Kent. He was active during the 1960s and 70s, when the state was completing the interstate highway system and erecting several notable bridges.

John E. Hodgkins, who retired after 41 years with Maine DOT in 1999. In 1957, he worked in construction engineering positions on major sections of the Interstate in southern Maine, eventually becoming the Construction Engineer for the I-295 Greater Portland Expressway System. In 1977, he became the Engineer of Traffic, championing the development of better planning practices for traffic patterns and congestion mitigation. He became the Department's Chief Construction Engineer in 1984, responsible for MDOT statewide capital construction projects supervising in excess of 150 personnel. During this time, several major projects were built in Maine including the I-395 Connector in Bangor, the Waterville Connector, the Portland Bridge, and Brunswick Bypass. He also taught transportation-engineering courses at the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Maine in 1956/57 as well as in 1992.

Theodore "Ted" Karasopoulos, who was the Chief Engineer for Maine Department of Transportation in the early 1990s, and the president of the Maine Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers in 1970-71, is still active as a consultant in the state.

The three Department of Transportation engineers were complemented by two construction engineers from the contractor side. Mr. Richard 'Dick' Martin is a former Superintendent and Operations Manager for the H.E. Sargent Company in Stillwater, Old Town, Maine. He started work for Sargent on October 27, 1953 on Maine Turnpike construction and still works seasonally for the company. Mr. Walt Parady, also a former Superintendent for H. E. Sargent, started with the company in 1942 and was part of the construction of several segments of I-95.

Seminars

Three 90-minute seminars were held during the Spring of 2010. Students as well as University of Maine staff were invited to the seminars, which were videotaped. The seminars were led by professors Thomas C. Sandford and Per E. Gårder as well as Professor Emeritus John Alexander

who after leaving the FHWA taught at the University from 1971 on until he became University of Maine Provost in the mid 1990s. The three seminars were held as follows:

- Thursday March 18, 2010. Speaker: John Dority. This seminar was attended by 26 students from CIE 225 Introduction to Transportation Engineering, 14 students from CIE 424 Urban Transportation Planning, and by several graduate students, staff and faculty members.
- Thursday April 8, 2010. Speakers: John Hodgkins and Richard "Dick" Martin. This seminar was attended by 34 students from CIE 225 Introduction to Transportation Engineering, 14 students from CIE 424 Urban Transportation Planning, and by several graduate students, staff and faculty members.
- Thursday April 22, 2010. Speakers: Theodore "Ted" Karasopoulos and Walt Parady. This seminar was attended by 28 students from CIE 225 Introduction to Transportation Engineering, 12 students from CIE 424 Urban Transportation Planning, and by several graduate students, staff and faculty members.

Documentation

Video recordings of the presentations, on DVD, can be ordered through Per Gårder by contacting him by e-mail Garder@Maine.edu