Cornell Local Roads Program Turns 65

2016 marks 65 years since the official start of the Cornell Local Roads Program! While many things have changed, the Local Roads Program is still working with the 1,600 municipal highway departments across New York State to improve local roads. We are still extending Cornell University beyond the campus.

Extension

- Highway School
  This two-and-a-half-day school brings together highway officials from all over New York State to learn and collaborate on the best ways to maintain roads and streets. The 71st Annual Highway School was held with our partner the Association of Towns of the State of New York in June with 737 attendees.

- Bridge Conference
  The 22nd Annual Bridge Conference will take place this fall in Syracuse and brings together bridge owners and designers from all over the state to share best practices and lessons learned. The Bridge Conference is a partnership of the New York State Department of Transportation, the New York State County Highway Superintendents, the Federal Highway Administration and several engineering consulting associations.

- Workshops
  We continue a long running tradition of day-long workshops around New York State. Local Roads Program workshops cover the gamut from drainage and pavement management, to legal issues and are held in every county across the State.

- Technical assistance, field visits and special training
  We meet the needs of the audience by answering questions on the phone, via email and with field visits when necessary. Special training at regional and statewide events is adjusted to meet the needs of the audience. Our summer intern program matches up undergraduates and municipalities to prepare pavement management plans.

Research

Our Directors have always performed research that is focused on the needs of local roads. For instance, here are examples we are still sharing with highway agencies developed by each of our former and current Directors.

- Why do potholes form on gravel roads? (Jim Spencer)
- How to handle extra loads on energy impacted roads? (Lynne Irwin)
- How do agencies make sure their signs are bright at night? (David Orr)

Change

How we do training has changed—we’ve gone from glass slides to electronic presentations and webinars but it still requires knowledge of the audience, knowledge of the field, and effective communication. To illustrate, the Program recently developed two smart phone applications for field crews.

Stop NY Invasives
Work Zone NYS

Remember, we all live on a local road and most trips start and end on a local road or street. We will continue to be a resource for anyone who has questions and needs technical assistance to make highways better.

Check us out on the web and Facebook . www.clrp.cornell.edu

Dr. Lynne H. Irwin, P.E. (1941-2016)

Lynne Irwin, Associate Professor and the Director of the Cornell Local Roads Program (CLRP) from 1973-2014 passed away in August. During his over 40 years with CLRP, he established the model on which the highly successful national Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is based.

He served on many Transportation Research Board (TRB) Committees and hosted the Fourth International Conference on Low Volume Roads here in Ithaca, NY.

In the research arena, Lynne was among the pioneers in the application of deflection testing in pavement structural evaluation including seasonal variations therein.

Lynne taught Highway and Pavement Engineering to Cornell students from when he arrived in 1973 until 2001.

Lynne’s most lasting contributions are those most difficult to document. They are the contributions that came about quietly, under the radar, whenever someone asked for his help. Has was, first and foremost, a teacher, whether in a classroom, or on an informal basis offering advice over the telephone to someone who reached out with a question. Lynne Irwin was always there to help.

A longer announcement is available on the Cornell Local Roads Program website at www.clrp.cornell.edu.