

# Howard Ferguson ends 37 years as a Career Public Servant

Howard Ferguson, who has served as ADMA with AES since January 1986, retired from the service on July 13, thus ending a 37 year stint as a forecaster, hydrometeorologist, research scientist, administrator and senior public servant, almost entirely with Canada's weather service.

At a crowded session in the AES Downsview Auditorium, attended by members of his family, Mr. Ferguson bade farewell to friends, colleagues, AES employees, retirees and Canadian government and other officials.

Mr. Ferguson announced that, though he was terminating some three and a half decades with the federal government, he would very shortly be beginning a new career on the international scene as co-ordinator of the Second World Climate Conference to be held in Geneva, Switzerland in November 1990. During his term as ADMA, Mr. Ferguson served as permanent representative for Canada at the World Meteorological Organization.

Despite the fact he would himself soon be travelling to a new position, it was Mr. Ferguson who wished AES 'bon voyage', meaning that he thought the new high profile of the service in the area of atmospheric research and global climate change would launch AES on an adventurous new journey towards a bright future in the 1990's.

Mr. Ferguson was appointed assistant deputy minister in January 1986, succeeding Jim Bruce who also retired after long service with AES and its predecessors. Mr. Ferguson joined the Meteorological Branch of Transport Canada in 1952 as a forecaster in Gander, Nfld. after obtaining his B.A. in Math and Physics at the University of Western Ontario. He went on to obtain an M.A. in Meteorology at the University of Toronto and by 1972 he held the post of chief of the Hydrometeorology and Environmental Impact Research Division.

Occupying several other major scientific posts in the late 70s, Mr. Ferguson then became director, Air Quality and Inter-Environmental Research Branch and in 1984 was appointed director general, Canadian Climate Centre. For two periods in his career, Mr. Ferguson did not work directly with the weather service. These were between May and September 1980 and between January 1982 and March 1984, when he served as Regional director, DOE, Ontario Region.



*ADMA Howard Ferguson and his wife Janet attend retirement proceedings in the Auditorium of the AES Downsview Headquarters Building.*

On July 31, Elizabeth Dowdeswell began her duties as the new assistant deputy minister at AES. Since 1986 she has held the position of Regional director general, DOE Ontario Region. Ms. Dowdeswell has served in several other federal government capacities, from advisor to the Treasury Board to co-chair of the International Joint Commission's Great Lakes Water Quality Board. Before joining the federal government, Ms. Dowdeswell was deputy minister of the Department of Culture and Youth in Saskatchewan (1978-82).

Besides being the author of 67 scientific publications, Mr. Ferguson gained a reputation for chairing several important international committees. These included Canadian co-chairmanship of the International Joint Commission's Water Quality Board and the IJC's Air Pollution Advisory Council. Previously co-Chairman of a UNESCO committee on the Environment, Mr. Ferguson culminated his international role by becoming chairman of the World Conference on the Changing Atmosphere, held in Toronto in June 1988.

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## Retirement Message

Our Service is a unique organization with a pride in its past and present and a basic strategic plan for its future. That future promises to be exciting because of the public concern about the changing atmosphere, which has grown remarkably over the past year or two.

I am confident that the expertise and the production and delivery systems of AES will continue to be dynamic and responsive to changes in science and technology as well as the tremendous growth of public interest.

By adapting and moving with the times, the Service can make a major contribution to a strong role for Environment Canada in national and international environmental policy development and ameliorative actions. The AES is fortunate to have an experienced environmental administrator, Elizabeth Dowdeswell, to lead it into that exciting future. I know that she will benefit from the same strong support that I have

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Canada

About 10 days before his retirement Mr. Ferguson was presented with a Citation of Excellence Award on the departmental level by deputy minister Dr. Len Good for long service and outstanding work within the department, especially in organizing the World Conference.

Highlights of the Downsview ceremony included the unveiling of a portrait of Mr. Ferguson to be hung in the "Rogue's Gallery" (pictures of former ADMAS displayed on the main third floor landing). The ceremony was performed by two former weather service heads, P.D. McTaggart-Cowan and Reg Noble.

Dr. Des O'Neill, acting DG of Weather Services Directorate, who was Master of Ceremonies during the proceedings, read more than a dozen letters of congratulations including correspondence from the Minister, Lucien Bouchard, federal ministers Jake Epp, and Leo Cadieux, under secretary of External Affairs J. H. Taylor and from the chairman of the Canadian Climate Board Dr. Kenneth Hare.

Don Smith, former DG of the AES Weather Service Directorate and retired deputy secretary general of the WMO, brought greetings "from afar" and welcomed Mr. Ferguson to his new international career. He also pointed out the presence in the audience of C. D. Berridge, permanent representative at WMO for the British Caribbean Territories.

Jim McCulloch, another retired DG, who joined the weather service the same day as Mr. Ferguson in 1952, summed up his colleague's entire career and reminded his audience that in those days the weather service had less than a dozen professional scientists. He made several presentations to Mr. Ferguson on behalf of his colleagues and AES staff, including a leather travelling companion/briefcase.

Far more than a sideshow was David Phillips' mock farewell address by "Howie Ferguson". Disguised as the spitting image of the retiring ADMA (beard and all), Phillips had Howie speak of plans to set up a "Conference on the Changing ADMA-sphere". He also placed objects in an imaginary time capsule supposed to be buried under the new Downsview South building for a hundred years. Objects included relics of the last cigarettes smoked in the Headquarters Building before the smoking ban came into effect, a copy of Zephyr and other relics of HLF's era. The revue resulted in much laughter and applause, especially from attending members of Mr. Ferguson's family.

Proceedings in the Auditorium were followed by a reception in the AES Cafeteria.

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## ADMA's retirement message cont'd.

received for the past 3½ years. I am grateful for that, and for the wonderful sendoff party arranged for my family and me on July 13.

I will be following the fortunes of AES and Environment Canada with great interest. Best of luck to all of you.

H. L. Ferguson



Former weather service heads Reg Noble (left) and P. D. McTaggart-Cowan unveil the portrait of Mr. Ferguson to be hung in the AES Downsview's third floor "rogues gallery" honoring former ADMAs.



Mr. Ferguson tries out the leather brief case presented to him by AES staff on the occasion of his retirement.



David Phillips, disguised as "Howie Ferguson", hands out a World Conference button to the real Howard Ferguson during a hilarious sketch presented during retirement celebrations in the AES Downsview Auditorium. Members of Mr. Ferguson's family look on.



Retiring ADMA Howard Ferguson and deputy minister Dr. Len Good display the former's recently received Departmental Citation of Excellence Award, together with a letter of appreciation for 37 years loyal service from Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and a painting of Ottawa's Rideau Canal.



Pre-school children at the AES Downsview Sunburst Daycare Centre assembled this imaginative Weather Is... collage in honor of ADMA Howard Ferguson's recent retirement and it was displayed in the cafeteria during the farewell reception. Supervisors at the Centre confirm that Sunburst children are weather conscious.