

Capt Patterson

Tomorrow is my last day in the workplace after over 38 years in the Canadian Forces. I decided a year ago to forgo a retirement function when I left. Nothing has happened at work to influence this decision I just don't want to be the center of attention at a function with speeches, certificates etc. when I leave. I've always thought a retirement function was kind of like being at your own funeral, but that's just me. In any case I just want to quietly fly under the radar when I go out the door and I hope that I have not upset anyone by doing it.

My time at BCE has been interesting to say the least. I have met many great people and have enjoyed working beside them. They are too numerous to mention here. There are in addition a few very special people who I have worked closely with in BCE. I hope you will forgive for not mentioning your names but you know who you are and you know how much respect I have for you.

I have enjoyed my last 5 years in BCE. It had its ups and downs, rewards and frustrations, but certainly the good times far outweighed the bad. It's a great place to work, the view from the office is outstanding and the work is rewarding. We all know there are tough times right now but the fact that we can still go out and fix problems and get things done is worthwhile and it helps other folks get on with their jobs when we fix their leaky roofs or the temperature of their workspaces and so on.

I would be lying though, if I told you that working in BCE was the best job I ever had. Nothing can compare with being a Combat Engineer supporting the Infantry, Armour and Guns in the field. Some of the best cups of coffee I have ever drank were at first light in the morning, dead tired, dirty, cold and wet while a battle group is breaking out of a 600 meter deep minefield that I had spent the entire night clearing a safe lane through it with my section of 8 guys. Whether it's been blowing the crap out of things with hundreds of pounds of explosive, building bridges, conducting mine warfare, jumping out of planes or climbing mountains, it's been 38 years of mostly good times with a few sucky times which you quickly forget. I have reached a point though, where I understand that although I loved doing all that stuff I don't want to be doing it at 57. It's a young soldier's game.

So, in closing I want to thank everyone who I came in contact with at BCE. It was a much different experience then what I had done for my first 33 years but I have no regrets at accepting a commission, a posting to Victoria and serving with you in BCE. I wish you all the best in your future endeavours.



My Band of Brothers, in Wildflecken West Germany on a Medium Girder Bridge with an APC Dozer as a backdrop. We had just finished constructing the bridge by hand. Those were the days.....