BRITAIN'S "IDEAL TAXI DRIVER" will be commencing a tour of Canada shortly, sponsored by the British Travel Association. He will tour in an English-type taxi (cab), an unusual sight on North American highways. Bert Burns, 40, has driven 500,000 miles through London streets. Of interest to other motorists will be the surprising ability of the taxi to turn almost in its own length. — CP Wirephoto

City must prepare for tourist influx when Alaska Marine Highway opens

The paramount importance in the future economy of Prince Rupert of the proposed Alaska Marine Highway was stressed by Mayor P. J. Lester in a radio talk Monday night when he gave a detailed resume of the project's scope. He said:

"The so-called Alaska Marine Highway is so much in the news these days that I think the people of Prince Rupert would like to know just what it is, what it involves for Prince Rupert; and what your civic bodies and city officials have been doing about it.

"The proposal is the State of Alaska will inaugurate a service of auto and passenger ferries, because of the impossibility of linking Alaskan island and coastal communities with each other or with the highway systems of the continent by road. These ferries will have their southern terminus at Prince Rupert; and Highway 16 will afford the connection to the 48 states, and to all of Canada also, of course.

"From Prince Rupert these ferries will run to Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, and Juneau. Connecting ferries, from Juneau will serve Skagway, Sitka and Haines; and from Haines there is a highway connection to the Alaska Highway and the interior of Alaska.

"This service will operate daily in the summer and four round trips a week in the winter. Now what would such a ferry service mean to Prince Rupert and to all the other towns along Highway 16? It would mean, right from the start, hundreds of passenger cars carrying tourists, holiday makers, and business people in both directions.

"It would be followed almost immediately by large bus companies inaugurating holiday bus trips from the States to Alaska. One such company estimates 14 to 18 thousand passengers in its first year of operation. With this type of service, people will not just drive through town and on to the ferry. Some will have 12, 16 or 18 hours to wait here. Many, I think most, will overnight here, patronizing hotels, motels, restaurants, souvenir stores and other businesses. We could easily, in fact we will, often have two or three hundred people in town waiting for a ferry — and that will keep up for all the summer months.

"Civic-minded people, and particularly your City Council and civic officials, have not been sitting back waiting to see what would happen. We have done everything we could to show our interest and to be helpful.

"The city has had representation at meetings in Juneau; we have appeared before the Alaska International Rail and Highway Commission and before committees of the State legislature. We have been in almost daily contact lately with the Southeastern Conference in Alaska.

"We know — perhaps better than the Alaskans — that helpful action is required from our Dominion government in the matter of a ferry landing here in Prince Rupert, and in maintenance of the Canadian portion of the Haines Highway; we also know what is required to make Highway 16 a first-class year-round highway. We have been working hard, and I think successfully, on all these matters.

"It is now up to the people, and particularly the business people, of Prince Rupert to be ready to provide the services which will be needed to look after the traffic which this Marine Highway will bring into Prince Rupert.

"This can mean the greatest single boost to business and employment here since the completion of the railway.

"In my opinion we have only two years to prepare.

"Transportation and Prince Rupert will be mentioned together in the news a lot this year, because about July 11 this year the new Prince Rupert airport will go into operation.

"These two projects may be quite closely connected as it is still possible we may be able to use one ferry landing for both the airport ferry and the Alaskan ferry service. Meanwhile, tenders have now been called for the airport ferry landing on Digby Island; and as far as the city's responsibilities are concerned, we will be ready to operate just as soon as the Department of Transport gives the go-ahead signal," Mayor Lester concluded.

FEATURE PHOTO WIN — Don McLeod of Vancouver, Province won the 1960 National Newspaper Award for feature photography. His winning picture of cyclists in action was taken through the wheel of a bicycle. — CP Photo

Arson suspected in packing fires

KELOWNA (CP) — RCMP and members of the British Columbia fire marshal's office are investigating the possibility of arson in two major packinghouse fires which have caused an estimated $1,300,000 damage here in less than a month.

Three fire departments, comprising 75 men, brought a fire that caused about $500,000 damage under control early Tuesday.

On March 14, four packinghouses were destroyed in an $800,000 blaze.

Firemen fought for four hours Monday night and early Tuesday in the poisonous fumes of cyanide gas.

A large Kelowna Growers Exchange packinghouse in a warehouse complex and an adjacent Occidental packinghouse cold storage plant were destroyed.

1961 Arts Fair dates set for April 14, 15

The seventh annual Civic Centre Arts Fair will be held on April 14 and 15 this year, announced director Joy Hinman, and will encompass arts, crafts and related subjects.

Previously the Fair was known as "The Pot Pourri."

In addition to displays of Civic Centre class work there will be sections in arts and crafts for competitors of all ages. Demonstrations will also be staged to show the public the type and standard of the work handled.

The auditorium will house, Mrs. Hinman said, a section called "The Bazaar" where clubs and service groups may set up white elephant stalls, sell imported crafts or home crafts and other similar items.

Space has also been reserved for the display of art, heirloom crafts, or a national display of crafts. Those interested in entering articles or displays or stalls in those sections should do so as soon as possible, said Mrs. Hinman.

Charges will be made, she continued, of either $1 per booth foot frontage or 2 per cent of total sales for the two days of the Fair. Persons entering competitive sections will not be charged. Revenue from the others will be used to cover expenses and insurance for the Fair.

The times during the Arts Fair will be open on both days are 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and again from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m.

Clubmen back alcohol clinic

Prince Rupert Rotary club has voted to sponsor a one-day clinic to be staged here by the Alcoholism Foundation of British Columbia either late in April or early in May.

The decision followed a recent meeting of club representatives with H. C. Huggins, director of education for the foundation.

To sponsor the clinic, a committee is to be formed composed of representatives of the Skeena Health Unit, the Indian Affairs branch, the Rotary club, Rev. Dr. R. W. K. Elliott, Magistrate E. T. Applewhaite, the Probation branch and the Prince Rupert Medical association.

It is expected that MLA William H. Murray and Mayor P. J. Lester will be patrons of the committee.

Coming here to hold the clinic will be Alcoholism Foundation clinic physician O. Minovitz, senior counsellor S. E. Kerslake, executive director E. D. McRae and Mr. Huggins.

Mr. Huggins told the Rotarians that the clinic will make a survey of the alcoholism problem's significance in the community, establish the need of skilled help, show films and hold a panel to find out what is to be the local committee's next step.

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CITY COUNCIL BRIEFS

Cleanup campaign to start April 11 says superintendent

The city works department plans to commence its annual clean-up campaign on April 1 until April 13, Carl Gustafson told city council Monday night.

This will allow, he explained no conflict with the city blacktopping program which is scheduled to start April 17 in those areas which have been fitted with the sewer and street lighting installations.

Last year, he said, the clean-up campaign was delayed until May and seriously held up the blacktopping program.

Expenses listed showed that last year the campaign cost the city $1,310.45 and 450 calls were made. In 1959 136 calls cost $550.19, and in 1958 231 calls cost $742.36.

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Four trade licences were approved Monday night. They were: Walter D. Gurvich Pacific Cabs of 714 Third Avenue West, taxi operator; Salvatore Ciccone, 600 Ninth Avenue West, landscape contractor; John E. Peterson, Peterson's Appliance Service, servicing machines and equipment; Reuben D. Scherk, 745 Seventh Avenue West, Zone Roofing Products, peddler.

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H. W. Harding, lands commissioner, assured the city council in a letter Monday night that the city would be informed if the department intended to lift the reserve placed on Sections 4 and 9. The present reserve, he stated, will remain in force for a period of one year. It is at present zoned as farm land.

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The finance committee reported to council that a land sale had been approved of Lots 11 and 12, block 38, section 7, map 923 to Nicholas and Carole M. Negraiff for the sum of $220.

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A new fire hydrant will be installed at the intersection of Eleventh and Water Street by the superintendent of works at a cost of $525, the board of works committee informed council.

It was also approved that the sum of $2,982.39 be paid Associated Engineering Services Ltd., of Vancouver for design and supervision work during February.

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Permission was granted by council for Superior Auto Service on the Corner of Third and Park Avenues to be listed amongst service stations receiving late and holiday opening permits.

An application by the same firm for the rezoning of Lots 40, 41, 42, 43, Block 29, section 1 from Zone 'C' (local shopping zone) to Zone 'E' (light industry zone) was approved by council subject to the passing of the appropriate bylaw following a public hearing.

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The police and traffic committee approved, subject to endorsement by the chief of police, diagonal parking extensions eastward on the north side of First Street to Seventh Street and also on the north side of First Avenue in front of the Commercial Hotel.

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Bylaw No. 1468, land sale bylaw 1961, passed its final reading and was adopted Monday night by city council.

Rail company shows deficit

OTTAWA (CP) — A continent-wide nosedive in transport traffic hit the Canadian National Railways in 1960 with the biggest deficit of its 37-year history.

The publicly-owned company went in the red by $67,496,777, which was $23,908,487 higher than the deficit of 1959 and some $6,000,000 higher than the record deficits of the depression years of 1931-32.

In an austerity-sized annual report tabled in the Commons today by Transport Minister Balcer, the company blamed its financial record chiefly on an "unexpected fall-off in traffic" that struck the entire surface transport industry of North America last year.

"Canadian National Railways was severely affected by the decline which closely paralled a general slowing-down in the rate of economic expansion in the country," said the report.

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