

Geotechnical Instrumentation News

John Dunicliff

Introduction

This is the forty-second episode of GIN. Very little for you this time – just the closure to the September 2004 article by Long et al about measuring pore water suction in glacial till, and this brief column.

Hey – Is There Anyone Out There Who Would Like GIN to Continue?

My earlier pleas for articles seem to have fallen on deaf ears. If you'd like GIN to continue, **please** send me a 200- to 300-word (no more) abstract of something that you'd like to write about, and we can go from there.

When I first started GIN eleven years

ago I hoped that it would become a minimum-effort way for us to communicate useful things among ourselves, and therefore that you'd send me lots of goodies. But that was clearly over-optimistic. It's up to you – my stock of possible future articles is small.

Reminder about Florida Course

I don't know whether you'll be reading this before or after the course. If before, it won't be too late to register. The course will be in Clearwater, Florida on March 13 thru 15, 2005 (www.doce-conferences.ufl.edu/geotech/).

For Monty Python Fans

Michael Palin has been touring around

the world and telling about it on BBC TV. He was in Bhutan, and described their laid back way of life. No such thing as GNP. Only GNH – Gross National Happiness. Not too shabby!

Closure

Please send contributions to this column, or an article for GIN, to me as an e-mail attachment in MSWord, to [johndunicliff@attglobal.net](mailto: johndunicliff@attglobal.net), or by fax or mail: Little Leat, Whisselwell, Bovey Tracey, Devon TQ13 9LA, England. Tel. and fax +44-1626-832919.

Here's lookin' at you, kid! (USA). Thanks to Charlie Daugherty for reminding me of this Humphrey Bogart classic.

Authors' Closure "Some Experience in Measuring Pore Water Suction in Dublin Glacial Till"

Michael Long
Chris Menkiti
Ben Follett

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The authors thank John Dunicliff for his discussion, which highlights some noteworthy opinions. We would like in the closure to clarify a couple of points he has made.

Bullet Point 9: [*"I believe that the advantage of the alternative system includes the ability to install several piezometers in a single borehole by us-*

ing the fully-grouted method (yes, I appreciate that this was eventually done at DPT, but it was not a consideration at the time when the option was selected)"]. The ability to install several piezometers in one borehole was considered at the time the option was selected. However, it was preferable to avoid the risk of vertical connectivity

between piezometers in one borehole. The less risky option of one piezometer per borehole was pursued. Nevertheless, cost constraints from tender discussions led to a relaxation of the specifications to allow the use of several piezometers in each borehole.

Bullet Point 1: [*"I believe that advantages also result from the use of the*

solenoid valves, which would have reduced response time under normal operation, and reduced recovery time after de-airing (yes, I appreciate that in the main works “the readings recorded ...recovered rapidly following de-airing”, but was this known at the time when the option was selected?” J). The response time for the system that was utilised was appreciated at the time the option was selected, based on experience of the use of the plaster of Paris system in Europe, and from the site trial excavation carried out for the Dublin Port Tunnel prior to design and specification of the main excavation works.

The authors’ comment that the alternative scheme was still under development at the time of the tender process is based on direct information provided

by the tenderers. The alternative system investigated at the time was based on using solenoid or hydraulic valves at the tip of the piezometer.

The discussor’s final comment that whole life cost should be considered is absolutely correct. It may be noted, however, that in a large project such as the one we discuss, a pool of good quality engineering resources/staff was already in place to service the whole project. Accordingly, the cost of “high level engineering supervision” and “performing all the tasks that follow” are very much reduced as advantages of scale and of drawing from an existing resource come into play. This does not mean to say that with modifications, a similar approach could not be used for small scale jobs.

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