

St. Andrews water tower a thing of beauty

By Allison Finnamore
Contributing Writer

The tiny resort town of St. Andrews-by-the-Sea, located on the coast of the Bay of Fundy in southern New Brunswick, attracts thousands of visitors each year.

The majority of them drove by a common sight found in any municipality – the water tower. The grey, circular holding cell isn't exactly an attractive welcome to the quaint tourist town, or any other community. The unsightliness was exacerbated by the annual tradition of spray-painted graffiti by St. Andrews' high school graduating class. But the water reservoirs are essential.

John and Lucinda Flemer love beauty. The St. Andrews family is the donor of the land for Kingsbrae Garden, a 27-acre site located on the edge of town. Named one of Canada's Top Ten Public Gardens, the garden is built on the grounds of several old estates and features 50,000 flowers, shrubs and trees.

In 2002, the Flemers decided it was time to turn the ugly water tower into a thing of beauty.

Andrea Mulder-Slater, Geoff Slater and Janteje Blokhuis-Mulder make up Jarea Art Studio in St. Andrews. They were recruited to help with the water tower's transformation and also to get the community's youth involved. The Flemers knew Jarea, both artists and teachers, had a good relationship with young people and were talented artists.

Mulder-Slater said the Flemers had an idea of what they wanted the water tower mural to look like, and about six drawings went back and forth before a final design was selected. She and Slater then set off for the high school to recruit help, signing-up six students.

Three of them were involved in co-operative education classes, so their work on the water tower helped them earn credits towards



Photo by Allison Finnamore

The water tower in St. Andrews, N.B., was transformed from an ugly, grey structure to this welcoming depiction of one of the town's attractions, the Kingsbrae Garden.

graduation. Others dropped in throughout the project to help out where they could.

A canvass of this size was new to Jarea. The rounded mural is about 30 feet (nine metres) high and 150 feet (46 metres) long. The medium – marine enamel – was also new. Mulder-Slater said the paint was thick and sticky, "almost like painting with glue." Most of the colours were mixed, she added, since marine enamel tends to only be available in primary colours. When the mural was finished, about 50 gallons of paint had been applied and hundreds of paintbrushes had been used, as well as dozens of gallons of paint thinner.

She said they also faced the challenge of painting on a structure that, at any moment, could be completely wet.

"It was done with panic," said Mulder-Slater. "We really didn't

know how much time we had before the weather changed and the condensation came."

Work began last year at the end of April and ended in June.

Slater noted, too, that painting the rounded structure needed some adjustment in thinking. "Because it's on a curve, a lot of straight lines aren't straight," he explained.

In addition to the students' help, the project drew in others from the community. One lent his scaffolding; another, his air compressor. Mulder-Slater said dozens of residents and tourists stopped by during the project to offer encouragement.

It was a worthwhile project, Mulder-Slater said, calling it the "chance of a lifetime" and an opportunity to turn an eyesore into eye candy.

P.E.I. to host 57th Annual ACWWA Conference

By Andy Walker
Contributing Writer

H₂O – Available on Tap will be the theme for the 57th Annual Conference of the Atlantic Canada Water Works Association (ACWWA), which will be held October 17-19 at

the Delta Prince Edward in Charlottetown.

In keeping with its regional roots, the conference rotates among the four provinces. Craig Walker, utility manager with the Charlottetown Water and Sewer Department, is the conference chair.

Walker held a similar role when the event was last held in P.E.I. in 2000, and many of the same people are back on his committee

this time around.

"During their visit to Charlottetown, we invite all delegates to explore all we have to offer: fine dining, festivals, historic parks and tours, and shopping," he said.

The conference's opening ceremonies are slated for 8:15 a.m. on Oct. 17. The keynote speaker for the morning session has not yet been confirmed.

Following a mid-morning nutrition break, delegates will attend their choice of sessions on water treatment or wastewater. Those choosing the former topic will hear a presentation by Robert Abernethy on a case history of a multi-stage filter package plant, and an explanation of the building block concept used on Manitoulin Island by Scott Pallwitz. On the wastewater side, the following sessions are planned: Bioxide and Bioxide AQ Odour and Corrosion Control with Byron Box, and Is Your Odour Corrosive? with Colin Christie.

The afternoon session will be divided into workshops on underground infrastructure and regulatory affairs. The speakers for the underground affairs component will be Bob Walker (Minimizing Failures with PVC Water Mains); Gerry Isenor (Asset Management of In Street Infrastructure) and Osana Hunaidi (Acoustic Methods for Locating Leaks).

On the regulator affairs side, the sessions will deal with well field protection on P.E.I. (George Somers); New Brunswick's source to tap drinking water protection program (Tony Whalen) and the Nova Scotia water protection strategy (Mark Farrell).

The wastewater topics to be addressed during the morning session on Oct. 18 include: Charlottetown's pollution control plant upgrade and expansion with Craig Walker and Mike Abbott; Densadeg High Rate Clarifier/Thickener with Paul Williams; land-based dispersal of municipal sewage effluent with Kelly Galloway; and ballasted flocculation for combined sewer overflow treatment with Christian Desjardins.

The other morning sessions will address the topic of controls and instrumentation. They include: Statistical Process Control (L.M. Emms); City of Moncton SCADA System (Ensor Nicholson and L. Mooers); AWWA Section Public Affairs Model Program (Hershel Guttman); and the AWWA Water Loss Control Committee Report (Kenneth Brothers).

The afternoon sessions on underground infrastructure will include: Get the Lead Out of Waterworks Brass (Gerry Gunn); Petrolatum Anti-Corrosion Systems (Kevin McMeachan); and Glass Lining and Ceramic Epoxy Lining (Robert A. Hollenbaugh).

The other afternoon sessions will feature a discussion on storm and water treatment with Fabio Tonto (Stormceptor Monitoring and Modeling) and Prefabricated Drinking Water Treatment Plants for Small Municipalities, led by Pierre Lehay. Al Daza and Hussein Halaweh will also present a session entitled, One Size Fits All? Don't You Believe It!

For more information, or to register, contact Betty Pryor at (902) 629-4014, or bpryor@city.charlottetown.pe.ca. Current ACWWA news can be found online at www.acwwa.ns.ca.



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