

Shawp Talk

Volume 43, no. 3

NEWS FOR EMPLOYEES AND FRIENDS

September 2009

The Men of the Hess

The new concrete products plant at Lantz – informally called “the Hess” – has been up and running a few months now. The six core employees of the Hess production team have immersed themselves in building their knowledge and skill on the new equipment. Management is thrilled with their progress and their dedication.

Production Manager Phil Langille has been leading the charge. “This team has worked really hard and learned quickly,” he says. “We needed to get this plant up and running and they’ve all contributed enormously. These employees are the reason we’re already making good product.”

“We chose Brick Division employees who we thought would be a good fit for the machine and who would be keen to learn,” adds Phil. “And they’ve really proved that we picked the right guys.”

Without any further ado, here they are: the men of the Hess.

Tim Dauphinee, Lead Hand

As Lead Hand at the new Hess plant, Tim is in charge of organizing orders, ensuring there is enough product for customers, and supervising the work of the four machine operators and one forklift operator.

“It’s going very well. We’ve got a good group of guys here and we all get along well.” He pauses and laughs. “So far!”

Prior to coming to the Hess plant, Tim was Lead Hand at the Block Plant. He enjoys the bustling routine of his new position. “Everyone is always doing something. We’re always busy.” The plant is currently operating eight hours a day with occasional overtime as they play catch-up in the lively summer season.

“The best part of the job is seeing the product as it goes out the road,” says Tim. “It’s a nice looking product. The new machinery is making quite a difference in how our products look.”

After 14 years at Shaw, Tim is glad that he’s finally made the pages of *Shawtalk!*



continued next page

The Men of the Hess *continued*

John Snow, Forklift Operator

John Snow is excited and impressed by the newness of the whole Hess operation. “That’s the best part for me,” says the former Block employee. “The equipment is a big improvement over the old paver machine. It makes a very nice-looking product. It’s also easier to handle.”



The forklift operator in the yard, John spends his days picking up the cured paver product as it comes off the conveyor and storing it in the yard for seven days. After it’s tested, John loads the trucks, and gets the product ready to ship out. “It’s very busy. We’re constantly going all day.” John is also considered the “gate-keeper” who ensures no untested or unapproved product leaves his yard.

A seven-year employee of Shaw, John says the Hess experience has been a great opportunity. “The team is just like a family,” he says. “Everyone is learning together. If one of the guys doesn’t know something about the machine yet, there’s another guy who can teach him.”

Joey Parks, Machine Operator

The new kid on the block, Joey has been with Shaw about 18 months. As the mixer operator for the old Zenith machine at the Lantz site, he’s the guy who can best articulate just how amazing the new equipment is.

“The new machine is computerized and a lot less complicated when it comes to troubleshooting,” he says. “There’s no more second-guessing or double-

checking. We can trust the machine is doing it right.”



Joey enjoyed learning both the computerized aspects of the new machine and the new mix designs. He also appreciated the fact that the Hess company sent three of their employ-

ees from Germany to help assemble the equipment. “Helping to build the machine was great because we really learned as we went along,” he says. “And having the guys from Hess on site to answer our questions was ideal.”

Joey adds that he’s still learning new things on a daily basis, but the best part of his job remains the same! “I love knowing we can manufacture so much product and it’s all really good quality.”

Chris White, Machine Operator

Chris White is another transplant from the Block plant. In his previous job, he was known as a jack-of-all-trades and thankfully in his new job, he hasn't lost any of that variety. "One day, you're running the machine, the next day you're on the lift truck, the next day you're on the cuber." The four machine operators are able to rotate jobs at the new plant because they've been trained in every position.

A Shaw employee for the last 12 years, Chris had a bit more of an adventurous start than the other



guys. He broke his foot a few months ago, which inevitably led to less physical work. "I took that negative and turned it into a positive," he said, noting that he was the operator who got to spend most of the time in the control room, concentrating on learn-

ing the technical aspects of the new equipment.

Chris commends Brick's upper management for the way they involved everyone in the process of setting up the plant. "We were doing things that typically operators aren't involved in." Chris, who recently travelled to the States for training on the complex ACT batching system, says putting the plant together helped him understand the machinery from the nuts and bolts on up.

Chris also appreciated the involvement of management right on the plant floor. "I have a different appreciation for what management does in the office and what their role is," he says. "It was interesting to learn from them and to realize how important it is to the business to make good block."

Shawn Baltzer, Machine Operator

Shawn Baltzer is at the other end of the spectrum. After 21 years with the company, he'll earn a quarter-century watch in just four years.



Completely new to machine operating, Shawn is enjoying his job immensely. "This is a big difference for me," says the former manual labourer in the Brick plant. "You have to really use your head

running the machine and I like that."

When the plant first opened, he wasn't convinced that the end product was all that pretty. "We weren't sure we knew what we were doing in the beginning," he laughs. "But we're at the point now where things are looking really good."

As a person who enjoys gaining new skills and knowledge, the steep learning curve of the Hess is perfect. Shawn was recently sent to the States to train on the complex ACT batching system. "There was a lot of training that went into learning both the new machine and the new colour mixer," he says. "I feel like we're still training because every day there is still something new."

HESS MEN continues next page

Grant Wilson, Machine Operator

Grant has been working with Shaw since he was 16. Starting as a summer student and fol-



lowing in the footsteps of his father, a long-time Shaw employee, Grant has worked at both the Block plant and Nova Scotia Sand & Gravel.

“I love my new job,” he says. “And

it’s nice to have shiny, brand-new gear.” As a former machine operator of aging equipment, Grant can appreciate how modern equipment helps with both job satisfaction and product consistency.

Echoing some of the sentiments of his co-workers, Grant is revelling in the way the new team has gelled. “We’re just like a family, really. We work well together and get along really well.” He notes that this ease makes work days much more pleasant. “When people are all getting along, you can work so much better and be more productive.”

An Inaugural Gala

On a beautiful sunny day in early July, the new Hess plant at Lantz got a proper kick-off celebration. Hot coffee, treats, and speeches under the ceremonial tent were all on offer for Shaw Brick’s customers, contractors, and suppliers. “We’ve made a significant capital investment with this plant that we’re all proud of,” says General Sales Manager Glenn Hardie. “We were keen to showcase the new equipment and also to recognize the efforts and contribution of an awful lot of people, including our employees, vendors, and suppliers.”

General Manager Terry MacDow and CEO Bert Frizzell talked about the importance of innovation to The Shaw Group. “This is a brand-new, state-of-the-art concrete products machine,” said Terry. “In fact, it’s the newest landscape products machine installed in Canada and probably in all of North America.”

SHINY AND EXPENSIVE

The plant, which was three years in the planning and execution, cost more than \$4 million dollars to get up and running. Terry told the assembled crowd that the question he was most often asked was why now? Why during the most uncertain of economic times?

“To defer or delay this investment would have only served to weaken our position in the marketplace and put our business in jeopardy.” He explained that the threats of increased competition, declining efficiencies due to ageing equipment, and limited product selection have all been addressed with this investment. “We have strengthened our market position into the future and demonstrated confidence in our people, our customers, and the markets.”



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THE FULL MEAL DEAL

Six groups were taken on coordinated tours of the new plant in full operation mode. “The folks on the tour were not only impressed with the scope of the operation but engaged and inquisitive,” says Glenn. “They were very interested in the mechanics of the equipment and about the products that we’re now able to manufacture. They were quite enthusiastic.”

As for take-aways from the event, Glenn believes that attendees left with the knowledge that Shaw Brick is in this business for the long haul. “We’re investing in the future of the landscape industry with committed employees, top-of-the-line equipment, and products the market wants,” he says. “We’re here to stay.”

Many thanks to six core employees of the Hess Production Team – Shawn Baltzer, Tim Dauphinee, Joey Parks, John Snow, Chris White, and Grant Wilson – for all their hard work. Also to Project Manager Brady Hawley and Production Manager Phil Langille for keeping the project on track. Kudos to Roger Perry, John Battcock, Randi Buchi, and the finance team for a great business plan; to Kevin McGinnis for his innovative product selection; and the rest of the sales and marketing team for being solution-focused. And last, but not least, to Jennifer Hall for coordinating this outstanding celebratory event.

Wash, wash, wash!

Handwashing
is the BEST WAY to prevent
infection with H1N1

Download the handwashing poster
(from the *Shawtalk* intranet page)
and post it where your family will see it

Accident-Free and Proud of It

The folks over at Shaw Resources manufacture wood pellets that heat our homes, sand for our children to play in, and pre-mixed concrete for our yard and garden projects. Even more quietly, though, they churn out something else of great importance – safety milestones.

Recently two employees were acknowledged for their safety records. Paul Spinney feeds sand to the wash plant at Keddy Aggregates. Every year for the last 15 years, Paul has ensured that approximately 400,000 tons of sand gets loaded into the hopper correctly, so the sand can be thor-



Paul Spinney, driver of The Shaw Group's largest loader

oughly washed. Even more amazing than the sheer amount of sand Paul handles is the fact that he's done it all without a single lost time accident.

No easy feat, says Operations Manager Jeff Newton. “Paul’s got a very big machine – it’s the biggest loader The Shaw Group owns.

As the operator of that machine, he is extremely conscientious and careful and has a track record to be proud of.”

Matt Ferguson, Silica Pit and Washplant Supervisor just passed five years accident free. Matt also functions as the Divisional Environmental and Exploration Manager at Shaw Resources.

In addition to these individual awards, 15 employees at Nova Scotia Sand & Gravel and Sunray Products, also earned an accident-free group award. The team is composed of Don Taylor, Ross Parker, Harry McMullen, Rodney McCulloch, Jan Isenor, Nathan Dixon, Robert MacKinnon, Percy MacAskill, Dave Day, Ian Barbrick, Wayne Kennedy, Doug Brown, Todd Gilby, Kenny Ross, Brent McMullen, Dwayne Campbell, and Scott Hardie. This was their sixth consecutive year without a lost time accident.

Jeff Newton reports that actively keeping safety records and acknowledging employees seems to encourage a culture of safety at Resources. “I think it makes employees more accountable to each other,” he says. “And it keeps the notion of safety front and centre.”

A River Runs Through It

The mammoth pipes we told you about in the last issue of *Shawptalk* have been cast and transported to New Brunswick for installation. Shaw Pipe shipped the 104 pieces of culvert, each weighing 70,000 pounds, over 10 days this summer. At over 14 feet across, each piece had to be transported separately and made an extremely wide load. The culverts are being installed by the New Brunswick Department of Transportation and will house a river with a road running over top.



Because of its weight, each section of culvert required its own flatbed trailer.



Below, Manzer Brook is perhaps the very first river to be "twinning."





At left is the endpiece of one of the pipes where Manzer Brook will exit into the open. The end is shaped much like the spout of a pitcher. Imagine it buried in earth that is sloped at the exit to match the angle of the "spout."

Below, looking from inside one of the twin pipes out through the brook's exit into a stony bed.



Planning for Life's Transitions

In these uncertain economic times, The Shaw Group has set out to equip its employees with some savvy financial skills for retirement.

In 2009, two Retirement Planning Seminars were held – one in HRM and the other in Shelburne for the employees of Ven-Rez. The idea to put on these informational workshops stemmed from the elimination of mandatory retirement legislation this past July. “We wanted to help people plan for their retirement knowing that they now had more flexibility and choices about when to retire,” says Glenda Hill, Manager of Human Resources.

MONEY IN THE BANK

Shaw employees over the age of 57 were invited to attend these day-long seminars and bring their spouse or partner. About 20 people attended each of the seminars and heard from a combination of internal and external experts on all things financial. Benefits, private pensions, Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, and provincial health benefits were just some of the topics discussed.

“There was lots of information on figuring out exactly what your retirement income might look like,” says Glenda. “Do you have savings? Can you live on your pension plan? What are the government benefits available to you?”

Glenda reports that excellent feedback came flooding in from participants. They benefitted not only from the money talk, but also from a special presentation on lifestyle and relationship issues. It shed light on the stress, anxiety, and challenges that can be caused by a retirement. Suggestions on how to successfully navigate this shift, in addition to some sage advice on how to ensure relationships survive retirement, were offered.

WHATEVER YOU DO, KEEP MOVING

“We wanted people to start to think about retirement and what that might mean to their relationships and to their lifestyle,” says Glenda. “A lot of our employees

are physically active in their work. When they retire, we'd like them to continue to be fit.”

To that end, Shaw had two fitness and nutrition experts come in for “healthy” breaks in the mid-morning and afternoon. “The trainers for the Shelburne session were just fantastic,” says Glenda. “They basically brought their gym in and had people up out of their chairs being physical and having fun.”

As they say, “a good time was had by all!” Subsequent retirement planning sessions are planned to further empower people with the knowledge they need to make sound decisions about their future.

Financing Your Future

Shawptalk thought it would be helpful to provide answers to some of the questions people ask about their investments.

1 • Things still seem a bit rocky in global financial markets – should I be pulling my money out and putting it elsewhere?

You may wish to ask the advice of a financial advisor and work with this person to review where your money is and assess the level of risk associated with your investments. Most financial advisors will tell you that you should stay focused on the long term. It is often advisable for an individual or family to work with a financial advisor to figure out ways to achieve their retirement goals.

Studies have shown that during stressful times, people tend to invest their money in what's familiar because the risk somehow seems lower. The problem with this rationale is that all contributions can end up invested in the same type of asset class, which limits diversification. It's better to keep your investments spread over different asset classes to help minimize risk and maintain a long-term savings strategy.

2 • What does “diversification” mean?

Diversification simply means spreading your contributions over various types of investments to reduce your risk of loss. By combining investments that don't react the same way to market changes, the strength of one investment will balance any weakness in the other, reducing your overall risk.

3 • What does the term “risk” mean?

Risk refers to the potential for loss. There are three types of risk factors to consider when choosing your investments: volatility, inflation, and interest rate risk.

Volatility This is the most commonly known investment risk factor. When purchasing stocks or shares of businesses, these investments carry no guarantees and have unit prices that fluctuate according to the market. Investing regularly through your group retirement plan gives you the benefit of dollar cost averaging, which means that over the long term, the impact of volatility is minimized.

Interest Rate An investment risk that is also sometimes overlooked is the risk associated with guaranteed investments. When you buy a guaranteed investment, such as a compound interest account, you lock in at a specific interest rate for a certain period of time. However, if interest rates rise during your term, you have missed the opportunity to lock in at a higher interest rate.

Inflation You should always be aware of inflation, regardless of what investments you make. Inflation is a long-term investment risk that is often overlooked. It can erode the purchasing power of your savings unless your investment earns a rate of return that equals or outpaces inflation.

There will be risk associated with every investment decision you make – even if you decide not to invest at all. Although you can't completely eliminate risk, understanding it will help you decide the level of risk you can live with.

4 • Can risk be minimized?

Diversification can help minimize your investment risk. Most financial advisors will tell you that diversifying your portfolio is the key to a good investment plan. Yes, you want to invest in a wide variety of investments to reduce your risk, but you also want to select funds within *your* comfort level of risk.

Investment personality questionnaires are available online. You may find these helpful to discover your feelings toward investment risk – in other words, your risk tolerance. The key is to choose investments that are right for you.

It's difficult to completely eliminate risk. Driving a car or crossing the street involve risk – there's no “sure thing.” And there's no “sure-thing” investment. All financial investments have risks associated with them, but not all risks are equal.

5 • When is the right time to invest?

Some people invest in their RRSPs by making one contribution a year during RRSP season. What if the markets are high then? Your money buys less.

You can smooth out the highs and lows of the market by contributing a set amount on a regular basis throughout the year. This strategy is called dollar cost averaging. You take advantage of this strategy by contributing through payroll deductions.

Dollar cost averaging is an excellent way to minimize volatility and maximize returns. By purchasing the same dollar amount of investments on a regular basis, you buy more units when prices are low. Similarly, when prices are high, you'll be purchasing fewer units. Overall, you may reduce your average cost per unit over the long-term and take the guessing out of when to invest.

The bottom line is, dollar cost averaging is one of the easiest and most effective ways to build wealth over time.

If you are interested in learning more about investment decisions or have specific questions about your pension plan and benefits, information sessions will be held this fall. These sessions always include a question and answer session. If you have specific questions you would like answered prior to the meeting, please forward them to lashley@shawgrouppltd.com.

Coated Pipe Heads for the Bottom

Over last summer Shaw & Shaw coated all 175 kilometres of the pipe that will run along the ocean floor carrying natural gas from the Deep Panuke field to Nova Scotia. The pipe has been loaded from the yard at Sheet Harbour onto the pipe-lay vessel *Lorelay*, and the pipe will be laid in October.

Shaw & Shaw is a partnership between Bredero Shaw, an international company that develops and manufactures pipe coating solutions, and The Shaw Group. The \$42 million pipe-coating contract was with EnCana, developer of Deep Panuke.



Above, the loadout of coated pipe has begun to make a small dent in the stockpile at the Sheet Harbour plant.

Right, the pipe are hoisted onto a truck for transfer, a few at a time, to the ship in the background.





Below, this is how the coated pipe look stacked very deeply inside the lay-ship Lorelay.

Bottom, while Lorelay loads in the background, three pipe supply vessels arrive. They will load the remainder of the pipe and transfer them to Lorelay at sea.



Not Just a Greenwash

Clayton Developments has been “doing it right the first time” for half a century. It was this reputation for excellence and leadership in planning communities



that attracted engineer Scott MacCallum. PEI-born Scott had been working in the States since graduating from university. After more than three years in Richmond, Virginia, employed by a site development consulting firm known for their “green” outlook,

Scott became a bit of an expert in this field.

He’s brought this expertise to his work with Clayton’s newest and largest master-planned community development – The Parks of West Bedford, a joint project between Clayton and Cresco under the umbrella of West Bedford Holdings Limited (WBHL). For the last two years, Scott has been working hard to ensure the environmental friendliness of this 1300-acre community that will eventually house upwards of 20,000 people.

GREEN FIRSTS

“The driving theme behind this development was to provide something that went above and beyond what even Clayton had been doing from a green perspective,” says Scott. According to General Manager Michael Hanusiak, Clayton was one of the first land development companies in HRM to incorporate “green” features into their developments and homes. “We built the first ‘enviro-home’ in Canada over 20 years ago,” he says. “In each and every one of our developments we’ve incorporated designs that take the environment into consideration.” In fact, says Scott, he was surprised by how many components of the sustainable, green movement Clayton was already using and

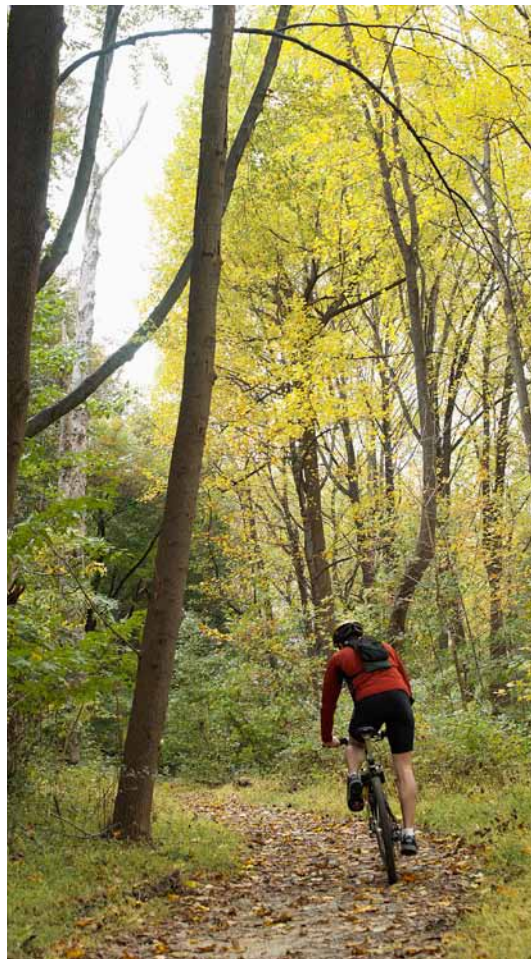
Even when West Bedford is fully developed, it will have nature trails for all to enjoy.

not really bragging about!

For the purposes of The Parks of West Bedford, the company broke the environmental considerations down into five categories: energy efficiency, land use and housing, water conservation, sustainable transportation, and the natural environment.

In terms of energy efficiency, one of the most important factors is that the entire community and business park will eventually be served by natural gas. “That’s a real plus from the energy perspective,” says Scott, noting that one of their other communities – Russell Lake – offers natural gas as well. “It certainly burns much cleaner than a lot of other fossil fuels.” In addition, the company has been investigating the possibility of having a geothermal energy option.

Each of the 6,500 future units that will populate the community will be EnerGuide-rated. “This is unique to Halifax,” says Scott, who also notes that all



homeowners will be given a comprehensive manual for assistance in making green choices. *The Best Management Practices Homeowners’ Guide* covers the gamut from how to use your compost bin to how to keep your lawn toxin-free. “It teaches homeowners how to maintain their properties from a green perspective,” says Scott, “and helps us maintain the natural environment within the community.”

BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

One of the most important aspects in the planning process

was the preservation of the natural environment. This didn't just include how much green space to keep, although Clayton has gone above and beyond what is required by municipal standards. It also emphasized the importance of respecting the hydrologic cycle and improving water quality.

The Parks of West Bedford is located within the HRM's serviceable boundary, meaning municipal water and sanitary services are provided. However, over the years, adjacent developments with septic drain-fields have damaged the watershed (an area of land that drains downslope toward a common body of water) and lakes with excessive phosphorous leaching from septic drain fields. "The Bedford Waters Advisory Board were concerned about these negative impacts," says Scott, "and welcomed WBHL's commitment to best management practices as presented in the master stormwater management plan for the Parks of West Bedford."

Scott and the Clayton team put a lot of hard work, thought, and intensive planning into their stormwater management and wetland preservation approach. They took great care to follow the natural drainage corridors and incorporate management practices that had been tried, proven, and used in the States for decades.

In this compact community Clayton also scores green points for incorporating "active living" trails that allow residents to bike, walk, or rollerblade to various points within the development. In addition, there will be nodes of mass transportation scattered throughout the neighbourhoods to increase connectivity and decrease vehicle reliance and fossil fuel emissions.

Low-flow toilets and urinals, solar ready homes, and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings – the list of large and small environmental considerations goes on and on. In an era of corporate "greenwashing," Clayton is committed to the principles of sustainable development.

"We've certainly gone above and beyond the typical commitment from a development standpoint," says Scott. "This is the norm here at Clayton, though – the general theme of all our developments is 'do it right.'"

"MacGyver" Retires

Bernard Myrick is missed at Ven-Rez. Just ask supervisor Ken Arenburg, who worked with him for 34 years. "We ate our dinner together in my office every day," says Ken. "We told a few jokes and just enjoyed each other's company."



Bernie Myrick, left, with Ken Arenburg at the retirement party.

With Ven-Rez since 1975, Bernie started out in the steel shop, where he worked for two years. He then moved on to maintenance, where he stayed. Called a jack-of-all-trades by everyone who knew him, Bernie could make or fix anything. "I saw him do things – building or repairing – that we thought could not be done," says Production Manager Wayne Williams. "Bernie is a person with a very special talent. There was no project that he wouldn't happily tackle."

In fact, Ken often thought Bernie's nickname should have been "MacGyver" after the American TV show hero, the resourceful secret agent who was able to solve any problem, often with just the help of his Swiss Army knife. "If you step inside the plant here and look around, Bernie had a hand in constructing pretty much everything," he says. "It's impossible to list all the things that Bernie did to make this operation work efficiently."

Responsible for the upkeep of all the plant machinery, he'd also fix any of the tractor trailers that broke down, and repair toilets, light fixtures, you-name-it. "If anything broke down, he was right there," says Ken.

It's likely that in retirement Bernie is spending more time at his camp near Caledonia, walking his dog, riding his bike, and tinkering with his antique GMC. Thanks for your expertise and commitment, Bernie, and best of luck in your next adventures!

CELEBRATION × 3

These three gentlemen have each put in a quarter of a century at The Shaw Group. In recent ceremonies, they all received the coveted 25-year watch. Read more about each of these committed individuals and get details of their work histories below!



Barry Ashley receives congratulations from John Greer, General Manager, Shaw Pipe

In his 25 years at Shaw Pipe, **Barry Ashley** has taken part in every aspect of the operation. He's worked in both the wet and dry cast plants and according to his supervisor Charlie Ashley (no relation!), Barry has always gone out of his way to learn the whole business. "Barry's travelled through both plants, moving from position to position to have a taste of everything we do," says Charlie. "He really knows the work very well."

Barry was hired by Shaw in 1980 as a temporary employee. In 1984, he came on as a full-time production worker. Bridge Crane Operator, Mixer Operator, Wet Cast Operator, and Fork Lift Operator are just some of the jobs that Barry has done. Since 2001, Barry has worked as Shaw Pipe's

Quality Assurance (QA) Technician. One of Barry's particular areas of expertise is working on special projects and ensuring that the mix is just right.

As well as being laid back and a good conversationalist, Barry is an avid outdoorsman. He loves being in the woods, fishing, and hunting. He's also built a lake-front cottage on the Eastern Shore that he's winterized and is able to go to year round.

Terry MacDow, General Manager of Shaw Brick, presents Allen Parker with his 25-year watch.



Allen Parker's nickname is "Flipper," and it has nothing to do with his status as one of Shaw Brick's senior Tunnel Kiln Operators. "Let's just say we don't let him drive," reports Plant Manager John McKenna.

After three years as a brick sorter, Allen moved right into his current job. Today, he is Brick's most senior Tunnel Kiln Operator, present for the major upgrades on the tunnel kiln in 1986 and in 2008.

John reports that Allen's orderly ways get the job done. He's also known for somehow managing to keep himself clean in a notoriously dirty job. His co-workers don't know how he does it. "He comes to work in a clean shirt and pants and when he leaves, they're the same colour!" says John.

A chip off the old brick, Allen is a second generation employee. His father Donald Parker, who retired a number of years ago, also operated the tunnel kiln. Just this summer, the third generation entered the picture. Allen's son Catlin came on board as a summer student at Shaw Brick.

Living in Urbana, a small village north of Shubenacadie, Allen has a younger daughter named Haley as well. This “laid-back” man enjoys reading, playing cards, and hockey. “He’s a happy-go-lucky kind of guy who’s a pleasure to work with,” says John, who also appreciates Allen’s steadfastness. “A lot of guys have had 10 different jobs in the plant but Allen has done the same job, and done it well, for over 20 years.”

■
Martin Ashley came to Shaw fresh out of high school. He began his career in the Brick plant and then transferred to Pipe in 1986. There, Martin worked in the Specials plant for three years before moving to the Block plant where he’s been since 1992.

Production Manager Phil Langille has known Martin almost all of that time. “Martin is one of the



Terry MacDow presents highlights of Martin Ashley's 25-year career at The Shaw Group.

most dependable and dedicated guys I know. He rarely misses work. And he doesn’t have accidents. He’s extremely cautious.”

After operating the cuber for a handful of years, Martin became the forklift operator in the yard at

the Block plant. For the last 13 years or so, he’s been responsible for running the lift truck, loading trucks, and taking orders.

When he’s not working, Martin likes to hunt, fish, and take his four-wheeler out for rides. This handy guy has also built his own home in Dutch Settlement. According to Phil, Martin is also adept at knowing how to bank time and use it later for holidays. “He’s

the only guy I know who can turn four weeks vacation into six or seven weeks off,” laughs Phil. In fact, Martin already has next winter’s trip to Jamaica planned and booked. Lucky fellow!

Going the Academic Mile

Time is something that **Rylan MacDow** tries to manage well - right down to the second. Over the last number of years, the Sales Manager for Shaw Pipe has managed to work full-time, earn a BA, and volunteer on myriad industry committees and associations - all with two young boys at home.

The self-described “multi-doer” recently received a BA with a major in political science and a minor in economics from Saint Mary’s University. Always interested in politics and intending to go to law school, Rylan was one year into

his degree when he took a full-time position at The Shaw Group. He’s taken two half-credits per year since 1999, adding economics courses to supplement his business knowledge.

A LONG AND REWARDING JOURNEY

Rylan appreciated how supportive the company was, allowing him to take the courses he needed and sometimes to restructure his work time. “They always encouraged me to finish, and generally supported me throughout the entire process.”

For Rylan, being a university

graduate was always something he aspired to and something he felt would make him more valuable to the company. “Whether for a promotion or a new internal opportunity, I thought having completed my undergraduate degree would show a level of comprehension and the ability to follow through and complete a challenging task.”

Lori Campbell, who has been steadily promoted during her four years with the company, agrees with these sentiments. “A university education will make me more

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Left to right, the hard-working students are Danny Kennedy, John Greer, Lori Campbell, and Rylan MacDow.

well-rounded, and certainly, a more valuable employee.” Shaw Pipe’s Inside Sales team member is currently taking part-time business courses at Mount Saint Vincent University in the hopes that the program that will help advance her career.

MID-COURSE AND GOING STRONG

The end result – a Bachelor of Business Administration – is still a few years off, but with each course she takes, Lori learns something that she can directly apply to her work. “I just finished a couple of accounting courses this year and I’m already able to look at budgets and divisional reports differently.”

The 29-year-old went straight into university from high school and quickly decided that her chosen field – science – wasn’t for her. That’s when she entered the work force, but the unfinished degree was always in the back of her mind. With a little encouragement from management, Lori embarked upon the journey to complete her BA.

“Shaw has been very encouraging,” she says. “The truth is I couldn’t afford to do this on my own.” Lori calls it “a smart move” on Shaw’s part. “It’s such good business sense to keep employees happy and learning and growing. It builds loyalty and it builds skills.”

PATH TO SUCCESS

Danny Kennedy certainly understands loyalty. He’s been with Shaw for the last 18 years. When the

Transport Manager for Shaw Resources enrolled in the Diploma in Management program at Saint Mary’s last year, he hadn’t been in a classroom since high school. But initial jitters were swiftly resolved. “Our program had a really diverse group of people – I grew comfortable very quickly.”

Thirteen people from all walks of life – entrepreneurs, government directors, and private business employees – took part in the one-year program.

“The biggest plus for me is increased confidence, which is a direct benefit to the company,” says Danny, who notes that he learned many things about human resources, operations, and financial management that he was able to apply right away. “The more I’m able to learn and the more confidence I have, the better positioned I am to do the right things for the company.”

Danny’s words of wisdom for other employees? “I highly recommend furthering your education. If you have the opportunity, don’t pass it up.”

GLOBETROTTING

Although **John Greer** doesn’t own a private jet like some of the other participants in the Harvard Business School Management Program, he certainly got a lot out of his experience in Boston. “It has absolutely impacted my work on a number of different fronts.” John cites strategic and financial study areas in addition to the opportunity to be immersed in a program with people from varied backgrounds.

“I’d never worked with people from India or China or the Middle East before,” says Shaw Pipe’s General Manager. “So, to be exposed to those cultures and the way different people think was very valuable. It was definitely a global experience.”

The program was structured into a trio of three-week class sessions spread over a two-year period. In advance of each session, John would receive case studies that he needed to analyze and prepare to discuss in class. When he and the other 120 students enrolled in the program arrived at Harvard Business School, they spent eight hours each day in class and further time learning in study groups, and shared living space with “pods” of eight people. Living groups were changed for each session and working groups were switched up halfway through each session.

“At Harvard Business School nothing happens randomly,” says John. “The people you live with and the people you study with are carefully selected by the program administrators.” All of this adds up to an intense experience that ensures students spend time with a variety of people over the course of the program.

John is grateful to Shaw for their support in ensuring that he had enough time to properly prepare and invest in this outstanding opportunity. “The hope is that upon graduation you are a better business leader, someone who generates long-term return on investment for the company.”

Wellness

A CHAMPION ROWER AMONG US

On a normal day, Michel Haché feeds logs into a chipping machine at the wood pellet plant in Belledune, New Brunswick. But on July 11 of this past summer, Michel – known to his co-workers and friends at work as Michael – climbed into a dory with four other guys and raced across the Baie des Chaleurs.

Why, you ask? It’s all part of the annual Festival des Rameurs (or Rowers’ Festival), that happens in Petit-Rocher, New Brunswick. In its forty-third year, the festival is one of the town’s main recreational and cultural events. The dory race is the principal attraction.

SUFFER FIRST, CELEBRATE LATER

This year, 10 teams of four rowers and one captain each rowed as hard and as fast as they could from Bonaventure, Quebec, to their destination, and the waiting crowds, in Petit-Rocher. Rowing 42–46 strokes per minute with oars 11 feet long, the teams pull their boats 35 kilometres in approximately three hours. Not for the faint of heart or the unmotivated, the race is known to cause dehydration, exhaustion, and tears.

“If you don’t want to suffer, you shouldn’t do it,” laughs Michel. “It’s very tough, physically and mentally. Near the end, you don’t have any muscle or energy left and you row on sheer willpower. Every time I’ve finished a race, I’ve said ‘that’s it, I’m not doing it again’. But then I do!”

This year was Michel’s tenth race and his team came in third. His teammates change from year to year, but his team usually places in the top three. Michel loves the ritual of the whole event, a community tradition. The night before the race, his team travels to Bonaventure,

continued next page



That’s Michel Haché in the bow of the dory, on the left.

where they have a good sleep and then eat a big meal on race day. Three hours and over 8,000 strokes later, an enormous crowd has gathered at the finish line. "There's a lot of shouting. All our families and friends are there. It's very emotional," says Michel.

After the prizes are given out, the teams shower and get ready for the big rowing ball that night. It's typical to party until the early morning and then take part in the parade the next day, followed by another party that night. "It's the biggest weekend of the year for me," says Michel. "It's a lot of fun."

TRAINING FOR ENDURANCE

In order to be in shape to do this race year after year, the 40-year-old needs to maintain a certain level of fitness throughout the year. During the winter, he plays hockey and as soon as the weather turns warm enough, he begins walking for exercise, which he slowly builds to jogging. "I start slowly, alternating between walking and jogging for awhile," he says. "It's not good for the body to start strenuous exercise too quickly after the winter. You have to take your time."

Rather than going to the gym, Michel does good old-fashioned sit-ups and push-ups in addition to cycling when he's getting ready for the big race. And then there's the 40 hours per month that his team needs to practice in order to be ready to survive the crossing. "After work we usually go out on the water three or four times a week, and on the weekend we do two-hour non-stop stretches," he says. "If you want to be competitive, you have to put in lots of hours." He's also conscious of trying to eat well and not drink to excess.

Many people in his community have competed annually in the dory race for up to 25 years, so Michel still has many years left. Thanks for your inspiring story, Michel, and *bonne chance* next year – we'll be rooting for you!



Michel (centre) and team savour their medal finish.

A Six-Piece Building

Prestige has another first under their belt – a trio of apartment buildings of 10 or 21 units built respectively of six or a dozen modular pieces. Panellized buildings are made of flat pieces; modularized buildings are made of "boxes" in which rooms – whole apartments! – are already built.



A 70-foot module works its way through icy Saint John streets. Construction started in December 2008 and ended in July 2009.





This module at left meets its mate, below. They were made for each other!



The new buildings show on the Saint John skyline – and what an expansive view for the new residents!

Making a Splash in Sussex

The Fundy Civic Centre has been in the works for over 10 years. According to Board of Directors Chair Wendy Osborne, the recreation centre is badly needed in the town of Sussex, New Brunswick.

“Over the last 50 years, the residents of Sussex and our neighbouring communities have used an outdoor swimming pool located right on Main Street.” Osborne reports that unfortunately the pool’s days are numbered. “The pool has been leaking for years and just isn’t a viable option for the future.” Osborne joined with other concerned citizens to begin planning an alternative for residents who want to have access to a swimming pool for fitness or instruction without having to commute to Saint John or Moncton.

MILLIONS NEEDED

These citizens formed a board and spent many years trying to secure government funding for the \$6 million project. In 2007, they received \$1.33 million from the federal government, \$1.33 million from the provincial government, and an additional \$300,000 provincial grant. That left about \$3 million that they needed to raise on their own. A fundraising committee was struck and canvassers started their work. John Robinson, Chair of the Fundraising Campaign, reports that local businesses have really stepped up to the plate. In fact, 91% of that needed \$3 million has already been raised.

Here at *Shawtalk*, we’re proud to report that Prestige Homes is one of the Sussex-based companies helping the cause. General Manager Dean Robertson and some of Prestige’s team posed for the picture above as they pledged \$25,000 earlier this year. “This project is going to be a great asset to our community,” says Dean. “In addition, most of our employees and their families will be able to enjoy this facility in the



Several Prestige employees present Prestige’s \$25,000 cheque to the future Fundy Civic Centre. Left to right, Don Banks, Heather Stevens, Rick Seeley, Tania MacNeill, Heather Waugh, John Robinson (Chair of Fundy Civic Centre Fundraising Campaign), Gudi Pach, and Dean Robertson

years to come. We’re glad to be able to support it.”

Our CEO Bert Frizzell concurs. “We feel very strongly that The Shaw Group should be giving back to the communities in which our companies reside,” he says. “The Fundy Civic Centre is a very worthwhile community project and we’re proud to have Prestige Homes named as one of its fundraising contributors.”

MANY THANKS TO PRESTIGE

The Fundy Civic Centre organizers are grateful for the support. “Prestige’s donation was generous and we thank them,” says John Robinson, who notes that the project could never have gone forward without business involvement. “It’s quite a feather in the cap of the local area,” says John. “It shows an awful lot of dedication and commitment on behalf of local businesses.”

In addition to the six-lane, 25-metre indoor swimming pool, the Fundy Civic Centre will also have an environmentally controlled walking/jogging track, a fitness centre, a community room, and health and wellness programming. Serving youth, families, and seniors, the centre will give people an opportunity to be fit and well, right in their own community.

With ground-breaking before the end of this year, it’s full steam ahead for this great new addition to the Sussex community.