



NORTH SYDNEY BALLAST GROUNDS

HA'S GOOD PLANNING AND PARTNERING PAY OFF

No sooner had the Harbour Authority of North Sydney Ballast Grounds taken over the management of the Cape Breton harbour in August, 1997, than it embarked on an ambitious plan which would see the harbour refurbished by the end of 1998. This was quite the change for a wharf to which access had been restricted, and which could have faced eventual closure.

The harbour is home to about 30 fishers and three buying stations. Located in downtown North Sydney, close to the Newfoundland ferry terminal, the harbour plays a major role in the area's tourist trade and attracts recreational boaters.

The work that went into refurbishing the Ballast Grounds is nothing short of impressive. Reconstruction of the 107-metre (350-foot) finger wharf involved replacing the cross-ties, stringers, blockings and fillers underneath. The wheel guards and moorings were also replaced; the wooden deck was removed and resurfaced with concrete. Similarly, the harbour's two marginal wharves now sport new mooring cleats, wheel guards and concrete decks.

The project also included a complete electrical overhaul of the three wharves. Prior to the project, there were no electrical outlets on the wharves for the vessels that moored there. New power poles with high-pressure sodium lights were installed, each equipped with two 110-volt



The refurbished North Sydney Ballast Grounds (foreground).

outlets. A number of the poles also have 220-volt welding receptacles. Extensive electrical work was involved in removing overhead power lines and burying them.

The 122-metre (400-foot) boardwalk that runs the length of the wharf was finished with pressure-treated wood. It is now wheelchair accessible and boasts new benches. Armour stone was placed along the boardwalk to prevent erosion and to keep the waves from hitting vehicles on windy days. The navigational light was relocated to the end of the boardwalk to provide better visibility.

Constructing a 12-metre (40-foot) slipway that can accommodate two boats at a time was one of the final steps in the harbour's renovation. Stone was put down to stabilize the bottom of the harbour to allow for the new slipway. Next came the placement of 14 12-tonne pre-cast slabs. The top of the slipway was poured on site.

What's even more impressive about these improvements is that they were completed in little more than a year. A great deal of the credit for the project has to go to the Harbour Authority of

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HA'S GOOD PLANNING AND PARTNERING PAY OFF

Continued from page 1

North Sydney Ballast Grounds. According to Mary Margaret MacIntyre, secretary of the Harbour Authority's Board of Directors, they were able to get five years' worth of work completed in one year because of good planning, and because they were fortunate enough to secure the necessary funding.

Indeed, the Harbour Authority knew the harbour's potential, given its prime location and importance as a refuge for fishing and recreational vessels. The fact that North Sydney was involved in other waterfront developments was also helpful.

Things moved quickly for the Harbour Authority once it signed the lease. Board members developed a proposal, knocked on doors and made presentations. By the fall of 1997, the first phase of the project was underway. Phase two began in the spring of 1998.

The project was cost-shared by the Harbour Authority, Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation, Human Resources Development Canada, Nova Scotia's Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the Cape Breton Regional Municipality and DFO through Small Craft Harbours. Together, these

organizations contributed labour, materials and technical support.

Mrs. MacIntyre noted that despite the ongoing construction activities, the harbour was never closed. The work was made easier with the patience and cooperation of everyone using the wharf. People were willing to accept a bit of short-term inconvenience for what would amount to a totally revamped facility.

The improvements have local folk and visitors alike talking. The Harbour Authority can't keep track of the number of people who have wondered if this is the same wharf, or have commented on its transformation.

ADVICE FOR OTHER
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When asked what advice she might have for other Harbour Authorities looking to take on a similar project, Mrs. MacIntyre laughed and replied, "A dedicated board of directors and lots of patience." She noted that the board's ability to work together was key to the project's success.

The Harbour Authority is busy making plans for the next phase of the wharf's redevelopment. The board is developing a proposal that would see the construction of a small retail outlet to serve the harbour's users and tourists. Such a venture would allow the Harbour Authority to generate the revenue needed to maintain and reinvest in the harbour. Other plans include the possible extension of one of the marginal wharves to accommodate a greater number of recreational vessels.

Future work, of course, depends on the availability of funding. But given its track record, we'll likely be hearing from the Harbour Authority of North Sydney Ballast Grounds again soon.

Based on articles from the Cape Breton Post by Julie Collins.

FROM THE EDITOR

At last count, there were 391 Harbour Authorities managing almost 500 harbours across the country, just two of which are featured here. Thanks go out to Mary Margaret MacIntyre of the Harbour Authority of North Sydney Ballast Grounds on the East Coast and to Robin Richardson of the False Creek Harbour Authority on the West Coast.

If you have a story you'd like to share with other Harbour Authorities, please let me know.

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GANDER'S HARBOUR AUTHORITY SEMINAR

COOPERATION — IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT WORK!

"Cooperation — It's the People Who Make it Work!" was the theme for the Ninth Annual Harbour Authority Seminar for Newfoundland and Labrador, held November 4-6, 1998, in Gander.

The people who make cooperation the success it is in Newfoundland are those who manage and operate over 130 harbours through the Harbour Authority Program. Most of the province's 100 Harbour Authorities were represented at the seminar, along with guest speakers and Small Craft Harbours staff.

The first of the guest speakers was Terry Burke of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission. Mr. Burke provided some practical advice on what Harbour Authorities should be requesting from potential contractors in terms of workers' compensation coverage. He suggested that the requirement for coverage should be specified in a request for tender. He stressed that before contracting out work, the Harbour Authority should request a Letter of Good Standing from the commission on the contractor. The letter, which confirms that the contractor is registered with the commission and has met the payment and reporting requirements, will protect the Harbour Authority from any liability for assessments owing by the contractor. Letters of Good Standing are valid for 45 days and should be obtained each time a contract is awarded.

John Costello of the Canadian Coast Guard spoke about aids to navigation. This is an important issue for Harbour Authorities since lights and buoys are critical to the operation of a safe harbour. Mr. Costello discussed what was available, and whom participants should contact if they had additional



Seminar participants at work.

questions or concerns about navigational aids. Participants were also able to seek out more specific information at a display booth set up at the seminar.

Brett Wareham and Ed Smith from the provincial Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture spoke about the provincial program for fishery-related facilities including slipways, fish plants, baited trawl facilities and marine service centres. They gave an overview of the program's results and outlined how interested groups could apply for these facilities.

Terry Harvey of the Canadian Coast Guard's Environmental Measures Division rounded out the list of guest speakers. He reviewed the procedures to follow in the event of an environmental emergency. Each Harbour Authority in Newfoundland has been provided with an environmental spill kit, and Mr. Harvey went through the components of this kit and explained their use.

The seminar also provided ample opportunity for participants to break into smaller groups and come up with suggestions and solutions for dealing with specific scenarios. In the contracting workshop, participants honed

their project management skills as they described the steps and processes involved in constructing and installing a floating dock. Similarly, the workshop on annual reports gave participants a good appreciation for implementing and maintaining sound budgeting procedures.

The "small group" approach was also used to advantage as Harbour Authorities and local Small Craft Harbours staff met to discuss matters specific to their area. Some of the topics raised included Harbour Authority membership, contracts and tenders, and insurance. As in previous years, this session proved to be quite productive and popular with participants.

According to the participants, the seminar was extremely successful, offering everyone a forum to discuss issues and exchange information, ideas and experiences. On behalf of all HAs in attendance, Bill Connolly of the Harbour Authority of Flatrock thanked Small Craft Harbours for organizing the seminar, and recognized SCH staff for their assistance and cooperation. It was evident to everyone present that it really is the people who make it work!

FALSE CREEK HARBOUR AUTHORITY

PUBLIC FISH SALES FLOAT NOW OPEN FOR BU

Quite the crowd was on hand for the January 30, 1999 grand opening of the False Creek Fishermen's Wharf public fish sales float in Vancouver. The Honourable Hedy Fry, Member of Parliament for Vancouver Centre, Tim Stevenson, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Vancouver-Burrard, and Councillor Sam Sullivan of the City of Vancouver participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

As everyone knows, the past years have been difficult for fishers. In 1997, the False Creek Harbour Authority (FCHA), which manages and operates the Fishermen's Wharf, saw a tremendous opportunity. If its members could sell their fish to the public from their boats right at the harbour, it might help keep them in fishing and create community goodwill at the same time.

The grand opening of the public fish sales float was the culmination of two years of planning, negotiation, environmental reviews, construction and operational testing. Looking to make more efficient use of their small water lot, the FCHA took an under-utilized net float and reconfigured it. It added two ramps, each 23 metres (75 feet) long and 1.5 metres (five feet) wide, which not only provide access to the boats tied up at the float, but anchor the float to the sea wall as well. Installing the ramps meant that driving piles and dredging the harbour weren't necessary.

The public fish sales float is the FCHA's first project since signing a lease with Small Craft Harbours Branch (SCHB) late last year. The sales float is a joint venture of the Harbour Authority, SCHB and Fisheries Renewal BC, a provincial crown corporation. At the grand opening, Lynn Prestash, President of



Vancouver Councillor Sam Sullivan, the Honourable Hedy Fry, and MLA Tim Stevenson cut the ribbon to mark the official opening of the False Creek Fishermen's Wharf public fish sales float.

the FCHA, noted that the sales float was an excellent example of governments working together to help fishers and the larger community. Robin Richardson, False Creek's harbour manager, added that SCHB's support throughout the project has been outstanding. He also recognized the assistance of the Steveston Harbour Authority and its general manager, Arnold Walter. The FCHA modeled its fish sales float after the one at Steveston Harbour.

All commercial fishers are welcome to use the sales float provided they agree to meet the conditions set out in the FCHA Public Fish Sales Directive. It stipulates, among other things, that vessels wishing to use the sales float may sell only what they are licensed to catch and that they must have the appropriate vendor's permits to do so. The direc-

tive, which is enforced by the FCHA, sets out the conditions governing the sale of fish, the procedures for berthage and penalties for non-compliance.

Everyone benefits from the sales float. Because there's no middleman, fishers get a higher return for their catch. Consumers get a first-class product at a great price, without paying the wholesale markup. And they're not just buying a fish — they're getting a shopping experience. If there's a story behind the catch, the customer will be sure to hear about it from the person who caught it!

For the FCHA, the sales float has freed up much-needed space on other floats. It eventually plans to charge vessels an extra fee for tying up, but for now, it's concentrating on promoting the sales float and the site among fishers and the public. Like many

SINESS!

harbours, False Creek has lost a number of fish boats due to licence retirements. Mr. Richardson notes that the harbour has regained 10% of its customer base thanks to the sales float, and is looking to build on that. False Creek's average vessel count is 230, 70% of which are commercial fishing vessels.

False Creek is an urban harbour, surrounded by high-rise condominiums. Downtown Vancouver is only a bridge or ferry away. This means there is a huge base of potential customers. The sales float's grand opening generated a fair bit of publicity, and the large banner draped from one of the ramps is hard to miss. The FCHA has also been advertising the sales float in small local newspapers. Word is spreading, and the Harbour Authority hopes that the nicer weather will bring more people out.

But more than that, the Harbour Authority is striving to get involved in the community and to be a good neighbour. In the short time the FCHA has been in charge of the harbour, it has spruced things up and had BC Hydro take out a row of old poles. It's working to have its newsletter, the *False Creek Tidings*, distributed to residents of the nearby



Visitors check out the new fish sales float.

condos, and it's also on the Web (www.falsecreek.com). It's not hard to see why local reaction to the FCHA's initiatives has been positive. This is important because, as Mr. Richardson points out, perception counts for a great deal.

FISHERS CAN SELL

THEIR CATCH TO

THE PUBLIC FROM

THEIR BOATS RIGHT

AT THE HARBOUR...



DEAR HARBY

What is a visual inspection?

A visual inspection is a regular examination of all aspects of harbour facilities and operations that are accessible without the aid of a boat or other equipment. It provides basic information that helps harbour staff identify trouble spots and structural damage, decide how to handle a problem, or request a technical evaluation where more structural information may be required.

How often should visual inspections be conducted?

Visual inspections should be conducted as part of a routine program of daily, weekly, and yearly inspections. The person responsible for day-to-day harbour operations might conduct a quick inspection of the facilities while recording the daily boat count or walking around the harbour. Items to look at include the garbage area, used oil storage area, other storage areas and fueling facilities. Conditions to look for include frayed wires, missing or damaged deck planks, wheel guards, fenders, debris in water and listing vessels. The Harbour Authority should also conduct weekly inspections of items such as firefighting equipment, lifesaving equipment, loading and unloading equipment, and water and electrical systems. Inspections focusing on an in-depth structural examination of harbour facilities should be done annually and immediately following a severe storm or an accident to determine the integrity and stability of the structures.

Why should a visual inspection be documented?

Written observations identify chronic problems at the harbour and will, over time, provide an indication of the condition of harbour structures. They may also provide a record of repeat offences and proof of diligence should an accident occur later on. Harbour Authorities might find a checklist the best way to record daily and weekly inspections. A descriptive report might be more suitable for the yearly inspection of structural components.

For more information, see Section 4.6 of the *Harbour Authority Manual*.

THE YEAR 2000 DATE CHANGE

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

There's a lot of information out there on the "millennium bug," also known as the "Y2K virus" or the "Year 2000 problem." Most material has been geared toward big business and industry, although recently it has started to focus on smaller businesses, households and consumers. If you haven't yet considered the impact of the Year 2000 date change in the context of your harbour's operations, now is a good time to do so. Keep in mind that the information presented here is general in nature and does not constitute legal or professional advice. It is up to you to determine the extent of the date problem on your operations, and its effect on your suppliers, users and customers, and to take the appropriate action.

Think about the Y2K problem and the first thing that probably comes to mind is computers, and with good reason. The fact that early computers stored dates in a format that used two digits instead of four to specify the year (i.e., "99" instead of "1999") is what caused the problem in the first place.

Depending on the size and complexity of your Harbour Authority's operation, you might use a personal computer to

run any number of functions. If so, it is important to understand and assess how your PC, software and data will handle dates before, during and after the year 2000. Testing your system is an integral part of the process. You can take on this task yourself, provided you have the technical skills, original software and manufacturer's user manuals. If you need help, most computer manufacturers have put Year 2000 information on their Web sites, or you can contact them by phone. You can also contact your retailer or local computer specialists for assistance in determining what needs to be done to make your PC ready for the new millennium. One of the special challenges for rural and remote communities is that the concentration of Year 2000 expertise is in urban areas.

Not a computer user? Think again. Many systems, utilities, products and services use embedded microchips — software-controlled electronics that rely on the storage and use of dates. Embedded systems far exceed the number of computer systems commonly considered to be at the heart of the Year 2000 problem. Fax machines, answering machines, copiers, telephones and thermostats use embedded systems. So do fire control systems and security systems. Again, check with the manufacturer, retailer



or your service provider to determine if these and similar machines or systems are at risk.

Basic services and utilities — electricity, telecommunications, water and sewage systems, for example — are also controlled by embedded systems. Without electricity, for instance, even the most compliant of computers or embedded chips won't work. Just as there is no guarantee that Canada's harsh and unpredictable weather can't damage power lines and lead to power outages, no one can state with absolute certainty that there won't be any problems with the power supply due to the millennium bug. Even though power companies are confident that the rollover to the Year 2000 will have

THE FACT THAT

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INSTEAD OF FOUR

TO SPECIFY THE YEAR

(I.E., "99" INSTEAD OF "1999")

IS WHAT CAUSED THE PROBLEM

IN THE FIRST PLACE.

BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS THE OCEANS

Canada has experienced unprecedented growth in oceans activity over the past 25 years. The oceans have the capacity to exceed the growth of any other sector of the economy. However, this growth is resulting in congestion, environmental degradation and ecosystem imbalances, which threaten the basis for future sustainable growth. Last year, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans released a discussion paper entitled *Towards Canada's Oceans Strategy* to stimulate discussion, and to find out from stakeholders the best approaches to ensure healthy, safe and productive oceans for current and future generations of Canadians.

Whether you would like a copy of the discussion paper, to provide comments on the oceans strategy, or to participate in the public consultations that are expected to take place in late spring, feel free to contact the regional DFO Oceans Director closest to you. Their names, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail addresses are given below. The discussion paper is also available on Canada's Oceans Web site at www.OceansCanada.com.

Harbour Authorities have a vested interest in the oceans agenda—it's your opportunity to make your views known.

Name/Region	City	Telephone/Fax	E-mail
Dick Carson, Pacific	Vancouver	(604) 666-7971 (604) 666-8956	CarsonD@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Marty Bergmann, Central & Arctic	Winnipeg	(204) 983-3776 (204) 984-2401	BergmannM@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Jean Piuze, Laurentian	Quebec City	(418) 775-0703 (418) 775-0542	PiuzeJ@dfo.mpo.gc.ca
Faith Scattolon, Maritimes	Dartmouth	(902) 426-2065 (902) 426-3855	ScattolonF@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Ben Davis, Newfoundland	St. John's	(709) 772-2027 (709) 772-4194	DavisB@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

only a minimal impact on electric system operations in North America, they are working on contingency plans for their critical operations.

Ensure that the suppliers upon whom you depend for materials, utilities, supplies or services are Year 2000 ready, or are taking steps to become so. The domino effect means that if they happen to run into problems, you might, too. Consider a contingency plan for your critical operations and be prepared, just in case.

A word about insurance: according to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, equipment that fails because of the millennium bug won't be covered by property insurance. But losses from a Y2K failure, such as pipes frozen in a related power outage, would be covered.

As for the comprehensive marine general liability insurance policy, discussions with the broker have indicated that Harbour Authorities should be protected against third-party claims resulting from the millennium bug.

If your Harbour Authority has separate Directors and Officers liability coverage, check with the insurer or broker to clarify whether there are coverage limitations in regard to Y2K.

Further information on the millennium bug is available from a variety of sources. If you have access to the Web, you can start at www.strategis.ic.gc.ca/sos2000 or choose from the thousands of sites devoted to Y2K. Reference material is also available from libraries, bookstores and business organizations. You can also call the federal government's SOS 2000 hot line at 1-800-270-8220.



In a previous issue of Forum, “Enviro-Tips” talked about the advantages of keeping your harbour tidy. In this issue, we outline good management practices for dealing with solid waste and its disposal.



✓ TIP No. 6 — Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

► Have a look

Take a look around the harbour. Are used boat batteries being left on the wharf? Is there recyclable material in the trash cans? Perhaps there's a pile of items beside the recycle bins — users aren't sure where they go.

► What to do

These problems can be minimized if you have a practical, well-publicized solid waste disposal program to deal with recyclable material, regular garbage and hazardous waste.

Make recycling easy and convenient for harbour users by supplying covered bins for tins, glass, plastic, paper, cardboard or any other materials that might be recyclable in your area. Labelling the bins should help to keep the amount of non-recyclable materials placed in them to a minimum, especially if there's a garbage can nearby.

Providing an adequate number of covered trash cans conveniently located around the harbour cuts back on garbage and other debris left on the property or in the water. These too should be clearly identified and emptied regularly. Let users know what materials the harbour cannot accept as regular garbage — fishnets and engine blocks, for example — and how they should be disposed of.

The storage and disposal of hazardous wastes tends to be more problematic. Included in this category are batteries, which contain acid and lead. Containers with flammable liquids such as propane, paints, solvents,

detergents and antifreeze, or with strong acids and alkaline compounds, such as ammonia, bleaches, disinfectants, naphtha, kerosene and dyes are all hazardous. Improper disposal of hazardous wastes is not only dangerous, it is against the law.

Depending on your harbour's requirements and the recycling services offered in your area, you might set up special containers for hazardous wastes that can be recycled. If recycling is not available, a hazardous waste transfer station or hauling contractor are options. Alternatively, harbour users can take small quantities of these materials to household hazardous waste disposal sites that are usually operated by the municipality. Used batteries can be exchanged or traded in wherever new batteries are sold.

A word about fish waste: fishers should clean their catch and dispose of the waste prior to re-entering the harbour. Fish waste can be especially problematic in “dead-end” coves and harbours where flushing rates are low. As fish waste degrades within the harbour, it uses dissolved oxygen that may lead to water quality problems as well as foul odors.

► Your role

As usual, it's up to you to ensure that harbour users know what's expected of them and that you make it easy and convenient for them. Inform them of the proper disposal methods through the use of signs and handouts. Follow up in person, especially if you've noted a particular problem.