

Education, thy name is APRMCA

It's always a proud moment when I can tell others that the Atlantic Provinces Ready Mixed Concrete Association (APRMCA) is the voice of the industry in Atlantic Canada. APRMCA began serving the construction industry, concrete producers and their associates more than 37 years ago, growing steadily in reputation and strength during this period. The association can rightfully claim to stand for quality, service and experience.

If you think of APRMCA as a house (a concrete house, of course), then it stands on a firm foundation. Its cornerstones are the essence of its existence, and those cornerstones are the APRMCA's many committed members; its diversified training and education program; its Concrete Production Facilities Certification Program; and its all-purpose marketing program.

The house is open to everyone who takes an interest in the

industry and its activities. Through the windows it's plain to see the vigorous interaction of the many partners to the association. These include CAC, ACI, CSC, architects and engineers, contractors and developers, construction and safety associations, home-builders, road builders, suppliers and many others. These occupants of the house recognize, too, that APRMCA is strongly interconnected with the industry in other parts of the land through CRMCA and NRMCA. The doors of the house are always open to serve its residents and welcome new friends.

Today we will tell you a little bit about one of those APRMCA cornerstones, namely the information that it passes along through its training workshops and education seminars. The participation rate is fairly high, but could be stronger. Read on to see what you have been missing!



Connelly's Dura-Notes

By John Connelly,
APRMCA Marketing
Director

Backtracking to May 2003, APRMCA hosted Concrete Pavement-The Story of Value, Design, Construction, Maintenance and Rehabilitation. Twenty-nine Maritimers, from consultants to municipal, provincial and national defence folks made their way to Moncton for this one-day seminar. It was a great set of presentations by interesting experts in construction and maintenance of concrete pavements. Too bad we couldn't attract more participants. This was billed as the "owners manual" for those daring to specify concrete pavements in the past 10 years.

In late 2003 APRMCA, with the assistance of its longstanding partner the Cement Association of Canada (CAC), created an off-the-shelf, three-hour breakfast seminar about cold weather concreting. It covers basic concrete technology, examples and precautions for using concrete in cold weather. The program was presented to small groups in Halifax, Corner Brook and St. John's, and to the New Brunswick Home Builders' Annual Conference in Fredericton. The program, an ideal refresher course for anyone working with concrete in the colder months, is available on fairly short notice to any group with the need or an interest in this subject matter. Thanks and credit goes to our technically minded friends at CAC, Newfoundland Geosciences Ltd. and Conquest Engineering Ltd. for their time and effort to make the presentations.

We were again blessed with success with our series of seminars titled Slabs-on-Grade: Design, Construction and Maintenance. The program was presented in Halifax in November 2003 and in St. John's

and Moncton in March 2004. Each venue attracted about 30 people and virtually all of them gave high grades to the content and delivery of this one-and-a-half-day seminar.

Did you ever meet a contractor who knows it all and loves to talk about it? We had the good fortune to be able to import just such a guest speaker, Geoff Kinney, vice president of Duron Ontario Limited. He's an individual with nearly 30 years experience in the concrete finishing business, and has seen just about everything. Armed with an elaborate and clear presentation showing many important facets of his trade, he grabbed everybody's attention with his colourful descriptions and extensive knowledge of his business. We thank Gordon Leaman of Jacques Whitford and Associates Ltd., who is also APRMCA's Plant Certification and Technical Committee Chair, and Bill Dooley of CAC for putting this program together. If you missed it, you should kick yourself. But don't fret, APRMCA hopes to offer it again in the next couple of years.

Our gracious thanks are also due to Colin Dickson and Ricco Fung of CAC, Eric Theriault of Jacques Whitford and Associates Ltd., Steve Grainger of Newfoundland Geosciences Ltd., Dean Forgeron, a research professional from Dalhousie University and Mike Corbett, an old friend to the industry who is now the principal engineer and owner of Infrastructure Management and Associates in Fredericton. We could not have done it without you folks!

APRMCA's Concrete Pump Operators Workshop, held for the third time since 2000, was a raving success in terms of turnout and as a benefit to our members. Sixty-eight people registered, including nine man-

agers; 22 attendees wrote the certification test for the first time and 37 were there for the re-certification.

We were there to absorb all the information about safe operation of concrete pumps and placing booms from Dave Klapstein, training manager for Putzmeister Inc. out of Wisconsin, U.S. Local flavour was added by Art Babineau, a power line technician with NB Power, who hit home the message about safety around power lines, and APRMCA Vice President Bob McGinn, who reviewed APRMCA's "Safety Handbook for Concrete Pumps and Placing Booms." The excellent course of instruction should lead to every operator passing his or her certification exam.

The watchword of this decade is sustainability, which refers to sustainable development and construction of our modern infrastructure in a way that has the least impact on the world's environment. Our land, water and atmosphere are being stressed to their limits by the activity of mankind on an overpopulated planet. The industrialized world is slowly waking up to the fact that it must take drastic measures to arrest and turn around the ill effects we're all having on Planet Earth. The cement and concrete industry is doing its part.

It's unfortunate APRMCA's winter annual meeting was snow-bombed with 100 cm of the white stuff, because we had a dynamite program that tied a number of topics together under the umbrella of sustainability. The topic remains hot.

APRMCA showed strong support for the Eco-Smart™ national series of seminars on climate change, SCM concrete technology and "green" building when they were in Halifax in March. Eco-Smart™ was back in town in early May for a pre-tender discussion between industry and the designers of a new PWGSC office building in Charlottetown, PEI. The ready mixed concrete industry in Atlantic Canada, and nationally through CRMCA, is a hard working partner in taking some of the "green" construction technology for our products from theory to reality.

In the same vein, APRMCA and its New Brunswick Concrete

Liaison Committee, along with the New Brunswick Road Builders Association and the N.B. Department of Transportation, will be sponsoring a one-day seminar in June titled End Result Specifications and the "How-To's" of Choosing the Right Concrete for the Job. Service to the industry! That's what it's all about!

Meanwhile, there are a few other ideas in the offing. CAC and APRMCA are planning to restart an earlier attempt at arranging an Agricultural Concreting Workshop in several farming areas of the Maritimes. This will be an interesting one as both APRMCA locally and CAC nationally recognize the great need for more attention to be paid by our industry to the agricultural sector. The market potential is big and technical solutions using more concrete in farm construction are many. We urge you to talk to anybody in the agricultural business and encourage them to sign up for this event.

There have been plenty of examples over the years of APRMCA's partnering with others in its efforts to provide a valuable training and education program. There have been "Lets Talk Concrete Breakfasts and Lunches," concrete technology and high performance concrete seminars, tilt-up presentations, ICF information sessions, home shows and architects' associations trade fairs. APRMCA spares no effort to provide the construction industry in Atlantic Canada with information about products and techniques that's most needed. That's not to say that you can't think of subjects that should be covered. We're always looking for good ideas, especially as we look forward to the late fall and prime training period in the first quarter of 2005.

APRMCA looks forward to your continued support, whether it's through attendance of industry training and education opportunities, the excellent suggestions you have for us, or your generous contributions of expertise when it's needed. Talk it up among your clients, customers, suppliers and staff to be certain the folks who want to attend are always aware of the available programs.

Atlantic Construction Journal

Publications Mail Reg # 7145

Transcontinental Specialty Publications

Group Publisher: Peter Kapyrka

Editor: Shirley McLaughlin

Special Projects Coordinator: Henry Flowers

Sales Executive: Naster Tracz

E-mail: ACJ@hfxnews.ca

Subscriptions: 4 issues - \$18.00 plus taxes. (NS, NB, NL - \$20.70); (PEI & Rest of Canada - \$19.26); (Outside Canada - \$25.68).

Atlantic Construction Journal is published quarterly by Transcontinental Media Inc. The opinions expressed in the Atlantic Construction Journal are those of the authors and do not represent the official views of Transcontinental Specialty Publications or its management. Atlantic Construction Journal and its contributors can accept no legal responsibility for loss through any error in information contained herein. Contents of Atlantic Construction Journal may not be reproduced without written consent of the publisher, who accepts no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, transparencies and other material.

Mailed under Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40015474

The Atlantic Construction Journal office is located at:

11 Thornhill Drive, Dartmouth, N.S., B3B 1R9

Advertising/Distribution Phone: (902) 468-8027, ext. 175

Advertising/Editorial Fax: (902) 468-2425



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Dominion Ash commercializes new technology

Dominion Ash CCP Ltd., a provider of complete fly ash solutions to coal-fired power plants, has entered a license agreement with the Hendrix Holding Company of Columbia, SC for exclusive rights to the Microwave Carbon Burnout process in its region.

Dominion Ash's new technology, Microwave Carbon Burnout (MCBTM), removes excess amounts of carbon from coal ash, providing a

processed product that is highly sought after as a partial replacement of Portland cement powder in ready mixed concrete.

Coal fly ash prevents the reaction of alkaline aggregates with available lime in the finished concrete and together with quality cement produces a superior finished product. There's currently a shortage of quality coal fly ash. Coal powers more

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