

The Next Generation



There's a new crop of business leaders emerging in Cornwall and region.

CORNWALL IS ONE OF CANADA'S OLDEST SETTLEMENTS, AND THROUGHOUT ITS 227-YEAR HISTORY, CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS HAVE EMERGED AS LEADERS FOR THEIR GENERATION.

As the City navigates its way through an unprecedented era of growth and investment, a number of young people are stepping forward to add their voice and vision into the mix.

In the past two years alone, the value of new building projects in the City has reached a quarter of a billion dollars. Work has been spread out over commercial and residential sectors, creating a lot of work for the region's construction industry.

One of the busiest contractors has been Robert J. Bourgon & Associates Ltd., where Chris Markell works hand in hand with his father, Dick Markell. The company had its busiest year in 2010, racking up over \$20 million in new construction business.

Some of the more notable projects the company has worked on include the Benson Centre, the new EMS Headquarters for the region's land ambulance service and a new Discovery Centre museum at Upper Canada Village.



Chris Markell, 35
Robert J. Bourgon & Associates Ltd.



Melanie Hamel, 23
Seaway Express

"When I joined the company a few years ago, we had a great deal of construction experience on staff but little of the new tools and technology needed to lead in the modern construction industry," notes Chris Markell. "In order to compete for the major projects coming to Cornwall, we needed to immerse ourselves in new ways of doing things. As a result, we've invested not only in new technology, but also in new training for our staff, to build on the solid foundation of expertise earned over the years."

This type of vision was evident when Dick Markell first created the company in 1976 as a commercial counterpart to an already successful residential construction business. Chris has learned a lot from his father, yet he is also applying lessons learned while studying at Queen's University and while working as an engineering consultant in Canada and abroad to lead the company to ambitious new heights.

"My father Dick is exceptionally well-respected in our industry, so I have

pretty big boots to fill, but I'm looking forward to it. I'm thrilled with the team we're building. As a professional engineer and project manager, I lead a tight-knit group of professionals that can tackle some of the most technically demanding and innovative building projects happening in our community," says Chris. "It's not enough to build a building – we build it to our client's satisfaction, and we build it to last."

Customer satisfaction is important in every business sector, but perhaps nowhere more so than in the competitive world of trucking.

Seaway Express is a Cornwall based trucking company that has built its

business on keeping its customers happy. The award-winning transport carrier services Central Canada, concentrating on the very busy and lucrative Toronto-Ottawa-Montreal trade region. It deals with some of North America's largest companies.

"Logistics is a sector that contributes to our economy in so many ways, yet it is a business that has grown increasingly more sophisticated," says Melanie Hamel. "The rising cost of fuel is just one factor that has required all companies involved in the supply chain to find efficiencies in order to remain competitive."

Melanie is ensconced in an office beside

*"The Cornwall economy
is really rolling now.
We aim to keep that momentum strong."*



Marc Lapointe, 27
Seaway Hyundai

her father (and owner of the company), Bob Gauthier. Her office is nearest to the door, and to the customers. It's a reflection of Melanie's growing responsibility to be the sales and marketing face of the company.

"Good customer service results in sustainable business relationships," says Melanie. "Everything depends on how well you understand your customers – and how well you communicate."

Communication is something Melanie learned at Carleton University, where she graduated with a Journalism degree. Even while working in communications in Ottawa, it was always her plan to work for the family business.

"I will continue to learn from my father and my co-workers and

at the same time, contribute my own ideas about how and where Seaway Express should grow," says Melanie. "As I approach my one year mark at Seaway, I know I made the right decision to come back to Cornwall."

Hyundai has seen its sales in Canada increase for 29 consecutive months, and this type of growth has been mirrored at Seaway Hyundai, under the watchful eye of Marc Lapointe.

"Hyundai has succeeded where other car manufacturers have faltered by ensuring that everyone in the organization constantly challenges each other – and that extends from car design to engineering to sales," remarks Marc. "Our entire team from Sales to Service and Parts work as a collective unit. We do not take our success for granted – which I think our customers really appreciate."



Natalie Brundige, 30
Lakeshore Massage Therapy

Seaway Hyundai is part of a Cornwall automobile success story that includes Seaway Chevrolet Cadillac Buick GMC Ltd. and Cornwall CARSTAR, a collision repair shop. All three businesses are owned by Marc's parents, Bev and Andre Lapointe.

Although the family succession plan has long included turning over the reins to Marc and his sister Danielle, his parents knew a strong education would be an important asset. Marc studied business at the University of Ottawa and finished his Bachelor of Commerce in Germany.

"Being in Germany for a year was an education in itself," says Marc. "It is important to stay open to new ideas and to new cultures."

On his return to Cornwall, Marc took over the day-to-day

management of Seaway Hyundai. The dealership was soon expanded and sales have increased every year.

"My parents are very intelligent business people. They have managed to balance the needs of the business with those of the family – and still manage to actively participate in the community. I feel privileged to be able to learn from them - and at the same time, implement some of my own ideas to help grow the business and make it stronger."

Another entrepreneur with a penchant for giving back to the community is Natalie Brundige, owner of Lakeshore Massage Therapy. The young woman is involved in the South Dundas Chamber of Commerce and supports numerous charitable initiatives.



Josh Eamon, 35
Genivar

"It's important to get involved in community events and causes that are important to your customers," says Natalie. "After all, it is our customers' loyalty that has given us our success."

Born and raised in Winchester, Natalie began her career in the affluent Ottawa community of Manotick following her formal training and education. Natalie also worked in the Brockville area for four years before moving her career back to the 'quiet life.'

"There are challenges in working in a big city. Customers in the city can be much different than those in a smaller town. It can be difficult to get to know clients on a personal level when working in the city. I missed the quiet life of South Dundas."

"More and more people are recognizing that Cornwall is a great place to balance work with quality of life."

Natalie took the leap and returned home to start her own business five years ago. She worked out of her house for the first two years, building the business and getting to know her customers.

She opened her well-appointed clinic in the heart of Morrisburg once she knew she had the business to carry the overhead. Today, Lakeshore Massage Therapy has seven people on staff.

"I learned a lot from my Dad, who runs his own business as well," says Natalie.

Another person following in the footsteps of the previous generation is Josh Eamon, the Senior Municipal Engineer with the Cornwall office of Genivar. Josh works down the hall from his father, Rick Eamon.

"It's an incredible advantage to be able to draw upon the experience of someone as talented as my father," says Josh. "After graduating from Queen's, I could have gone anywhere in the world and found employment in my field. I chose Cornwall for a number of reasons, not the least of which is being able to contribute to this office's long tradition of engineering excellence."



Jamie Fawthrop, 33
City of Cornwall

Rick Eamon was a partner in one of Eastern Ontario's most respected engineering firms, The Thompson Rosemount Group (TRG). TRG merged with engineering powerhouse Genivar in 2010, and the union could not have worked out better.

"Our team remains very tight and connected to the community," says Josh. "However our access to the Genivar network provides us with whole different layers of knowledge and experience."

Engineering is structured discipline that depends on the individual creativity of each engineer. Often, what separates one engineering company from another is the ability to harness the creative energy of its team members.

"I am fortunate to have worked on some major projects, particularly in the wastewater treatment industry, including major upgrades to facilities in Brockville and Hawkesbury."

Another young engineer making a name for himself in Cornwall is Jamie Fawthrop. Jamie recently accepted a position with the City of Cornwall as a Design and Construction Engineer.

After graduating from Queen's University, Jamie worked for an environmental engineering firm in Toronto. Although he enjoyed the fast-paced life of the big city, he quickly realized that Toronto was not where he wanted to settle down and raise a family.

His wife Kate was also from Cornwall, and he began to look for a job closer to their families. It didn't take long. TRG was

hiring, and he joined Josh Eamon on staff at TRG.

"Cornwall offers a quality of life that could not be matched in any other city," says Jamie. "Being able to raise children with our family close by is invaluable. The low cost of living and access to amenities have allowed us to enjoy all the benefits of a large urban center without any of the disadvantages and inconveniences."

Jamie left TRG to join the City's engineering department at a pivotal point in time. The City is investing millions in new infrastructure to accommodate growth.

"There are some major projects completed and even more under construction, such as the new Benson Centre, Hospital redevelopment and the construction of the new bridge. The City is extending sewers, building new roads and is about to tackle a major extension to our wastewater treatment plant."

"This a very exciting time for Cornwall." ♦

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generation of
business leaders,
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