

taa world

Storytelling
on a world scale

taa Themed Attraction
Association Canada

*TAA is a network
of Canadian
businesses that
provide innovative
and engaging
solutions for
themed attractions
globally.*

TAA World 2006 Q4

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**GMA's giant fiddle
sculpture welcomes
cruise ship passengers
to Sidney, Nova Scotia;
see pg 4.**



President's message

GEARING UP FOR 2007/08

The Board is finalizing plans for our upcoming year and there will be some future changes and new faces to help head us forward. Amongst these I am pleased to announce that Jan Sircus, of Maple Leaf Studios, has agreed to stand for President at our next AGM in March 2007.

We have all benefited this year from the External Marketing Committee's efforts, spearheaded by Duane Fast, supported by a crew of dedicated TAA Canada members and PEMD financing. A second trip to China to meet with the Shanghai 2010 World Expo Committee is in the early planning stage.

The recent addition of Michelle Brazeau as our new Executive Director is already benefiting TAA Canada and we will shortly send out our new operations plan and a schedule of 2007 meetings and events to assist your plans for the coming year.

On behalf of the entire TAA Canada Board, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members and their families the very best for the holiday season and an extremely rewarding 2007.

Barry Marshall

President, TAA Canada



Michelle Brazeau
Executive Director

Along with many TAA members, Michelle Brazeau has an Expo 86 connection. She was recruited in Montreal and moved to Vancouver to work at the Canada Pavilion as Deputy Commissioner General. After Expo 86, she lived in Tokyo, where she started her own publishing company. Upon her return to B.C., she worked at The Vancouver Board of Trade as Director of Communications and Business Development and at the CBC in the office of the Chair.

Goings on

FOAM ON TOP

3D Custom Foam was recently awarded the 2006 Business Innovation Award hosted by the City of Burnaby and the Burnaby Board of Trade. The company has revolutionized B.C.'s film industry by providing sculpted expanded polystyrene props in a quicker and far more accurate fashion. <<http://3dcustomfoam.com/>>

WELCOME, IMPERIUM

TAA welcomes new member, Imperium Design, who provides custom design and fabrication services to clients such as Disney, The Uptown Giftbox Company, Straightline Designs and X-MAX Media.

Projects are always varied as exemplified by current projects of an 8 FT long pre-historic fish the front half of a 172 Cessna. <<http://imperium-design.com/>>

THEA TIME FOR APA

The Themed Entertainment Association recently named winners of its THEA awards and two projects designed by AldrichPears Associates (APA) made the list. The Kidspace Children's Museum in Pasadena, California won the Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement for a Children's Museum while the Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement for a Zoo Exhibit was awarded to Zoomazium at the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle.

The Thea Awards recognize achievement, talent and personal excellence within the themed entertainment industry. <www.teaconnect.com>

MARSHALLING JUST REWARDS

More news from our friends at APA. Isaac Marshall has been appointed as principal, joining Phil Aldrich and Ron Pears, co-founding principals of the firm, in leading the 40-member Vancouver-based master planning and exhibit design firm.

Isaac has been instrumental in reinforcing the firm's commitment to supporting mission-driven, not-for-profit organizations dedicated to informal learning experiences. Isaac has also been actively involved in the TAA for a number of years, with a particular emphasis on marketing efforts. <<http://aldrichpears.com/>>

SHANGHAI BOON FOR TAA

In August, the TAA met with a delegation from the Shanghai Expo 2010 Organizing Committee. During the visit, our representatives impressed upon the visitors TAA's one-stop-Expo-shopping advantage. We now have valuable friends inside the organization who have offered to help us navigate through the bureaucracy of Shanghai Expo 2010.

AIRMILES FOR IMC

As Ian McLennan Consulting, Ian's travels have recently taken him to Havana where he met and worked with the dean of Cuban historical architects, Julio Cesar. Ian has also just returned from the 75th anniversary of Adler Planetarium in Chicago. He went on to Louisville, Kentucky for the Association of Science & Technology Centers, Oakland (Chabot Centre), Los Angeles (re-opening ceremonies for Griffith Observatory), and Athens, Greece for the re-opening of the Eugenides Planetarium and Science Centre, a client of his over the past 11 years. <<http://ianmclennan.com/>>



LEFT **3D Custom Foam's** ingenuity and innovation in product design as well as other business activities was recently recognized.



ABOVE **Imperium Design's** Gerald Lauzé and Rob Bowen with a work in progress of the skull of a prehistoric fish.



ABOVE **Issac Marshall's** leadership and contribution is recognized by APA.



LEFT **Rumours of a 7500+ taxi fleet for TAA members in Athens Greece** fleet were unsubstantiated, reports Ian McLennan from his travels there.



ABOVE **Phil Aldrich, of Aldrich Pears Associates** recently facilitated a brainstorming session with TAA members and guests at the venerable Maplewood Farms of North Vancouver.

What to do with a steel storage shed

Nowhere is the concept of giving a thematic character to a building more appropriate than in a facility serving the tourist industry. This was an opportunity Gatrill Management Associates took four years ago when they started the redevelopment of the Port of Sydney on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia.



TOP The old, but renewed, steel shed building is visible behind the new glass and steel front.

ABOVE Interpretive exhibits showcase the rich history of the region.

WELCOME TO SIDNEY

When GMA began in 2002, the port had only a 20,000 SF unheated steel storage shed on a wind-swept slab of concrete with the sole comfort of port-a-potties to greet the passengers from the 25 luxurious cruise ships that called that year, chiefly because Sydney is a safe harbour. The passenger experience was dreadful. Small wonder few passengers ventured into the Sydney high street to shop.

Yet initially, this was what the Regional Municipality asked Adrian Gatrill of GMA to do: create a signage system to better move passengers from ship to shops. After a two-day exploratory trip, GMA recommended that the municipality redevelop the entire port if they wanted to keep those ships coming and grow their toe-hold in an expanding cruise ship market. Within two weeks GMA had the go-ahead to prepare a design concept and business plan for a redeveloped port.

WE NEED A PLAN

Cape Breton is a refreshing place to work because people are open, honest, and well-informed; no posturing here. A few trips around the island gave GMA a good insight into tourism and cultural assets, and many meetings with Cape Bretoners provided a strong sense of the amenities a re-developed port should offer to cruise passengers.

On this basis GMA developed a design concept for the building architecture, the site plan, identified the facilities required, and planned the interior space layout. The design concept was copiously illustrated with 3d computer renderings prepared by Rhidian Art and Animation. In addition, the final report presented a concise summary of the objectives, rationale, content, capital costs and annual operating profit and loss statement for the project and gave a strong argument for why it should be funded.

GMA articulated three major objectives for the re-development:

- create a dramatic cruise ship terminal that welcomes cruise passengers;
- create a cultural, performance, and event venue for the community;
- provide a tourist centre and a tourist window on Cape Breton Island.

The computer illustrations of the project captured the imagination of the community and sold the concept. The visually stunning presentations also brought potential stakeholders and funding agencies on-side, raising a total of \$10 million in seven phases of funding, design, and construction.

WORKING WITH LUCK, TRUST AND TEAMWORK

Gatrill feels that they were lucky in many crucial ways but the most important was gaining and maintaining the confidence of the Port's management and board of directors. Following the excitement created by the design concept, and GMA's raising of the first \$1.4 million, the client had total confidence in them. They were then engaged to complete the project as the designers and project managers and the port gave them free rein, never challenging their recommendations and supporting them as they went. Gatrill wishes, "Should we ever be so fortunate again!"

Seven phases of design and construction and four years later, the \$10 million project is complete and very successful with more than 60 cruise ships calling each year bringing 60,000 passengers and adding \$7 million into the Sydney and Cape Breton economy.

Undoubtedly seven phases presented a drawn-out management challenge but ironically gave GMA the time to design each phase in-house from architectural concept to corporate identity, graphics, the tourism exhibition, the lighthouse and fiddle icon, produce videos, etc. GMA hired and directed a local team of architects and engineers to prepare the detailed design and tender package for the building; they followed our concept design closely and, where required, improved on it. GMA also engaged a

local construction company to perform the detailed construction management while GMA looked after the overall project.

THE RESULT

Although the original shed was the anti-message as far as image was concerned, Gatrill liked the visual language of the steel structure. GMA transformed the appearance of the shed beyond recognition by pushing out a glass atrium to the south, building a 10,000 SF mezzanine in the south-end interior, adding retail shops and a dock-side entrance to the west, and creating a dramatic city-side entrance on the east. This also added a further 15,000 SF of space for a total of 35,000 SF, as required to meet the program of requirements.

The redeveloped port now has:

- a main stage with an audience capacity of 1200 where concerts are held including the East Coast Music Awards and the Celtic Colours Festival. This space is also used for a craft market, trade shows and exhibitions, and a Farmers' market;
- a total of eight retail shops which last year chalked up more than \$1.5 million in sales to cruise passengers. Tenants are selected on the basis that their products reinforce the Cape Breton Island theme;
- a Visitor Information Centre for cruise passengers and land tourists;
- a 5,000 SF Cape Breton Island Tourism Exhibition with exhibits, art, artifacts and interactive displays on the cultural and tourism features of the island to entice cruise passengers to come back in their cars and stay awhile;
- food facilities, kitchen, a cocktail bar and a harbour-view balcony;
- a 35 foot tall Lighthouse (a powerful maritime symbol) towering over the mezzanine in the glass atrium and doubling as an AV theatre (equipment supplied by Commercial Electronics);
- a smaller stage (300 seat capacity) adjoining the Lighthouse used for weddings, receptions, business lunches and similar events;
- a 2,000 SF art gallery displaying contemporary art from Cape Breton University;
- a sheltered dock-side welcome plaza for tendered-in passengers;
- new floating docks and ramps;
- a 60 foot wide covered outdoor stage (10,000 people capacity) for rock concerts on the dock site;
- images of Cape Breton throughout the facility, the largest one being the one in the main hall at 20 feet square produced by Artcraft Advertising who also produced many of the graphics in the Tourism Exhibition.

Assuming the number of cruise passengers calling at Sydney continues into the foreseeable future, then the present value of the stream of direct income to the Cape Breton economy is \$170 million. "Well worth the \$10 million invested by the stakeholders," enthuses Gatrill, "We need more projects like this!" <<http://gatrill.com/>>



TOP The 55 feet high, 8-ton fiddle is the "big icon" that greets visitors to the port facility and celebrates the cultural significance of fiddle music on the island

ABOVE A mock lighthouse provides a visual focus in the atrium.

LEFT Branding and signage establish a strong share of mind for both regional residents and visitors alike.

Health and dinosaurs

Karo creates a spa-like environment for patients and a rich experience for gallery visitors.

UBC'S NEW NOBEL BIOCARE ORAL HEALTH CENTRE

Open to patients in September 2006, the Nobel Biocare Oral Health Centre is a state-of-the-art, 3,510 sq. meter teaching and research centre that has more than 35,000 patient visits each year. UBC's Faculty of Dentistry's 250 students will learn in 126 open clinical operatories and 18 enclosed operatories for special procedures using the unique "smart" dental chairs and advanced chair-side technology developed in concert with Plan Meca of Finland.

Working closely with an extensive user group, Walter Francl Architects, Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden and many stakeholders, Karo Design was selected to create an innovative interior design for the public oral health clinic that reflected a sophisticated, efficient space for learning, community service and research. In addition to exterior identification, the scope of Karo's interior environment design included creating a unique visitor (patient) and education experience for the public reception, information and waiting areas and a wayfinding and signage program.

Karo's multidisciplinary team created a visitor arrival experience related to a contemporary spa, encapsulating feelings of: calmness, wellness, care, positive energy and rejuvenation. Inspired by UBC's overall "Leading From The Edge" vision, the clinic visitor arrives on a metaphorical shore, before being escorted to, and cared for, in the sunlit clearing of a coastal rainforest. Karo selected colours, finishes, millwork, custom furnishings and west coast shoreline imagery throughout the clinic to reflect the shore metaphor. From the woven natural cedar wall at reception and the translucent graphic foliage on the operatory glazing panels, to the spectacular west coast photography of

Graham Osborne, each element was meticulously chosen to remind the clinic visitor of the clinic's spectacular location in UBC's Point Grey campus location.

IIDA AWARD FOR ROYAL TYRRELL MUSEUM DESIGN

Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology, Drumheller AB, stakeholders were very pleased with Karo's design solutions for a revitalized visitor experience at three exhibit areas within the Museum. International Interior Design Association judges were also impressed as they recently awarded Karo an Honorable Mention in the 2006 'Design In Concept' category for the project.

Karo Vancouver and Karo Calgary collaborated to create concepts for a richer visitor experience in the introductory galleries and the Cretaceous Garden adjacent to the Museum's world famous Dinosaur Hall Exhibit.

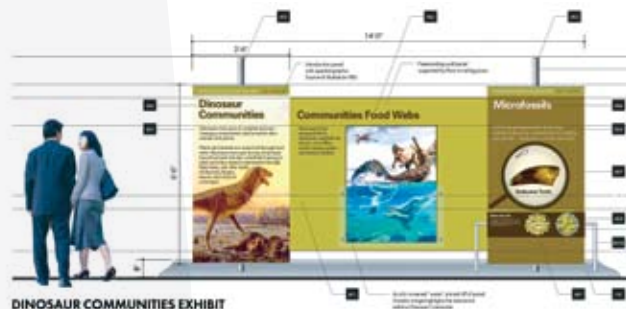
Karo's design concepts include changes to circulation flow, exhibit volume and lighting, to encourage visitors to stay longer and engage more with the exhibit content. Also, regional expertise and content are given more prominence in the display areas.

Karo's conceptual design also includes succinct interpretive content that is appropriate for all ages. Installation of state-of-the-art LCD projection systems are recommended to allow visitors to better engage with the fossil and skeletal reproductions of Mesozoic Era dinosaurs. Technological components such as holographic overlays support amazingly impactful displays. <<http://karo.com/>>



ABOVE **Glazed recognition panels feature backlighting and an inset video monitor.**

LEFT **Motifs from nature help alleviate patient anxiety.**



ABOVE **Schematic presentation illustrates graphic communications approach.**

A fresh look underwater

AQUAQUEST – THE MARILYN BLUSSON LEARNING CENTRE

Have you ever watched a cuttlefish launch a sneak attack on a tiny unsuspecting crab? In the Vancouver Aquarium's new Canaccord Capital Exploration Gallery, designed by AldrichPears Associates, you can watch this scene play out – over and over.

This new gallery is part of Aquaquest – the Marilyn Blusson Learning Centre, a \$22-million expansion completed this fall. All 52,000 square feet of the Learning Centre is dedicated to meeting the needs of the Aquarium's growing education programs. In addition to the Exploration Gallery, the Learning Centre includes classrooms, a wet lab, a theatre and a children's play area.

APA identified new ways of seeing and integrated these into interactive exhibits featuring fragile marine life. At the same time, they provided visitors with the "wow" experience of encountering really cool aquatic animals and behaviours.

Underwater cameras and live-capture magnifiers play a key role in this exhibit – they offer visitors a chance to see things that happen too fast, too slow or at too small a scale to observe. In the sea star tank, a camera captures 24 hours worth of footage. Using a spin browser – video-editing technology adapted for the public – visitors can control the speed of footage. By speeding up the captured video, visitors can watch sea stars "run" around the tank, climbing over anything in their path, be it rocks or moon snails. At other exhibits, visitors slow down footage of cuttlefish catching prey or zoom in on a barnacle's delicate feeding filaments in action.

To provide new views on animals and their behaviours, APA also used tanks in non-standard ways. In many aquariums, a front view into a tank is the only option. In the Exploration Gallery, APA designed three and four-sided tanks. Several tanks feature pop-up windows so that visitors can see underwater life from a fish's perspective.

Many tanks feature one species only, with minimal tank landscaping. This approach allows visitors to focus on individual species and transforms the display into a living sculpture. The simple beauty of a tank filled with illuminated jellyfish is breathtaking.

An additional challenge for APA was the need to design for flexibility. The Aquarium wanted to be able to change out species without a lot of fuss, so unlike many aquarium exhibits, the Exploration Gallery is not focused on a single geographic area. An animal can be replaced by another with captivating behaviours without the extra consideration of its place of origin. This meant that tanks are similar in size to suit different species. The need for flexibility also meant that graphic labels needed to be easily be added to, shortened or replaced.

Knowing that fascinating animals would be featured in illuminated tanks and that AV screens and touchscreens would be an important part of the exhibit, APA used minimal ambient lighting. Illuminated fabric projection screens overhead define exhibit groupings. As part of this approach, graphics were high-contrast and spot lit.

The result is an atmospheric exhibit that provides visitors with tools that expand the scope of their observation. It has been rewarding for APA to work on a project in their own backyard, and to see up-close the benefits to visitors and locals alike. <<http://aldrichpears.com/>>

The Exploration Gallery introduces visitors to new ways of viewing and understanding aquatic animals.

LEFT A young visitor thrills to the experience of an underwater view.

BELOW Entry portal to the gallery presages the immersive exhibits.



ABOVE A giant internally-lit mosquito sculpture hovers over visitors.

LEFT Visitors are mesmerized by being so close to the jelly fish.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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WHO WE ARE

TAA is an organization of companies and individuals working in the themed attractions industry. TAA members' work carries them all over the world and encompasses a broad range of disciplines. The TAA was formed by companies that had worked together at EXPO 86 in Vancouver. Members have become involved in every World Exposition, as well as providing international services at a high level to every imaginable type of themed attraction, Olympic, cultural and trade show event.

WHAT DO WE DO

- Master planning, project management
- Concept and theme development
- Market assessment, strategic planning, business planning and finance
- Architecture and engineering
- Exhibition design, graphics and media
- Story telling, writing, filmmaking, videography and simulation
- Exhibit fabrication and installation
- Special events staging, multi-media and technical services
- Operations including management, ticketing and training
- Cultural programming and production services
- Publicity services, promotion services and public relations
- Suppliers of products to the themed attractions industry
- Printers and manufacturers of graphics, signage and supports

WHO ARE OUR CLIENTS

- World Expos and pavilions
- Traveling exhibits
- Theme parks
- Children's museums
- Heritage buildings and sites
- Themed retail and restaurants
- Planetariums
- Cultural venues
- Museums
- Nature and interpretive centres
- Parks
- Zoos and aquaria
- Science centres
- Theatres
- Conventions and trade shows



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ABOUT TAA WORLD

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