



Nova Scotia is forecasting 2.1 million visitors will take in provincial attractions such as Peggys Cove in 2010. That's a one per cent increase from last year's tourism numbers. (TED PRITCHARD / Staff)

See where the locals play tourist

TV ads for N.S. tourism to feature real people

By **BRUCE ERSKINE**
Business Reporter

Nova Scotians will promote Nova Scotia on television commercials as part of the province's 2011 tourism strategy.

The strategy, announced this week at a conference in Halifax hosted by the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, will include Nova Scotians sharing their favourite local experiences as part of the marketing effort.

Auditions for the commercials will be held in the spring.

Mount Saint Vincent University marketing professor Don Shiner said he's seen a similar campaign from Ireland that used local people instead of professional actors and thinks it can be effective.

"If the people come across as being genuine and they have good photography, that can work quite well," he said on Tuesday. "It's 'come into my house.'"

According to government figures, Nova Scotia expects to welcome about 2.1 million visitors in 2010, up one per cent from 2009.

There was a three per cent increase in regional visits compared to 2009, while

visits from Ontario were up by one per cent. Visits from Western Canada were down seven per cent.

Total overseas visits were down by eight per cent.

Visits from the U.K. dropped by eight per cent, while visits from the U.S. were down by two per cent.

Visits from Germany, however, were up by five per cent compared to 2009.

Room nights sold to date in 2010 were consistent with 2009 results.

Some regions saw an increase in room nights, but those gains were offset by declines in southwest Nova Scotia.

Yarmouth and the Acadian Shores saw an 11 per cent drop in room night sales related to last year's loss of the Cat ferry service from Yarmouth to Maine.

Larry Peach, general manager of the Yarmouth and Acadian Shores Tourism Association, applauded the regional marketing campaign but said the loss of the Cat ferry will continue to be a challenge to the local industry.

"Access is critical," he said, adding he was disappointed there hasn't been any movement on restoring the ferry service.

"Obviously, we're going to have to

adapt to that change."

The province spent more than \$400,000 in 2010 to market the Yarmouth area as a tourism destination rather than a transportation terminal.

Tourism, Culture and Heritage Minister Percy Paris said the province will use technology and partnerships to attract tourists in 2011.

"Together with our partners, we will use innovative ways to build on our amazing experiences and natural beauty to attract more visitors to the province," he said in a news release.

The 2011 plan calls for enhanced marketing efforts in Ontario and the Maritimes in response to the increase in visitors from Eastern Canada.

For international markets, the province plans to work with the other Atlantic provinces and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, through Tourism Atlantic, to attract visitors from the northeast United States, the U.K. and Germany.

The province also plans to capitalize on the increased use of the Internet by tourists planning trips by making novascotia.com available on mobile devices.

Nova Scotia's tourism sector employs more than 31,000 people and contributes \$1.82 billion to the provincial economy.

(berskine@herald.ca)

Ontario firm sues ex-GM over alleged unauthorized payments

By **CHRIS LAMBIE**
Business Editor

The former general manager for **Canada Powertrain** is being sued for \$35,683 by his past employer.

Crane Carrier (Canada) Ltd. of Ontario has launched a case in Nova Scotia Supreme Court against Reginald Fraser.

Crane is the parent company to the truck parts and servicing outfit that employed Fraser until Sept. 28, 2009, when Canada Powertrain closed shop in this province.

Court documents filed by Crane allege that after he was dismissed, Fraser "misappropriated business opportunities for himself, submitted inappropriate expense claims in violation of policy and removed (Crane) property without any authorization."

With respect to expenses, the statement of claim further alleges that Fraser was "making unauthorized payments of \$1,500 to himself in relation to residences that were owned and used by him. The unauthorized payments continued over a nine month period" beginning in August 2008.

In a letter dated Oct. 1, 2009, Crane notified Fraser "of its concerns, withdrew its severance offer (which had not yet been accepted), and notified the defendant that it required him to repay his outstanding travel allowance and repay unauthorized expense claims," says the suit.

The company alleges that Fraser breached its employee policy to make only legitimate and authorized expense claims.

The suit also alleges that Fraser "has been unjustly enriched by paying himself the expenses in relation to his own residence and retaining the travel allowance."

It claims Fraser owes Crane \$22,183 in travel allowances "against which the defendant admitted he had no expenses to deduct."

Crane also wants to recoup \$13,500 in "unapproved monthly housing expenses" paid out over nine months.

"Despite (Crane's) requests, the defendant has refused to repay the amounts owed," says the suit.

None of the allegations in the suit have been tested in court.

Fraser could not be reached for comment.

(clambie@herald.ca)

Ontario miner reaches deal to option gold property near Liverpool

By **Our Staff**

A junior mining and exploration company has optioned a gold property near Liverpool.

Canuc Resources Corp. has inked a deal with **Magnum Resources Inc.** to acquire 100 per cent interest in the Mill Village gold property, which consists of 31 claims totalling 501.8 hectares in an area that used to be home to the historic Gold Eagle and Thompson mines.

"The terms of the agreement require Canuc to pay \$50,000 to Magnum within five days of the commencement date and to issue one million common shares of Canuc and two million common share purchase warrants, exercisable at 25 cents," says a news release from the two companies.

"Work commitments include \$500,000 in the first year, \$300,000 in the second year followed by a minimum production commitment of 7,300 tonnes of run of mine ore in the third."

Magnum will retain a three per cent gross smelter return that can be purchased by Canuc at a later date on terms to be agreed by both parties.

Canuc's main holding is an 85 per cent stake in the Nambija Gold Mine, located in south-eastern Ecuador.

"According to records obtained from the Central Bank of Ecuador, it is estimated that, to date, nearly three million ounces of gold have been produced using the most primitive of mining and milling recovery processes from the Nambija area," says a news release from the Ontario-based company.

The company's shares were trading at 14 cents a piece late Tuesday on the TSX Venture Exchange, two pennies off their 52-week low of 12 cents a share.

(business@herald.ca)

Tidal

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Oct. 20 but was moved to Nov. 22.

General Power president David Parker, an engineer and former graduate of the Technical University of Nova Scotia, said his company is keen to install its 200-kilowatt, in-stream tidal generator, which could generate enough electricity to power 60 homes. It would cost under \$2 million.

"We're quite interested in the Bay of Fundy and it looks like it's a very promising endeavour," said Parker in a telephone interview from Sarasota on Tuesday.

The successful proponent will join three other developers — **Nova Scotia Power, Alstom** and Hantsport's **Minas Basin Pulp and Power** — that have berths on the ocean floor.

Nova Scotia Power and its technology partner, **OpenHydro** of Dublin, Ireland, have experienced the trials and tribulations of developing working tidal turbines.

Most recently, OpenHydro failed to lift its damaged turbine from the ocean floor for an inspection and has postponed the recovery until December.

The two companies deployed a \$10-million turbine in the Minas Passage about 10 kilometres west of Parrsboro last November. It was damaged and will be hauled out of the water this month.

Nova Scotia Power discovered that two

blades — made from blends of plastic and glass — on the 400-tonne experimental turbine had broken off in May. The malfunction is forcing the company to pull the device out of the water a year ahead of schedule.

Parker said his company is not deterred by the setbacks experienced by OpenHydro and has learned from their mistakes.

"I think certainly OpenHydro is ruling the day they went in there with glass blades," said Parker. "We took a lesson from OpenHydro. We're not going big; the result is we're looking at quite a small unit."

Minas Basin and Alstom of Switzerland will deploy their turbines in 2012.

(jmyrden@herald.ca)

Schoolhouse

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starting at \$950 a month. They can be viewed at www.willowlofts.ca.

Office space on the lower and main levels ranges from \$11 to \$18 a square foot, depending on the location in the building, and is geared toward low-traffic professional businesses. All but one of the office spaces are rented, with a lawyer, an accountant, a physiotherapist, the area's MP and real estate brokers settling

in.

Office spaces again play off the characteristics unique to an old schoolhouse and feature exposed ductwork and lots of natural light. The building's commercial entrance makes it feel like a schoolhouse with modern amenities.

The biggest challenge in dealing with a building that is almost 100 years old came in working with the lower level, where hand-mixed cement had to be cut through to create doorways, said Meech.

"It was built like a bomb shelter," he said. "So you had to make sure you wanted that door there."

How to insulate the building and the

heating system was the other major design challenge. In-floor heating is used on the lower level, with the rest of the building using heat pumps. The building also has air conditioning.

Meech said the building defined the decision to go with mixed use. It acts as a sort of buffer between the residential neighbourhood to one side and the commercial part of town to the other. A green space is behind the building.

"It's still a very residential-feeling area so we knew whatever we built would blend well with this part of the town," said Moffatt.

(mgorman@herald.ca)

Taylor

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According to the bank's survey, there are signs that the housing market, particularly in metro Halifax, may have picked up, which shows that some people are paying attention to economic conditions.

But that increase is only making up for a cooling in house-buying activity in the spring, when the resale market fell back to lows reached at the end of 2008.

There may be an argument for holding off on buying a home until there are more obvious signs the economy is taking off.

But by that time, who knows what the housing market will look like?

(rtaylor@herald.ca)

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