

W. FRANKLIN HATHEWAY TRUST A FRIEND OF LABOUR

By

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Like Saint John's historic Labour Bells, the name Warren Franklin Hatheway still resonates today as a community, business and political leader, scholar, philanthropist, supporter of workers and visionary who was ahead of his time. He is commemorated at the newly re-constructed W. Franklin Hatheway Pavilion and W. Franklin Hatheway Labour Exhibit Centre at Lily Lake. It is a source of pride for our community and the local labour movement. The volunteer Board of the Trust has laboured diligently to honour this man since the early nineties, when the trust he established shortly before his death in 1923, was re-activated.

Born in Saint John in 1850, he was of Loyalist stock. His grandfather authored a provincial history and a cousin served as Premier of New Brunswick. He became a gifted linguist, writer, joined the militia and was French Consul for Saint John. His successful business career began at Small and Hatheway Steamboats and later, with Messrs. Turnbull and Company in wholesale groceries. His concern and support of workers was demonstrated when he gave his employees at W.F. Hatheway and Company, a share of the profits, plus wages, later permitting some to become active partners. His will generously stipulated bequests for his co-workers in recognition of the loyal and faithful way in which the warehousemen, auto-truckmen and teamsters always acted in the interests of his company.

His role in numerous groups reads like a directory of community organizations. He became President of the Saint John Board of Trade, where he took leadership in workers' rights, influencing a number of key pieces of labour legislation, even before he became a member of the New Brunswick legislature. There, he also supported funding for education, agriculture, rights for First Nations, forestry, pensions and women's suffrage. The Workmen's Compensation Statutes, commonly referred to as "The Hatheway Act" and the "Factory Act" were notable.

Shortly before his passing, Franklin Hatheway established a Trust for the working people of Saint John, their families and friends. He gave over seventy acres of land in Millidgeville for a Labour Park or alternatively, to construct a Labour Temple. Over the years, a board comprised of representatives from the labour community, oversaw its responsibilities but the park or temple did not become a reality. In the early nineties the group re-activated and began actively searching for a suitable new site, since the original lands had been gradually sold off. Pat Riley chairs the Hatheway Trust Board today, along with Lloyd Soble, treasurer, Bill Farren, secretary, Bob Davidson, David Gregg, Leo Kelly, Chuck Hickey, Sandy MacDonald, Paul Maxwell, Tom Robichaud, Tom Tracy and George Vair. It is comprised of representatives of the Saint John and District Labour Council and the building and construction trades unions. "We ensured the provisions of the Trust were respected" says Pat Riley, when they finally struck an agreement he terms "a great partnership", with the Saint John Horticultural Association to locate the Hatheway Trust and Labour Temple at Lily Lake. "We knew he would approve" he adds, citing Mr. Hatheway as "a caring giver and philanthropist". It is fittingly symbolic that Mr. Hatheway was President of the Saint John Horticultural Association.

Wallace MacMurray, Pat Watts, Brenda Farren, Leslie McColgan, and Bob Capson were early participants who galvanized the community into a giant effort to eventually raise about \$1.7Million for the project. The Hatheway Trust committed an impressive \$350,000, augmented by \$450,000 from the Government of Canada, \$225,000 from the Province of NB and many generous community donors. Today, following the extensive renovation of the Pavilion at Lily Lake, it now bears the Hatheway name and is the home of his cherished dream of a Labour Temple and place where workers, their families and friends can gather for recreation, education and moral refreshment.

In 1984, the Canadian Labour Congress declared an Annual Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job, subsequently recognized provincially, nationally and internationally. Today, a brochure highlights six monuments which stand across our province as testament to them except in Saint John, which is “conspicuously absent” says George Vair, who heads the local Monument Committee. This will soon be rectified with the help of the Hatheway Trust and a significant project underway. For a year, they have been planning and fundraising a “six figure amount”. They held a competition for a design of appropriate proportions to be located next to the Hatheway Pavilion. The revealing of the winning design is but a few weeks away, with completion and unveiling due on April 28, 2011. George Vair is delighted that Darren Byers and Fred Harrison, two New Brunswick artists have been selected to commemorate the Day of Mourning.

W. Franklin Hatheway Trust, contact Pat Riley 635-8610 or George Vair 672-1412 for information or to arrange a tour of the exhibit centre.



Photo; Pat Riley, Chair of W. Franklin Hatheway Trust Board and George Vair, board member and head of their Monument Committee are proud of the W. Franklin Hatheway Labour Exhibit Centre at Lily Lake, which houses artifacts of significance to our community and the labour movement and honours W. Franklin Hatheway, “merchant, politician and friend of labour”.



Community Profile is a weekly column highlighting community causes and work done by non-profit organizations in the Greater Saint John area. It is contributed by Jane Barry, executive director of The Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Contact the foundation at 506-672-8880. To view other Community Profiles go to www.saint-john-foundation.nb.ca