

The Chronicle Herald

CAPE BRETON, NOVA SCOTIA

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LEITCHES CREEK

Cape Breton police charge 3

1 accused of obstruction of justice, 2 others with allowing drunkenness

CAPE BRETON POST

SYDNEY — A police investigation into the June 10 death of a 17-year-old North Sydney youth has resulted in charges against three people, including the driver of a vehicle that allegedly struck the teen as he walked along the side of the road.

Hayden Kenneth Laffin, 21, of Laffin Lane, is charged with obstruction of justice in relation to the death of Nathan Joneil Hanna.

Cape Breton Regional Police allege that Laffin provided false information to them in connection with the circumstances surrounding Hanna's death in Leitches Creek.

Laffin made a brief provincial

court appearance Thursday afternoon in Sydney accompanied by his defence lawyer David Iannetti. Regional Crown attorney Katheryn Pentz represented the prosecution service.

Laffin was released on conditions and is to return to provincial court Sept. 7 to enter a plea.

Among the conditions of his release, Laffin is to keep the peace

and be of good behaviour, attend court as directed and have no contact, direct or indirect, with members of the Hanna family.

Police also reported Thursday that they charged Kenneth Wilkie, 52, and his wife Donna Wilkie, 49, both of Leitches Creek, with allowing drunkenness on their

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DRINK TAMPERING

N.S. police to review response

Another woman comes forward

BRETT BUNDALE THE CANADIAN PRESS

The last thing she remembers is buying a drink. Hours later she was found unconscious, alone on a dark sidewalk.

The 19-year-old has spent weeks trying to piece together what happened after a night out with friends, another suspected case of drink tampering in downtown Halifax.

As the university town readies for an influx of students this fall, police are grappling with how to respond to a recent rash of drink spiking incidents.

The Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police drug committee, which includes officials from the Department of Justice, the medical examiner's office, the public prosecution service, police, EHS and fire, has added the issue to its agenda at an upcoming meeting on Aug. 16.

Halifax RCMP Chief Supt. Lee Bergerman says a closer look is warranted even if it's premature to call it a trend.

"I think it's a topic that we should at least discuss," she says. "I do think that drug and drink tampering is underreported. I

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SAINT NINIAN'S CATHEDRAL



Brittany Houghton restores peeled paint to the wall using steam and glue so that when some of the layers are removed the covered work underneath will be whole. AARON BESWICK • THE CHRONICLE HERALD

'He was Canada's Michelangelo'

Artist's early 20th-century work partly uncovered in church

AARON BESWICK THE CHRONICLE HERALD

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Fortunate isn't a label to be casually applied to Saint Cecilia.

Legend has it that the young woman of noble birth converted her pagan husband to her faith and a life burying the fellow Christians killed by Rome's then prefect.

The lover of song died slowly at the end of the second century from wounds delivered to her neck by a Roman sword.

Her story and canonization as the patron saint of music touched someone's heart.

Because an anonymous donor wanted Saint Cecilia to be seen

again the way Ozias Leduc conjured her image with his famed brush over a century ago above the choir loft in Saint Ninian's Cathedral.

"He was Canada's Michelangelo," Michelle Gallinger, a

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BBC to feature historic Chignecto railway

DARRELL COLE
AMHERST NEWS

FORT LAWRENCE — Cumberland County's historic Chignecto Marine Ship Railway is getting international exposure.

A film crew from the British Broadcasting Corporation was in Fort Lawrence on July 27 to do a preliminary inspection of the site and a crew will return later in August to do some filming for a segment on the BBC's Great American Railway Journeys.

The TV series explores the impact of railways on North America.

"Had the Chignecto Ship Railway been completed, it would have provided a unique form of transport which could be used as a model for many other countries," Cumberland Colchester MP Bill Casey said. "For this reason, the BBC has determined that it should be part of the story about North American railways."

Sometimes called Ketchum's Dream, the ship railway was the brainchild of civil engineer Henry Ketchum, who in 1875 proposed building a railway for ships across the Isthmus of Chignecto at its shortest point from the Bay of Fundy at Fort Lawrence to the Northumberland Strait at Tidnish — shortening a trip between the bay and the Gulf of St. Lawrence by about 930 kilometres.

The project would see ships lifted out of the water at one end and onto a rail car for transport, then place it back in the water at the other end using a hoist and lock system.

Ketchum submitted his proposal to the fledgling Canadian government in 1881 and construction began in 1888. It was three-quarters completed in 1890 when financial problems occurred, and the project halted 1891. The federal government refused to extend its support of the project and Ketchum died suddenly in Amherst in 1896.

Casey's family owned the 142-hectare, 27-kilometre long property for more than 40 years before selling it to the province in February 2012.

Casey hopes this exposure may entice the province to further protect the site and potentially develop it as a tourist destination.

"I think it will give the area good exposure and give attention to the ship railway, which it needs," he said. "It's one of only 34 national historic civil engineering sites in Canada and it should be recognized. Hopefully, this exposure will help get that recognition. It's a tremendous part of our engineering and seagoing history."

While at the site, the BBC crew examined much of the documentation available, including a copy of the original deed plan. The plan, more than 20 feet long, outlines every aspect of the roadway and the challenges involved in the construction.

BBC crew members Rosalind Hill, Ben Rowland and Louis Sarinha visited the Bay of Fundy end of the railway and walked along the railbed. They climbed on the stone foundations of the machinery used for the hydraulic lifts and had a close look at many of the remaining barrels of concrete left from construction — including 197 at one location.

The wood of the barrels has disintegrated and the steel hoops have almost all disappeared, but the concrete has turned into cement and they are still piled exactly as they were left in 1890.

The crew also filmed downtown Amherst including the Tupper Building, once owned by Sir Charles Tupper, who was instrumental in the development of the Chignecto Ship Railway.

At the time, Tupper served as the minister of railways and canals and in 1896 served as prime minister.

Casey said the BBC crew was surprised to learn Tupper was born in Amherst and was one of Canada's founding fathers. He served in Britain as Canada's high commissioner, and also became a member of the British Privy Council.



Michelle Gallinger and her 'art gals' Aimee Hawker and Brittany Houghton are removing multiple layers of paint at Saint Ninian's Cathedral in Antigonish to reveal the work of Ozias Leduc, known in art circles as Canada's Michelangelo.

AARON BESWICK ■ THE CHRONICLE HERALD

'This is our Sistine Chapel'

FROM PAGE A1: SAINT NINIAN'S

professional art conservator, said of Leduc.

"This is our Sistine Chapel and it's one of the churches he painted that's never been restored."

Gallinger and the team of fellow conservators she calls her "art gals" have been painstakingly uncovering Leduc's work.

Saint Cecilia was just the first. "It was about beauty," said Rev. Donald MacGillivray.

"When he was originally commissioned it would have been quite a sacrifice for a congregation to pay for him to come and do this."

When the Diocese of Antigonish hired the Quebec artist in the 19th century to come to northern Nova Scotia it wasn't just to paint Saint Cecilia.

It was to paint nearly every inch of the cathedral's interior.

The great stone building on the hill in Antigonish was raised by the Scottish immigrants who had been clearing land and building communities since their arrival.

MacGillivray's own great-

grandfather donated a week of his time per year hauling granite from an area quarry with horse and wagon.

It took the congregation nearly three decades after its 1874 consecration to pay off the initial construction debt and raise the money to bring Leduc.

But walking through the cathedral's heavy hinged wooden doors now, you'd never know it was once a great painter's masterpiece.

Since Leduc finished his three-year project in 1903, his work has been damaged and covered and touched up until it is nearly unrecognizable.

There was the steam leak in the basement that travelled up the pillars and forced the paint from the walls.

There was an incident where a person nearly fell through the ceiling (and thankfully didn't as it is very high), damaging some of the plaster in the process.

There were well meaning though lesser artists who believed the apostles should be made darker to match the coats of yellow paint that have covered most of Leduc's work.

In 2006 with the many coats of paint peeling and a knowledge

of what was hidden, conservators were brought in to figure out what, if anything, could be done to restore the cathedral.

They found that it could be done but not cheaply — upwards of \$24,000 per saint.

That's because it would take a team like Gallinger's at least five weeks per saint working on scaffolding a few floors up to slowly peel back the layers of paint.

It wasn't until a donor came forward with the money to uncover Saint Cecilia in honour of his sister, a fellow music lover, that work began.

In steps Gallinger.

Herself an artist, she has spent 25 years learning about the history, chemistry and restoration of painted works. She's also restored 150 Maud Lewis paintings.

"It's about using chemistry to split the layers of paint," said Gallinger.

"The layers of paint that were applied began 35 years after Leduc completed his work so his paint was already dry and there is a layer of dirt that's probably also helping us."

To simplify it, Leduc's team first apply a glue to the peeling paint and then using steam to fold it back and re-adhere it to

the wall.

Then they apply poultices, carrying solvents chosen for the composition of each layer, to the wall to slowly remove each coat that covers the saints and apostles.

They've been on staging in the cathedral's loft working in temperatures often exceeding 35 C all summer.

"You develop a fondness for Leduc," said Brittany Houghton, one of Gallinger's team.

"You're always so happy to see him come out as you get down to his work. You have these moments where you say to yourself 'Ah yes, success.'"

The committee responsible and the private donors funding the restoration have been making hard decisions because they can't afford to uncover all of Leduc's work.

They are in a race against time.

Because as the paint peels, cracks and falls to the floor so do the strokes of Leduc's brush so many years ago.

"We'll do as much as we can as funds become available," said MacGillivray.

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