

Parents rap inquest process

BY NINA CHIARELLI
Telegraph-Journal

In the end, one family's unflinching demand for an inquest into the death of their daughter ended up ruling out their own theory about her death.

When six-year-old Ashley Atkinson of Hampton was admitted to the Saint John Regional Hospital in February 2001, her parents thought she

had another bout of the croup.

What they didn't know was that Ashley remained heavily sedated under an anesthetic called propofol for the nearly four days she stayed in hospital.

Ashley's parents, Chris and Susan Atkinson, believed the drug was not intended for use on



Ashley

children, and demanded an inquest. They believed the hospital and the doctors who treated Ashley erred in prescribing the drug, and failed to monitor its continued use. They also believed propofol directly caused their daughter's death.

The five-member Saint John jury, who listened

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intently for six days, didn't agree. They concluded the child died of natural causes "as a result of influenza viral

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N.B. man helps N.S. town avert floods

BY SHAWN BERRY
Telegraph-Journal

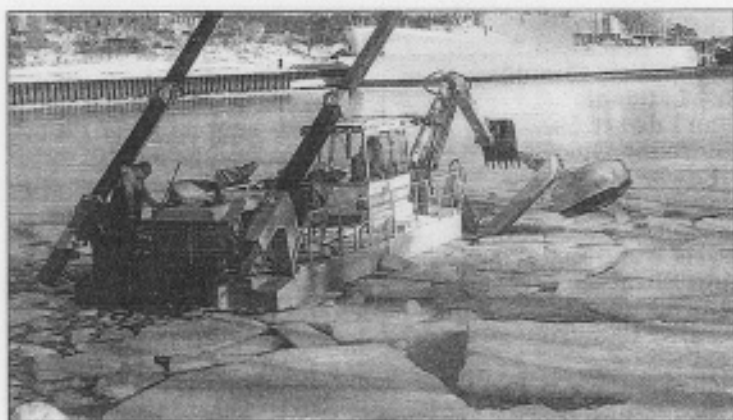
BRIDGEWATER, N.S. — An Acadian Peninsula man and his floating excavator spent the weekend breaking up ice in Bridgewater, N.S. to help with flooding.

Paul LaPlante of Pigeon Hill has been in the community located about 100 kilometres southwest of Halifax, since Thursday, using his floating excavator to break up an ice jam on the LaHave River that has caused havoc in the town

for the past week.

Since last week's ice storm, the town has endured flooding and the threat that the ice buildup on the river could destroy the community's bridges.

"We saw they had big problems, so we called and explained that we could do this. They were hesitant, but I took the initiative to come down and give them a demonstration," Mr. LaPlante said



Mark Roberts/Canadian Press

Eco Technologies of the Acadian Peninsula is the only company in the Maritimes with a floating excavator capable of breaking up ice.

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ICE: Contraption garners curiosity

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from Bridgewater.

Mr. LaPlante and his crew were contracted for 15 hours of work on the river Thursday and Friday, with the Province of Nova Scotia and the Town of Bridgewater splitting the \$350 an hour cost of the pontoon excavator. They were hired to stay on until Sunday afternoon.

While locals are most interested in the floating excavator's work, the contraption itself has garnered some curiosity.

"When we put the machine in the water Thursday, they

were really impressed," said Mr. LaPlante, whose Eco Technologies is the only company in the Maritimes with such a vehicle.

The machine arrives on a trailer, raises itself like a spider so the trailer can be pulled out from underneath it, and using two moveable pontoons and its shovel, the machine carries itself to the water. Once there it can float or slide on the ice.

"When we get there with the machine, we put it on the water and we break the ice, clearing up the jams."

The current, he said, takes the ice away.

"But we go down to that other place first and make a large hole to receive the ice so it won't cause more problems somewhere else."

Bridgewater and the Nova Scotia government didn't have the budget to completely remove the jam, Mr. LaPlante said.

"We did what they wanted us to, made a canal for the water to flow through."

"I made a canal, so at least the water can follow its course and not flood."

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Reach our reporter
tjedmu@nb.aibn.com