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Deep Roots

L. Chabot Enterprises Ltd. has a 50-year history but strives to change with the times

BY HEATHER HUDSON

When the Winnipeg Soccer Federation needed two new artificial turf pitches to host this summer's the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Women's World Cup, they needed a heavy construction company that could handle excavation as well as prepare the field with laser-like precision.

It was a tall order: FIFA requires a 0.5-degree slope across the 84,000 sq. ft. pitch with 5 mm of accuracy. And they do not tolerate deviations of any kind.

"There has to be a very, very minute deviation in the slope," says Devon Kashton, President of the Winnipeg Soccer Federation.

This meant a careful selection process among the respondents to their request for proposal. Despite the fact that L. Chabot Enterprises Ltd. had no experience with artificial turf, something told Kashton they could handle the job.



A panoramic view of the field prior to turf installation



Photos courtesy of Martin Gurtman,
L. Chabot Enterprises.



L. Chabot Enterprises is proud to be a part of projects that matter to the community and groups like the Winnipeg Soccer Federation, which lead the development of the two FIFA-approved fields



"We are always striving to stay current in the construction industry and provide a complete solution. The roots of our business are still aggregate production, excavation and backfill services, but we're using technology to expand what we do to offer a complete solution."

— Martin Gurtman, Director of Operations, L. Chabot Enterprises Ltd.



A view of the stripped field and drainage trench construction on one of two fields where FIFA Women's World Cup teams will practise

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"We knew they traditionally do roads and jobs of that nature, but we didn't want their inexperience with turf pitches to be a motivating factor when making our selection... ultimately, they did a fantastic job," he says.

People who know L. Chabot Enterprises won't be surprised. The family-owned, third generation company has been specializing in sand and gravel crushing and delivery since before current Vice-President Nicole Chabot was born.

Today, along with her father Chubb (President), mother May (Controller) and husband Martin Gurtman (Director of Operations) and a specialized workforce of 130 and growing, L. Chabot Enterprises is taking on projects shaping the Winnipeg landscape, infrastructure and surrounding municipalities.

Notable examples of their recent high-profile projects include work on:

- The Manitoba Floodway Expansion Project from 2007-2013
- The CentrePort Way project from 2011-2013 (they produced and supplied more than a quarter million tons of specialized MSE Wall material)
- The Phase I Bridgewater subdivision excavation and remediation in 2011
- The former Sugar Beets site excavation adjacent to the Brady landfill property

These kinds of jobs are a far cry from Lucien Chabot's humble beginnings hauling gravel in a single truck 50 years ago. Gurtman says that staying true to the company's origins is one of the keys to the company's longevity, but so is the ability to evolve with the times.

"We are always striving to stay current in the construction industry and provide a complete solution," he explains. "The roots of our business are still aggregate production, excavation and backfill services, but we're using technology to expand what we do to offer a complete solution."



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GPS-enabled dozers help L. Chabot Enterprises ensure accuracy and reduce surveying costs

It's this commitment to employ technology that led them to secure the Winnipeg Soccer Federation project.

"We recently invested in Trimble base station and GPS receivers and have equipped our [heavy construction] units with GPS machine control technology to ensure accuracy and reduce surveying costs," says Gurtman.

This allows the company to pre-program a model when spreading aggregate, ensuring the kind of accuracy that's needed for jobs like the artificial turf project. The operator can follow the GPS model in the cab knowing that it's being laid exactly to grade.

"The technology helped us feel confident bidding on the Winnipeg Soccer Federation job, which was a good opportunity for us. It included a lot of excavation, technical dewatering and an elaborate plan to create proper drainage on field. There was also lot of backfill of aggregate, which is a mainstay in our regular scope of work," says Gurtman.

L. Chabot Enterprises is also using Trimble systems on dozers, graders and excavators for roadway jobs, including the large-scale, multi-year Hwy. 1 shoulder widening project secured in 2014, more than 30 km long.

As the company forges forward, they're looking to offer even more comprehensive services to their customers. Whether it's mass-scale site remediation projects or a building excavation project, they thrive on offering a range of construction projects.

To support their ever-growing operation, L. Chabot Enterprises has opened multiple gravel manufacturing operations in the Winnipeg Capital Region, most recently the Gull Lake location in 2011. Their operations include a fully certified service and maintenance shop with a full-time, 24-hour staff of heavy-duty mechanics and truck and trailer mechanics tasked with maintaining the fleet of trucks and equipment.

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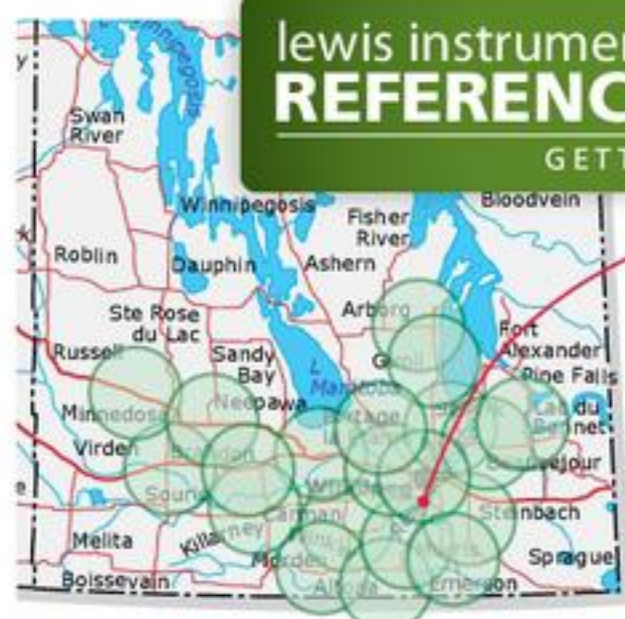
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The crushing division employs more than 30 people during peak season. Between the project managers, supervisory personnel, dedicated construction safety officer and the Class 1 and 3 drivers, heavy equipment operators, construction labourers and project personnel, L. Chabot Enterprises' workforce is always expanding.

Gurtman says they are especially proud to make a lasting contribution to the Winnipeg community through projects like the artificial turf on St. Vital Memorial and Shaughnessy Park, which is obvious to those involved.

"We had a great experience with Chabot. The nice thing was that not only were they professional but they were also very open to the fine tunings of the process," Kashton says.

"You expect that from a company that's well respected and understands what they do very well, but it's the attention to detail and willingness to learn from others that makes the difference." 

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