

Congratulations to the 198th Class of the Inspector Training School

On Friday, May 13, fourteen students graduated from the Inspector Training School Program that was held in Powassan, Ontario, Canada. The class was taught by veteran National Inspector Tom Byers. The following students graduated from the 198th Class of the Inspector Training School and received the certificate of completion:



- Stephen Aleck, Murray Bros. Lumber Co. Ltd.
- Kamal Aliouane, Quality Hardwoods Ltd.
- Vince Beasley, Haliburton Forest
- Mionne Blais, Haliburton Forest
- Turner Fice, Haliburton Forest
- Matthew Gibson, Ontario Hardwood Products, Ltd.
- Bethany Moran, Haliburton Forest
- Anita Morrison, Bernie McGlynn Lumber Ltd.
- Connor Osborne, Quality Hardwoods Ltd.
- Tim Ross, Quality Hardwoods Ltd.
- Serena Schamehorn, Haliburton Forest
- Greg Simpson, Haliburton Forest
- William Spotton, Haliburton Forest
- Alisha Wilson, Haliburton Forest

NHLA would like to welcome these men and women to the hardwood industry and the Inspector Training School alumni community. We wish you a long and successful career.



What is a lumber inspector?

A Hardwood Lumber Inspector evaluates a raw cut board of hardwood lumber and assigns the board a grade, based on the NHLA Hardwood Lumber Grading Rules. Once the grade is determined the board can then be valued, distributed/sold, and used by a wide group of manufacturing segments such as furniture, flooring, cabinetry, moulding, millwork, pallets, and more!

The certificate program is comprised of both lecture and lab time, ensuring the student learns the NHLA Grading Rules and ethics requirements, as well as hands-on grading practice. The skill of appropriately grading, or inspecting, hardwood lumber is crucial to the success of any facility in the hardwood lumber industry. The certificate of completion program also prepares students to advance to future positions such as Sawmill Manager, Lumber Buyer, Sales, and Procurement. Students with the knowledge and skill of hardwood lumber inspection, who are graduates of the NHLA Inspector Training School are in high demand!



The NHLA Inspector Training School has two learning options!

There are two ways to receive a certificate in lumber inspection. The first is the **8-week Inspector Training School Program**; offered at NHLA headquarters in Memphis, TN. This course is a mix of hands-on training, testing, in-class lecturing, one-on-one training with the instructor, group study and more. Students who successfully fulfill all program requirements will receive a certificate of completion.

Alternatively, students may take part in the **ITS Online Training Program**, which allows students to receive a certificate of completion in a hybrid learning environment. This program is perfect for self-motivated students looking for a flexible schedule.

The ITS Online Training Program is composed of 3 Modules:

Module 1 is a two-week course that includes hands-on training and in-class lectures at NHLA Headquarters in Memphis, TN. Once Module 1 is complete, students can register for Module 2.

Module 2 is all online. Students can spend up to one year studying online from work, home, or anywhere with WiFi connection. Once successfully finished with Module 2, students can register for Module 3.

Module 3 is three weeks of training in Memphis. In this Module, students will be taking tests, grading lumber, and students can meet with our instructors for one-on-one guidance.

After successful completion of all 3 Modules, students will receive a certificate of completion. Students applying to the program are required to speak fluent English, provide a high school or GED transcript, or may opt to take the state approved Ability to Benefit test at NHLA. We also highly recommend that our students are well versed in memorization skills, as well as using fractions to calculate formulas for measurement.

The NHLA Inspector Training School offers the only Hardwood Lumber Inspector certificate program in the world. Due to the reputation of the School, it has a 98% job-placement rate. Graduates are often in high demand because many companies require their inspectors to be trained by NHLA. As further testament to the value of the School, many alumni are now in ownership or management positions within the industry. These alumni know the value of the School and send their employees to complete the course.

Visit our website at www.nhla.com/education or give us a call at 901-377-1818 and let us answer any questions you have about the Program.

For a great number of people over last 75 years or so, the NHLA hardwood lumber grading school has become the foundation of success for many of us in the lumber industry.

It was exactly that for myself. After graduating from Forestry in mid 70's I worked as Forest technician in both public and private sector and finally landing steady employment with small sawmill in 81. Here I was tasked with planning, implementing annual operating plans for our logging operations. It meant time in the woods logging thru winter, road layout in spring, road building thru summer. Any gaps thru the year meant working in and around the mill wherever needed.

It was during these mill times I discovered the lumber grading position. It intrigued me to inquire with the owner to ask if I might take up that position to enhance my future and benefit the sawmill. He hesitated but agreed and offered to sponsor my tuition and pay me 3 weeks per month while I was on the course. If I agreed he asked that I agree to work for him for 10 years in return.

Without hesitation I agreed and then convinced my wife it would be a good idea. We were new parents at that time with 6 month old baby. I can't say my wife Gerri was totally convinced!

I left in early September with Brad Thompson who was sponsored by Oliver Lumber. I left Gerri and the baby Jennifer with her parents on the family farm near Goderich and 2 days later arrived in Memphis with Brad. Memphis was an eye opener for two country boys from rural Ontario.

We rented a 2 bedroom apartment, rented some furniture set up our kitchen and settled into the course. Three weeks later Gerri arrived with baby Jennifer and Brad's Fiance. We were now 5 in the apartment with lot's of cockroches to keep us busy.

The course kept us very busy studying and expanding our lumber universe. There were 80 students in our class from all walks of life, all looking to improve our future potential. Twelve weeks later in early December we had our graduation and we all headed back to hopefully apply our new skill set. I'm not sure what would've happened if I had failed. It was not an option I suppose?

Over the years since achieving the grading certificate along with the experience and self confidence gained I have worked in several lumber related jobs. Every success has some benefit tied to the Lumber grading course.

I continue to connect with Alumni in business and friendships.

Here at Quality hardwoods we have trained several graders and most recently 3 attended and passed as part of the 198th NHLA class held here at Haliburton Forest and Quality Hardwoods. One of those students, Connor Osborne is son of Derek Osborne who is foreman and lumber grader here. Derek's father Bud Osborne attended the NHLA school in Memphis back in the late 50's. Three generations of lumber graders!

Another grader, Mike Brooks attended NHLA in Memphis right after high school back in 96' and started work here at QH for his uncle Paul Brooks who attended NHLA Memphis back in late 60's.

The lumber Grading class might not be a University degree but it certainly has had a positive impact on students, staff, instructors and the hardwood industry. Congratulations to all the graduates of the 198th class.

