

# CELEBRATE KINGS: *Pride in our people, places and products*

## **Art and nature meld to light up the night**

A local artist unites Kings County flora with unique rocks from the Bay of Fundy shore in her creation of unique botanical lamps.

These works of “functional art” are products of StoneLeaf Lamps and artisan Anna Spooner. On the Old Post Road in Grand Pré, Kings County, is the workshop where the artist derives each new design by combining a naturally sculpted stone with local plant life.

“We had a botanical shade given to us from a lady in Ontario renowned for her lampshades. I’m a gardener and I liked the thought of the light shining through the plants.” So, in 1998, Anna began experimenting with making her own.

Anna wanted to create a shade that was not only beautiful, but durable and long-lasting. “I wanted one where the plants wouldn’t break up if the shade was bumped into. I actually ended up picking up a technique from a lamp-parts catalogue.”

In the method chosen by Anna, styrene is used as a backing. She brushes on a non-yellowing, environmentally safe varnish and, while wet, places the plant on it. Then she varnishes the plant, places Japanese paper over it, varnishes again and lets it dry. As a final touch, she adds one more coat of varnish.

Originally, Anna made only lampshades. But she received a call from a family friend who does stonework and had created a lamp base with a Bay of Fundy stone. They sampled it with one of her shades and loved the result.

The rock bases are now Anna’s inspiration for her lampshades. The base determines the shade’s size and shape, what plants are selected, and what Japanese paper is used.

“Once it is all put together, people will see how the base and shade connect. It’s functional art, as no two shades or bases are the same. I see each as a whole – as a sculpture.” And the art changes from day to night - a different perspective is displayed when the lamps are lit from within.

The married mother of two is in her fifth year of selling her art. And the shades have evolved as Anna’s experience has grown. Each lamp is signed, with a signature on each shade and a number under each base. All are CSA-approved.

Anna’s products are in homes across North America and as far away as New Zealand. She sells them at her studio and online at

stoneleaflamps.com. Anna also displays at the Nova Scotia Designer Craft Council’s (NSDCC) Christmas show in Halifax - she is a - NSDCC juried member - and at Toronto’s One-Of-A-Kind show. From her Toronto display, she has just received her first wholesale order.

“My work caught the eye of a couple of furniture design companies and they approached me about doing wholesale orders. One has three of my lamps on display in its Queen Street West showroom. It’s very exciting!”

At the last NSDCC show, Anna received a compliment illustrating how her art has grown. “I had a comment from someone who had been following my work. She believed my work had become much more sculptural.” For Anna, it means her work is recognized as art - truly functional art!

*Story and photo by Marlene Huntley*



*Anna Spooner relaxes with two of her StoneLeaf Lamps.*



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