

The Town Pump



The Town Pump (maquette)
2013, by Michael Tizzano

The Town Pump sculpture

The City of Dublin has a legacy of providing the community with meaningful public artworks that connect to important moments and places in the City's history - and *The Town Pump* by Michael Tizzano is no exception. The interactive sculpture to be installed at Bridge and High streets is the latest addition to the internationally recognized Dublin Art in Public Places program, which was established in 1988 by Dublin Arts Council and now contains more than 70 sculptural elements.

History of Dublin's town pump

Picture if you will, the Village of Dublin more than a century ago. At the time, Dublin was a stopover for a stagecoach line running from Granville to Greenville. Horses, bicycles and your own two feet were the primary modes of transportation on local roads in the late 1800s. Residents didn't have the luxury of turning on a faucet in their homes if they wanted a drink of water. They had to venture to one of the four local water pumps with a pail in tow.

Local wells were dug in the limestone that existed below ground in the area. The primary source of drinking water for the public wells was the Dublin Spring near the intersection of Riverview and Bridge streets.

Each of the water pumps was operated by hand. These water pumps were often gathering places for people to share news and connect with one another.

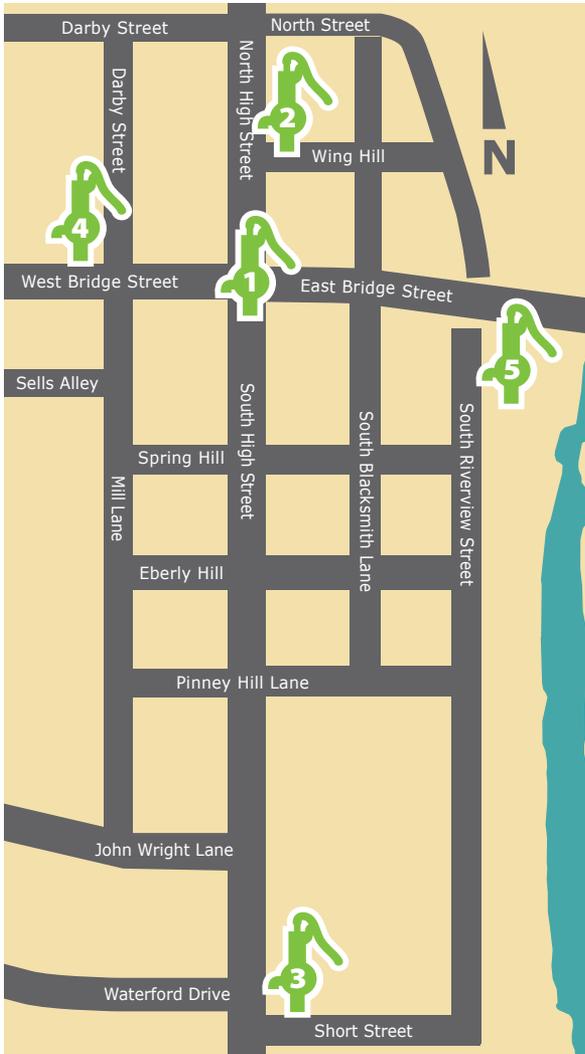
Once the water was collected, residents would store their drinking water in ceramic crocks and pots in their homes to be used for drinking and cooking. Townspeople also collected rainwater to wash clothes and dishes.

Dublin's main water pump sat right in the middle of the intersection of Bridge and High streets. It was surrounded by a 22-inch concrete barrier and had a horse trough at one end. With the advent of motorcars, the pump became a hazard due to its location in the middle of the road.



The town pump, circa 1920

The State Highway Department offered to move the pump out of the intersection to keep it out of harm's way, but there was disagreement on its new placement. The demise of the main town water pump took place after a motorist slammed into the barrier that surrounded the pump and threatened to sue the village. The pump was eventually removed and replaced with a traffic light, as automobiles became more commonplace in the village.



Locations of Historic Dublin Water Sources

- 1 Bridge & High streets
- 2 North High Street in front of dentist's office
- 3 South High Street near Dr. Karrer's office
- 4 Bridge Street near Veterinary Clinic
- 5 Spring at Riverview & Bridge streets

The Town Pump sculpture

Michael Tizzano is a keen observer of his surroundings and draws his inspiration from the world around him. He lives and works in Westerville, Ohio. Tizzano is a former middle school art teacher in the Westerville school district and retired in 2010 after spending 23 years in the classroom, to pursue sculpting full time. Throughout his tenure as a teacher, Tizzano worked as a freelance graphic designer specializing in lettering design for clients such as Mid-Ohio Racing. He also completed post-graduate coursework in architecture, art history and bronze casting at The Ohio State University in 1993 and 1994. Tizzano has created numerous commissioned public and private sculptures for clients over the past 22 years, including ballet dancers for Dublin Dance Arts, *Kayla Reading* at Blendon Middle School media center, and *The Chase* for Westerville Parks and Recreation. To view more of Tizzano's work, visit www.tizzanosculpture.com



"I live in a nearly constant state of obsession with the human form, be it man, woman or child. I pick up features, gestures, lines, postures in others that most people don't even notice. For some reason, I am compelled to capture these the way others like to take pictures. But for me, it must be the working of my hands in clay, the ecstasy of forming the figure into a likeness, creating a kind of magic using the basic element of raw earth. Having the opportunity to share my creative passion with the viewer is extremely rewarding to me, and I hope it is for the viewer as well. I have been this way since I was a child and know of no other way of being."

-Michael Tizzano

As a former art teacher, community education is important to Tizzano. As a result, *The Town Pump* sculpture is being created on site at the Dublin Community Recreation Center to encourage public engagement. This is a unique opportunity for Dublin residents and visitors to see a work of art completed from start to finish, as well as to ask questions of the artist while he is working.

Tizzano works from multiple sources, including visual memory, photographs, drawings and sketches. Sculptures are three-dimensional works of art, so Tizzano created a ¼-scale model, called a maquette, to get a sense of the final work. For *The Town Pump*, Tizzano used historic photos

of the pump at the intersection of Bridge and High streets along with current photographs and sketches of local children to create the initial maquette.

The Town Pump sculpture features two barefoot children dressed in period clothing. A six-year-old boy struggles to operate the pump while his 13-year-old sister sits on the edge of the horse trough, holding a pail to collect the water. As Tizzano describes the scene, "... she loses her focus and allows the pail to overflow, spilling its contents into the trough, creating the fountain feature."

The resulting sculpture will tell a story through art about a different time, and will be installed just steps away from the original town pump site.

Sculpting terms

Additive: something that is added, as one substance to another, to alter or improve the general quality, or to counteract undesirable properties.

Armature wire: a skeletal framework built as a support on which a clay, wax or plaster figure is constructed.

Bas-relief: relief sculpture in which the figures project only slightly from the background.

Bronze: a yellowish-brown alloy of copper comprised of up to one-third tin.

Casting: an object made by shaping molten metal in a mold.

Ingot: a mass of metal from which a shape is cast.

Foundry: an establishment that produces castings in molten metal.

Kiln: a furnace or oven for burning, baking or drying something, especially one for firing pottery or baking bricks.

Maquette: a smaller, three-dimensional model of a full-size sculpture that an artist plans to create.

Patina: a mixture of chemicals that are brushed or sprayed on a sculpture's surface. This application gives bronze a warm, slightly aged appearance in most cases.

Plastilina: an oil-based modeling clay that does not harden or dry.

Polystyrene foam: a lightweight, but strong, insulation foam that when rasped will form the proportions of the sculpture.

Rasp: (verb) to scrape with a rough instrument.

Sprue System: Wax rods are heated and attached to the hollow wax sculpture to act as plumbing, allowing the molten bronze to be poured into the form.

The bronze sculpture process

There are multiple labor-intensive steps in creating life-size bronze sculptures and the process takes many hours, weeks and months to complete. Working from a combination of sources, including photos, sketches, videos and live models, Tizzano creates a scaled-down



maquette, or clay model, of the final sculpture. A wire armature is created and then covered with plastilina clay, which is then sculpted and molded to resemble the full-size sculpture.

Recreating something from history can be somewhat tricky. Tizzano only had two historic, grainy black-and-white photos from which to work in order to construct the pump for the maquette.

The armature

For life-size bronze artworks such as *The Town Pump*, Tizzano begins with a welded steel armature based on the enlarged specifications of the maquette, which he then covers in a lightweight but very strong, polystyrene foam. The foam is then rasped, sawed and shaved to create the correct proportions of the sculpture. A thin layer of clay is then applied and molded in order to construct details. The sculpture is now ready for the rubber mold portion of the process.



The mold

Tizzano applies several coats of rubber to cover the sculpture, followed by layers of plaster of paris in order to retain the form of the sculpture once it is removed from the flexible rubber mold. Wax is melted and poured into all areas of the hollow mold, then allowed to cool for removal.

Spruing

Next, a sprue system is created to allow the molten bronze to be poured directly into the form.

The sprued wax sculpture is coated with multiple layers of a ceramic and sand mixture, drying between each layer. This mold is then fired in a kiln to allow the wax to melt away, creating a hollow form that will be filled with the molten bronze.



The pour

Bronze ingots are placed inside a gas-fired furnace, melted at approximately 2,000 degrees, and are poured into the hot ceramic mold. After cooling, the solid bronze is removed using chisels and pick hammers, destroying the mold.

Chasing and finishing

After sand-blasting the sculpture to remove excess mold material, Tizzano spends many hours removing the sprue system and de-burring, grinding, filing and repairing any imperfections in the bronze. If the sculpture is cast in multiple pieces, they are then welded together and are again sand-blasted.

Next, the sculpture is heated and covered in a patina, then brushed with paste wax to preserve it. Lastly, the sculpture is buffed and polished.

For the young at art

Word Search

m b d s r a t f o u n d r y o l v d w
c a j f y g k e t d z p b f b i w r c
s e d o t k i l n w v a p k r a x p y
m b d r o d t r q l b l f u o d g t e
s a s m p m o l d r a k j h n d j w v
u f a i k z h b i s s r w n z i s u q
m f w s c u l p t o r h g c e t t k j
n d j r a m w i m v e j d e n i k d w
g q z e s h c f s c l f d s m v w q o
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c l a y x b q b h y e w h f k s n j d
m i u w a x k s p d f i g u r e o t f
v u s u b t r a c t i v e m w s a r t

Word Bank

bas relief cast sculptor edition form bronze
enlargement foundry mold clay plastic art
kiln additive wax figure subtractive

Acknowledgements

Dublin City Council

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