



Report on People, Places & Culture Workshop Come by Chance

June 19-20, 2019



Heritage NL

Cover Photo: Cooper's Cove, Come by Chance

Introduction:

Heritage NL's program, "People, Places & Culture" is designed to assist communities to identify their cultural assets and to consider ways to protect and develop them. It is based on a recognition that heritage/cultural assets are some of the strongest elements that a community has to: define its unique character; create new economic opportunities and; enhance the quality of life for residents and instill local pride.

These notes represent the outcome of a "People, Places & Culture" Workshop, facilitated by Heritage NL in Come by Chance on June 18-19, 2019 which was attended by 16 individuals from the community on the first night and a smaller group including some partner organizations for the strategy session. The workshop comprised two parts: I) a cultural mapping activity that considered the community's tangible and intangible cultural assets attended by around 16 individuals and; II) a session to explore opportunities for protecting, safeguarding and developing these assets that included representation from stakeholders (Legacy Coast DMO; ACOA; TCII). The latter activity involved identifying themes and clusters of cultural assets that emerged from the mapping session.



Participants in People, Places & Culture Strategy Session

What Participants Want from Workshop:

- build tourism
- preserve and promote community heritage assets
- support inter-generational connections in the community
- support the efforts of the heritage committee

I. Themes/Clusters

1. What People did for Work (and linkage to strategic location on the isthmus that supported these activities)

- Fishery: barrel making; lobster factories; schooner;
- Sawmilling: for making barrel components and for the railway (ties)
- Farming
- Cottage Hospital
- Railway
- Oil Refinery



Come by Chance Oil Refinery, at nearly a half century old, has had a major economic and social impact on Come by Chance and the region.

2. Early Settlement & Family Histories

- The Gut (first settled area in community, now abandoned, Adams family) and availability of resources that supported settlement (river with its fish (salmon) and birds); ferry service provided across the Gut (Jimmy Gilbert providing tea and a bun)
- Oldest Cemetery at the Gut
- Cooper's Cove settled by the Gilbert Family – fishing; site of a cooper's shop; 4 WW I service men)



Cemetery at the Gut
(photos courtesy of Ron White)



Historic photo of residents of the Gut

3. Special Places in the Landscape

- Powder Horn Hill (Aboriginal and Colonial History) with good views of the isthmus and neighbouring communities; popular hiking and hunting area)
- Glenview (people used to row across the river; ice floods; home of the Holdens and before than the Hardings; lots of Holden family stories that “Nan” knows; farming that happened here such as dairy that supplied the cottage hospital along with horses and gardens; root cellars; Dr. Kennedy)
- Glenview River (natural heritage; guardian of the river and birds)

- Jonathan's Lookout
- Watson's Pond (popular cabin and fishing area)
- Come by Chance River (salmon river with a salmon counter back in the 1970s, swimming/camping, pump houses to supply water to the subdivision)
- Places associated with the railway: Railway Mileage Markers (still used to identify specific areas in and outside of the community); the former railway bed (the Track) which is used by people to access the landscape (e.g., pick berries, ATVs, walking, going to Glenview); former structures (station, tracks, speeder shack)
- Cooper's Cove: site of former cooper shop that made barrels for the fishery; place to tie up boats; place to fish for Connors (children); site of former lobster factory
- Ponds (Siding Pond; Switch Pond; Half Moon Pond)
- Barachois Brook – saw mill before 1901
- Concrete building constructed as a liner board mill under the Smallwood industrialization program that never opened.
- A number of local stores/shops that closed with the Moratorium (most provided credit to fishermen which ended when the cod fishery was closed)
- Berry Picking Grounds – people stopped using them because of the environmental impacts of the refinery
- Otter/Alder Pool – a place of gentle water where people went swimming
- Uncle Jackie's Mill
- Site of the old school and all of its memories
- Cleary Hiking Trail

4. People (e.g., who have traditional knowledge) & Traditions

- Betty Gilbert – folk hero, shop owner, operated the mail, Betty Gilbert's Pond
- Story of the "Jack o-Lantern" – green light that could be seen at Come by Chance Point
- signing to snails: "Snail, snail, come out of your hole, your mudder and fadder is black as coal, the cows come home in the morning."
- Kitty Paul: excellent baker, cook, storyteller who had a farm,
- Alexander Gilbert (WW I War memorial)
- Big Santa Claus parade
- "By the Otter Pool" Rex Benson

II. Recommendations for Protecting, Sharing, and Developing Come by Chance's Heritage Assets

Come by Chance has a settled history extending back approximately 200 years with an earlier history marked by the presence of the Beothuk and the French, and by French-English conflicts from the late 17th – early 18th century period. The community is probably best known for the establishment of the Come by Chance refinery nearly a half century ago which saw a significant influx of residents who went to work there. Today it is a prosperous community with many of its residents employed at the Come by Chance Refinery and other industrial enterprises along with retirees who worked in those industries. Recently the community established an active heritage committee devoted to collecting and preserving the history and heritage of Come by Chance. In many ways, the most compelling stories – and those that make Come by Chance unique – are those related to its industrial history. As an example, the Refinery is likely what the community is best known for around the province yet few likely know the story of its development, its history, its economic, social and environmental impacts, and the way of life that it supported.

Preserving and presenting heritage is something that a community does first and foremost for itself: to encourage and support community pride and identity; to protect important heritage assets; to enhance the quality of life for residents. When a community is successful at doing these things, visitors will naturally be attracted to that community and development opportunities may emerge. Heritage NL recommends that the focus of the community's heritage efforts should be on gathering and sharing its heritage with local residents. When a community protects and values its heritage, opportunities emerge for local residents to develop local enterprises be that in the form of crafts based on traditional skills or cultural tourism.

1. Oral History Initiatives

Come by Chance is a relatively young community and many people are still alive who remember some of the important milestones in its economic history. It would be useful to undertake a systematic oral history gathering initiative that captures some of the key aspects of this history:

- i. The Refinery – its founding; history of ownership; labour history; local impacts
- ii. The Cottage Hospital – history of who worked there; community impacts
- iii. History of Local Businesses – stories about the businesses that supported the community in the past and why they eventually closed down
- iv. Senior residents – capturing the stories and memories of older residents

Heritage NL's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Office can provide assistance with planning oral history projects and providing training to conduct them. Online oral history resources are available at www.ichblog.ca

2. Protection for The Gut and Cooper's Cove

These two areas, representing the earliest settled parts of the community, represent cultural landscapes with meaning for the community. While little in the way of infrastructure remains (a small cemetery in the case of The Gut and remains of a wharf and a boathouse in Cooper's Cove) they are places of memory and likely also archaeological remains. Both are located along the Cleary Hiking Trail. There is currently no development in this area which allows public access to these scenic areas of shoreline. The area is presently protected under a Municipal Wetland Stewardship Area agreement which addresses natural features and qualities.

Consideration may be given to reviewing the town plan and/or the Stewardship Agreement to:

- expand protected shoreline areas if deemed necessary;
- to list cultural assets to be protected;
- to ensure that development controls are sufficient to guard against development that negatively impacts the natural and cultural heritage assets of the area and that potentially impacts public access.

Public involvement to review the Stewardship Area and Municipal Plan will also help to build buy-in for existing and future conservation and protection measures.

As the cemetery is not easily accessible except by boat passage over the Gut, there is likely little value in undertaking a full restoration. Allowing old cemeteries to naturalize is part of the story of settled places that are now abandoned. The best option would be to ensure that the inscriptions of the existing grave markers are fully recorded and the results shared with the NL Family History Society if this has not already been done. As well, periodic efforts may be made to keep the markers somewhat clear of vegetation. Heritage NL can provide direction on this.

3. Sharing Come by Chance's history and stories with the Community

Sharing local history, stories and traditions with residents is a good way to: keep them alive; build community identity and pride; ground people in a particular place; encourage them to be good stewards of their natural and cultural heritage resources. Doing this in an engaging way that appeals to all generations is the challenge. Traditional approaches like museum displays often don't connect in a significant way with locals, particularly youth. If they do visit, they come once, rarely to return if displays are not changed fairly frequently.

Some suggestions for sharing the history and traditions of Come by Chance with residents include:

- 1) Presentation of artifacts – periodic rotating, themed exhibits in one or more spaces where residents regularly congregate can be a good way to share artifacts. Ideally, these will be accompanied by text (in a printed or digital format) to provide the context for artifacts. Flexible display cases and panels could be constructed to accommodate these displays. Virtual Museum exhibits can also be developed to share local stories with a broader audience (provide contact info).
- 2) Lecture Series – periodic talks on different topics related to local heritage and history can be scheduled
- 3) Mug-up Sessions – residents are invited to come together over tea to share what they know about a particular topic of community history or traditions. For information on organizing a “mug up session” see: https://www.mun.ca/ich/resources/MUG_UP.pdf
- 4) Encouraging youth from the community to do Heritage Fair projects on local topics
- 5) Walking Tours – the Heritage Committee and/or knowledgeable individuals from Come by Chance could offer tours in different parts of the community. These could take the form of walking tours (either self-guided with a brochure or app or guided) that highlight the natural and cultural heritage of the community. The concept presented by Ron White of a history tour of the Gut and boil-up led by the historic character of Jimmy Gilbert could be offered on a trial basis to gauge the level of interest. Based on its success, there may be opportunities to offer it on a more regular basis and to promote it to outsiders. Consideration might also be given to providing a tour of Come by Chance and the Whiffen Head facility to visitors, perhaps in the form of a boat tour



Ron White assuming the role of John Gilbert (photo courtesy of Ron White)

6) A digital heritage map of Come by Chance that allows people to explore the different places and stories in the community can be a good way to share what is special about the community with a wider audience. For a sample see:

<http://www.arcgis.com/apps/Shortlist/index.html?appid=311a7a61299c463bae05001f21babf2e>

4. Developing Tourism

Tourism development in a community requires developed attractions and supporting visitor services such as food and accommodation along with individuals willing and interested to offer these services. Come by Chance is not currently positioned to offer these. As indicated, it is recommended that the community preserve and share its heritage for and with its own residents. This may inspire some locals to explore tourism-related businesses down the road. That being said, efforts to develop and promote tourism are best considered on a regional basis. While a single community may not have significant developed tourism assets or amenities, a cluster of communities may be able to create a tourism draw. It is recommended that the Town of Come by Chance meet with neighbouring communities such as Sunnyside and Arnold's Cove to discuss what each may, potentially, bring to the table in terms of encouraging tourism visitation to the region.

Appendix I – Resources for Community-based Heritage Initiatives:

There is a wide variety of programs and resources that can support initiatives to protect, safeguard, and develop community heritage assets. These include:

Heritage NL

Offers programs and services to preserve historic places and safeguard intangible cultural heritage:

- the designation of **Registered Heritage Structures** and **Registered Heritage Districts** which can help protect historic places and structures
- **funding programs** for the preservation of designated properties
- assistance with **municipal designation** programs and heritage protection measures
- **technical assistance on heritage preservation**
- assistance with **inventorying tangible and intangible heritage resources**
- assistance with developing and implementing **oral history projects** and projects that celebrate, transmit and develop intangible cultural heritage resources
- the **Provincial Historical Commemorations Program** that recognizes historic places, persons, and events of provincial significance along with cultural traditions and tradition bearers
- For more information on our programs see: www.heritagenl.ca or contact us at tel. 709-739-1892

Government of Newfoundland & Labrador

There are a variety of provincial programs that can support cultural projects and initiatives:

Cultural Economic Development Program (CEDP) – offers funding for the planning and implementation of heritage projects in areas such as inventorying, conservation, and interpretation For more information see: <https://www.tcii.gov.nl.ca/heritage/cedp/index.html>

Regional Development Programs - The Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation provides support to organizations by way of non-repayable contributions for projects aimed at supporting economic development, innovation and capacity building in all regions of the province. The Regional Development Fund is comprised of two components: the Regional Development Program (RDF) and Community Capacity Building. RDF can support cultural heritage projects that will support long-term economic development in a community. The Community Capacity Building fund can provide funding for project planning and building local capacity to undertake development work. For more information see: <https://www.tcii.gov.nl.ca/regionaldev/RDF.html>

Tourism Product Development - The 2017-20 Provincial Tourism Product Development Plan reflects the collective private-public tourism development priorities for the provincial tourism industry, along with integrating the regional Destination Development Plans for St. John's/Northeast Avalon, Eastern, Central, Western and Labrador. The Provincial Tourism Product Development Plan can be found

here: https://www.tcii.gov.nl.ca/tourism/tourism_development/pdf/17-20_prov_prod_dev_plan.pdf

The Western Destination Development Plan can be found here: https://www.tcii.gov.nl.ca/tourism/tourism_development/pdf/TDVAA-Western-Sept-2015.pdf

The online toolkit *Creating Experiences* provides information about the business opportunities that surround experiential travel. It can be found

here: https://www.tcii.gov.nl.ca/tourism/tourism_development/pdf/creat_exp_toolkit.pdf

The Legendary Coasts of Eastern Newfoundland Destination Management Organization (DMO) is a membership organization representing tourism operators in the region (<https://legendarycoasts.com>)

Other Provincial Department Programs:

Employment-related programs: The Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour offers programs such as JCP which have been used for a wide variety of heritage initiatives including: restoration of historic buildings; construction of infrastructure; oral history and inventorying projects. The Self-Employment program provides financial support to eligible participants while they are starting up a business. Youth employment programs can support the hiring of students and interns for cultural projects. For more information see:

<https://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/forcommunitypartners/default.html>.

The Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment offers the Community Enhancement Employment Program which has been used to provide labour for various heritage initiatives. For more information see: https://www.mae.gov.nl.ca/emp_support/ceep.html

Government of Canada

The federal government has a number of programs, in various departments, that can support cultural initiatives:

ACOA supports community economic development through such programs as the Innovative Communities Fund (ICF) and the Business Development Partnership (BDP). It has been used by various communities in the province to support enhancements and infrastructure initiatives that will support economic development (e.g., adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, cultural infrastructure, public improvements)

<http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/eng/ImLookingFor/ProgramInformation/Pages/Home.aspx>

New Horizons offers grant programs to community organizations that support seniors in a number of ways: empowerment; encouraging them to share their knowledge, skills and experience with others in the community; and enhancing seniors' social well-being and community vitality. Grants have been used to support initiatives such as oral history projects and sharing knowledge with younger generations.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/new-horizons-seniors.html>

The Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF) offered by the Department of Canadian Heritage supports the improvement of physical conditions for arts, heritage, culture and creative innovation. The Fund supports renovation and construction projects, the acquisition of specialized equipment and feasibility studies related to cultural spaces. It has been used to support the adaptive reuse of heritage properties for the presentation of the arts and heritage (e.g., performance and interpretive spaces).

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/cultural-spaces-fund.html>

Young Canada Works administered by Shared Services Canada offers employment grants and internships to eligible employers to hire students and recent graduates. It can be used in a variety of ways to support heritage initiative such as (inventorying, research, interpretation).

<https://young-canada-works.canada.ca/Account/Login>

Staff at Heritage NL and in the Arts and Heritage division of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation can provide additional information on project planning and accessing resources for community cultural heritage projects.