

# Report on the 2021 Change Islands People, Places & Culture Workshop



Heritage NL

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## Introduction

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



These notes represent the results of a "People, Places & Culture Workshop", facilitated by Heritage NL in Changes Islands on Monday, October 4, 2021, which was attended by 8 individuals from the community on the first night and 5 the following day, Tuesday, October 5, 2021. The workshop comprised two parts: I) a cultural mapping activity that considered the community's tangible and intangible cultural assets and; II) a session to explore opportunities for protecting, safeguarding and developing these assets. The former activity involved the ranking of themes and clusters of cultural assets that emerged from the mapping session. The anticipated benefits of this cultural mapping include:

- Create awareness of little-known but important pieces of community history
- Contribute to heritage and culture related activities and events
- Contribute to drawing people into the community through sharing its local history and culture (tourism/interpretive planning)
- Support employment and businesses

# Themes/Clusters

Through the mapping exercise, a number of themes were suggested by the community. These top level themes are addressed first, with the lower-ranked themes following. A list of all people, places, and culture items identified by the community is attached below as [Appendix 1 - List of Community Assets](#).

## Theme #1 - Cemeteries

Ten known cemeteries exist in the community, plus some burial sites in surrounding places, some of which are overgrown. Headstone transcriptions exist for many of these cemeteries, these could be updated and photos of the headstones could be added.

[Anglican Cemetery](#)

[Church Hill United Church Cemetery](#)

[Duck Cove Salvation Army Cemetery](#)

[Edwards Island United Church Cemetery](#)

[Hawkin's Cove United Church Cemetery](#)

[Pentecostal Cemetery](#)

[Peter's Cove United Church Cemetery #1](#)

[Peter's Cove United Church Cemetery #2](#)

[Saint Margaret's Anglican Church Cemetery](#)

[St. Margaret's Anglican Churchyard](#)



## Opportunities and Participant Comments:

- Priority should be on ensuring documentation of existing headstones, and entering this information on a spreadsheet to make it searchable.
- Ensure any cleanup or repairs are done to heritage standards.
- [www.billiongraves.com](http://www.billiongraves.com) workshop. Billiongraves is a free and accessible application that creates searchable GPS cemetery data. Headstones are photographed, they are transcribed on the application and a GPS coordinate map is created for the cemetery. A possible project for volunteers.
- For municipal heritage designations of cemeteries, see [Municipal Designation of Cemeteries and the Historic Places Initiative](#)

## Theme #2 - Heritage Skills

Several makers were highlighted in the session as important to the community. These included carpenters, knitters (knitting tip to wrist method), and those who create wedding dresses, cakes, and flower arrangements. The Change Islands Heritage and



Culture Committee also identified a series of heritage skills such as net making and mending, making piggins and grub boxes, filling snowshoes, making lobster pots, spinning wool, rug hooking, herringbone quilting stitch, crocheting, knitting trigger mitts and vamps, soap and candle making, bread baking, and making preserves. These were suggested as potential programs for intergenerational learning.

### Opportunities and Participant Comments:

- Craft workshops or demonstrations.  
Examples: [Pillow Top](#), [Baklava](#), [Wooden Windows Repair and Restoration](#)
- Documentation of heritage skills including photos, videos, and interviews.
- Produce a booklet about Change Islands heritage skills. Example: [Crafts in Cartwright: Bearpaws, Dickies, and Komatiks](#)
- Mildred LeDrew - known for making wedding dresses, prom dresses, wedding cakes, mothers day flowers, funeral sprays & wreaths.
- Phyllis Reid - knits mittens from the tip of the fingers up to the wrist. Thought to be the only person on the islands who knits mittens this way.
- Art Scammell - squid jigging song.
- Winston Bown - carpenter; store; garden.

## Theme #3 - Historic Places

A historic place is any place that is significant to an individual or community because of its relationship to past people, places, and/or events. These places tell our stories and maintain history. Several historic places were identified by residents including:



Fishery Buildings (fish plant, White's fishing premises, William Earle's residence), Churches, Lodges, Lookouts, Berry Picking Places, Puncheon Cove, Blaggard Rock, etc.

One place that was highlighted was the stone walkway which was created by Change Islands residents to cross a body of saltwater in Corry Cove. The handmade causeway is created out of large stone rocks placed across the saltwater to create an easier route of passage than the boglands surrounding the cove. The stone walkway was put in place prior to Route 335-14 which currently cuts across part of the stone walkway.

#### Opportunities and Participant Comments:

- Documentation of the historic places including built heritage inventory, photos, and [oral history interviews](#).
- Municipal designation of important places. See example of a site similar to the stone walkway: [The Klondyke](#).



#### Theme #4 - Invention of Newfoundland Cod Trap

One of the highest ranked items was the invention of the cod trap. Joseph Edmund Elliott is said to have thought up the idea for the Newfoundland Cod Trap while sitting in church in 1867. This is a different variation than the cod trap invented by Captain Whiteley in 1865.



#### Opportunities and Participant Comments:

- Further research on the [history](#) of the cod trap, and it's invention.
- Documentation of the Newfoundland cod trap including photos, videos, and oral history interviews. Example: [Pillow Top Research](#)
- Demonstrations on the construction and repairs of a Newfoundland cod trap.



### Theme # 5 - Occupational Folklore

Occupational folklore is the shared knowledge found in a particular occupational group. This can include stories, techniques, hand-made objects, slang, etc. Several occupational groups were identified by the community including midwives, educators, veterans, Newfoundland pony owners, business owners, ferry operators, and fishery workers. The Change Islands Heritage and Culture Committee further identified: seal hunting, gardening and food preparation, and women's and children's roles.

#### Opportunities and Participant Comments:

- Research on occupational folklore. Focus research on one particular occupation at a time.
- Documentation of occupational folklore including photos, videos, and interviews.
- Use the documented material for a [booklet](#) about the occupation.
- See examples of booklet on historic shops: [Everything Was Wrapped in Brown Paper: The Old Shops of Port Blandford](#) and [A Little Montréal: Merchants & Memories of Main Street, Windsor](#).
- Midwives: Bessie Hurley, Mary Brinson, Nurse Davies.
- Business owners or managers: Andrew Bown, George Fancy, Solomon Roberts, Winston Bown, Beatrice LeDrew.
- Ferry operators or freight delivery: Charles Fancy, Fred Chaffey.
- Fishermen or skippers: Charles Watton, Orville LeDrew.



### **Theme #6 - Calendar Customs:**

Calendar customs are events or practices that take place once a year during a particular season or on a particular date. Some of the calendar customs suggested by the community included Bonfire Night, Candlemas Day, Guy Fawkes Night, Mother's Day, Torch Night, and Watch Night. Other events that take place throughout the year such as mummering, Christmas concerts, school and church picnics, Fisherman Lodge parades and suppers, Orangemen's times, and Easter Monday socials by the Ladies Aid were also noted.

### **Opportunities and Participant Comments:**

- Further research on Change Islands calendar customs.
- Documentation of the calendar customs including photos, videos, and oral history interviews.

*These last three themes - invention of the cod trap, occupational folklore, and calendar customs - could form the basis for one or more community oral history projects. See Recommendation #3.*

# Recommendations for the community of Change Islands

Based on the ideas generated in the People, Places & Culture workshops, Heritage NL recommends the following community actions.

## 1. Heritage Skills Inventory & Workshops

The skill of local residents is one of the greatest resources a community has. Knowing and promoting local artists and makers can have a trickle-down effect for the overall health of the local economy. An inventory of artists and makers can be used by tourism operators, local businesses, and by local cultural, social, and educational organizations. Knowing what products are available in your community could be the basis of a buy local campaign. Knowing what skills are available could be the impetus for hands-on workshops that allow the transfer of skills from practitioner to learner. It can also serve as a starting point for the transmission of skills across generations through the use of workshops and demonstrations.

See [Baccalieu Trail Traditional Knowledge Inventory](#).

Heritage NL can offer assistance in completing an inventory or developing workshops.



*Unique kettle made by Thomas Peckford at the local tinnery at the North End of Change Islands. Kettle was made for use on a boat so you wouldn't have to pass the kettle back and forth and risk spilling tea. Tea went in the larger part, and molasses went in the bottom to sweeten the tea. Kettle is held at Olde Shoppe Museum which is owned and operated by Peter Porter. The museum houses an extensive collection of Change Islands artifacts and has been a key contributor to preserving the culture and heritage of Change Islands.*

## 2. Documentation of Historic Places

The best place to start in preserving, celebrating and developing a community's heritage assets is to know what it has to work with. Before undertaking new inventories or historical research it will be useful to see what has already been gathered in the way of archival collections (photos and documents); oral history interviews; writing about local history, etc. This research into existing sources could be undertaken either by volunteers in the community with a strong knowledge of and interest in local history and/or with the assistance of a student with a background in heritage/history/folklore. Young Canada Works offers grants for hiring both post secondary summer students and interns.

**Built Heritage Inventory** – during the workshop a number of early structures in the community were mentioned, many of which have been altered. An inventory would form the basis for any future strategies or actions to preserve the town's built heritage which might include: designation (municipal or provincial); incentives for preservation and restoration; publications; exhibits; tours. Heritage NL can offer built heritage inventory templates along with training.

See [Architectural Inventory: The Heart's Content Heritage District](#)

## 3. Documentation of Oral Histories

Oral histories can add a rich layer to our understanding of the past by providing first hand accounts and a variety of different perspectives/voices. These can help fill in gaps and personalize a community's history beyond mere facts and dates. Oral history projects are most effective when they are well-planned and focused (i.e., dealing with a specific topic). Involving youth in the collecting of oral histories can be a good way of creating intergenerational sharing. Seniors get validation through sharing their knowledge with young people and youth learn about their community's past. There are a variety of tools for collecting oral histories and sharing the results that include:

- A. Formal oral history projects involving researchers/interviewers and the audio or visual recording of targeted residents (e.g., of older people engaged in a specific economic activity or way of life). See our [online handbook](#).



- B. Oral history “Memory Mug-ups” where seniors are invited to a session to share their stories. These can often be followed up by individual oral history sessions. See our [How to Run a Memory Mug Up](#) guide.
- C. Hosting a “Photo Scanning Party” and followup events are a good way to get locals to share vintage photos from the community. See our [How to Run a Scanning Party](#) guide.
- D. [Digital Storytelling](#) videos incorporate collected audio and photos as a way to share local stories through social media/town websites.

Heritage NL can offer training on how to complete an oral history project.

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## Appendix 1 – List of Community Assets

This is the listing of people, places, and cultural items shared by participants at the workshop.

### People

- Bessie Hurley - midwife; 100 babies.
- Mary Brinson - midwife.
- Nurse Davies - nurse & midwife.
- Netta LeDrew - ponies.
- Mildred LeDrew - known for making wedding dresses, prom dresses, wedding cakes, Mother’s Day flowers, funeral sprays & wreaths.
- Phyllis Reid - knits mittens from the tip of the fingers up to the wrist. As far as I know she is the only person on the islands who knits mittens this way.
- Andrew Bown - layreader in the United Church for a great number of years. Also operated a retail grocery store for many years. Established a family business that lasted 125 years. This business was relied upon by all fishermen for supplies and groceries, fuel, ect for generations.
- Charles Fancy - operated a boat delivering freight (groceries, etc) from Lewisporte to Change Islands and Fogo Island.
- Fred Chaffey - operated passenger & freight boat to Lewisporte. Later ferry service to Cobbs Arm, and later to Farewell.

- George Fancy - manager of Seaway Co-op. He was a great help in letter writing for less educated people.
- Solomon Roberts - had a large business on Change Islands. Collector of salt fish to send to other parts of the world.
- Winston Bown - carpenter; store; garden.
- Charles Watton - fisherman.
- Orville LeDrew - skipper; master storyteller for oral history.
- Lionel Hoffe - local historian.
- Peter Porter - owner/operator of Olde Shoppe Museum which houses an extensive collection of Change Islands artifacts. Currently restoring a bully boat.
- Art Scammell - squid jigging song.
- Weston LeDrew - WWII veteran; saved the lives of a minister and his wife who would have met with certain death on the broken ice floes between Changes Islands and Fogo.

## Places

- Birch Cove for blueberries and partridgeberries.
- Blaggard Rock - ghost spot.
- Bown's Store.
- East End Store - Beatrice LeDrew.
- Fish Plant.
- Old Fishermen's Lodge - community centre.
- Orange Lodge.
- Puncheon Cove - where people used to get their drinking water during the summer months.
- Salvation Army Cemetery in Duck Cove.
- Salt Bar.
- Stump Hill - where the children from Seal Harbour used to have their bonfires. It is also a good place to pick blueberries.
- Tall Boy - tallest hill on North Island. Served as a lookout for fishermen overlooking the fishing grounds. Fishermen could keep an eye on the weather, sea conditions, boats that might be overdue, etc.
- United Church Building - Northside.
- White's Fishing Premises - three generations of fishery. Built by James White. Still used in fishery today.

- William Earle's Residence - now known as Seven Oakes.
- Cemetery behind Seal Harbour in marsh.
- Cemetery on Edwards Island - one of the oldest cemeteries of Change Islands.
- Duck Cove Cemeteries - belonging to Salvation Army & United Church.
- Graveyard on Edward's Island.
- United Church Cemetery on the hill behind the Salvation Army.

## Culture

- Roaming livestock.
  - Bark pots smell in spring.
  - Fred Waterman - the ferry across tickle
  - Joe Elliot - invented cod trap.
  - The Tickle Safe Haven - set your compass with tickle E-W.
  - Bonfire Night - fires on different parts of the island. Comparing fires to see who could get the largest fire. Cutting boughs months in advance.
  - Candlemas Day - Fishermen's lodge celebration.
  - Christmas Concert held in the Christmas holidays by the school children
  - Fishermen's lodge parade and supper.
  - Guy Fawkes Night was a big event. We started cutting boughs in Sept until Nov 5. We save all boats, tires, etc.
  - Mother's Day.
  - Mummering at Christmas time.
  - Orangeman's Time - "grabs" and homemade ice cream; every wife tended a table; square dance in evening. All the members had people who tended their tables. Ladies all bought new outfits and a big dance followed.
  - School picnic at close of school took kids by boat to the beach - Seal Cove, etc.
  - Social conducted by the Ladies Aid (United Church) on Easter Monday night.
  - Torch Night - night before bonfire night.
  - United Church Sunday school picnic held in the summer for the kids.
  - Watch Night service on New Years Eve, 11pm, at the Salvation Army.
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## Appendix 2 – Resources for Community-based Heritage Initiatives

There are 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:

- 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
- For more information on our programs see: [www.heritagenl.ca](http://www.heritagenl.ca) or contact us at 709-739-1892

### Government of Newfoundland & Labrador

*Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation:*

[Cultural Economic Development Program \(CEDP\)](#)

[Cultural Events Fund](#)

[Tourism Market Readiness Subsidy Program](#)

[Tourism Season Extension Program](#)

[Community Healthy Living Fund](#)



***Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills:***

[Job Creation Partnerships](#)

[Wage Subsidy Programs](#)

***Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs:***

[Community Enhancement Employment Program](#)

[Municipal Capital Works](#)

[Gas Tax Agreement](#)

**Government of Canada**

[Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency](#)

[New Horizons for Seniors Program](#)

[Canada Cultural Spaces Fund](#)

[Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage Fund](#)

[Young Canada Works](#)



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October 2021