



Heritage Foundation
Newfoundland & Labrador

#005

COVES, STREETS, FIELDS AND MORE: THE PLACES OF BAY ROBERTS

Edited by:

Katherine Harvey

Researched & Written by:

Folklore Graduate Field School Class of 2017



ORAL HISTORY ROADSHOW SERIES

COVES, STREETS, FIELDS AND MORE: The Places of Bay Roberts

Researched & Written by:
Folklore Graduate Field School Class of 2017

Edited by: Katherine Harvey
Oral History Roadshow Series #005



Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador
Intangible Cultural Heritage Office
St. John's, NL, Canada

Layout / design by Jessie Meyer

2018

INTRODUCTION

The recollections in this booklet were recorded by students in Memorial University's Folklore Department. For three weeks in September 2017, Memorial's newest folklore graduate students arriving from Northern Ontario, all parts of the United States, Iran, and Israel, were transplanted to Bay Roberts to participate in a cultural documentation field school: a required course that takes place at the start of the first semester of the graduate program. The field school participants were warmly welcomed by local residents, and this booklet is both a "give back" to the community, as well as a product of what the students learned.

The academic goals of the field school are for students to learn first-hand about cultural documentation: techniques of audio-recorded interviewing, ethnographic observation, writing fieldnotes, documentary photography, video-recording, organizing and archiving field data, analysing field data, and public presentation skills. In addition to skills and techniques, students learn to work in teams, to meet new people, and to recognize local traditions and culture— this is at the heart of folklore fieldwork. The warmth with which we were welcomed to Bay Roberts—from the very first day was a highlight. It was a cold and rainy Sunday afternoon, but students enjoyed the "Toutons and Tunes" walking tour, which ended in the Red Shed (a special place indeed!) with tea, toutons, scrunchions, crab legs, and traditional tunes—what a delicious introduction! Over the course of the next three weeks, students were invited into people's homes, where they shared cups of tea, baked goods,

and stories. They began the field school as strangers, and by the end of three weeks became part of a community. On the evening of the final public presentation, students had the opportunity to share what they had learned, and in turn to hear back from the residents they had interviewed. The Bay Roberts field school was a wonderful success.

The theme of the field school—documenting special places and landmarks— was suggested at an early meeting of representatives from the Town of Bay Roberts, the Department of Folklore, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Bay Roberts Cultural Foundation. With the help of a Quick Start grant from Memorial University's Office of Community Engagement, we hosted a public event in the spring to learn from residents about their "special places." Later, students spent the field school seeking out and recording stories on that theme. The Town of Bay Roberts has expressed interest in identifying some of the community's landmarks for potential heritage designation and we hope the work of the folklore students and the narratives contained in this booklet will help pave the way towards this goal.

From our perspective as folklorists, the prospect of exploring a community's special places was ideal. Folklore and place are deeply intertwined. Place often shapes folklore and, on the other hand, folklore expresses what place means to us. As landscape scholar Kent Ryden writes, "Stories-and folklore in general-are inextricably linked with landscapes, overlying them snugly,

bound to them and colouring them like paint on a barn wall. They are a central means by which people organize their physical surroundings” (56). Students in the 2017 Folklore Field School came to know Bay Roberts through the stories residents shared of some of the community’s special places: Drummer’s Rock, Muddy Hole, Bear’s Cove, Cable Ave, the field on Neck Road, skating locations, “cobby” houses, Powell’s Supermarket, the library, and the Amalgamated School.

Some of these places, like Drummer’s Rock, are well known community landmarks that tell of the town’s long history. They tie present day listeners to the earliest days of settlement. Others, like Powell’s Supermarket, speak to Bay Roberts’ history as a commercial centre and reflect the importance of present day businesses that not only offer vital goods and services but represent important meeting places as well. Powell’s with its wide aisles encourages customers to take the time to chat with other shoppers. The aisles, each named for a part of the community, bring the past into the present and remind residents of their common roots.

Located between the remote past evoked by Drummer’s Rock and the present day of Powell’s supermarket, are the many remembered places of childhood that community members shared. These landmarks recall the distinctiveness of Bay Roberts’ neighbourhoods that were once separate communities. As residents recalled growing up in different parts of town, from

Cable Ave to Coley's Point, they described a variety of recreational spaces that shaped the lives of earlier generations of children: Bear Cove, Muddy Hole, the field on Neck Road, spots to skate, and places to play. The library, schools, and school grounds, could be added to the list. These examples offer an intriguing glimpse into how community landmarks can be gendered. In some areas boys and girls might have played hockey or tiddly, or built cobby houses together, while in other neighbourhoods these activities were usually divided along gender lines. Most of all, these recollections of special places anchor past childhoods in physical spaces and help uncover the roots of belonging.

Taken together, the special places residents shared with students in the field school give shape to the town of Bay Roberts. They help identify the unique combination of landscape, historical events, and people that defines the town. Most of all, the stories express what it has meant, and what it means now, to belong to Bay Roberts. Anthropologist Barbara Bender writes, "By moving along familiar paths, winding memories and stories around places, people create a sense of self and belonging" (306). This is especially true in Newfoundland where folklorist Gerald Pocius argues sharing of space is central to life (298). Belonging in Bay Roberts, as in Calvert where Pocius set his study, "is still tied to a series of spaces that make up the place, spaces that extend both throughout the community and back in time" (25). The special places and their stories found in this booklet not only describe Bay Roberts, but what it means to belong there.

In closing, we would like to thank the institutions, organizations, and businesses without whose support the field school would not have been possible: Mayor Philip Wood and representatives of the Town Council of Bay Roberts, Bay Roberts Heritage Society, the Bay Roberts Cultural Foundation, The Road to Yesterday Museum, The Christopher Pratt Gallery, the Society of United Fishermen (Dawe Lodge #82), the guides, cooks and musicians of the Toutons and Tunes tour, Roaches Line Cabins and Campground, Madrock Café, Office of Memorial University Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, Memorial University Office of Public Engagement, Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Wooden Boat Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador. A special word of appreciation to Renée Clowe of Memorial University's Department of Folklore for all her help. Thanks also to the guest instructors who enhanced our learning experience: Mike Flynn, Ron Delaney, Dale Jarvis, Dennis Flynn, Nicole Penney, Terra Barrett, Sharna Brzycki, Bonnie Sunstein, and Arthur Hunsicker. Finally, our warmest appreciation to Marilyn Dawe and all the people of Bay Roberts whose generosity and kindness made this field school such an enriching experience for both the students and the instructors.

Jillian Gould & Diane Tye,
FIELD SCHOOL INSTRUCTORS

REFERENCES

Bender, Barbara. 2006. Place and Landscape. *In Handbook of Material Culture*. Ed. Chris Tilley, Webb Keane, Susanne Küchler, Mike Rowlands and Patricia Spyer. Los Angeles: Sage. 303-314.

Pocius, Gerald L. 2000. *A Place to Belong: Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Ryden, Kent C. 1993. *Mapping the Invisible Landscape: Folklore, Writing, and the Sense of Place*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.

SANDRA ROACH

Sandra Roach is a lifelong resident of Coley's Point and still lives on a piece of land that her father sold to each of his children for one dollar. She is the youngest of seven siblings and is proud to say that she married her childhood sweetheart. Sandra has both a Bachelor of Physical Education, and a Bachelor of Education from Memorial University of Newfoundland. While she started her career as a school teacher, Sandra later became an entrepreneur running two of her own businesses: Classy 'n Sassy Jewelry, and Wedding Decoration and Design. Sandra now works for the Bay Roberts Cultural Foundation, as their General Manager, and is proud of the many contributions the foundation has made in helping to preserve the intangible cultural heritage of Bay Roberts.



Sandra Roach outside her home in Coley's Point. Photo by Maeghan Chassé.

DRUMMER'S ROCK

By: Maeghan Chassé

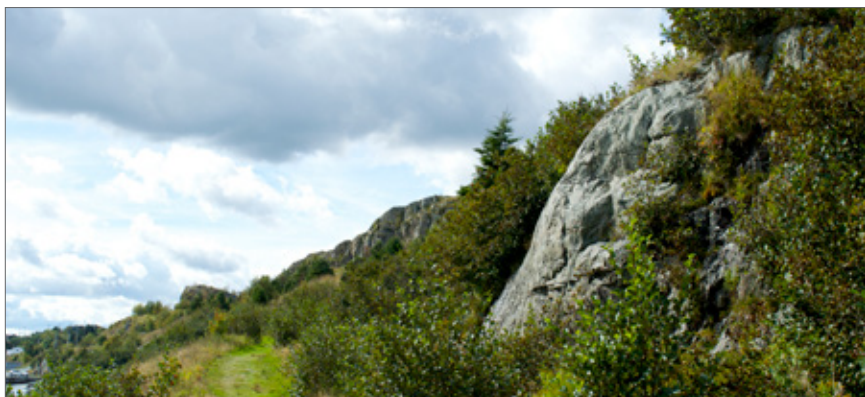
The Haunting is not usually a term you'd hear in many other places, especially when it is nowhere near Halloween, but in Bay Roberts this is not a strange or unknown term. Every summer The Bay Roberts Cultural Foundation puts on what they call The Haunting, a guided walk that starts in Coley's Point and treats those brave enough to tales of local ghost and fairy stories. Stories that have their origins in folktales and childhood frights, but have also been retold as true encounters with spirits and malicious fairies. One of the most memorable stories takes place along what is now The Shoreline Heritage Walk in Bay Roberts – a beautiful trail that winds along the Atlantic Ocean, past old root cellars and stone walls, an echo of those who once chose to settle along this tract of land. Strolling down this picturesque trail, in-between Churchill's Beach and Bishop's Beach, one will no doubt come across the infamous Drummer's Rock. To the untrained eye this particular rock may not seem very interesting or special, but if you ask the right person, you might just hear a ghost story that will send a shiver down your spine.

Sandra Roach, General Manager for the Bay Roberts Cultural Foundation, remembers her mother-in-law first telling her the story of Drummer's Rock. She recalls her words: "Well it was years ago, I was told that I wasn't allowed to go near this rock because we'd probably see a ghost and hear a drum being played." As with Sandra's mother-in-law, many children living in the east end of Bay Roberts were warned about passing by Drummer's Rock once the sun had gone down. "It was kind of a place where,

you know, you've got to be careful. You don't go around there," Sandra explained.

As Sandra tells the tale, it was not uncommon to see "man-of-war ships" anchored in Bay Roberts' harbour during times of war. While soldiers were plentiful on these ships, one unique member of the crew was the young drummer boy they often carried with them. The drummer boy was an important member of the crew because he served as an alarm clock for the soldiers on board the ship. "He drummed when it was time to get up in the morning, when it was time for meals, evening, whatever they did. He also drummed at the approach of an enemy or call to arms," Sandra recalls.

While one of these ships was anchored at the far end of the harbour, a young drummer boy, about twelve years of age, decided that he no longer wanted to be on the ship anymore. It is unknown as to whether the young boy swam or rowed to shore, but either way Sandra believes, "It wasn't very far." Once on land the young boy took off running and found a large rock, big enough to hide behind. He waited. One has to wonder why the young boy chose to leave that day and what he hoped would happen. Did he dream of starting a new life for himself as he hid, sheltered by the imagined safety of that rock? Did he think about making friends? Having enough warm food in his belly to keep him satisfied and happy? Or maybe, he dreamed of a home where he could stay long enough to put his roots down. Either way, whatever his intentions were, none of them would ever come to fruition.



To the right you can see Drummer's Rock. Photo by Maeghan Chassé.

It couldn't have been long before the soldiers realized that their drummer boy was gone, and they surely weren't going to let a deserter get away without consequence. A particularly mean soldier equipped with what Sandra calls a cat o' nine tails, a multi tailed whip used to dole out harsh punishments, pursued the young boy onto shore. Finding his young crewmate cowering behind a large rock, the soldier took it upon himself to teach the boy a lesson. There would be no pity given to a deserter, no matter how young or naive he may be. As it goes, the soldier whipped the boy. He whipped him until the boy's whimpers ceased and he fell silent.

"He was killed there," Sandra explains. "So, this is why they used to hear the sound of his drum and see his ghost from time to time." They say, if you step out on the right night you may just hear the drummer boy's ghostly march rolling along the rugged coastline,

calling out to any of those brave enough to pass by and greet him. Crying out, so not to be forgotten, or washed away by time.

I have often wondered why stories like Drummer's Rock continue to endure. Are these ghost stories told around lamp lit kitchens and campfires as a simple form of entertainment? Or, are they something more? Maybe these stories are cooked up by parents and grandparents as a way to protect children – to discourage the younger generation from playing in places deemed unsafe or dangerous. I myself remember hearing stories of spooks and specters who haunted the train tracks in my small northern Ontario town. Just like train tracks, the rocky coastline near Drummer's Rock could pose a potential risk to children playing in the area. True or not, I believe that there is something more to this story - something that has allowed the Drummer Boy's woeful tale to stand the test of time.

While the story of Drummer's Rock may make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up on the night of The Haunting, or any given night for that matter, it is truly a beautiful place to visit or take a peaceful walk. One may feel a sense of quiet tranquility on The Shoreline Heritage Walk, where you can take the time to marvel at sheer cliffs, hidden coves, and the natural beauty created by the community's close proximity to the sea. With such a connection visible between the people and the place they call home, is it any wonder that the drummer boy wanted to start a new life for himself here in the bay?



Looking up at Drummer's Rock on The Shoreline Heritage Walk, Bay Roberts.
Photo by Maeghan Chassé.



Drummer's Rock can be seen to the left of the photo. Photo by Maeghan Chassé.

TRUDY HUTCHINGS

As she would tell you, Trudy Hutchings, born Trudy Holmes, is 21 years old with 50 years of experience. She lives in Shearstown, Bay Roberts in the house on the spot where she was born. She taught English for 30 years, retired, and then began teaching abroad – in China, Nunavut, Guatemala, and Bhutan. Trudy has two children – one in Singapore and one in St. John's, NL. When Trudy is home, she finds her peace walking, reading, knitting, and taking care of her numerous houseplants.



Photograph of Trudy Hutchings at her home in Shearstown.

Photo by Wyatt Hirshfeld Shibley.

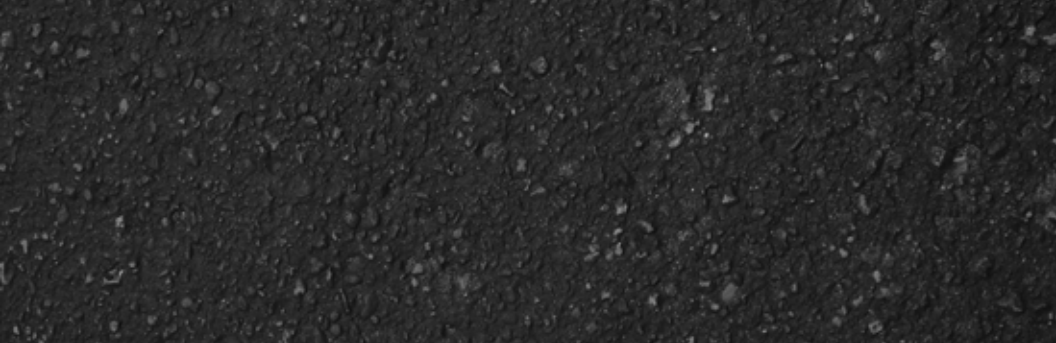
MUDDY HOLE

By: Abigail Crocker

One of Trudy Hutchings' favourite places to walk in Shearstown, Bay Roberts is Muddy Hole. When she first mentioned it, I imagined an actual hole, small, round and muddy – something a child would dig in the dirt during a rainstorm. “All Muddy Hole is, is a hole – well I suppose maybe it was muddy down there at one point. It's just the road,” she said during our interview. “People used to live in Muddy Hole. But they don't live there anymore... I suppose they came up to be with the rest of the people. Water and sewer wasn't put through there but I can remember as a small child – there were foundations and stuff down there... We had a minister here – Reverend Evelyn Smith – she was the Anglican minister until last fall and that's where she was born. She still owns land down here... There's not much to see. You're just walking along a road and there's grassy fields on either side and some farmland and it's just a pleasant place to go.”

Places are embedded with past meanings for people who know them intimately, so when Trudy offered to take me on a walk through Muddy Hole, I couldn't say no.

On the day of our walk, the sun was warm on my face and the breeze was soft. The wind crescendoed, corrugated the water's surface and puffed up across the hill dragging the smell of decaying biomaterial – fish, weeds, and salt – like a trawler with a net. I sniffed. This smell did not surprise me. It was faint, but familiar. I too grew up close to the sea – the salt pickling the biomass, the air drying it, the water making it rot – a smell that is an inseparable hallmark of a healthy estuary – and, for its own benefit, pleasant. The estuary smelled organic but with a smart tang that curled my nostrils. I thought my wrinkling nose was



subtle, or maybe she just smelled it too, but Trudy explained, “This used to be more polluted. See these bulrushes, they didn’t use to grow here. It seems to me the best example of ‘if you don’t pollute an area any more, nature will adapt and clean itself.’”

I looked down at it from a grassy knoll – large enough to be called a modest hill but much too small to be a challenge – I saw a changing, but empty, expanse. I watched as the estuary ballooned outward before me. To my left, a narrow gap spewed water from the sea into the pocketed depression like a gulp of liquid gushing into a stomach. I understood that, if I were to spend my day here and watch, the tide would change, some water from the pool would slowly trickle outward, mix, and now brackish, gurgle its way back to the harbour. The change in tide wouldn’t significantly change the level of the water in the pool that the people of Shearstown call Muddy Hole, but you could measure the rings left on the rocks at each low tide.

To the left of the road however – not much more now than an ill managed pathway – was bog land. Standing water saturated the mire and congealed the soil pitted stones and broken sticks. Sphagnum moss floated placidly on the surface of the bog like sprouts on a chia-pet, and was soft and springy to the touch. The bog was not large, nestled in the hollow at the base of some cliffs as it was.

Boulders lined both sides of the road, framing the bog land and the estuary pond where dogberries, laden with fruit, grew sturdy and tall. These rocks, I’m told, were here to stop members of the community from dumping refuse into Muddy Hole. To my eye,



Photograph of bulrushes at Muddy Hole. Photo by Abigail Crocker.

the rocks standing sentinel have done their job splendidly. I imagined the overpowering stench of decaying and moldy food, stained and torn mattresses, and empty milk cartons – imagined the slime oozing over the pond, the absence of reeds and flowers, the land left abused.

It was not like that now.

Places have lives of their own, and Muddy Hole was a testament to nature and humanity's cyclical relationship – cohabitation, abuse, protection. To begin with, the estuary pond was neither very muddy nor traditionally hole-shaped and I found myself wondering about the name, Muddy Hole. "A hole is just the

name of a place,” Trudy told me when I asked. “It doesn’t mean an actual hole.” The water here was dark but clear and spans in length about 250 meters and about 125 meters in width. The tips of the algae lifted on delicate air bubbles near where the water meets the shore. The cattails and bulrushes grew both lush and plentiful. Dragonflies whizzed by and the occasional bee hovered lazily over a patch of purple wild daisies, pausing on some, passing others by.

Despite the peacefulness of the place, there was a disuse that clung to it – the spirit of a harnessed land that regretted being set free. Once sturdy fences withered on the hill beside us, their wires twisted and rusty, the posts shattered and moldy. A small trail wound its way to the water overcome with grass the lime



Photograph of the Shearstown Estuary Pond taken on a walk with Trudy Hutchings.
Photo by Abigail Crocker.

green colour of new growth, the openings in the fences beside it the only indication that front yards and homes once existed here. A pile of old tires lay abandoned in some blueberry bushes – the only hint that, once, cars could drive through here.

As a result, the community unofficially reclaimed the area. Spaniard's Bay and Shearstown jointly own the estuary and work together to keep it clean. Trudy and other members of Shearstown pick berries here. Crushed Coors Light cans and empty lighters sprinkle the ring around an abandoned fire pit from a night of frivolity and relaxation. Fragmented glass from smashed bottles has been pounded into the pathway under rugged ATV wheels and the heels of teenagers' hiking shoes. Hastily scrawled inscriptions – this millennia's cave paintings –



Photograph of the former Muddy Hole Community site taken on a walk with Trudy Hutchings. Photo by Abigail Crocker.

declare “Josie and Ryan are Best Friends” beside a lopsided heart and “Kesh + Corey – Best Buds 4 LIFE” between two stars just for added sparkle.

“People think I’m crazy for walking down here by Muddy Hole,” Trudy told me as she bent over the patch of blueberries beside the rusty tires. “You couldn’t walk here at night because you’d twist your ankle, but in the day, it’s perfectly safe.” She popped a handful of berries into her mouth. “Not many people walk down here. I don’t know why.”

Perhaps it was taboo to walk down here. Maybe it was cursed. Perhaps politeness kept the community from travelling through – out of respect for the phantom neighbourhood. People did still own land here. The lane connecting Main Beach to North Side Road was unkempt and neither sewer nor electricity ever made it to this place – the Muddy Hole, the gut of the estuary. And so, people left. Perhaps the living community fears the abandonment because it reminds them that their community too might die.

Or, perhaps, the community knew the ghost story of the Hanged Man in Muddy Hole. Years ago, according to Brandon Cross, also of Shearstown, “A man hung himself on a tree. They have the tree cut down now but apparently if you go down there at night sometimes you can see him hanging himself and if you look away he will pop up behind you.” And so, I believe, some people choose not to walk here. They may remember the tale of the hanged man or they may have been told a different story long ago, and as time washed away the details of the story like sand, only the vague feeling of fear remained like the rocks on the path through the

estuary. Trudy, for her part, ‘took everything with a grain of salt,’ trusted her own experience and was confident, assertive, and completely unafraid when walking through Muddy Hole.

To the Shearstown community – even if they didn’t realize it – Muddy Hole was a place of change. The ash bushes and haying grass constricted the road, narrowing it each year until it disappeared or covered by a coating of short soft grass. The rain eroded away the sand and left more and more of the grey stones along the pathway uncovered and bare. The places where houses stood are overgrown and thickets of stunted pine trees and shrubbery cover over the foundations. Hornets make their nests in the tumbling picket fences. Nature has reclaimed the area of Muddy Hole, and the people of this community – of Shearstown, Spaniard’s Bay, and Bay Roberts – have embraced its fluctuating change from neighbourhood, to garbage pit, to walking trail. Someday maybe, the land will reclaim that too.



Photograph of a forgotten picket fence in Muddy Hole, Shearstown.
Photo by Abigail Crocker.

MARGARET AYAD

Margaret Ayad, nee Abbott, grew up with her parents at the navy station at Argentia Bay. She is of English descent and every section of her family was from different parts of the surrounding area: Conception Bay, Trinity, Long Island in Placentia Bay. Her father worked in Bay Roberts earlier in his life and ended up bringing his family back to stay when Margaret was in the ninth or tenth grade. Margaret had a fond love of reading in her youth and turned the passion into a lifelong career as a librarian and teacher. She has a deep love and great pride for her home, Bay Roberts.



Margaret Ayad, informant, showing art print. Photo by Amy Richardson.

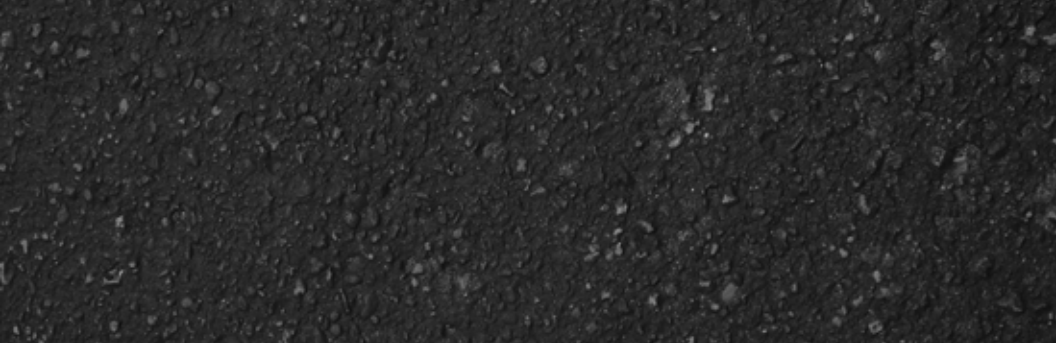
BEAR'S COVE

By: Amy Richardson

“Located on Water Street and fronted with a lovely lawn and flowers is the Regional Library. The first library in Bay Roberts was opened in 1946 and was located in a store, with original librarians Mrs. Harry Dawe and Mrs. Wilfred Wilcox, who worked voluntarily for three months. Since then Miss E. M. Parsons has taken over and has been librarian right up to the present time. The library in use today was opened December 15th. 1948. It has a capacity of 1078 registered readers, 5,858 books, and the circulation for 1955 was 17,158.” *Article from Atlantic guardian 1956 Robert Moss*

“The Library has been nicely decorated for Christmas and as the festive season draws near we wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and good reading to all who visit our library.” *The Daily News (St. John's NL 12-17-63)*

Bear's Cove was (and still is) frequented by teenagers and youths in the summer to swim and hang out; the water is not particularly warm, but if you time it right in the middle of the summer and kept close to shore you won't freeze to death. The beach is a pebble beach and the area was more shallow than other bodies of water nearby, which made it more ideal to wade in. Another unique feature of the cove is that it has small waves that people now come to surf, although not everyone partakes. Other activities done out on the beach would include teenagers building bonfires on summer nights and families holding picnics during the days. It's a scenic spot where you can look across the water and see Spaniard's Bay. Margaret Ayad remembers it fondly, sharing: “It's a really beautiful place.” While you're there, you can't help but agree.

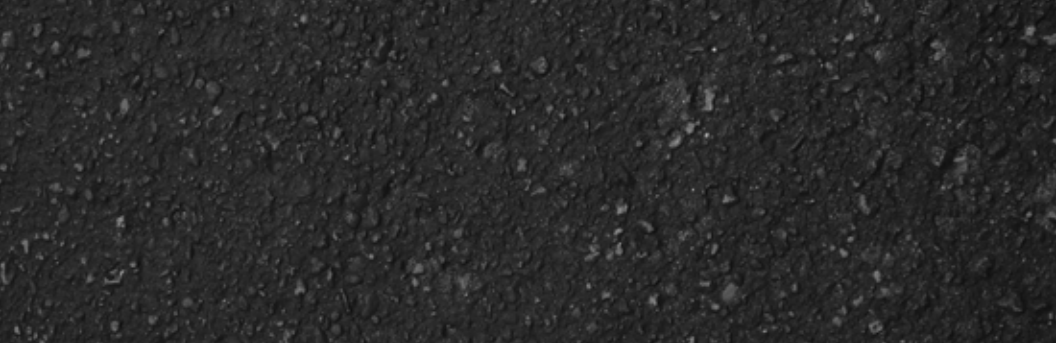


As time went on, the cove had spilled a little inland and therefore a rock bar was built higher up on the beach, which makes for a little adventurous climb up to the top. The rocks are now very large, although it had been a pebble beach in times before. It is best to be careful not to slip on the rocks, perhaps even consider avoiding the area during rain or snow, but it is truly appropriate that the terrain is hiding a unique facet of the community: waves that can be surfed.

The area is clearly still frequented by teenagers, so not too much has changed in that way. Although it is clear that teenagers visit from the sort of artifacts that teenagers tend to leave behind, it is heartening to see that it is still visited even though the landscape has changed over time with the rocks being built up.

Bonfires on coasts in the area are no doubt a common practice for youth and Bear's Cove is no different. It offers a beautiful view of the sea and the surrounding area, and the coast is very long and fairly easily walkable for teenagers walking around with a sweetheart or a rowdy group of friends. Although surfing is mostly only done in the summer (for obvious reasons—the cold!), this is an area that could and would be used all year round. It is far enough off a main road that it offers some seclusion from daily life or nagging parents, which no doubt draws teenagers to visit.

Picnics may not be as frequent in this location anymore considering the sizeable rocks that now inhabit a large line of the cove, but if you walk away from the rock pile, you will find a pebble beach that harkens back to the way it was before. Be sure to bring a blanket and all your favourite foods, be sure to check



Wave coming into Bear's Cove. Photo by Amy Richardson.



Bear's Cove. Photo by Amy Richardson.

the weather, and head down for a good view of surfers, swimmers, and the little waves.

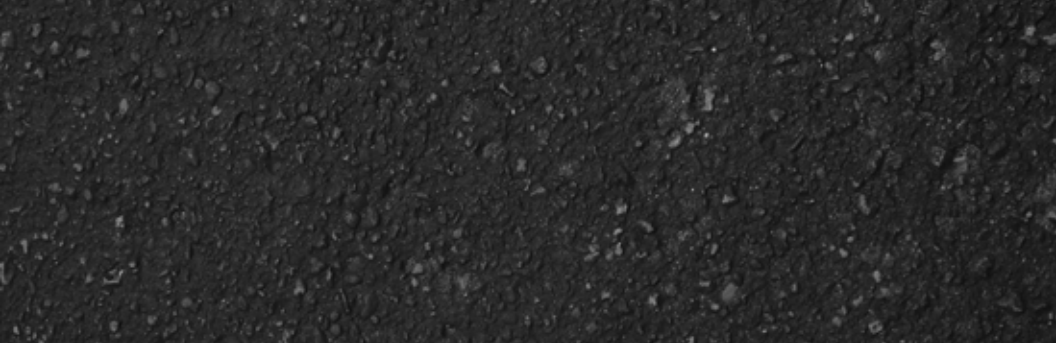
It's a good place to check out and just watch the small waves roll into the shore. It is a strange sight in Newfoundland to be sure, but even though the waves do not hold up to something like the Pacific Ocean swells, there's still something very endearing about them. It, in many ways, feels like a novelty on water as cold as Newfoundland's, as if it is daring braver souls to venture out and risk it all for a couple moments of glory before plunging into the cold. You can be sure that for those willing to venture out into the water to catch a wave, it is an invigorating and exciting moment. It's strange in general to hear about people surfing off a pebble beach, not a sandy one.

When asked about swimming in the cold water, Margaret said "If you swam close to the shore you wouldn't freeze to death." Margaret also noted the advent of surfing in the area, because



Bear's Cove Road street sign; the road leads down to Bear's Cove.

Photo by Amy Richardson.



when she had frequented it as a teenager, that wasn't done. "...the other interesting thing about it is it has waves and people surf there now." It's nice to see that the spot has opened up a new activity that was not done in the past.

Although the world has moved forward, changing how kids, teenagers, and some young adults' interaction with the world in a significant way, places like Bear's Cove offer a much needed lifeline to living in the present and enjoying the land in an authentic way. Newfoundland has a great abundance of beautiful places and it no doubt must be distracting at times for kids and teenagers so devout to new technology.

In Bay Roberts, and any older maritime town, it's very common for well-loved places to be taken over by nature, destroyed by weather, or removed by humans, as many of the other buildings and locations from the past are now long gone. Fortunately, Bear's Cove has stood the test of time and continues to be an attraction in many similar ways that it had been before. It serves as a connector between the old and the new, as the strangeness of the waves continues to drive teenagers in to enjoy their time there, despite the ways in which the landscape has changed over time.

Locations like these are vital for people and their homes because they serve as collective memory and illustrate that although things are changing and will always change, some things will remain. Bay Roberts is no different from other rapidly changing places, in that it will always maintain its history, its heritage, and the fond memories of its inhabitants, which will remain invaluable for all time.

COURTNEY MERCER

Courtney Mercer, 26, grew up in Bay Roberts on Cable Avenue. She currently lives with her mother Debbie, her father Dave, and her grandmother. She also has a younger brother, Nicholas, who currently attends school at the Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's. Courtney moved to St. John's for university, where she got a Bachelor's degree of Education in Intermediate Secondary with a focus on Math and French. After completing her degree, Courtney returned to Bay Roberts where she currently works as a substitute teacher. She has also worked as a volunteer at the Road to Yesterday Museum in the Cable Building for the past ten years giving tours and working in the archives as well as at the gift shop. Cable Avenue is one of her favourite places in Bay Roberts.



Portrait of Courtney Mercer. Photo by Sarah Shultz.

CABLE AVENUE

By: Sarah Shultz

Cable Avenue is a residential street which runs perpendicularly up a hill from Water Street before connecting with Smith Street. The houses are duplexes with Dutch Colonial Revival elements that were built starting in 1913. Many of the houses have gambrel roofs. It is a beautiful place to live, with a view of the water and streets lined on both sides with tall chestnut trees. It is also a site with great historic significance to the town of Bay Roberts.

According to Michael F. Flynn, the houses were originally built by the Western Union Telegraph Company to accommodate their workers after a cable station was built in Bay Roberts in 1910. This cable connected the town with a cable station at Coney Island in New York City, and served as a connection between the United States and England. In his book *Historic Bay Roberts: Not Your Typical Small Town*, Flynn notes that Western Union installed sidewalks and streetlights on Cable Avenue. The street also had its own water and sewer systems, electricity, and a gated entrance. The cable office played a crucial role in keeping America and England connected during both world wars, and also received a telegraph about the sinking of the Titanic in 1912.

Although the cable station connected Bay Roberts to the rest of the world, it was American employees of the the Western Union Telegraph Company who originally had the privilege of living in the modern and comfortable homes on Cable Avenue. Western Union operated in Bay Roberts for 50 years, but eventually local people began to move into the homes on the quiet tree-lined street. It is crucial to understand that Cable Avenue is not just an important place for historical or heritage reasons. It has been and continues to be a home for many families in Bay Roberts.



View of Cable Avenue. Photo by Sarah Shultz.

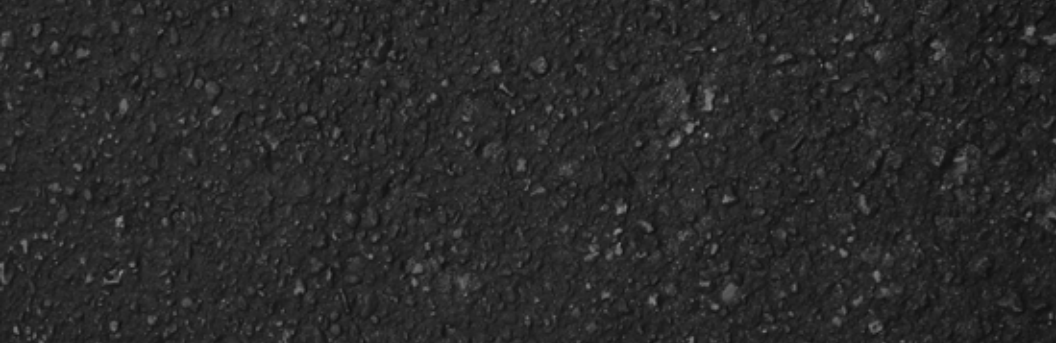
Courtney Mercer describes growing up on Cable Avenue as a wonderful experience, especially for a young child. The houses have spacious backyards that she and her friends would run through and play in during the summer months: “We were always back and forth. One of my friends lives just down the road. So we used to be back and forth and, just walking back and forth. And she’s got a pretty, like a big backyard too, so we’d be back there, and like up behind her house. Out of her backyard, there was a little area there, so we’d go there and just wander around.” There is a cemetery at the top of the Avenue that the children who lived there would explore from time to time, although they were always careful to be respectful and quiet while doing so. On rainy days in the middle of the summer the leaves of the chestnut trees are full enough to act as a natural umbrella, and children can walk



View of Cable Avenue. Photo by Sarah Shultz.

up and down the street and listen to the sound of the raindrops hitting the leaves without getting wet.

The Avenue also provides lots of opportunities for play in the fall and winter: “I loved hanging out on the street. So, lots of times just walking up and down the street, playing with the leaves. Especially here because there are so many leaves. So in the fall you just take them and we’d just rake them all together in a big pile down there, and we’d just jump in them. It was just so nice. And sledding too, we’d slide down [the Avenue].” In the winter months when it is too cold to spend much time outside on the Avenue, the houses are cozy and comfortable. Courtney identified Christmastime at her home as one of the best times of the year growing up in Bay Roberts: “There would just be like lots



of food. Lots of food. Probably my favourite part. But yeah there would just be lots of people coming together and telling stories and just talking about this and that. And listening to Christmas songs. It's just really nice...I love Christmas because we usually have a nine foot Christmas tree. So it's so big and nice. We always used to put it in the corner [of the living room] by the window, and last year we moved it to the other corner, and that was really good because we could all sit and just look at it instead of leaning back onto it. We decorate the fireplaces, too."

Cable Avenue is an important place to the town of Bay Roberts. It is a significant historical landmark, a symbol of both technological advancement and of the key role that Bay Roberts played in major world events over the past century. It is also a valuable cultural landmark. The hundred-year-old houses and towering chestnut trees on both sides of the street connect the changing Bay Roberts of today with its past. These homes, which have been markers of progress and innovation, are now also symbols of Bay Roberts' cultural heritage. More simply, Cable Avenue is home to many families in Bay Roberts, and its streets and yards provide ample space and opportunity for children to play, as Courtney Mercer shared during her interview: "It was just so nice to grow up here, especially on the Avenue, because it's just so nice and so quiet and peaceful. Especially by the water, too. It's just the breeze, there's something really peaceful about it."



Cable Avenue street sign. Photo by Sarah Shultz.

ROLAND DAWE

Roland Dawe was born in Port de Grave, but spent most of his youth in Coley's Point. During his teen years, Roland took pleasure in helping his family. Whether working alongside his grandfather in the garden, or hauling up fish on his father's boat, Roland was always happy to lend a hand. Now, after teaching for nearly 33 years, Roland is retired. However, Roland's love of labour has continued into his retirement, and today he keeps himself busy working as a carpenter's assistant, maintaining a community wood pile, and, as he puts it, "grandfathering". Roland is also an active member and volunteer at his Church, St. John the Evangelist - his favourite place in Bay Roberts.



Roland Dawe. Photo by Wyatt Shibley.

THE FIELD ON NECK ROAD

By: Wyatt Shibley



Neck Road Field. Photo by Wyatt Shibley.

Spreading out from a small parking lot across from the United Church cemetery on Neck Road lies a field that was once an important focal point for local children of the late 50s, early 60s, and perhaps other decades as well. As Roland shared his memories with me, this field was a place he returned to again and again in his recollections. This was because of the field's popular use for games, including field hockey, tiddley, and soccer. Because the field was so frequented, it became an essential part of the cultural landscape for the children of Coley's Point. Today the field is disused and overgrown, but many who grew up in Coley's Point during this time will remember it as a hub of childhood activity.



Neck Road Field. Photo by Wyatt Shibley.

Because the field on Neck Road no longer quite exists as such, its size and dimensions are impossible to measure today. Instead, it will have to suffice to say that the field is smaller than any regulation-sized field used for any popular sport - perhaps roughly half a football field in size. As well, like so much of the ground in Newfoundland, the field is not entirely flat. Instead, it dips considerably toward the back, meaning that players would sometimes have to fight the incline at the same time they struggled against the opposing team. While trees and shrubs have now partially overtaken the field, Roland described it as having been grassy when he played there as a child. The high ground on which the field is situated gives it a good vantage point, and the waters of Long Beach and Long Beach pond are visible in the distance.



Neck Road Field. Photo by Wyatt Shibley.

In Roland's youth, the North/South division was strong in Coley's Point, and this rivalry was often expressed in sport. In those days, the boys of Coley's Point faced off in ice hockey games that would alternate in location between Northside and Southside ponds. Hockey season would begin at the Gullies, with its shallow water being the first to freeze. As the winter continued, games would move to progressively deeper water that was preferable for skating. This would continue until the spring thaw, when players began to lose ice on which to play. But the youth of Coley's Point were dedicated, and rather than give up hockey for the summer they took their sticks into the field and continued playing there. Roland recalled this being called field hockey, but "not field hockey like you know." Roland explained, "It was just hockey in a garden."

But giving up ice hockey for field hockey also meant giving up the ability to alternate locations for games between the Northside and Southside. Because of Neck Road's location in the centre of Coley's Point, the field there provided an important bit of common ground for both Northsiders and Southsiders alike – not to mention those from Neck Road itself. "That was neutral territory," Roland explained. While today the field faces the United Church cemetery, in Roland's youth there was a United Church across the road as well. It seems possible that this holy presence may have helped keep players on their best behaviour. "You weren't allowed to swear or anything," Roland joked, "no bad words." It would certainly seem possible that this respect for the Church may have had a role in easing tensions between the Northsiders and Southsiders, and may have helped facilitate play between the two groups in the field.

The field was also a popular spot to play soccer. However, Roland recollected that the balls he used growing up were drastically different from those used now. Rather than the modern, mass-produced soccer ball familiar today, the children of Coley's Point played with an inflated pig's bladder. "Grandfather killed his own pigs," Roland explained. "And then of course he had to save you the bladder, and then, I don't know who was brave enough to blow up a pig's bladder [laughing] but we got some poor soul willing to blow it up." Roland recalls that these homemade bladder balls had one distinct advantage over their mass-produced counterparts available at the time – they were waterproof. Roland recalled how the first "real" soccer ball he played with would gather water if it was being used on wet grass. This would make it heavy until, as Roland put it, it was "just like kicking a bloody big rock."

While hockey and soccer are part of the sporting culture outside the province, the third game popular on the field, Tiddley (also spelled Tiddly) most certainly is not. Tiddley does not require much in the way of specialized equipment. Three rocks were used to make up first base, second base, and home. Apart, from these, all that was required was a short stick to act as the ball, and a long stick for a bat. Not any old stick would do, however. A good stick, Roland told me, “was one that you took home, and planed it down, and made it almost like a bat.” The short stick would be balanced on the home rock, struck downward to pop it up into the air, and then struck with the long stick. As the batter ran for the first rock, it was the job of the outfielders to either catch the stick to get the batter out, or failing this, to gently throw the short stick at the runner - aiming below the waist, in order to get them out.

Children no longer play in the Neck Road field. Roland couldn't recall when exactly children stopped playing there, only that he personally stopped once he entered high school and got involved with scholastic sports. Today the field has largely been overtaken by various trees and shrubs. Where once stood children, now stand spruce, dogberry, and wild rose. However, tufts of tall grass still poke out from between the trunks of trees, and the field lives on in the memories of those who once played there, and their reminiscences of youth, sport, and neighbourhood rivalry. In that field, a generation of Coley's Point children had their first taste of victory, and took their first sip from the bitter cup of defeat.

ELIZABETH SNOW JERRETT

Elizabeth Snow Jerrett is a Bay Roberts native. Born in 1943, she is a retired teacher with a passion for ice skating. She has two children, a daughter who is fifty and a son who is forty-seven years old.



Betty Jerrett. Photo by Aida Dalvand.

SKATING

By: Ayda Dalvand

Playing sports is a favourite activity for many people around the world. It provides us with enjoyment and also freshens up our mind. Indulging in sports helps our body to function smoothly and more efficiently. Finding a sport you love early in life and playing it often may be the key to staying active and healthy in your 70s and 80s. People's tendencies in choosing and playing sports vary from one country to another, and these preference may be influenced based on the weather of a place. One of the exciting sports in cold weather, especially in Newfoundland, is skating.

On the 9th of September 2017, on a rainy day, we arrived in Bay Roberts to conduct research. Their culture was our field school. Bay Roberts is located on the north shore of Conception Bay in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I decided to focus on the sports that people play in the area for my research. On the 22nd of September, I had a chance to interview Mrs. Betty Jerrett, a lady with a lot of enthusiasm for skating.

Elizabeth Snow Jerrett, commonly known as Betty, was so kind and responded to all of our questions patiently. She was born in 1943 in Bay Roberts. Her father worked with Canadian National Marine. He was a purser on the ships and traveled all over the island. Her mother is from Spaniard's Bay, and she was a teacher. She has two sisters, one in Nova Scotia and another in New Brunswick, and Betty was the eldest one. She went to school in Bay Roberts. She started school at the Old Saint Matthew Academy in September 1948. She was 21 when she got married. Her husband is from Clarke's Beach. Together, they have two children.

Betty's favourite sport is skating, and she told us how she started skating in her childhood. Also, she mentioned Johnny North's rink as one of her favourite ice rinks during her childhood. It sat on Green's Road in Bay Roberts in 1950, directly behind Saint Matthew's Hall to the right. It was constructed by John North. The rink was moved and now it sits in front of the Royal Canadian Legion in Bay Roberts.

Betty learned to skate at an early age. Her house was next door to the rink so she could easily look at the people skating through the frost on the window, and she could hear the music from the rink every time she played outside. She wanted to skate from the very first time she saw that. "So, I said to Santa Claus, I want to skate," Betty explained. Her friend was selling her brown skates and so Betty decided she would buy those from her for a dollar. "The following Christmas I asked for white skates, and I got my white skates, and I am still skating today."

She would not play alone but would play with her friends who lived in their neighbourhood. Since Betty and her friends were neighbours to the rink, the owners let them skate for free. They really enjoyed skating and they would practice constantly, trying moves like "the bird." Betty really wanted to be a figure skater. "We would try all these fancy moves. If I were a little girl now, I would want to be a figure skater. I don't miss [watching] figure skating when it comes on TV."

There was another lane in Bay Roberts which is called Bagg's Lane, constructed by John North, the rink's namesake, and

Walter Baggs the longtime fire chief in Bay Roberts. It was the next one to Saint Matthew's Hall.

Another favourite rink for Betty and her friends was Mr. Fred Bennett's rink. It was the first artificial ice surface in Conception Bay North, and it was located on the main highway in Bay Roberts. They went there as they were teenagers, but unfortunately that rink no longer exists today.



Betty at John Rink. Photo by Ayda Dalvand.

There were also several marshes in the community where they would go to skate. One was in Greens Road and another one was near Jubilee Estates. The distances between their houses and these marshes were so close that they could walk home. "We would skate, walk home again and there would be so much ice and snow on our skates, and our mothers would open the oven door of the stove and ice would all melt off and then would take the skates off."

When I asked Betty if she likes Bay Roberts, she answered "I love Bay Roberts ... Everyone has a wonderful memory and wonderful time, great friends, you know...it's just wonderful."

In the short amount of time I lived in Bay Roberts, I was surprised to learn about the amount of local community pride. The people there were so interested in sports, especially different winter sports, and they did it not just for their health, but also for fun. They enjoyed it from the bottom of their hearts and sports were a large part of their lives.

Finally, I want to say how much I appreciate their hospitality. We had the honour of spending three weeks with them and we learned a lot about their nice community.



Marshes. Photo by Ayda Dalvand.

MARILYN MURRIN

Like her father, mother, and grandparents, Marilyn Murrin was born and raised in Coley's Point, Newfoundland. Her father owned and operated a store in the area, while her mother stayed home to be a housewife and mother to both Marilyn and her younger brother. Marilyn attended college at Bishop Spencer College in St. John's and eventually worked for the school board in Bay Roberts for twenty-eight years. She has two daughters and one son and plans to remain in Coley's Point where she enjoys playing cards with friends and raising money for various charitable organizations in the community.



Marilyn Murrin. Photo by Naomie Barnes

COBBY HOUSES

By: Naomie Barnes



A Cobby House. Photo submitted by Jasmine Paul.

I spent one late-September morning with Marilyn Murrin, of Coley's Point, talking about growing up in the Bay Roberts area. It was during our conversation that Marilyn said, "just about every little girl had a cob." For those uninitiated to Newfoundland, hearing the term "cob" may not initially bring children's play to mind. In fact, as a mainlander from the western United States, I had no idea what a "cob" was. According to the Dictionary of Newfoundland English: Second Edition, the term "cob" refers to "a little house built by children" or "a place on the ground outlined with rocks." More importantly, Marilyn explained that playing cobby was an integral part of growing up in her neighbourhood, as all the girls took turns playing in each other's cobby house.

Cob houses are called many things depending on what area of Bay Roberts you're from. Whether you call it a cob, a cobby (house), a coopy house, or a copy (house), these small structures were found in sheds or the corners of porches, in haylofts or down by the water. Really, the cobby house design depended on the children who built it. Most cobby houses were constructed from easily accessible materials such as tree boughs, driftwood, rocks, and disused pieces of wood that might be lying around the yard. Many cobs were temporary structures designed to last an afternoon. Often, children at the beach used rocks to outline kitchens, bedrooms, and other rooms only to leave the cob behind once it was time to go home. Other times, materials would be lashed together to create a sort of lean-to structure that could easily last several days or even a full summer before the snow obliterated any sign of the structure. Some cobs, however, lasted several years because they were built indoors or, if children were lucky, their father would build them a solid cobby house to play in.



Root cellar. Photo by Naomie Barnes.

Marilyn recalled one of her first cobs was located in the hayloft of her father's barn. Having it in a hayloft could be problematic because, as she explained, "when you cut the hay in the summer and dry it, you put it in the hayloft to feed the cows and the horses in the winter. So I had a cob in the hayloft probably for a month then I had to get out because the grass, you know, would be dried and have to go in." The solution to her problem came through her father, who decided to build her a cob on the back porch. Her new cob had solid walls and tarpaulin for a roof and she entertained friends within its walls many times. She told me that while she enjoyed playing or watching different games like tiddly or hockey, she loved playing in her cob and especially loved visiting friends in theirs.

It was common for girls in Marilyn's neighbourhood to host each other in their cobs of various styles and sizes. Marilyn recalled that one of her friends built a cob in the family root cellar, with the vegetables on the lower level and the cob on the upper level. Having a cob inside the cellar allowed them to play together on days when the weather would not have allowed them to play outside. It was also a time when children ran freely throughout the neighbourhood. The kids often went in and out of neighbours' houses where they would ask for a glass of water or perhaps be invited to have dinner with a friend. Marilyn said it was a tight-knit community where parents didn't worry so much about whether or not their children were safe. They knew that everyone looked out for each other and that neighbourhoods felt like family. Which is perhaps why playing cobby was so prominent in the area.

Children played many different types of games where they traded roles as mother, father, or baby and student or teacher. According to Marilyn, they played out every aspect of life. She said, with a



Beach rocks, driftwood and seaweed. Photo by Naomie Barnes.

laugh, “We’d pretend like one day we’d be having a wedding and another day we’d probably have the funeral.” Whatever scenario came to mind on a given day was played out in imaginative detail. Sometimes their play required props, which were often provided by the neighbourhood mothers and called “cobby dishes.” Marilyn explained that the girls would “go around, knock on doors, and see if they [the women] had any cobby dishes to give.” The dishes were most likely to be chipped saucers or cups with a broken handle—things that were no longer in use but would allow the children to copy their home environments. These dishes were especially useful when making mud pies and cakes. Sometimes Marilyn and her friends got creative with their designs and mimicked their favourite cakes or pies. She said, “sometimes years ago when you’d ice the cake they’d sprinkle coconut over the cake, so we used to get sawdust and sprinkle it over the mud for the coconut.” I couldn’t help but relate to this experience, making many stick and mud pies of my own when I was young.

Many children play house all around the world, and I certainly remember playing it in the deserts of Arizona. Newfoundland, and more specifically Bay Roberts, children have a unique take on this tradition by sharing and inviting others to play in their cobby houses on a regular basis. Children learn at a young age to not only be hospitable to their neighbours, but they also learn the value of community and family. Playing cobby likely influenced the continued atmosphere of hospitality and kindness that I and the other folklore students felt in coming to Bay Roberts. Just as children created their temporary families, we felt like we became part of the Bay Roberts family even though our stay in the community was short.

CLARENCE MERCER

Clarence Mercer is a retired teacher, who started his teaching career in Harbour Breton. After teaching there for one year, he moved to Clarke's Beach where he taught for sixteen years, and then to Bay Roberts where he taught in the Amalgamated Academy for thirteen years. Following his retirement, Mr. Mercer became involved with the Bay Roberts Tourism Committee. In addition to that, he has served for eight years as a Councilor for the Town of Bay Roberts. Mr. Mercer is also one of the founding members and a chair of Bay Roberts' Cultural Foundation.



Clarence Mercer. Photo by Alina Sergachov.

SCHOOL

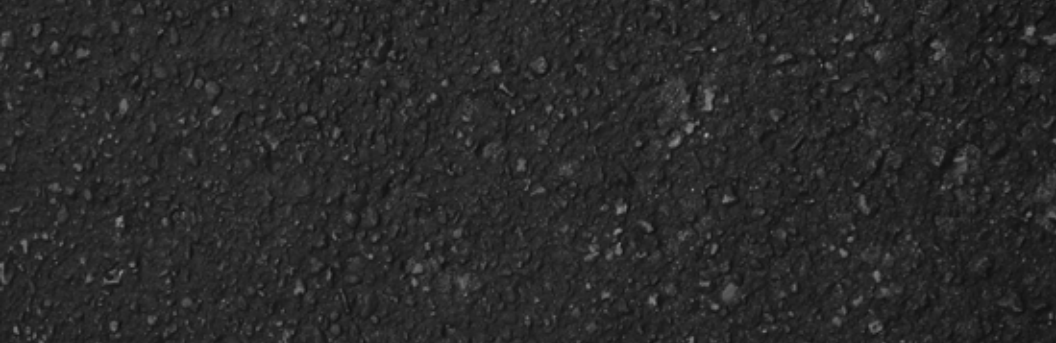
By: Alina Sergachov



What remains of the Amalgamated school. Photo by Alina Sergachov.

Practically everyone we met during our stay in Bay Roberts is a former teacher or a school administrator. Perhaps that's what makes this community so unique—it's a community of educators. Since the schooling has changed tremendously over the years, we asked Mr. Mercer—a retired teacher who taught in Harbour Breton, Clarke's Beach, and Bay Roberts—to tell us what going to school in Bay Roberts was like in 1950-1960s.

As a boy, he attended the Amalgamated school which was located on Patterson Street, right behind the S.U.F. Lodge. Back then, religion had such an enormous impact on the education that every denomination had a school of its own: United School, an Anglican school, a Salvation Army school, and Roman Catholic school. Given that an Amalgamated school was run by three church groups rather than one (United Church, the Anglican, and the Salvation Army), it was quite different from the rest of the schools of that time period, and according to Mr. Mercer, it was the closest to non-religious school as one could get.



When the population of the students increased, a second school was built directly behind the Amalgamated school. That building is still there—it has turned into the Goodwill Centre, The Helping Hand. Unfortunately, the first school no longer exists. High grass and a couple of trees separate the remnants of the building from the road, shielding it from the intruders. There are no walls, only its foundation remains. The concrete basement structure is divided into two parts. The left part is smaller, but deeper. It is waist-deep. Weeds break through the cracks in concrete. This place looks desolate, but shards of brown glass lead me to believe that it is not entirely deserted. There are other signs of human presence. For instance, someone left behind five tires and rusty pieces of a kid's bicycle. And someone chose to leave his or her mark by defacing the fragments of foundation with a sloppy graffiti and sketches of phalluses.

The basement structure looks so small that it is hard to believe that this place used to be a school. Then again, the population of students was small too and there was only one class for each grade. Since the house system was common in the Amalgamated school, students were divided into one of three or four houses that would compete against each other in sports and academics. That competition would culminate at the end of the year when the house that had the most points got a trophy.

School corporal punishment is one of the main things that have changed in Bay Roberts over the years. Mr. Mercer mentioned several physical punishment techniques that were common when he was a child. He told us that in addition to the use of strap, teachers forced children to kneel on a broom handle, sit in

a closet for a period of time, and stand in a corner with a dunce cap on their heads. Sometimes children were told to hold books in both hands and if they dropped them when their arms got tired, they had to pick them up and start time over again.

“There was also segregation in most communities based on—different denominations. Every denomination that was present in Bay Roberts had its own school at one time. There was always a United School, an Anglican school, a Salvation Army school, and Roman Catholic school in this community.”

“There was one class for each grade. And we went from kindergarten to grade eleven. In that particular school. At the time that I started. As I said earlier, when I, when I got to grade eight the high school had just been constructed. That was an Anglican school. This school that I attended here was sort of non-denominational. So, I didn’t even know if I was going to be able to get into that school, but I applied and I did get in. So, there was, there was one, one classroom per grade and the population increased while I was in school, the early years, so much so that they built a second school directly behind. That second school is now the Goodwill Centre, the Helping Hand. I don’t know if you’ve noticed or not, but you go out here and just look up and you can see the building. And that particular building had kindergarten, grade one, two, three, and four. Later on then we moved, would move down to an older building and—go from grade four to grade eight. They had an auditorium. Today, when you look at the, at the concrete foundation that was left, one would hardly say that it was big enough for anything, but we had an auditorium. We used to play some floor games. It wasn’t overly big. But we were big in,



What remains of the Amalgamated school. Photo by Alina Sergachov.

into—presentations. They used to call them operettas and they were singing and speaking—concerts that we would put on. And I served many times in those, in those particular operettas and, and took many parts. I, I sang as well as acted.”

“One of the main things that changed was the use of the strap. There was, there was punishment, physical punishment, in the classroom if you did something that was wrong or the teacher thought that was wrong. And you know, you would stand in front of the classroom and hold your hand out and they would use a leather strap. You’ll get so many whaps with that. I used the strap as a teacher twice. In early, very early in my career. I thought it was justified and when I look back at it now maybe there were different ways of handling it. But anyways I didn’t appreciate it being a student. I never got the strap very often. I don’t believe I ever got the strap in school, but I didn’t appreciate the idea

that it was being used and others were being punished in such a manner. Some of the techniques for punishment were very, very crude. Very crude. Depending upon the school, depending upon the teacher. They could range from being put in a closet and made to sit out a period of time. You would, you might have to stand in a corner with a dunce cap. They were used to call it dunce cap. On the head. Now, that's going back. I—I can't remember that being used the whole lot in my career. And my—student life. [...] Dunce cap is just a piece of card board or whatever that looks like a witches' hat. That's the best, without the brim. You just wear it on top of the head. Other teachers used punishment techniques like kneeling on a broom handle. Another one was standing in a corner with books in both hands and holding them. And if you dropped them, then, well you would have to do that for a period of time, if you happened to drop them your arms got weak you had to pick the books up and go back and start time over again."

"For me, the Amalgamated Academy was—[sighs] as close to non-religious I guess with regards to control by the church as one could get at that time. It was basically under the rule of the Roman Catholic, I'm sorry, of the United Church, the Anglican, and the Salvation Army. Those three church groups basically ran this particular school. So, it was a unified effort. But even, even in nineteen late nineteen sixties, the high school was built by the Anglicans for the Anglicans. And I attended that high school as a United Church person. Anyways, there you go. Today, that's all gone. It's been totally wiped from our educational system. [sighs] It was not good—because when I look back, there were many opportunities that were missed for friendships."

PHYLLIS

Phyllis grew up in South River and Cupids. Her mother and father's families are originally from South River. She attended school in Cupids and then continued her education in St. John's. She held three positions in town before moving to Bay Roberts in 1961, when she was hired at Powell's Supermarket as the store's bookkeeper. After her employment with Powell's, she continued her work with two other companies in Bay Roberts until she and her husband started their own business. In addition to working and raising a family, Phyllis has volunteered with several charitable organizations in the community.



Phyllis. Photo by Natalie Dignam.

THE POWELLS

Isabell Powell grew up in Fortune Bay, NL. She met her husband, Herbert Powell, in St. John's where she was a teacher. She moved to Carbonear in 1954, the location of the original Powell's Supermarket and Herbert's hometown. In 1957, they moved the business to Bay Roberts and ran the first supermarket in Conception Bay, which also included an attached clothing store. Isabell "did a little bit of everything" at the store and is still part of the business today.

Carol Powell was born in Bay Roberts in 1961 and left in 1978 to attend university in St. John's. She started working at her parents' store around the age of 8 or 9 and continued to work with the business on the weekends and during the summer until the early 80s. She was a French teacher for thirty years and is now retired. She splits her time between Bay Roberts and St. John's.



The Powells. Photo by Natalie Dignam.

POWELL'S SUPERMARKET

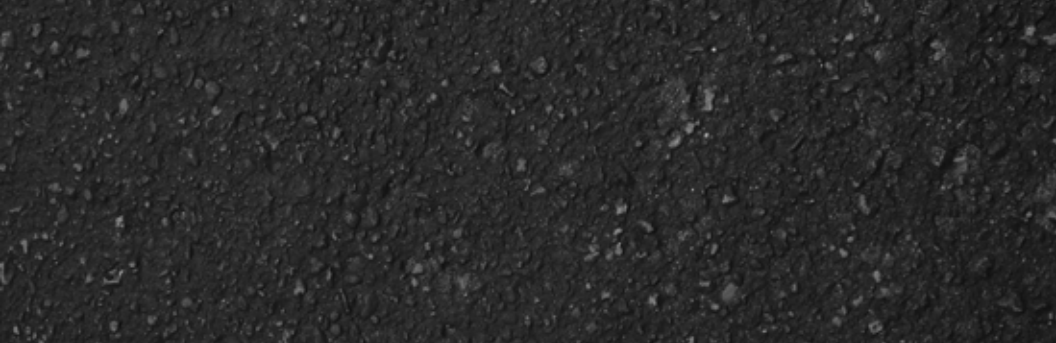
By: Natalie Dignam



Powell's in the modern day, 2017. Photo by Natalie Dignam.

Although it's commonplace today, what made Powell's Supermarket special in 1957 was the grocery carts. Unlike other shops in town, you didn't have to ask someone behind the counter to get this or that for you. Instead, you could purchase whatever you wanted right off the shelf, and the selection was far larger than the neighbourhood grocers. After six decades in business, a lot has changed. Powell's is no longer the only supermarket in Conception Bay, but is one of three supermarkets on Conception Bay Highway, which has become the commercial center of Bay Roberts. Mrs. Powell no longer cooks her annual Christmas dinner for the Powell's employees, or hosts salespeople in her home. The business has grown, but then so has Bay Roberts.

When Powell's Supermarket first moved from Carbonear to Bay Roberts in 1957, the main businesses in town consisted of



smaller grocers, general stores, meat markets and wholesalers along Water Street. Lady Anne Morgan's, R&I Saunders, Ace Spencer & Co. Limited and many more shops made Bay Roberts economically important to the surrounding communities. Powell's is representative of both the past and future of Bay Roberts as a commercial center; it's part of the larger trend towards bigger stores like supermarkets rather than the smaller, local shops. Despite its expansion, the supermarket has kept the appeal of a neighbourhood grocery store. The aisles are wider than at a typical supermarket, which makes it unobtrusive when old friends, neighbours and kids coming from soccer practice stop to talk while shopping. In the dairy section, two elderly ladies, carts facing in opposite directions, pull up like two cars on a residential street where neighbours stop on their way out to chat.

From the location to the décor, Powell's presents itself as a business at the heart of the various communities that came together quite recently to form Bay Roberts. The current Powell's Supermarket is the store's third building. The first burned down in 1970 and the second building now houses Atlantic Restaurant Supply. The current store, located across the highway from its original location, is much larger and also includes a restaurant called Breaktime. Although the supermarket only relocated across the street, this move put it in a central location and increased accessibility as it became more convenient to enter and exit the parking lot from either direction along Conception Bay Highway.

The décor in Powell's Supermarket also reflects its long history in Bay Roberts. On the front wall next to the cash registers, large

orange letters read; “Serving the Community for over 60 Years.” There is a sense of connection to place that is not as prevalent in the larger, more recent stores along the highway. Even the aisles signs in Powell’s reflect its roots in the community. Each sign includes a different moniker drawn from the former towns and neighbourhoods that make up Bay Roberts today. The signs hang from thin metal chains and have multiple parts; the community name and aisle number at the top and the contents of the aisle hang underneath, also from metal chains, each item printed on its own piece of wood. The signs read; Coley’s Point, Shearstown Road, Bareneed Road, Country Road, Central Street, The Klondyke, Cable Ave, Crossroads, and Water Street.



Powell's 1948.



Powell's interior. Photo by Natalie Dignam.

Many of these places, such as Shearstown and Coley's Point, were independent towns until the 1980s and 1990s. Others, like The Klondyke or Cable Ave, are places in Bay Roberts that have their own significant history. The Klondyke connects Coley's Point and Bay Roberts across the harbour and made travel between the two communities much easier. Cable Avenue is historically important as the location of the Western Union Telegraph Company (1913-1962), which connected Bay Roberts to other parts of the world. Cable Avenue is also the neighbourhood where company employees lived and is one of the few rural planned neighbourhoods. A supermarket does not initially seem

like a place for a history lesson, but Powell's continually reminds residents, in its unassuming way, of all these different places that form Bay Roberts.

As Powell's Supermarket has grown, expanding its location in Bay Roberts and adding stores in Carbonear and Harbour Grace, its role in the community has similarly transformed. In the past, if a resident was in need, organizations like the Lion's Club or local churches collected door to door. Herbert J. Powell, the founder of Powell's Supermarket, was also known for his generosity. Carol Powell described her father as "very community-minded." "He gave an awful lot," she said. "You know, quite often it wasn't known what he gave...But... people would come knocking on the door, they were hungry, they had nothing to eat... wondering if you had a loaf of bread or whatever the case is." Powell's is still active in the Bay Roberts community, but their involvement is on a larger scale in a more official capacity as sponsors or fundraisers. They support rowing and softball teams or hold fundraisers for local causes like Kraft Hockeyville or the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

After many years in Bay Roberts, Powell's Supermarket has become a location where formerly independent communities come together to shop, grab coffee, eat lunch, catch up and go about their lives as they always have. The everyday places people frequent, like supermarkets, are not often counted among the landmarks of a city or town, but sometimes these easily overlooked locations are special because they are so commonplace and so unassumingly important to the people who live there.



About Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador

The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador is a nonprofit organization which was established in 1984 to stimulate an understanding of and an appreciation for the architectural heritage of the province. The Foundation, an invaluable source of information for historic restoration, supports and contributes to the preservation and restoration of buildings of architectural or historical significance. The Heritage Foundation also has an educational role and undertakes or sponsors events, publications and other projects designed to promote the value of our built heritage. The Heritage Foundation is also involved in work designed to safeguard and sustain the intangible cultural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future generations everywhere, as a vital part of the identities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and as a valuable collection of unique knowledge and customs. This is achieved through policies that celebrate, record, disseminate, and promote our living heritage.



Heritage Foundation
Newfoundland & Labrador



Collective
MEMORIES

Newfoundland
Labrador



The Oral History Roadshow is a project to empower and encourage seniors to showcase their memories through a series of public oral history night celebrations, with funding provided through New Horizons for Seniors.

Research and design made possible through the Collective Memories Project, an initiative of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Office of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, with funding provided by the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

.....

*Visit online and listen to audio recordings
of these stories, and more!*

www.collectivememories.ca

1-888-739-1892

Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland & Labrador
1 Springdale Street
St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5V5

ISBN 978-1-988899-05-3