

Torbay

Heritage Plan September 2009

Torbay Heritage Plan

A Process Of Collective Interpretation.

September 2009 | Final Report



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Andante



The thrilling news we heard last week Is in our memories
yet Two fishermen from Newfoundland Saved
from the jaws of death Two fine young men born
in Torbay Who went adrift at sea On the eighteenth day of
April From the schooner Jubilee.

Sharing the stories and art of Torbay.

Sharing + Heritage = (s) Heritage
Sharing the stories and art of Torbay.
A process of collective interpretation.
September, 2009.

The following report presents an innovative, carefully constructed heritage strategy developed for the multi-layered, unique, growing community of Torbay, Newfoundland.

Project (s)Heritage is aimed at supporting dynamic, creative, engaging, long-term, and most importantly, inclusive community involvement in the elaboration of an ever-evolving shared heritage...



PHOTO: St. Michael's Convent was condemned and raised to the ground in the 1980s. See appendix for plans for Torbay's new town center.



PHOTO: Torbay Heritage Committee Museum Archive Collections

On the Hills of Torbay

“I said, “Pretty fair maid, if you would come with me,
I’ll take you to my home in the big U.S.A.,
I will dress you in silks, in nylons and satin,
If you will just leave the hills of Torbay.”

I don’t want your silks, your nylons or satins,
I don’t want no part of your big U.S.A.,
I would rather stay dressed in my old cotton custom
A-watching my goats on the hills of Torbay.

I said “Pretty girlie, if you give me your answer, Say
you will be mine and right here I will stay.”
A-watching the goats on the hills of Torbay. ”

- Jack Todd

Torbay has seen a recent, marked increase in its population. This is exciting, because it means that new lifeblood is being pumped into the heart of a truly beautiful region of Newfoundland. As would be expected, many of the new members of the community feel disconnected from those who have much deeper roots in the region - some that stem

several generations.

What becomes immediately apparent, is that for the benefit of all of the residents of Torbay, connections need to be made between new and old members. Significant links must be formed between those members who are Torbay’s future (children and new families) and those who know

the most about Torbay’s past (the senior citizens and long-term residents who have lived and worked in Torbay for decades).

In order for this to materialize, Torbay clearly needs places for people to congregate in order to share their stories, ideas about their history, and no less importantly, their art and music.

We often think that a region’s heritage must be defined by old buildings (the local built heritage) and/or remnants of material culture excavated and officially identified by archeologists from deep within the surrounding immutable “natural” landscape. Fortunately, the truth about



PHOTO: Torbay Heritage Committee Museum Archive Collections (THCMAC)

heritage is much more interesting, especially when we start to pay attention to Torbay's living traditions and oral history expressed through its folklore, music and inter-generational story-telling. Sometimes, a lack of government resources (in the form of government subsidies and top-down attention by experts and academics) leaves space for grass-roots movements to compensate. The result can be more empowering and organic - and not surprisingly – much more interesting to tourists.

In communities like Torbay, there is no way of getting around the fact that some of the more significant historical buildings (that might have served as portals to life in the 1800s) have been abandoned and/or condemned and “erased” from the landscape. Indeed, many a local poem has eulogized the demolition of the extraordinary St. Michael's

convent. Several interpretive planners enlisted to participate in this project, long term residents

would make Torbay the subject of academic dissertations. This is untapped potential to be

What might be best described as the *invisible landscape*, one that reveals a rich local tapestry of stories, song, and local artwork - has just begun to be uncovered, developed, published and displayed.

and casual visitors all concede... currently, when newcomers visit the town of Torbay they cannot see anything but a superficial version of the place. What might be best described as the invisible landscape, one that reveals a rich tapestry of stories, song, and local artwork - has just begun to be uncovered, developed, published and displayed locally.

There is no question that significant academic studies need to be done in and around Torbay. The town awaits more work by graduate students who

sure. We can expect this to change as the next generation of Torbay's youth move through the universities and make their home the subject of academic interest. The more attention the region gets, the richer the cultural interpretation/appreciation. However, as this report will underscore, what currently makes Torbay a wonderful place to live, and potentially attractive to tourists and local visitors, is its extraordinary coastline, matched with an uncommon wealth of recorded human experience in the



PHOTO: THCMAC



PHOTO: THCMAC

form of oral history, folklore and music.

The following recommended policy directions are focused on the identification of the “major next steps” for an over-arching

heritage plan. Tract Consulting Inc. and Jane Severs Interpretive Planning have come to a number of conclusions focused on efforts to draw all of Torbay’s positive attributes together. Once set in motion, the goals, policies and

programs will grow organically out of the town’s own long-term heritage management plan. The budget implications (in terms of a feasibility study) will be developed at a later date for all the suggested/selected priority areas – as the

town’s new center and museum continue to be carefully designed.

But the question remains: what can a community do, when the upkeep of older colonial settler structures and/or the



price of academic archeological excavations is currently more than the local economy can generate? In Torbay, local groups of volunteers and hard-working municipal government officials have been asking themselves these types of

questions for decades. Efforts to find alternatives in order to make sure that the “invisible” heritage of Torbay is remembered and respected -- have been hard-won. The following heritage strategy has been conceptualized to build

on these important ongoing local efforts. Torbay’s heritage committee, for instance, founded the local museum and have developed ongoing programs that allow for a repository of local oral history currently displayed on

their web site. The current mayor, himself, wrote one of the only two books published on the history of the region. Indeed, there can be no substitute for this kind of local pride and the attendant healthy culture of grass-roots activism.



PHOTO: THCMAC

PHOTO: THCMAC



After review of the background archival material held in the Torbay Museum, at the Center for Newfoundland Studies (CNS) and Memorial University's Folklore and Language Archive, after careful perusal of the oral history arranged on the Torbay Museum web site and after countless on-site visits to the region with a team of interpretive planners, historians, urban planners and landscape architects -- it was clear that a strategy for commemorating and enlivening the heritage of Torbay had a cluster of unique challenges.

To come straight to the heart of the matter: a beautiful coastline does not a community make. Torbay is crying out for public places for its community members to congregate; venues, both inside and outside, that will allow the residents to share in the lively wealth that is their regional culture. Trails and carefully researched interpretation panels that help connect people to spots

thought to be of local interest (churches, war monuments, cemeteries and the beachfront) are largely missing or effectively buried as the result of a lack of obvious signage. Currently many of these sites are not easily accessible.

There is no question that Torbay is at a critical moment of community renewal and renaissance. The population of Torbay is on the rise: new families are moving in and want to learn more about their new home. Thankfully, the Torbay Museum, currently housed in the basement of the Town Hall, is already understood as a place where people come to share ideas about their past (by either donating to the collection or sharing memories about Torbay's history with museum staff in the form of oral interviews).

Currently, long-term plans are in motion to create a new town center that will include multiple

new buildings: structures that will house all sorts of shared amenities and provide new public spaces for Torbay residents to congregate. Importantly, the main component of this overarching long-term heritage plan contains the

Torbay is at a critical moment of community renewal and renaissance.

architectural renderings/plans for a highly anticipated new space for the Torbay Museum. The Torbay Museum is the cornerstone of the following heritage strategy which is focused upon building and reinforcing the successful grass-roots projects and extraordinary regional initiatives already underway -- thanks to Torbay's long history of local activism/voluntarism.

Each example provided within this report is chosen with an eye to seeding discussion and debate -- enabling the Torbay community

and visitors to learn more about how to display the history in the area in visual and oral terms. There is no quick fix or hard sell here, each example included in this report was considered with regards to first developing heritage

projects locally for the community of Torbay. However, efforts at each stage of this project also consider the potential for carefully designed public programs and installations that would draw people from outside the community in for a visit. Each suggestion is conceptualized to reach beyond the immediate local heritage plan - towards the newest approaches of tourism development.

At this early stage, these policy recommendations have been based upon consultation with members of the Town Council, surveys of the Torbay public

opinion and in-depth discussions with the Heritage Committee of Torbay. The results of the



heritage survey are included in the appendix of this report, as are a variety of landscaping options that work to both identify and beautify existing prominent heritage themes and spaces. The survey and the conceptual designs are meant to inspire but not define the thematic landscaping possibilities for the development of future sites in Torbay.

As this report will argue forcefully, there is no such thing as a “final count” of possibilities for Torbay’s heritage sites. They grow as the community grows – the task is to find new and engaging ways to reveal collective ideas about history. Indeed, in Torbay, much of the difficult work has already been done! The Torbay Museum curators (to date) have been (with the help of students) collecting oral histories for several years. This kind of “do-it-yourself” audacity (passion for local history-gathering despite limited resources and provincial support) is what leads us to believe that Torbay has the potential to become a lively center for oral/public history in Newfoundland.

To summarize: this project was conceptualized and carefully tailored to enable authentic community engagement while supporting the creative initiatives and the collective projects already underway in the community.

The interpretation plan is a strategy to both enliven and identify innovative methods to display the culture and ideas of a long-standing community - where very few of the original built heritage structures remain. Despite the limited visual cues on the extraordinary Torbay landscape, residents have fought to maintain connections to its rich past and have been carefully collecting and archiving local stories and material culture. An active heritage committee - with its monthly meetings - have met for years to build and support the museum and the Mayor himself has thoughtfully researched and written a local history of the region. These factors have all been considered and woven into the series of suggestions put forth in this report.



PHOTO: Torbay Hillside Festival Tapper's Cove - Boat Tour

What is Heritage?

Does it simply concern old buildings and cemeteries? What if all of the buildings that long defined the landscape of a region are gone only to be replaced with less remarkable structures? To figure out what is special about Torbay, what makes the region unique...we were forced to go back to the root of the heritage planning process and ask ourselves a very basic question: What is heritage? What makes Torbay a place with heritage worth exploring?

The obvious answer is that heritage is often understood to be about “stuff”. Specifically, “old stuff” : heritage buildings, historic documents, family heirlooms and so on... Fortunately, it doesn't stop there. Heritage is as much about

a sense of place as it is about actual physical things. Heritage can be defined by intangible aspects of a culture (like music and oral tradition) just as easily as the tangible buildings and material culture.

Heritage is as much about a sense of place as it is about actual physical things.

What makes asking the question “what is heritage?” at this precise moment in time so critical is because Torbay is in the process of planning a new town center. As such, it is at a moment of town renaissance -- important questions should be discussed. Concepts that



PHOTO: Arch Rock, once a local landscape attraction on the southside of Torbay, collapsed during the 1940s. See appendix for possible landscaping designs aimed at helping people make use of Torbay's beautiful outdoor public spaces and trails.

“ Placemaking is about the design of places, the experiences they make possible and the consequences they have in our lives. ” - Appleyard & Lyndon

have to do with town planning must be introduced, considered and explained. Placemaking, for example, is a term that began to be used in the 1970s by architects and planners to describe the process of creating squares, plazas, parks, streets and waterfronts that would attract people because they are pleasurable or interesting. Again, what is heritage? In Torbay, the challenge is to create a sense of place that will help render in visual terms what makes Torbay the perfect destination to explore that very question.

Philip Pratt (Architect, PHB Group Inc.) has begun the initial phase of designing such a place. His preliminary drawings for Torbay's new town center are included in the appendix of this report. Philip's designs will incorporate elements of Torbay's forgotten architecture. His ideas for Torbay's new town center include a group of buildings

beautiful in their simplicity and practicality but with a modern twist. Part of his overall approach to "placemaking," Philip's structures merge with the landscape while working to mirror the beauty of the surrounding physical coastline and hillside. Philip's buildings for the new town center will be carefully integrated in both form and proportion. Especially pertinent to this report, the museum will be found at the heart of the town center. Interviews with members of Torbay's heritage committee have indicated a high degree of interest in building the space with an eye to salvaged and



PHOTO: THCMAC

“ During the summer of 1870 the community of Torbay was to face a different type of catastrophe, in the form of a large forest fire, that eventually burned into all of the communities that now comprise the northeast Avalon region. This disaster caused untold damage and hardship for the residents of these communities. This was an era in our history where there was little regulation in the woods and forest fires throughout the Island were common. Often fires were attributed to individuals who ventured into the woods on trout and hunting excursions and, after “boiling up” did not properly extinguish their cook fires. During the period there was no firefighting equipment, nor were there organized fire departments – or, for that matter, fire insurance. While the community could always be counted on to help any individual family “find their feet” again after a house fire, forest fires threatened the whole community....There were not regulations designed to combat fires until 1905. ”

- The History of Torbay – by Bob Codner



PHOTO: Mayor Codner - Heritage Walk

re-purposed materials. Philip is interested in this, as well as making the town center a multi-purpose place; a beautiful hub that encourages people (of all ages) in Torbay to come together in collective activities.

As the new museum and the library can be located close to one another in the town center, the librarian can continue to

Heritage is whatever we value enough to preserve for future generations.

work in concert with the town's museum director. The library would be a natural partner for the archival sorting of all the oral history projects and any/all computer interactive media projects. The library could also serve as a natural place for genealogical searches – freeing up the museum director for other types of projects. A tea/coffee shop could also be located nearby and double as a

space for local arts/crafts to be displayed and sold. In the new town center, all these buildings would be nearby and the staff and volunteers would cross-pollinate quite easily.

Gerhard Weiland (Landscape Architect, Tract Consulting Inc.) has been designing all manner of outdoor landscaping options for the new town

center, potential look-outs and additional trail developments. Having assessed the four main heritage sites in Torbay we felt it necessary to propose a variety of designs that would relate and connect people to their broader surroundings while linking everything back to the town center. The idea of clustering the town's heritage activities, and funneling programming energies and resources through

the museum and the curator, is part of the landscaping design strategy as well.

Here are the four main goals of this Heritage Plan:

- 1** - To use heritage as a tool to foster a sense of place
- 2** - To involve as many Torbay residents as possible in this process. (This includes residents young and old! It includes Torbay's "founding families" and the more recent arrivals and new immigrants.)
- 3** - To develop spaces that allow for activities that take the form of interactive museum displays and outdoor public art installations – projects that get people talking positively and imaginatively about the community.
- 4** - To enable residents to produce projects that would encourage non-residents (tourists) to visit and spend time in Torbay.

These are ambitious goals and we knew from the start that if we wanted to achieve them, we would need to move beyond the standard approach of identifying a few "historically significant" sites and simply erecting explanatory panels on the side of a few churches and cemetery entranceways. We needed an approach that was different....something that was dynamic, engaging, and inclusive. So, let's pose the question again: What is heritage? Heritage is about memories, stories, beliefs, customs, traditions...any



PHOTO: Torbay Museum

element of "who we are" and "how we identify ourselves." Simply put, heritage is whatever

we value enough to preserve for future generations. Under this definition, heritage is not fixed. That is because, as a community grows and changes

traditions, beliefs, etc... Most importantly, heritage is a process – it's the way we decide what's important through personal reflection, shared

Heritage is a process – it's the way we decide what's important: personal reflection, shared discussions and debates....

(the demographics of its population, the economy that supports it, and the broader society that surrounds it) so do the values of its residents. Heritage is constantly evolving, never static and always the subject of reflection, discussion and debate.

In summary:

Heritage is the tangible stuff – things we can touch and hold. It is also the intangible stuff – things we preserve and share through our thoughts and actions: memories, stories,

discussions and debates. At this point in the planning process, we have determined:

WHAT we want to interpret:
heritage in the broadest sense: tangibles, intangibles and most of all the discussions that come out of the process of sharing ideas about the past

WHY we want to interpret it:
to foster a sense of place, engage community residents and create a buzz



“Historians are supposed to reach the past always through texts, occasionally through images; things that are safely caught in the bell jar of academic convention; look but don't touch...but one of my best loved teachers...had always insisted on directly experiencing 'a sense of place,' of using 'the archive of the feet.'”

– Simon Schama – LANDSCAPE AND MEMORY



PHOTO: THCMAC



PHOTO: Liddy's Restaurant; THCMAC

“...But enough remained to provide a sense of what in philosophical circles is called “place,” something to be distinguished from mere “space.” The world of place is the world of subjective human experience and significance... Space ordinarily comes first, developing aspects of a place with the onset of human habitation. A rock takes on significance by becoming the rock that took the bottom out of Gus’s boat. A tree takes on significance by becoming the one around which the children play. ” – PLACES LOST by Scott Walden

PHOTO: THCMAC



Our final step in the planning process is to figure out how we are going to do this – what kinds of interpretive media we will enlist and what theme or message we will use to communicate a given idea/story/

What is (s)Heritage?

message. Since our definition of heritage includes both “stuff” and “process” we needed a theme for Torbay that includes both. So, to make a long story short, after much discussion and debate, the theme we arrived at was (s)Heritage. What is (s)Heritage? At its most basic, (s)Heritage is a combination of the words “sharing” and

Sharing + Heritage = (s)Heritage

“heritage.” Yes it is a little corny, but it is also catchy. And best of all -- it is simple.

(s)Heritage is an idea that can be explained quite easily to a broad range of ages and one that everyone from the youngest school child to the most senior of citizens can understand.

On a deeper, philosophical level, (s)Heritage is: the antithesis of the grand narrative.

(s)Heritage is not an official timeline of the great moments in Torbay history. Nor is it a bunch of “experts” figuring out what is important about Torbay’s past. (s)Heritage is heritage on a personal scale.

We want to open up the process by asking every resident: what makes Torbay...Torbay? What are the places, memories,

stories, traditions, songs etc... that make the community special. Next, we want to develop

ways of sharing the answers we receive. We want to create places and programs that encourage residents to discuss and debate the past in a way that is meaningful and relevant to them. To do this, we have developed a two-pronged approach.



PHOTO: THCMAC

“ There is a path in Torbay cut through the woods which is still there today and which was caused by the fairies. They were so angry at one man that they caused a lightning bolt to strike the house, go down the chimney, out the other side and through his garden cutting a path right through the woods. ”
– Marcie Maura Madden (“The Fairies in St John’s and Surrounding Areas: A Functional Analysis” - MUNFLA)

Tool Kit

1 - THE MUSEUM

Within the new town center, the museum will provide a focus for the heritage development projects in Torbay. We envision a re-developed museum that becomes the (s)Heritage headquarters. This space would develop into the main hub for art and heritage programming in Torbay. It is a place where both tangible and intangible heritage can be collected, stored and shared. It is a place where residents can gather and it is a starting point for visitors (and tourists). Building on the strong foundations already in place

for gathering material and oral history in Torbay, the new museum (as a center for the innovative use of oral history and community art projects) would make Torbay a place where people would come to see the “real” Newfoundland. Therefore the museum becomes:

- A focus for heritage activities (a place where we can engage residents in the on-going story of their community)
- A repository for tangible and intangible heritage
- A starting point for outside visitors/tourists

Currently, there is only one seasonal employee to staff the museum. This must change in order to run a vibrant cultural center that would involve residents and host programs and displays that would be a tourist draw. Again, the town is at a moment of renaissance, and has shown enormous foresight by hiring an exceptional new curator (Contessa Small) with a back-ground in oral history (she is a Ph. D. candidate at MUN) and experience in theatre production. Extending the operating season of the museum/cultural center year-round would enable her to build and train a volunteer base involving residents in all variety of oral history and theatre programs. Entrenching the curator within the town's government by giving her a broader title would allow her to apply for a wide range of government grants for the center's programs (including

funding agencies like the Canada Council for the Arts and the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council (NLAC)). Contessa Small's qualifications and job description would also render Torbay eligible for grants from the Professional Festival's Program (PFP) and the Community Arts Program (CAP). Calling her the town's "Arts and Heritage Officer," or "Arts and Heritage Director" would allow her more versatility. The new curator, with her oral history/folklore gathering qualifications is a perfect fit and with the proper support

“ No visit to Torbay is complete without a visit to the Torbay Museum. The museum, in the municipality building, is a little different from most outport community museums, because it was constructed from ... doors and windows salvaged from the old St. Michael's Convent. ” - A Heritage Guide to Torbay (Robin McGrath).

she will be able to begin to train student volunteers and conduct oral history projects that will be instrumental in developing vibrant, constantly updated heritage projects.

In order for Torbay's new museum to become a center for innovative displays that focus on the region's oral tradition, the new museum's oral history programs would need to purchase the appropriate/ attendant oral-history-gathering equipment. Material would include; digital video camera, tripod, mic, mic stand, memory cards for video camera, digital camera and voice recorder, cassette recorder, dubbing equipment (to dub cassettes, microcassettes and VHS tapes to CD/DVD), a television, a computer for the purposes of

digitizing, and a video editing program. If the town library were also situated in the new town center, then there would

PHOTO: Torbay Museum (Before Remodel)





PHOTO: Torbay Museum, Curator, Maureen Power,
Developed Hands-on Interpretation Displays

“ Heritage/Cultural tourism may be the trend but I’m not in agreement that the way it’s done elsewhere is necessarily relevant to Torbay. In Torbay’s case...there is no existing built heritage to take advantage of...rebuilding structures like fishing premises with flakes is too much like other communities...can become a cliché of the culture it’s trying to interpret... Along with the obvious physical attraction of the landscape here, I’m more inclined to see oral history as a focus... There are so many different and engaging ways to do this for visitors and citizens alike. ”--- Laurie Dempster (Torbay Heritage Society Acting President)

be an easy connection between the museum and the library. Previous efforts by the museum curator to help people trace

people of Torbay the salvaged windows and doors from the old convent, in addition to many material culture objects from

The specific connection that the Torbay Museum has to the St. Michael’s Convent should be made clear.

their family’s genealogy could be placed back in the library, and oral history tapes and transcripts could be catalogued and stored in the library. Productive synergy would exist between these two town institutions and professionals.

While the fine points of the design of the museum will be created by the architect at a later date, it is clear that the specific connection that the Torbay Museum has to the St. Michael’s Convent should continue. Upon the demolition of the convent, the Presentation Sisters left the

within. The nuns, who taught in the nearby Holy Trinity School, were happy to donate the salvaged material to the town so that it might be re-purposed in the museum. The new museum should continue to incorporate their legacy, in any manner possible. In addition, the Torbay Heritage committee has done a great deal of research on small museums that also serve as cultural centers. The heritage committee members would like to see the new museum incorporate local stone and wood (wherever possible). Three of the committee’s favorite



Spertus Museum, Chicago



University of Michigan Museum of Art

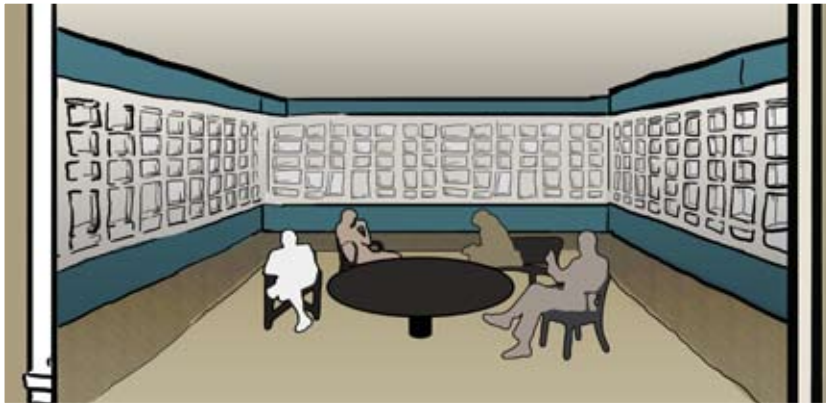
“

According to research by the Institute for Museum and Library Services, 43% of museum visits in 2006 were remote, predominantly via museum websites. This percentage is likely to rise, and the content of remote visits to museums will continue to shift from basic information gathering to more complicated forms of engagement. Museum and exhibit planners already confront questions about whether some aspects of the museum experience should be delivered entirely in digital format, if only to reach different audiences. These questions will not

go away. Digitizing collections and other assets is a relatively simple challenge compared to what's ahead...In an increasingly atomized and digitized world, people still have a core desire for human engagement and authenticity. Museums will be oases of the real in an increasingly virtual world. Along with the outdoors and places of worship, museums represent the best opportunities for getting away from it all.

”

Museums & Society 2034: Trends and Potential Futures. – Center for the Future of Museums



Museum Space Schematic: Open Storage with Programming Space

“dream” museums include: the Bruce County Museum and Archives (www.brucemuseum.ca), the Grey County Museum (www.greyroots.com), and the Shetland Museum (www.shetlandmuseum.org.uk).

The second feature of this

museum/cultural center space that we consider important, involves empanelling more of the current collection into a system of open storage. Traditionally, when parts of a museum’s collection are not on display, they are stored behind closed doors: only

to be accessed by staff and researchers. An open storage system safely stores the collection, but in a manner that can be viewed – giving all those interested – equal intellectual access. Each object could be then given a number and a computer database would allow

visitors to type in that number and call up all the information associated with that particular object. This could include, a photo, an audio component and/or video. This system of storage would be unique to the Torbay museum/cultural center because in addition to retrieving information, we want to encourage visitors to share any stories or insights they might have. For example, a tourist from Florida might see an object that he/she recognizes (like a kind of tool on display) and have a story to add to the virtual discussion about it. One thing is clear: lack of storage in the current museum (in the basement of Torbay’s Town Hall) is a huge issue that must be addressed creatively.

A key component of this new museum will be a permanent exhibit that highlights a rotating selection of objects from



Torbay's current collection, accompanied by community generated content. Building on the (s)Heritage theme, we want to ask residents: what objects

significant events in the history of the community. Others might be very personal. Some might be sad. Others might be hysterically funny. Individually,

Torbay's very own heritage Wikipedia.

do they connect with in the current collection? What stories and memories do they associate with those objects? Some of the exhibits/stories might describe

each voice shares a story, but presented together, they begin to provide a picture of life in Torbay, both past and present. It should be a place where

residents gather and people feel immediately welcome.

- The exhibit would be focused on more lively inclusive process and less on final "product."
- The content would be community generated: their ideas, stories, songs, photos, art...
- The objects drawn into the main display are meant to serve as triggers for resident

memories and stories (and treated less like antique road-show untouchables.)

- The displays are constantly being changed – giving people reason to come to the museum over and over again.

What makes small local museums so extraordinary is the spirit of regional pride and local voluntarism that generally brings the museums into



PHOTOS: The Pirate Store, 812 Valencia Blvd, San Francisco

existence. Members of the Torbay community have been donating antiques and family heirlooms to the town museum for several decades now. Developing and designing a space that allows local visitors to see their contributions displayed fits better with the democratic spirit that the objects embody. It increases visual and intellectual access to the collection and encourages further visitor contributions. What makes

this system different from open storage networks in other museums is that in addition to retrieving information, we also want to encourage visitors to share any additional information or insights they might have by entering their thoughts into a computer database. A computer kiosk could allow for visitors to leave, not just their general impressions of the exhibit (like a museum guestbook), but also add their own stories and

questions about various displays or photographs. Think of it as Torbay's very own heritage Wikipedia.

Along with our concept of open storage, we also imagine a vibrant, active programming space that forms the core of the re-developed museum. Like open storage, we believe this space should not be hidden behind closed doors, but be physically located in the heart

of the exhibit area. We imagine an open space that encourages visitors to step in and get involved, or simply sit down and watch what is going on. Like the series of images provided of an award-winning creative writing space developed for the children of San Francisco, the new Torbay cultural center would be welcoming and fueled by the creative programs by/for local residents. In the "Pirate Store"



PHOTO: Oral History Memory Pods: The Newest Form of Museum Interpretation

in San Francisco, the children's creative writing projects are actually sold in the small adjacent store. The walls of the space have drawers and curiosity cabinets that visitors are encouraged to reach in and touch. There is even a fish tank that serves as a constant source of fun and the fish inside have been named and are often featured in the children's stories! Unlike the "pirate store" that exists in Charlottetown, PEI - where only tourists would think to venture - to buy touristy knick knacks, the pirate store in San Francisco is focussed on the needs of the local population. All ideas for merchandise, like designs for t-shirts and jars of "scurvy medicine" are spun creatively from the programs within the center. Importantly, material is cleverly created and produced locally.

Programming Space:

- Central component of the museum
- Design should encourage observation and participation
- Vibrant, active, social space
- On-going programming
- Facilitate the sharing of local stories & memories
- Encourage community involvement in (and ownership of) heritage projects

An on-going calendar of programs and events will facilitate the sharing of local stories, memories and traditions, and encourage residents to get involved and take ownership of their heritage.

“ GRACE FOLLET (born 1914) : Oh my dear... changes...even to look at the houses...years ago there was no such thing as front yards...your front yard was a place where you planted your vegetables...it was called kitchen yards and the women of the house would grow vegetables and cabbages ... while the men fished...we had quite a job to come to town...there were no stores and such in Torbay...and I remember when we had to get out ... there was a time when...there was no such thing as cars. I can remember the first car...that came down the south side... ”

PHOTO: Local Projects (Story Corps.)



“ JAKE BRADBURY: There were no beer parlours...no clubs of any kind. In the evenings then we'd go up around the road...probably walk down as far as FlatRock...down to the south side down to the north side...down to Gosse's store. ”

“ TERRY SANFORD: Every single tree outside we planted – you could look right from this house clear up to the school... you see that school? The front part was built by volunteers... ”

2 - MEMORY PODS

Cell phones are being used more and more in efforts to reveal and relay the specific stories found in a region. Projects that allow visitors to use their cell phones -- to hear creative stories or songs -- are at the cutting edge of outdoor trail interpretation. For example, Kensington Market in Toronto, along the Main (Rue St. Laurent) in Montreal and on Water Street in St. John's, visitors can find small signs that provide numbers to call. We have dubbed this kind of signage "memory pods." They can be placed along a trail, or on a building...even on a gate or a monument! In St. John's, a story map was created that features personal stories at specific locations – the signs for this project are on 26 light poles. By calling the number, a pedestrian can hear a story about the place where they

are standing. The stories can be constantly changed and updated. Visitors get to hear what residents have to say or sing – in their own voices. Out and about the Torbay community, in addition to the landscaping/infrastructure/beautification possibilities introduced in the appendix of this report, we are strongly advocating that Torbay make use of its already extraordinary archive of oral history and combine it with conceptual art generated from within the museum programming space. For example: A replica of a "memento" could be placed at a specific location along the Father Troy trail - along with an oral history snippet that relays an event that took place at that precise spot. Outside of the Torbay museum, we imagine an endless, renewable system of memory pods – small scale, intimate installations that anchor a personal story or

memory to a specific location in the community's landscape. Use of these oral history/memory pods would place Torbay at the forefront of self-styled community heritage interpretation. There are many ways that activities developed in the programming space of the museum can be displayed creatively and unobtrusively in Torbay's outdoor public spaces. To summarize:

- Continue the museum

An Extraordinary archive of oral history...

exhibits into the landscape and encourage people to explore the outdoor trails and public spaces

- Small scale, intimate installations
- A personal or community memory is anchored to a specific location

- Include a variety of media options: replica mementos, audio pods, digital projections etc.
- Visual cues to identify sites e.g. representative use of a colour, font or symbol

As a specific example, in 1999 the Newfoundland Museum hosted an exhibit entitled "The Stuff We're Made Of." The team of museum curators and interpreters posed a question:

How can Newfoundland and Labrador culture be defined?

The end result was an exhibit that displayed 50 objects selected by anyone interested enough to vote by mail, fax, phone and email. A central question was posed: "If you had to describe who and what Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are, using objects

instead of words, what objects would you choose?" The result was an exhibit that accepted a wide range of objects and promoted discussion and even laughter. People talked about the question in classrooms and in grocery line-ups! Someone even submitted a group of linked sausages to the curators with the suggestion that the people of the province were feeling processed and squeezed but still "linked together." This type of project is a great example of an exhibit that is run to be inclusive of many vantage points while also being experimental.

Museums all over the world are taking this new type of inclusive/democratic approach. The Museum of Croyton is another excellent example (www.museumofcroydon.com). This museum's website encourages people to submit their ideas via the internet. Its



PHOTO: THCMAC



mandate is “built on the memories and stories of the local people.” The website has a “your story” section where the people of Croydon are encouraged to send in their pictures and stories. The following question was presented on the website:

“Whatever the Weather?': we are particularly interested in hearing about your stories and memories of weather in Croydon. Anyone can use storyteller to send us a story. Got a story to tell? Start writing!”

Submissions to the Museum of Croydon's website are currently

grouped into themes by the curator. Photos of objects as varied as a shoe mending tool c.1910 -- to a sports bag and blanket c.1990 -- were all submitted because of the interesting story that accompanied each one. These types of exhibits prize interactivity and insist on a plurality of voices. The exhibits serve as conversation starters – rather than static presentations of “fact.”

A final example can be drawn from the international design firm “Local Projects” (www.localprojects.net). This award-winning firm was selected to design the exhibit for the World Trade Center Memorial Museum. With a focus on creating spaces where community dialogue can take place, their most famous projects involve creating

public places where people are encouraged to leave their “stories” and impressions. One project entitled “memory maps” involved posting huge subway maps along a fence -- where people were encouraged to leave small stories pinned to the places on the map where they had occurred. Another, was entitled “StoryCorps” and involved a booth where people

These types of exhibits prize interactivity and insist on a plurality of voices.

could enter and leave a narrative of personal history which would then be archived in the Library of Congress. The possibilities are endless.

Memory pods can be paired with all types of public art installations. Some public art pieces can be playful, others can take a much more serious tone. The photo included (on the following page in this

report) of the shoes placed along the bank of the Danube River in Hungary are actually a memorial to victims of the Holocaust. *The Shoes on the Danube Promenade*, created by Gyula Pauer and Can Togay, was created in memory of Jews who were shot by Arrow Cross militiamen in 1944-45. The memorial depicts their shoes left behind on the bank when

they fell into the river. These days people stop, watch, some take photos others light candles or leave flowers. The sculptor created sixty pairs of period-appropriate shoes out of iron.

The work of Santa Fe blacksmith Tom Joyce is another great example. Joyce created a baptismal font for the Santa Maria de la Paz Catholic community church from iron objects donated



PHOTO: Memorial - Budapest, Hungary



PHOTO: Memorial - Giby, Poland



PHOTO: Jericho Park Beach, Vancouver B.C.

“ As an NBC (Newfoundlander By Choice) I am passionate about Torbay, especially the coastline and natural beauty. Because we live on a Rock, the use of the large rocks (that I see in my travels around the community) is so natural and practical. We don't have to buy, build or paint them. We just have to transplant them around the town for places to sit- tables to have lunch on and take in the beautiful view. They are virtually indestructible as far as vandalism goes. ”

--- Lynda Lalonde (Torbay Heritage Society Member)

by community members. Forged like a quilt, babies would then figuratively, be baptized in the ancestry of the community. For another community art project, Joyce built a gate for the Albuquerque Museum of Art -- made from metals taken from a beach clean-up (1/4 mile stretch). Car springs and metal drums all found along the Rio Grande by volunteers were folded beautifully into the gate designed for the museum.

Public art installations do not need to be commissioned by artists, but can come from carefully thought out and inexpensive ideas using local materials. Jericho Park, is one of Vancouver's most memorable beaches. Using a simple repetition of form, the landscaping is conceptual and ecological at the same time! Similarly, the field of rocks in Giby, Poland, draw a similar sense of awe and curiosity. In Giby,

hundreds of boulders are clustered together on a hillside to suggest a battleground or a congregation. Historian Simon Schama writes:

"Halfway to the top we could read script on a small notice pinned to the cross telling us that in early 1945, here, at Giby, hundreds of men and women accused of supporting the Polish Home Army were taken to their death by... Stalin's security police. The little hill had been given a fresh crown of yellow sand on which rested roughhewn slabs of polished granite. The stones were engraved with perhaps five hundred names, listed alphabetically from A to Z. A single stone, at a remove from the rest lay on its side amidst the boulders, declaring 'they died because they were Poles.'" (Schama, Landscape and Memory, 1995).

The formation of rocks in Giby is not complicated and on some level is actually quite gentle and inconspicuous -- but the memorial holds tremendous visual power. It reveals the invisible story in a manner that creates a sense of place. As a public art installation, it allows the viewer imaginative

space; a powerful way to share a complicated heritage.

Conclusion:

The suggestions found in this report take the form of a developed strategy for a project of cultural sharing that works to bring together the old and new members of a growing community of people that live in Torbay. The heritage strategy (at this stage) will serve as a guide with respect to all future interconnected heritage displays and activities. This intervention is a long-term strategic system of recommendations that offers carefully considered examples of the most cutting-edge public art installations in the world - twinned with carefully aligned cultural plans for the development of a multi-dimensional community-run museum and new, welcoming, collective programming space.

Appendices

Town Centre Concept Drawings

The following concept drawings describe the Heritage Plan's "placemaking strategy" in visual terms. Philip Pratt's vision for the town as "focal point" speaks directly to the results of Torbay's Recreation Master Plan (2009). The town center here proposed, utilizes vacant land in a dramatic setting and not only creates this focal point, but also incorporates the facilities identified in the Recreation Plan. The need for more community buildings, paired with possible potential commercial outlets, will enable a critical mass of uses. The close proximity of the buildings will allow for sheltered links and facilitate the sharing of resources and facilities. A celebration of Torbay's rich history, the buildings together make it an exciting and vibrant place. A big emphasis is placed on locating public spaces in a center core with great views and easy access to outside spaces. The concept accommodates a collection of related structures including a full sized gym, swimming pool, multipurpose rooms, a library and a museum. Building the town center into the hillside, the architectural style will support Torbay's traditions without trying to imitate old buildings. The architectural design works with traditional scattered settler building patterns in form and texture while ensuring the benefit of contemporary structures and amenities. The following town center maps and concept drawings have also been printed in large format and folded into a sleeve in the report to facilitate locating the individual landscaped sites on the map while providing a better bird's eye view visualization of the whole network.

The Proposed Town Center - A Placemaking Strategy For Torbay

Full Scale Drawings are available in the Following appendices.

Legend:

- ① Existing War Memorial
- ② Post Office
- ③ St. Nicholas Church
- ④ Rest Area
- ⑤ Liddy's Tavern
- ⑥ Roadside Rest Area
- ⑦ Community Hall
- ⑧ Rest Area
- ⑨ Codner House
- ⑩ Cemetery
- ⑪ Parking
- ⑫ Reconstructed Bridge
- ⑬ Relocated War Memorial
- ⑭ Lookout
- ⑮ Medical Centre
- ⑯ Secondary Cemetery Entrance
- ⑰ Prayer Garden
- ⑱ Cemetery
- ⑲ Enhanced Cemetery Entrance
- ⑳ Holy Trinity School
- ㉑ Entry Road





Torbay's New Town Center (Close-Up)

Full Scale Drawings are available in the
Following appendices.

Legend:

- ① Stage
- ② Festival Area and Amphitheatre
- ③ Library/Coffee Shop
- ④ Future Municipal Building
- ⑤ Promenade
- ⑥ Promenade
- ⑦ Museum
- ⑧ Community Recreation Centre (gym and pool)
- ⑨ Future Building (Residential or Commercial)
- ⑩ Future Building (Residential or Commercial)
- ⑪ Public Square
- ⑫ Cemetery
- ⑬ Gateway Feature
- ⑭ New Entry Road
- ⑮ Existing Municipal Building
- ⑯ Bank
- ⑰ Plaza

Torbay's Town Center - Hillside Public Festival Space



Landscape Concept Drawings

Early on in the heritage planning assessment of Torbay, four sites were identified as being of potential interest to tourists. Gerhard Weiland has designed a number of options that would serve to identify, beautify and draw further attention to several of these sites.

Trail Connecting Some of The Proposed Landscape Options



PHOTO: The St.Nicholas Church Cemetery look-out (with trail linkages) to the Old St. Nicholas Anglican Cemetery.

Introduction

Northside Torbay youth used to consider the old wooden bridge their territory...

But gradually, the bridge in Torbay became a popular gathering space where anyone in the community could join friends and enjoy some free time. The landscape feature draws inspiration from an old wooden bridge (c1845) that connected the North and South sides of Torbay. Long before the age of radio or TV, Torbay's old wooden bridge was a cherished haunt for both Protestant and Catholic youth. For almost a hundred years young people assembled on the wooden deck boards, with the stream rushing underside. Something about the place made sense...local oral history has it that on a nice evening, if you were within short distance of the bridge, you would hear the musical strains from mouth organs, the voices of animated story tellers, even people dancing! The bridge became a natural breathing spot for people to gather in public - much to the disquiet of the local constable. If you share a story or a laugh on this bridge you are connecting to a generous past of shared lively cultural exchange. If you are inspired to sing and dance on the bridge - just don't fall off!

The Footbridge



12

Reference Map
on page 47 for
location

The footbridge. The bridge is here re-furbished and redesigned as an example of heritage-inspired landscaping that Torbay might consider. An interpretation panel could also have a “memory pod” oral-history component; one phone call could produce the sounds of someone playing a jaw harp or provide an oral history snippet with someone recalling an incident at the old bridge etc...

Close-up of The Foot-Bridge with Parking Space



Torbay's National Historic Site Monument



13

Reference Map
on page 47 for
location

The Monument (which serves to remind us of the end of the Seven Years War and can be laced into a celebration of its 250-year anniversary in 2012) would be moved down to the beach-front where hundreds of British soldiers once landed. In addition to moving the monument, as per Mayor Codner's suggestion, a trail with historic roots would lead directly down to the beach from the town center.

St. Nicholas Church Look-out



3

Reference Map
on page 47 for
location

Mailbox Look-out



6

Reference Map
on page 47 for
location

Mailbox look-out. Areas that might be overlooked as “boring” can serve as relaxing look-out spots for local residents. As you collect your mail take a moment and enjoy the view...

Torbay Beach



14

Reference Map
on page 47 for
location

Fishing Flakes-inspired look-out. This lookout could house an interpretation panel or oral history memory pod that would serve to enliven the history of dray-fishing on the Torbay Beach.

The Old Holy Trinity Parish Cemetery



19

Reference Map
on page 47 for
location

The old Holy Trinity Parish Cemetery (sidewalks and façade improvement). Students could be enlisted to give tours of the cemeteries in Torbay.

Survey Results

Over 90% of those surveyed thought preserving heritage was important. Almost 80% of those surveyed expressed that they did not know very much about Torbay's heritage. 64% surveyed said they had visited the museum and came because they liked the exhibits.

Question 6.

	Response Frequency	Response Count
HOW IMPORTANT IS PRESERVING AND PROMOTING TORBAY'S CHARACTER AND HERITAGE AS PART OF THE PLANNING PROCESS?		
Very important	55.8%	120
Somewhat important	35.3%	76
Less important	7.4%	16
Not important	1.4%	3
answered question		215
skipped question		28

Question 7.

Answer Options

	1	2	3	Response Count
WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF TORBAY'S HERITAGE?				
Military (Col. Amherst's Landing)	20	16	20	56
Agricultural history	13	21	13	47
Fishing history	53	35	32	120
Family history	46	27	28	101
Religious history	8	13	16	37
Historic houses	10	31	24	65
Historic footpaths	58	29	28	115
None – don't know about Torbay's heritage ..	23	3	3	29
Other (please specify)	-	-	-	4
answered question	211			
skipped question	32			

Question 8.

	Response %	Response Count
HAVE YOU EVER VISITED THE TORBAY MUSEUM?		
Yes	64.2%	138
No	35.8%	77
answered question		215
skipped question		28

Question 9.

	Response %	Response Count
I HAVE VISITED THE TORBAY MUSEUM BECAUSE:		
There was an event that interested me	22.0%	27
I enjoy talking to people there	14.6%	18
I brought friends/family who were visiting..	26.0%	32
I enjoy the exhibits	64.2%	79
Other (please specify)	—	19
answered question		123
skipped question		120

