



Intangible Cultural Heritage Office  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Foundation Compiling List of Bonfire Night Celebrations Across the Province**

From the woodstove in the kitchen, to the St. John's Fire of 1892, to the annual lighting of bonfires on November 5<sup>th</sup>, fire has a firm place in the heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador.

As part of a plan to explore that history, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador is compiling a list of community events surrounding one of the province's most colourful holidays. The list is part of a new festival celebrating fire and fire traditions in the province.

"We are collecting a list of communities that are holding official Bonfire Night events," explains Dale Jarvis, the intangible cultural heritage development officer for the province. "We want to know what events are planned for Bonfire Night in communities all across Newfoundland and Labrador."

Bonfire Night, traditionally held on or near November 5<sup>th</sup>, is a tradition that has seen a decline in recent years, in part due to worries about illegal fires. "There is an increasing concern about the decrease in Bonfire Night participation in the province," says Jarvis. "We would hate to see the tradition vanish, so we are looking to promote those communities who celebrate the holiday in a safe fashion."

What can be done to preserve this tradition?

The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (HFNL) was established in 1984 to preserve the architectural heritage of the province. Since 2008, HFNL has been working to safeguard and sustain the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador for present and future. The list of bonfire night celebrations is just one part of the foundation's new Festival on Fire, to take place at the end of October and beginning of November.

Many residents of Newfoundland and Labrador associate their earliest fire memories with Bonfire night. Other fire related traditions of interest to the foundation include things like blacksmithing, candle making, boil-ups, cooking and baking traditions, and the oral histories of volunteer and professional fire fighters.

“We will be planning a series of events around these traditions,” says Jarvis. “But to start, we want communities to contact us about any Bonfire Night events they already have planned.”

In coordination with this, HFNL hopes to collect local memories and stories about Bonfire Night and fire-related traditions.

Any persons who have interesting stories or memories associated with Bonfire Night in Newfoundland and Labrador are encouraged to contact the foundation’s office through their website [www.festivalonfire.ca](http://www.festivalonfire.ca) or to call Melissa Squarey at 1-888-739-1892 ext3.

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Communities wishing to register their Bonfire Night events, or individuals with memories to share about the tradition should contact the Heritage Foundation by **Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010:**

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