

Building Resilient Coastal Communities Through Social Enterprises

Marie Louise Aastrup, Joan Cranston, and Natalie Slawinski

Community Scholars
Sept - Nov 2021



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Harris Centre Community Scholar
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Norris Point, NL

Canada

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Table of Contents

Project at a Glance.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Community Partnership.....	5
Host Organization: The Old Cottage Hospital	6
Community Events & Activities	7
Reflections on Community Research Partnerships	9
Appendix A: PLACE Dialogues in Norris Point.....	10



Project at a Glance

Local communities are essential to human wellbeing as they provide a sense of place and belonging. Coastal rural Newfoundland and Labrador faces an array of challenges spanning from the impact of climate change over food insecurity to changing demographics and urbanization. Place-based social enterprises have the unique potential to overcome some of these challenges and provide opportunities to revitalize communities. As such, place-based social enterprises are vehicles for the development of sustainable communities. Social enterprises not only strengthen communities but provide local solutions to (global) challenges. One such community-based social enterprise is the Old Cottage Hospital in Norris Point. With a love for and commitment to place, the Old Cottage Hospital has become a community hub of initiatives that revitalize the community and celebrate Newfoundland and Labrador's history and culture. Among the Old Cottage Hospital's many initiatives is a commitment to develop strong bonds with community-based researchers. Building positive, long-lasting relationships with community leaders and entrepreneurs is key to this project.

Developing long-standing relationships with place-based social enterprises across the province is what led our team to develop the PLACE Framework. The PLACE Framework captures revitalization efforts among social enterprises in Newfoundland and Labrador, through five distinct strategies: P: Promote community leaders; L: Link divergent perspectives; A: Amplify local capacities; C: Convey compelling stories; and E: Engage both/and thinking. Based on the PLACE Framework, we have, alongside our research partners and advisory committee been delivering a series of workshops titled the PLACE Dialogues. The PLACE Dialogues are designed to directly contribute to sustainable rural development through knowledge sharing and network building. The first dialogue took place on Fogo Island in 2018. This year, the Old Cottage Hospital hosted the fifth PLACE Dialogue (Oct. 13–15, 2022) to bring community leaders, entrepreneurs, policy makers and academics together from across the province to discuss how social enterprises can revitalize rural communities.



Introduction

Local communities are essential to human wellbeing as they provide a sense of place and belonging. However, coastal rural Newfoundland and Labrador faces an array of challenges spanning from the impact of climate change over food insecurity to changing demographics and urbanization. Place-based social enterprises have the unique potential to overcome some of these challenges and provide opportunities to revitalize communities. As such, place-based social enterprises are vehicles for the development of sustainable communities. Such enterprises not only strengthen communities but provide local solutions to (global) challenges.

Central to the social enterprises included in our research is a love for and commitment to place which is translated into initiatives to revitalize rural communities and celebrate Newfoundland and Labrador's history and culture. Building positive, long-lasting relationships with community leaders and entrepreneurs is key to our research team's approach and central to the success of our research. It is a shared love for Newfoundland and Labrador and a strong connection to place that drive our research partners to establish successful social enterprises across the province. Spending time with our research partners in their communities is essential for building strong ties to both the enterprises and the people living in the communities.

Community Partnership

We have a long-standing partnership with the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation (BBCHHC or the "Old Cottage Hospital") in Norris Point. The Old Cottage Hospital is a research partner on the Ocean Frontiers Institute funded research project "Building resilient coastal communities through social and community enterprise", which is part of the Future Ocean and Coastal Infrastructures. The Old Cottage Hospital was also a sponsor and the host of this year's PLACE Dialogues - a series of workshops focused on place-based social enterprises that bring community leaders, entrepreneurs, policy makers and academics together from across the province to discuss how social enterprises can revitalize rural communities. Joan Cranston, the coordinator for the Old Cottage Hospital, was a co-lead of the workshop and a key member of our planning team. Joan also serves on our advisory committee. The Old Cottage Hospital is also one of our six case studies on place-based social enterprises in coastal rural Newfoundland and Labrador.



Host Organization: The Old Cottage Hospital

The Old Cottage Hospital is an historic building that has served the Bonne Bay area since 1938. The heritage building had been the anchor of health and wellness in the Bonne Bay area for over 60 years. In anticipation of the building's 2001 closure, Joan Cranston and a team of community leaders formed the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation (the Old Cottage Hospital) to take on the challenge of preserving and repurposing the Old Cottage Hospital.



Also known as the Julia Ann Walsh Centre, the Old Cottage Hospital's mission is to preserve local culture and heritage, promote health and wellness, and foster local economic and social development.

Today, the Old Cottage Hospital has become a social enterprise hub hosting a diverse array of tenants and programs including:

- The Old Cottage Hostel
- The Norris Point Public Library
- Community Kitchen, Gardens, and Greenhouse Program
- Wellness Center
- Health practitioners
- Home Care Office
- Childcare options
- A studio to host conferences, meetings etc.
- The Voice of Bonne Bay (VOBB) community radio station
- The Cottage Hospital Museum Room
- The Cottage Concerts Series
- Trails, Tales, Tunes Festival
- Other tenants include: Bonne Bay Ground Search and Rescue Avalanche Canada
Atlantic Healthy Oceans Initiative

Learn more about the Old Cottage Hospital here: <https://oldcottagehospital.com>



Community Events & Activities

During the community scholar placement, we co-hosted several events. These include:

- **The PLACE Dialogues (Oct. 13 – 15):**
 - Based on the PLACE Framework, we have, alongside our research partners and advisory committee been delivering a series of workshops titled the PLACE Dialogues. The PLACE Dialogues are designed to directly contribute to sustainable rural development through knowledge sharing and network building. The first dialogue took place on Fogo Island in 2018. This year, we are hosted the fifth PLACE Dialogue at the Old Cottage Hospital in Norris Point (Oct. 14–15) to bring community leaders, entrepreneurs, policy makers and academics together from across the province to discuss how social enterprises can revitalize rural communities. The event is based on the The PLACE Framework (Figure 1). This framework captures revitalization efforts among social enterprises in Newfoundland and Labrador, through five distinct strategies: P: Promote community leaders; L: Link divergent perspectives; A: Amplify local capacities; C: Convey compelling stories; and E: Engage both/and thinking. Our team has conducted research with Shorefast (Fogo Island), Fishing for Success (Petty Harbour), St. Anthony Basin Resources Inc. (St. Anthony), Bonavista Historic Townscape Foundation (Bonavista), Placentia West Development Association (Burin Peninsula), and the Old Cottage Hospital (Norris Point). See appendix A for the post-conference package.



Figure 1 The PLACE Framework



- **Old Cottage Hospital Stakeholder Meeting (Oc. 28):**

- We hosted a meeting with stakeholders associated with the Old Cottage Hospital. This meeting was an opportunity to meet with the larger research partner community and get an in-depth understand of the Old Cottage Hospital ecosystem, the various actors involved, and the projected plans for the social enterprise.

- **Old Cottage Hospital: Future of Childcare in Norris Point (Oct. 29):**

- We hosted a meeting where we invited parents living in the area. This meeting was intended to understand parents' needs in terms of childcare and strategize about how the Old Cottage Hospital can provide childcare services in the future. The Old Cottage Hospital is currently hosting a private daycare but intend to expand with an affordable and reliable daycare. This project is a key part of the projected plans for the Old Cottage Hospital and its social mission.

- **Mindful Monday Community Health Retreat (Nov. 7):**

- We hosted an afternoon retreat for residents in the area on November 7th. This retreat included a yin yoga session led by a local yoga teacher and health practitioner, followed by a silent meditation, a walk to Wild Cove beach, and a print making workshop where participants had the opportunity to create a print of the Old Cottage Hospital. Following a day of activities, we shared a healthy meal prepared with local ingredients and by a local caterer. This retreat was an opportunity to connect people and provide active living opportunities for residents.



Reflections on Community Research Partnerships

Partnerships between communities and researchers can be beneficial both for the researchers and for communities. Building relationships between academic researchers and community partners take time. It requires that the researchers invest time and effort in the communities and accept that the realities of community building take prevalence over academic outcomes and timelines. This is understandable. After all, community partners (at least in the case of the Old Cottage Hospital) *volunteer* their time and in many ways, dedicate their lives to their community (often outside of their day jobs). This means that grants funding community activities are often conceptualized, written, and, if funded, carried out as volunteer efforts. Needless to say, these are time consuming undertakings. Being able to stay with community partners for a longer period of time, provides opportunities for researchers to understand how community-based initiatives like the Old Cottage Hospital, are organized and run.

Our research team works closely with community partners. The PLACE Framework was developed as a result of longstanding relationships with community partners. The PLACE Framework is a meaningful abbreviation that can guide place-based social enterprises' activities. It's not meant as an exhausted list of "everything a social enterprise needs to do to be successful", but rather a framework that can guide practitioners in their pursuits. Spending time at the Old Cottage Hospital has benefitted our research team as we have had an opportunity to see how the framework is used to guide not only the life of a social enterprises in rural coastal communities in Newfoundland and Labrador, but also the birth of a new social enterprise initiative in Port au Choix, where the Old Cottage Hospital is establishing a sister organization.

In conversation with our community partners, we observed some barriers for strengthening the ties between Memorial University and community partners. These are primarily related to administrative burdens put on research partners. Volunteer research partners do not necessarily have the infrastructure to support Memorial University's administrative requirements (e.g., requiring a VISA receipt as proof of payment). We suggest lowering the administrative barriers to ensure that we do not put unnecessary workloads on community partners.



Appendix A: PLACE Dialogues in Norris Point



MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY'S CENTRE FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
& THE OLD COTTAGE HOSPITAL PRESENT

2022 PLACE DIALOGUES

OCTOBER 13-15, 2022
NORRIS POINT,
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

PLACE-BASED SOLUTIONS IN A CHALLENGED WORLD:
THE ROLE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES AND COMMUNITIES

Photo credit: Joanie Cranston

Photo credit: Bernice Hillier



On October 13 – 15, 2022, 40 community champions, ecosystem partners, and researchers gathered at the Old Cottage Hospital and Lions Club in Norris Point to find solutions for building stronger communities.

THE PARTICIPANTS

Ario Seto, Memorial University

Bernice Hillier, CBC

Charlie Caldwell, Shorefast

Chris Paterson, Harris Centre MUN

Christopher Mitchelmore, St. Anthony Basin Resources Inc

Colleen Hiscock, Java Jack's

David Lank, The Cape

Diane Hodge-Burt, CBDC Trinity Conception Corporation

Emily Bland, SucSeed

Garrett Melee, TaskForce NL

Gary Wilton, Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corp

Ivan Emke, Kitchen Table Communications

Ivan J White, Abadak

Jennifer Charles, Wild Cove Wellness

Joan Cranston, Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corp

Jodie Ashini, Cultural Guardian of the Innu Nation

Joshua Smee, Food First NL

Joyce Reesor, Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corp

Kelly Vodden, Memorial University

Ken Kavanagh, Bell Island Community Development Co-operative

Kimberly Orren, Fishing for Success

Kristen Murray, NL Federation of Co-ops

Laurie Haycock, Gros Morne Farm & Market

Lynn Way, Department of Industry, Energy and Technology

MacKenzie Young, Ocean Frontier Institute

Marie Louise Aastrup, Memorial University

Melissa Wheeler, Department of Industry, Energy and Technology

Natalie Slawinski, University of Victoria & Memorial University

Oana Branzei, Ivey Business School

Pamela Gill, Memorial University

Patrica Hewitt, Bonavista Historic Townscape Foundation

Rachel Atkins, Atkins Consulting

Renee Pilgrim, GNP Health & Wellness

Rob Greenwood, Harris Centre MUN

Sam Follett, The Cape

Sarah Croft, MUN Centre for Social Enterprise

Shirley Montague, Trails Tales Tunes Festival

Susan Cull, Shorefast

THE PARTICIPANTS

We had participants from across the province:

- 1 from Labrador
- 2 from eastern Newfoundland
- 3 from central Newfoundland
- 4 from the Great Northern Peninsula
- 8 from western Newfoundland
- 16 from the Avalon Peninsula
- 4 joined from out of province

And from various sectors:

- 12 represented social enterprises
- 10 represented academia
- 6 represented non-profits
- 5 represented business
- 2 represented community
- 2 represented media
- 1 represented government

ETUAPTUMUK

At the Dialogues, we aimed to practice Etuaptmumk, which means “two-eyed seeing” in Mi’kmaw.

Etuaptmumk is knowledge coexistence for the benefit of all people.

To practice it we all have to see that our knowledge can overlap but remains distinct. We do not throw away or relinquish if we can find good, we keep all the good for the mutual benefit of all.

Etuaptmumk is a philosophical concept, not a research method, that guides Indigenous and non-Indigenous people working together to ask if their **respect for other perspectives is stronger than their reliance on their own viewpoint.**

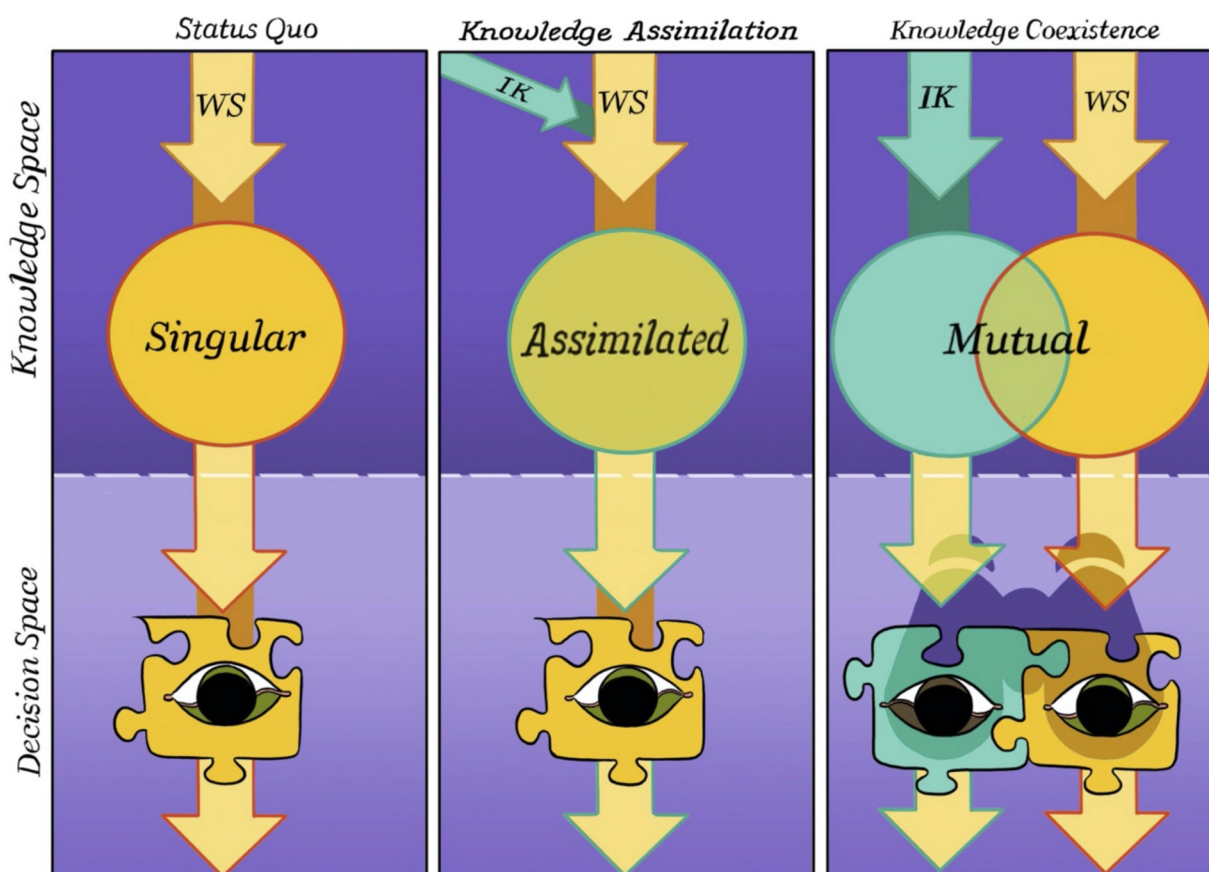


Image Source: Reid, AJ, Eckert, LE, Lane, J-F, et al. “Two-Eyed Seeing”: An Indigenous framework to transform fisheries research and management. *Fish Fish*. 2021; 22: 243– 261. <https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12516>

Text: Ivan J White (with full and respectful credit to Elder Albert Marshall for conceptualizing and honoring us with the gift of Etuaptmumk)

Learn: <https://maw-lukutinej.buzzsprout.com/> <https://coastalroutes.org/coastal-connections>

ACTIVITIES

WHAT DO PLACE-BASED INNOVATIONS LOOK LIKE FOR YOUR REGION?

Participants joined regional groups to develop innovative blueprints for their region.

The innovations were focused on the following sectors:

- **Green Tech** – Integrating communities, food provision, & business
- **Retirement hub** – Responding to senior housing needs incl. culture, nature, & health care
- **Transportation** – improving connectivity across the province with green infrastructure
- **Tourism** – Focusing on agritourism, festivals, & food

ACTIVITIES

Participants had an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the PLACE Framework by walking around Norris Point, **exploring the P-L-A-C-E of Norris Point.**

Participants were divided into groups based on region (Avalon, Fogo & Bonavista, Western, Great Northern Peninsula & Labrador, and a pan-provincial group).



A large orange letter 'P' is positioned on the left side of the page. The background is a photograph of a sunset over a range of hills, with a utility pole and power lines visible on the right side.

P

Promoting community leaders means increasing the capacity of community members who are (becoming) champions of their place.

Participants noted that community champions could come from various groups:

- Health
- Business owners / entrepreneurs
- Town council
- NGOs
- Politicians
- Service industry
- Inter-regional groups:
 - Young people / young families
 - Youth groups / schools

Photo credit: Marie Louise Astrup

PROMOTE COMMUNITY
LEADERS

A sunset over a body of water with mountains in the background. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with some clouds. The water is dark, and the mountains are silhouetted against the sky. There are some power lines and a street light visible on the right side of the image.

P

Promoting community leaders means increasing the capacity of community members who are (becoming) champions of their place.

"The more I learned about what social enterprise is, the more I actually feel that I embodied social enterprise. I actually live it in my life in my day-to-day experience. It's who I want to be as an individual and how I want to be in growing, maintaining, and future-proofing our communities. This has been a beautiful weekend of discovery for me: you know who you are as individuals, what you're doing, and how you're inspired by the place you're from."

Renee Pilgrim (GNP Health & Wellness)

Photo credit: Marie Louise Astrup

**PROMOTE COMMUNITY
LEADERS**



Linking diverse perspectives can catalyze creative solutions.

- This approach can help with:
 - Bridging new and “old” residents
 - Resident & visitor tension resolutions
 - Linking researchers, academics, and community partners
- It can also help address challenges relating to issues such as:
 - Housing options (construction + rejuvenation & long-term housing)
 - Food needs – fresh, affordable, accessible, community based
 - Fishers & tourism

Photo credit: Marie Louise Aastrup

LINK DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES



Linking diverse perspectives can catalyze creative solutions.

"The dialogues we've had, the passion that each of us in this room has had, the knowledge we're able to share and the experiences, this is why it's really important to bring us all together in person so that we can learn from each other. And then, we can look at the opportunities going forward and keep building [them]... building something really big, lasting and very powerful."

Christopher Mitchelmore (SABRI)

Photo credit: Marie Louise Aastrup

LINK DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

A large, bold, orange letter 'A' is positioned at the top left of the page. The background of the entire page is a scenic photograph of a coastal town, likely Norris Point, featuring a body of water, buildings, and mountains under a cloudy sky.

Amplifying local capacities requires asking questions like: What does your community have? What makes your place special?

Norris Point has many assets including:

- Natural assets:
 - The **best** views
 - UNESCO, Parks Canada
 - Farm and
 - Ocean recreation opportunities
- Cultural assets:
 - Trail, Tales, Tunes Festival
 - Cottage Concerts
 - VOBB
 - Mystery Building (previous town bar)
- Social assets:
 - Diverse groups working together
 - Old Cottage Hospital
 - Lions Club & other social groups
- Physical/Institutional assets:
 - Proximity to airport
 - Ferry
 - Health care

Photo credit: Marie Louise Aastrup

AMPLIFYING LOCAL CAPACITIES



Amplifying local capacities requires asking questions like: What does your community have? What makes your place special?

"I think, one of the biggest things for me throughout the past couple of days has been really seeing the multifunctional use of space in a place and how one old building can mean so much to the community and also offers so much back to the community as well. So I think that's just been very inspirational, especially in rural coastal communities, where we have a lot of older assets that could be repurposed for something similar."

Garrett Melee (TaskForce NL)

Photo credit: Marie Louise Aastrup

**AMPLIFYING LOCAL
CAPACITIES**



Conveying and sharing positive stories about our place can be empowering. Challenges can be reframed as opportunities.

Stories about Norris Point include:

- Pre-highway coastal life
- Community gatherings through the National Park, festivals, arts, community/ university partnerships
- Come From Away's (and Stay's) feeling welcome
- Friendly ghosts in the Old Cottage Hospital
- Young chef living & working in the community with his young family

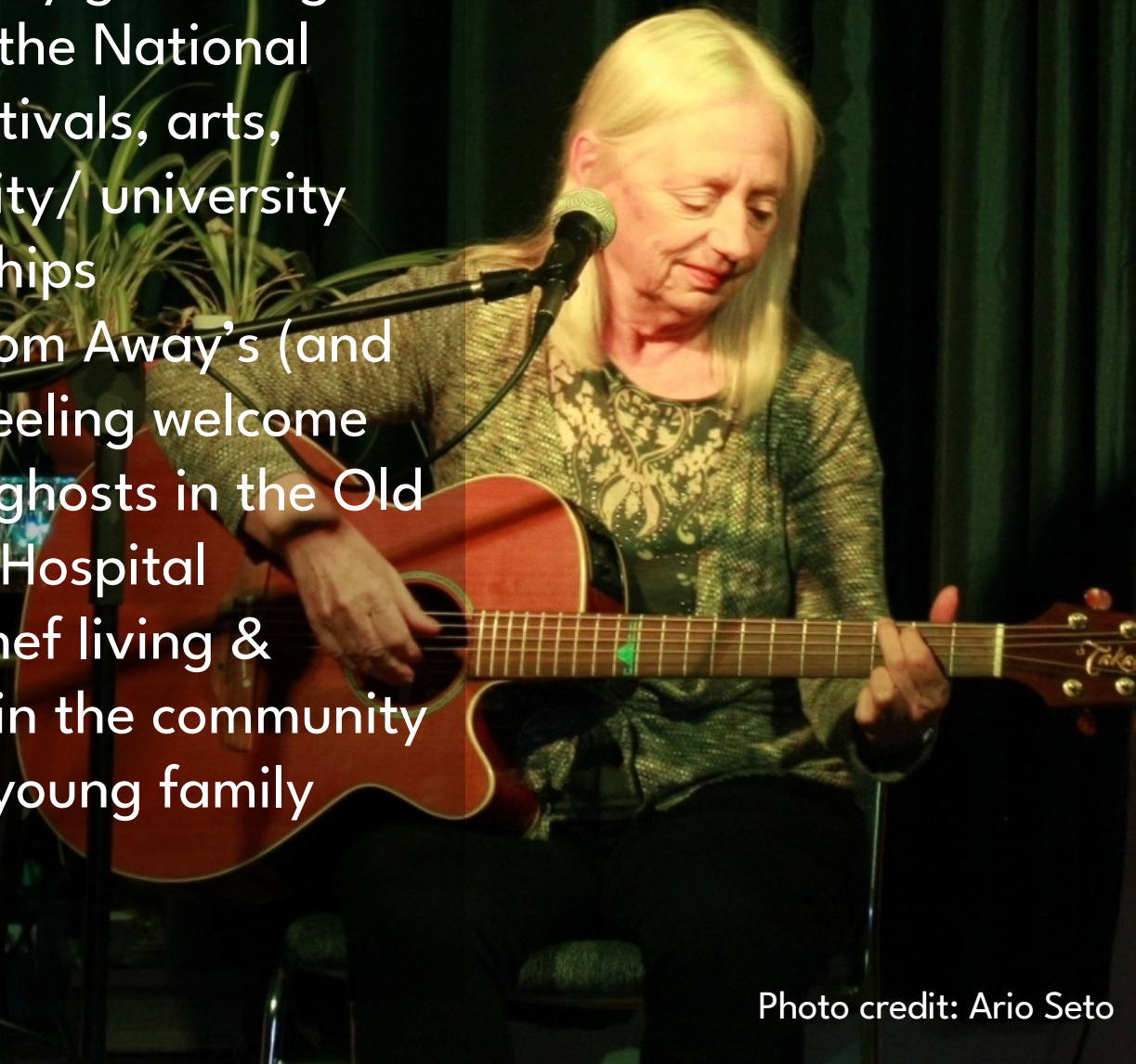


Photo credit: Ario Seto

CONVEY COMPELLING STORIES



E

Engaging both/and thinking means embracing ambiguity and working towards bridging divides such as generating revenues AND social impacts in social enterprises.

Both/and thinking can uncover new opportunities such as,

- Livable communities:
 - Co housing & “Norris Point Living (housing through investment and adaptation)
 - Community shuttle
- Recreation:
 - Off-season recreational opportunities (winter recreation)
- Food access:
 - Grocery co-op (food delivery service)
 - Fish access
 - Food experiences
- Old Cottage Hospital:
 - Health and community hub
 - Balancing traditional community life with new developments

Photo credit: Marie Louise Aastrup

ENGAGE BOTH /AND THINKING

PRINCIPLES

We believe that the PLACE Dialogues are so much more than just a conference. Some of our guiding principles are:

1. We welcome, listen, and learn from everyone
2. We create a safe space for honest conversation and authenticity
3. We embrace vulnerability
4. We aim to practise Etuaptmumk
5. We push the boundaries & welcome innovation
6. We support one another
7. We foster connection and collaboration



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SEE YOU IN 2023!