

# Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

News and notes on  
Newfoundland and Labrador's  
Intangible Cultural  
Heritage Program



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[www.SeedsToSupper.ca](http://www.SeedsToSupper.ca)

For the past three years the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador has supported a local folklife festival in the province. The goal of the festival is to celebrate these otherwise unspoken traditions that may be taken for granted. This year's theme is agriculture, and we've been working with partner organizations to build a series of events around the theme.

Our partners this year include the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Food Security Network, Food Education Action St. John's (FEASt), the St. John's Farmers Market, MUN Botanical Gardens, Newfoundland and Labrador Agricultural History Society, Bonavista Institute for Cultural Tourism and Root Cellars Rock (see their article on page 3).

We'll have workshops for families, walks, lectures, demonstrations, a mini-symposium on food, folklore and tourism, and much more. We start August 13<sup>th</sup> with the Brookfield Road Field Farm Day celebrations, and end off on August 21<sup>st</sup> with the Third Annual FEASt Open Garden Day. A full list of events will be added to the Seeds to Supper website at [www.seedstosupper.ca](http://www.seedstosupper.ca).

Get your own "Seeds to Supper" button at the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives Tent at the Newfoundland Folk Festival in Bannerman Park, the first weekend of August.

And we still want to find out about YOUR root cellars! Folklore co-op student Crystal Braye and NL Agricultural History Society intern Julie Pomeroy are tracking down as many as they can, and we want your help. See Crystal's article on the next page, or log into our collaborative Root Cellars of Newfoundland and Labrador Map, and stick in a virtual pin to let us know where we can find one! Visit online at: <http://tinyurl.com/rootcellarmap>

For more info on the festival, contact Mel at 1-888-739-1892 ext 3 or email [ichprograms@gmail.com](mailto:ichprograms@gmail.com)

*(Seeds to Supper logo by Graham Blair)*

## Diggin' in to the Root Cellar Project

*By Crystal Braye*

Since the Root Cellar Project was launched as part of the 2011 Folklife Festival, Seeds to Supper, twenty-one root cellars have been documented in the Avalon Region, primarily in the areas of Portugal Cove-St. Philips, Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove, Bay Roberts and Brigus. Each root cellar is being photographed and measured, GPS coordinates are recorded, floor plans are drawn up, and interviews are being conducted with individuals about historic and contemporary root cellar traditions in the province.

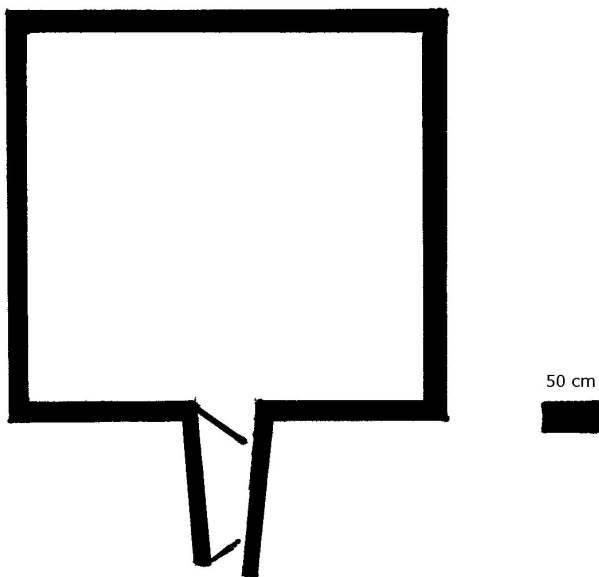
From the data collected thus far, a pattern seems to be emerging that indicates a preference for a particular style of root cellar in each area.

In Outer Cove, Andrew and Laura Boland describe their cellar as “a two-story structure, the lower level is below ground, built into a hillside with three sides completely covered with earth and the fourth side exposed for access. The upper level is an above ground wooden structure with a door and window, used for storing garden equipment.”

Once a dual entrance cellar with access through both an exterior door and a hatch in the upper level shed, renovations in 2002 resulted in the removal of the hatch entrance.

“In the old days when they were building these things they didn’t have the luxuries that we have today of snow blowers and such,” describes Andrew Boland, luxuries which makes winter access less problematic than in the past. Additionally, the modified design does not require support beams required for a hatch design, allowing for more space in the root cellar.

Root cellars have become recognized as a tangible symbol of Newfoundland’s agriculture activity, both past and present.



“It was a part of life,” says Boland while reminiscing about his grandfather’s cellar, “I always remember the smells. You could smell the earth, it was a cool, fresh smell.”

Photographs, drawings, and audio interviews are being made available on Memorial's Digital Archives Initiative and HFNL's ongoing Intangible Cultural Heritage inventory. Once the project is complete GPS coordinates will be used to record each cellar on a map which will also be made available online.

If you know of a root cellar in your community or have a root cellar of your own and are interested in participating, or for more information, please contact Crystal Braye via email [folklore.coop@gmail.com](mailto:folklore.coop@gmail.com) or telephone at 709-739-1892 ext. 5

Or, stick a virtual pin in our collaborative Root Cellars of NL map at <http://tinyurl.com/rootcellarmap>

*Photo: Boland Root Cellar, Outer Cove, by Crystal Braye. Drawing, Boland Root Cellar, Crystal Braye.*



# ROOT CELLARS ROCK!

*By Sarah Ferber*

Root Cellars Rock is a project that promotes healthy local food consumption and production across the province by celebrating Newfoundland & Labrador's food heritage and fostering growth in agriculture and local food self-sufficiency through citizens, community groups, and agricultural producers.

Visit the blog [www.rootcellarsrock.ca](http://www.rootcellarsrock.ca) for articles and resources and to find out more about the 4Ps of local food: planting, picking, preparing, and preserving. Look for the launch of a workshop resource kit in the fall that will assist community groups across the province in hosting their own food skills workshops.

Why Root Cellars? Root cellars are a symbol of Newfoundland & Labrador's unique food heritage. The way of life in Newfoundland and Labrador communities was connected closely with local and seasonal foods and people depended on methods of food storage and preservation, like root cellars, to ensure access to healthy food year-round. Most communities practiced gardening, fishing, hunting, and foraging wild foods like berries in order to provide for themselves.

Root cellars played an important part in preserving those harvests. Over time the traditional root cellar became an image associated with our province's food history. Root Cellars Rock celebrates that heritage while also building upon it today by creating resources to increase our capacity for food self-sufficiency in the future.

Root Cellars Rock is a project of the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (FSN). FSN is a provincial, membership-based, non-profit organization initially started in 1998. Since then, FSN has been at the forefront of food security work in the province - fostering awareness, dialogue and action around food security issues and how they impact citizens, food producers, and the sustainability of communities.

FSN's mission is to actively promote comprehensive, community-based solutions to ensure physical and economic access to adequate and healthy food for all. To find out more about FSN and its other projects and resources, visit [www.foodsecuritynews.com](http://www.foodsecuritynews.com)

*Photo by Sarah Ferber, showing a plot at the Brother McSheffrey Community Garden on Mt Scio Road, a program which is organized by the MacMorran Community Centre.*



## Zoar Repatriation

*By Jamie Brake*

In 1927, William Duncan Strong traveled to Labrador as the anthropologist with the second Rawson-MacMillan Subarctic Expedition. Other members of this scientific expedition included a botanist, a geologist and a zoologist, who together with Strong, represented the four main branches of study at the Chicago Field Museum. As the anthropologist, Strong was meant to gather information on the indigenous peoples of central/northern Labrador, both contemporary, as well as archaeological. During the 15 months he was here he spent time traveling with the Innu, who were living a traditional nomadic lifestyle at that time, and he also spent some time in the Inuit communities on the north coast.

Strong was the first professional archaeologist in Northern Labrador and he recorded a number of important sites while he was here. He also published an article about an “Old Stone Culture” based on data he collected from some of these sites in which he argued (correctly) that there was evidence for human occupation of Labrador which was older than the Inuit and Innu cultures.

Journal entries and expedition correspondence indicate that while Strong was in Labrador he was also expected to collect Inuit human remains which would be brought back to the Museum and studied. Museum officials were pleased when he sent word during the expedition that he had been able to secure human remains from several sites on the coast. He emphasized the significance of the nearly complete remains of recently buried individuals which he had taken from a church cemetery at the no longer occupied Moravian mission station of Zoar. One of his colleagues from the Museum responded enthusiastically and wrote that he hoped Strong could bring back even more.

Human remains were taken from the graveyard at Zoar on two different occasions in 1927, and during the first visit the remains of two individuals were excavated. Local people who happened to observe this activity reported what they had seen to others along the coast which led to a great deal of anger amongst the Inuit. It is likely that local people only ever knew about the removal of the first two individuals from the cemetery as there is no evidence that anyone from Labrador observed the exhumation of the other twenty bodies. Things came to a head the following summer when Strong was awakened by a police magistrate in Nain who interviewed him for hours about the incident. During the interview it was decided that Strong would promptly rebury the remains and within days he and a small group went back to Zoar and made it seem as though they had done just that. However, in reality they only pretended to rebury the remains and instead kept them and brought them back to the Field Museum in Chicago where they stayed until May of 2011. Because a reburial was staged, and because of careful omissions from publications, the truth about what happened, and the fact that Inuit remains from Zoar were being kept at the Field Museum, were unknown in Labrador for decades.

Research conducted at the Torngâsok Cultural Centre (TCC), prompted by an emailed tip, revealed the truth about what had happened at Zoar in 1927-28. At that point, TCC staff initiated and maintained contact with the Chicago Field Museum. In May of 2011, a delegation from Nunatsiavut traveled to Chicago to bring the remains of the 22 individuals back to Labrador. This trip went well and the remains were successfully taken to Nain and kept at the RCMP station in that community for the next month. On the 22nd of June, the remains were brought by longliner approximately 50 kilometers south from Nain to Zoar where they were reburied after a respectful ceremony which was attended by close to 100 people (*Photo at right*).



## Jim Youden's heritage carpentry recognized by Southcott Awards

*By Melissa Squarey*

Jim Youden was born just outside of St. John's to a family that had relocated there from the community of Bull Cove, near Brigus. His grandfather was the famous navigator, Thomas Youden, and the family was made up of boat builders and sailors. Jim, as a young boy of 12 years old, spent a lot of time working as a carpenter for the neighbours. Jim says "I was selling little cabinets and stands that I had made for anywhere between 50 cents and 3 dollars".

As Jim got older he began working bigger jobs on construction projects and even had his own contracting business doing repair jobs on the side to older historic properties around St. John's. In 1971, Jim began specializing his carpentry to producing heritage style windows using only traditional methods of construction and as many traditional materials as he could get to duplicate the design and workmanship of the older style windows.

Since then, Jim's work on heritage window restoration has led to a large amount of successful heritage award-winning properties such as the Fogo Island Co-Op building, Cabot Tower, Cape Spear Lighthouse, the Temperance St. Stone Houses, the Coaker premise, the Ryan Premises, Hawthorne Cottage, and many of the homes in Brigus.

Jim learned his skills from several people, most influential was Gill Lynch from Paradise and the carpenters from the Canadian National Railway's Dockyard in St. John's. Jim bought old equipment and tools from the Stokes, Vardys, and Bradburrys which he then used to recreate the windows from information he found in some really old books he found. "The books contained all of those little details that were long forgotten, once I was shown and I read those books, well you could teach yourself from there" says Jim.

"When I started I could buy my pine locally, in Glennwood, Appleton or Benton, the mills picked out the good stuff and set it to one side. Today, it's all from the mainland or the states, usually ordered special for me" says Jim when asked about the process of making the windows. "The glass came from England when I started and was carried by Thomas's and Peters & Sons. Then after that it came from Montreal and PPG used to stock it, they still do but it's usually for custom orders that I make". In his heyday, Jim says that he could make up to a window per day if they were simple. The more detailed the window the more time it takes to make.

Jim says "an old style window made with good material and that is well maintained with paint and putty can last a very long time. The storm window will give out long before the original window will". When speaking to Jim you can hear the pride he has for the windows he's made. He has a few that are particularly special to him. Jim says "The windows in the SUF Hall in Heart's content were recreated from some old newspaper photos. That's all we had to go on and when it was put together it looked right."

Jim says that he's been making windows not because of the money, but because of the love of making the windows. "I can drive around town and see all of the projects I've done over the years and 40 years later they are still there. You leave a footprint" says Jim and he doesn't plan on quitting the habit yet.

*Photo: Kim Blanchard of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador presents Jim Youden with the Newfoundland Historic Trust's 2011 Southcott Award for Heritage Craftsperson on June 15, 2011 at St. John's City Hall.*

