

HOW A COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDS ITS PAST:
ORAL HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND IDENTITY
IN PLACENTIA, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

PATRICK S. CARROLL

**How a Community Understands Its Past:
Oral History, Archaeology and Identity in Placentia, Newfoundland and Labrador.**

by

© Patrick S. Carroll

A thesis submitted to the
School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Folklore

Memorial University of Newfoundland

St. John's

Newfoundland

ABSTRACT

For the majority of the residents interviewed for this research, their personal history involved the experience of being from someplace other than the original Placentia. Their main attachment to Placentia and its history is through the authorized heritage myth of the town as the “ancient French capital” epitomized by the archaeological excavations that were being conducted at the time of my fieldwork. For the majority of people I spoke with the town’s history is most important for its role in the development of economic opportunities to be derived from heritage tourism. Two reasons for this are that a lack of personal experience with Placentia’s Past makes it easier for the community to adopt well-constructed narratives of the French and British occupations and, at the time of this research, economic viability was the most important item on the town’s agenda. The story of the “ancient French capital” was the epitome of economic opportunities provided by the archaeological excavations and the potential for future income resulting from the development of heritage tourism products. The myth of the “ancient French capital” provides a means for individuals to attach themselves to a place where they have limited personal experience. It is an accepted narrative that provides a foundation for belonging at the community level.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the residents of Placentia, Newfoundland, who agreed to be interviewed for this research and the many others who generously shared their stories, comments, and time with me. I would like to thank Dr. Peter Pope and Stephen Mills and the Newfoundland Archaeological Heritage Outreach Program for providing funding and other support. Financial support was also generously provided through the David Buchan Graduate Research Award in Folklore, the Mary Griffith Bursary, and the Women's Association of Memorial University of Newfoundland. I would also like to thank Greg Thomas and my other colleagues at Parks Canada for their enthusiasm and support. Thank you to the Folklore Department at MUN for being exceptionally supportive and for being a surrogate family as I waded through the quagmire of graduate school. For helping guide this beast to harbour, I thank my advisor Dr. Gerald Pocius. Thank you especially to Lee Everts and Gary Lundrigan for their friendship and for helping set things straight over breakfasts at the "Big R." Also, thank you to Lori Pretty and to Chris Newhook for their unending generosity. To Sunyi, thank you.

This research is dedicated to the memory of my father, James Montgomery Carroll, and to the memory of my grandmother, Mona Gertrude Carroll.

For everything else, I thank my mother.

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	3
List of Figures	7
Chapter 1: Introduction	8
1.1 Method	15
1.2 Developing a Research Method	16
1.3 The Interview Process	21
Chapter 2: The Keeping of the Useful Myths	26
2.1 Community, Past, Understand, and How	30
2.1.1 Community	31
2.1.2 Past	38
2.1.3 Understand	42
2.1.4 How	49
Chapter 3: An Overview of Placentia's History	55
3.1 Plaisance: 1500-1713	56
3.2 Under British Rule: 1713-1811	58
3.3 The Sweetman Era: 1812-1880	71
3.4 Ushering in the Twentieth Century: 1880-1941	77
3.5 Argentina: 1941-1970	82
3.6 Placentia: 1970-2003	86
3.7 Summary	90

Chapter 4: The Public Landscape and the Heritage Myth	91
4.1 Toward a Definition of Heritage	92
4.2 Heritage Defined	98
4.5 Building a Heritage Landscape	99
4.6 Summary	126
Chapter 5: Experiencing the Past in Placentia	128
5.1 “History’s been around me pretty much all my life.”	128
5.2 “There’s an interest in it and there’s not an interest in it.”... ..	132
5.3 Historic Themes	134
5.4 Learning History	139
5.4.1 Cyril Bambrick	145
5.4.2 Gerry Griffiths	147
5.4.3 Gerald O’Reilly	149
5.4.4 Helen Griffin	153
5.4.5 Kristin McCrowe and Aaron Hickey	156
5.5 Living the Past	160
5.5.1 Rita Power	161
5.5.2 Margaret Kelly	164
5.5.3 Art O’Keefe	168
Chapter 6: History is the Memory of Things Said and Done	176
Figures	183-188
Endnotes	189

Interviews	200
Bibliography	201

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Regional map showing Placentia in relation to the Province of Newfoundland.

Figure 2: Poster advertising summer performances of the Placentia Area Theatre
d'Heritage.

Figure 3: Town sign posted on highway entering the community from Point Verde.

Figure 4: Town logo. The image incorporates several elements of the town's cultural
heritage: water, canon, hills, clock on the courthouse, steeple of the Catholic
Church, wall of a fortification, and the French and English names for the town.

Figure 5: Flower box designed with a *Fleur de Lis* and a shamrock.

Figure 6: Overview of the town. Photograph taken in 1959.

Figure 7: Recent photograph of the town showing the Lift Bridge and the development of
the Great Beach.

Figure 8: Map of the municipality of Placentia.

Insert: "Town of Placentia Map" produced by the Placentia Lions Club to be used as
"both a guide for visitors and a keepsake for Placentia area residents."

The world is only that which we say and think and know...it is a poem, not a scientific treatise.

Hugh Brody, The Other Side of Eden

“History’s been around me pretty much all my life, just didn’t know it.”

John Bruce, Placentia, NL.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2002 I spent six weeks in Placentia, Newfoundland interviewing residents and talking informally with them about their community in order to answer my research question: how does a community understand its past? I wanted to know where people had come from, how long had they lived in Placentia? Where was their family from? Is Placentia different from other communities? In their opinion, what is Placentia best known for? What can they tell me about their past and how did they learn about the community’s history? The main research interest of this thesis is to explore expressions of community identity and belonging in the oral history and material culture of Placentia, Newfoundland. (Figure 1)

Placentia was chosen as the location for this research because of archaeological excavations that were ongoing as part of a community heritage development program at the time of the fieldwork for this thesis. Placentia, the “ancient French capital of Newfoundland,” has long been part of Newfoundland’s heritage landscape because of the ruins of French military fortifications overlooking the town from Castle Hill National Historic Site and because of its culturally diverse history. The town’s origins are in a

vague reference to Placentia harbour on a sixteenth century map drawn by Basque fishermen. The Basque were followed by the French and later the British military who occupied the town until the early nineteenth century. Ironically, none of the town's residents are directly associated with the community's Basque, French or British origins; most associate themselves with the Irish who came to Placentia Bay in the eighteenth century. Many of the current residents consider themselves recent migrants, having moved to the town from outport communities as part of government resettlement programs in the mid-twentieth century, or arriving since the 1940s to work at the United States Naval Base at Argentia. Lacking a sense of belonging to Placentia, many residents turn to the story of the "ancient French capital" to create a sense of attachment to their new home. Archaeological resources, therefore, have had, and continue to have a major role in the definition and communication of community identity in Placentia.

Archaeological resources are the tangible expressions of the "mythic" origins of the community and are integral in shaping how residents interpret their community's past and consequently develop a sense of belonging.

To address the initial research question, "how does a community understand its past," this thesis will look at the relationship between the oral and written historical records and the diversity of material culture used by individual residents to derive and communicate a sense of identity (Dundes 1983). Archaeological resources, as a prominent element of the town's material culture, are placed in the wider context of heritage collections including Castle Hill National Historic Site, Provincial Historic Sites, local museums, built heritage, etiological knowledge, and oral history. Research was

undertaken to establish the numerous sources of information and perspectives employed by the residents of Placentia in experiencing, learning, and transmitting knowledge of their community's past. Based on the results of this research, contemporary material culture and oral historic expressions of Placentia's past are presented in relation to the community's understanding of archaeological resources as a tangible expression of a "mythic" past and the impact of those resources for the current sense of community identity.

The dominant terms to be addressed in this thesis are history, heritage, and tourism. Henry Glassie defines history as "a story of the past, told in the present, and designed to be useful in constructing the future"; the writing of history is "speaking myth" (1999). For Glassie, history is a term that refers to both the chronological ordering of events of the past and the selective, meaningful process of communicating those events in the present. History is both a process through which individuals develop an understanding of the past and it embodies a purpose for transmitting an individual's understanding of the past. Ultimately, that is the understanding of history that underlies this thesis, but, in order to facilitate a discussion on various perspectives on the past, the term "heritage" is used to distinguish between the facts of historical events and the interpretation of those events through a public-oriented narrative. History, for the purposes of this discussion, is defined as the facts of past events, the "things said and done" (Becker 1969). Heritage, as distinct from history, is used to refer to those elements a group selects from its past in order to define itself in the present (Handler 1983, 1984; Lowenthal, Hobsbawm). Heritage is a means by which a group identifies itself, often in

opposition to other groups. It is also a means of creating social cohesion and solidarity.

Tourism is the promotion of a group's heritage as a marketable product (Overton).

The interpretation of "history," the communication of the facts of past events, is an automatic step toward the construction of heritage, or historical narrative. Through a comparison of the local "folk" history, meaning history transmitted by local people and relating to the local area (Dundes 1980; Eriksen), and the "official" history, meaning history transmitted by institutions such as Parks Canada and the Provincial and Municipal governments, it is expected that one will be able to determine the process by which the community of Placentia constructs its heritage to produce a marketable version of its history. Consequently, to what degree does Placentia's self-identity reflect the totality of its history? It is hoped that this research will illuminate a wealth of local historical knowledge that is often overlooked when heritage is brought to the open market.

The initial fieldwork for this research was conducted in 2002. Five years have elapsed since then. I have been in contact with the community since and have learned more about its history. To be true to my initial observations, I have limited how much recent information I have incorporated into this thesis. This thesis is a snapshot of Placentia at the time of my fieldwork. Edward Ives writes,

when we come to work up our field data, we should not be discouraged because it is not as clean or complete as we now see it should have been any more than we should fool ourselves that we are being truly objective when we gather it. We have to do the best we can with what's available. (Ives 1996: 168)

The data I have presented is a cross-section of residents that were presented to me during my research. At the time, this was considered to be the most time-efficient manner

to construct a representative sample of the community – to let the community select it for me, as is discussed in the methodology section.

Art O’Keefe is not the only voice for Placentia’s history. I know now there are others and that there is a stronger oral history tradition than is presented in this thesis. I have tried to suggest its potential existence. A recent email shows the potential for further work in this area:

Also, have you ever heard of the Old French Well (or Swan’s Well) in your research? Shawn O’Keefe and Billy Walsh showed me the location behind the Boardwalk Lounge. Ronnie Bishop was there to point it out too. They all had some stories to tell about it. Funny though, I had not heard anything about this well before now! And it seems if I ask anyone who was not local to the area (example: Jim & Bess moved here in the 1960s, Lar Parsons – Clattice Hr., the Whelans – Jerseyside) they never heard of it. Yet Ronnie, who grew up next door to it said when he was a kid they couldn’t go near it because there were weasels in it that would spit at your eyes and make you go blind. Shawn said it was said to be haunted as there was a finger from a French soldier (?) that got cut off and thrown down it! (Chris Newhook pers. comm. 2007)

I present this research, therefore, as a moment in time for Placentia. It is not intended to be an absolute statement on the historic character of the town, but rather, to be yet another voice in a long line of voices documenting the changing and immutable character of the “ancient French capital” of Newfoundland. The following is an outline of the contents of each chapter in relation to the overall structure of this thesis.

Chapter 1 is a discussion of the research goal and the methods used to reach that goal. Written sources were an important part of the research process but the main body of primary information was gathered through formal interviews and from time spent residing in the community. The community in general and the interviewees were instrumental in defining the direction the research would take, the former by directing me

to individuals they felt were knowledgeable about local history and the latter by sharing information they felt was relevant to my questions, often leading me in unanticipated directions and providing me with invaluable insight into the community's history.

Chapter 2 is a discussion of the key concepts in this research thesis. The rationale for designating the original town of Placentia as the focus for this research are discussed. Drawing on work by Carl Becker (1958, 1969), Glassie (1994, 1999, 2006) and Pocius (2000) the main concepts from the initial research question—Past, Understand, Community, and How—are discussed and defined. It is stated that history is twofold. It is a broad chronology of events and it is a selective recounting of personal experiences. A chronology generally places historic events beyond the community level and at a national or international scale. Personal experiences are generally limited to the social group and landscape in which the events occurred. According to the definitions presented in this thesis, the Past in Placentia is “Personal,” meaning based on the experience of living in the community, and “Mythic,” meaning it deals with events beyond personal experience. The myth of Placentia as the “ancient French capital” is also considered to be the “Public” version of the community's past. It is considered to be the socially accepted version of the past that is presented to outsiders. It is also the single narrative drawing the disparate personal histories together to create the beginnings of a singular identity for the town. The myth is a focal point enabling newcomers a means to attach themselves to the history and to the landscape of Placentia.

Chapter 3 presents an overview of Placentia's history based primarily on written sources. The intent of this chapter is to document the narrative of Placentia's history that

is most accessible to the public and to set a foundation for the later discussion on the relationship between the heritage landscape and the experiential past. This is a summary history intended to show the research that has been done in the past and to point out the lack of research done to date on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This summary is also intended to be of use to the community in their heritage programming.

Chapter 4 is a discussion of the history of the development of heritage interpretation in Placentia. The chapter includes a discussion of the development of the term heritage and defines how it is applied in this research: as a story told about history in a manner reflective of the contemporary desires of the society, or social group, in which the story originated. The development of a heritage landscape in Placentia is presented and its relationship with the development of culture tourism or “public” history, meaning history intended for public audiences is discussed. The leadership role that has been played by federal and provincial governments in determining historic themes is also discussed. Much of this research has never been compiled before, therefore, it is hoped this chapter will be of value to the community in their heritage programming.

Chapter 5 is a discussion of how the public and personal versions of history are manifest in the community. The goal of this chapter is to show how the “personal” history of many residents expresses a sense of belonging to someplace else. It also discusses how the “public” version of history, the myth of the ancient French capital, is used by residents to attach themselves to a community where they do not have strong roots. This chapter looks more closely at several interviews to discuss the processes by

which informants have learned Placentia's history and created a sense of belonging to the community.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion that in Placentia, at the time of this research, there were numerous perspectives on the past as a result of resettlement, relocation for work at the Naval Base in Argentina, and municipal amalgamation. Consensus on what constitutes the community's past is difficult to achieve without an overarching narrative to tie the disparate perspectives together. Because many residents retained a strong sense of belonging to neighbouring communities in the municipality or to the communities they had left behind, it is not possible to speak of a collective past in Placentia. Instead, what most of the informants I spoke with and many of the current residents shared was the collective experience of having origins in some place other than Placentia and living there now. The dominant narrative that enables the creation of a sense of belonging to Placentia is the myth of the ancient French capital.

1.1 Method

The goal of this section is to describe the method by which information was gathered for this thesis and to discuss how the nature of the data collected impacts upon the final interpretation. Information was collected from both primary and secondary sources including the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archives (MUNFLA), the Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives (CNS), and the Placentia Area Historical Society files held in the Placentia public library. While information gathered from various sources was an important part of the research process, the most influential component was the time spent residing in Placentia, conversing with residents

and sharing their perspectives on living in the community. Nineteen formal interviews, approximately twenty hours in total, were recorded, but by far the majority of interactions were informal conversations and interviews which provided a broader understanding of community dynamics and the complex of issues surrounding the questions of identity and history that were being asked. Knowledge gained from immersion in the community greatly benefited my ability to define my research questions and refine the research process. Several key sources of information were brought to my attention by residents early in the field work process and information derived from these sources positively influenced the final direction of the research.

While I retained a professional perspective during formal interviews to allow me the freedom to ask pertinent, and sometimes personal questions, at other times I welcomed questions and comments from residents, inviting them to express their interest in the research project and suggest alternative informants, subjects, and information sources. I felt that an openness on my part repeatedly brought forth otherwise inaccessible information and perspectives which were beneficial to the success of the project.

1.2 Developing a Research Method

There were two main periods during which I was resident in Placentia: June 9-30, 2002 and August 19-25, 2002. The first period of residence involved an intense process of identifying and contacting informants, and organizing and conducting interviews. The second period of residence was focussed upon interviewing members of the archaeological crew. Previous visits to the town included a day trip made in early May and a brief stay, from May 29-31, 2002 to conduct background research. Because time,

available for background research was limited due to graduate course work, it was decided that a brief preliminary visit was necessary to become familiar with the current archaeological excavations and the individuals involved in historic and heritage related projects in the town. With the assistance of Ken and Charmaine Flynn, executive members of the Placentia Area Historical Society, I began to collect names of potential informants. Since the completion of my fieldwork residency in August, 2002, I have made several additional visits to the town primarily to visit with friends. Inevitably, though not intended as "fieldwork," these visits have increased my understanding of the town and its history.

Because I did not have sufficient time to acquaint myself with either the diversity of perspectives present in the community, or with the depth of history, it was decided to develop a snapshot of the community during the interview process and later compare this snapshot to the documented history of the community's past. It was anticipated that, through comparison, I would achieve a better picture of how one component of the community, those individuals addressed by my research, understood its past. It was believed that by interviewing a cross-section of residents, narrative patterns would emerge that would suggest the degree to which a segment of the population melded public and personal history into narratives of community and self.

Although a portion of my research method was ethnographic, involving participation and observation while residing in the community, the main method used for documenting was the formal interview (Allen and Montell; Ives 1980). Allen and Montell describe three different settings in which people talk of the past: informal conversations, informal

settings; informal conversations, formal occasions; formal conversations, formal occasions (40-45). According to their definitions, my research involved each of these settings ranging from dinner conversation and engaging strangers in conversation while on an evening stroll, to attending formal presentations sponsored by the local historical society, and conducting formal interviews. Allen and Montell describe the interview's purpose as to allow

organized, patterned conversation, in the form of questions and answers...based on one knowledgeable person being questioned by someone else who either does not know the answers or wants to know more. Since the resulting conversation follows the course prescribed by the interviewer, rather than the person being interviewed, the content of the historical information placed on tape is heavily controlled by the researcher. Yet, human memory works largely by association, and the associations that participants in informal conversations draw between persons and events can be valuable clues to the local history researcher about insider's perceptions of or points of view about the past. A formal interview does not usually allow these kinds of associations to be drawn, thus depriving the researcher the potentially important insights into the subject at hand and the interviewee's feelings about it. (43)

In contradiction to the limitations noted, the research for this thesis involved conducting interviews in order to elicit information about insider's perceptions and points of view about the past. To this end, a combination of formal and informal interview techniques were used, the main distinction between the two being the degree of control which I, as the researcher, exerted over the direction of the interview. In most cases I prompted the interviewee with a general question on local history and then let them impart information, occasionally directing them toward general themes of relevance to the research and to make a distinction between what they perceived as local history and stories of their own past.¹

A series of interview questions were developed prior to undertaking field work. These questions were applied to give an overall direction to the interview process but were altered during the interview process to address the character of specific informants and, following individual interviews, in order to refine the larger research process. The motivation for an informal interview setting was the ambiguous nature of the initial question—how does a community understand its past—and the myriad perspectives the research was intended to encompass.

Given the limited amount of time allotted for fieldwork, it was necessary to create a research plan that could accommodate the refinement of the research goal while the interview process was on-going. My initial, admittedly naive assumption, was that there were specific residents who would be recognized as the community's historians, or knowledge keepers. My experience in Placentia is that this is not the case. Residents often commiserated that the 'old timers' are mostly all gone now.² Several elderly residents evaded my attempts to interview them, in part because they did not consider their stories to be of interest. Barbara Patterson and "Red" Flynn were both repeatedly recommended to me as important sources for local history. When I mentioned Mrs. Patterson's name to Rita Power, Rita said,

Yeah, she probably doesn't want to be recorded. She's a great storyteller, though, and she knows more about Placentia than the first fellow that ever moved in here, because she, her parents were, Barbara's, well I wouldn't want to guess how old she is because she'd kill me, but, I'd say her parents are, you're talking back 160, 170 years. And she remembers every story that her mother and father told her and everybody who lived everywhere. Unreal...Barbara has the real, she does, I mean anybody I ever want, like somebody comes [to the Rosedale] who probably had relatives here fifty years ago and I'll call Barbara and she'll know right away who I'm talking about. (Power. Interview)

Unfortunately, although several attempts were made to contact both of them, neither Barbara Patterson nor "Red" Flynn was available to be interviewed for this research.

There were numerous people within the community who were respected for their knowledge of the past. Among these individuals, different ones were acknowledged for their specific knowledge whether it related to a time period or event. Depending upon the question asked, for example what part of the town it related to, I would be directed to particular individuals. The Pattersons, Barbara and William, were known as old-timers in old Placentia; John Whelan was noted as a source for the history of Jersey side, as was Nick Careen. "Red" Flynn's name came up with regard to the town in general. Art O'Keefe was an important source of information for events relating to the woods and country in and around Placentia and the Southeast. Gerald "Pearly" O'Reilly was recommended because his genealogical research meant he was also knowledgeable about the local Irish population. Brendan Collins was recognized as a local historian because of his research into his home community of St. Kyran's in Placentia Bay.

As my fieldwork began, I started to realize that as a whole, there was no single past and, consequently, no single understanding of the past in Placentia. As a result, my initial planned investigation into how the past is represented was refocused to look more closely at the numerous perspectives which constitute the community's past. To this end, the search for the few archetypal sources of oral history gave way to the compilation of as wide a range of perspectives as possible. Even the concept of the past, whether it was several hundred years ago or simply several years ago, was left open to interpretation by

informants on the premise that the time frame by which individuals defined the past is a key to understanding what the concept means to them.

1.3 The Interview Process

There is no standard format to the interviews conducted for this research except to say that some were more formal than others. Formal interviews are considered to be those which were recorded and were, therefore, characterized by some degree of formal interaction, often precipitated by the presence of the tape recorder and microphone and the statement of ethics approval, between myself as a researcher and an informant. In these instances, the process of the interview was formal, although an informal, conversational tone was maintained throughout. The interview setting varied between formal and informal settings depending upon the personality of the person being interviewed. Some interviews were conducted in informant's houses, others were in their places of employment, while others were conducted in public spaces. In every instance, I allowed the interviewee to establish the location and time for the interview. In some instances their decision was to allow me to set the time and place which may have been an indication of indifference in the project, although in most instances it was a sign of cooperation and interest.

The initial process of contacting informants was essential to developing my understanding of the structure of the community and the relevance of the research question. The initial round of interviews were informal attempts to assess the nature of the community's knowledge of the past, create a list of contacts, to develop my own knowledge about the community, and to make the community aware of my research.³ At

this time, I realized that the town did not have a cohesive understanding of its past, instead, it was composed of divergent perspectives due to the equally divergent backgrounds of the residents. I also became aware of the fact that the current town of Placentia was an amalgamated municipality. In order to keep this research manageable parameters were established: the community to be considered would be roughly that area known historically as Great Placentia, in this case including Jerseyside and the Southeast.⁴ Informants would have to have some connection, past or present, with the area known historically as Great Placentia. With these fairly broad parameters determined, I allowed the community itself to present me with informants on the premise that the resulting list of individuals and their perspectives would be an additional perspective on the community's expression of its past. Rather than document an absolute history based upon the reminiscences of a few residents, this research has focused upon a more broadly based approach to show, with specific reference to the demographic of Placentia, the diversity of perspectives that compose a community's understanding of its past. In this way, it is possible to show the diversity of motivations for an individual's association with the past as well as numerous ways in which various people's understandings come together and diverge.

As well as following the community's lead, a separate list of informants was compiled in order to assure the representation of a cross-section of the population. Many of the names I gathered independently overlapped with those provided by the community. In the end, the list of informants ranged from high-school students, to the elderly. Many informants were middle-aged or recently retired. Informants were not selected based on

their knowledge of or interest in heritage or history, although many informants showed a long-term interest in their community's history and the economic potential to be derived from the development of a culture tourism industry. Some informants were chosen because of what I perceived as their personal or business relationship with the town's history. For example, as well as being a long-term resident of Placentia, Mrs. Kelly is also the proprietor of the only hotel in the town. Rita Power operated a bed and breakfast in a partially restored historic home, while the owner of Belle's Restaurant has created an heritage ambience to market her business. Fred Whelan, the Deputy Mayor of Placentia, is involved in developing the economic potential of cultural tourism and also asserts his strong personal attachment to his hometown's history. Kristin McCrowe and Aaron Hickey are students working as interpreters at O'Reilly House museum.

Most of the people I spoke with strongly asserted the importance of preserving their heritage.⁵ While this may be a potential bias in the research, it was not one that was encouraged. For example, although attempts were made to interview all members of the archaeological crew, more than half refused to be interviewed. There are several reasons for this, foremost being their disinterest in my research. As well, they may have been hesitant about the value of their personal knowledge, and possibly reluctant to speak openly, often expressing disapproval or disinterest in their work, for fear of compromising their job and therefore their ability to collect enough hours of employment to make them eligible for employment insurance. While the supervisors for the archaeology crews were archaeology students from Memorial University of Newfoundland, the crews were composed of people from the Placentia area. Most crew

members had no previous experience in archaeological excavation or laboratory techniques, or, at most had acquired these skills during the previous year's excavations. Their motivation for taking part in the archaeological work was primarily financial; they needed the work. In the end, those crew members who were willing to be interviewed are best classified as converts to the heritage cause and were vocal about their newfound awareness of the value of archaeological research and, by extension, their town's history.

It is expected that those individuals who make themselves available to the researcher will have a personal motivation for choosing to become involved in a project. I accepted that my informants had their own reasons, or agenda, for allowing themselves to be interviewed. At the same time, I think many people agreed to be interviewed simply because they did not have any reason not to be. There almost always seemed to be time to talk with a stranger. Beyond a concern for personal agendas and bias, it has been an interesting process exploring the many meanings the past provides for people. The common theme has been an expression of rootedness, an acceptance that the events of the past are an integral part of the shaping of the present.

There's a lot of good values in the past that we need to preserve. The best analogy I can give you is, do you know how to row a dory? You row a dory backwards. How do you keep on course? You pick a spot behind you and you keep focussed on it. Well, if you don't focus on your past you don't know where you're going. If you don't keep fixed on that point with your dory, you're going to steer off course. So, next time you're rowing a dory you pick a spot behind you and focus on it and you'll go straight. Keep the stern lined up with the past and you're okay. (O'Reilly, Gerard. Interview)

For most of the people I spoke with the past was an important part of who they are now, whether it is the past interpreted by heritage programs or the past transmitted

through family stories there is a sense of pride emitted when individuals feel they can assert themselves into the larger narrative of the town's history.

For Placentia, the potentially successful commodification of the past is a recent phenomenon. One must bear in mind, therefore, the town's interest in the marketability of its heritage when assessing an individual's enthusiasm for his or her history. Often the information provided is part of a popular understanding of the past, meaning it is derived from the popular media rather than from other traditional means. It is the responsibility of the researcher to distinguish between the two and to understand the relative value of each in the overall character of Placentia's ongoing historical narrative.

Chapter 2: THE KEEPING OF THE USEFUL MYTHS

When this research began, it was anticipated that it would be an oral history collection project. Not long into the fieldwork component of the research, it became evident that a different focus was emerging. Romantic preconceptions of a covey of knowledgeable informants waiting to impart historical narratives were quickly dispelled when it came time to document and understand the complexities of human experience. The initiate folklorist (me) did find knowledgeable informants but they were not the naively anticipated archetypal wise men and women with a lifetime of local legend and myths hoarded in their skulls. Instead, a spectrum of individuals, selected to represent a cross-section of Placentia's residents, showed an abundant interest in, and knowledge of, their adopted town's history and its economic potential as a cultural tourism destination.

In order to grasp the manner in which the past has meaning for Placentia's residents it has been necessary to adjust my initial expectations of this being an oral history collection project and conceive of it, not as a documentary project involving community history, but rather, as an analytical project focussing on the reasons for and methods of preserving and transmitting knowledge of the past that are currently active in Placentia, Newfoundland. Oral and written histories are considered to be equally valid and prevalent, and often interwoven, if not complimentary, forms of knowledge. There are numerous historical narratives existing in Placentia. The motivations behind the production and presentation of these narratives is equally numerous and varied. What had initially been anticipated as a documentary project involving the transmission of oral history through a variety of oral traditions,⁶ has come to focus instead on the diversity of

perspectives that constitute a community's history and the purpose that that history has for the community members.

Jan Vansina defines oral history as "reminiscences, hearsay, or eyewitness accounts about events and situations...which occurred during the lifetime of the informants" (1985: 12). Oral history is day-to-day, or everyday knowledge, which may be derived from and may provide an impetus for the creation of an oral tradition. Based on Vansina's distinction between oral history and oral tradition, I would say that Placentia as the "ancient French capital of Newfoundland" is the most pervasive subject of oral tradition in the community at this time — it is enacted by local theatre groups (Figure 2), applied to the town's signage (Figure 3) and promotional materials (Figure 4), and often mentioned in conversation as being a defining characteristic of the town's identity. Although the "ancient French capital" tradition is also the key element of the community's commodified history, this should not detract from its essential role as the defining narrative for the origins of Placentia. The stories of the "ancient French capital" play an important role in creating an identity that would otherwise lack a unifying narrative of place. On the other hand, personal narratives collected during the interview process for this research constitute an oral history composed of diverse personal experience narratives occasionally incorporating and reflecting on information garnered from public media forms and tailored to meet the narrative needs of individuals. While there are points of congruence in the personal and community histories told by the informants I recorded, these points of congruence are almost always generalized and deal with events derived from written and broadcast sources (for example, the historic

presence of the French and British or contemporary Newfoundland issues), not as part of an oral tradition documenting the residents' memory of a collective past.

The exception is the residents' Irish identity (Figure 5). This "Irishness" exists through direct family links related to periods of immigration starting in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. According to Rita Power,

I suppose when you look at it neither English nor French really settled in Placentia. It was the Irish that the Verrans and the like of them brought over here that, you know, they used to, they never wintered over, the English didn't. I mean the Irish were the ones who started the community...I mean they brought over the Irish immigrants as workers and they were the ones that had guts enough to stay and the rest of them all went back. I mean, they were only here for the fish. It was for the money basically, I mean, they were traders. They were merchants. So, they didn't want to spend, they had their big manor houses over in England. But there's only that Henora Sweetman that got tangled up with this Verran fellah. She stayed here because all this land here, like where my house is and this house next door, that was all Saunders and Sweetman land. They owned half of Placentia in those days. (Power. Interview)

Gerald O'Reilly, whose family lived in Argentia for several generations, states it was "pretty well all Irish, here [Argentia]. Except for those who came to work on the [U.S. Naval] Base it would have been all Irish and all Catholic for sure" (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview). Irish origins are a source of pride. Descendants are described as rebels, exiled from their homeland. Gerald recalled, probably deriving the story from a written source, that Roger Sweetman, the main merchant to operate out of Placentia in the nineteenth century, had a brother "who was hanged in 1797, before the rebellion [in Ireland]. He was one of the leaders of the rebellion and it was rumoured that the rebellion, the Battle of Ross, was planned in Michael Sweetman's house in Wexford. It was at that time that the Cape Shore was settled. Around 1798—99, 1800. So they were likely, a lot of them were rebels. Irish rebels escaping the aftermath of the war"

(O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview). During my interview with Gerald, he also told a story of three unnamed brothers who were involved in conflicts in Ireland. Pursued by British soldiers, they managed to secure passage on a ship heading to Newfoundland where they embarked and settled in Placentia Bay. According to Gerald, their descendants are among the families still living around the Bay.

Art O'Keefe recounted a similar story for his family's Newfoundland origins.

Originally [my grandfather] came from Ireland. There was supposed to be three brothers came there, over, oh couple of hundred years ago I imagine. I think they came ashore in Harbour Grace or wherever. We just know that they, my cousin in southeast did a family tree. He traced these three brothers back to where they got off of the boat in Harbour Grace, but he couldn't find them on no, no account of them on the other side. But we think that they were ah, they were two, two or three steps ahead of the law....We know that we sprung from three brothers who came ashore in Harbour Grace back two or three hundred years ago and ah, the brothers came to this area here, the Placentia area. For what reason we don't know. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Fred Whelan was born and raised in Jerseyside and has a strong connection to the Placentia area. He is also very much aware of his Irish origins: "I can walk into the cemetery in Placentia, see the grave of my great grandfather who was born in Ireland, who settled over here. And then died over here. And then go up a couple of grave sites and see my grandfather and my father and my brother. All these generations of Whelans. Why wouldn't I have roots here? Why would they be anywhere else?" (Whelan. Interview). Beyond being a Newfoundlander and a Canadian, tracing family origins to Ireland, however distant the connection, is one of the few identities shared by the majority of people I interviewed.

In general, the events as recounted in the various stories and reminiscences I recorded during the interview process show an underlying disparity in the feelings of

attachment to Placentia. This disparity is indicative of an overall lack of shared experience of living in the town by the current residents of Placentia.⁷ This lack of shared experience is primarily a result of the town's fluctuating demographic due to changes in the local economy and government policy which have lead to excessive immigration and emigration throughout the twentieth century. The unsettling of large portions of the population has resulted in a community composed of a variety of identities lacking a common base on which to construct the products of a localized oral tradition. The goal of this research is to determine the underlying narratives that constitute the community's identity. The findings of this research are that current residents do not have a shared experience of their community's past beyond one or possibly two generations. Therefore, to understand the way in which Placentia understands its past at the present time, it is necessary to embrace a variety of perspectives. While an idealized covey of sages ruminating on a common past does not currently exist in Placentia, this does not mean residents are lacking in the stories they wish to tell.

2.1 Community, Past, Understand, and How

In order to define the basic terms and boundaries that will be applied in this analysis, I would like to turn to the initial research question: how does a community understand its past. Embedded in this question are the fundamental concepts for this thesis: community, past, understand, and how. The following section will discuss each of these concepts and how they are applied in this research.

2.1.1 Community

Placentia, as a term of reference, has many different meanings. It is a modern municipality and an ancient French colony. It is the home, said with both cynicism and pride, of “saints and scholars.” For some it is “shit beach,” while for others it is the “nicest little town.” It is the place where many Newfoundland outport fishermen came for their first taste of paid employment when the Americans opened their naval base at Argentia, and where many outport fishing families were grudgingly resettled by the Provincial government’s resettlement scheme. It was a terminus for trains supplying coastal steamers and the beginning of an adventure for people from the outports of Placentia Bay travelling to St. John’s. It was the hospital, the church, and the school, and for many, it was modern. Both past and present, Placentia has meant the collection of houses, businesses, and government buildings clustered on the Great Beach (Figures 6 and 7). Officially, the name Placentia refers to the municipality of Placentia (Figure 8). Incorporated in 1994, it includes the communities of Jerseyside, Freshwater, Ferndale, Dunville, Southeast, Bond’s Path, Argentia and Placentia. Historically, the name Placentia refers to the community of Great Placentia in order to distinguish it from Little Placentia, the community that later became Argentia.

Each of the communities composing the modern municipality has a distinct history. One of the main issues encountered in the initial stages of this research was how to define the area of study when the various histories and the mobility of the residents overlapped within the municipality. Many people interviewed currently work in “Placentia,” but have a home and have lived their entire lives in a neighbouring

community within the municipality. Therefore, although they would say they were from the municipality of Placentia, they would, often adamantly, express an allegiance to a different locality within the modern municipality or stress that their family belongs to a different part of Placentia Bay, or elsewhere in Newfoundland, and had moved to Placentia for one reason or another. If the study area was to encompass the entire municipality the potential scope of the research would be daunting. The solution was to limit the study area to the original colony of Plaisance, the “ancient French capital.” This decision was reinforced by the perspectives of the residents and their comments during the interview process. Many informants recognized that the modern municipality referred to the collection of communities in the immediate region and used the referent “Placentia” locally to refer to the settled area on the “flats.”

The French colony at Plaisance was centred around the Great Beach, an expansive cobble beach that provided an excellent natural feature for the drying and preparation of cod. Fishing stages, houses, and businesses, the church, and a harbour were all situated on the northeast side of this beach, adjacent to what are today known as the Orcan River and The Swans. The colony was buffered to the south by Dixon’s Hill, beyond and to the south of which lay the Brulé. The first major fortification, La Vieux Fort, was constructed on top of Mount Pleasant overlooking the gut and the Placentia Roads. As the colony grew and French and English hostilities increased, the French increased their fortifications in Placentia by constructing Fort Louis on what is today known as the Jersey-side Flats. This expanded the colony that eventually came to include the construction of Castle Royal and a series of defense works on top of Castle Hill.

Although the original colony included what is today referred to as Jerseyside, Jerseyside remained distinct from Placentia until the construction of the Sir Ambrose Shea Lift Bridge in 1961. Prior to the construction of the lift bridge, and still, Placentia was referred to as "townside" to distinguish it from Jerseyside. The gut flowing between the two communities effectively limited interactions between them. According to Tom O'Keefe, who grew up in the 1940s, before the communities were amalgamated, he identified strongly with Placentia, "clearly you're not Jerseyside. You're not from Freshwater. You're not from Dunville" (O'Keefe, Tom. Interview). When asked why the distinction was made between communities, he replied, "maybe it was mostly the [Colinet] road connection, the break in the water on Jerseyside. So people over there were doing things for themselves with themselves." He remembers as a child the ferry across the gut cost ten cents but "poor people wouldn't have a dime to go across the gut on the ferry" (O'Keefe, Tom. Interview). As a child, Tom says he

didn't leave Placentia a lot....I remember walking up maybe to Bond's Path or Southeast occasionally, or going up there to go troutng or something like that, but I don't remember going to Dunville or Freshwater or even Jerseyside a lot as very young...it was just because, and I don't know, I never related the two but I'm sure when I was a kid there was lots of times when I wouldn't have a dime and if I did I wouldn't waste it on a ferry trip. (O'Keefe, Tom. Interview)

Rita Power grew up in Dunville and recalls the original road that connected Dunville to the Colinet Road in the early 1960s.

Well it went through what they call the Devil's Bit, Ferndale. And then it went down the lower road in Dunville, down by the water. Now that was earlier. But when the Americans built the road they built the road through the middle of Dunville where it is now, but then you went on out and you...there's a dirt road now that turns off just as you begin the access road and it goes out around through the Southeast. Yeah, well if you keep going straight towards Colinet,

that's the way we had to go to St. John's, that was the road the Americans built.
(Power. Interview)

This route connected with the Colinet Road and then into Placentia. It was the only overland route between the communities on the north and south sides of the gut. Rita remembers as a child she would cross the gut on the ferry to go to school in Placentia, but then,

when the gut would freeze over in the winter, we used to have to go out around the [Colinet] road, like the road I was just telling you about, the dirt road. There'd be about a hundred and fifty of us on a 68 passenger bus because they'd have to pick up the Jerseyside crowd then because they used to walk to school [but couldn't cross the gut in winter]...they'd go right around, yeah. Bring us to school...Oh my god, we used to be two and three hours late...And we were standing three deep in the aisles and three in the seats going around on the road, like a glass bottle because it was so slippery. Because there was no highways department or anything then to salt the roads and stuff. I mean I look at Pete Coffey, now, he used to drive our bus and I think, "man, you're a hero. How did you ever have the nerve to haul that many kids around the road and that icy road?" But we'd be right delighted, you know, if something happened to the bus and we get broke down out there in the wilderness somewhere. (Power. Interview)

The lift bridge was operating in Rita's last year of high school and, according to her, "it wasn't half as much fun then, it wasn't exciting at all. You just got to school on time every day" (Power. Interview). Rita's reminiscences, through the filter of her childhood, serve to illustrate the difference that the bridge had in increasing access between the communities on both sides of the gut.

Margaret Kelly was raised on the Flats in Placentia. In her early twenties, before the bridge was built, she moved to Jerseyside to begin raising her family. She remembers feeling isolated from her life in Placentia.

My parents were on this side [Placentia], they were still living. And to get over here, well we had a car ferry, but I wouldn't drive a car at that time. I wouldn't put her on the ferry anyway. But the bridge meant you could get across

anytime...No, it's not far, but you're still away from friends and every time you want to make a run to a store you have to come across here and things like that. I don't know. [Placentia] was home. This was home for me. (Kelly. Interview)

For Mrs. Kelly, she'd "grown up over here, we're, Jerseyside wasn't my cup of tea...I had spent twenty-five years in Placentia, and then to move over on Jerseyside, you know" (Kelly. Interview).

Unlike Jerseyside, the Southeast and Bond's Path have always had an association with Placentia. Prior to the 1940s, overland access to Placentia was by way of the Colinet road that ran between St. John's and Colinet on St. Mary's Bay, continuing westward following the Southeast River into Placentia and along the Cape Shore. Most of the people I spoke with accept the Southeast as a part of Placentia. Tom O'Keefe was born and raised in Placentia and says, when he was young, prior to amalgamation, "Southeast, Bond's Path and Placentia would be more considered as one...And I think Point Verde. But even Point Verde had a little distinctiveness, and this is just in my consciousness. It's almost like I belong more to Southeast, Bond's Path, and Placentia—Townside" (O'Keefe, Tom. Interview). I asked Mrs. Kelly if, when she was younger, she considered the Southeast to be part of Placentia.

Mrs. Kelly: No, I didn't like the Southeast [as much as] I liked this spot here.

Patrick: And this spot didn't go much past Dixon's Hill at that time?

Mrs. Kelly: Dixon's Hill went that way, Southeast starts up over the hill there about a mile or so. Bond's Path, Southeast, Point Verde turns off to your right.

Patrick: So is Bond's Path part of the Southeast to you or is it part of Placentia?

Mrs. Kelly: They have their own names. They always had their own schools...it all started to come together with school and stuff, bringing them together. (Kelly. Interview)

According to Mrs. Kelly, communities were defined by the services they provided, or more specifically, whether or not they had their own school. After amalgamation, education became more centralized and the boundaries between communities began to dissolve. Other reasons for the merging of the communities in the minds of residents might be in part due to their shared history and the fact that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the Colinet Road brought a degree of economic development to Placentia through the Southeast. This may have created a local perception that the road physically and economically "connected" the Southeast with Placentia in contrast to the gut that effectively isolated the communities to the north. I asked Rita Power why Jerseyside seemed to be considered distinct from Placentia, whereas, the Southeast seems to be considered a part of Placentia.

And it was always, see...the southeast of Placentia was always a part of Placentia for some reason. But I think it was the Gut. The Gut made the difference. The Gut made the separation obvious in more ways than one. You know, because like they never say I'll go to Jerseyside. [They say] I'll go across the Gut. They had these sayings "up street" and "across the Gut." You were going to a foreign country if you went across the Gut. (Power. Interview)

Bond's Path is a small community between Placentia and the Southeast. It is also occasionally mentioned in conversations about Placentia. According to Tom O'Keefe,

it's not so much recognized now, but when you leave and go up towards what's called Southeast, it's more recognizable. In the old days that route would have been split up into two divisions, Bond's Path, which we saw it as a place dividing at a place called Smelt River, and then go on to the other side of Smelt River, a little further out, and you're in Southeast. So each one of them might be a couple of miles long or less and just strung out, basically houses on either side of the highway there in the old days. They've spread out a little more since, but they're just houses on each side of the main road coming in to Placentia. (O'Keefe, Tom. Interview)

Although it exists in local memory as a separate entity, Bond's Path no longer appears to have a distinct political or physical presence in the region. Meghan MacGillivray is a teenager who grew up in Placentia.

Patrick: Placentia, this is your home?

Meeghan: Well yeah, this is my home.

Patrick: I know your parents came from somewhere else but...

Meeghan: Yeah, well yeah. This is practically my home. I consider it my home.

Patrick: The Southeast Arm?

Meeghan: Ah, yep. Well, Bond's Path actually. But Southeast is the same place. (MacGillivray. Interview)

Most of historic Placentia is conveniently framed by natural features, the most prominent being the cobbled Great Beach. The other major defining feature is the gut that separates Placentia from most of the other communities in the municipality. The gut is, in many ways, a metaphor for the independent development of Placentia, an independence fuelled by the presence of the Great Beach. Militarily, the gut separated the French fortifications from the community they were constructed to protect. Starting in the nineteenth century and following the period of military occupation, neighbouring communities to Placentia began developing independent economies based primarily on in-shore fishing, although other forms of resource extraction, such as agricultural produce in the Southeast or timber cutting in Dunville, were also practiced. Placentia, meanwhile, continued to develop primarily as a centre for services providing land-based labour and materials for the fishing industry. At first it provided the beach and a resident labour force for migratory fishermen. Later, it became the base for a variety of merchants and

ship building companies. Because of its commercial identity, it also became the centre for other forms of social infrastructure such as the church, local government, legal and other ancillary services. Fishermen and their families using these services settled in the surrounding communities, whereas Placentia was characteristically settled by the people providing the services. Thus, with a population characterized by a professional class of citizens such as doctors, teachers, priests, nuns, and merchants the community eventually gained the distinct reputation of being the home of “saints and scholars.”

Although Placentia’s history is intricately woven with the history of Placentia Bay, it is defined by its being a centre for services as opposed to being a fishing community. It is not an outpost.⁸ This makes it unique in relationship to the communities that have grown up adjacent to it. The history of this relationship and the fact that this relationship persists at the present time is the primary rationale for establishing the boundaries of the study area around the original French colony, the original Plaisance.⁹

2.1.2 Past

When Gerald Pocius began his field work in Calvert, Newfoundland, he asked residents to tell him about the community’s “history.” His request led him to a tradition founded primarily on “oral accounts of late-nineteenth-century textbook history” and the realization that, for the residents of Calvert, “history” was something one learned from books; “print has become sacred” and “local oral accounts in Calvert are considered less accurate than the written word” (Pocius 2000:45). Instead of history, “an academic chronology that deals with the general past—bold sweeping trends over long periods of time,” Pocius realized what he was looking for was Calvert’s Past, a collection of

narratives “filled...with specific deeds and pervasive attitudes, all connected to particular locations...in talk about people’s actions connected to specific places” (Pocius 2000:34). It sounds like a subtle distinction, History/Past, but it is an important one because it stresses that, for Calvert, and as we will see for Placentia, history is twofold: it is “History,” what people write about in books, and it is the “Past,” a collection of oral narratives that document the lives and lineages of the individuals who enact them. When we ask, therefore, “how does a community understand its past” we are not asking only for a chronology of events, we are also inquiring about the meanings those events impart for the individuals that perpetuate them.

Carl Becker, writing in 1932 on the relativist nature of history, also noted history’s dualistic character. He wrote, “there are two histories: the actual series of events that once occurred; and the ideal series that we affirm and hold in memory. The first is absolute and unchanged—it was what it was whatever we say or do about it; the second is relative, always changing in response to the increase or refinement of knowledge” (Becker 1969:6). For Becker, the “essence of history is the memory of things said and done”; history is “what we know it to be” (1969:7). History, therefore, is the privilege of any being capable of memory. One of Becker’s goals is to show the egalitarian nature of the historic process and to stress that if historians can claim any authority in their work, it is only because they derive their results from the dedicated study of a broader selection of data than the average citizen and that the narratives they produce “preserve and perpetuate the social tradition” (1969:17). The historian, unlike Becker’s “Everyman,” is one who has been entrusted with “the keeping of the useful myths” (1969:16); not just the

dissociated facts of events, but also imaginatively reconstructing the narrative context that gives them meaning. In the end, it is “not the indiscriminated fact, but the perceiving mind of the historian that speaks...to present the succession of events in the life of man, and from the succession of events thus presented to derive a satisfactory meaning” (1969:17).

For Henry Glassie, writing more than sixty years after Becker, the purpose of history remains to “frame vague, general knowledge into the specific factual narratives that contain the messages people must consider in their effort to live properly” (1994:965). One of the important “tasks” of historical research is to study “the ways people construct understandings of the past in order to speak about culture in the present...to learn why and how history is important to the living” (Glassie 1994:961). Like Becker, Glassie supports a relativist perspective on the creation of historical narratives. For Glassie, the fluid character of historical narrative is central to its social purpose;

the sacred narrative and the society it charters both exist only in a constant state of reconfiguration...we can say history’s purpose is to charter societies, consolidating them in the face of variable dangers, while itself lying beyond consolidation in a realm of endless revision where facts fuse with affect. The past about which history is a tale is so enormous that all narratives are incomplete.... (1994:962)

This is not to say history is not factual, rather it supports Becker’s claim that there is a limit to how much one person can communicate. An historian’s stories are, according to Glassie, selective and purposeful in their telling.

The historians do more than gather the facts; they select key events and reconstruct them into engaging tales that trap the particular while suggesting the general. The stories join in truth, in space and time, and they connect in narrative

order, in typological formation... Together they comprise the history of a people, an outline of their culture, a view of their world. Making an epic of common life, the stories tell, not of a rare hero, an Achilles, Sunjata, or Yoshitsune, but of people like us who shifted through time in a small rural place, facing the dilemmas of existence, making choices, living with the consequences, and find a way to carry on. (2006:378)

One of the great purposes of history is to make us “feel more at home, more densely and maturely a member of [our] community” (Glassie 1994:963) whether it is an isolated farming community or the global village. Historical narratives,

do not float free. They are attached to the land [to a place], which becomes a massive mnemonic device. Then knowledge of the land, necessary to getting around, provides people with a collective warehouse of historical information, shelved by location, from which facts can be lifted and shaped into distinct narratives that are performed in relation to each other to meet the instructional needs of the instant. (Glassie 1994:965)

To feel at home we need to understand both the people we come from and the place we inhabit.

History, therefore, defines us in the present based upon the stories we tell about events from past. It is dualistic in nature. It is both an impersonal chronology of events recounted at a wide scale and it is a recounting of personal/communal experience at a local scale. The Past, as the term is used in this thesis,¹⁰ is based on personal experience and landscape. It is a form of history derived from experiences resulting from having lived in a place. It is, as in Pocius’s work in Calvert, a body of knowledge based on shared experience that is held in common by the members of a community. And it is, according to Glassie’s work in Ballymenone, true; meaning “worthy of belief, for truth is what one sincerely believes in the light of the facts” (Glassie 2006: 375). Historians speak

the truth to bring people together, resisting the divisive forces of politics and making it possible for the people who gather tonight in the ceili to gather tomorrow in the fields. Silence and lies drive people apart. Talking and truth pull them together. Truth is the lashing, the binding and the basis of social order; truth is the buried armature of the stories that entertain the company at the hearth. (Glassie 2006: 377).

When we ask, therefore, “how does a community understand its past,” we are asking how a group of people understand the shared experience of having occupied a specific space over a period of time. What are the narratives they tell to create a sense of belonging; to situate themselves as the legitimate proprietors of the place they call home?

2.1.3 Understand

History is, for Glassie as it was for Becker, ultimately indistinguishable from myth. Becker, an historian writing in 1932, referred to historians as the keepers of the “useful myths” (1969:16) while Glassie, a folklorist writing in 1999, states that “writing history is speaking myth” (1999:6). History and myth are both bodies of stories linking people to their distant past through genealogy (time) and through the landscape (space) they inhabit. Local historical narratives, what Pocius refers to as the “past” and Glassie refers to as the knowledge retained by “country historians,” is focused on “the human condition, told to raise enduring moral issues” (Glassie 1994:965). Glassie refers to history as myth, as a social “charter” (1994:961), a coded text for communicating standards of social behaviour. As such, it is also a narrative accepted by the largest part of society as being the foundation of that society. Claude Levi-Strauss stated that, “I am not far from believing that, in our own societies, history has replaced mythology and fulfils the same function, that for societies without writing and without archives the aim of mythology is to ensure that as closely as possible...the future will remain faithful to the

present and to the past" (42). For Levi-Strauss, the schism between mythology and history in modern western society "can probably be breached by studying histories which are conceived as not at all separated from but as a continuation of mythology" (43).

William Bascom defines myth as

prose narratives which, in the society in which they are told, are considered to be truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past. They are accepted on faith; they are taught to be believed; and they can be cited as authority in answer to ignorance, doubt, or disbelief. Myths are the embodiment of dogma; they are usually sacred; and they are often associated with theology and ritual. Their main characters are not usually human beings, but they often have human attributes; they are animals, deities, or culture heroes, whose actions are set in an earlier world, when the earth was different from what it is today, or in another world such as the sky or underworld. Myths account for the origin of the world. (98)

Elliott Oring includes the element of social charter into his definition of myth when he states that myths "do not refer to the forms of narrative so much as to the attitudes of the community toward them" (124). Community's tend to accept their myths, not because they necessarily believe the facts of the story, the events might seem fantastical to a sceptical mind, but because individuals need a sense of origin to develop a sense of belonging. Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, in discussing myth archetypes in our everyday lives, state that at an individual level, "any life story, written or oral...is in one sense a personal mythology, a self-justification" (10). Martin Lovelace says that in Port de Grave, Newfoundland, the story of the community's origins "takes on the character of a foundation myth, which is indicative of a society's chosen view of its history but may not be objectively true" (52). Robert Bringhurst, in reference to his work on Haida oral history, states that the "mythtellers calling...is to elucidate the structure and the workings of the world. Myths are stories that investigate the nature of the world" (288). For

Bringhurst, myth is not history, it is the “sense that history makes” (360). The performance of myth is a journey and the “reason for such voyages is learning, not by rote but by experience. That is why myths take mythic form. Knowledge is digested when experience occurs, and in order for experience to happen, a story must unfold” (407). Myth brings order to our world by incorporating realities beyond personal experience into our understanding of the past. Myth is the personal experience of Story, a communication of an event’s constituent meanings and intentions. Myth is history beyond reach. It is deep history, mythic in its purpose in defining a base for subsequent understandings of what it means for an individual to belong within a social group and/or an associated landscape. According to Oring, “myths tend to be core narratives in larger ideological systems. Concerned with ultimate realities, they are often set outside of historical time” (124). While history is a method for understanding the daily realities of belonging to a place, myth is a framework for understanding the realities of a place beyond any lived experience or family connection of the individual. In Placentia, the town’s history, the history of the place, is ultimately understood mythically.

According to Bascom, myths are accepted on faith and are taught to be believed. As we have already discussed, because it is ultimately subjective, history, at some point becomes an act of faith for those who listen to historians. The most prominent myth in Placentia is the community’s identification as the “ancient French capital.”¹¹ In Placentia, the “keepers” of the “ancient French capital” myth are currently epitomized by the presence of Castle Hill National Historic Site of Canada and its interpretive staff and the archaeologists working for the Newfoundland Archaeological Heritage Outreach

Program (NAHOP). These two groups currently exercise the greatest authority over the interpretation of the tangible remains of the French presence in the town. Their interpretations, based on knowledge gained through specialized training, are accepted on faith by community members who, in turn, repeat the stories as truth to others. In this way, these interpretations become, as Bascom states, the “embodiment of dogma” with professional historians and archaeologists the unquestioned authorities. The following excerpts come from an interview with John Bruce, one of the local excavators working on the Fort Louis site.

Patrick: So how did you learn the history?

John: Oh, through digging here and over on the fort across the way there. You know. Blair’s been telling us a lot of history. Ken is another guy that has been telling us a lot of history.

...

Patrick: So, if you have a question you want to ask about history, who would you go to?

John: If I had any questions to ask now I’d go to Ken, yeah. Pretty much. Amanda.¹² If she couldn’t help me out, I’d try Ken. That’s the biggest information place that I can think of. (Bruce. Interview)

Ken, is Kenneth Flynn, a board member of the Placentia Area Historical society and a Placentia resident. He was one of several residents actively involved in supporting the development of the archaeological sites. Ken is self-educated in the history of the French and British occupations in Placentia. Much of his knowledge came from his reading research reports and talking with people associated with Castle Hill National Historic Site and the NAHOP program. Many local residents consider Ken to be an “expert” on the

public history of the area, an equal to the trained archaeologists conducting the excavations. According to John Bruce,

Well, I worked at O'Reilly house about three or four years ago doing a bit of work, we was restoring the house, and Ken would always pop in in the daytime for a little visit, right. And I used to just call it a history lesson, you know...what got me going on history was Ken. Pretty much. You know, you'd hear this and that and the other thing over they years, but, go in a historic house and we're doing some renovations and restoring it and Ken was kinda overseeing it all and ah, she just went from there. (Bruce. Interview)

The next two characteristics of myth are more difficult to apply; they are usually sacred and are often associated with theology and ritual. The difficulty is, in part, because in contemporary western society secular narratives have become more prominent than religious ones. In Placentia, the myth of the "ancient French capital" is very much integrated as a key component in the economic prosperity of the community. In this way, the myth is sacred, meaning sacrosanct or inviolable, because to question it, or rather the community's interpretation of it, would be to violate a community charter by threatening, not the community's belief in the story, but rather the community's economic viability.

The final characteristic of myth is that the characters are not usually humans, but have human attributes, and their actions are set in a world different than it is today. The characters that play a key role in the myth of Placentia are the everyday soldiers and fishermen that populated the French community. Removed from the daily lives of the current residents by time, culture, and the basic realities of life, but linked by place, these early residents become models to support the achievements of the current residents.

I lie in bed, I lie in bed in the night time, especially in the wintertime, it was a real cold night and it can get cold around here too. And I sat thinking to myself now, 500 years ago there was probably some kind of a little shed here, right here where my house is, okay. Probably a family of four or five huddled in one little room,

okay. Did they have enough to eat? Did they have firewood? Because this is a beach, they couldn't just go outside and cut down a tree and burn it...and then people didn't have, it's documented that a lot of them died of malnutrition from one reason or another whether it was from scurvy or TB or whatever. But, what kind of life did you have? I mean it was, if it's hard for people now in the twentieth century, it must have been very, it must have been a lot harder for them. How would they survive, that's what I think about. And what I always think about is the young kids. I've got a little grand daughter, she's got down syndrome...If she was around 500 years ago she wouldn't have a chance. So how many people or small kids who were sick, when there was no doctors or nothing around and no food and stuff, that died before their time, you know? (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Rachelle Connors, an interpreter at Castle Hill National Historic Site, also speculates about the original French colonists and the hardships they faced.

I have to look back and think of what kind of a life they had. And I find I do that a lot. How did the French make out here? Did they have a good life? It had to be very difficult. Because everything was so far, they're homeland was back so far, so they imported everything, it was more costly so it had to be a hard life, it had to be a hard life....Because, right now if I want to go home I just hop a plane and go home. However, back then, they had to wait for the seasons. There was a sailing season. They had to have their money to go. Money was hard to get. Money was difficult to get and they had to work hard to get the little bit they got, you know. (Connors. Interview)

The French are viewed as survivors. They are foreigners in a foreign, inhospitable land putting in time before they can return home. According to Art,

Now, if you can imagine yourself with a fifteen pound musket on your back in the middle of February, probably forty-five degrees below zero, with twenty degrees plus a twenty mile an hour wind, looking out there to see what's going on and you're a long way from home because he's probably from France somewhere. I mean what did these people go through? You know. They had very inadequate clothing, I imagine a lot of them had very inadequate food and they didn't have life easy...I'm just saying, I'm wondering how those people survived, okay. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

They are not Newfoundlanders. I asked Art O'Keefe if I interviewed one of the French fishermen living in Placentia in the 1700s would I be speaking to a Newfoundlander?

Art's response was "no, you'd have got a Frenchman's story" (O'Keefe, Art. Interview).

The French were not born and bred of this place and are not, in the end, suited to more than simply surviving in it.

I think he was so caught up in survival that he didn't have time for anything else. I mean he probably worked seven days a week and he worked as long as he could make fish or whatever. They had to do a lot of things just to survive. Well, I'm retired, but if I wasn't retired, I wouldn't be working at twelve hours a day seven days a week. You don't have to. And I wouldn't have to go out and set potatoes and tend them. I didn't have to go out and raise cattle and tend them. I didn't have to grow wheat and bake bread because it wasn't needed. All you have to do is go up to Sobey's or go here or go there and buy it. But his fellah, he had to really have his nose to the grindstone and if you asked him I would think that you would, yes, get a sense of a...patriotism. Me, I'm a Newfoundlander and this and that and I love the place but a lot of them didn't like the place. They had no other choice but to be there. You know. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

The myth of the "ancient French capital" is a founding myth for the community, but it is a narrative of occupation, not of direct descent. As Kristin McCrowe states, "the things they've found they can date back and they know that there were people here and things, but I don't really think it gives a sense exactly of who we are or who we came from" (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview). It is a narrative of the origins of the place, not of the people who currently live there.

The most obscure characters in the Placentia myth are the Basque. Very little is known of their presence. They exist primarily as narrative. Tangible evidence is restricted to a small collection of gravestones that are dissociated from their graves (Howley 1912). Excavations conducted on Mount Pleasant were originally believed to have uncovered an early Basque fortification, but subsequent analysis found no artifacts to support this. The main Basque narrative is an accounting of the origins of the town's name. The French name Plaisance, interpreted locally as meaning "pleasant place," is believed to have its origins in the Basque word "Plazienca," meaning "a harbour within a womb of hills." The

reference first appears on a map dating to 1547. There is no other historic documentation to support a Basque presence in Placentia. They are almost pre-mythic. While their presence historically precedes the French, the story of the Basque has not yet been successfully configured into the larger narrative of French occupation except as a fuzzy precursor, a preamble to the French. Still, it stands as the foundation myth for Placentia; the story, if you will, of its birth.

2.1.4 How

“How” is a question of method. When we ask how does a machine operate, we are asking about the mechanics of the machine; what are the processes that make it function, how does it work. When we ask how does a community understand its past we are asking what are the methods employed to make sense of the present by looking at the past. To summarize the initial research question, “how does a community understand its past,” therefore, we are asking by what method do the residents of the municipality of “Placentia” express the history of their community in order to justify it, for themselves and for outsiders, as a place where they belong. The mechanics of this question have been presented in the previous discussions of the words Community, Past, and Understand. This section will draw those discussions together and present the central thesis of this thesis; a working model for how Placentia understands its past at the time of this research.

Modern Placentia is one of several communities constituting a larger municipality. Each of these communities has a distinct history that persists in spite of the amalgamation. It is accurate to say that the municipality is in the early stages of defining

a singular, or unified, self-identity, that “as amalgamation presses forward we’re trying our best to draw them all into one” (Whelan. Interview). The key element to a shared sense of history is the role of Placentia as the “ancient French capital.” While the theme of the French is used to promote the entire municipality, it is most prominent in Placentia, the area that was the original French colony of Plaisance. This is also the area, according to the interviews conducted for this research, with the weakest sense of communal history. Few of the people interviewed considered themselves to be from Placentia, although they have come to call it home. When they spoke of their personal history, they generally related stories of a different place and often of a way of life that belonged to their parents. Most of the informants were the first, at the most the second, generation to live in “town.”

In the section on the Past it was stated that history is twofold. It is a broad chronology of events and it is a selective recounting of personal experiences. A chronology generally places historic events beyond the community level and at a national or international scale. Personal experiences are generally limited to the social group and landscape in which the events occurred. According to the definitions presented in this thesis, the Past in Placentia is “Personal,” meaning based on the experience of living in the community, and “Mythic,” meaning it deals with events beyond personal experience. The myth of Placentia as the “ancient French capital” is also considered to be the “Public” version of the community’s past. It is considered to be the socially accepted version of the past that is presented to outsiders. It is also the single narrative drawing the disparate personal histories together to create the beginnings of a singular identity for the

town. The myth is a focal point enabling newcomers a means to attach themselves to the history and to the landscape of Placentia.

Rachelle Connors is a Francophone, originally from Ottawa, who now lives in Placentia. She came to Placentia with her husband when he returned home for his retirement. When she first arrived in Placentia, Rachelle worked in a local bakery. When the bakery closed down, she returned to school, and late in her life managed to graduate with her Level 3.¹³ Following this she applied for and got a job working as an interpreter at Castle Hill National Historic Site. According to Rachelle, when she started the job she “never knew any of [the local history]. So, as material was given to us to learn, I’ve found out all kinds of stuff that I didn’t know before...and it’s really interesting” (Connors. Interview).

Rachelle: Well it changed my outlook on this area altogether.

Patrick: What was your outlook before?

Rachelle: Well, it was an English place, but that’s not true. That’s not true at all, you know. French was here. In fact, there was Spanish, Portugese, English and French and all through the wars it was, down to the last day, French and English. (Connors. Interview)

Learning the details of the community’s history and the role that the French played has had a major impact on Rachelle’s sense of belonging in Placentia. Prior to her studies, she felt dissociated with what she felt was a primarily English community. Having learned of the prominent role that the French played in the local history, Rachelle claims to have “grown an affinity into the place, you know. Yes, because when I walk up on Castle Hill my, what would you say, my ancestors, because of the French, worked,

walked here, fought here, struggled here you know, so. I think it's great" (Connors. Interview).

The dualism in Placentia's history is, therefore, generally speaking, the Public myth (the heritage) of the ancient French capital, and the Personal experiences of coming from someplace else. Again, it must be stressed that the "someplace else" is often a neighbouring community within the current municipality.

Henry Glassie uses the terms public and private when he discusses a similar dichotomy in the Irish community of Ballymenone (Glassie 2006). For the residents of Ballymenone, as with the residents of Placentia, neither way of understanding is an absolute. Rather, identities are "fluid," they are acquired depending on the circumstances of a given situation: "between the public and private opens a wide realm of transaction, neither public exactly, nor private exactly, that divides by nuances of access" (Glassie 2006: 381). Public and private, public and personal, the terms refer to an ideal on either side of a continuum. In Ballymenone,

Private instances lie to one side, public to the other, but most of time passes between, in the fields and at the hearth. Daily experience in the fields counters all ideology. Local, quite, and thoughtful, the talk at the hearth contradicts the national, loud, and emotional talk of the town. In different settings – alone on the lane, in company at the fire, in the crowd of the town – they think differently and represent themselves differently. They have no need beyond the immediate context to develop a logically reconciled consistency. Their thought has not consolidated into a mindset abstract from reality. Sincere in every situation, responding to its demands, they hold within a conflicted complexity that slips, shuffles, and transforms, enabling spontaneous change. (Glassie 2006: 385)

In Placentia, the public and the personal versions of the community's history work together to create a sense of belonging. The Public myth of the "ancient French capital" provides a means for individuals to attach themselves to a place where they have limited

personal experience. It is a commonly held narrative that provides a foundation for belonging at the level of community.

Personal narratives are what individuals use to define themselves. Personal stories are about the immediate past. For most residents, their personal stories are associated with other places that are seen as being very distinct from Placentia. Fred Whelan, the Deputy Mayor of Placentia at the time I interviewed him, grew up in Jerseyside and had family connections to Argentina. Fred is a passionate promoter of Newfoundland and of Placentia. In his own words, "Newfoundland is the best place in God's creation...and I think Placentia is the best part of Newfoundland. I'm being biased and tunnel visioned, you know, but I got great memories of growing up here" (Whelan. Interview). For Whelan, the Deputy Mayor, Placentia means "the whole municipality, the whole amalgamated community of Dunville, Freshwater, Jerseyside, Placentia, Southeast, Ferndale" (Whelan. Interview). When pushed, Fred Whelan from Jerseyside, admits that "as much as I am pro-Placentia, I'm still Jerseyside. But Jerseyside is an integral part of the amalgamated town of Placentia, so I am Placentia. But I am still, in my heart and in my mind a Jerseysider" (Whelan. Interview).

At the present time, the residents of Placentia attach themselves to the myth of the "ancient French capital" to make up for a lack of personal experience in the community. The myth provides a framework for the creation of a sense of belonging to a place, to a landscape that many residents are not yet capable of giving voice to. At present, the residents have a relative scarcity of personal experiences to give depth to their community's history. As a result, a great deal of information is derived from more

official channels such as the publications of professional writers and researchers and communicated through “heritage” products and programs. The myth of the “ancient French capital” is a suitable substitute for an overall lack of personal experience of living in the community. Personal histories, in contrast, are full of anecdotal information. The narratives recounted most often deal with events occurring in communities other than Placentia and are often told as family stories passed on by the teller’s parents or as first hand accounts. These stories reinforce a general lack of attachment to Placentia, meaning Great Placentia or the colony of Plaisance, by the current residents of the municipality. Amalgamation is still fresh in people’s minds and it is only with time that the historic boundaries between communities will dissolve and a wealth of generations of personal experience will lead to a deeper sense of the Past in Placentia.

Chapter 3: AN OVERVIEW OF PLACENTIA'S HISTORY

Placentia's history is as long and colourful as the history of the island of Newfoundland though not nearly as well documented. The majority of the history written about Placentia involves the role the community played in the international struggles between England and France. A body of research was compiled during the development of Castle Hill National Historic Site (Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada; Humphreys; Morton; Proulx) and this literature is being added to as a result of ongoing archaeological investigations (Crompton, Gaulton and Carter, Jersey/Plandentia Archaeological Society). Very little, though, has been written (Barnable; Placentia Area Special Issue; Mannion 1986, 1987; McCarthy 1973), with specific reference to Placentia, on the years following the Treaty of Utrecht and the withdrawal of the French from Newfoundland, and the emergence of the island as an English colony. As one team of researchers wrote, "Beyond the eighteenth century, Placentia played a very limited role for the English and consequently there was a reduction in trade. The end result was that both the settlement and many of its buildings fell into a state of ruin" (Gaulton and Carter 5). While this is true of the military occupation of Placentia, the withdrawal of the British military ushered in an era of growth for the remaining civilian population. Still, the belief that Placentia's history ended with the withdrawal of the French is unacceptably common. Frederick Rowe summarized the history of Placentia, in the context of the history of Newfoundland, as follows:

On the east side of [Placentia] Bay is the historic town of Placentia, heart of French activities in Newfoundland for many years. The French formally occupied and strongly fortified the site in 1662, but they were forced to relinquish it by the

terms of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Just a few miles to the north is Argentia....” (18)¹⁴

There are numerous themes belonging to Newfoundland’s history that are represented in Placentia’s history as well. Among others, a list would include: the emergence of a merchant class; Irish immigration; the judicial and medical history of Newfoundland; the growth of the bank fishery; the building of roads and the railway; resettlement; the construction of American military bases; and the emergence of municipal governments. The following is intended as an outline of Placentia’s history, putting it in a context with the history of the island, with a focus upon events that have shaped the community. This is a history derived primarily from secondary sources, constructed to provide a framework. It is not intended to be a comprehensive history, such an undertaking would take several volumes. Drawing primarily on published sources, the goal of this chapter is to illustrate some of the patterns and themes in Placentia’s history as a basis for comparison to the residents’ individual understanding of their past.

3.1 Plaisance: 1500-1713

The documented history of Placentia Bay is as old as the history of the island of Newfoundland. It is believed that the Placentia area was first explored at the beginning of the sixteenth century¹⁵ (McCarthy 1973: 43). The area is first recorded on a map, dating to 1504, as *Insulae Cortrealis*, named after the Portugese explorers and mapmakers Gaspar and Miguel Cortreal. By 1547 the name had been changed to *Isle de Plaziencia*, reflecting the increased use of the area by Spanish fishermen. It was also an important

fishing location for Basque fishermen who, along with the Spanish and Portuguese, continued to use the area after it had become, first a French, and later, a British colony.

The English and French were equally interested in Newfoundland's rich fishing grounds. By 1550 Portugal, Spain, France, and England were busy working around the island. While no single nation had yet claimed control, all four "fished and fought together" (Matthews 48). By 1600, Spain and Portugal had ceded control of the island to the English and French. While all four nations continued their fishery interests in Newfoundland, the English began to focus their seasonal activities on the east coast of the Avalon Peninsula. At the same time, the French were establishing themselves along the southern shore, centralizing their operations on a migratory fishery operating out of the French colonial capital at Placentia. In 1655, Louis XIV appointed the first French Governor for Newfoundland in order to establish France's authority in Placentia in opposition to rival claims by the British and militancy by the Spanish Basque and Breton fisherman who were still "claiming it as their own port" (McCarthy 1973: 44). For the next thirty-five years a succession of French Governors would struggle to establish a small resident population of colonists and military personnel intended to support a migratory fishery and assert France's authority over the Placentia Bay fishery.¹⁶ By 1690 England and France were heading to war. The strategic importance of Placentia was being brought to the fore. According to McCarthy:

Up to the year 1690, it had been a convenient fishing station and haven for ships sailing from Quebec to France. From its founding its fortunes had waxed and waned with the success of the fishery and the royal whim. Now it became a base of operations against the English and their interest in both Newfoundland and Canada. No longer would the French claim that their colony was founded to

advance the fur trade and not the fishery, nor to give protection from marauding bands of Indians. (1973: 64)

Hostilities between the French and English continued until the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 that ceded the island of Newfoundland to the British. The French, under obligations of the treaty, were required to either pledge their allegiance to England or to abandon the French colony; “either accept the French King’s bounty and go to the Isle Royale, or the English Queen’s permission to retain their property and remain at Placentia as English subjects” (McCarthy 1973: 74-75). The response to leaving appears to have been mixed, partially because Placentia was composed of individuals of Irish, English, and Basque, as well as French origins who were not necessarily motivated by their patriotic obligation to France, if to any nation. Prowse quotes a contemporary historian that, “M. De Costabelle, the Governor, therefore lost no time in sending off the garrison and inhabitants to Cape Breton so that the latter might not lose their summer’s fishing. Some of the people objected to leaving Plaisance...and would willingly have remained under English domination, but Costabelle urged all to go except idlers and vagabonds, whom he discreetly left as a legacy to his successor” (259). The transfer of Placentia from the French to the English marks “the last episode in the history of the French Colony in Newfoundland. The settlement existed there over half a century, but during all that time it never increased, it was essentially military” (Prowse 259).

3.2 Under British Rule: 1713-1811

Under British rule, Newfoundland began taking steps to become an English colony. In Placentia, the years from 1713 until the abandoning of the British garrison in 1811 saw the regional development of a colonial government, the establishment of a

predominantly Irish population, the successful development of the fishery, and the rise of the great merchant firm of Saunders and Sweetman. In general, the greater part of the eighteenth century was characterized by steady growth and prosperity.

With the acquisition of the French Colony, the English fishing merchants anticipated an increase in their business interests, including access to the rich fishing grounds in Placentia Bay. A legal formality denied them immediate access as control of Placentia fell into the hands of the British officers who made every effort, and succeeded until 1728, to seize control of the fishery.¹⁷ According to Prowse,

When the English took possession [of Placentia], Governor Moody and his successor, Governor Gledhill, followed the same practice as their predecessors; Moody, and some of his subordinates, bought out the French officers...this military dominion and military trading was too much for the West Countrymen, and a peremptory order was sent to the lieutenant-governor of Placentia...putting an end to their trading and fishing. (282)

Placentia managed to prosper while under Gledhill. His strict hand did not keep all the merchants away and, in fact, he does not appear to have discouraged merchants from setting up shop, rather he exacted a large part of their profits in return for allowing them access to the area's resources. Meanwhile, the population and economy of Placentia grew so that, by 1725, it is described as a

very prosperous town, with a ship yard that built several ships for the foreign trade, and attracted many fishing merchant ships which came for repairs suffered in storms on the way across the Atlantic. The Jerseymen, too, were now coming in great numbers, and they occupied the side of the harbour opposite old Fort Louis, which became known and is still known as 'The Jersey side.' The main English merchant at Placentia was a Richard Welsh, who...continued in business until around 1750. (McCarthy 1973:77)

Increased pressure from the West Country merchants culminated with the decision of the English Privy Council, in 1727, to establish a seasonal governor for

Newfoundland along with a series of resident justices of the peace. With the establishment of legal, as opposed to military authority, Placentia was removed from the jurisdiction of the Governor of Nova Scotia and became one of six original legal districts in Newfoundland.¹⁸ With its extensive fortifications, Placentia had become the military centre of the island following the Treaty in 1713. It, therefore, was also designated to be the initial seat of government with the transfer of legal authority and, according to Barnable, “indeed, between 1713 and 1762 Placentia, not St. John’s, was the chief town of British-held Newfoundland” (6).

The prominence of Placentia and the Placentia Bay fishery at the beginning of the eighteenth century played a key role in the initial establishment of the Irish Catholic population on the island. Irish servants had been employed by British merchants since the beginning of the Newfoundland fishery.¹⁹

It was to buy...Irish woollens, ‘Frises, Bandel-cloths,’ ‘stockins,’ pork, beef, butter, to engage Irish servants, that the West Countrymen first touched at Waterford and Cork on their way out to Newfoundland, and thus commenced the Irish trade in ‘youngsters’ and provisions. The first Irishmen in the Colony were these youngsters, shipped for two summers and a winter; as Baudoin tells us, they were servants to the English, who treated them ill. (Prowse 201)

Dissatisfied with their treatment by the English, many of the Irish servants abandoned their positions to search out other employment on the island. Over time, the island’s resident Irish population increased and began to develop the skills necessary to become successful fishermen.²⁰

In Placentia, a concerted effort was made to recruit Irish servants. According to Matthews, “perhaps even more important” to Irish settlement in Newfoundland after 1713, than the diaspora of disillusioned servants,

was the problem of developing the fishery in Placentia Bay. Colonel Gledhill, commander of the garrison at Placentia, claimed ownership of all the good beaches and fishing rooms and the West Country men, refusing to pay him rent, tended to stay away from that area. He (illegally) developed the fishery for himself but needed labour, or at least someone who would rent fishing rooms from him. The West Country men would not deal with him and he seems to have turned to Ireland. By 1729 the population of Placentia town was growing rapidly and over eighty percent of them were Irish. They came almost to a man from the town and locality of Waterford city—indeed, most of them were called Power. Placentia was settled as an Irish community and so it has basically remained to this day. (Matthews 153)

Newfoundland's Irish population continued to grow, expanding along the South Coast and into Placentia Bay. Placentia developed as a mercantile centre with a predominantly Irish population, while St. John's developed its role as a political centre dominated by the English. Although they were the governing class in Newfoundland, the English were also the minority, the majority of the population being Irish. The potential threat of this imbalance was acted upon after 1745, after France had renewed her threats of invasion and the English were forced to question the loyalty of the island's Irish residents. Fears that the Irish would side with the French lead to the enacting of legislation aimed at controlling the Irish (McCarthy 1999). The dissatisfaction of Irish servants because of unlawful treatment by their English employers and the justice system lead to further unrest. Persecution of the Irish and a climate of fear among the English persisted throughout the eighteenth century. The repealing, in 1784, of legislation denying Roman Catholics from conducting religious services on the island (McCarthy 1973:85) was the first official attempt to quell antagonism between the English and Irish residents.

It was the ability of St. John's to provide an infrastructure for the increasing administrative needs of the Colonial government that eventually saw its development diverge from that of Placentia. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, St. John's had not yet emerged as the political and economic centre of the island. In fact, according to Barnable (2002), Placentia was the centre of authority until the 1760s. It wasn't until the early nineteenth century that economic control was centralized in St. John's with the rise of the Water Street Merchants (Matthews 168-169).

Matthews states that there was "nothing God-given about...the justification of St. John's as a capital" (166).

We sometimes forget, for example, that the first colonists did not choose to settle in St. John's but in places like Harbour Grace, Cupids, or Ferryland...the only reason why men visited or settled in Newfoundland was to catch fish and St. John's is not a good place for inshore fishermen to operate from—at least it will not support a large population if they must live off their own fishing. However, although as yet St. John's was of no great economic importance—and certainly had not economic influence over the other ports—it already [by 1713] stood out as a communications [and administrative] centre. (166-167)

St. John's was the first major port encountered by ships crossing the Atlantic, which made it a logical location for the seat of a central government for the island.²¹

Placentia, although it was the original seat of colonial authority, was economically based on the fishery and did not provide any specific administrative opportunities that were not already provided by St. John's. It is interesting to note that the shortcoming noted for St. John's, that it would not support a large population if they have to live off their own fishing, is similar to the problems of self-sufficiency which hampered French settlement in Placentia. Placentia was, also like St. John's, the first major harbour encountered when entering Placentia Bay. LeMessurier states, "Placentia is...low land on the eastern side

and there is no harbor for 27 miles inside of Cape St. Mary's, and not until Placentia is reached can one be made" (7). But, unlike St. John's, it was the infrastructure provided by fishing merchants²² servicing Placentia Bay, not English politicians, that provided a basis for the existence of a resident population in Placentia.

England had little concern for the French Bay until the garrison at Plaisance became a military threat. Once that threat was eliminated, English military occupation of the Bay appears to have been little more than a display of sovereignty. By 1713, England had already begun to organize its Newfoundland colony along the east coast of the island and, when the entire island came into her possession, there was no need to reorganize the emerging colonial infrastructure. Placentia, as an administrative centre, was expendable. Its primary function, as a base of operations for a Placentia Bay fishery, was of economic interest to fish merchants. LeMessurier states that in the "early times of the settlement of Placentia Bay there were large mercantile houses situated in different parts of it. There was no trade with St. John's, each mercantile house carried on its business direct with the Mother Land" (29). Head states that in the 1760s, "Placentia functioned not only as a garrison and fishing town, however, for it was the important supply centre for the whole of Placentia Bay. Most sack and American ships called there rather than at the bay's many small ports" (158).

With the dissolution of military authority in 1727, English merchants began to establish themselves throughout the bay. Placentia prospered. By the mid-eighteenth century it was "the largest town in the island" and it is estimated that it was the base of operations for "one fifth of the total fishing fleet" (McCarthy 1973:78). According to

Barnable, "After 1729, Placentia remained an important centre of commerce for the fishery in Placentia Bay" (3), with no mention made of its fleeting administrative function. A contemporary writer described the prominence of Placentia around 1760 as follows,

Placentia, from the Convenience of the Road (roadstead) and safety of the Harbour, has assumed the Superiority of a Capital, over the many small harbours and Coves in the extensive Bay of that Name, and of others situated further to the Westward. Custom and Confidence in the Fortifications, has confirmed this pre-eminence, and now all the Fishery carried on at this side of the Island is supplied from this Magazine with Stores and Provisions. (As quoted in Head:158)

The most detailed record of the impact and activities of fish merchants operating out of Placentia is John Mannion's (1986) study of the firm of Saunder's and Sweetman. The firm began with the arrival of Richard Welsh in 1734. Welsh worked for resident merchants until 1753 at which time he "rented some ground on the Great Beach of Placentia from a long-established English planter and built premises there" (Mannion 1986:130). The impact of Welsh's legacy on the community is evident from the following summary of the firm he founded:

The firm, founded by Richard Welsh of New Ross in Placentia, Newfoundland, continued by his son-in-law William Saunders of Bideford, Devon, and later by Welsh's own likely descendants, the Sweetmans of Newbawn, Co. Wexford, lasted for more than a century. From modest beginnings, the firm became a giant in the Newfoundland trade. At its peak this house owned a dozen ocean-going vessels, employed or supplied several hundred men and shipped as much as L25,000 worth of dried cod in a single season to markets around the North Atlantic. After 1800 the company was responsible for the settlement of scores of Irish immigrants throughout its trading territory in Placentia Bay. These settlers came mainly from the southeast of Ireland; and their descendants dominate parts of the bay to this day. (Mannion 1986:128)

LeMessurier describes the success of the firm as follows

They had a shore establishment which covered a large space of ground; there were two large fish stores, a ship, dwelling house, cook room, cooperage, forge and general store. They had a ship yard where they built crafts of all sizes and from which were launched several foreign going ships. It is said that their greatest collection for one year amounted to over 100,000 quintals. So prolific were the fisheries in those days that an entry on the books of these merchants show that one Green of Point Verde, for himself and his man turned in 500 quintals of fish for one season. The dealings of this firm were chiefly with Waterford and from Ireland they imported many of the Irishmen who subsequently settled in the bay. (25)

There was nothing unique about Welsh's interest in the fishing industry. As has been mentioned, from 1713 until Welsh's decision in 1753 to operate his own business, there had been a steady increase in the number of merchants working throughout Placentia Bay. According to Mannion, between 1734 and 1753 "the number of fishing ships and fishermen had almost doubled" (1986:130). LeMessurier states, "after the Treaty of Utrecht, mercantile houses commenced to flourish in the bay. Jersey Houses had been early in St. Lawrence, Burin, Mortimer, Little Placentia, and Placentia, and were in some cases in existence at the time of the French occupation of Placentia" (25). That the allure of the potential for financial success appears to have been high, resulting in a high turn-over among merchants, is suggested when we consider that in his first few years in business Welsh was able to acquire "at least five more properties from nearby English planters" (Mannion 1986:130).

Following the collapse of the North Devon fishery in 1756, Welsh was in a position to emerge as

the leading merchant in the harbour of Placentia, where the Irish outnumbered the English two to one. Indeed the district of Placentia was the most Irish part of the island.... Welsh took advantage of his connections to build up an ethnic trade but also maintained commercial links with the local English planters. His drive to capture the commerce of the district was contested by the merchants of Poole

[primarily operating from Argentia (Little Placentia)], and a bitter struggle ensued. (Mannion 1986: 131)

Although he had become recognized as an important merchant in Placentia, Welsh continued to focus his trade on local planters, depending upon overseas connections to ship his cargo and supplies. In 1763 he hired Richard Saunders of Bideford as his agent and made his first steps to enter the international market.

In 1770, Welsh died and passed the operations of his company to his son-in-law, William Saunders. Saunders continued to expand the business, including the purchase of ocean-going vessels, to the extent that, by 1780 "the firm...was one of the leading shipowners in the fishery" (Mannion 1986:138). Although he was the most successful merchant in the bay, William Saunders was not the only merchant operating from the harbour. The 1770s saw a huge increase in the importance of Placentia as a mercantile centre for the Placentia Bay fishery. Mannion states that,

Despite the intensification and spread of settlement, seasonal and permanent, along the southern coast, the harbour of Great Placentia maintained its monopoly over trade in the region. "If Placentia were to fall," an official reported in 1772, "it would destroy the fishery of twenty harbours." In a petition a decade later from seven Poole firms asking for better fortifications at Placentia, the town was described as "the repository for all the coast between Cape Pine and Cape Ray" with cod exports amounting to nearly one third of the island's total. Like his father-in-law, Saunders was the principal merchant in this fishery and headed the only major house in the harbour. (1986: 138)

In 1778, William Saunders moved the base of his operations from Placentia to Poole, making his brother Thomas a partner in the trade, and making Newfoundland one component of an expanding international trade.

William Saunders's death in 1788 led to a major shift in the operations of the company by paving the way for the subsequent partnership of the Sweetman family and

the company's name change from Saunders and Company to Saunders and Sweetman (Mannion 145-147). The Sweetman's, through marriage, were major shareholders in the company and descendants of Richard Welsh. The death of William Saunders created an opportunity for Pierce Sweetman to take over the company's operations that had been inherited by Saunders' son, David. David was, at the time, a minor and the business was being managed by William's brother, Thomas.

The success of the Placentia Bay fishery led to an increase in competition from rival traders arriving from St. John's, the West Indies, and Quebec who were "willing to sell supplies at prices lower than those set by the company" (Mannion 1986:153). In spite of the competition, Saunders and Sweetman's business continued to grow, so that, prior to the outbreak of war in Europe in the 1790s they could be described as "among the giants of the Newfoundland trade" (Mannion 1986:158).

The war in Europe saw a drastic decrease in transatlantic trade and travel to the degree that it forced many smaller merchants out of business. Larger merchants, such as Saunders and Sweetman, managed to absorb their losses, although, throughout the 1790s Pierce Sweetman struggled to maintain the company's international connections. The death of Thomas Saunders in 1808 left the Sweetman's as the sole owners of the company, which they dissolved. The company's properties and premises in Placentia are said to have, "despite the decline in the firm's fortunes...represented one of the most substantial and specialized mercantile cod establishments recorded at this time" (Mannion 1986:166).

The closing of Saunders and Sweetman marks an era of transition in the history of Newfoundland as they were among the great firms founded on the migratory fishery. The closing of the migratory fishery at the end of the eighteenth century corresponded with other changes in Newfoundland's trade and with the economic and political growth of St. John's. Head states that "it was in the last years of the eighteenth and the first years of the nineteenth century that observers began to report explicitly that Newfoundland had changed over the century" (230). Chief Justice Reeves writing in 1791 stressed that "it must be understood that Newfoundland is no longer a place resorted to only by mere fishermen who carried out sufficient provisions for themselves and their men, caught their fish and at the close of the season returned to their mother country" (as quoted in Head 230). Rather, according to Head, it was "a place well populated, year-round, and operating with a finely balanced system of differing classes of residents—merchants, boatkeepers, and servants—and drawing supplies from many parts of the Atlantic trading community" (Head 230). Still, in 1785, St. John's was essentially a military and administrative centre. The majority of the island's economy rested in the hands of merchants operating in outport communities.

Indeed, the most wealthy merchants in Newfoundland between 1775 and 1793 did not trade from St. John's but from Trinity. Such places as Harbour Grace, Carbonear, Ferryland, Placentia and Little Bay could boast merchants who were as large and important as any in St. John's. They obtained their capital, their immigrants and their supplies directly from abroad and marketed their fish directly. They had little interest in St. John's and St. John's certainly had no influence over them. (Matthews 168)

The end of the migratory fishery, and the turn of the century, saw a dramatic shift in economic control as the "merchant houses in St. John's began to expand to the other

larger centres...this resulted in the monopoly of the larger outport firms like 'Saunders and Sweetman', and 'Newman and Hunt', being broken" (McCarthy 1973:90).

As the outport merchants lost their money and weakened or disappeared into bankruptcy, the Water Street merchants took over the trade of the local men. Even where the local merchants remained many were not truly independent, being financed by and tied to the larger brethren on Water Street. The astonishing growth of the Labrador fishery and the sealing industry also helped, for St. John's was admirably suited—as the strongest financial and trading centre — to control these industries. As the importance and wealth of St. John's grew, it gradually acquired social and cultural advantages. (Matthews 168-169)

By the early nineteenth century "there could be no doubt as to the dominating influence of St. John's over most of the island's settlements...as a place of security...and as a competitive market, St. John's was the prime trade centre of the island" (Head 234).

Although the Sweetman's dissolved the firm of Saunders and Sweetman, Pierce Sweetman continued to operate the thriving, international business from its European base in Waterford, retaining its operations in Placentia. McCarthy states that at the turn of the century, "Saunders and Sweetman were still expanding themselves, and had a large woods operation in Bay d'Espoir, which provided among other things timber, for their boat building at Placentia" (90).²³ He describes Placentia in 1810 as "a growing town, second only in importance to St. John's in commerce. The fishery was expanding and new colonists were coming to live there" (91).

Placentia's prosperity at the beginning of the nineteenth century must be understood in the context of the passing of the migratory fishery era. As St. John's began to centralize the island's economy, the old economic model of the regional merchant became less viable and Placentia's influence became more localized and limited. Although Sweetman's business in Placentia prospered, it was not developing in

accordance with the changing economy of the island. Based on the strength of Saunders and Sweetman, Placentia was able to retain its prominence during the period of economic change marked by the shift in power from the outport merchants to St. John's. As the new economy took hold, Placentia found itself lagging behind neighbouring communities backed by Water Street merchants and contemporary business interests. Referring to the early nineteenth century, Head states,

Of Placentia as a secondary distributing centre we know little. It was noted as a 'Magazine' of stores and provisions in 1772, but little was said of it thereafter. At that time Placentia had supplied its whole bay and other coves further to the westward. By 1807 it was still probably the bay's distributing centre for bread and flour, but in most other major imports, the port of Burin had drawn ahead; this latter port brought in half again as much salt meat, almost all the rum and molasses, and twice as much salt as did the old capital of the bay. (236)

According to Governor Gower, writing around the same time,

Placentia though formerly considerable, had greatly declined there being but one Mercantile House established in it, and not more than six or eight vessels annually loaded there, while at Burin, Mortimer, St. Lawrence, and other Harbours on the Western shore of Placentia Bay, a considerable number of Merchants and Planters are settled, who carry on the principal part of the Fishery of that District. (As quoted in Head 236)

In 1811, the British garrison, which had long since ceased to be a major part of the community, was closed and the fortifications abandoned. This had, according to McCarthy, "little effect on the life of Placentia except for the loss to Saunders and Sweetman of the contract to supply the fort with food and other necessary articles" (1973:92).²⁴ The closure of the garrison probably had little impact on the island as a whole, now that St. John's had become the economic and political centre and Placentia's importance as a harbour was in decline. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the

life of the community had become irretrievably linked to the success of its merchants, especially it seems, to the success and failure of Pierce Sweetman.

3.3 The Sweetman Era: 1812-1880

Having assumed control of the firm, Sweetman began to rebuild the company from its weakened state following the European wars. He sent his brother Thomas to oversee operations in Placentia, while Pierce pursued alternative international markets to remain competitive in the ever-changing trade. Unlike most of his competitors, Sweetman continued with the "migratory, transatlantic mode of trade, which by then had become archaic" (Mannion 1988:841). His efforts to rebuild the fishery lead to an increase in Irish immigration to Placentia Bay. Both servants²⁵ and trade goods, including food, were still shipped from the company's offices in Ireland. The flow of Irish immigrants began to diminish by the 1830s at which point "passengers from Ireland to Placentia accounted for no more than 5% of the manpower engaged there in a season. Whether they worked for the company or for planters, most servants were now residents and living mainly in Placentia" (Mannion 1986:169). McCarthy states that in 1812,

there was a fleet of 41 ships fishing from Placentia, manned by a total of 111 men. Seventy fishermen also fished from the shore. Many of the shoremen who came out to fish during the summer with the planters now came from Ireland, and in 1812, 42 men came, as well as a number of females, came to serve as domestic servants. Most of the males returned in the fall, but the females usually remained, and in many cases escaped from the servitude of domestic servants by marrying shoremen or planters, in the more remote harbours, in order to escape punishment or deportation back to Ireland. (92)

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw unrest caused by changes in the economic base of the fishery, but it must be noted that the success and stability of Sweetman's business assured a degree of prosperity for Placentia and loyalty from the

company's servants. According to Mannion there is an oral tradition supporting the Sweetman's benevolence toward their Irish servants and their role in "fostering settlement in Placentia. Between 1800 and 1840, partly under [the Sweetman's] auspices, settlements were established or expanded along the northeast and southeast arms of Placentia, on some of the less favoured coves on the islands to the west, and particularly along the Cape Shore" (Mannion 1986:172). Sweetman's influence on the settlement of the Placentia area entailed a degree of dependence by the residents which was detrimental to their survival when the company finally began to fail after Pierce's death in 1841. A Placentia resident writing in 1846, recalled the "considerable advantage in past times from the establishment of the House of Sweetman...In the days of the Sweetmans never was it thought of that application should be made to the government to relieve the poor. It is only under [their] representatives that the system is adopted of looking abroad for that which had always been dispensed at home..." (Mannion 1986:171-172). Following Pierce's death, his son Roger moved to Waterford and took over control of the company. He struggled to maintain the international trade until his own death in 1862, at which point the legacy which began over a century earlier with Richard Welsh's arrival in Placentia in 1734, was brought to an end.

It would not be fair to say that Placentia suffered under the paternalistic hand of the Sweetmans but it may be accurate to suggest their influence kept the community from developing in tandem with the rest of the island. Although the Sweetmans operated in the best interest of their Newfoundland servants/employees, it was also in the company's best interest to perpetuate the merchant/servant relationship which characterized the business

throughout the eighteenth century. There are many political, religious, and economic variables involved in this assumption which will not be discussed here, suffice it to say that with the demise of the Sweetmans, Placentia seems to have been unable to sustain itself.²⁶

Throughout the nineteenth century Placentia felt the affects of failures in the fishery. It was the benevolence of the Sweetmans (as quoted previously) that carried the community through.²⁷ The gradual decline of the town was present even in 1815, a period of regrowth and prosperity for the Sweetmans. A writer described the town at this time as “still the chief place on the area, but now a little more than a mere village with the vestiges of its ancient fortification. It still has a lieutenant governor who however holds merely a nominal post” (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:93). In 1819 the town was described as “all Roman Catholics and very poor, with their houses dilapidated. The land is little cultivated, and in any case the populations are in the same state as those in St. Mary’s Bay. They have eaten all their seed potatoes” (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:95). By 1820, the population had begun to decline. A failure in the fishery in 1834 prompted Roger Sweetman, who had been elected as the Placentia—St. Mary’s member to the House of Assembly, to request relief for local fishermen (McCarthy 1973:93-94). Mannion describes the town, when Roger Sweetman returned in 1850, as “an economic backwater [with] little traffic overseas” (Mannion 1986:178). In 1867, five years after Roger Sweetman’s death, a visitor described the town as follows:

This was the first harbour I visited and here I found very little business of any description being done. This is a very fine harbour but rather difficult to access. The place generally has the appearance of being abandoned by merchants and dealers of all kinds. The people of this harbour sometimes assist themselves a

little by carrying firewood to St. Pierre, in return for which they bring back provisions, but so little of this is done it cannot be said to be of much benefit, besides it is only the owners of large boats who can avail of this traffic. (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:95)

While Placentia declined, St. John's continued to grow, expanding its infrastructure into the island. To increase communications, courier services were created.²⁸

In 1840 a mail courier service was established between Placentia and St. John's, and Mr. Thomas Kelly was employed to carry the mails. There was no road between those places then, so Tom walked through the woods and across the barrens. (LeMessurier 27)

In 1848 R. Falle & Company, based in Burin, established their own connection with the Placentia courier. Communications became a commodity as new centres emerged around the bay and Placentia, with its link with St. John's, was able to take advantage of this. In 1849,

Sweetman sent his own boat on the other side, and in 1850 the first contract was made with Mr. John Collins for the regular carriage of the mails from Placentia to Burin, calling at Paradise and Oderin. In 1851 Nicholas Coady, of Burin, secured the contract, but in 1852 it reverted to Mr. John Collins, who successfully ran the service until 1874. At that date his son-in-law, Mr. Wm. Ryan, obtained a contract which included other ports of call. He retained the service until the advent of the Hercules, the first steamer that performed the bay mail service. (LeMessurier 28)

Although a road connecting St. John's to Placentia had still not been built in 1840, government-supported road construction had begun in Newfoundland in 1835 when Mr. Josiah Blackburn was commissioned to undertake a preliminary survey between Holyrood and Salmonier. Roads were constructed in sections and the work commenced sporadically over the next fifteen years (McCarthy 1973: 94). By 1855, "the road from St. John's via Holyrood to Placentia was opened, for Wood's Almanac advertised that a

wagon was running every two weeks from St. John's to Placentia. In 1860, two clergymen from Fortune Bay came to Placentia by boat and then went to St. John's by carriage" (McCarthy 1973: 94). It is hard to believe that the road was constructed with the intention of bringing prosperity to Placentia rather than to enhance the established link between communities within the bay and St. John's. Placentia had become a terminus between St. John's and Placentia Bay, a role that the community would attempt to capitalize on in the future with the construction of the railway. At this point in time, it would have to suffice with simply watching traffic pass it by.

The building of roads also facilitated the construction of telegraph lines and Placentia became an important communications link between the island and the mainland.²⁹ According to Prowse, in 1867,

It being found that the line across the breadth of Newfoundland, from the severity of winter storms and the tardy means at hand for restoration, was generally unreliable and unsatisfactory, it was determined to lay a submarine cable from Great Placentia in Newfoundland to North Sydney in Cape Breton, taking the French island of St. Pierre by the way, and so bringing the colony within the fold of telegraph communication, and at the same time rendering the company independent of somewhat precarious communication by the air line across the island of Newfoundland. From that time until the present the cables between Placentia and North Sydney have been multiplied and strengthened, while the line via Port-aux-Basques has not of late been in use for through traffic." (643)

The first school board for the Placentia—St. Mary's electoral district opened in 1836. It was a nondenominational board composed of Protestants and Roman Catholics with its headquarters in (Great) Placentia and schools in Great Placentia, Little Placentia and St. Mary's (McCarthy 1973: 100). Increased enrollment lead to the opening of a separate Commercial school in Placentia. In 1845, the elementary school in Placentia became denominational and two separate school boards were established. The

Commercial school did not become denominational until 1859 (McCarthy 1973: 101). In 1860, a stone convent was being constructed in Placentia, although, "completion of the building was...delayed by a series of poor fishing seasons, and a good deal of sickness" (McCarthy 1973: 102). The school Inspector described it as follows: "the school house in the Harbour at Great Placentia which is a very pretty one—has been allowed to get in a state of bad repair, and were it not for the sum of one pound five shillings, that was expended by the teacher and of which he furnished me with details the porch would have gone to pieces" (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:102). In 1863, the Presentation Sisters arrived in Placentia and took over responsibility for teaching the girls, separately from the boys who were taught in the Commercial school.

Placentia appears to have struggled throughout the nineteenth century with fluctuations in population reflecting not only the uncertainty of the fishery but also changes in technology, for as Winter states, "during the latter half of the century shipbuilding became an important mainstay of the economy, but as steamers replaced sailing vessels the shipyards too were closed" (319). The image of Placentia by the latter part of the nineteenth century is of a community drastically reduced from the glory of its early days. In 1872, Captain Brown of the *H. M. S Danae* reported,

Placentia, formerly a place of considerable importance, (even in the fishing world) now shows every sign of decay, and is I believe being gradually deserted for more favourably situated places. The commencement of the decay of this port dates back about thirty years, when a number of merchants who had amassed considerable fortunes left the place, taking their capital with them, and the town is now falling to pieces. Half the homes are in ruins, and the Protestant church and grave-yard are in the same condition. The inhabitants, who are said to number 400, but of whom we saw about 20, appear to partake of the blight which has fallen on the place. For whereas at other settlements the inhabitants have been glad to see us and have offered us such hospitality as was in their power. Here

were found difficulty in getting information even, so listless and unsociable are the few people we met...." (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:98)

As McCarthy points out, Brown may have "felt that his importance had not been recognized" (99) and let his prejudice influence his description of the community. Regardless, in 1873, it was stated that "at Placentia the fishery was not so well spoken of, and it would appear that of late years this station, once the principal on the coast, has been almost deserted by fish..." (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:99). It is, therefore, difficult to imagine the community being overly welcoming after undergoing what appears to have been decades of struggle to stay afloat.

3.4 Ushering in the Twentieth Century: 1880-1941

The end of the nineteenth century saw two important influences on the immediate future of Placentia: the development of the bank fishery and the construction of the Placentia branch of the Newfoundland railway. McCarthy states that for the latter part of the nineteenth century,

the reports show that the success and failure of the town depended to a large extent on whether or not the fish ran and the direction they took. Thus, there were good years and bad years, but, by the beginning of the twentieth century most of the fishermen from Placentia were fishing from small coves near Cape St. Mary's, returning every week or second week to unload their catch which was dried at Placentia. The Bank fishery was also now being developed at Placentia, and by 1889, many bankers were sailing from the town, returning every couple of months, or earlier if the fishery was good, to land their catch which again was dried on the beaches and flakes of the community. (99)

The Bank Fishery and the railway rejuvenated the community and, as a result, "Placentia entered the Twentieth Century as a busy centre of transportation and supply for the Western Shore and part of Fortune Bay" (McCarthy 1973: 107). Increased access as a result of the railway also lead to a renewed interest in the historic importance and

tourist potential of the remains of the French and British fortifications in Placentia.

Traffic in and out of the bay would sojourn in Placentia and, with its position as the centre for the district's medical, legal, educational, communications, and transportation services, it would be expected that attention would be drawn toward the town's role in Newfoundland's development.

At the turn of the century, Placentia was able to draw extensively upon its past glory and geographical location to keep itself in the public eye. The railway extension has proven valuable in the history of the development of the area, but its construction was not without controversy. In a footnote, Prowse states,

this railway was built, so it is said, to obtain adhesion of the tow Members for the district, Hon. W. J. S. Donnelly and the Speaker, G. H. Emerson. Each of these eminent legislators cost the Colony \$250,000. Another account of the reasons for building the Placentia Railway and the admission of Catholics to the ministry is given by a friend of Sir G.Wm. Des Voeux. He and the Governor were standing on Colinet Bridge; they were on their way to Placentia; they could plainly hear the sound of the railway whistle at Whitbourne. The Governor then and there determined to use his influence to build the Placentia branch railway. My informant also states that it was the Governor's objection to the gentleman named as colonial Secretary that caused the Ministry to seek Catholic allies. (514)

Placentia got its railway in 1889, coinciding with the advent of a government operated weekly steamship service that provided essential services and supplies to communities in the bay and along the south coast.³⁰ A railway terminal was constructed by the docks in Jerseyside. A journalist's report on an early trip from St. John's captures the spirit of hope and enthusiasm, very much in contrast to descriptions from the 1870s, which prevailed.

As the train glides on, the rolling hilly country, around Placentia comes into view, and the serrated range along the shore presents a fine, bold aspect. At length the old French capital around which cluster so many historical associations becomes

visible, nestling low on a sea-formed beach, encircled with hills on all sides except toward the bay. The appearance and situation are most picturesque. Castle Hill, on which was built a formidable French fortress, rises over the narrow entrance of the splendid harbour, completely commanding it. On the opposite side is flagstaff hill or Signal Hill...the party then crossed the harbour on a ferry boat and spent several hrs. in exploring the fine old town which presents a thriving aspect. New homes are going up, and the people have an air of comfort, and no signs of poverty were visible. Several fine bankers were lying in the harbour, Placentia being now one of the chief centres of our revived Bank fishery. Now that the railway has reached it, and made it a trade centre for the southern and western shore, and probably for Sydney and also a resort for summer visitors and tourists from Canada and the U.S.A....The great pioneer of progress, the railway, has broken the slumbers of the quiet old capital, and great developments will follow. A pleasanter place for a summer resort would not be imagined. A new hotel is in the course of erection, and there are already two comfortable homes in which boarders are received. A steam launch for the harbour is spoken of, and this would furnish means for delightful excursions up the sea arms already referred to. (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:99)

Barnable provides the following description of Placentia in 1902.

James Murphy and Sons ran a long-established business. Patrick O'Reilly owned the Star Store, while Mrs. Austin (Eliza) Collins had a store on 'the Cross,' meaning the crossroads. There was Sheppard's Hotel on the Jerseyside and Bradshaw's Hotel overlooked Bradshaw's Cove between the water and where the roadway runs in present-day Placentia. The ferry boats were kept busy. Between 400 and 600 people crossed the Gut daily. Socially, there were house parties, church bazaars, and times in the parish hall in Little Placentia. In the summer there were picnics and horse races at Bruley farm and boat races in the Southeast Arm. The social centre in Great Placentia was the Star of the Sea building which was then a dry establishment. There were weekly variety concerts and debates at the Star, which also had a fine billiards room. (31)

In spite of the enthusiasm, the changes did not bring growth as much as they brought a level of stability. The town was still without a sustaining source of income.

William O'Reilly, born and raised in Placentia to later become a provincial Justice of the Peace, wrote of Placentia in 1906,

The place is prosperous, therefore, the people are happy and contented. Unfortunately great numbers of our young men have to "go West" to find employment, the fishery of late years having been unable to employ all. What is

most badly needed in Placentia is the opening of some avenue of employment so that our young men can be kept at home and thus devote their energies and abilities to the building up of the home land instead of the American and Canadian cities. (12)

Regardless of claims for the town's prosperity at the turn of the century, "little changed...the men worked on the railway and the ships, fish was caught and dried, and the years passed" (McCarthy 1973:108). What had changed, was the concept of value expressed by the newfound tourism potential of the community. A 1906 article in the Newfoundland Quarterly, "Placentia as a Tourist Resort," simultaneously bemoaned the lack of industry and enthused over the potential for tourism.

[Placentia] has beaches capable of drying and curing thousands of quintals of fish. At one time it was the opulent centre of a great bank fishery. When we find the reason why it is more profitable for Placentia men and other Newfoundlanders, to sail from Gloucester to our local fishing banks, and carry fish in American craft to American ports, and when the mysterious obstacles are removed, Placentia will be the wealthiest town in the island, as it is better adapted, as has been proved, to the successful prosecution of the bank fishery than any other port North or South...[and] when the people of Placentia realize to the full how profitable it is to business of every kind, to have large numbers of summer visitors, they will begin in real earnest to cater to it. Shopkeepers, hotels, boarding-house keepers, fishermen and farmers, all will be taxed to their utmost to supply the needs of tourists. (14)

While there were practical motivations for the construction of the Newfoundland railway, the government quickly recognized its economic potential as a key to the development of a tourism industry that spanned the island (Pocius 1984). The railway was marketed as an elegant and efficient means of travel for sportsmen and sightseers, and consequently, communities were encouraged to develop their attractions to accommodate the anticipated flood of summer visitors. O'Reilly was keen to see his community's merits promoted,

The value of Placentia as a tourist resort is fast becoming known, each year our visitors both local and foreign are increasing. We have a great deal to offer those who pay us a visit....By and by when Newfoundland in general, and Placentia in particular, get better known we expect our share of the 'golden stream' of tourists from both East and West—and thus make our scenic and sporting resources an asset, and serve the purpose of bringing us in the hard cash. (12)

It is not clear how much of this is boosterism, but in the same breath, O'Reilly notes the deteriorating condition of the "old road" connecting Placentia to St. John's and the necessity of repairs "if it is not to be allowed to fall into disuse. Something should be done because it is a most valuable highway and used not alone by sportsmen, of where there are numbers, as along this road are some of the best trout and salmon pools in the country—but by the fishermen-farmers of Cape Shore who drive cattle in large numbers over it every year to the St. John's market" (O'Reilly 12).

Even if the twentieth century did not bring an economic boom, it did usher in a desired economic stability that led to a sense of optimism for the future. By 1889, the Educational District of Great Placentia had a total of seven schools in operation; one in each of the following communities: Patrick's Cove, St. Bride's, Branch, Point Verde, Southeast Arm, Northeast Arm, and Placentia. This optimism was again tempered with the outbreak of war in 1914 and another series of bad fishing years. Returning soldiers found little but hardship and uncertainty. A newspaper reported in 1920 that "about 150 young men left by the *Rosalind* last night Halifax and New York, and about 100 more left by the *Kyle* from Placentia this morning. Many of these men have been overseas with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment" (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:108). The railway terminal in Jerseyside was moved to Argentia in 1920. The move fueled existing

antagonisms between the two communities Placentia and Argentia—as each vied for control over the areas scant resources and development projects.³¹

Until 1920 the terminus of the Placentia branch of the railway has been at Jersey Side. There was, however, no safe harbour for the coastal boats...It was decided then to extend the railway to Argentia, which had a safe, landlocked harbour, for the most part ice-free in winter. Of course this did not sit well with the people of Placentia, who aired their opposition in the press in no uncertain terms; nevertheless, the change was made. (Houlihan 1992)

The existence of the railway terminal probably influenced the decision of the Commission of Government to establish a Cottage Hospital, one of the first six on the island, in Argentia. Built in 1936, the hospital was dismantled when the American base was built in 1941 and reconstructed the following year in Placentia. Throughout Newfoundland, communities suffered from failures in the fisheries during the 1920s and the impacts of the depression of the 1930s. Relief came, as it had several times in the past, with the outbreak of war. Unlike other places in the world, though, relief did not come in the form of industrial development, it came in the guise of American occupation with the development of a United States Naval Base in Argentia.

3.5 Argentia: 1941-1970

Writing on the impact of modernization in the first half of the twentieth century on the communities of Inner Placentia Bay, Howard Brown states,

From the point of view of social and economic development this period may reasonably be divided into 1900-1939 and 1939-1966. While many processes operate through the entire period, political and economic adjustment appear to be paramount for the first period while the later period is more one of social change, technological improvements and an accelerated pace of modernization. (26)

The two main events, occurring between 1939 and 1966, that had an economic and political impact on the future of the island were the development of American

military bases in Newfoundland and Newfoundland's decision, in 1949, to join the Canadian confederation. The former event provided Newfoundlanders with unprecedented freedom in the form of a cash economy, while the latter provided numerous social benefits.³² Brown states,

Confederation with Canada not only brought all the benefits of the Canadian social security system to individual Newfoundlanders, but made it possible to develop an infrastructure and level of services the island was unlikely to have achieved on its own. (33)

With regard to the construction of the military bases,

...cash started to flow freely in communities which had seen precious little cash money before. The old truck, or credit system started to collapse as fishermen discovered they had an option never presented before. People started moving to centres near the new bases, attracted by the prospect of full employment with good wages.... (Municipalities:11)

Although the base was constructed in Argentia, it had a positive economic impact on Placentia which changed "from a fishing and farming settlement to a dormitory for base workers in construction and maintenance" (Placentia Area Special Issue:10). During the initial stages of development, the influx of workers was immense and accommodations had to be built. Placentia, again, saw its population grow. Businesses responded in kind, catering to Newfoundlanders and a new clientele: American servicemen. Poor fishing during the 1930s encouraged many people from around the bay to apply for the security of employment at the base and many families abandoned the fishery and resettled themselves in Placentia and the neighbouring communities. The war, and subsequent changes in international markets, also led to changes in the fishery. The growth of the frozen fish industry meant that bankers were unloading their catches at fish plants outside of the bay, thereby eliminating processing jobs at their home ports (Brown

351). The presence of the U.S. Military on the island lead to further road development to facilitate the needs of their military infrastructure. In Placentia, this meant the creation of a road that ran from Argentia to join up with the Colinet road, as well as attempts to construct a bridge across the Placentia Gut. The community's response to the Americans' attempts to bridge Placentia Gut is recorded in an anonymous ballad collected by Eileen Houlihan.³³

With an influx in population and in cash, Placentia formed a Rural District Council in 1945, becoming one of the first municipalities on the island. Creating a municipal government was an important step in the community's development and marks an important shift in community expectations and identity. The benefits of local governmental representation meant that Placentia now had the means to become a modern town and had again become the centre of government for the region. The town council accepted responsibility for water and sewage, as well as providing "a level of fire protection, take care of the roads within the municipality, and provide garbage collection and street lighting. It also assumes responsibility of setting controls over many aspects of life. Laws governing the control of animals within the community's boundaries are a good example of action in this line" (Municipalities:14). Among the intangible benefits derived from being a municipality "should be the [fostering of] a better sense of community. It should make the local people aware that they can, and do, exert a real influence over the future of their community through their elected representatives" (Municipalities:15). As Placentia, at this time, was made up of people from various parts of the island, the creation of a local government provided a useful vehicle to enable the

community to work toward a common goal. Freshwater and Jerseyside became separate municipalities in 1951, and Dunville in 1964.

Following confederation, the provincial government began a campaign to modernize Newfoundland. The benefits of increased road construction were spouted to validate the government's decision to phase-out the system of coastal steamers which had been, for decades, supplying the outport communities. Modern factories and fish processing plants were built in specified growth communities around the islands. The final move in the government's campaign was the official resettlement plan which began in 1953 and continued until 1975 and resulted in the relocating of ten of thousands of residents from isolated outport communities. The general mandate for the resettlement program was that it was necessary "because of the physical isolation of many communities, difficulties in providing services, and the economically unhealthy state of the fishery" (Brown 339). As a result, people were directed to move to designated growth centres, chosen because they offered medical, educational, and other essential services as well as some form of economic development. Placentia was a designated growth centre because of its many services and its proximity to the base in Argentina. Again, the make-up of the community changed as many families came from around the bay to settle.

As a result of the military base in Argentina, the resettlement program, and the development of local government, Placentia had grown in population and wealth by the middle of the twentieth century. The old economy of fishing and shipbuilding had been almost completely replaced by work on the base.

3.6 Placentia: 1970-2003

The phase-down, announced in 1970, of the base in Argentina left the Placentia area without a main source of employment. One writer described the fall-out as follows:

The American Base has virtually closed down, Pyramid Homes³⁴ has gone out of business, and the promised shopping mall doesn't appear to be going ahead. With all this bad news, what's keeping the Placentia area employed? A few people work in Long Harbour and with CN and there are a number of service industries, such as stores, motels, the high school, the Vocational School, and so forth. (Municipalities:34)

Faced yet again with uncertainty, an Argentina Task Force was organized which later became the Placentia Area Development Association (PADA). The Association was composed of members from each of the four town councils and worked to facilitate and initiate regional developmental programs and projects. In the 1970s, one of their major projects was to rejuvenate the local fishery.

When so many areas of Newfoundland have been and are depressed economically, government isn't about to spend money in places that have a relatively high rate of employment. This was true when the Argentina Base employed several hundred people, but then when the Base phased down, there were no other jobs to which people could turn. And while other communities had been building up their fishing facilities all along, the whole Placentia area, and the government, had hardly even looked at the fishery. Says John [Whelan], "when the Base phased down, the people hardest pressed for jobs were those who came in as a result of centralization. They found no fishing facilities here whatsoever, and no real concern about establishing them. (Municipalities:30-31).

In the early 1970s, PADA acquired funds to construct a community stage in Jerseyside which was subsequently rented by Newfoundland Quick Freeze who put in a filleting line. PADA also secured funds to establish a boat building business that managed to construct four longliners before their funding was reduced. The facilities were retained by PADA who made them available for the use of local fishermen.

Throughout the latter part of the twentieth century, the community focused upon trying to establish an economic base to replace the military base.

The federal government became involved in 1968 with the development of Castle Hill, the second National Historic Site in Newfoundland.³⁵ In 1951 the site was declared to be of national historic importance, in 1953 the text for the plaque was approved, and in 1968 the site was officially opened. Excavations began in 1967 and in 1971 work began on the interpretation centre. The opening of Castle Hill National Historic Site renewed the community's interest in its heritage as well as the economic potential of tourism. In 1955, the provincial government of Newfoundland released an Act Respecting the Preservation of Historic Objects. In 1966, the province initiated the Historic Markers program to erect a series of commemorative markers celebrating aspects of the province's history. This led to the commemoration of the English fort, Fort Frederick. An archaeological survey was initiated in 1972 by William O'Shea, the superintendent of Castle Hill National Historic Site, and the Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society in an attempt to establish an inventory of cultural resources around the town. At the same time, the community received funds through the Argientia Task Force to facilitate the purchase of lands considered to be of historic value in an attempt to create a foundation for the development of a heritage tourism program to complement the work done at Castle Hill. A wooden palisade constructed along the shoreline marking the location of the French fort, Fort Louis, and two cannons mounted at the Argientia/Dunville/Jerseyside intersection are remnants of this attempt at heritage presentation.

In spite of the community's efforts, in 1988 Nick Careen still bemoaned the lack of tourism business in the town.

Too often people pass through the area without stopping. After spending 18-20 hours on a ferry, that's not surprising...People may dally more on the way back, but the tourist chalet is in Dunville so there's not much incentive to visit here, and there's not enough tourist information on the boats. Castle Hill is good for tourists, but only a handful of local people benefit. (Placentia Area Special Issue:44)

The phasing-down of the Argentia Base had a major impact on Placentia. Despite numerous attempts the community was unable to replace the central role it played in the region's economy and the community again went through a period of out-migration as young people left to find work elsewhere. In 1988 there were "a number of different employers. ERCO employs 300 people, the base and the Lions Manor [Nursing Home] each employ 100, the hospital and highways department 60 each, businesses provide a similar number of jobs, and there are over 100 fishermen fishing in Placentia Bay"³⁶ (Placentia Area Special Issue:26-27).

In 1994, Placentia, Jerseyside, Freshwater, and Dunville amalgamated, centralizing many essential services in Placentia and pooling their combined resources. In the summer of 2001, the Placentia Area Historical Society initiated a major archaeological project as part of the town's preparations for the 2004 celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the French arrival in Atlantic Canada, and in the summer of 2002 Voisey's Bay announced the construction of a nickel smelter and refinery complex in Argentia. The announcement created enthusiasm in the community that threatened to supplant the energy being directed toward heritage development, but the promised construction did not happen.

The amalgamated town is now sharing resources to increase its marketability. The Argentia Area Chamber of Commerce Investors Guide notes Placentia, the "Townside," as the "commercial site" of the amalgamated town, describing it as having

all its services within walking distance. The Health Centre, supermarkets, several government offices, two colleges, and two schools bring hundreds of people through the marketplace daily. Placentia is the service centre for nearly 10,000 people across the region. (43)

Essential and other services available on the Townside include: supermarkets, restaurants, medical clinics, hotels, RCMP, Provincial court, schools, community health centre, Dept. of Development and Rural Renewal, bank, Community Business Development Corp., finance companies, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, drug stores, Human Resources Development Canada, training colleges, law firm, and Human Resources and Employment offices (Investors Guide:44). The Investors Guide also highlights the "historic integrity of the community with its streetscaping, historic buildings, proximity to major historic sites and natural tourist attractions" (Investors Guide:46). Promotional brochures distributed by the town state,

With Argentia as its industrial area, any prospective business would do well to look at Placentia as a location of unlimited potential. The workforce is eager and well-educated. The infrastructure is already in place. The climate for new business is excellent. The incentives are unrivaled. Placentia's drawing power is two-fold: as the nearest community to the Voisey's Bay Smelter and Refinery, its potential for business development is unlimited. On its own, the community is, quite simply, and incredible place to live and to do business. It's been that way for centuries and centuries.

At the turn of the millennium, Placentia is still fighting to secure the economic potential of heritage and industrial development, with Placentia, "Townside," once again in the role of administrative centre

3.7 Summary

The goal of this historical summary has been to establish patterns and key events in the history of Placentia as they are commonly presented in published documents; it has not been to provide a concise history. Extensive historical research is beyond the scope and resources of this project, as a result some parts of the community's history have not been included. It is hoped, all the same, that this brief analysis might shed some light on the patterns of Placentia's history and those events that have been noted of importance by past researchers.

In compiling this history I have tried to focus on events following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 because little research and scholarship has been done on this period in Placentia's history. John Mannion's article (1986) is an exception among scholarly work, while Barnable (2002) and McCarthy (1973) have both produced popular accounts. Still, there is a noticeable gap in the historical record of Placentia following the death of Pierce Sweetman in 1841 until the opening of the Base in 1941. It is proposed that the former point in time unofficially marks the extent of researchers' interests to date, while the latter roughly reflects the period that exists within the living memory of the community. Of course, this is a generalization as there will always be an overlap between what any community knows of its history and what it learns of its history from outside sources.

Chapter 4: THE PUBLIC LANDSCAPE AND THE HERITAGE MYTH

In late 2000, early 2001, the town of Placentia presented an application to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada for national historic designation of the town as an historic and natural site of national importance. In summarizing the history of historic research in Placentia the report states,

The first assessment of the historical importance of Placentia was conducted by the Placentia Historical Society in the early 1930s. No further attempts were made to recognize its complex past, or to protect its rich heritage resources until the Government of Canada designated the remains of Fort Royal on Castle Hill as a National Historic Site in 1968. Several studies were undertaken by Parks Canada in the course of developing Castle Hill, and others identifying the built heritage and extensive military sites have since been conducted. (Hogan 2000:1)

While the summary is succinct and it captures the lack of research and preservation work which has been done in this area, it fails to express the fact that interest in the preservation and presentation of various aspects of Placentia's history have been expressed by a diversity of individuals and institutions for over one hundred years. The goal of this chapter is to present the history of the development of a heritage landscape in Placentia and to show how the heritage landscape is representative of the main themes documented in the written, or public, history.³⁷ It is argued that the heritage landscape represents a limited perspective of Placentia's history, it does not account for the many 'personal' histories that add to the community's varied identity. One goal of developing a heritage landscape is to allow the community to express its history and historical connections to the larger community and nation to which the community belongs and to assert the community's unique place within those larger narratives. Another goal is to make use of these same historical connections to attract outsiders tourists—to the

community. For this discussion, heritage is used in reference to the product of formal cultural resource policies of the federal and provincial governments.

4.1 Toward a Definition of Heritage

According to Raphael Samuel, “lexically, ‘heritage’ is a term capacious enough to accommodate wildly discrepant meanings” (205). As with too many things, the modern definition of the word “heritage” has been sullied by its association with the commodification of culture: the heritage industry. Regardless of its capacity for definition, the term does have a modern usage and a traceable lineage.

The original usage of the word heritage is in reference to “that which is or may be inherited,” those things “such as works of art, cultural achievements and folklore that have been passed on from earlier generations” (Oxford Canadian Dictionary). The individual’s, or group’s, claim to the rights and obligations of inheritance is an important aspect of the word’s origins. Samuel states that heritage is, “a high-flown term, or poetical word, for hereditary rights...this was one of its major uses in Middle English times, when it served sometimes as a synonym for birthright, sometimes as a grandiose word for liberties, privileges and immunities, and more occasionally, in religious discourse, as the mark of the elect...” (231). In response to Samuel’s classist interpretation of the word heritage, a more modern and proletarian use of the word is as a synonym for culture. Both terms are commonly used to refer to the many tangible and intangible components that constitute a distinctive way of life. Art O’Keefe likes to talk about his family’s history as hunters and guides in the Placentia—Cape Shore area. He still hunts, as his father and grandfather did, but not as a primary subsistence activity.

According to Art, "We don't depend on the land that much for a living because you'll starve off it, but we like it because it's part of our heritage, part of my heritage anyway" (O'Keefe, Art. Interview).

Samuel notes that it was during the folk music revival in the 1950s that the word heritage, in England, began to be used as an alternative to the word tradition. During the twentieth century, heritage was no longer something simply inherited with no-questions-asked, it had become a definable, representable collection of cultural behaviours and expressions to be documented and commemorated. Folk songs and stories, dances, costumes, language, beliefs, as well as architecture and other items of material culture all became tangible expressions of one's heritage. Heritage places came to "include historic buildings or monuments which bear the distinctive imprint of human history...linked with people, events, activities and, in a wider sense, with cultures, societies and economies" (Herbert 1995a:9). As "tradition," the word heritage has become much more integrated with issues relating to the authenticity of representations of the past.

With the advent of the heritage industry and its economic relationship with tourism, heritage, more than a synonym for culture, has become a synonym for conservation. Samuel points out that heritage is not just a cultural reference; "in the language of nature conservancy [natural heritage], 'heritage' is represented by unspoiled countryside and wildlife reserves" (209), "in the vernacular of Nature Conservancy, 'heritage' is a generic term for environments at risk" (221). A conservation ethic coupled with the original concept of inheritance led to an overall increase in the public's interest in the preservation and presentation of historic relics. According to David Herbert,

“heritage tourism...is mainly a phenomenon of the latter part of the twentieth century. It is during this period that the heritage industry has flourished and the number of people visiting heritage sites [natural and cultural] has multiplied” (“Conclusions,” 213).

Heritage has become a story told through objects. It is, subsequently, criticized by historians who repeatedly question the historical validity of the narratives communicated through heritage interpreters. As Patricia Wood states, “while all history is narration that fills a therapeutic prescription for the teller and the audience, the emphasis on heritage or tradition is the most consciously selective of narratives” (34). Other researchers argue that, while historical fact is the foundation of successful heritage interpretation, the past is not an aim in itself, but a starting point from which [visitors] depart on a discovery tour. The tour is a journey that will tell them as much about themselves as it will about history, provided, that is, they are prepared to listen and look carefully, and provided the story is communicated properly, giving the facts, but leaving space for imagination, wonder and curiosity (Schouten 22). According to Schouten,

visitors are not primarily looking for scientific historical evidence. They may even be only partly interested in the historical reality as such. Visitors to historic sites are looking for an experience, a new reality based on the tangible remains of the past. For them, this is the very essence of the heritage experience. Heritage is not the same as history. Heritage is history processed through mythology, ideology, nationalism, local pride, romantic ideas or just plain marketing, into a commodity. (Schouten 21)

Heritage, by the late twentieth century, had changed from its origins as an undisputed inheritance of rights, values, and cultural behaviours into a form of historical narrative intended to communicate general historic themes to large public audiences. The generalized nature of heritage interpretation is the most contentious issue for historians

who argue that too often historical fact is compromised in order to tell a good story.

Heritage interpretation too often presents the past “not as a prelude to the present but as an alternative to it” (Samuel 221). The result is that

history and heritage are typically placed in opposite camps. The first is assigned to the realm of critical inquiry, the second to a merely antiquarian preoccupation, the classification and hoarding of things. The first, so the argument runs, is dynamic and concerned with development and change; the second is static. The first is concerned with explanation, bringing a sceptical intelligence to bear on the complexities and contradictoriness of the record; the second sentimentalizes, and is content merely to celebrate. (Samuel 270)

Much of the heritage/history debate is centred around the nature of interpretation rather than communication. Whereas historians stress the necessity of accurately communicating the facts of history, heritage, as noted previously, is involved in creating an experience of history. Of course, both of these statements are generalizations but they help to define the opposing factions in the heritage debate. As Samuel points out,

Are we [historians] not guilty ourselves of turning knowledge into an object of desire? And is it not the effect, if not the intention, of our activity as historians to domesticate the past and rob it of its terrors by bringing it within the realm of the knowable? Historians are no less concerned than conservationists to make their subjects imaginatively appealing. We may not prettify the past in the manner of English Heritage or the National Trust, but we are no less adept than conservation officers and museum curators at tying up loose ends and removing unsightly excrescences. We use vivid detail and thick description to offer images far clearer than any reality could be. (271)

Heritage presentation, therefore, represents general historic themes, but, has also come to represent trends in the public’s relationship with historical narratives. Wood describes heritage as “the aesthetic of history” (34). For Wood, heritage tourism lacks

both depth and specificity, it is history reduced to an economic and political commodity. The emphasis is on a sensory experience of the past, its exoticism and spectacle. The entertainment value of heritage sites is not merely their selling

point, but increasingly their *raison d'être* and a principal influence in the selection of narratives recounted. (34)

Samuel also views heritage as an aesthetic; “aesthetically, as well as historically, heritage is a hybrid, reflecting, or taking part in, style wars, and registering changes in public taste” (211). It is a social construct which both changes with and effects changes in society.³⁸ Unlike Wood, who presents heritage as a passive victim of commercial desires, Samuel presents heritage as a malleable mirror of social awareness that, “in any given period...will reflect the ruling aesthetics of the day” (211).

Heritage, therefore, is not history. Rather, it is a story told about history in a manner reflective of the contemporary desires of the society, or social group, in which the story originated. The historian's concern with the authenticity, and perceived lack of authenticity, in heritage presentation is derived from a perceived lack of factual information. Critics tend to focus on the generic nature of heritage presentation in relation to a site's history rather than recognize the narrative intent of the heritage experience. They are two fundamentally different endeavours, although they influence and draw upon each other.

Arguably it is not the traditionalism but the modernism and more specifically the postmodernism of heritage which offends. Aesthetes condemn it for being bogus: a travesty of the past, rather than a true likeness, let alone—the preservationist's dream—an original. In other words, in spite of the charge that heritage is imprisoning the country in a timewarp, and the accusation that it is sentimentalizing the past, heritage is being attacked not because it is too historical but because it is not historical enough. It lacks authenticity. It is a simulation pretending to be the real thing. It is not because heritage is too relevant about the past that it provokes outrage, but on the contrary the fact that, in the eyes of the critics at least, it seems quite untroubled when it is dealing with replicas and pastiche. (Samuel 266)

There is a fine line separating historical accuracy from political agenda. It is the point at which this line is drawn which elicits, justifiably so, debate from many historians. At the same time, it is the point at which this line is drawn that determines the effectiveness of the heritage narrative to communicate historical themes to a popular audience. The historiocity of heritage reflects the shifting nature of that invisible line. Changes in heritage presentation reflect changes in social conscience, "history, commemoration and conservation are all, therefore, implicitly political. What a self-defined group or nation seeks to preserve, and to represent to others, allows us to understand something of what a particular 'imagined community' thinks it is" (Gruffudd 49). Where many warn against the perils of definition Samuel views the process of interpretation as a means of undermining the potential for an autocratic perspective,

far from heritage being the medium through which a Conservative version of the national past becomes hegemonic, one could see its advent as part of a sea-change in attitudes which has left any unified view of the national past...in tatters. Culturally it is pluralist. Everything is grist to its mill. (281)

To invalidate heritage, both the term and the concept, because it has recognizable limitations, is not an acceptable response. The heritage narrative is intended to change as societies come to terms with the complexities of their histories and the myriad of stories waiting to be told. Unlike historical facts, heritage and historical interpretation are by nature fluid. Heritage is not a goal it is a process, the unravelling of which is most reflective of the time and place in which it occurs. Heritage interpretations are of the present, not of the past. Heritage is the selective process by which we understand the past.

4.2 Heritage Defined

Although heritage interpretations strive for historical accuracy, heritage is not history. Heritage is a story told about history in a manner reflective of the contemporary desires of the society, or social group, in which the story originated. The fluid nature of heritage interpretation mirrors the changing nature of human society. In the late twentieth century heritage became a buzzword for countless community development projects. Culture tourism was viewed as a saving grace. Numerous communities, both large and small, throughout Newfoundland and Canada quickly drew up plans to identify and express marketable components of their history. The waters of heritage projects, to say the least, have been muddied. In this thesis heritage is used in reference to official Federal and Provincial guidelines. The presence of Castle Hill National Historic Site and various Provincial commemorative plaques in Placentia have provided the basis of heritage presentation in the community. For this argument, heritage is considered to be a narrative, or perspective of the past constructed by outside institutions and individuals.³⁹ The interpretation is constructed in order to meet the political mandates of the respective institution. Heritage is, therefore, considered to be public history. It is an interpretation of historic events funded by public institutions with the intention of expressing historic themes of relevance to a wide public audience, specifically, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the nation of Canada. The heritage landscape consists of both tangible and intangible aspects of the community's history, highlighted because of their representativeness and effectiveness for communicating a heritage narrative.

4.5 Building a Heritage Landscape

How far must the present recede into the past before it becomes a thing of value?

According to John Jackson,

there has to be an interval of neglect, there has to be discontinuity; it is religiously and artistically essential. That is what I mean when I refer to the necessity for ruins: ruins provide the incentive for restoration, and for a return to origins. There has to be...an interim of death or rejection before there can be a born-again landscape. Many of us know the joy and excitement not so much of creating the new as of redeeming what has been neglected, and this excitement is particularly strong when the original condition is seen as holy or beautiful. The old farmhouse has to decay before we can restore it and lead an alternative lifestyle in the country; the landscape has to be plundered and stripped before we can restore the natural ecosystem; the neighbourhood has to be a slum before we can discover it and gentrify it. That is how we reproduce the cosmic scheme and correct history. (102)

There are no set standards but generally speaking it should be far enough to elicit reminiscences from elders as the stuff of stories, of legends and myths. An early and rare mention of historic ruins in Placentia is in LeMessurier's essay. Writing in 1910, he recalls being captivated by the allure of the remains,

When quite a lad I visited Placentia in 1854 and remained there nine months. My great-grandmother, who was then quite old, and who was the wife of a lieutenant of the 61st Foot, told me many times of the old garrison days, where the forts lay and where the store houses and barracks were situated. I remember seeing the Artillery barracks which then stood west of the field near Fort Frederick. The Infantry barracks was on the beach to the rear of Sweetman's house and in line with the old Court House. The French commandant's house, or Government House, stood until quite recently where the Post Office is. It was built of oak, the frame having been imported from France. The Commissariat House or storekeeper's dwelling, was but a short distance from it on the south-west; in this Mr. Ballard lived for some years. At the time I speak of all Sweetman's buildings were intact, but a small business was carried on by the surviving partner of the great firm, who died shortly after. (26)

By the twentieth century the foundations of the various fortifications, with the exception of Castle Hill, seem to have disappeared from the landscape or are at least not

mentioned in the published record. More than a century later they are gradually being uncovered as part of an extensive archaeological project. In the interim, numerous projects and several attempts have been made to develop the heritage landscape and tourism potential of Placentia.

The construction of the Newfoundland Railway played a key role in the development of tourism throughout the island. Promotional material dating to 1910 noted that, "During the last few years Newfoundland and Labrador have been appealing to the tourist, health seeker and sportsman, and every year witnesses an increasing number of tourists in search of the picturesque. Travellers, explorers, health seekers, anglers and hunters carry back glowing reports of the wonderful attractions of Newfoundland and Labrador..." (as quoted in Pocius 1994:47). Initially, the focus of promotional material was on "three drawing cards: as a health resort; as a place where unlimited fish and game could be caught; and as a wilderness area" (Pocius 1994:51). Placentia benefited from both its natural attractions as well as its location as a terminus for travellers between Placentia Bay and St. John's. The Newfoundland Guide Book, published in 1905, includes "Placentia, South—East River" among the rivers accessible from St. John's noting "there is a direct railway line to this picturesque spot, once a French Place d'Armes. The river, which is easily reached either by boat or by road, affords splendid trout fishing in the season, and small salmon. It contains excellent pools" (95). Art O'Keefe was born and raised in the Southeast. He recalls fishermen using the Southeast River when his father was still alive.

See Southeast was the fishing stream. Northeast river, there was always fish would go in that river but there was not the quantity or the quality of the

Southeast river. But now it's the other way around. There's very few salmon go in the Southeast river, most of them go in the Northeast river and most of them fish the Northeast river because you can, do you see where the road goes, you see where the river goes, you can just get out of the car and walk five minutes and you can get to the stream. This one here [the Northeast river] there's different pools, it's more like pools. But this river [the Southeast], oh Lee Wulff the noted sportsman he fished this river with my dad. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Art provides insight into the sportsmen's use of the Placentia area in the early twentieth century, a subject not encountered in my archival research or elsewhere in the interview process. I would, therefore, like to quote his reminiscences at length as they are an important part of Placentia's history and describe the use of the Southeast and Cape Shore by sportsmen. Art also stresses the use of the area by the wealthier segment of St. John's society, an important aspect of the development of tourism. As Pocius states, "Tourism usually occurs in situations where groups of people from more affluent places travel to destinations where the economies are much less developed. Rarely does tourism occur among peoples who are not financially well off...Tourism by the affluent to a poorer region is possible only when methods of transportation have developed sufficiently to permit reasonably easy access" (Pocius 1994:49). Art O'Keefe's description of the guiding infrastructure on the Cape Shore in the early twentieth century addresses most of the criteria noted by Pocius.

This was always a prosperous area, even before Argentia came here, you know. I mean, and Long Harbour. There was a lot of bed and breakfasts in this area because all this area, right here down towards the Cape Shore, this is all tundra. This is all open ground. I can remember back in the early forties, up in this area right here of the Southeast River, this is one of the best salmon rivers in Newfoundland. And because of its close proximity to St. Johns, the professional people in there would come out, doctors and lawyers and stuff and they would stay at different boarding houses in Southeast. Up in Southeast is only a small area and there was two hotels up there back in the twenties and thirties and they made money. I mean, they would cater to the tourists or the hunters coming from

St. Johns. They'd stay out there the same way with the doctors, and lawyers would come out and stay too. People who had only one or two or no kids and these people come out every year, stay with them for probably about a month. Go up in the river in the morning catch their salmon and the quota then was twelve a day. Twelve salmon a day, now it's two per season. And the people who would cook the homemade meals, and that. The fresh produce would be out of the garden, fresh eggs, homemade butter, homemade milk and [things] they probably could not get in St. John's you know. So they would come out for the summer for the fishing and then in the fall of the year they would come on the train to Placentia and they would go down the Cape Shore down towards where you were to in St. Brides.

Patrick: How would they get down there?

Art: They would go down. There was always a road down there and the people that were down there always had the horse and cart. They would come and get them here, bring them out, put them up in their homes and then they'd go back into the country, back on the ridge, it's the headwaters of Branch River. The guys from St. John's, I think the Bells. Mr. Charlie Bell and the Munns, and who else did my father tell me? The guys who owned the Telegram, the Herders, they had a cabin right here and I can remember going out to Branch with my father and he could look across here and you could see that cabin. They'd come in here and shoot the partridges. That's the ptarmigan now, all right. Now my dad, he used to act as guide in the fall of the year. He used to work from, I think May to September with the wildlife or the Fish and Game and then, that winter he would work as a guide with the Wildlife and he said he was he was always fascinated with these old English aristocrats. He said they would come out, probably drive out the road here, this was in his time now, but before that they would have to come out on the train and use the horse and carriage to get out there because they never had any cars yet. Okay. When did Ford make the first Model T. Now I wasn't around. Anyway. So when they got the first four-wheeled conveyance that they could get out, they would drive back to out and in. They would come out and they would stay at the house of the guide and then he would bring them back in to the country.

My great-uncle Lawrence, he used to be the cook for one of these consortiums. Now, they were the people that would...and the Ayers were the other ones, the Bairds and the Ayers, the Collingwoods, the fish merchants in St. John's, the Crosbys, all the big names. They were all excellent sportsman and my father said they were excellent shots. He said, with those light-weight English side-by-side double-barrels, he said very seldom they would miss a shot and lots of times they would fire, a bird would get up, and they'd fire a left and a right — bang bang — and three birds would drop. He said the first one would be a left and then probably two birds crossed like this and he'd get two. But they didn't like that,

you know. That was a fluke shot. But, he says, they were very excellent shots. And, my father and uncle, great-uncle Lawrence, he was their cook. So they would come out to the station along the Cape Shore on some kind of conveyance, get back into the country, and they would probably just stay there for a month.

Now, what they would do. Every morning there would be a horse and some kind of a conveyance, a gig or whatever would go back into the country. There would be a horse leave the cabin in here, and would go out with the birds in it. Like they used to do, they used to take wooden barrels with a brown paper sacks and every time they'd shoot a bird they'd put the bird in the brown paper sacks, twist the top and throw it in the barrel. When they got the barrel full they would put it on the horse and the horse would leave and go towards the road. At the same time, there was a horse leaving the road coming in with fresh provisions and produce and drinking material and whatever. Fresh clothing, whatever they wanted. So they would take it and they would switch then. This horse would keep on going out, another one of course going in. Then there would be one leave here, Patrick's Cove, go in to Placentia and meet the train and pick up provisions from St. John's for the next day, and ammunition and anyone that was coming out to go in the country and then of course they'd have anyone who was rotating to go in. And they kept that up for two months. All those people on the Shore made their living by that. The fella who owns the horse was getting paid to bring the provisions to Patrick's Cove. The guy who owned the house was living in Patrick's Cove. He's getting paid for the guiding part of it and everyone was happy. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

As well as providing sportsmen access to wilderness areas, the railway also offered its passengers "excursions...to Topsail, the Brighton of the Colony, to Placentia, the picturesque old French Capital, and to all the various places north where the railway passes, and by the Reid's local steamers every port of the various bays can be visited" (Prowse 1905:120). When it came to promoting Newfoundland's attractions, Placentia offered its share.⁴⁰

The most promoted attraction in Placentia, starting in the early twentieth century and continuing at the present time, are the military remains on Castle Hill. With an increase in visitors resulting from the construction of the Placentia extension of the railway, Castle Hill became a beacon for tourists and writers visiting the town. A

journalist, writing in 1889, describes his first impressions on ascending to the train station in Jerseyside,

As the train glides on the rolling, hilly country around Placentia comes into view and the serrated range along the shore presents a fine bold aspect. At length the old French capital around which cluster so many historical associations becomes visible, nestling low on a sea-formed beach encircled with hills on all sides except toward the bay. The appearance and situation are most picturesque. Castle Hill, on which was built a formidable French fortress, rises over the narrow entrance of the splendid harbour, completely commanding it. On the opposite side is flagstaff hill or Signal Hill. (as quoted in McCarthy 1973:99)

Public interest in Castle Hill is derived from both its historic associations and the physical prominence of the hill in the local landscape. Because it was the first object encountered, visitors could use it to identify their arrival in Placentia. It is understandable, therefore, that in the minds of many outsiders arriving by train, Castle Hill would become an icon. Further, with the ruins noted by LeMessurier gone from the landscape, Castle Hill became in John Jackson's terms a symbol of the neglected past and the vehicle through which early twentieth-century culture-vultures⁴¹ could "reproduce the cosmic scheme and correct history" (J. Jackson 102).

From the late eighteenth century into the early twentieth century, the publication of seminal texts reflected the increasing interest in documenting and promoting Newfoundland's history.⁴² While some of these documents dealt with Placentia's history in the context of the history of Newfoundland, other principle documents, such as LeMessurier's A Lecture on Placentia (1910), dealt specifically with aspects of the town's cultural heritage. Foremost among the latter are three reports produced by M. F. Howley for the Royal Society of Canada: The Old Basque Tombstones at Placentia (1902), The Old Royal Coat of Arms at Placentia (1910), SVIGARAICIPI: A Hero of

Old French Placentia (1912). Howley's research and writing, along with the interest already surrounding Castle Hill, laid the foundation for the construction of the heritage landscape that has persisted throughout the twentieth century; a select narrative of great men and events primarily focussing on Placentia as the Ancient French capital of Newfoundland.

Two articles in the October 1906 issue of The Newfoundland Quarterly capture the enigma⁴³ of Placentia's efforts to capitalize on its tourism potential: "Historic Placentia" (O'Reilly, W. F. 1906a), and "Placentia as a Tourist Resort" (O'Reilly, W. F. 1906b). The town had ample resources available to promote itself as a tourist resort.

Its situation, the beauty of its scenery and its historic association all beget and retain never-failing interest. The Town proper is situated on a beach thrown up by the sea, and kept in place by the Atlantic on one side and the swift strong currents of the South-East and North-East Arms on the other. It is unique in its situation and surroundings. It is flanked and protected by the towering summits of Castle Hill on the one side, and the beetling Strouter and fair slopes of Mount Pleasant on the other. The Arms run inland for many miles, and are charming in the beauty and variety of their scenery. To the angler they supply some of the very best fishing in Newfoundland. (O'Reilly, W. F. 1906b:14)

The author is beguiled that the town is not running over in "American gold" when it is "so easy of access by steam and rail, and it has so many delightful resorts in its near neighbourhood...Up either of the Arms is an ideal place for a day's outing or picnic parties. Within easy walking distance is Argentia...then one can take the steamer and visit the many islands and towns in the Bay" (O'Reilly, W. F. 1906b:15). The article is intended to market Placentia. It is also an attempt to draw the attention of the town's residents to the economic potential of the developing Newfoundland tourism economy; "When the people of Placentia realize to the full how profitable it is to business of every

kind to have large numbers of summer visitors, they will begin in real earnest to cater to it. Shopkeepers, hotels, boarding-house keepers, fishermen and farmers, all will be taxed to their utmost to supply the needs of tourists" (O'Reilly, W. F. 1906b:14).

Following Howley's lead, William O'Reilly joined the growing collection of writer's promoting the town's heritage, noting that, although "a great deal has already been written about this old town, much more can be said without exhausting it" (11). O'Reilly then gives a brief summary of the town's history starting "about the year 1640" and ending at 1713, after which "we find the British ensign flying from the old French flag-staff on the Hill. The town was again fortified and garrisoned, and British troops held sway for the next one hundred years" (O'Reilly, W. F. 1906b:11). As well as the general historic themes already discussed,⁴⁴ O'Reilly discusses various "relics of France and England" then present in the town. Among the "relics" was "a grant of land signed by Louis XIV...several old English documents, as well as the Communion Plate...[and] of course no one would think of leaving Placentia without viewing the old ruins of the Forts, and to go away without a visit to the old Church Yard is a thing not to be thought of. Here are to be found the old Basque headstones dating as far back as 1676" (O'Reilly, W. F. 1906b:11).⁴⁵ Two other artifacts of note have since become essential parts of the heritage landscape of Placentia, the bailiff's tip staff and the royal coat of arms. Barnable states that the tip staff, now included in the collection in the O'Reilly House museum, was "given to the Town of Placentia by King George III. It bears several markings including a coat of arms, the date 1772, and the town's name 'Placentia'" (13). The coat

of arms was the subject of one of Howley's reports for the Royal Society of Canada (1910).

Prince William Henry, whom later became King William IV, is one of the more colourful characters from Placentia's history. Writing in 1895, Prowse states that many "anecdotes are current in the Colony about our Royal visitor" (867). Many stories have been repeated about his residence as surrogate in the colony for the year 1786. These stories have since entered the general body of historical narratives known by today's residents and appear to be derivative of official rather than folk culture—of written history rather than oral tradition.⁴⁶ Because he is a notable historic figure and belongs to the era of British military occupation, William Henry, for this thesis, is considered to be part of the public history of Placentia and a component of the heritage landscape. There is another series of stories involving William Henry and a Collins family from Placentia. According to Prowse, "the story goes that, in order to test the courage of the boys to be selected for commissions, the Prince made a feint to give them a tremendous blow with a stick. Young Collins, a stolid, strong fellow, never budged, and was accordingly chosen for His Majesty's service" (Prowse 1895:366 footnote 1). Young Edward Collins, "after 20 years distinguishing himself in the sea battles of the day [retired] in Placentia, where he died shortly afterwards" (W. F. O'Reilly 11). A local variant of the Collins story suggests that he was an illegitimate son of the Prince and the fact that he was not intimidated by the Prince's feint was proof that he had royal blood. Residents of Placentia enjoy telling stories about Prince William Henry but I believe that the narratives have been derived from published sources and have not, although they exist as an oral

tradition, been transmitted orally through the generations. That said, the following reference was handwritten in the margins of a document in the Placentia Area Historical Society files: “[supp]osed to have had a child for William IV — hence the royal blood.” The notes appear to be a selection of family stories although the family’s name is not known.⁴⁷ It cannot be determined, therefore, if this is part of this particular family’s genealogy, and if it is, if it is an example of the genealogical predilection toward establishing a royal lineage. Regardless, it shows that, after 1962 the story was being passed on in some context associated to one local family’s stories.⁴⁸

O’Reilly also raises the issue of neglect and the desire for preservation. Reminiscent of Jackson’s contention that “ruins provide the incentive for restoration, and for a return to origins,” (J. Jackson 102) O’Reilly observes that the “inexorable hand of time is playing sad havoc with these old stones [Basque tombstones] and unless something be done to preserve them ere long these historic relics...will have crumbled into dust” (W. F. O’Reilly 1906a:11). He also bemoans that the “Old Church which has withstood the wind and weather and high tides, too, of over 150 years, is now nearly down” (W. F. O’Reilly 1906a:11). A similar concern for the preservation of the Anglican church was made seventeen years earlier, in 1889 (McCarthy 1973: 100).⁴⁹ O’Reilly also notes that the “Old Court House, another Centenarian, was taken down a year or two ago [c. 1904—1905]” (W. F. O’Reilly 1906a:11). All of these activities, including the concern that the various artifacts “are not private property and something should be done to keep them from crumbling away, as they are most interesting historical records,”⁵⁰ (W. F. O’Reilly 1906a:11) created an environment of neglected heritage for which “many of

us know the joy and excitement not so much of creating the new as of redeeming what has been neglected, and this excitement is particularly strong when the original condition is seen as holy or beautiful" (J. Jackson 102). Such was the state of the heritage landscape in Placentia prior to the 1920s, when tourism was characterized by health, fishing and hunting, and wilderness; before the value of heritage tourism had been realized.

When the government of Newfoundland purchased the railway from the Reid Company in 1923, it acquired the main vehicle of the growing tourism industry. For many years, interest groups had been trying to promote the tourism potential of the island's historic and cultural resources. Two articles on Placentia have already been discussed (W. F. O'Reilly 1906a, 1906b). A third article, "The Tourist Traffic," by H. F. Shortis, was published in 1910. Unlike the previous two articles which presented historic attractions as an addition to "scenery, fin, fur and feather" (Pocius 1994: 71), Shortis is more adamant that his intent is on "advertising our Historical Associations for the benefit of this splendid object," (10) that is, for attracting tourists. Among the various human and architectural accomplishments noted by Shortis is, again, the "ancient capital, Placentia, with its great arms teeming with salmon and trout, its beautiful scenery and its hospitable people. Take for instance, the Castle Hill, with its historic associations and surroundings" (Shortis 1910:10). Shortis, like others, tries to capitalize on the public's passion for antiquities.

Then there is to be considered the archaeology of Castle Hill when the King Edward Memorial Park shall be commenced. Excavations made for the opening of such a Park, on the summit of Castle Hill, might easily place the Newfoundland Historical Society in possession of some very interesting military relics of the past. The ground has never been explored, so that if it were found to contain old

weapons of warfare or ammunition in use two hundred years ago, it would repay the Historical Society to recover and possess them. (Shortis 1910:10)

What is unique to Shortis's vision is his call for the erection of an "everlasting monument" (Shortis 1910:11) on Castle Hill. He is among the first writers to go beyond preservation and call for commemoration of heritage sites.

The Newfoundland Tourist and Publicity Association (NTPA) was formed in 1925, two years after the transfer of the railway from the Reid Company to the Newfoundland government (Wheeler). The NTPA continued to promote the natural attractions of the island but also added heritage and cultural sites to its agenda. The NTPA was originally "supported through public subscription but legislation passed in 1927 incorporated the association and entitled it to receive funds collected by means of a travel stamp tax on all outgoing steamship and rail passenger tickets" (Wheeler:578). The Commission of Government amended the legislation in 1936 and the Newfoundland Tourist Traffic Development Board was created along with an annual operating grant and a mandate to develop the island's tourism infrastructure.⁵¹ Unfortunately, the finances were not sufficient to address the extensive desires of the board and, along with other financial problems and the outbreak of World War Two, the tourism industry lay dormant until 1949, when Newfoundland joined Confederation. This same period, from roughly 1920 to 1947, was also a period of uncertainty for another heritage icon, the Newfoundland Museum. According to John Maunder, when James Howley died, "on January 1, 1918...an era passed; and the Museum slipped deep into the doldrums." Maunder states that, "without a doubt, the Commission of government years, during the late 1930s and the 1940s, were the darkest in the Museum's long history." It appears,

therefore, that, although the importance of heritage had gained the public's attention by the mid—1920s, the combination of Newfoundland's political uncertainty, a global economic recession, and world war kept it from being developed on the island until control was first returned to a Home government and then transferred to a provincial government⁵² operating under the Federal Government of Canada.

The 1950s and 1960s were important decades for the development of Newfoundland's tourism industry. Paved highways increased access for motor vehicles to various locations across the island inspiring local economic development with the opening of hotels and other services catering to tourist traffic. With regard to heritage, this era saw the implementation of the Act Respecting the Preservation of Historic Objects by the Provincial Government in 1955, followed by the Historic Markers program in 1966 which was designed to create a series of commemorative markers celebrating aspects of the Province's history.

Federally, initiatives were undertaken to establish National Parks and Historic sites, not only for the preservation of selected heritage resources, but also to interpret and promote these resources as tourist attractions, thereby boosting local economies.⁵³ The following excerpt from a letter dated 1952, outlined the Federal Government's initial ambitions for Castle Hill National Historic site,⁵⁴

The marking of Placentia as a place of national historic importance presents a problem. It has been approved as such. The Board has also recommended my proposals that Castle Hill should be set out as a recreation park and that on the site where Fort Frederick stood on the eastern foreshore of the Gut a small area should be set aside and in it mounted the guns which are lying there. The difficulty is to find out who may lay claim to these properties. I am informed by Deputy Minister Carter of Mines and Resources that no survey of Placentia exists, but that certain grants were issued over a hundred years ago. The Board which requires in each

case a License of Occupation has to be satisfied regarding land titles. I had hoped the areas were held by the Crown.

I wonder if it would be possible to have notice given to the effect that in view of the intention of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board to mark Placentia and Jersey Side as places of national historic importance, it would be appreciated if any persons claiming to hold grants covering Castle Hill and the eastern foreshore of the Gut on the eastern side submitted their claims to the Department of Mines and Resources in a stipulated time, failing which, the areas would be proclaimed to be Crown Land. I am not sufficiently familiar with the laws to determine whether this would be in order or not.

After more than a decade of negotiations, in June, 1968, Castle Hill became Newfoundland's second national historic site. The original plans for the site were not realized and the official boundaries were limited to the defense fortifications located on the hill. Interpretation of the site was restricted to those remains held within the property and echoed the interests of visitors to Placentia half a century earlier with its emphasis on the military and European roots. For example, the following excerpt from The Daily News, St. John's, Newfoundland, July 6, 1973: "The park, which includes three restored fortifications and a large modern visitor's centre, focuses not only on the military history of the area but also the French and British struggle for the fishery that played such an important role in that history." While Castle Hill National Historic Site remained emblematic of Placentia's heritage landscape, the remains only represented a portion of the overall history, even of the history relating to the military occupation. Although the site was intended to "interpret not only the Castle Hill story but also would bring it into context and speak of the general history of the area,"⁵⁵ there was no heritage preservation or interpretation present in the town to support the work undertaken at Castle Hill. There were no links available, conceptual or otherwise, to facilitate a tourist's heritage

experience of the region beyond visiting the limited remains on the hill. Although the town had an active Historical Association, they did not have a museum. When he visited Placentia on November 24, 1960, A. E. Hunter noted that a 20' X 12' room had been put aside in the Town Hall for the "purposes of a museum."⁵⁶ At that time the contents included "only a few framed scenic photographs and photostatic plans, facsimiles of old documents and such like" (see footnote 56). Hunter also visited the Anglican Church and found that

no care has yet been given to the cemetery which is suffering less from wilful damage than from long disuse and neglect. Many graves are completely overgrown, their headstones down, partly or wholly buried; slabs of rock and pieces of stone, which may be fragments or tombs, lie about, and there is a litter of old lumber, roofing felt and other such debris...When the church was repaired some dozen years ago after a period of disuse in the absence of an Anglican congregation, the most ancient tombstones, those commemorating Basque Sea Captains of the 17th century, were dumped outside. None of the Basque stones is now whole and those which were already broken are further damaged, and one has disintegrated almost beyond redemption. (see footnote 56)

Efforts were still being made to facilitate the preservation of the Church and its cemetery. The 1966 minutes of the Management Committee of the Newfoundland Historical Society note that the "Venerable Archdeacon Legge approached the Secretary for help in connection with the upkeep of the Church of England cemetery at Placentia, and submitted two papers on the Basque and other old stones of great historical value."⁵⁷ The situation surrounding the site's preservation "in connection with the Church of England and Cemetery at Placentia is that only half-a-dozen Anglican families are left in the community and are capable with some assistance of the Diocesan Synod only of maintaining the Church itself. The cemetery and stones is [*sic*] in very bad shape and unless something is done, all will soon be lost to history" (see footnote 57). A couple of

months later it was reported that, "In view of extensive repairs having to be made to the Placentia Anglican Church itself, the Anglican Synod has decided to include the cemetery and a chain-link fence is now being erected and the grass cut."⁵⁸

The steady increase in tourism, the associated interest in both the economic and personal benefits of heritage, and the development of Newfoundland's cultural identity persisted throughout the remaining years of the twentieth century. Faced with increased economic hardship, many communities turned to their heritage to create an economic base for their survival. The concept of heritage presentation and interpretation began to change with the advent of social history and folklore studies directing more attention toward vernacular concerns and the lives of everyday people. Not many communities had the same potential for heritage interpretation as Placentia; not only from the extent and diversity of its history, but also because of the promotional impetus provided by Castle Hill and the existing structures and artifacts scattered throughout the town.

In 1972, under the guidance of William O'Shea, then Superintendent of Castle Hill National Historic Site, and with support from Opportunities For Youth (a development fund), the Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeology Project was organized in Placentia. Not only did this survey help to extend presentation of the heritage landscape beyond the limited boundaries of Castle Hill, it also directly involved local residents in the research and documentation process. According to William O'Shea, "the original idea behind the archaeological project...was to develop information about the resource base to give ownership [of the resources] to the community" (William O'Shea. Interview). More

than simply gathering information, the survey made residents feel a part of the history they uncovered. The final report, written by residents, summarizes their experience.

The members of the committee feel satisfied with both the objectives and results of the project. For many of us it was the first time that we had taken an active part in what we feel was a worthwhile contribution to this area. We believe that the project was valuable, not only in the sense of its helping to promote development, but also in an educational sense. Because of the project we discovered knowledge of our history, and through it a greater realization of who we are and where our roots lie. The project gave us a greater understanding of the area we live in. (Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society)

Not only did the experience increase their awareness of local history, it also increased their desire to see it preserved.⁵⁹

Because of the project we became more involved in the affairs of the community. When we learned, for example, that the Placentia Town Council planned on re-locating its municipal dump to an area which would greatly endanger two historic sites which we had surveyed, we sent a letter of protest to the Council and requested the Placentia Area Historical Society to do the same. Although our efforts proved fruitless, if it had not been for the project we probably would not have been interested enough even to write. (Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society)

Furthermore, involvement in the project increased the participant's awareness of the economic potential to be gained from the preservation and presentation of their heritage.

There is one point on which the members feel strongly. We believe that programmes like O. F. Y. [Opportunities For Youth] are of greater benefit to Placentia than to most areas. Because of the recent economic setback from which this area is still trying to recover, any project which can help to promote development in the community as well as bring employment to students in the community, should be encouraged as being not only valuable but necessary to the community. We feel that this project, with its emphasis on the historical importance of the area, is a good example of what is needed to make Placentia an economically stable area. (Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society)

What is unique about the Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Survey is that the accompanying documentation provides a glimpse of the community's response to a heritage project in which they are the principal organizers. The response is three fold focussing on the recovery and preservation of historic resources, the creation of employment and career opportunities for youth, and the potential for community development through heritage presentation. G. A. Frecker, Chancellor of Memorial University wrote to O'Shea, in support of the project, his hopes that the

implementation of the project could result in some quite interesting 'finds', of permanent value. It would certainly stimulate among the participants and also among the residents of the area a new awareness of the historicity of the old French capital of Newfoundland. Furthermore, out of the project there could come an awakened interest in archaeology, which in turn could spur one or several young Newfoundlanders to make archaeology their field of study and future research, with benefit to Newfoundland and Canada" (Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society).

In a similar vein, David Curran of the Memorial University Extension Services wrote to O'Shea that, in addition to the obvious benefit of "employment and experience for the participants," the project will enable the residents to "see the past being unearthed and this should make them more aware of their rich history" which, according to Curran, "has never been sufficiently understood by the residents as a resource upon which a profitable tourist industry could be established" (Jerseyside/Placentia Archeological Society). The Placentia Town Council responded to the project by stressing their mutual interest in the preservation and interpretation of the town's history, adding that "for many years council has been working towards developing the history of the Placentia Area and to establish Placentia in its own right as the 'Old French Capital of Newfoundland'... during the past year council has purchased six old French Cannons to be mounted at the

Fort Louis site in an attempt to commence with the restoration of this site”

(Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society). Martin Lee, a member of the Newfoundland Public Libraries Board, recognized the historic insights to be derived from the site as well as the accompanying long term, economic benefits resulting from the promotion of the town’s heritage.

There is no doubt that any information which you discover will provide greater insights into the history of the area, and perhaps provide impetus for the newly formed Placentia Area Historical Society to approach historical development themselves. Since resource development is an immediate necessity if the Placentia area intends to remain a viable entity. (Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society)

Overall, the community responded positively to developing its own heritage project. Although the major heritage themes still related to the French and English military presence in the town, the survey increased the documentation of sites not encompassed by Castle Hill and added several sites known primarily through local knowledge and folklore. The sites included in the Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Survey included: “Point Verde, site of a former English gun battery; The Letter Rock, a place rich in folklore and legends; Gallon’s Point Battery, on which another English gun-battery was supposed to be situated; Crevecoeur Battery, part of the English defences north of the Castle; Freshwater Cemetery, a French graveyard according to old stories; Fort Frederick, English fort of the eighteenth century; Fort St. Louis, the French stronghold in Newfoundland; The Blockhouse, an English Battery which guarded the road entrance to Placentia,” (Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society) a graveyard in the location of Fort Louis, and a collection of artifacts recovered from a construction trench dug on the property of Randell Verran. Early on, William O’Shea, chief co-

ordinator and mentor, left the archaeological project and it is likely that the follow-up suffered from the loss of his influence. Despite the impetus and potential provided by the results of the archaeological project, no further interpretive work was undertaken and the sites were subsequently abandoned.⁶⁰ It would take another thirty years and another generation to renew the town's active involvement in the preservation and interpretation of its heritage.

Meanwhile, a series of provincial projects continued the process of developing the heritage landscape of Placentia. In 1986, Elaine Mitchell, on behalf of the Provincial Planning Office, Department of Municipal Affairs, compiled an inventory of all the buildings then present in the old townsite. According to Mitchell, "the visible signs of history have largely disappeared. Older buildings have been demolished or renovated into newer architectural forms, historic sites built on or forgotten. The purpose of her project was to uncover the built heritage of Placentia and develop a plan to help the community take advantage of its historic resources" (2).

Mitchell's report was the first document to look specifically at the resources of the town and, through the development of domestic architecture, express a narrative of Placentia relating to people and events occurring in the more recent past and more reflective of the heritage of the current residents. Mitchell separated her inventory into three broad categories: Public Buildings, Houses, and Historic Sites. Public Buildings included St. Luke's Anglican Church, Sacred Heart Parish Church, Presentation Convent, Star of the Sea Memorial Hall, and the Placentia Court House. Houses included the Verran House (now the Rosedale Manor Bed and Breakfast), Cable Office, and

Magistrate's House (now the O'Reilly House Museum). Historic Sites, a minor part of her research, included Le Vieux Fort, Fort Louis, and Fort Frederick. In a series of recommendations Mitchell reiterated the major issues voiced by previous researchers that town council should institute policies to ensure the protection of the sites, should make use of the existing historic structures to develop "a wider range of economic opportunities such as those associated with tourism," (24) and should encourage the efforts of the Placentia Area Historical Society "and its intention to open a local museum" (25).

In addition to her report, Mitchell created a sample walking tour of Placentia which effectively links the town's built heritage with the main themes of community identity and development focussing upon the mid-nineteenth century up to 1986.⁶¹ Mitchell's work remains an important source for the role it has played in creating an expanded framework for both the temporal and spatial dimensions of Placentia's heritage landscape.

An archaeological survey in 1996 (Gaulton and Carter), further explored the potential of this broader historical perspective. The survey, sponsored by the Provincial Cultural Heritage Division of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, was undertaken because,

In the past few years, Newfoundland's troubled economy has forced many communities to focus their attention on areas that were once virtually left untouched. One area that has great potential to help revive the economies of many Newfoundland communities involves tourism. Placentia, with its rich and varied history, has the opportunity to become one of the major tourist attractions in Newfoundland. One way in which tourism can be increased in the region is through archaeological excavation. It is through archaeology that the historic

nature of Placentia can be revealed and brought to the public. (Gaulton and Carter:1)

It interesting to note that, in relation to the heritage landscape concept being developed in this chapter, Gaulton and Carter not only commented in their report on the economic potential to be derived from the interpretation of a community's history, but also that "with the exception of excavations carried out at Castle Hill and a brief excavation/survey in 1972, no other meaningful archaeological work has been done in the area" (6). Of the seven locations tested in 1996 (O'Reilly House property, Placentia playground, open field between post office and Elaine Murray's house, Jersey-side Ballfield, Derm and Rita's property, Mount Pleasant, and the Murray property) only two, Mount Pleasant and the Murray property, contained a substantial amount of undisturbed stratigraphy and cultural remains (Gaulton and Carter:17). Testing at Mount Pleasant revealed that the site included several stone walls and other features along with a variety of 17th century French and possibly Basque artifacts. The Murray property contained 18th century remains indicating that a "blacksmith shop or similar work station was located nearby" that may have been operated by the merchant firm of Saunders and Sweetman (Gaulton and Carter:17). The 1996 survey, therefore, not only supported the original concept of the heritage landscape representing the French occupation of Placentia, it also provided archaeological evidence to interpret the expanded heritage landscape concept which included the more recent occupation of the town by merchant firms.

The most comprehensive attempt to preserve and present Placentia's heritage landscape was the Townscaping plan published in 2001 under the initiative of the mayor

at the time, William Hogan. Hogan's concept was to use the Townscaping plan as a fulcrum for a variety of other projects.

What I did was, Townscaping is a nice phrase, a nice thing to get money on but I was after the cultural aspect of it and the municipal infrastructure. The paving of the streets and the sidewalks and water and sewer and sewage treatment plant, all these kind of fine things. And I was after a celebration of the history and the culture...I mean, if you went in looking for ten million dollars worth of water and sewer and infrastructure for the town they'd look at you over their glasses and say you're nuts, you know. But if you go in describing a plan celebrating our history and culture and call it a Townscaping Plan and how you're going to do it up to attract tourism and get all the cliches, you know, so there's a...sewage plant, a treatment plant in this...Townscaping is a word that would describe what you're going to do in dressing up your town. What kind of a definition you're going to put on your town. So you put your, what's your definition? Well the definition was a big fort right up Placentia gut, one on each side the gut. You enunciated them and you make walking tours, you make your walking areas as a, you know, environmentally friendly, or eye-pleasing. (Hogan. Interview)

Hogan recognized the importance of melding multiple projects into a single plan: "the Townscaping Plan covers a multitude of sins. It helps them out from infrastructure, it adds to the town, people attracted to Voisey living in a nice pleasant town with all these attributes. It just makes for better living" (Hogan. Interview). In support of his interest in the town's heritage Hogan created the Placentia Historic Trust, a committee composed of council members and the Placentia Area Historic Society, mandated to "explore various means of development of our history and culture tourism potential to coincide with the town's Townscaping plans" (The Charter, July 10, 2000:5) including the management of an extensive archaeological project involving the excavation of several of the fortifications present in the town.

The Townscaping project is described as a “study in the conservation of the natural and cultural environment of a Newfoundland outport community of national historic significance” (Hogan 2001:1). Furthermore, it

does not pretend to offer a panacea for the community’s economic woes. The intent is to offer a partial solution, an alternative that will contribute to the diversification of the local economy and thereby serve to mitigate some of the negative economic impacts the town has experienced over the past twenty years. We are confident that if this Plan is fully and properly implemented, it will generate significant economic benefits for the Town, the region, and for the province as a whole. (Hogan 2001:1)

Hogan’s vision for the Townscaping plan was to create a project in which infrastructure development and cultural tourism would effectively support one another by invigorating the local economy while, at the same time providing a vehicle for upgrading existing municipal services.⁶² It was an attempt to incorporate a multitude of community development demands into a single project drawing on the resources of the Federal, Provincial, and municipal governments.

What is fascinating, and certainly unique in Placentia’s case, about Hogan’s proposal is the scope of his concept of a Cultural Heritage District or Townscape.⁶³ As is stated in the report,

the concept of townscape and heritage district conservation is relatively new to Newfoundland. Until recently, the emphasis has been on the preservation of buildings. It is now recognized that specific areas or districts within our communities reflect and project the past. One building standing alone is experienced as architecture; several buildings considered together generate a very different response. (Hogan 2001:4)

More than just built heritage, the townscape plan also incorporates complex issues of historic land use (gateways, walkways and footpaths, open spaces, sacred land, property enclosures and fences, gardens, farming and grazing) and topography (the harbour,

shoreline, beaches, flooding, watercourses, wetlands, and vegetation). The Townscape concept is defined as the “art of relationship; its purpose is to take all the elements that go into creating the town’s environment—its buildings, open spaces, natural features and elements, waterways and historic character and weave them together so that their historic character and ambience is enhanced and people begin to experience something of the past” (Hogan 2001:90). As with other interpretations of Placentia’s past, Hogan’s Townscaping concept of the heritage landscape drew heavily upon previous concepts and research focussing on the Portugese, Basque, French, and English history up to 1813, including the Irish as a dominant immigrant population. The official definition of Placentia’s “existing heritage conservation area” includes the area of the town bounded by “Prince William Drive, Dixon Hill and Orcan River including the site of Fort Frederick...[and including the] narrow streets oriented along the old paths perpendicular to Orcan river as set out by the French in the 17th century” (Hogan 2001:24). The plan also makes note of the relevant cultural components contained therein and is reflective of the various groups previously mentioned. It is misleading, though, to suggest that the Townscaping proposal was limited to interpreting the town’s seventeenth century characteristics. Hogan’s proposal was much more complex and merely used the French history as a framework for the interpretation of the diverse resources present in the old section of the town. A major part of the accomplishment of the Townscaping proposal is its comprehensive historical scope.

Part of the reasoning behind the focus on the pre-nineteenth century history of Placentia may have been the commemorative mandate established by Castle Hill National

Historic Site.⁶⁴ In a 2002 draft of the commemorative integrity statement for Castle Hill National Historic Site of Canada,⁶⁵ the “reason for national significance” of the site is defined as, “from 1692 to 1811, the defences at Castle Hill played an important role in the defence of Placentia and the larger economic and strategic interests of France and Britain in what is now Atlantic Canada” (Parks Canada).

At the same time as the Townscaping plan was being developed, the town was applying to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMB) for designation of the Town of Placentia and its immediate surroundings as a cultural landscape of national historic significance (Hogan, no date).⁶⁶ Because the Federal Government already recognized the French character of Placentia, it made sense that this application should draw on a similar theme, adding that there are numerous other resources reflecting other historic periods and cultural groups. The HSMB application divided the heritage landscape into built and natural components. Built heritage components included military installations constructed by the Basque, French, and British and other structures and artifacts representing the presence of these cultures in the town. It also took advantage of the opportunity to note the presence “throughout the lanes and pathways of the Old Town [of] a large number of traditional Newfoundland vernacular residences and commercial properties” (Hogan 2001: 5). The natural heritage components are less specific than they are in the Townscaping document, although this is probably a result of the HSMB proposal being catered to the commemorative intent of Castle Hill as opposed to the town. The HSMB proposal describes the natural components as ranging “from the Point Verde sand bar and downs, the terrain of the adjacent hill trails to the Brule gardens,

along the Great Beach to the Gut connecting the Harbour and Orcan River with its safe anchorage” (Hogan, no date: 5). It then goes on to state that, “while Dixon Hill, Mount Pleasant and Castle Hill dominate the Old Town, it is Larkin’s Pond behind Castle Hill, and its stream to Freshwater Cove, which is perhaps the sustaining source of Placentia’s long history,” (Hogan, no date: 5) concluding with a listing of the various “coves, headlands, cliffs, crevices, gulches and granite hills, the ancient flora and fauna of the downs, barrens and wooded drokes, ponds and streams which provided the backdrop for some of Canada’s most significant historic scenes,” (Hogan, no date: 5) thereby leaving open the interpretive potential and areal extent of the heritage landscape.

In 2001, Amanda Crompton, a PhD student from Memorial University, in association with the Newfoundland Archaeological Heritage Outreach Program (NAHOP), began an extensive archaeological excavation of sites relating to “the early European occupation of the Placentia region (especially that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries)” (Crompton 3), which consist of primarily French military installations. At the same time, the community was developing a series of celebrations to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the arrival of the French in Canada. The community’s celebrations were to be held in association with a variety of other French culture related events throughout Atlantic Canada in 2004. Placentia’s involvement in the “Year of the French” celebrations originated at the same time as the Placentia Area Historical Society became involved in Hogan’s Townscaping plan. The opportunity to capitalize upon Placentia’s historic role as the “ancient French capital” inevitably meant that the “Year of the French” celebrations adopted a defining role in the town’s heritage

activities. The community's enthusiasm for the celebrations, ranging from the creation of a local French language group to requesting the presence of a life-size, operational replica of D'Iberville's ship, the *Pelican*, reflected the healthy state of Placentia's recognition of the potential value of heritage tourism. At the same time, the emphasis on French history led the community to cross the boundary from historic fact to heritage narrative—as the town donned the trappings of Ancient France it also formulated a version of itself intended for the consumption of outsiders, mostly tourists and officials intent upon experiencing the past, not necessarily the current realities of life in Placentia.

4.6 Summary

The goal of this chapter has been to document the growth of a heritage landscape in the town of Placentia; a process which has been ongoing since 1889 and continues to this day. For this thesis, the concept of heritage landscape has been associated with the concept of culture tourism, of public history and the interpretive leadership provided by Federal and Provincial government heritage programs. The Federal Government's initiative to preserve and interpret the military remains on Castle Hill in 1968 marked the culmination of nearly a century of attempts to promote the site as a tourist attraction. Commemoration of Castle Hill led to more comprehensive heritage projects being undertaken within the town itself. Periods of economic hardship and the development of cultural tourism across the island of Newfoundland have resulted in an increased awareness by the town of the economic potential of its historic resources. This has resulted in more ambitious and directed heritage programs being undertaken by the town itself.

Earlier in the chapter I wrote that heritage is used in reference to official Federal and Provincial guidelines. This does not mean that only projects undertaken by the respective governments are to be classified as 'heritage' projects. What is meant, rather, is that the various projects undertaken in Placentia, whether they are the work of the Federal, Provincial, or Municipal levels of government, private organizations or individuals, generally follow the heritage narratives established by outside institutions and individuals. As with the written history, the emphasis of heritage interpretation in Placentia has focussed on events prior to the midnineteenth century and often centred around stories emanating from the remains commemorated at Castle Hill National Historic Site.⁶⁷ In many ways, Placentia's heritage, its public history, has retained the character of being a select narrative of great men and events with Placentia highlighted as the Ancient French Capital of Newfoundland.

Chapter 5: EXPERIENCING THE PAST IN PLACENTIA

We all experience the past. Through our experience of the past we construct an identity to create a sense of belonging in the present. It is part of our human prerogative to create a bond to validate our being in any place we find ourselves living in. The purpose of this thesis is to address the question: how does a community understand its past? In chapter 2 the question was refined to ask: what are the narratives told by a community's members to create a sense of belonging; to situate themselves as the legitimate proprietors of the place they call home? This chapter will look at how public and personal versions of history are expressed by a selection of residents from Placentia. It will look at how the people interviewed for this research express their past and how Placentia's past is, and is not, incorporated into their sense of community. It will also discuss the role archaeology has played in bringing to life the myth of the "ancient French capital" and the impact that the tangible remains have had on connecting the town's residents to Placentia's past. The goal of this chapter is to show how the personal history of many residents often expresses a sense of belonging to someplace other than Placentia and to show how the public version of history, the myth of the "ancient French capital," is used by residents to create an attachment to a community where they do not have strong roots.

5.1 "History's been around me pretty much all my life"

John Bruce was a member of the archaeology crew excavating in Placentia in the summer of 2001 and 2002. Born and raised in Dunville and Jersey side and trained as a carpenter in Placentia, John left the island and worked in Toronto for a couple of years

before returning home. Like many Newfoundlanders, he works when work is available, often relying on scant hours to collect enough time to qualify for income assistance.

Working for a summer as a member of an archaeology crew meant employment, something hard to come by if one wishes to stay on the island. The opportunity for work in Placentia also meant he would not have to leave his home and his family. When he first started with the archaeology program, it was "just a job."

Last season it was just a job, right. First couple of weeks I was at it and I didn't quite know what I'd got myself into. But I started finding some stuff and got really interested, really interested. Days I didn't want to go home. That kind of a way, right, you know. But it came up again and I applied, now here I am. (Bruce. Interview)

For John, the allure of archaeology is the physical presence of the past, the "digging part" because you never know "what you're going to uncover..."

People like to see stuff. That's the way I look at it. You come over and 'what you find today?' 'Nothing, b'ye.' And they kind of go away disgusted, right. But you hold it up and show them, 'oh yeah, great stuff, oh man look at that, yeah.' (Bruce. Interview)

Working as an archaeologist has brought the heritage myth of the ancient past to life for John. He was familiar with local stories about the buried fortresses, but doubted the truth in them.

I heard my father talk about this for years. That there was a fort down here, but, you know, there was never any sign of it. They'd say this was the wall here and I didn't believe it until the last year we were rooting around and we found it. The stones, eh. It's amazing." (Bruce. Interview)

The physical evidence of the stories, the artifacts, has more than quelled his scepticism. It has created an indelible connection for him to the origins of his community. Prior to excavating, his feelings were, "Ah, there was a fort down in the ballfield, ah b'ye you

know. Who cares?" (Bruce. Interview). His original disinterest has been replaced by a sense of amazement and attachment.

But now you're down here diggin' on it and you say, geesus, b'ye this is amazing stuff once you see what these people did. With no tools, no nothing. You know. And you dig down a foot or so in the ground and you see these big stones and you say, geez, somebody really worked here. How did you ever get to do it? And lived here for fifty or sixty years, and...somebody'd uncovered it in 150—200 years [later]. (Bruce. Interview)

What was once story has become fact. The artifacts have brought "truth" to his father's stories. The stories have been made "worthy of belief" (Glassie 2006:375). The archaeology has brought the past to life. History has been experienced through excavation and resides in the material culture and the structural remains associated with the military fortifications.

History was not an important part of John's life, "it was always, you know, not a big conversation at times, but every now and then a thing'd come up about what they were doing on Castle Hill" (Bruce. Interview). The past consisted of "talking about relatives and relatives's estates years ago and people coming home and you reminisce over the years and what's gone and who's still alive and all this kind of stuff, you know" (Bruce. Interview). Having taken part in the excavations, John Bruce has acquired a new sense of importance for his community's history and a sense of ownership over the ancient past in Placentia.

Patrick: It seems something's changed in your sense of history.

John: Oh yeah. It makes you wonder what happened here years ago, you know. There's so much history and everything that happened here that no one really cared about for a long time. That's the way I looked at it. Didn't really phase me very much.

Patrick: It didn't?

John: No. No, it happened years ago. That's...(laughter).

Patrick: So what things are coming together here to change it for you?

John: Well, uncovering all these structures is certainly changing my mind for having things done. There's so much can be done and getting back to the employment part of the thing, anyway. Employment is a big thing around here, boy. (Bruce. Interview)

The experience of working as an archaeologist has also given him a tool for communicating a sense of history to his son. Knowledge is respected and John Bruce respects that his archaeological work has given him an opportunity to pass new "truths" to his children. This is a source of pride for him.

Oh yeah, well my little guy. He comes down now. He'll probably be here this evening when my wife comes to pick me up. And the first thing he'll ask is 'what you find today Dad?' Right? And he'll be out in the yard and he'll be rooting around in the grass and he'll say 'look Dad, look look look artifact.' (Bruce. Interview)

Through his work at the excavation, John Bruce is able to transmit new knowledge to his future generation.

John Bruce is not from Placentia. His father is from Argentina and his mother is from Jersey. Like most people I spoke with, though, he is comfortable with being a resident of the larger municipality of Placentia and, in accordance with that, his experience working as an excavator has increased his understanding of the larger place he calls home. As he says, "History's been around me pretty much all my life, I just didn't know it" (Bruce. Interview).

5.2 "There's an interest in it and there's not an interest in it."

For John Bruce history lives in the things, the physical objects that the archaeology uncovers. It is the tangible remains of the fortifications that validate their existence.⁶⁸ Although he had "heard my father talk about this for years" (Bruce. Interview), John Bruce did not "know" the history until he could actually experience it as a result of his own efforts at excavating. History's authority resides in artifacts. The Past, on the other hand, resides in reminiscences. Rather than physical objects, the past is known by "talking about relatives and relatives estates years ago" (Bruce. Interview). The Past's authority resides in individuals and the stories that they tell. The people are themselves the physical objects that validate the Past.

Intentional or not, John Bruce is very definite in stating that what he is learning at the archaeology site is "history," a recounting of events with which he has not had any prior experience. The process of compiling the facts is interesting enough, but the story of the "ancient French capital" is too distant from his personal experience for John Bruce to warrant it a place in his personal narrative. It might be his story because of where he lives, but at the same time it isn't his. It is a dichotomy that clearly expresses the schism between the community's public history and its residents' personal understanding of the past. As he says, "People always talk about Castle Hill. There's an interest in it and there's not an interest in it. I don't know how to explain it to ya" (Bruce. Interview). The story of the "ancient French capital," and by extension Castle Hill, is a heritage narrative created by outsiders for the town, not by the town. As a narrative, it has no purpose for him. He states quite clearly, "no descendants of mine were there, for sure" (Bruce.

Interview). Castle Hill's purpose is economic, "it's an important factor in the town. From the tourism aspect of it alone. I don't know how many people you get up on the Hill for a season, but I'm sure it's in the hundreds, at least in the hundreds, you know" (Bruce. Interview). The archaeology and the history are interesting, but the bottom line is "employment is a big thing around here, boy" (Bruce. Interview).

John Bruce is distinguishing between history and his past when he says history had been around him all his life although he didn't know it. For his son, though, the "truth" of the remains at Fort Louis will merge the two and become a part of his past, a part of his personal life experience. It is possible that the stories of the boy's grandfather will mix with the memory of his father working at the site and the physical objects uncovered by the excavations and together these will constitute a single experience, or narrative, for this youngest generation. An artifact excavated by his father and put on display in a museum will have a personal anecdote attached to it that the child, as a man, can pass down to his own future generations.

Kristin McCrowe states that, unlike the older generation that resettled to Placentia, for the younger generation that has grown up here Placentia is their home, it's "our place now" (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview). By extension, the stories uncovered by the archaeological excavations are stories of their place to be woven into the narratives of their experience of living here.

The main issue for the younger generation is that the lack of employment means many of them will have to leave the community to find work away from Newfoundland and, therefore, will not get the opportunity to maintain a base of experience upon which

to create a Past in Placentia. Like their parents, they will have reminiscences of the place where they were young, but their attachment, and therefore the narratives of their Past in that place, will have been severed and limited.

5.3 Historic Themes

The theme of the “ancient French capital” dominates in Placentia, in large part due to Castle Hill National Historic Site and its commemoration of the French military fortifications. The British military is also commemorated at Castle Hill National Historic Site and by a provincial heritage plaque erected on the “townside” of the gut at the site of Fort Frederick. A plethora of cannons scattered around the town ensure that Placentia’s French and British military history is well presented. But what of other aspects of the town’s history, particularly events following the military occupations including the subsequent rise of the merchant families and the periods of development and decline that have since characterized the town’s history? This section will highlight themes taken from the summary history of Placentia presented in chapter 4 of this thesis as well as themes that were documented in the interviews conducted for this research. A comparison of the written and oral perspectives will help us better understand the personal landscape of Placentia, as opposed to and affected by the heritage landscape. It will also show us how the residents understand their history by noting those events from the town’s history that continue to play a role in the residents’ narrating of their past.

There are numerous historic events related to the French and British occupations of Placentia starting with the origins of the community up until the closing of the British garrison in 1811. It has already been established, though, that there is very little historic

continuity between the present residents and this element of the community's past. While there are numerous anecdotes and references to French and British history, most, if not all of these appear to derive from "official" or printed sources and are not part of an oral tradition that has been preserved through several generations.⁶⁹ Art O'Keefe and Margaret Kelly are noted exceptions. They will be discussed later, when we look at the historic themes expressed in the interviews.

Since many residents claim to have Irish roots and the Irish were most prominent in Placentia's history starting in the late-eighteenth century with the establishment of Saunders & Sweetman Company, it is presumed that, if there is a living memory in Placentia, it would potentially extend back to this period of Irish immigration. As Rita Power states,

I suppose, when you look at it, neither English nor French really settled in Placentia. It was the Irish that the Verrans, and the like of them, brought over here that, you know, they never wintered over, the English didn't. I mean the Irish were the ones who started the community. And that's why you got all these Powers and Collinses, you know, all these Irish names you don't hear many, you don't hear any French names here and you certainly don't hear any English ones. (Power. Interview)

Most of my knowledge of post-1750 Placentia came from studying written sources, not from speaking with residents. Two exceptions are residents who have produced written histories of the community: Michael McCarthy (1973, 1999), a writer and historian who grew up in Placentia, and the Hon. Gerald Barnable (2002), who was resident in Placentia at the time of my research although he is originally from Renew.

Placentia's history is characterized by attempts to create an economic base in what has typically been a centre for essential services. As a result, the community has

been extremely vulnerable to shifts in the island's economy and consequent increases and declines in population. Placentia's history, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is characterized by long periods of economic depression interspersed with brief periods of prosperity associated with large projects such as the development of the railway terminus at Jerseyside or the American Naval Base at Argentia. The following list contains themes based on the historic summary presented in chapter 4 and will serve to illustrate the heritage, or public, landscape of Placentia; the town's history as it is presented by heritage professionals and other outsiders to the community.

- 1730-1810: The emergence of a merchant class throughout Placentia Bay and development of Placentia as an economic centre.
- 1734-1862: The Sweetman Era
 - 1734-1770: Richard Welsh, Placentia's first great merchant and the beginnings of the Sweetman legacy.
 - 1770-1788: William Saunders; Saunders & Co. Merchants.
 - 1788-1808: Pierce Sweetman; David and Thomas Saunders; Saunders & Sweetman, Merchants.
 - 1808: Sweetman moves base of operations to Waterford, Ireland, but continues to exert control over economic activities in Placentia and other parts of Placentia Bay. As a result, Placentia fails to adjust to the changing economy.
 - 1812-1862: Pierce Sweetman (1812-1841); Roger Sweetman (1841-1862) and the end of the "Sweetman Era."
- 1810: St. John's begins to grow as the economic and political centre of Newfoundland and the subsequent period of decline of the "outport" communities.
- 1836: First school board for the Placentia—St. Mary's electoral district opens with its headquarters in Placentia.
- 1840: Beginnings of courier services between Placentia, Burin, and St. John's. Mr. Thomas Kelly was employed in 1840 to carry the mail between Placentia and St. John's. There were no roads, so Kelly would walk the mail between the two locations.
- 1850s: Development of a road connection with St. John's.
- 1867: Telegraph connection between Placentia, St. Pierre, and North Sydney.
- 1850-1880: Closure of Placentia shipyards as steamers replaced sailing vessels.
- 1880s-1900: A period of prosperity leading to stability as Placentia becomes more involved with the changing Newfoundland economy but remains without a sustaining source of income.

- 1889: Railway terminus constructed at Jerseyside. Terminus increased importance of Placentia for processing and shipping fish as a result of the development of the Bank Fishery and the coastal steamship service.
- 1900: Development of Newfoundland tourism “industry” including the promotion of the natural and cultural attractions of Placentia.
- 1920: Railway terminal moved from Jerseyside to Argentia.
- 1920-1940: Failures in the fishery and economic depression.
- 1940: Construction of US Naval Base at Argentia.
- 1942: Cottage hospital relocated from Argentia to Placentia.
- 1945: Formation of a Rural District Council for Placentia making it one of the first municipalities in Newfoundland.
- 1953-1975: Outport residents are moved to Placentia, a designated growth centre, as part of the Provincial Government’s Resettlement Program.
- 1968: Establishment of Castle Hill National Historic Site.
- 1970s-2000: Various attempts made to establish an economic base in response to the closure of the American Naval Base at Argentia.
- 1970: Phase-down of the Naval Base in Argentia.
- 1970s: Placentia Area Development Association created to facilitate and initiate regional development programs as the community faced another period of economic decline.
- 1994: Placentia, Jerseyside, Freshwater, and Dunville amalgamated, centralizing many essential services in Placentia and pooling their resources.

In comparison, the following list contains more generalized themes that were communicated through the interview process. Most of the informants were not residents of Placentia,⁷⁰ but rather belonged to a neighbouring community within the municipality or had family connections to someplace else in Newfoundland or on the mainland of Canada.

- French fortifications and French presence in Placentia
- French and British conflict
- Resettlement
- United States Naval Base at Argentia
- Randell Verran
- The bridge across the gut
- Regional road development
- Churches, religion/education

The themes are reminiscent of the major themes documented in the written record and expressed in the heritage landscape. The main themes communicated in the majority of the interviews were the French presence as exemplified by Castle Hill National Historic Site and the archaeological remains then being excavated, the US Naval Base at Argentia, and, less prominent, the impact of resettlement on the town's demographics.

There were two interviews, though, that stood out from the rest in terms of the historic material they contained specific to Placentia: Margaret Kelly and Art O'Keefe.

As well as those themes already mentioned, Mrs. Kelly also spoke of:

- The history of buildings and businesses in early twentieth century Placentia
- Mrs. Corrigan and the boarding house she operated in Placentia
- Local places names: the Swans, Foxes Scrape, Stroughter, Betty's Hole, Snack's Cove, and Verran's Island
- Early twentieth century seasonal migratory employment. Placentia men would travel to Trinity to work at a whale processing plant; work at the lumber mills in Grand Falls c. 1906; work at building the airport at Gander.
- Lady Day celebrations, August 15th. People would donate the day to work on behalf of the church. They would donate the day's catch of fish or cut wood, etc. to the church.

Art O'Keefe provided a very unique body of information relating to the Southeast and Placentia's historic relationship with the Cape Shore. Much of what he recounted was about the involvement of his grandfather and father in hunting, trapper, guiding, and wildlife management activities in the early twentieth century. Art recounted many anecdotes and place names that were not presented in any other oral or written sources. His interview is unique among the interviews conducted for this research because of the wealth of information it contained and because, of all the people interviewed for this project, with regard to Placentia, Art most exemplified what Glassie referred to as a "country historian" (Glassie 1994).

Mrs. Kelly is a similarly strong voice for Placentia, but she lacks the generational depth of Art's knowledge. Regardless, both Art and Mrs. Kelly both express a sense of the Past that is derived primarily from their personal experience of living in and belonging to Placentia. Other informants expressed a similar sense of attachment but it was to other communities, usually within the municipality, not to Placentia.

In the majority of the interviews, knowledge of Placentia's history is limited to the exposure of informants to the archaeological excavations. Individuals are either employed excavating or otherwise experiencing the tangible remains of events that, to that point, they had only read or heard about. For most of them Placentia's "history" was, for the first time, coming to life and they exuded a sense of pride in being a participant in the process. The archaeological experience marks a beginning for the creation of a stronger sense of belonging in many of the people interviewed, but for most of the informants the archaeological remains ultimately serve an economic purpose as a tourist attraction and have no direct connection to their own lives. As with John Bruce, the archaeology is History. The Past lives in stories about the communities they grew up in and in which they have family roots. The historic themes recounted in the interviews, therefore, reflect a generalized understanding of Placentia's History rather than the informant's Past, an understanding that is heavily influenced by, as expressed in the themes previously listed, the heritage myth of Placentia; the "ancient French capital."

5.4 Learning History

For many of the people interviewed, the history of Placentia as the "ancient French capital" was something they learned in an official setting. It is knowledge

collected and communicated by professionals and institutions such as the local school, Memorial University of Newfoundland, the Provincial Government, or Castle Hill National Historic Site. The narrative of the “ancient French capital” is transmitted through various institutions as the authoritative version of Placentia’s history. It is accepted because of the authority granted to the organizations and individuals that present it.

With regard to his research in Calvert, Newfoundland, Jerry Pocius noted that

With the advent of public education and the familiarization of people with the academic pursuit of ‘history,’ local oral accounts in Calvert are considered less accurate than the written word. Print has become sacred...anything that appears in print is assumed to be true. (Pocius 2000:45)

When a draft of Pocius’ study of Calvert, including his “initial assessments of the community’s history, along with supplementary documentary materials” (Pocius 2000:46) was circulated in the community it immediately became an authoritative text on Calvert’s history. In Pocius’ case, his research was adopted to the degree that long-term residents considered it to be as accurate as, if not more accurate than their own traditional knowledge because it contained “proof.” His research was accepted to the degree that “the book,” like the excavations in Placentia, brought “truth” to local stories and, therefore, on occasion superceded local oral history as a primary source for information.

Unlike the numerous outsiders that have been constructing a heritage narrative for Placentia, though, Pocius was working within the community of Calvert. His research tells the story of the people’s own lives as they have given it to him to present. In this sense, the residents are co-authors that have utilized Pocius’s specialized skills as a researcher and writer. The community is respectful of the researcher’s efforts and is

confident and satisfied that the final product is an honest and “truthful” recounting of the information that they have provided him with.

In Placentia, the story of the “ancient French capital” is not the residents’ history. It is not their past. They have not been part of the development of the heritage narrative and, therefore, they have no personal investment in the story other than its use as a tool for economic development. As John Bruce said, “there’s an interest in it, and there’s not an interest in it” (Bruce. Interview).

This section will look at how the majority of the people interviewed for this research have learned the history of Placentia through their exposure to individuals associated with educational and government institutions and the heritage products produced by these same groups. While the past is something they know intuitively because it is the story of their being in the place they call home, Placentia’s history is something they have been taught. In most cases their personal experience of Placentia is limited to one, or maybe two generations. Their past is still attached to the communities they have left behind. Therefore, in terms of what they have been taught to believe, and according to the most authoritative voices in the region, Placentia’s history is the story of the “ancient French capital.”

Physical remains of the fortifications were always present. According to Tom O’Keefe, “generally people knew...the old cannons were there lying on the ground so we knew that it used to be a French fort...it was just a general acknowledgement in the community” (O’Keefe, Tom. Interview). Tom remembers having a cannonball in his house when he was a kid. Peter Mansfield, a resident of Jerseyside, remembered playing

with cannonballs that he found on the beach, tossing them into the air to see how deep they would sink into the landwash (pers. comm. 2002). Fred Whelan also remembers finding “cannonballs mostly, and things like that” around town when he was a kid.

Pretty well all around town you could pick up a cannon ball, pretty well anywhere. On our front yard, as a kid growing up, I remember we had a cannon. There was an old cannon mounted in our front yard. Wasn't mounted, it was on the ground in our front yard. It was hauled up out of the beach by my grandfather, you know, and just put in the front yard and it was there for years and years and years and years and years and I don't know what happened to it after. (Whelan. Interview)

Gerald O'Reilly remembers cannonballs and cannons scattered at the base of Castle Hill.

Oh, lots of them. Lots of cannonballs over at the bottom of the hill, there. I've seen lots of them but didn't, should have brought some home, kept them but I didn't. There was lots of them around, lots of cannons, lots of big old cannons there, you know. Some of them English, some French. (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview)

According to Gerald local people were aware that there had been fortifications on Mount Pleasant and on the Jersey side Flats, but Castle Hill was the only location with visible remains of fortifications. The community, though, seems to have remained indifferent to the remains, never working to capitalize on their tourism potential although it was repeatedly expressed by outsiders to be one of the community's greatest assets.⁷¹

The ruins and artifacts have always been here. People are curious to know what they represent, who built them, and how old they are, but not everyone is inclined toward the lists of chronological data historian's collect. Instead, many people are more interested “to learn why and how history is important to the living” (Glassie 1994:961). What makes the ruins relevant to them? People are more interested in their role in the story behind the artifacts, or as has been referred to previously in this thesis, the myth —

the narrative that will give them meaning through the artifact. Even with an associated body of narrative, in this case the stories of the French occupation, the ruins remain an enigma because their existence speaks of a period in time beyond the living memory of the community. Many residents, therefore, seem satisfied with their generalized knowledge of the history of the French occupation. They struggle when they attempt to connect it to their personal lives. The story of the ancient French capital is the narrative of a place, not of the people who live there. Residents are not able to find relevance for the ruins in their everyday life where employment is the primary concern. Things must be relevant to be given meaning and the immediate relevance of the archaeological resources is their economic potential as a tourism draw, more than the role they can play in creating community identity.

Meghan MacGillivray is a teenager who was working as an excavator. Meghan respected the allure of the archaeology but was also very pragmatic of the economic reality of the work for crew members.

I would like to see, actually Fort St. Louis for one thing, I'd like to see that totally excavated. The whole nine yards and then have a museum or something built around it or a site or something...like Ferryland to get it, more of a bigger area to make it nationally known and stuff like that. Yeah, that's what I'd like to see come out of it. Plus, there's an opportunity for jobs and stuff like that for people in the area. That's also a good thing, too, because there isn't a lot of employment in the area and so anything that comes in is good to the area. (MacGillivray. Interview)

Meghan had tried to take part in the excavations the previous year, but wasn't eligible because the Job Creation Program (JCP) was designed for individuals that were collecting employment insurance (EI).

I wanted to get onto it [the excavation crew] but where I wasn't EI eligible, it wasn't possible for me to be on it. That's the thing I don't like about it 'cause there's no stamps for this right. I mean, that could cause a lot of trouble and I mean people that probably even have experience in archaeology and don't have the stamps for it can't get a job at it. (MacGillivray. Interview)

For most in the community, therefore, working on an excavation crew is a risk because the hours worked determine the amount of income assistance one will receive for the remainder of the year. The work itself, as well, is first and foremost a form of employment. It could easily be any other type of job. Employment, regardless of what it is, is a necessity. There is little extra energy available to spend on speculating about the future development of an archaeological site.

In this section, through summaries of some of the interviews, I will discuss how many of the people interviewed for this research learned the history of Placentia through secondary sources as opposed to personal experience and, therefore, illustrate the prominence that the heritage myth has in Placentia. I will also present some reasons for this.

It is important to reiterate that many of the people interviewed for this project were not residents of Placentia and, therefore, had little, if any attachment to the community or prior knowledge of the particulars of its history. Many informants lived in other neighbourhoods within the municipality, or were the descendants of people that had come to Placentia to work at the United States Naval Base at Argentia or as a result of the Provincial Government's resettlement program. Both of these events had a major impact on changing the demographics in the Placentia area, and Placentia itself, starting in the mid-twentieth century.⁷²

Gerry Griffiths grew up in Placentia at the beginning of the resettlement program in the 1950s. As an adult, he lived away for 20 years. When he finally returned to Placentia in the 1970s the community had changed. According to Gerry, “when I came back there was a whole [phone] book of new names” (Griffiths. Interview). Rita Power said clearly that “most of the people who live in Placentia now weren’t born here” (Power. Interview). Aaron Hickey, an interpreter at O’Reilly House Museum agreed that “most of the people who live here never always lived [here]...like Placentia is a town that really grew a lot when everyone was resettled...” (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview). The Naval Base at Argentia was also a major factor in the relocation of many people to Placentia. Almost everyone I interviewed had either a personal or family connection to the Base.

Prior to the archaeological excavations beginning in 2001, most of the people I interviewed had received only minimal formal exposure to Placentia’s history through their primary and secondary education. This teaching amounted to a recounting of Placentia as the ancient French capital of Newfoundland as epitomized by the military remains at Castle Hill National Historic Site.

5.4.1 Cyril Bambrick

Cyril Bambrick has been an interpreter at Castle Hill National Historic Site since 1985. He was raised in Placentia and lived away from the community for several years working and travelling as a young adult. After studying History and French in university, he was hired by Parks Canada. According to Cyril, his knowledge of the local French history developed “as I came here,” to work at Castle Hill. His formal education

consisted “more of a Newfoundland perspective, actually. Got into a little bit about Placentia but it was more of a broader Newfoundland perspective” (Bambrick. Interview). His work at Castle Hill, though, has expanded Cyril’s understanding of Placentia’s historic role in world history and increased his sense of pride and attachment to his home community. While he is able to conceive of the national and international role that Placentia had, his current interests are more at the “local level,”

When I first came here, naturally I was interested in learning about all the various different fortifications that they teach us at school. But now, more of the recent developments, like in some of the research they’ve been getting into the social side of things. Like some of the resident fishermen, and that gives it a more human, a more community sort of thing. When I first came here it was just, in a nutshell, military fortifications. Yes, they had fishermen here, but it was just like a pretty basic, or pretty severe, place to be. Now, by the seventeenth century standards, I mean they had all, they had everything...there was a hospital here...tradesmen of various descriptions and there were women who were property owners. I mean this was a sophisticated society for the seventeenth century so I think that, to me that’s pretty cool...and I try to bring this out now in my tours. It actually augments the excavations that they’re doing. When they uncover the fortifications it’s not just simply walls and artifacts, I mean these were people that actually a, you know, this was a community it wasn’t just a military outpost. So, I mean, it makes the whole thing seem more alive, it makes the history, it’s far more extensive now than what it used to be. (Bambrick. Interview)

For Cyril, working at Castle Hill National Historic Site has broadened his understanding of the extent to which his home community has played a role in international history. Speaking with him, one gets a sense at times of awe, certainly of enthusiasm, when he speaks of the depths of history in Placentia; “In terms of, in terms of community. You know, we’ve been around for hundreds of years, not just a, fifty years, whatever” (Bambrick. Interview).

5.4.2 Gerry Griffiths

Gerry Griffiths was born in Buchans. He moved to Placentia when he was eight years old when his father got work on the Base in Argentina. For the first part of his adult life, Gerry lived away, working at various jobs.

Well, I was born in Buchans in 1936 and we came here in 1945. And then in 19 and 57 I left. I went to Nova Scotia where I lived for eleven years and, I believe, I was five or six years in Labrador City working with the Iron Ore Company and, ah, came back in 19 and 75 and went to work with the, ah, 1974 I came back here and I went to work with Long Harbour and I was here for four or five months when this job with the Coast Guard came up. So, that's pretty well it. (Griffiths. Interview)

In spite of all his travelling, Placentia is his home. "This is my home, yeah. I always call it home. Even though I was gone for nearly twenty years it was still home to me"

(Griffiths. Interview). Gerry lives next to St. Luke's Anglican Church. The church is an historic structure and the graveyard contains the oldest headstones in the community.⁷³

Richard Welsh's, the founder of the Sweetman legacy, is among them. The cemetery, with unmarked graves, literally extends into Gerry's property and he is very aware of the potential for uncovering buried artifacts when he digs in his backyard. The previous summer, in the process of planting some trees, he uncovered a section of clay pipe that he had identified as being of Scottish origin dating to the 1700s and fill, that had been taken away years earlier during the construction of his house, was found to contain "coins and stuff like that" (Griffiths. Interview). He has a piece of shaped stone in his front yard that he claims is a brick from one of the fortifications around town; he is not sure which one. It is displayed proudly on his lawn. For many years Gerry had the key to St. Luke's and, despite being a Roman Catholic, was responsible for opening the church for visitors and

providing them with a guided tour of the graveyard. He is also the Town Crier. Dressed in period costume, he lends a sense of history and propriety to official functions. It is a volunteer position that seems to fit well with Gerry's personable personality and also involves him a little more in the experience of his community's history. For him it is a "fun thing, I really like that" (Griffiths. Interview) and it is a way for him to share his enthusiasm for the town's history with school children and the general public.

Gerry's interest in history is directly related to his exposure to the artifacts of the past, particularly to work being done on the remains of Castle Hill and other archaeology programs that have occurred in the town since he returned.

Patrick: I'd like to talk more about the artifacts and the archaeology. You said you took, when you dug your hole [in your backyard] and you found stuff and you took it to [the archaeologist], what about the stuff you would have found before that? What would you have done with it?

Gerry: Well, it probably would be just shoved out of the way. Maybe buried, maybe thrown away, maybe raked up, thrown in the garbage or anything like that. This would be probably twenty-five years ago when I started here you know, because ah, archaeology, it's only in the last ten years I suppose, fifteen at the most that it's become anything of significance....

Patrick: What changed your idea about it? You say twenty-five years ago you didn't bother.

Gerry: I probably wouldn't, but then I began to realize, you know, that as Castle Hill got renovated again, you know, that, I mean, we live in an historic area here. Dating back, what, at least four hundred years? At least that much. (Griffiths. Interview)

Gerry's interest in history, therefore, is primarily, though not solely, in the "ancient" past in Placentia, the myth of the French; the narratives that impress themselves most prominently on the heritage landscape.

Patrick: A lot of this history, how have you learned a lot of this stuff? Did you have any of these stories passed down from your parents as well?

Gerry: Not a lot in that way, no. But, I got a lot through the historical society in digging out a little bit here and there. I didn't do any research, but there's things I picked up and the more I learn the more I want to learn about it. And you pick up little pieces here and there.... (Griffiths. Interview)

History is, therefore, something he has lived with in Placentia but can only experience vicariously through re-enactments as the Town Crier or through the artifacts and ruins uncovered by archaeologists. It is through an involvement with the artifacts and narratives of history, through his learning about the ancient past in Placentia, that Gerry has renewed his sense of belonging to his community.

5.4.3 Gerald O'Reilly

Gerald O'Reilly is known locally for his genealogical research and as an amateur historian. As he puts it, "I'm interested in history. I'm an amateur historian. I'm more interested in genealogy than history, that's how it all, that's how my interest in history started, because they're obviously closely related" (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview).

Gerald's family had been in Argentia for several generations before moving to Jerseyside. According to Gerald, "My parents are from [Argentia], my grandparents, my great grandparents, great great grandparents, great great great, oh yeah. It goes back to about, depending on which, you know some of them go back to the early seventeen hundreds probably" (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview). Gerald still lives in Jerseyside. His historical interests are "particularly in Irish history" and the history of the Irish in Placentia Bay, but he is also very knowledgeable about local events in Placentia.

Two things were particularly striking about Gerald: his philosophical understanding of the value of history and the dualistic character of his historical knowledge of the municipality of Placentia. Unlike anyone else interviewed for this project, he has a secure footing in two worlds; his historical knowledge is a wonderful amalgam of both public history and personal experience. That said, Gerald's deep knowledge of the past in Argentia and Jerseyside and his comparatively studied understanding of Placentia's history clearly illustrate the lack of an oral history tradition relating to Placentia encountered during this research.⁷⁴

Gerald has no doubt about the value of history.

There's a lot of good values in the past that we need to preserve. The best analogy I can give you is, do you know how to tow a dory? You row a dory backwards. How do you keep on course? You pick a spot behind you and keep focussed on it. Well, if you don't focus on your past you don't know where you're going. If you don't keep fixed on that point with your dory, you're going to steer off course. So, next time you're rowing a dory you pick a spot behind you and focus on it and you'll go straight. Keep the stern lined up with the past and you're okay.
(O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview)

The past is a source of knowledge, of origins, of knowing where you have come from and where you belong.

Well, all the stuff I just talked about, community pride, a sense of history, where we are, nothing, you know, I pity people who don't have a sense of history. I think that they're lost. I think they're lost in the world. I don't think they know who they are, or what they are, or where they've come from. I don't think that they can appreciate the things that, you know, if you don't know, if you don't have any appreciation of where you've come from you can't appreciate who you are now. I just think that that's all a part of the human existence. (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview)

The past is also something individuals acquire over time. It is not immediate, but rather it grows with the accumulation of experiences of living in a place. With regard to residents new to Placentia, Gerald believes,

I think that they'll be, you know, once people come, you know. You've been here for a little while now, if you were here for six or eight or ten months, or five years, or you know, eventually you'd start to identify with the community and you'd be as much a member of this community as I am after twelve generations. But, then you'd start to identify with it, you know. You'd take a sense of pride in the history. Everybody would. (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview)

Gerald grew up as a child in Jersey-side, listening to generations of stories from Argentina. It is probably fair to say that he learned the history and adopted the landscape of the larger community as he grew older. Although, he states clearly that his interest in history is a result of his interest in genealogy, it is likely he was exposed all his life to a rich body of narratives about his family's past in Argentina and Jersey-side. This is the impression one gets listening to him talk. When he discusses Placentia he talks in historical generalizations and recounts fact. Placentia's history is

...with the French as being the French capital. They sent their first governor here and all that sort of stuff, you know. But in Prowse's history he doesn't even mention Placentia until he, he does it chronologically, until he gets to 1662 and Placentia's not in the whole history until [- - -]. I mean, amazing that he, you know, he missed that, you know. That people had been here, its possible that the first settlers were in Placentia. I mean, it was a pretty good place to come and later in the late sixteenth and seventeenth century they always fought over the beach here because they could dry fish on the beach. They didn't need to build fish stages here. That would save a lot of labour and time early in the spring because usually all this stuff would wash away during the winter or be destroyed or, you know, the rivals, the English would destroy the French or the French would destroy the English's fishing premises. But you couldn't destroy the beach, so when they arrived in the spring, they just started catching fish and drying it. And they all competed for their piece of beach. And apparently they had a pretty good a, pretty good a, you know, they divided it up. At one point they used to say that the amount of beach front that each ship would have would be determined by the

length of her main sail, or something like that, some formula like that, and it kept them from fighting over it too much, you know.

Patrick: But every year they came in they'd have to reestablish who was going to get what?

Gerald: Yeah, yeah, whoever got here first. And they had all kinds of ways to avoid fighting over it because they knew if they fought over it they could lose the whole summer. The first marine insurance in English history, the first marine insurance was a load of fish from Newfoundland was insured. Now other countries used to use insurance, marine insurance, but it was different, it was called [bottoming?] and that was a, the ship owner would go to an insurer and they'd determine the value of the ship and the cargo and the insurer would actually give the money to the ship owner who would give back the money if the ship came back okay, plus an agreed amount, a percentage. But that meant the insurance company had to have 100 percent of what they insured. But this was the first insurance, 1604 was the first. (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview)

But, when his conversation shifts to Argentinia it is easily interspersed with references to his family.

...My father was born in Argentinia but when he was fairly young, he was born in 1912, and when he was fairly young they moved up here. My grandmother had a farm in Argentinia when the Base started. She had a sixteen acre farm which was, you know, substantial for Newfoundland standards.

Patrick: It sounds like an oddity, a rarity.

Gerald: Yes, yes, it was built from a, built from a, it came from a much larger farm that was in Point [Mall sp?], it was called Shalloway Farms which the Furlongs started there in probably 1720 and, then my, that would be my great great great grandparents Furlongs and then one of the Furlong girls married a Foley and they got a part of the farm. So, that was a small piece of it. And then my great grandmother, when she married, she got a small piece of it and she gave that to my grandmother and that was sixteen acres. So, the farm must have been much, much, much bigger than that originally. And I don't know why it was called Shalloway Farms. The Furlongs moved to different places, they went to Placentia Sound down near Fox Harbour, started another farm called Shalloway Farms, and they moved to central Newfoundland and started another and called it Shalloway Farms. I don't know what the significance of Shalloway was, but I'm still working on it. (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview)

Memories of his childhood elicit a more immediate connection with the landscape.

Patrick: Did you ever go off into the woods, did you ever go hunting and stuff as a kid?

Gerald: Oh god yes, yes. Fishing mostly...Yes, we always went troutng. Yes, we'd walk in up through Dunville, actually we'd go through the Base, through Dunville and the back part of the Base and we'd fish in there. We'd bring our lunch with us and a, the Americans were building a road there at the time, and we'd hear the trucks coming and we'd jump in the woods and hide. We probably weren't supposed to be there, you know. And a, we always fished there and we picked blueberries, raspberries, we picked strawberries along the railway tracks all the time. (O'Reilly, Gerald. Interview)

I have quoted Gerald's interview at length in order to illustrate the differences in the descriptions of places he is more, and less, familiar with, Argentia being the former and Placentia being the latter. The intimacy of his childhood and family history experiences with Argentia are clearly contrasted against the generalized knowledge relating to Placentia, a place he has not known as intimately through personal experience and is still in the process of learning to identify with.

5.4.4 Helen Griffin

Helen Griffin is the Project Coordinator for the Placentia Area Theatre D'Heritage, a theatre troupe composed of Placentia area residents hired seasonally to prepare and perform theatrical events in the town. Like the archaeological excavators, most of the participants, ranging in age from students to middle-aged, are hired through a provincially funded Job Creation Program. The theatre program is a source of seasonal employment and income for a handful of residents.

The Placentia Area Theatre D'Heritage began in 1993 with a script written for performance at Castle Hill National Historic Site.

Patrick: Does the theatre group have an official name?

Helen: The Placentia Area Theatre D'Heritage corporation. So, we keep that little bit of french because that's what we really started out with. To do our plays, "Faces of Fort Royal" which are a re-enactment, or to relive history at Castle Hill, D'Iberville, De Boulleron, the governors and merchants and stuff like that.

Patrick: Was that a Parks Canada project initially? How did that start?

Helen: Well, it was a partnership with Parks Canada to write a script and I think one of our first writers...she had written a script and we put it to actual, you know, we got a couple more writers in to do some more work on it and we used it for, gosh, almost five years I suppose. We used that one and then, when I came on in 1999, we done it in 1999 and I felt that that was enough. It had almost like a five year run and I felt it was time to try and do something else. (Griffin. Interview)

The following year they performed the play "Born with a Call" about the resettlement of Placentia Bay. The play was a "big success" and inspired Helen to create new pieces for the troupe.

I felt like we needed another change so we came off the Castle and went down into the town and we done summer vignettes, we call them, "Glimpses from Our Past." And we do one about Prince William Henry, "Order in the Court," then we done another one about the Basques in Placentia, we done that at the Anglican cemetery, and then we done a dirty laundry skit about an Irish comedy. (Griffin. Interview)⁷⁵

The subjects were chosen because they were well known and addressed the diverse history of the town. According to Helen, "I wanted to move to something English for a change, rather than the French. We'd looked at that for so many years I said, well, it's time to get some of the other nationalities involved" (Griffin. Interview). Prince William Henry was an established part of the local heritage. He was chosen as the subject of a vignette because,

He was a prominent figure in the community at one point. He was the surrogate judge, Prince William Henry. So, uh, I don't know why I just picked on him. Because he was a prominent figure and the historical society have always presented him as a good character in the town...and where he was the surrogate judge and there was a bit of controversy at the time when he was here. He was

said to have made a local girl pregnant and sort of things like that. I don't know if it's relevant or not, but actually I picked a thing out of the newspaper, they had an article done on him. He was a royal carouser. (Griffin. Interview)

The story of the Basque was also already an established part of the heritage landscape; "then, of course, the Basque has always been something that's been here and it's been, people have always wanted to go see the Anglican cemetery...[where] we had the Basque fisherman buried" (Griffin. Interview). The third vignette, "Dirty Laundry," is a comedy telling the story of the Irish servants that began arriving in Placentia in the early nineteenth century. This play is set at a heritage house that used to belong to Randell Verran, a descendant of the Sweetman family who were merchants responsible for bringing many of the Irish immigrants to Placentia Bay.

Helen Griffin believes in the role theatre plays in communicating local stories to the town's residents and to tourists. To date, the catalogue of plays addresses most of the town's main historic themes, "And we have more ideas for adding more next year. More things of significance to the area. That's what we sort of like to do. They have to have some sort of significance and then they're...maybe they don't have to, but that's the way the committee feels about it now" (Griffin. Interview)

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Placentia courthouse, "Order in the Court" was performed in the courthouse and, according to Helen, "it was the first time a lot of local people had even been in the courthouse...so, they'll say, oh gosh, that's the first time I was ever in here. I didn't know what it was like" (Griffin. Interview).

Performing the plays in local settings creates an informal educational environment for residents and tourists alike and showcases the community's heritage landscape.

5.4.5 Kristin McCrowe and Aaron Hickey

Kristin McCrowe and Aaron Hickey are teenagers working as interpreters at O'Reilly House Museum. Kristin is from Placentia and Aaron is from Dunville. They represent the next generation for Placentia; they have grown up in the municipality with the legacy of resettlement and the Naval Base behind them. Kristin's mother is from Dunville and her father's family was resettled to Placentia from Placentia Bay. Aaron's grandfather moved to Dunville from the Bay to work at the Base and the family has lived in Dunville since. Kristin and Aaron are an interesting study because of the different and similar ways in which public and personal history has shaped, and is shaping, them and their sense of place in Placentia.

Working at the museum and being exposed to the archaeological excavations have been instrumental in the development of Kristin's sense of history and appear to have given her a greater appreciation for the depth of history in her community. Prior to working at the museum and seeing the results of the archaeological excavations, Kristin knew very little about the French history of Placentia.

Well, I didn't know very much about it. We used to go to Castle Hill all the time just to see it, but I don't think, I didn't know as much as I do now about it. I didn't know that there was actually, down in the ground over at La Vieux Fort, that the started to find [the remains]. I didn't really think that they would have found very much and, well, they did. (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview)

Her knowledge of local history "mostly started when I started working [at the museum] actually, last year" (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview). The history she is learning at the museum has, in turn, inspired Kristin to learn more about her family's history. It has been

an important part of Kristin's understanding of herself as someone from Placentia, as opposed to her parents and grandparents who have roots elsewhere.

Kristin's grandparents were resettled when her father was still young so their children could go to school. Although he has lived most of his life in Placentia, her father "still says he, like, lived in Red Island over the summers and most of the time...he still feels strongly about having come from Red Island" (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview). According to Kristin, her parents didn't pass on a lot of stories about their past; "not really. They did a little bit but not that much" (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview).

Patrick: Where did you get any sense of the local history then?

Kristin: Mostly when I started working here actually, last year.

Patrick: A lot of the history that you heard as a kid was from your grandmother telling you stories?

Kristin: My grandmother did.

Patrick: And they were about where she was from?

Kristin: Where she was from and actually most of it was last year about resettlement. I didn't know a lot about resettlement I wasn't really interested when I was a kid. When I'd come here I'd probably skip those rooms because it was all reading and I really didn't want to. I'd go in and I'd look at the model that was there with the house being floated out and stuff but I really didn't pay attention to most of it. (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview)

Working at the museum, though, and spending time with the resettlement display opened a door for Kristin into an important part of her community's history and into her own past.

Yeah, well, I didn't even really know so much about resettlement. My grandmother, she told me a bit about it but all I mainly, when I started asking her last year after I worked here, the whole room up there on resettlement, I read all of it. I mean it was pretty much my grandparents did that so it was really interesting after I started to work here. (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview)

Aaron is almost an antithesis of Kristin. Although Aaron, like Kristin, had little knowledge of Placentia's history before working at the museum, he was, for his age, steeped in his family's past. Aaron repeatedly referred to his grandfather as a source of information and much of what Aaron knows has been passed on to him through his family.

Patrick: What about, you wouldn't have learned a lot about Placentia history?

Aaron: He, he, I never learned much about that, but I learned a lot about the other side of the Bay, the Burin peninsula areas. Before he [his grandfather] died I, like I, he has like a little cabin over in the town where he was born. There's not a town anymore it's just like, fisherman would go there in the summers now and spend the summer there fishing, and my cousin is one of them. My cousin Ben fishes there and, ah, we went over and he showed us where the house was and about the sandy harbour and how the boats used to come into Sandy Harbour and fill up with sand and bring it back to Europe and everything. And he took out his charts and he showed about all the towns and all the places where they used to fish to and he showed me, we went out in the boats and he showed me the marks for the fishing grounds and the shoals and all this stuff. I found that really interesting now. My ah, my cousin actually, well, after my grandfather died my cousin, I guess he realized that there's not too many of these old fellahs around, so he went and got a book and got my Uncle Ned, which is my grandmother's brother who also lived from out there, he's from Bar Haven, give them all the marks to the fishing grounds and stuff like that just, I guess so, I say he's a fisherman. He doesn't really need them anymore because, I mean, he's using nets and stuff like that he's got his own fishing marks for spots where he fishes now. It's not like it used to be kind of thing, out there, but ah, I guess just for old time's sakes he has all the marks and stuff like that. (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview)

When Aaron spoke of resettlement, he spoke directly of the experience of his grandparents and his community.

Resettlement is something that people around this area and the tourists all find very interesting, I guess because resettlement is something, you know, everyone's grandparents did. I mean, my grandparents floated their house across the water just, you know, on oil drums and stuff. It's something everyone can relate to, I mean, there's still lots of people around here, like my dad who resettled during the '40s and '50s and stuff, and they're still alive and they talk about and you can

hear stories about it and there's a lot of bitterness about it and there always has been. (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview)

Aaron has a strong sense of his past and of the place, Dunville, where he lives and, having been exposed to the heritage of Placentia, is feeling more attached to the larger community.

I guess it's kinda strange because...I don't really know much about the town, the recent town history say, past fifty years ago. My family didn't live here so I don't know pretty much nothing about it. Like, I know the old history of like, you know, the English and the French and stuff, but the recent things that happened probably fifty years ago...I didn't know about, like, I knew up in the cemetery there was a lot of old headstones but before, probably two or three years, I never even knew that St. Luke's church was there...it's interesting...I didn't really realize how much stuff is around here. Apparently there was eleven forts or something, apparently here at one time and I never knew that kind of stuff. I always find it interesting. (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview)

Being exposed to local history has developed a sense of belonging to Placentia for both Aaron and Kristin. For Aaron, it has created a larger sense of place and, for Kristin, it has helped her to understand the difference between her place, Placentia, and her parents' belonging to Red Island and to Dunville. I asked Kristin if the remains being uncovered by the archaeological excavations increased her feeling of belonging in Placentia, the same kind of feeling her parents and grandparents have about the places they are from.

I think it does. The things they've found they can date back and they know that there were people here and thing, but I don't really think it gives a sense exactly of who we are or who we came from. It's, like, mostly the towns that resettled that are here. But, I guess...[Placentia is] our place now. More our place than our parents'. They resettled here. They consider their place [to be] where they're from. (McCrowe and Hickey. Interview)

History, therefore, has created a stronger sense of the origins of the place, but not necessarily of the origins of the people who live there. It can lead one, as in Kristin's

case, to learn about his or her place in the larger heritage myth; but it can never fill in the gaps from one's own past.

5.5 Living the Past

The previous section discussed how many of the informants were taught Placentia's history in an institutional setting and how they consider the myth of the "ancient French capital" to be the authoritative narrative for Placentia's heritage. This section will look at three informants who approach Placentia's history more directly from their personal experience of living there and of having a strong attachment to Placentia as their home. In discussion, the three of them are more likely to speak about their own lives in Placentia when asked about the town's history or incorporate the heritage narrative into a presentation of their personal experiences. This, in spite of the fact that two of them, Rita Power and Mrs. Kelly, own businesses that could directly benefit from an increase in tourism.

It is their strong sense of belonging, or rootedness, that makes Art and Mrs. Kelly less concerned with the heritage work in town and the archaeological excavations. They both have a sure sense of place and do not need anything beyond their personal experience to feel secure. Therefore, Mrs. Kelly can get by simply reading about the archaeology in an "article here and there" in the local paper and Art is free to pick and choose what he needs from the French and British history to compliment the stories he draws from his own past. Of the three, Rita Power is the most involved with the town's heritage. At the time of this research, Rita was operating a Bed & Breakfast in a heritage house and used the town's history as part of her marketing. Unlike the residents discussed

in the previous section, though, her involvement with the restoration of a heritage house shows an historic awareness for Placentia that was not evident in the others.

Art O'Keefe, the third person profiled in this section is, in Glassie's terms, Placentia's "country historian" (Glassie 1994). Art is unique in this study in the way that the "Stars" were unique for Henry Glassie working in Ballymenone.

As it is with the world, so it is with most people. Their ways are rough, their talk is dull. Their minds cloud and drift, their words come tumbling, mumbled without elegance or order, sharpness or spark. The star is the one who shines in the social scene, speaking smoothly and brightly, glittering against the engulfing darkness as the stars above interrupt the night sky with pricks of brilliance. (Glassie 2006:67)

Considering that the community did not direct me to Art as a source of information and the subsequent wealth of stories that I received from him, Art is considered to be an unrecognized "star" in Placentia.

5.5.1 Rita Power

Of the three, Rita Power has the least attachment to Placentia. Rita was born and raised in Dunville and moved to Placentia after she was married. In 1989 she opened The Rosedale Manor Bed & Breakfast in a restored heritage building that had once been owned by her neighbour, Randell Verran.⁷⁶

Randell lived out next door. He sold this house [The Rosedale]. He was the last of the Verrans that lived here. He built the house next door and then he sold this one and then, when he moved in there, he became very ill and he didn't live too long after that...I took care of him when he was sick, until he died. (Power. Interview)

Randell was the last descendant of the Sweetman family living in Placentia. He was the community's last living link to the merchant family that had been prominent in the settlement of the Irish in Placentia Bay and in the economic sustainability of Placentia during the nineteenth century. The house was built by Randell's father, Henry Verran in

1893. It is a perfect example of period architecture and a landmark in the town's heritage landscape. Randell sold the house to a "chief" working in Argentina.

And he and his wife lived here for maybe two, two and a half years. And then it sold to another American, I think, for a couple of years and then George Lannon in Southeast bought it and he rented it out. And then it got destroyed with the people that rented it, just didn't take care of it. So, then the council, George Lannon was going to tear the house down and he went to the council for a permit and they told him they couldn't tear it down because it was old, you know, it was a hundred, well it was at that time it was ninety-eight years old. It'll be a hundred and ten next year. And uh, so he said well if you're not going to let me take it down you're going to have to buy it from me, because I'm not keeping it. So, the town council bought it and they had it closed up and boarded up. I suppose for almost two years. And my brother-in-law and my husband were sitting down one evening. He's an architect, my brother-in-law is, or he was, he passed away since and, ah, they were, ah came over and they were kinda looking around to see was the place sturdy and, you know, was the structure good and they knew it was. And so, we made a deal with the council and we made an offer and we bought it in December of 1989 and we started renovating right away and we opened [The Rosedale] and finished in August of 1990. (Power. Interview)

Rita bought the house with the idea of running it as a Bed & Breakfast and because "we thought it was a shame to see it destroyed" (Power. Interview).

We live over there right behind this and we'd been watching what was going on. We watched the destruction of it after Randell sold it. And then, of course, you know, 'cause I'd known him so well and he was kinda special to us to and we knew the story of the house because he always told it, and ah, you know, just thought that if you were going to do a bed and breakfast you'd do it in a place with, I mean people want to go to a place with the history anyway. You shouldn't even be in a bed and breakfast if you don't want to talk about history. (Power. Interview)

Rita recognized the heritage value of the house for her business, but was also motivated by her desire to preserve the community's heritage. Her interest in history appears to have been present before she purchased the house. Renovating the house gave her a way of expressing both her economic and historic interests.

It's amazing. But, like you know, you think of all the things that happen. Like my husband found a clay pipe between the walls...you think of all the things that went on, you know. And stories of the people who lived here and, you know, I think about the old fellow that was smoking that clay pipe and to be able to say the house that he raised his children in, you know. There's something to be said for it. Maybe people don't care, but I do have a sense of, a sense of what I came from and a sense of what made the community what it is and why it's survived so long and if you have nothing to show for it, well, then it didn't survive did it? (Power. Interview)

Rita is aware of the heritage resources she needs to create a positive experience for her visitors and, therefore support her business. Her selection of topics is a wonderful mix of elements chosen because they are part of the established heritage landscape and relevant to her personal experience of living in the community. Outside of her association with Randell Verran, Rita has a general understanding of Placentia's historic themes. She usually tells visitors about the French and English history of the area, directing them to visit Castle Hill National Historic Site; about Argentina and the impact of the American Naval Base, recommending Eileen Houlihan's book Uprooted and directing them to visit the Argentina display on the road leading to the ferry terminal; and directs them to the resettlement exhibit in the O'Reilly House Museum.

It is primarily through her association with Randell, though, and her subsequent restoration of The Rosedale, that Rita has been able to experience and gain an intimate connection with one aspect of Placentia's past. The passion with which she discusses the history associated with the house and her efforts to restore it suggest that it is this experience that has resulted in giving Rita a strong sense of belonging to her adopted community. Unlike the people discussed in the previous section, Rita has gone one step further to make a personal connection with Placentia's past. The community's history has

moved beyond being an old building—an historic artifact—to become an acquaintance with an individual. For Rita the past has a face and a name and it lives on in her memory, in her reminiscences of Randell Verran.

5.5.2 Margaret Kelly

Margaret Kelly moved to Placentia with her parents when she was very young. Her mother was from Argentinia and worked as a school teacher in numerous communities around the island. Her father was from Bay Bulls and worked as a telegraph operator in Kelligrews and then Placentia. The family moved to Placentia prior to the construction of the American Naval Base in Argentinia. Mrs. Kelly's knowledge of the town's history is derived from her personal experience of having lived in it for most of her life (circa 1935/40 to the present time). Mrs. Kelly is the owner of the Harold Hotel. The walls of the dining room are adorned with photographs of Placentia dating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. She has an interest in her community's past and bemoans that much history is being forgotten, that, for events prior to the early twentieth century, "there's not a mention of it" (Kelly. Interview). She is not an avid recorder of events but knows who in town to ask about specific facts. In a discussion about the name of an individual associated with a specific building, Mrs. Kelly remarked, "now that would have been. Let me see now. Who was the name? I had a friend who had all that down" (Kelly. Interview). In spite of her espoused lack of involvement, Mrs. Kelly is, among the people interviewed for this research, one of the most knowledgeable informants with regard to the twentieth century Past in Placentia. Her sense of the Past is very much in line with the definition given earlier in this thesis in that it reflects her experience of the

landscape in which she lives; the events she recounts are attached to the physical locations where they occurred. She has a good memory of the history associated with many of the buildings in the town, some of which no longer exist, and recounted berry-picking expeditions in the "Swans."

That would be our Sunday recreation. Two or three of us get in a dory and go rowing up in the Arm there...Go over where the islands are and then over there was a little more rough water and you'd come out to the Southeast Arm. I've gone through there too...And I berry-picked on top of those hills over there when I wasn't very old...right across from the Swans...there was a place there, it had been a woodcutter's trail, they called it Foxes Scrape...Scrape, because this was a clearing in the hill from throwing wood over it...Cliff on top of it. The rest was all shaley rocks, rocks that had been broken over the years. And of course, everywhere the wood's cut the raspberries grow. See, when we got to the top of that hill, we knew our directions. We had five different sections we could go into and pick. We'd pick enough berries to do us all winter. (Kelly. Interview)

In the end, Mrs. Kelly is probably one of the few anomalies in this research in that, although Placentia is her "adopted" community, she has created a sense of belonging based on personal experience rather than an immersion in the myth of the French. Placentia is her home. She has come to know it intimately, in a manner consistent with the great purposes of history; to make her "feel more at home, more densely and maturely a member of [her] community" (Glassie 1994:963).

She has a limited understanding of the town's "mythic" history beyond reading "an article here and there that you see that the local paper writes about it" and to recognize that "there's so many years lost there between 1500 and 1900...there's no coverage at all. There's probably forts all over the place" (Kelly. Interview). But, she is interested and would like to "find out a little more about what went on. I always said I'd love to get into history. But I really didn't do it afterwards. I should retire and get into the

digging. Books I mean...see what's on the go" (Kelly. Interview). It is interesting to note that for Mrs. Kelly "history" is something one finds by "digging" in books, it is not something one encounters in one's everyday life. It is something one needs to devote time toward.

Later in her interview, however, she acknowledges her lack of family history and the wealth of stories she did not inherit from her relatives in Argentina. With her earlier reference to "history" and the following discussion of her family's Past, Mrs. Kelly provides an excellent example of the dualistic character of historical understanding that was presented in chapter 3.⁷⁷ At the end of this passage, she suggests an untapped wealth of narratives associated with Argentina. This emphasis on stories belonging to Argentina happened while interviewing a number of informants and, in contrast, highlights the lack of an oral tradition that I encountered in Placentia.

Patrick: When you were growing up did you, did your parents teach you their stories, their history, family stories and things like that?

Mrs. Kelly: No. No, I miss...I look back now and even things concerning our own family. We didn't get into.

Patrick: You didn't have grandparents around, I guess, really, did you? Or did you because you're from here?

Mrs. Kelly: Ah, nope. I never knew my, only one. One grandmother and she lived in Argentina. She spent some time with us when I was young and then she moved to Grand Falls.

Patrick: So do you feel you have a sense of history from your parents from being here?

Mrs. Kelly: Other than the fact that it was through, really not by choice that we ended up here.

Patrick: You mean for your father?

Mrs. Kelly: Yeah, it was a job. But because we were here I've just grown to it. I like this little town.

Patrick: Okay, thanks.

Mrs. Kelly: Coming out of Argentia they had all kinds of ghosts stories to tell you. Sometimes you were there shivering in your shoes while you listened to them. Not my parents. My parents never told these stories but I had an uncle. My grandmother would tell them too. But she was only with us short periods of time. Maybe halfway [- - -] when they met the corpse coming you know, the night when they were going home. They were sure that was the real thing.

Patrick: Do you remember any of those?

Mrs. Kelly: Nope. See, Argentia was a terrific area for rum-running and they, as a matter of fact it was my mother's uncle was one of the prime, they had their little boats and he had them out fishing. But they always went in to St. Pierre and they told me the story that the marshes in Argentia were full of kegs of rum. This old uncle now, that used to work on the boat for his uncle, right, he would tell me about all the stories about when he was a young man coming home at night and who he met and what he met, he met a corpse and he met the thing and now whether he had been down in the bog and dug up a keg from somewhere, but he ah, once he'd tell you that as clear as it really happened. And he stepped aside and the funeral went on, the casket went ahead. They were full of ghost stories and they used to play tricks on one another too, I think. And they'd hear the story about the ghost. (Kelly. Interview)

When I interviewed Mrs. Kelly, she had little to say about the French and English history or about the role of archaeology for local tourism or economic development. She does not have an opinion on these topics. When she speaks of the past, it is through stories drawn from her own life experiences. What is unique about Mrs. Kelly is that her life, based around her father working as the telegraph operator and her later involvement in the hotel business, has been independent of the Naval Base, although it most likely benefited from it over the years. Her life experience, also, has been centred around, and has become a part of the history of Placentia. Though she is the first generation of her family to live in Placentia, she is very much a part of the place.

5.5.3 Art O'Keefe

If we accept the Southeast as a part of Placentia, then Art O'Keefe is one of Placentia's finest "country historians." Art is the third generation of his family to live and work in Placentia. If you include his children and grandchildren, then you have five generations of the family having lived in the immediate area. Art is firmly planted in Placentia, his home is "right here in Newfoundland, at least right here in Placentia. Well, Southeast is only five minutes drive from here and that's where my father's house is and that's where my son lives right now, up there, going up toward the Southeast where I grew up and right in this area. For the past 64 years now" (O'Keefe, Art. Interview).

Art has a well developed sense of history and of his past. He has been fortunate enough to inherit a wealth of stories and information and has supplemented this by reading widely. According to Art, "I can remember when [Nfld] joined confederation in 1949 and I know what it was like. I can't remember what it was like during the '30s because I wasn't around, I was born in 1938, but I can remember the war years and what went with it" (O'Keefe, Art. Interview). Placentia, as he remembers it, was very different before the Americans.

We had very little, Newfoundland had very little accommodations for people. Like there was no supermarkets, there was only a couple of small stores and they were down here in Placentia and they were owned by different individuals, private individuals where you can go in pick up a can of milk and say, okay write this down for me and I'll be back tomorrow and pay for it. And they only had a very limited stock it was just the real basic basics all right. It wasn't until 1949, back in the 1950s that bigger stores moved in like the trading company down here I showed ya. They were in business until Sobey's moved in, back in 1960s probably, 1970s 1980s. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Including the television, “well, I watch the Discovery Channel,” Art has learned his history orally and through being an avid reader. I asked him how he has learned history,

Art: Orally.

Patrick:...because you talked as well about getting a lot of stuff out of books.

Art: Oh yeah, I’m after reading everything they’ve got here in Newfoundlandia. I even come up with some, to the girls with books, hey can you get me this book or whatever. I’m up to reading, I’ve been reading since I was four years old. I’m one of the oldtimers that ah, like, if I’m going back in the woods, if I had a choice of taking a loaf of bread or a book I’d take the book. Okay, years ago when I was drinking beer I’d take the book and a six-pack and a loaf of bread. I don’t take the six-pack anymore so I can take two books now. (O’Keefe, Art. Interview)

The fact that he has a long family history in the area is an obvious source of pride for Art. He mentioned several times that a lot of what he knows he heard, or learned, from his father and grandfather. When speaking of the origin of some local place names, Art says “and this was a long time ago. This was handed down to me orally by my grandfather and father.” Later in the interview he repeats that “these stories and stuff were passed down to me from my father who was a great story teller” (O’Keefe, Art. Interview).

Being on the land is a large part of Art’s family history. They have long been hunters and trappers and his father worked for many years as a Provincial and then a Federal wildlife officer. Art has many memories of travelling in the woods with his father and his grandfather and more recently with his own children. Hunting is still a good way of supplementing one’s income as well as a way to get in touch with one’s sense of self.

P: But you still get out on the land yourself.

A: Oh yeah, every time, every chance I get I go out there. As a matter of fact I'm trying to get out there now. We go out hunting this time of the year, it's a, its after salmon or brook trout. In the fall of the year its after small game: partridge, ducks, geese. And in the fall of the year also, if we are lucky enough, we'll get a big game license which we have over the past five years. I've got a caribou license this year, so we usually fill that. That's good for at least 120 pounds of meat if it's a caribou. If it's a moose it's good for 350, 400. So, ah, we don't depend on the land that much for a living because you, you'll starve off it. But we like it because it's part of our heritage, part of my heritage anyway. And I've got a son who does a lot of ah, same as I do, go back to the camp and we just go out. Lots of the time I just go back to my cabin just to ah, just to relax. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Art likes to assert that this knowledge is first hand, it is not book knowledge, it is his personal history. He is expressing his family's "heritage," validating their sense of belonging to the land.

Art's family "originally came from Ireland. There was supposed to be three brothers, came over a couple of hundred years ago, I imagine. I think they came ashore in Harbour Grace or wherever" (O'Keefe, Art. Interview). The family origins are not clearly known and are expressed through a common narrative suggesting they may have been exiles or rebels.⁷⁸

We just know that they, my cousin in southeast did a family tree. He traced these three brothers back to where they got off of the boat in Harbour Grace, but he couldn't find them on no, no account of them on the other side. But we think that they were ah, they were two, two or three steps ahead of the law... We know that we sprung from three brothers who came ashore in Harbour Grace back two or three hundred years ago and ah, the brothers came to this area here, the Placentia area. For what reason we don't know. I know that my grandfather and them were hunters, trappers. They would probably fish during the year but most of the time they spent on the land... Our family did hunt and trap and ah, they also fished but not as much as they would in the country after caribou and stuff like that. I don't know whether they didn't like to fish or couldn't fish or what but they, the O'Keefe's are known to be trappers. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Art's brief family history is also an expression of his basic principles. He is for the "little guy," the outsider, and believes in the value of honest effort. His descendants

were only “two or three steps ahead of the law” and his father, “before he was a Fishery Warden he was a poacher. So, he said that’s why they probably hired him, because they knew he was a poacher, okay, so they hired him and he knew what to look for” (O’Keefe, Art. Interview). It is a source of pride for Art that his father became a government employee, in spite of having originally been “outside” the law, and that he subsequently associated with respectable people such as the “noted” sportsman Lee Wolf or “old English Aristocrats” from St. John’s who would come to the Cape Shore to go sport hunting. Art takes pride in believing his family “put one over” on the establishment. His father’s poaching is not interpreted as illegal, his poaching is understood as being a necessary activity to feed his family and the act of illegal hunting was one way a “little guy” could manage to feed his family. Art sums up his values when he talks of the role historical interpretation can play in telling the stories of the common folk.

Because if you, if you interview a Lord or a Knight or a King you’re going to get his interpretations, all right, which is usually a rosy, upper class, ah, easy living way of doing it. But, when you’re talking to a little guy on the bottom like me, you’ll get my idea of how I’m living and stuff like that. Not their views, you’re getting my views. (O’Keefe, Art. Interview)

Art is a wonderful “historian.” His stories are a blend of fact, interpretation, and reflection and, underlying them, are his basic values that serve to “preserve and perpetuate the social tradition” (Becker 1969:17). His stories, again in accordance with Becker, are not simply the communication of “undiscriminated facts...[rather, it is] the perceiving mind of the historian that speaks...to present a succession of events in the life of man, and from the succession of events thus presented to derive a satisfactory meaning” (Becker 1969:17). If someone was to object to Art’s version of history, he/she

would be objecting to his interpretation more-so than to the facts. That sets Art apart from the other informants. Not only is his knowledge directly based on personal experience, but his discussion invites the listener to learn from his experience. History is about connecting with the past and sharing in the experience. I asked Art his thoughts about preserving the artifacts from the archaeological excavations.

I would like to be able to go in and have access to, say, to go in and look at it. And then take my kids in and say this, you know, or my grand kids and say this is a, okay, this is a pipe that we use, or that Poppy [Art] used to use last year, and this is a pipe that a man used 250 years ago. Both of them are basically the same, you got your burned tobacco in them, okay, but they're made out of different things and stuff like that. So, what I would like is to have access to all of that. That we'd be able to go in and, if the place is a museum it should be open to the public like in St. John's. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Art's stories verge toward myth, whose primary concern is to "ensure as closely as possible...the future will remain faithful to the present and to the past" (Levi-Strauss 42). They are more ambitious than fact and strive to communicate an event's constituent meanings and intentions. Art's storytelling is purposeful, it is a tool of self-expression and, as such, it is much more than the chronological listing of facts that characterizes most of the other informant's association with the public history of the heritage landscape. Art's retelling of history is part of his continual shaping of self. He is not interested in history for its own sake. I asked him if he was familiar with some of the artifacts that are regularly associated with the heritage landscape and are on display in the O'Reilly House Museum.

Patrick: There's a painting of a coat of arms in St. Luke's.

Art: Yeah.

Patrick: And the Basque tombstones. And there's a staff, a King George staff in the museum. Are you familiar with those things?

Art: I've heard of them, yep. There's also a ah, chalice set that was given to the town by King William Henry, have you heard about him? Who was here in this area.

Patrick: Where did you hear about these?

Art: Well I've read about them because I've got something off the internet here one time about William Henry, he was here and running the place. Uhm, and he left, he left the chalice or the cup or whatever, the communion set. I think that's in the museum in St. John's. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Although he is not ignorant of the "official" history, he's read "something off the internet here one time," it is not the focus of his thinking. The larger themes are frameworks for his own stories, the stories of the everyday folk. Therefore, the myth of the "ancient French capital" leads him to wonder about the tribulations of a "family of four or five huddled in one little room" on the Great Beach 500 years ago or empathize with a soldier a long way from his home.

Now if you can imagine yourself with a fifteen pound musket on your back in the middle of February, probably forty-five degrees below zero, with twenty degrees plus a twenty mile an hour wind, looking out there to see what's going on and you're a long ways from home because he's probably from France somewhere. I mean what did these people go through? You know. Ah, they had very, they had very inadequate clothing, I imagine a lot of them had very inadequate food and they didn't have life easy. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

Even when he talks of his years spent working at Argentinia, he is able to focus his story on the success of one of the "little guys" that he's known.

I know, remember several guys on the Base who retired in the '80s who went there in the '40s. One guy had 46 years and he started as a young boy bringing water to what's called a nipper, n—i—p—p—e—r. Nipper is a young boy who would carry water to the men on the construction or he'll make the fire and boil the kettle and have everything ready for them. And that's what he started at. And when he ended up forty-six years later, he was working for housing and he was the highest paid man in Argentinia. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

When Art's stories move from general comments on a subject to his specific examples they "frame vague, general knowledge into specific factual narratives that contain the messages people must consider to live properly" (Glassie 1994:965). This is one of the primary purposes of history according to Henry Glassie. The following quotation is another example of how Art can take a general topic, Americans for example, and take it in a direction that addresses the motivations and the consequences of the Newfoundlander's embracing the way of life the Americans offered.

So the same thing getting back to the Americans. When the base started, not only from around here, but they moved from everywhere. They just came flocking in because this was a chance to get out from under the merchants, this was a chance to get a bit of solid cash for myself and, not only the men, the women too. Okay. Because the women, I would think in Newfoundland worked harder than the men. The men went out and caught the fish and brought it in. But guess who was there to help them split the fish and cut the fish and salt the fish and when the men is out in the boat the next day catching more fish, who's spreading the fish on the flakes? The women are. And they also got to raise a bunch of kids and they got to cook and wash and whatever the wifely duties are. Okay. So, and this, so when the young fellah got ten years old his father grabs him one morning, instead of him going to school he went in the boat and he was in that boat sometime as an indentured servant, he probably got fed and that's about it until he probably became eighteen years old. So that youngster who was eighteen years old saw his buddy on the street making 20 cents an hour in Argentina. Next morning he's in Argentina pushing a broom, making 20 cents. Fuck the boat, excuse my language. The same thing with the girls. Instead of them getting up in the morning at three o'clock and spreading the fish, they went down and they got a job with us down in the cafeteria making 50 cents an hour making coffee or working on the cash register. And then this young GI comes up and gives her the eye and she's going back home to the farm with him. Now whether the farm was ever there or everything worked out, sometimes it did sometimes it didn't, but the next day she wasn't talking like she came from ah, what shall I say, she was using exaggerated English. (O'Keefe, Art. Interview)

It is interesting to note that while Art is opinionated, he is not judgmental. He is still, essentially, recounting the "facts" of the story, not just the dissociated facts of events, but also imaginatively reconstructing the narrative context that gives them

meaning. The Base offered an alternative to a life filled with hard labour. You can't blame the young for making the choices they did. Unfortunately, the cost is a loss of culture when people begin adopting "exaggerated language" and leave the island to return "home to the farm." While the women leave with American soldiers, the young men are left behind "pushing a broom, making 20 cents." Again, as with all of Art's stories, there is the underdog, the Newfoundlander, doing his best to improve his lot and barely succeeding. Art skilfully brings forth the past to comment on the human condition and "raise enduring moral issues" (Glassie 1994:965). His father, the poacher, remains the archetypal hero because, ultimately, he didn't have to leave home to succeed and he succeeded without compromising his sense of self. In his heart, one gets the sense that his father will always remain, and by extension so will Art, the poacher descendant of Irish rebels.

To listen to Art speak of his family's past is to experience the past of Placentia and the Southeast. It is also to share in his experience of what it means for him to live there today and to have experienced the changes and potential futures for the community. Merging the past with the present and the future, what we ultimately learn from listening to Art's stories is what it means to feel "at home, more densely and maturely a member of [a] community" (Glassie 1994:963). We gain an understanding of what it means to belong. We are learning history filtered through the experience of Art's past; through his memory of things said and done.

Chapter 6: HISTORY IS THE MEMORY OF THINGS SAID AND DONE

For the majority of the residents interviewed for this research, their personal history involves the memory of things said and done in someplace other than Placentia. Their main attachment to Placentia's history is through the authorized heritage myth of the town as the "ancient French capital" epitomized by the archaeological excavations that were being conducted at the time of my fieldwork. For the majority of people I spoke with, the town's history is most important for its role in the development of economic opportunities to be derived from heritage tourism. When it comes to issues of self-identity, most of the residents interviewed for this research expressed a sense of belonging to some other part of the municipality of Placentia. Margaret Kelly and Art O'Keefe, the two residents with the strongest tie to Placentia, showed the least interest in the heritage narrative and spoke primarily about their personal experiences when asked about Placentia's history.

No version of history is a definitive statement. All history is a perspective on events that happened in the past. As Becker states, history at its most basic is "the memory of things said and done" (1969:7). It is a necessarily selective interpretation because "the ideal series of events that we affirm and hold in memory...is so intimately associated with what we are doing and what we hope to do, [that it] can not be precisely the same for all at any given time, or the same for one generation as for another" (Becker 1069:13). History must be part of a social dialogue to have any relevance; it must have a life of its own.

Berate him as we will for not reading our books, [but] Mr. Everyman is stronger than we are, and sooner or later we must adapt our knowledge to his necessities.

Otherwise he will leave us to our own devices, leave us it may be to cultivate a species of dry professional arrogance growing out of the thin soil of antiquarian research. Such research, valuable not in itself but for some ulterior purpose, will be of little import except in so far as it is transmuted into common knowledge. The history that does work in the world, the history that influences the course of history, is living history, that pattern of remembered events, whether true or false, that enlarges and enriches the collective specious present, the specious present of Mr. Everyman. (Becker 1969:20-21)

This is not too say that historical fact must be compromised, rather that interpretations are essential because history only lives on in the meanings it is used to express. Meaning elicits dialogue and the ultimate purpose of history is, "however more consciously or expertly applied," to "breed legends out of remembered episodes and oral tradition" (Becker 1969:20). The historian's "proper function is not to repeat the past but to make use of it, to correct and rationalize for common use...mythological adaptation[s] of what actually happened" (Becker 1969:21). This is myth as meaning, as "the sense that history makes" (Brighurst 360). The historian's purpose, therefore, is "not to create, but to preserve and perpetuate the social tradition" (Becker 1969:17); to continuously express the evolving social tradition in "specific factual narratives that contain the messages people must consider in their effort to live properly" (Glassie 1994: 965).

What is the social tradition in Placentia? The community is caught in a dichotomy between what we have been referring to as its History and its Past; a dichotomy between the way the Past is understood by the few residents that have been there for generations, and the compulsion for newer residents to adopt narratives to understand their place in the community's changing history. The new narrative, the myth of the "ancient French capital" is contrary to the historian's purpose. It does not preserve or perpetuate, it has been created. It is not, like Art O'Keefe's stories about Placentia and the Southeast,

Gerald O'Reilly's stories about Argentia, or even young Gerard O'Reilly's stories about Dunville, part of a local tradition that is evolving in place. The heritage myth fails because it is not "true," it does not "contain the messages people must consider in their effort to live properly" (Glassie 1994:965). The heritage myth is focussed on the ancient past and does not account for expansive periods of history. The heritage myth is, ultimately, a story whose meaning is the potential for the town to make money. Art's stories, in contrast, absorb and adapt to the present but remain "true" to the past in that they perpetuate his sense of moral order.

The historian is an artist. He is the creator of an expressive product. He is recognized by his community for having developed a specific skill and is, therefore, charged with retaining specific knowledge and with speaking on behalf of the larger group to which he belongs. For Becker, historians are the keepers of the "useful myths" (1969:16), while, for Glassie, their stories are focussed on "the human condition, told to raise enduring moral issues" (1994:965).

Gerald Pocius defines art as skilful behaviour executed in a manner that addresses the cultural traditions of the group in which the behaviour is enacted (1995). The determination of what defines "skilful" behaviour is, in part, a community decision.

Each group arrives at a consensus of what it considers to be appropriate art forms, and individual creators draw on this group consensus. Pure and simple, all art has a social basis, and artists are part of some collective, whatever that might be. If art is unique, it still can relate to group concerns. When art speaks to the human needs of a particular group, then we need not worry about taking some kind of cultural referendum to gauge how truly collective an art form is. (Pocius 1995:425)

Not everyone I interviewed is an historian. Most of the people I interviewed are more correctly the audience experiencing the performance of the various historical narratives that are currently active in Placentia. As the social group in which the narrative is being enacted, the community of Placentia is responsible for determining what the prevailing narrative will be; the community defines the "social tradition." The consensus among my informants was that the prevailing narrative in Placentia was the story of the "ancient French capital." Two reasons for this are that a lack of personal experience with Placentia's Past makes it easier for the community to adopt the well-constructed narratives of the French and British occupations and, at the time of this research, economic viability was the most important item on the town's agenda. The story of the "ancient French capital" was the epitome of economic opportunities provided by the archaeological excavations and the potential for future income resulting from the development of heritage tourism products.

According to Pocius,

Art involves creation. And all creation is partly culturally based. Artists live in a particular time period and in a particular place. Thus creation never occurs completely in a vacuum; it must involve a choice of techniques, as well as content, that are all culturally influenced and learned. (Pocius 1995:424)

The narrative of the "ancient French capital" is not an artistic creation, although the community has been influenced to adopt it as the story of their origins. We have already discussed how the story fails because it is not "true," it does not "speak to the human needs of a particular group" (Pocius 1995: 425). The success of the story, though, in contrast to Art O'Keefe's version of the town's past that I would argue is art, is due to how it is culturally influenced and learned. Secure in their sense of having a Past in

another place, most of my informants had no attachment to Placentia, meaning the “flats” or the original colony of Plaisance. Their attachment was to the greater municipality of which their local community was a part. They have been told there is money to be made by developing the heritage narrative of the “ancient French capital.” They have, therefore, been culturally influenced to believe in the economic potential of the heritage product and have learned the story in support of that belief in prosperity.

Art O’Keefe, on the other hand, is telling stories about the Past, something that does not “relate to group concerns,” and, given that the majority of residents do not have an extensive history in Placentia, does not have a “social basis” in the community’s current reality. Art, in fact, was the finest historian I encountered with a wealth of undocumented knowledge on the southeast portion of Placentia. But, given the current disparate demographic of the community, Art’s stories were not considered relevant with regard to the group’s consensus on what the community’s historical narrative would be.

The initial question for this research was: how does a community understand its past. If we look at the greater municipality of Placentia, we would say it understands it mythically, or based on the heritage myth of the town as the site of the “ancient French capital” of Plaisance. Residents understand the past as being a series of events that occurred in the distant past that are still present in the archaeological remains and artifacts scattered around the town. The myth of the “ancient French capital” provides a means for individuals to attach themselves to a place where they have limited personal experience. It is an accepted narrative that provides a foundation for belonging at the community level. The myth is an important tool for creating a sense of belonging and the

archaeological excavations and associated cultural resources are an important part of “validating” the myth for many residents.

If we redefine “community” to mean long term residents of the area encompassed by the original colony, we would say the past is understood based on the oral histories they have inherited as a result of being resident in this place. The past is understood based on an individual’s personal experience. It is anecdotal and purposeful as a tool for maintaining community cohesion and identity. The archaeological resources are another element to be brought in to the story, but they do not tell the historian anything he or she does not already know from having lived in the area. The artifacts are lifeless. They operate as mnemonic devices to suit the larger, moral purpose of the historian’s story.

History is not static. Placentia is in the process of redefining its history. In the process it is losing much of the physical and intangible elements that constitute its communal past. I repeatedly heard current residents lament that many of the “oldtimers” were gone and their knowledge with them. There are a handful of current residents that “belong” to the community. They are also aging. At the time of this research, the community’s attention, for valid economic reasons, was focussed on the development of the archaeological remains and on promoting the heritage myth of the French occupation. It appears little was being done to document the living knowledge of the current residents. Admittedly, there is only so much that can be done and time does not sit still. There is no such thing as a lack of history, but it is possible to lose history, to forget the past. It can die as readily as the individual in which the knowledge of it resides. If, as Becker says, history is in the things said and done, then the historic traditions of the

current residents of Placentia will have a dramatic impact on the reforming of the community's history. And so it should. History is everchanging and, as Kristin McCrowe said in her interview, "...I guess [Placentia's] our place now. More our place than our parent's. They resettled here. They consider their place [to be] where they're from" (McCrowe and Hickey interview). The future is shaped by the traditions we carry forward from the past. And so we step, from the past into the present and into the future.



Figure 1: Regional map showing Placentia in relation to the Province of Newfoundland. Map is based on a map in the *Investors Guide: Argentia Area Chamber of Commerce* (1999).



Figure 2: Poster advertising summer performances of the Placentia Area Theatre d'Heritage.

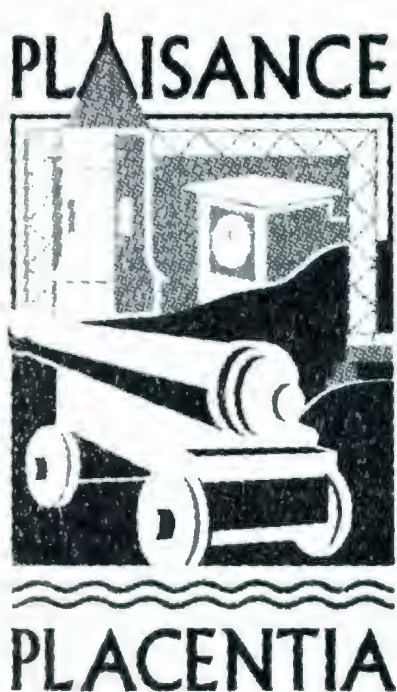


Figure 3, above: Town sign posted on the highway entering the community from Point Verde.

Figure 4, left: The town's logo. The image incorporates several elements of the town's cultural heritage: water, canon, hills, the clock on the courthouse, the steeple of the Catholic Church, the wall of a fortification and the French and English names of the town.

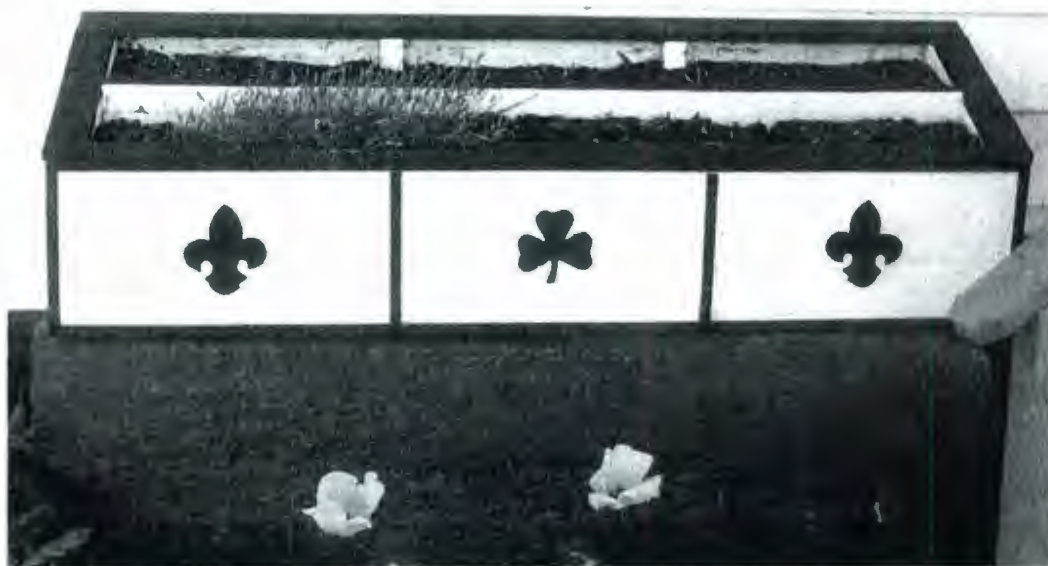


Figure 5: Flower box designed with a *Fleur de lis* and a shamrock. When I asked the owner about this design he said he used these two symbols to make reference to “the first people to live in the area and the people who live here now.”



Figure 6, left: Photograph of Placentia taken by Roy Rogers, 1959. This view from the top of Castle Hill shows the town just prior to the construction of the lift bridge. View is from Castle Hill looking up the Northeast Arm to the left.

Figure 7, right: Photograph of Placentia taken by Christopher Newhook, 2007. This view is taken from Dunville, looking into Placentia Road. Note the lift bridge and the development on the Great Beach.

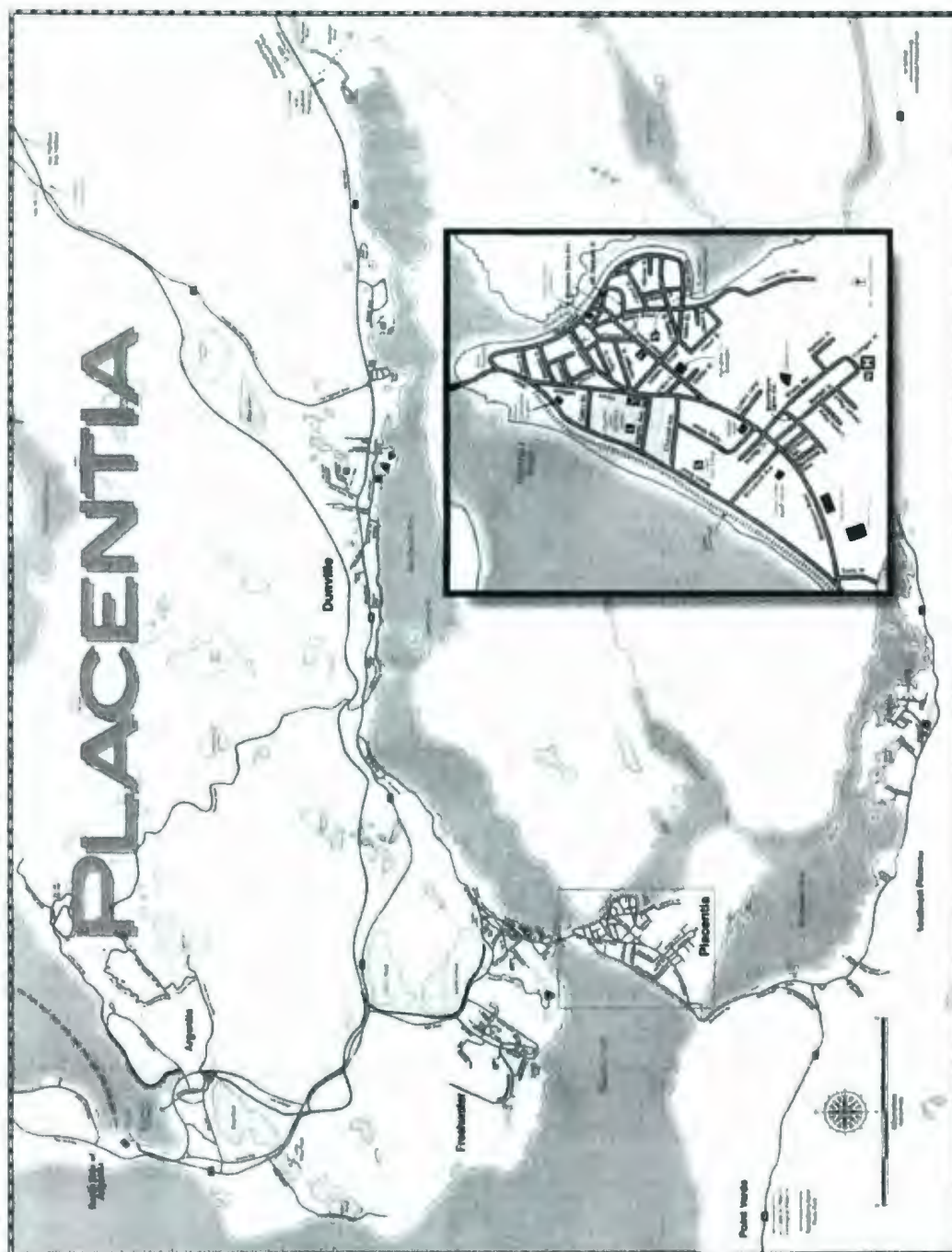


Figure 8: Map of the Municipality of Placentia. This is a preliminary version of a map used in the Town of Placentia Map tourism brochure produced by the Placentia Lion's Club. A copy of the brochure including a full size version of this map is included in the pocket at the back of this thesis. Map created by Christopher Newhook, July 1999.

ENDNOTES

¹ What is meant by local history, or what is referred to in this thesis as public history or heritage, are those stories which, generally speaking, are learned from a study of the history and are often considered by informants to be the kinds of things outsiders are interested in; it is usually learned from books, television, or other forms of popular media. Individual's stories from their own past, what is referred to in this thesis as personal history, are, generally speaking, stories about an individual's life; they are usually learned from experience and transmitted as a tradition—oral narratives, songs, etc.. Most informants in Placentia were reluctant to consider their personal experiences to be of value or relevance and, therefore, were quick to redirect me to someone they felt was more knowledgeable or who, essentially, was more versed in local history. As John Bruce said in his interview, reflecting on his newfound passion for archaeology and his community's history, "history's been around me pretty much all my life, just didn't know it" (Bruce. Interview).

² An interview with Randell Verran is a valuable source about the town and one of its more colourful characters. The interview was conducted in 1975 by Jim Traverse as a term project for an undergraduate folklore course at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Randell Verran died in the early 1980s.

³ As well as making myself visible in the town, I ran a description of my research project with contact information in the "Community Calendar" of the local newspaper, *The Charter*. (June 17, 2002:13. [Folklore/oral history research.](#))

⁴ Jersey side was included because it had an historical connection with Great Placentia and contained several important archaeological sites. The Southeast was considered because it also had historical associations and most of the people interviewed considered it, unlike other neighbouring communities, to be an extension of "Great" Placentia. The study area is defined in more detail in chapter 3.

⁵ In this instance, I am using the word heritage, as it is commonly used and understood, as a substitute for cultural inheritance, meaning a sense of self derived from a way of living. See the discussion on heritage in chapter 5 of this thesis.

⁶ Oral history is not the same as oral tradition. Jan Vansina, an historian concerned with the ways in which historical information is preserved and transmitted in non-literate societies, states that the term oral tradition "applies to both a process and its products. The products are oral messages based on previous oral messages, at least a generation old. The process is the transmission of such messages by word of mouth over time until the disappearance of the message" (1985:3). Oral history is only one form of information imparted through oral traditions. The categories of oral tradition are memorized speech, accounts, epic, tales, proverbs, and sayings.

⁷ This is primarily an issue of scope. Many of the town's current residents share the experience of having worked at, or having had family that worked at, the military base in Argentia. A focussed analysis at this scale would show a higher level of common experience and shared narratives than is being suggested. This thesis is looking at a much broader historical scale than the one or two generations represented by the military base at Argentia.

⁸ Contemporary use of the term outport is in reference to a place not of the city and is intended to connote a sense of nostalgia for a way of life exemplified by the mythos of the Newfoundland fisherman. The same dichotomy is used in the distinction between the words "towny," an often derisive reference to a male resident of St. John's, and "bayman," also a potentially derogatory reference to "one who lives on or near a bay or harbour; inhabitant of an outport..." (Dictionary of Newfoundland English 1990). In this manner, the outport reference is synonymous to the rural/urban dichotomy present throughout mainland Canada. A less popular, although equally documented term is "outharbour." The second edition (1989) of the Oxford English Dictionary (O. E. D.) cross-references outharbour with outport. The term outport is originally documented (O. E. D. 1989, reference is dated 1642) as "a port outside some defined place, as a city or town; in England, a term including all ports other than that of London." A more succinct definition of outport is "a secondary seaport close to a larger one but beyond its corporate limits or jurisdiction," with a specific reference to its use in Newfoundland to mean "an isolated fishing village" (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 1993). The 1989 edition of the O. E. D. includes an entry for outport that refers directly to the word's use beginning in the 1820s, "Chiefly in Labrador and Newfoundland, [as a reference to] a small remote fishing village." At the same time, the word "outporter" was being used in reference to the residents of these small villages. Outporter, synonymous with bayman, was used in 1905 to refer to "the small fisherman of the remoter coast, who must depend wholly upon his hook and line for subsistence" (A Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles—ADCHP, 1967). Outport, therefore, is a relative term which has, in reference to Newfoundland and Labrador, come to mean any community which still retains, or wishes to retain an identity based on its origins as a fishing village. It can be used in a derogatory manner. A reference to the use of the word outharbour, dated to 1818, illustrates the nature of the core/periphery relationship elicited by the word: "...it will appear evident that those merchants, who reside constantly at St. John's, receive a double profit: the first arising from their foreign exports of salted cod; and the second, from the articles which they supply to the outharbour settlers, in return for this commodity" (ADCHP, 1967). Throughout its history, Placentia has been a centre for the purchase and processing of fish and the centre of operations for a lineage of merchants and migratory fishermen. The community's history is dominated by its role as an administrative and economic centre for Placentia Bay. While it may be viewed as an outport in relation to markets originating in Europe and, therefore, in accordance to the original definition of the term, it has never functioned as an outport in accordance to the current manner in which the term is commonly understood in Newfoundland.

⁹ "Plaisance" is the French name for Placentia. It means "a pleasant place" and is used on the town's signage: "Bienvenue à la Ville de Plaisance."

¹⁰ Glassie notes that some histories are "constructed genealogically" linking people through "lines of descent" while other are constructed "spatially" linking people through the landscape they inhabit. Accordingly, "it follows that as mobility increases – in contemporary America for instance – identity by lineage would rise to challenge identity by place, and history, if not the very land, would become a battleground for factions..." (1994:964-965).

¹¹ The history of the "founding" of Placentia is presented in greater detail in chapter 4. It will only be referenced here to illustrate how Bascom's definition of myth is fulfilled by the narrative of the "ancient French capital."

¹² Amanda Crompton was a PhD student in archaeology from Memorial University. Both she and Blair, also a Memorial student and professional archaeologist, were employed by the Newfoundland Archaeological Heritage Outreach Program (NAHOP).

¹³ Level 3 is the equivalent to grade 12.

¹⁴ Rowe states in his Preface that his intention with the book is to create a "comprehensive general history for adults" and, therefore, admits that the book "leaves out certain matters entirely or gives inadequate treatment to others." Regardless, his perspective that Placentia's history ends with the Treaty of Utrecht echoes the perspective of many historians. John Mannion's research on Placentia remains an exception.

¹⁵ LeMessurier gives a brief history of the earliest maps naming Placentia and Placentia Bay, as well as the possible origins of the name. (7-9)

¹⁶ Humphrey's (1970) states that "Plaisance was founded to protect France's claim to a share of Newfoundland's coasts, to shelter her dry fishery and to establish local authority over her nationals...Because of the paucity of agricultural resources, industrial raw materials and secondary exportable staples, the inhabitants of Plaisance were forced into a dangerously single-minded concentration on the fishery. This in turn led directly to chronic friction between the settlers on the one hand and the merchants and fishermen of the summer fleet on the other. French merchants alienated the settlers by ruthlessly exploiting their own position as the primary suppliers of manufactured goods, indentured labour...from France and land-grown foodstuffs." (vii)

¹⁷ English law prohibited anyone from owning land in Newfoundland. Therefore, in order to facilitate the sale of land, as a condition of the Treaty of Utrecht, from the French colonists to the English, Placentia was placed under the jurisdiction of the governor of Nova Scotia. Needless to say, the "lieutenant-governors who ruled over Placentia were army officers who considered themselves answerable only to the governor in Nova Scotia and...came to think of themselves as the governors of Newfoundland" (Barnable 5).

¹⁸ The district's boundaries are described as: "with the community of Placentia as its centre, it ran from Cape Pine on the east to the western side of Placentia Bay, and as far west as there were fishing settlements. There were to be three magistrates and three constables for the district" (Barnable 6).

¹⁹ McCarthy (1999) states that the first documented reference to an Irish settler in Newfoundland was to a "Mr. Russell, who was reported living in St. Mary's," (3) in 1662. He also states that, "in 1675 it was reported that there were Irish settlers living at Ireland's Eye, Trinity Bay" (3).

²⁰ Matthews states that many of the Irish settlers, being farmers, "knew nothing about fishing, but any hand was better than none and the fishing ships began to bring over Irishmen to work in the fishery...[the Irish] slowly learned how to fish and when prosperity returned to the fishery in 1728 were well placed to take advantage of it" (153).

²¹ "Between 1730 and 1765 the establishment of a criminal court and of customs and naval officials further raised St. John's above the other communities" (Prowse 168).

²² Further research needs to be done, but it appears that problems of self-sufficiency are specific to Placentia, or what is known historically as Great Placentia. Neighbouring communities, specifically Little Placentia, or Argentia, appear to have been self-sufficient and prosperous. In part, the question of self-sufficiency seems to derive from the fact that Placentia has never been a "fishing" community, rather, it appears to have been a "merchant" community where the products of fishermen were purchased and processed, as well as offering essential services: legal, religious, and transportation.

²³ Mannion describes the wood cutting operation as follows: "Winter was spent cutting timber and hauling it from the woods. Early each December Saunders and Sweetman dispatched crews of around a dozen men in shallops and schooners across the bay to Mortier or to the densely forested river system in Bay D'Espoir, 200 kilometres to the west. Some of these crews were employed by the company, others worked on contract on their own account but were usually given winter provisions by the firm" (1986:159).

²⁴ Although the removal of the garrison had little impact on the community, the military presence did have an important social and political function: "the military at Placentia, the strong arm of colonial authority, bolstered mercantile control and ensured total loyalty. It not only protected a merchant fishery but was a source of lucrative contracts to merchant houses, particularly in wartime" (Mannion 1986:183).

²⁵ Mannion (1986) states, "Almost all wage contracts were for the summer season only, but some of these men were taken on as winter dieters and were given clothes, provisions, and accommodations, but no wages. All were Irish and only a few could sign their names" (169).

²⁶ Part of the reason may be that the Irish servants hired by Sweetman, who later became residents, were not fishermen (see footnote 7). They were hired to work as shoreworkers and farmers and unable to adapt to the life of a fisherman after the closing of the Sweetmans firm.

²⁷ Prowse states that, "the prejudice against the merchants, however reasonable in olden times, should not exist now; employers and employed are mutually dependent on each other. We have seen the effect of the withdrawal of large mercantile houses from the outports. No one has filled their places; their beneficial influence in giving labour and employment to the people has been entirely lost" (530). Matthews expresses a similar indebtedness with regard to merchants from the west of England: "Those merchants may be liked or loathed, but the fishery and settlement of Newfoundland could never have occurred without them" (54).

²⁸ *The Newfoundland Guide Book*, published in 1905, notes Placentia as a regional point of exchange for mail; "mails are exchanged between all places in Newfoundland at least once each week, to the principal places daily, and tri-weekly connection with steamers for the different bays being made as follows:...Placentia Bay - from Placentia and St. John's" (131).

²⁹ Prowse's, *The Newfoundland Guide Book*, published in 1905, noted telegraph offices as one of the amenities available in Placentia. They enabled tourists, and others, to not only send messages but also to send and receive money orders (132).

³⁰ In 1905 the schedule for the *S. S. Argyle* travelling within Placentia bay was as follows: "leaves Placentia every Monday and Tuesday; due back Tuesday and Saturday." The *S. S. Glencoe* travelled "between Port-Aux-Basques, leaves Placentia every Wednesday afternoon, and Port-Aux-Basques every Sunday; due back at Placentia Friday evening and Port-Aux-Basques on Tuesday" (Prowse 1905:126-127).

³¹ Argentia, originally known as Little Placentia, has a history as long and colourful as Placentia's. The history of the relationship between the two communities will not be discussed in this thesis. Argentia's history is a fascinating subject worthy of in-depth study to compliment the work already done by Eileen Houlihan. The impact of any project on a small community cannot be underestimated. "The extension of the railway to Argentia was a considerable boost to the economy of the community...In addition to the construction of the line itself, there was employment for several longshoremen who transferred the freight from the train to the two coastal boats...the Railway station itself gave employment to a number of people [station agent, assistant, customs collection, tidewater]...as well several Argentia men secured positions on the train and on the coastal boats, while some crew members from outside the community rented houses and took up residence in Argentia" (Houlihan 9-10).

³² Debates about the impact, both pro and con, of confederation are still raging and there remains an ambivalence in many Newfoundlanders toward the presence of the American military. The issues raised are far from resolved and will not be discussed in this thesis, except to say that the generation directly affected by the building of the base at Argentia is aging. Based on my fieldwork in the area I feel there is not only a fascinating story to be told, but also that many residents are at a point where they would like to talk about their experiences.

³³ The ballad is reprinted in "Home of Wooden Boats and Iron Men" (pages 28-29) and in Houlihan's book "Uprooted: The Argentia Story" (pages 12-13).

³⁴ The Pyramid Homes Company was manufacturing mobile and sectional homes in Argentia.

³⁵ The first National Historic Site was Signal Hill in St. John's.

³⁶ ERCO Industries began producing elemental phosphorous at Long Harbour in 1968. They supplied up to 52,000 tonnes a year to markets in Canada, England, and the United States.

³⁷ In chapter 3, Placentia's history was described as being two-fold: "...the Past in Placentia is 'Personal,' meaning based on the experience of living in the community, and 'Mythic,' meaning it deals with events beyond personal experience. The myth of Placentia as the 'ancient French capital' is considered to be the 'Public' version of the community's past."

³⁸ Philip Bohlman applies the idea of a social aesthetic to the presentation of musical canons, what he describes as "those repertoires and forms of musical behaviour constantly shaped by a community to express its cultural particularity and the characteristics that distinguish it as a social

entity." Folk music canons form "as a result of the cultural choices of a community or group. These choices communicate the group's aesthetic decisions" which are themselves a result of "a community's transformation of cultural values into aesthetic expression." According to Bohlman there are an unlimited number of aesthetic expressions in any given society at any given time. Canons, or expressions of a specific group's aesthetic, emerge for reasons relevant to the needs of the group.

³⁹ In the summer of 2002, Placentia did not have a very extensive heritage program. Much of the heritage interpretation in the town has occurred as a result of Federal and Provincial initiatives. Some businesses have attempted to capitalize on heritage themes but it appears to have never been fully developed.

⁴⁰ In the chapter 4 it was noted that, among Placentia's amenities, the town was also a terminal for ferry service into the bay as well as to Port-Aux-Basque, had regular mail service, and a telegraph.

⁴¹ Lin Jackson's article is an interesting tirade against the commodification of Newfoundland culture starting in the 1960s. "How should we respond to the current rage among bureaucrats, social scientists, the media and the general public for the 'preservation of cultural identities'...what does the current rash of culture-worship mean, and why should we in Newfoundland be more than a little suspicious of it?" I would suggest that the 1960s "popular and fadist enthusiasm for culture and cultural preservation [that leads] not to the survival of living cultures, but their more rapid decay" under the misguided hands of "culture-dilettantes whose real spirit is that of the mass society" is a similar phenomenon, though possibly less parasitic, to the attempts at preservation enacted by the upper classes in St. John's in the early twentieth century.

⁴² Included among them are M. F. Howley's Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland, 1888; D. W. Prowse's A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial and Foreign Records, 1895; and James P. Howley's The Beothuk or Red Indians: the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Newfoundland, 1915.

⁴³ As pointed out in these two articles, since the advent of tourism in Newfoundland, Placentia has been a high-potential community and has since received both Federal and Provincial support in promoting its cultural and natural tourist attractions. The enigma is that the town has not been able to capitalize on its resources to the degree that most observers feel is possible.

⁴⁴ See chapter 4 of this thesis

⁴⁵ The Communion Plate was presented by Prince William Henry to St. Luke's Church in 1787. The plate had been in the possession of the Bradshaw family, in Placentia, for many years, but is now in the possession of the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in St. John's.

⁴⁶ There are several standard stories told about William Henry's time spent in Placentia. Most of these are recounted by Prowse (1895: 365-67), and repeated in innumerable publications since including; O'Reilly (1906), LeMessurier (1910), McCarthy (1973, 1999). The Prince William Henry stories I heard were variations or vague references to these printed versions. For example,

Bill Hogan's version of the story is as follows: "Prince William was supposed to have, you know, impregnated a dozen women around, where's all his children to, you know? It's some fascinating. I think it is anyway" (Hogan. Interview).

⁴⁷ The page's contents are separate notations, listed as follows: "The 'Swans' was the name of Grandfather Fitzpatrick's home. We still have a deed covering his grandfather's land where his home was located. His name was Thomas Whelan;" "George Le Blanc and son George, old family French. Had Royal Grant for tremendous amount of land. Capt Fitzpatrick married Mary LeBlanc, but the name had become Blanche – still member of family in Placentia 8th generation. Your great grandmother was Mary Blanche. Thomas Whelan was your great-great-great grandfather. Grandpa Murphy's mother's people were 'Walsh' and had the first business in Argentia after French departed. Walsh came from St. Malo France, where his grandfather had taken refuge from [Ireland?]. He spoke only French;" "...Dallion or Vallian, one who became a British subject;" "...sed to have had a child for William IV – Hence the royal blood."

⁴⁸ The page is taken from L. E. F. English's, *The Story of Placentia: Three Centuries...Two Flags*, published in 1962.

⁴⁹ The original church was constructed in 1789 and demolished in 1905. A second church was completed in 1908, was renovated in the 1950s, and was recently registered with the provincial Heritage Foundation as a heritage structure. The church graveyard has been given a Borden number and is protected from development as part of the national registry of archaeological sites.

⁵⁰ Because there were no legal regulations for the preservation of artifacts or institutions mandated to collect artifacts, historic artifacts were generally curated by individuals, in their homes. For example the Communion Service had been in the possession of the Bradshaw family for many years and the bailiff's tip staff was recovered from a government office where it was being used as a coat rack. For background on the development of museums and heritage legislation in Newfoundland see Carroll 2002.

⁵¹ Joseph Smallwood's *Book of Newfoundland*, published between 1937 and 1975, is an example of the kind of synthesis and information collection projects undertaken to promote Newfoundland identity at this time.

⁵² Wheeler states, "The immediate post-war period was one of much uncertainty for those interested in tourist development. The cautious austerity programmes of the Commission of Government did not provide the finances necessary for the Tourist Board's ambitious plans for development and promotion. As a result, few one-range projects were undertaken. Soon after Confederation with Canada in 1949 the new provincial Government embarked upon an aggressive programme of economic development. The building up of a tourist industry was given major importance and the Newfoundland Tourist Development office was established as a division of the new Department of Economic Development" (578).

⁵³ Louisbourg National Historic Site in Louisbourg, Nova Scotia is an example of a National Historic Site reconstructed as a means of sustaining the local economy. According to A.J.B. Johnson, "for a quarter of a century the commemoration of Louisbourg stood relatively still. Then in 1960-61 there was a leap of unprecedented proportions, one that completely transformed the

historic site. The transformation began when a royal commission on the Canadian coal industry urged that the Federal government undertake a 'symbolic reconstruction' of the French fortified town that had vanished two centuries earlier. The reasoning went something like this: Cape Breton Island has an unemployment problem. Yet the place has scenic beauty and a colourful history. Tourists like scenery and historic sites and spend money travelling to see them. If one could attract enough tourists, there would be a hospitality industry; people would have jobs. But you need something substantial to draw people and their wallets. Louisbourg could be the answer. If you reconstructed something like a Canadian Williamsburg then you would have a tourist magnet. People would be put to work during the building phase; others would have jobs when the project was completed. The direct and ripple effects in the Cape Breton economy would be substantial. And so it came to be. About one-fifth of the original French walled town was rebuilt; about fifty buildings and over a kilometre of fortifications. Thanks to a substantial budget for research, reconstruction, refurbishing and costuming, an impressive section of the mid-eighteenth-century ville fortifiée was re-created" (8). (Johnston, A. J. B. "Past/Present/Future: Marking Louisburg." *Material History Review* 50 (Fall 1999): 3-10.)

⁵⁴ Letter to the Honourable J. R. Smallwood, Premier of Newfoundland, St. John's from C. E. A. Jeffery, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada dated St. John's, November 12, 1952. Smallwood Collection, 075, 3.02.03 Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archive, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

⁵⁵ Letter from Arthur Laing, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to The Honourable J.R. Smallwood, Premier of Newfoundland, September 5, 1967. Smallwood Collection, 075, 3.02.005 Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archive, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

⁵⁶ Document entitled The Proposed Visit to Placentia was Made on November 24th, 1960, signed by A. E. Hunter. Smallwood Collection, 075, 3.02.023 Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archive, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

⁵⁷ From Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, Wednesday June 22, 1966. Smallwood Collection, 075, 3.02.023 Newfoundland Historical Society. Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archive, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

⁵⁸ From Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, August 17, 1966. Smallwood Collection, 075, 3.02.023 Newfoundland Historical Society. Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archive, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

⁵⁹ The following letter by James E. Wyse (July 17, 1972) was sent to the Placentia Town Council: "In our work, regarding archaeological investigations of historic sites in the Placentia area, we recently surveyed two sites of historic value in the area between Gallon's Point and the Blockhouse. The specific site being the 'Letter Rock' and a former English Gun Battery located about Gallons Point. In the course of our inquiries, regarding the mentioned sites, we have learned that the town council plans on relocating the municipal dump in that area which approximates or actually encompasses these very sites. As we know, you are fully aware the economic situation in this area is such that great value must be placed on any remnants of our town's historic past which could be used to promote future development. With this in mind, we

hope that consideration will be given to the preservation of the previously mentioned sites by a possible further relocation of the planned municipal dump." The Town Council responded, "Your letter regarding the recently surveyed two sites of historical value in the area between Gallant's Point and Blockhouse was discussed at the Council Meeting...and Council feels that the proposed location of the new dump site will not interfere with the future development of these sites." Copies of both documents are available in Jersey/Placentia Archaeological Society. I questioned residents about the location of the Letter Rock site during my fieldwork in the summer of 2002. According to the people I spoke with, the Letter Rock site was destroyed during the course of road construction for the Municipal dump noted in the Town Council's letter of July 25, 1972. The dump and the road leading to it also impacted on the future interpretive potential of an historic trail running between Placentia and Point Verde.

⁶⁰ The Letter Rock and Blockhouse sites appear to have been irreparably damaged by road development. Point Verde, Fort Louis, Gallon's Point were revisited as part of an extensive archaeological project in the summer of 2002. Remains of Fort Frederick were uncovered during the construction of a water line in August, 2002 (Linda Browne, *The Charter*, August 19, 2002: 5). Rather than relocate the line, the town elected to impact on the Fort's remains (Ken Flynn, personal communication).

⁶¹ With regard to the buildings highlighted in Mitchell's walking tour, in the spring of 2003: the Presentation Convent was registered as a heritage structure with the provincial Heritage Foundation although the restoration project had been halted for several years; the Croucher/Bonier House, greatly deteriorated, was demolished in December 2006; St. Luke's Church was recently registered as a heritage structure with the provincial Heritage Foundation; the buried remains of Fort Frederick received a minor impact during the laying of a water pipe in the summer of 2002 when the town refused to re-route the line around one of the walls; urban development and the construction of a boardwalk have altered the historic aesthetic of the Great Beach; and, as noted in the report, the Verran House was demolished in the early twentieth century; the lot still stands empty. Of the houses highlighted, the home of Magistrate O'Reilly is registered with the Heritage Foundation and is maintained by the Placentia Area Historical Society, the Court House is a functioning municipal structure, and Randell Verran's house was restored privately by Rita Power, a resident of Placentia who now operates a heritage-oriented bed and breakfast in the house (the business was sold by Mrs. Power in the summer of 2005. It is still being operated as a heritage B & B.)

⁶² To this end, the stated overall goals of the plan were: i) to conserve and develop the traditional architecture and historic townscape of Placentia for future generations, ii) to enhance the quality of life of the residents of the town by creating a stimulating environment, iii) to support the revitalization of the town's economy through business start-ups and reinvestment in existing businesses, iv) to enhance the heritage tourism product of the town, its region and the province, v) to generate social and economic benefits for Placentia and its region. (Hogan 2)

⁶³ Both terms are akin to what is being referred to in this thesis as a heritage landscape.

⁶⁴ It has already been noted that the ruins on Castle Hill have had a long term impact on Placentia's heritage focus. It was not until Mitchell's work in 1986 that heritage resources within the town received extensive attention.

⁶⁵ Because this is a draft document, some of the wording may be changed in the final copy. It is expected, all the same, that the commemorative intent will be the same.

⁶⁶ The submission did not pass the HSMBC's review because what was left of the historic landscape was not considered to be substantial and unique enough to be of national historic significance.

⁶⁷ The Townscaping proposal is the most ambitious attempt to date to produce a heritage landscape interpreting the extensive depth of the town's history. It failed to incorporate most events ranging from the late eighteenth century to the present except for noting the variety and typology of architectural styles. The main reason for this gap in interpretation might be the lack of available historic information.

⁶⁸ A further example of this is that many residents have expressed their interest to have the physical remains left uncovered following the excavations. Exposed, the remains provide a much more attractive site for tourism, but it is interesting to consider that some residents also want the "truth" of the remains to continue to be a part of the physical landscape.

⁶⁹ Prior to my arriving in Placentia, Ken Flynn had informed me that Gerry Griffiths "had a song" about Prince William, one of the historic personages associated with the British occupation of Placentia. When I later asked Gerry about the song, he said he had read it in a kid's book in the library. There is a brief discussion of Prince William stories in chapter 5 of this thesis.

⁷⁰ Issues related to the non-residence status of the informants are discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis.

⁷¹ See chapter 5 of this thesis.

⁷² I overheard someone mention in a conversation one time that many of the original place names in Placentia had "died-out" in the 1950's and were replaced by "Bay" names. It is not clear whether this meant that the names of places in the Bay had been literally transferred to Placentia's landscape, or if new names had been given to Placentia landmarks from people resettled from the Bay. In either case, it suggests a dramatic shift had occurred in Placentia's cultural landscape.

⁷³ There are old headstones beneath the floor of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, but the dates and identity of them is not common knowledge around town. Their existence is spoken of with uncertainty by most residents, which suggests that very few people have actually seen them.

⁷⁴ There may be numerous reasons for this noted difference between communities including the methodology used for this research. It was also repeatedly noted that many of the "oldtimers" in Placentia had passed away and their stories with them and, as was mentioned previously in this chapter, that many of the current residents arrived in Placentia starting in the mid-twentieth century bringing their own narrative traditions with them. It should also be noted that Argentina

and Placentia have very different histories and this may account for the two communities having equally distinct historical traditions.

⁷⁵ The plays performed by Placentia Area Theatre D'Heritage include: *Faces of Fort Royal* (French history); *Born with a Call* (Resettlement of Placentia Bay); *Glimpses of our Past: Order in the Court* (Prince William Henry), *The Basque in Placentia*, *Dirty Laundry* (Irish comedy); and a dinner theatre piece on the United States Naval Base at Argentina.

⁷⁶ See Jim Traverse's 1975 interview with Randell Verran on file at the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archives (MUNFLA – 75-59).

⁷⁷ History is dualistic in that it is both a broad chronology of events and it is a selective recounting of personal experiences. Henry Glassie says history has two tasks, "studies the things of the present - documents, broken crockery, elicited memories - in order to speak about past culture. Another studies the ways people construct understandings of the past in order to speak about culture in the present" (1994: 961). Carl Becker states there are "two histories: the actual series of events that once occurred; and the ideal series that we affirm and hold in memory" (1969: 6). Gerald Pocius describes history as "an academic chronology that deals with the general past" to distinguish it from the past, a collection of narratives "filled...with specific deeds and pervasive attitudes, all connected to particular locations" (2000:34).

⁷⁸ This motif was also present in my discussion with Gerald O'Reilly (see chapter 3: Introduction) with regard to his family origins. I believe this is a pretty common 'origins' story, especially along the Cape Shore where many Irish arrived at a time when Ireland was historically at conflict with England.

INTERVIEWS

Recorded interviews were conducted with the following individuals. Transcripts and copies of the interviews are held in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archives as per the consent of the interviewees. They have not yet been assigned catalogue numbers.

Abbott, Tony. Interview by Patrick Carroll, August 26, 2002. Interview at the site of the Fort St. Louis archaeological excavation.

Bambrick, Cyril. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 20, 2002. Interview at Castle Hill National Historic Site of Canada.

Bruce, John. Interview by Patrick Carroll, August 20, 2002. Interview at the site of the Fort St. Louis archaeological excavation.

Connors, Rachelle. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 22, 2002. Interview at Castle Hill National Historic Site of Canada.

Counsel, Mary Ann. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 20, 2002. Interview at the Community Care Hospital, Placentia.

Griffin, Helen. Interview by Patrick Carroll, August 21, 2002. Interview at the temporary office for the Placentia Area D'heritage Theatre, Freshwater.

Griffiths, Gerald (Gerry) V. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 22, 2002. Interview at Mr. Griffiths' home, Placentia.

Hickey, Aaron. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 19, 2002. Interview at the O'Reilly House Museum, Placentia.

Hogan, William P. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 26, 2002. Interview at the Northeast Arm Hotel, Dunville.

Kelly, Margaret M. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 19, 2002. Interview at the Harold Hotel, Placentia.

MacGillivray, Megan. Interview by Patrick Carroll, August 21, 2002. Interview at the site of the Fort St. Louis archaeological excavation.

McCrowe, Kristen. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 19, 2002. Interview at the O'Reilly House Museum, Placentia.

O'Keefe, Arthur J. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 20/21, 2002. Interview at the Placentia Public Library.

O'Keefe, Thomas V. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 22, 2002. Interview at Mr. O'Keefe's home, Dunville.

O'Reilly, Gerard. Interview by Patrick Carroll, August 23, 2002. Interview at the Archaeology Lab, Placentia.

O'Reilly, Gerald (Pearly). Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 15, 2002. Interview at the College of the North Atlantic, Placentia campus.

O'Shea, Bill. Telephone Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 10, 2003.

Power, Rita. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 25, 2002. Interview at The Rosedale Bed and Breakfast, Placentia.

Whelan, Fred A. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 14, 2002. Interview at the Town Council offices, Placentia.

UNRECORDED INTERVIEWS were conducted with the following individuals:

Barnable, Hon. Gerald. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 13, 2002. Interview held at Placentia Courthouse.

Collins, Brendan. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 14, 2002. Interview at Mr. Collins' home, Placentia.

Green, Dr. Daniel. Interview by Patrick Carroll, June 23, 2002. Interview at Mr. Green's home, Placentia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, Barbara and William Lynwood Montell. From Memory to History: Using Oral Sources in Local Historical Research. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1981.

Argentia Area Chamber of Commerce. Investors Guide. St. John's: Robinson Blackmore, 1999.

Barber, Katherine. The Oxford Canadian Dictionary. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Barnable, Hon. Gerald. Under the Clock: A Legal History of the 'Ancient Capital'. Placentia: Heritage Advisory Committee of the Town Council, 2002.

Bascom, William. "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives." Contributions to Folkloristics. Ed. William Bascom. Meerut: Folklore Institute, 1981: 95-123.

-
- Becker, Carl L. "Detachment and the Writing of History." Detachment and the Writing of History: Essays and Letters of Carl L. Becker. Ed. Phil L. Snyder. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1958: 3-28.
- . "Everyman His Own Historian." The Historian as Detective: Essays on Evidence. Ed. Robin Winks. New York: Harper and Row, 1969: 3-23.
- Bohlman, Philip. "Folk Music and Canon Formation: The Creative Dialectic between Text and Context." The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988: 104-20.
- Bringhurst, Robert. A Story as Sharp as a Knife: The Classical Haida Mythtellers and Their World. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2002.
- Brown, Howard Cecil. The Impact of Modernization on a Traditional Regional System: The Case of Inner Placentia Bay, Newfoundland 1911-1966. Masters thesis. Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1985.
- Carr, David. "Phenomenology and Philosophy of History." Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy. Ed. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, Lester Embree, Jitendranath Mohanty. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992: 103-12.
- Carroll, Patrick. Folklore, Ethnology, Aboriginal Representation, and Cultural Diversity: A Survey of the Ethnology Collection of the Newfoundland Museum. St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archives, Department of Folklore, 2002.
- . "Folklore and Ethnology: A Canadian Context." Culture & Tradition 24/25 (2002-2003): 89-99.
- Childe, V. Gordon. Man Makes Himself. New York: New American Library of World Literature, 1951.
- Crompton, Amanda. The Placentia Archaeology Project, 2001: Interim Report. St. John's: Provincial Archaeology Office, Cultural Heritage Division: Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, 2002.
- Cruikshank, Julie. The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.
- Cruikshank, Julie. "Oral Tradition and Oral History: Reviewing Some Issues." Canadian Historical Review LXXV.3 (1994): 403-18.
- Dundes, Alan. "Who Are The Folk?" Interpreting Folklore. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980: 1-19.

-
- . "Defining Identity Through Folklore." Identity: Personal and Socio-Cultural. Ed. Anita Jacobson-Wedding. Upsalla: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1983: 235-261.
- Dunville Branch of Women's Institutes of Newfoundland and Labrador. Home of Wooden Boats and Iron Men: A Local History of Dunville, Argentia and Fox Harbour (Including Ancient Placentia). Dunville: Dunville Branch of the Women's Institutes of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1970.
- "Eastern Placentia Bay." Decks Awash 1977.
- English, L.E.F. The Story of Placentia: Three Centuries...Two Flags. St. John's: Guardian, 1962.
- Eriksen, Anne. "'Like Before, Just Different': Modern Popular Understandings of the Concept of Tradition." Arv 50 (1994): 9-23.
- Gaulton, Barry and Matthew Carter. Placentia Archaeological Survey, 1996. St. John's: Provincial Archaeology Office, Cultural Heritage Division: Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, 1997.
- Glassie, Henry. "The Practice and Purpose of History." Journal of American History 81.3 (1994): 961-68.
- . Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History in an Ulster Community. Publications of the American Folklore Society. Ed. Marta Weigle. Vol. 4. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982.
- . Material Culture. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.
- . The Stars of Ballymenone. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.
- Gruffudd, Pyrs. "Heritage as National Identity: Histories and Prospects of the National Pasts." Heritage, Tourism and Society. Ed. David T. Herbert. London: Mansell Publishing, 1995: 49-67.
- Harrison, S.B. "Near the Walls of Fort Louis." Newfoundland Quarterly 1908 (December): 23-24.
- Head, C. Grant. Eighteenth Century Newfoundland: A Geographer's Perspective. Carleton Library. Vol. 99. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976.
- Herbert, David T. "Heritage Places, Leisure and Tourism." Heritage, Tourism and Society. Ed. David T. Herbert. London: Mansell Publishing, 1995a:1-20.

---. "Conclusions." Heritage, Tourism and Society. Ed. David T. Herbert. London: Mansell Publishing, 1995b:212-20.

"Historic Houses of Placentia." Decks Awash 1977: 28-30.

Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Placentia, Newfoundland. Agenda Paper 045, Ottawa: Parks Canada, Environment Canada, 1962.

Hogan, William P. Placentia: Townscape Development and Cultural Heritage District Master Plan. A Report on the Feasibility and Desirability of Establishing a Townscape Development and Cultural Heritage District in Placentia, Newfoundland. St. John's, Newfoundland: NEWLAB Engineering Limited and Frederick Hann Associates Ltd., 2001.

---. The Town of Placentia/La Ville De Plaisance: Application for Designation, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Personal files. Incomplete document.

Hosbawn, Eric and Terence Ranger. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Houlihan, Eileen. Uprooted! The Argentia Story. St. John's: Creative Publishers, 1992.

Howley, J.P. The Beothuks, or Red Indians: The Aboriginal Inhabitants of Newfoundland. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915.

Howley, M.F. The Old Basque Tombstones at Placentia. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada, 1902.

---. The Old Royal Coat of Arms at Placentia. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada, 1910.

---. Svigaraicipi: A Hero of Old French Placentia. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada, 1912.

Humphreys, John. Plaisance: Problems of Settlement at This Newfoundland Outpost of New France 1660-1690. Publications in History. Vol. 3. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1970.

Ives, Edward D. The Tape-Recorded Interview: A Manual for Field Workers in Folklore and Oral History. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1980.

---. An Oral Historian's Work with Dr. Edward Ives [videorecording.] Orono: Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History, 1987.

---. George Magoon and the Down East Game War. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

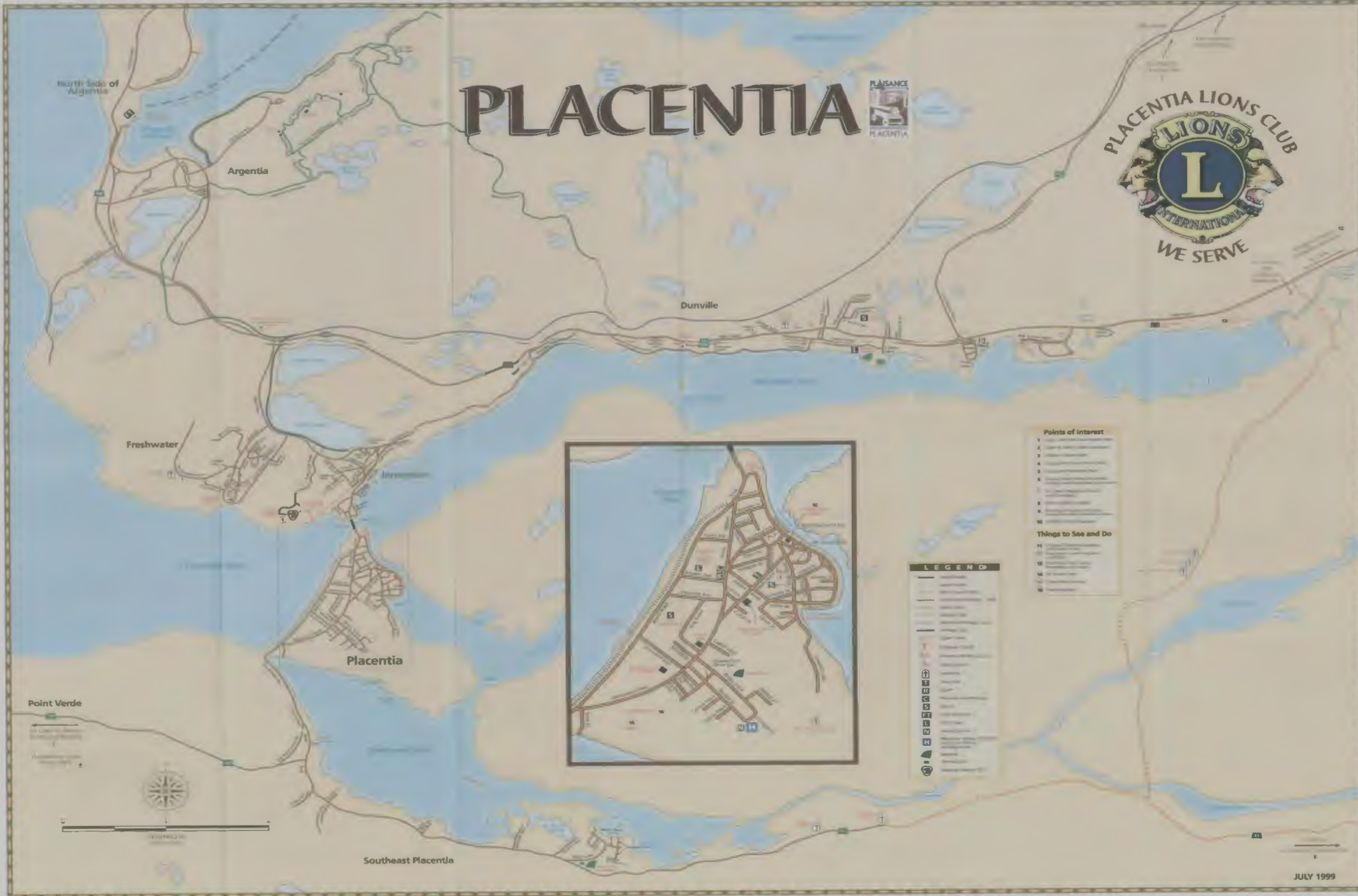
-
- . "Oral and Written Tradition: A Micro-View from Miramichi." The World Observed: Reflections on the Fieldwork Process. Ed. Bruce Jackson and Edward D. Ives. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996: 159-170.
- Jackson, John Brinckerhoff. The Necessity for Ruins and Other Topics. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980.
- Jackson, Lin. "Local Communities and the Culture-Vultures." Newfoundland Quarterly 1986 (Winter): 7-10.
- Jerseyside/Placentia Archaeological Society. Synopsis of the Jerseyside—Placentia Archaeological Project Activities Throughout the Summer of 1972. Placentia: Manuscript on file with the Placentia Area Historical Society, 1972.
- Johnston, A.J.B. "Past/Present/Future: Marking Louisburg." Material History Review 50 (1999 Fall): 3-10.
- LeMessurier, H.W. A Lecture on Placentia. Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1910.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. Myth and Meaning. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978.
- Lowenthal, David. The Past Is a Foreign Country. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Mannion, John. "Irish Merchants Abroad: The Newfoundland Experience, 1750-1850." Newfoundland Studies 2.2 (1986): 127-90.
- . "A Transatlantic Merchant Fishery: Richard Welsh of New Ross and the Sweetmans of Newbawn in Newfoundland 1734-1862." Wexford: History and Society. Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County. Ed. Kevin Whelan. Dublin: Geography Publications, 1987: 373—421.
- . "Sweetman, Pierce." Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Vol. 7, 1836-1850. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.
- Matthews, Keith. Lectures on the History of Newfoundland: 1500-1830. Newfoundland History Series. St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1988.
- Maunder, John E. The Newfoundland Museum: Origins and Development. Web page. The Newfoundland Museum. Available: <http://nfmuseum.com/notes2.htm>.
- McCarthy, Michael. A History of Plaisance and Placentia 1501-1970. Centre for Newfoundland Studies, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1973.

-
- . The Irish in Newfoundland: 1600-1900. Their Trials, Tribulations and Triumphs. St. John's: Creative Publishers, 1999.
- . A History of Plaisance and Placentia 1501-1970. Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland. No date.
- Mitchell, Elaine. Placentia: Built Heritage and Forgotten Sites. St. John's: Provincial Planning Office, Department of Municipal Affairs, Provincial Government of Newfoundland, 1986.
- Morton, Bruce A. Excavations at Castle Hill, Newfoundland in 1969. Manuscript Report No. 79. Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1970.
- "Municipalities." Decks Awash 6.6 (1977).
- Munz, Peter. "The Historical Narrative." Companion to Historiography. Ed. Michael Bentley. New York: Routledge, 1997: 851-872.
- Noyes, Dorothy. "Group." Journal of American Folklore 108.430 Common Ground: Keywords for the Study of Expressive Culture, Special Issue (1995): 449-478.
- O'Reilly, John A. The Last Sentinel of Castle Hill: A Newfoundland Story. London: E. Stock, 1916.
- O'Reilly, W. F. "Historic Placentia." Newfoundland Quarterly 1906a (October): 11-13.
- . "Placentia as a Tourist Resort." Newfoundland Quarterly 1906b (October): 14-15.
- Oring, Elliott. "Folk Narratives." Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: An Introduction. Ed. Elliott Oring. Logan: Utah State University Press, 1986: 121-44.
- Overton, James. Making A World of Difference: Essays on Tourism, Culture and Development in Newfoundland. Social and Economic Studies no. 56, St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1996.
- Parks Canada. Castle Hill National Historic Site of Canada, Commemorative Integrity Statement. Draft Document. Personal Files. 2002.
- "Placentia Area Special Issue." Decks Awash 17.3 (1988).
- "Placentia as a Tourist Resort." Newfoundland Quarterly 1906 (October): 14-15.

-
- Pocius, Gerald L. "Tourists, Health Seekers and Sportsmen: Luring Americans to Newfoundland in the Early Twentieth Century." Twentieth-Century Newfoundland: Explorations. Ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary. St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1994.
- . "Art." Journal of American Folklore 108.430 Common Ground: Keywords for the Study of Expressive Culture, Special Issue (1995): 413-31.
- . A Place to Belong: Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000.
- Proulx, Jean-Pierre. The Military History of Placentia: A Study of the French Fortifications. History and Archaeology 26. Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, 1979a.
- . Placentia 1713-1811. History and Archaeology 26. Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, 1979b.
- Prowse, D.W. A History of Newfoundland. (1895) St. Philips: Boulder Publishing, 2002.
- , ed. The Newfoundland Guide Book. London: Bradbury, Agnew, 1905.
- Ridington, Robin. Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community. Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1988.
- Rowe, Frederick W. A History of Newfoundland and Labrador. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980.
- Samuel, Raphael. Theatres of Memory. Volume 1: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture. London: Verso, 1994.
- Samuel, Raphael and Paul Thompson. The Myths We Live By. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Schouten, Frans F.J. "Heritage as Historical Reality." Heritage, Tourism and Society. Ed. David T. Herbert. London: Mansell Publishing, 1995.
- Shortis, H.F. "The Tourist Traffic." The Newfoundland Quarterly 1910 (December): 10-12.
- Sinari, Ramakant. "The World as the Ontological Project of Man." Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy. Ed. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, Lester Embree, Jitendranath Mohanty. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992: 198—206.
- Smallwood, J. R. ed. The Book of Newfoundland Volumes 1-6. St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1937-1975.

-
- Vansina, Jan. Oral Tradition as History. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
- . Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology. Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1965.
- Verran, Randell. Interview by Jim Traverse, 1975. MUNFLA 75-59. Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archives, St. John's, Newfoundland.
- Wheeler, Douglas J. "The Boom in Tourism." The Book of Newfoundland. Ed. Joseph Smallwood. St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1967.
- Wilson, William A. "Folklore and History: Fact Amid the Legends." Readings in American Folklore. Ed. Jan Harold Brunvand. New York: W.W. Norton, 1979: 449-66.
- . "The Deeper Necessity: Folklore and the Humanities." Journal of American Folklore 101 (1988): 156-67.
- Winter, Kathleen M. "Placentia." Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador. Ed. Cyril F. Poole. Vol. 4. St. John's: Harry Cuff 1993.
- Wood, Patricia. "The Historic Site as Cultural Text: A Geography of Heritage in Calgary, Alberta." Material History Review 52 (2000 Fall): 33-43.
- Wright, Ronald. A Short History of Progress. CBC Massey Lecture Series. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2004.

PLACENTIA



Points of Interest

1. Placentia City Center
2. Placentia City Hall
3. Placentia City Library
4. Placentia City Museum
5. Placentia City Park
6. Placentia City Golf Course
7. Placentia City Beach
8. Placentia City Marina
9. Placentia City Pier
10. Placentia City Harbor

Things to See and Do

11. Placentia City Museum
12. Placentia City Library
13. Placentia City Park
14. Placentia City Golf Course
15. Placentia City Beach
16. Placentia City Marina
17. Placentia City Pier
18. Placentia City Harbor

LEGEND

- 1. Placentia City Center
- 2. Placentia City Hall
- 3. Placentia City Library
- 4. Placentia City Museum
- 5. Placentia City Park
- 6. Placentia City Golf Course
- 7. Placentia City Beach
- 8. Placentia City Marina
- 9. Placentia City Pier
- 10. Placentia City Harbor
- 11. Placentia City Museum
- 12. Placentia City Library
- 13. Placentia City Park
- 14. Placentia City Golf Course
- 15. Placentia City Beach
- 16. Placentia City Marina
- 17. Placentia City Pier
- 18. Placentia City Harbor



