

# Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

## News and updates on Newfoundland and Labrador's Intangible Cultural Heritage Program

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### In this issue

Page 1	UNESCO ICH in NL
Page 2	Technical Workshops
Page 3	Branching Out
Page 5	Poetry & Storytelling
Page 6	Labrador Snowshoes
Page 7	Spatial Knowledge

### UNESCO ICH Chief to visit St. John's

This coming May, the Canadian Museums Association annual conference will be held in St. John's Newfoundland. One of the themes of the conference is Intangible Cultural Heritage. We are delighted to announce that Cécile Duvelle, Chief of the Section of Intangible Heritage of UNESCO and Secretary of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage will be the keynote speaker for an ICH panel discussion. Ms Duvelle will speak Wednesday, May 12 at 9:00 am at the Sheraton Hotel Newfoundland.

Moderator for the panel is David Walden, with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

This round table discussion will address some of the steps which are being taken nationally and internationally to safeguard ICH, and will pose some suggestions for future work. Responding to Ms Duvelle's comments will be Richard Kurin, Smithsonian Institution; Richard MacKinnon, Cape Breton University; Gerald Pocius, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Laurier Turgeon, Laval University.

Cécile Duvelle was trained in cultural anthropology at the University Paris V – René Descartes. She worked during her studies more particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, on subjects such as spontaneous housing in the Dakar suburbs and its consequences on the traditional family structures; the role of women in development in Gabon (where she stayed three years), and on an anthropological approach to alimentation. Having worked as coordinator of the Encyclopedia of African Law, a 10 volumes series reviewing the legal framework since independence of the seventeen French-speaking African countries, she joined UNESCO in 1989 and successively worked for UNESCO Publishing House and the Culture Sector. In 1999, she joined the Office of the Director-General of UNESCO, where she was responsible for culture related topics as well as speechwriting for the Director-General. In the exercise of these functions, she closely followed the elaboration and negotiation processes of several cultural normative instruments, in particular the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the 2005 Convention for the Promotion and Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. She accompanied the Director-General during his official visits to more than eighty countries.

## ICH Technical Workshop Series

This month, the ICH program introduces the first in its Technical Workshop Series, with two workshops on digital recording and presentation. The first workshop, Digital Audio Recording for Ethnography and Oral History, sold out two sessions within a few days of being announced. Both novice and experienced ethnographers and oral historians are often mystified by digital jargon and by the increasing array of options and equipment available for audio recording. Aimed at the requirements of field researchers, this workshop will provide a thorough introduction to: 1. fundamentals of digital audio 2. the selection and use of digital audio equipment for recording interviews. Attendees will have opportunities for hands-on work with recorders and microphones.



The instructor for the workshop is Andy Kolovos. Kolovos is the Archivist and a staff Folklorist at the Vermont Folklife Center in Middlebury, Vermont. He earned an MA in Folklore and an MLS, both from Indiana University. He has worked as an Instructor for the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology at Indiana University, a researcher and archivist for Traditional Arts Indiana, a fieldworker for the Polis Center at IUPUI, project assistant for the Folklore volume of the MLA International Bibliography, and the librarian and archivist of the American Society for Psychical Research. His research interests include audio field recording, audio preservation and the history and development of folklore and folklife archives. He maintains the Vermont Folklife Center's Audio Field Recording Equipment Guide, available online at:

[http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res\\_audioequip.htm](http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res_audioequip.htm)

The second workshop, later in March, is entitled "Using Google Maps for Community Folklore Projects." This workshop is designed to teach you how to use the Google Maps feature My Maps to create dynamic, interactive maps for your organization or classroom.

During the course of the afternoon you will be introduced to My Maps, and explore its use on a neighborhood, city, country, and world-wide-scale. You will learn how to add text, links, photos, and videos to placemarkers on your map, and how to share it with others.

The instructor for the Google Maps workshop Jedediah Baker, a graduate of Memorial University's Folklore Department and has worked in at City Lore in New York City, where he worked on the website City of Memory. For the past year, he has been employed as Memorial University's Intangible Cultural Heritage Intern, working with the Digital Archives Initiative.

### **Note:**

**Participants must provide their own wi-fi enabled laptop for use.**

This workshop limited to 12 attendees, and there are still spots available at the time of publication. Preregistration mandatory.

RSVP to Dale Jarvis at [ich@heritagefoundation.ca](mailto:ich@heritagefoundation.ca) or phone 709-739-1892 ext 2.

Google Maps Workshop Tuition: \$50

Date: Thursday, March 25, 2010. 9am - 4pm

The workshop will be held in St. John's.



## “BRANCHING OUT” Exhibition

*By Sandra Wheeler, Corner Brook*

The Art Room at G.C. Rowe Junior High School in Corner Brook was the scene of an exciting exhibition of Spruce Root Basketry on Thursday evening, January 28, 2010. Approximately 50 parents, relatives and friends had an opportunity to view and celebrate the high level of artistry and individuality of 18 newly-skilled artisans. They are grade eight students and the protégés of their instructor Mrs. Eileen Murphy, an accomplished Spruce Root Basketmaker. The project was conceived and produced in her Newfoundland and Labrador Crafts Class.



I had the pleasure of representing the Intangible Cultural Heritage Program of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador and to personally congratulate Mrs. Murphy and her class for preserving such an important cultural icon in this province.

While a student at Bay St. George Community College in Stephenville in 1980, Eileen Murphy had learned the skill from Anthony White (1915-1990) of Shallop Cove near the Port au Port Peninsula. “Mr. White,” she exclaimed, “revived the craft of root-woven ribbed baskets in the late 1970s, and he shared his skills with others by teaching evening classes at the College.” Based on the Mi’kmaq style of basketmaking, she explained that to make his basket framework, handle, rim, and ribs, Mr. White used branches of peeled witherod or chokecherry which he wove with spruce roots.

Mrs. Murphy’s passion for this tradition was evident in her remarks and in the photographs on display outlining the various steps of the project. “Fall is not the best time of year to collect spruce roots,” she revealed, “spring is the best time because the roots are more pliable, and the sap in the withered branches ensures easier peeling from the bark. The students started the project in September and persevered to present their baskets at the show.”

Their thoughts were expressed in the following reflections:

William Hussey: *I made it from Spruce Roots and chokecherry branches I found in the woods. I never knew nature could be so sophisticated.*

Erica Stone: *I felt happy to be one of the people to make a basket because then we can show it to other people. I had lots of fun looking for roots.*

Jared Greening: *There was always another root in my bucket when I went back. It was magic!*

Laura Allen: *Worth every moment. One of nature’s finest gifts!*

Andrea Hollett: *Making a spruce root basket was a wonderful experience, which has brought me closer to the earth.*

Blake Gillespie: *It was a wonderful experience, and it really connects us with nature.*

Stephen Power: *Nature is infinite.*





Rosemary Burton: *It is so much fun to make!*

Samantha Penney: *Spruce Root Baskets were used a lot when the natives needed baskets. These baskets are very unique, especially the way they are made.*

Joshua Shears: *It made me feel very good while searching for both the underground roots and the chokecherry branches because I got to see the forest in a different way, and even got to smell some amazing smells that I have never smelled before.*

Michael McCarthy: *It felt so good getting branches and roots, and it was so fun to get down and dirty. . . I will make another basket for my kids, and I will teach them and try and keep it going for as long as possible for my loving teacher Miss Murphy who taught the class.*



Corey Seaward: *This unique, one-of-a-kind basket connects us to our heritage. Our ancestors made this same style of basket and used it throughout their daily life.*

Jordan Joseph: *Worth every blister and headache!*

Kate Brazeau: *I was so happy to be able to work with natural resources! I am soooooo amazed by nature; I'm sooo eco-friendly!*

Dejaiah Borden: *While making my basket I felt creative.*

Mrs. Murphy has taught basketmaking to adults as well as youth. Helga Gillard, a retired teacher living in Main Brook on the Northern Peninsula, spent a weekend learning the craft from Mrs. Murphy and has gone on to participate in further workshops to produce some "magnificent baskets."

In the fall of 2009, Mrs. Murphy was able to coach Sir Wilfred Grenfell College professor Barbara Hunt in teaching this traditional practice to her visual arts students. It is obvious that Mrs. Murphy is happy to pass on her skill and knowledge of Spruce Root Basketry to whoever is interested, but she is always eager to discuss other styles:

"I was doing a

demonstration at the Discovery Centre in Gros Morne National Park in July 2003 when this friendly woman from South Dakota shared her love of basketmaking with me. She was interested in witherod, as the materials she uses are rushes, grasses and willow."

The education system in this province is fortunate to have people like Eileen Murphy who will assure the relevance and continuation of cultural traditions like Spruce Root Basketmaking by involving the youth of this province.

*Thanks to Sandra Wheeler, Eileen Murphy and the students of G.C. Rowe Junior High School for the photographs and quotes.*



### The Fiddler's Tune

*for Gar*



There's as many fiddlers as shipwrecked ghosts strung along this coastline but, you know, I picked up one of Rufus's CDs the other day. Guinchard. And it put me to thinking; maybe there aren't as many real fiddlers as I'd thought. Sure there's players, plenty enough, numerous as the day's catch of mainlanders sliding slick from the maw of the Argentia ferry. Plenty of players who'd happily strum a tune or two, hum a bar, shuffle their feet. At little charge, they'd even offer up a nod and wink. That's how they are 'down here'. But not so many fiddlers with cat gut for muscle, wide-eyed musical poets with lyrical blood running in their veins. Old Rufus, though. You don't have to be a blind man to hear he never forced a bow across a string in his life. Broke a sweat once, twice maybe while contorting his fingers into a skeleton of song, but mind, he merely witched the damned strings, readily hauled the tune like a drag line, hand over hand from the murky melody of the grey Atlantic. Like his father before him, he drew deep and set his spirit drifting.

- Patrick Carroll



## International Perspectives on the Art & Tradition of Storytelling July 2010 International Storytelling Conference, St. John's, NL

Picture it. Summer 2010. Storytellers from throughout the world will merge in one place - St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador - for the 18th annual conference of Storytellers of Canada. For five days, participants will be engaged in an international meeting place of culture, art, and tradition.

This summer's conference is brimming with opportunities for professional development. Participants will learn international perspectives about the art and tradition of storytelling. They will gain marketable skills to help them with the business side of their storytelling performances and teaching. Most importantly, they will be immersed in the story telling and story sharing of Newfoundland and Labrador.

For centuries, we've opened our doors to people from throughout the world. We've shared stories of mermaids swimming at sea, fairies hiding in woods, and mummers visiting our homes. Participants will be invited to listen to our stories and music; meet our people; explore our rocky coastline; and attend celebrations for the 400th anniversary of English settlement in Cupids, a community within an hour's drive from St. John's.

Sometimes you've got to go to the edge for a good story! Storytellers of Canada 2010 conference – a meeting place of storytellers held at the eastern edge of North America!

Wednesday, July 28 to Sunday, August 1, 2010.

**To register, visit <http://www.sc-cc.com>**



## Snowshoes Exhibit at the Labrador Interpretation Centre

For thousands of years, northern peoples across the continent have used snowshoes to navigate over the winter landscape.

“Snowshoes have been, and still are used by people in Labrador,” says Mina Campbell-Hibbs, curator at the Labrador Interpretation Centre in North West River, Labrador.

“They are important part of the heritage because they were one of the basic and significant means of transportation within Labrador -- the Innu, the trappers, the wives of trappers and many people depended on snowshoes to assist them to travel through difficult places.”

“The knowledge of making a pair of snowshoes was a test of skill and patience,” says Campbell-Hibbs. “Today, there are few who make the traditional beaver tail or bear paw wooden framed with babish filled snowshoes. Most people, today, purchase the modern types.”

Not as many people today know how to make snowshoes in the old way. “The skill of snowshoe making is fading - it is time consuming and requires patience,” says



Campbell-Hibbs. “However, some people are learning through their family and friends, some are learning through projects like the exhibit and program here at the Labrador Interpretation Centre, some projects the Innu have offered are all helping to keep the knowledge that is required, to survive today.”

The Snowshoe exhibit will be at the Labrador Interpretation Centre until March 31, 2010. On Wednesday and Sunday afternoons from 1:00pm - 4:00pm, Joe Goudie will demonstrated the art of filling a pair of snowshoes. While at the Centre, visitors can also tour the permanent exhibit.

“Everyone is welcome to drop in and watch or give it a try yourself,” Campbell-Hibbs says. “Or drop by from Wednesday through to Sunday afternoon's from 1-4pm to see the snowshoe video and/or exhibit.”

**Visit the centre online at:**

**[http://www.therooms.ca/museum/labrador\\_interpretation.asp](http://www.therooms.ca/museum/labrador_interpretation.asp)**

**For more information call Mina at 709-497-8566.**



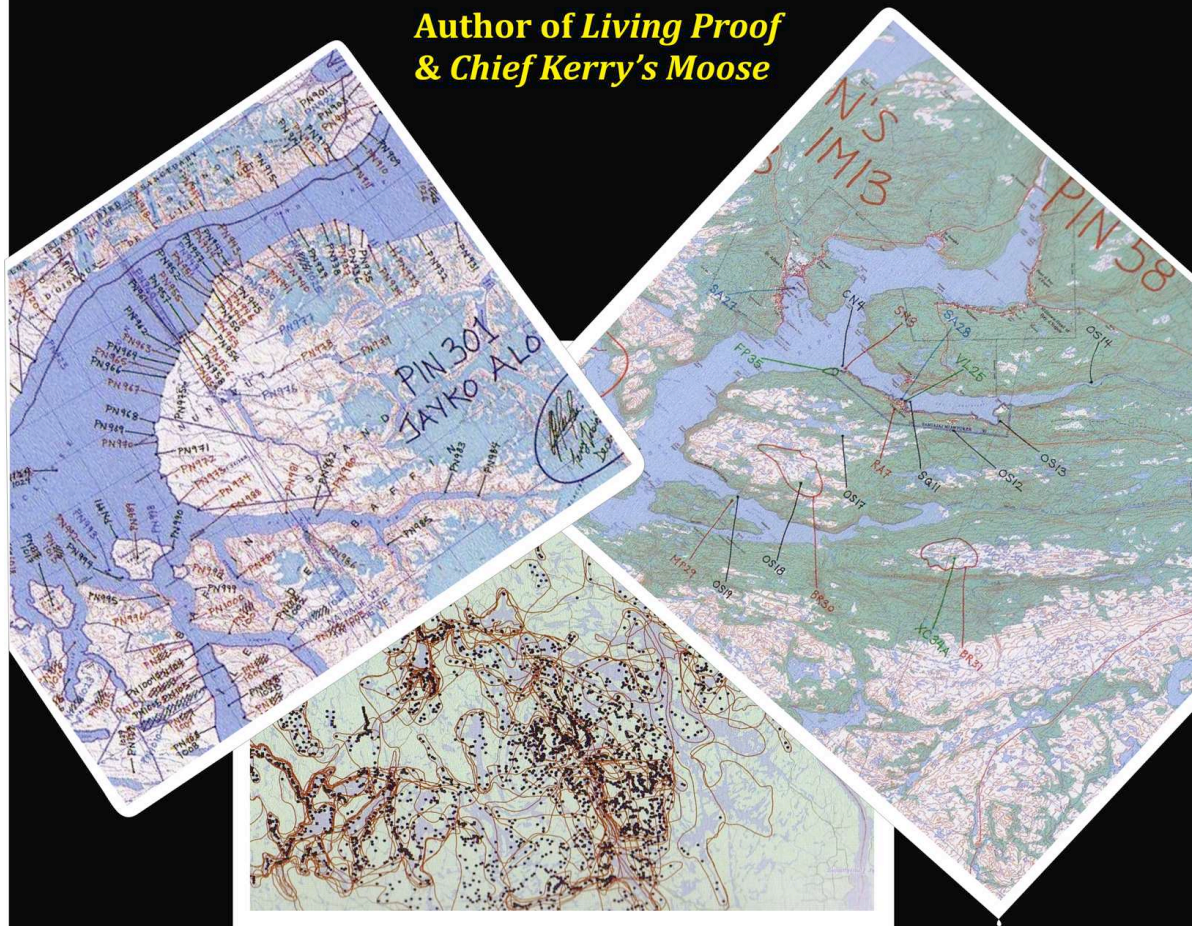
Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

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# Best Practices

For map biographies  
& the documentation of spatial knowledge  
Public lecture by Terry Tobias

*Author of Living Proof  
& Chief Kerry's Moose*



Join Terry Tobias for a stimulating introduction to the map biography method of documenting spatial knowledge. Public lecture at Memorial University, Monday evening, April 26th (lecture room tbd). For more information, contact Peter Armitage at [parmitage@nl.rogers.com](mailto:parmitage@nl.rogers.com)

Sponsored by: (in Winnipeg) Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources, Natural Resources Institute - University of Manitoba, Cultural Landscapes Laboratory & Centre for Community-based Resources Management - University of Manitoba, Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Earth, Environment & Resources - University of Manitoba, & White Spruce Archaeology; (in Thunder Bay) Negahneewin College of Academic & Community Development, Confederation College of Applied Arts & Technology, Lakehead University Centre for Northern Studies, Lakehead University Office for Aboriginal Affairs, Dean of Science & Environmental Studies - Lakehead University; (in St. John's) Miawpukek First Nation Government - Conne River, Ratana Chuenpagdee - International Coastal Network - Memorial University, Canada Research Chair in Aboriginal Studies - Memorial University, Native Peoples Solidarity Group of Newfoundland & Labrador, Barbara Neis - Community-University Research for Recovery Alliance - Memorial University, Wolverine & Associates Inc., & David Natcher, Larry Felt, Andrea Proctor in collaboration with the Government of Nunatsiavut.