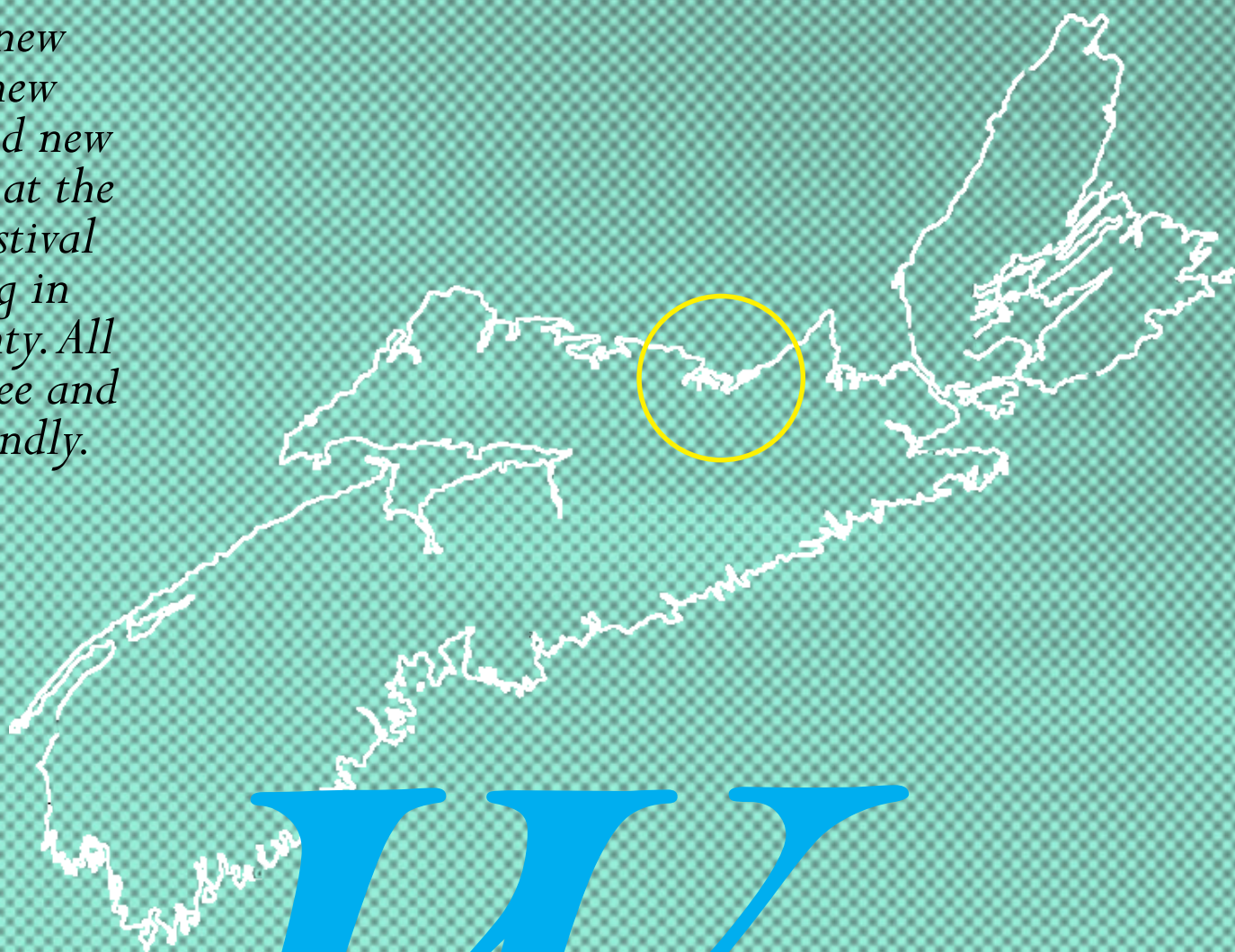


Discover new  
terrain, new  
histories, and new  
possibilities at the  
*W(here) Festival*  
this spring in  
Pictou County. All  
events are free and  
family friendly.



# *W* (here) festival

**JUNE 26 – 30 2012**  
PICTOU COUNTY NS

**special projects by:**

**SHEILAH WILSON**

*The Invisible Inside the Visible*

listen to stories about the legendary  
racetrack in River John at the Lee Tik  
Service Centre in River John

**MARLENE CREATES**

*Award Ribbons for Places in Pictou County*

share your meaningful places - either  
natural or built - and travel with Marlene  
and other participants to give it an award!

**KATHERINE KNIGHT**

**+ DAVID CRAIG**

*Memory Factory*

join us for a video screening and launch of  
this online project featuring the Maritime  
Packers lobster cannery in Caribou

***Walking in Place with:***

**LINDA LITTLE**

**+ SHEREE FITCH**

**RAINA MCDONALD**

**SHARON NOWLAN**

**SUSAN SELLERS**

join us on 4 local artist-led field trips to  
various locations (River John, Brookfield,  
Waterside Beach, Pictou Island) transformed  
through storytelling, performance and  
collaborative making.

**+ kitchen pARTy**

a social evening with artists at Carvers Coffee House

**+ Here Today Here Tomorrow**

an interactive talk about creative Pictou County at Pictou Academy

**+ Closing reception with music**

**by Al Tuck** at the Palace Theatre

*a series of  
events exploring  
place, art and  
community*

curated by  
*Mary MacDonald*  
organized in  
partnership with the  
*Pictou Renaissance  
Society*

**NOVA SCOTIA**  
NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

find out more details and schedule information at:

**[www.wherfestival.ca](http://www.wherfestival.ca)**

17 Water Street Pictou NS 902 921 3373



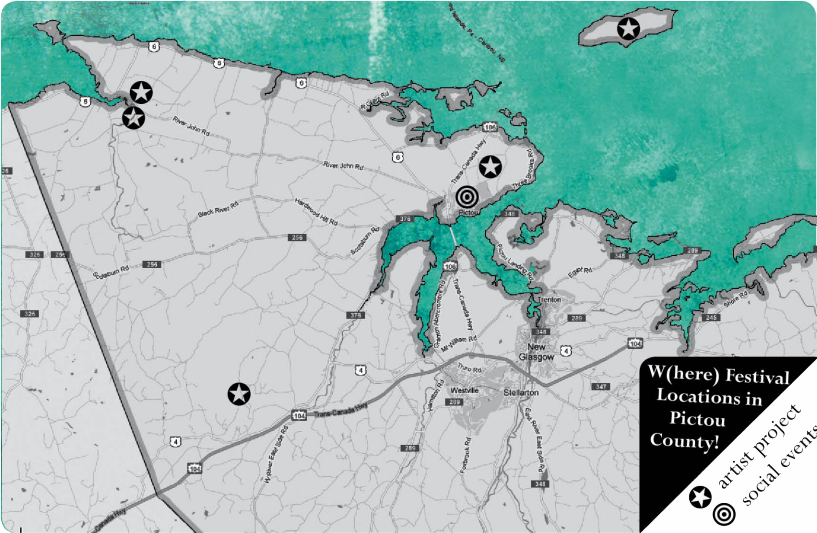


# Welcome.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the **W(her)e Festival** featuring 18 local and visiting artists right here in Pictou County, Nova Scotia! Exploring art, place and community, makers from a variety of disciplines and experiences lead residents in specially designed field trips, projects, presentations as well as discussion, story and song.

This festival is a hands-on, feet-moving experience, one to be shared and talked about with neighbours, friends and family. Moving between sites and beyond gallery walls, these art projects explore new terrains, new histories and creative possibilities.

- Mary MacDonald, curator



## Event Schedule

### JUNE 26

**7pm - 9pm – kitchen pARTy**  
a social evening of local artist talks and Festival Launch,  
Carvers Coffee House, 41 Coleraine Street, Pictou

Here the traditional artist talk is transformed into a fun and social evening! Eight local artists (filmmakers, painters, sculptors, and textile artists) share recent projects and works-in-progress in 15 minutes or less. Come, be merry and meet some of those involved in Pictou County's art scene.

participating artists: **Eliza Furnbach, Susan Tilsley Manley, Amanda MacDonald, Dawn MacNutt, Stephanie Robertson, St. Clair Prest, Carolyn Vienneau + Fenn Martin.**

### JUNE 27

**9am-1pm – Award Ribbons for Places in Pictou County**  
a project led by visiting artist **MARLENE CREATES (NL)**  
Bayview Community Hall, Bayview Road, day 1

Marlene invites participants of all ages to share some of their meaningful places in Pictou — either natural or built — revealing invisible layers of meaning. Participants will be given the materials to create an award ribbon, which will be installed in their chosen spot. This is a chance to commemorate a place that people value in their everyday environment. Sign up in advance required.

Marlene Creates is an acclaimed environmental artist and poet who lives and works in Portugal Cove, Newfoundland. For over thirty years her work has been an exploration of the relationship between human experience, memory, language and the land, and the impact they have on each other. [www.marlenecreates.ca](http://www.marlenecreates.ca).

### Walking in Place: Field Trips in Pictou County\*

Led by community members and local artists these field trips lead the public to various sites and may include historical research, on-location performance or site-specific sculpture. Each walk is unique and devised by the artists themselves.

**12pm-5pm – Following the Footsteps of an Unsung Heroine**  
walk led by **SUSAN SELLERS\***  
Pictou Island

Using the framework of the life and times of Pictou Island nurse, Margaret MacDonald (1897-1977), this field trip will begin and end with a voyage at sea. On Pictou Island, Susan will lead us to various sites that played a major role in MacDonald's life as well as a dramatization of the popular legend of the White Lady. Sign up in advance required.

Susan Sellers has travelled back and forth to Pictou Island for the past 25 years. Sellers is a retired school teacher with 28 years experience, five of which when she was the enrichment teacher for students on Pictou Island. She is also a writer, lover of horses and photographer, having recently published images in *Saltscapes* magazine.

### JUNE 28

**9am-1pm – Award Ribbons for Places in Pictou County**  
project continues, day 2

On day 2, participants travel together awarding their chosen sites. A video story featuring each participant and their location will be uploaded to an interactive map that will live online after the festival is complete. Visitors may accompany the group on their adventure or interact online adding their own award.

**2pm – The Invisible Inside the Visible**  
a site-specific audio installation by **SHEILAH WILSON**  
Lee Tik Service Centre, 1971 Sunrise Trail, River John

Wilson has been documenting stories from the local community about the area's almost forgotten but still famous racetrack. A part-time resident of the area. These oral histories and accompanying document will be installed in two locations at the local gas station throughout the festival. On June 28 at 2pm residents will have the chance to meet Wilson and hear her talk about the making of this project.

Sheilah Wilson was born in Caribou River (NS). Her work is an investigation of the seam that binds experience to language, story to teller and fantasy to history through photography, site-specific public art and performance. [www.sheilahwilson.com](http://www.sheilahwilson.com).

### JUNE 29

**9am-1pm – Award Ribbons for Places in Pictou County**  
project continues, day 3

**2pm – From the Bridge**  
walk led by **LINDA LITTLE + SHEREE FITCH\***  
Meet us in the Royal Canadian Legion parking lot, River John

Sheree and Linda lead a troupe along a stretch of the Jitney Trail to the old iron railway bridge. Reading site-specific poetry and passages from their work featuring elements of the landscape around us, the old rail-bed and bridge are transformed through story, bringing new thinking about the physical structures and their metaphorical applications in art. Followed by tea and a small workshop.

Sheree Fitch is an educator, literacy activist and author of award winning poetry, picture books, nonfiction, plays and novels for all ages. Her books include: *Toes in My Nose* and *Mable Murple*. In addition, her work as a poet and literacy educator has taken her to the Arctic as eight-time poet laureate for Peter Gzowski's fundraisers for literacy. [www.shereefitch.com](http://www.shereefitch.com).

Linda Little lives and writes in River John. She has published short stories in many reviews and anthologies, including *The Antigonish Review* and *Descant*. Linda has two award-winning novels, *Strong Hollow* (2001) and *Scotch River* (2006). Linda is also involved with River John's annual literary festival, Read by the Sea.

**7pm – Here Today Here Tomorrow**  
a discussion about art, place and community with invited artists  
Pictou Academy Auditorium, 88 Patterson Street, Pictou

In this interactive discussion, artists are asked more critical questions that pertain to festival's overall themes, successes and failures sharing experiences from the past few days. What is the future of rural art practices and here in Pictou County? Have your say.

### JUNE 30

**9am-11am – I AM HERE**  
walk led by **RAINA MCDONALD\***  
525 Back Road, Brookland

Gathered in an old overgrown foundation, Raina will invite us to explore the surrounding world (considering here as a specific geographical location with stories that create notions of past, present and future) along with the world within each of us (considering here as an intimate space within our bodies that we inhabit when we allow ourselves to be truly present).

Raina McDonald lives in Pictou County where she enjoys engaging with her rural community through art and teaching yoga. Raina looks to the worlds around her for metaphors to describe her own evolution, creating work through printmaking, installation, sculpture and community projects that speaks to the current human experience. [www.rainamcdonald.com](http://www.rainamcdonald.com).

**4pm - Where Sky Meets the Sea**  
walk led by **SHARON NOWLAN\***  
Waterside Beach

As Sharon Nowlan's work naturally begins with a walk on the beach, so will our adventure. Collecting stones we will construct a large beach drawing together. This walk is open to all ages, families and friends. Afterwards, the results will be sent to the *World Beach Project*, an online database of beach-art hosted by the Victoria and Albert Museum (London).

Sharon Nowlan has been gathering pebbles all her life. A resident of Pictou, Sharon studied Fine Arts and Enviromental studies at the University of Waterloo.

**7pm-8pm – Memory Factory**  
a project by **David Craig and Katherine Knight**  
Palace Theatre, 41 Water Street, Pictou

Filmmakers David Craig and Katherine Knight of Site Media Inc., in collaboration with the Northumberland Fisheries Museum, embark on an exciting online project that features reflections, images and stories about the Maritime Packers lobster cannery in Caribou NS. What once was, gives us foresight in shaping the future. Join us for the launch of this project.

Katherine Knight and David Craig founded Site Media Inc. in 2006 to produce documentaries on creative individuals in extraordinary places. To date they have produced four documentaries on Canadian artists: Annie Pootoogook; Kinngait: Riding Light into the World; Pretend Not to See Me: The Art of Colette Urban and KOOP – The Art of Wanda Koop. [www.sitemedia.ca](http://www.sitemedia.ca).

**8pm-10pm - Closing Reception**  
with music by **AL TUCK (PEI)**  
Palace Theatre, 41 Water Street, Pictou, NS

Al Tuck has shared the stage with Garth Hudson, Feist, Sarah Harmer, Old Man Luedecke, Buck 65 and Joel Plaskett. An awesome encyclopedia of popular music and roving troubadour, Al's musical influences include country, blues and even a little vaudeville. His musical grace and drawling vocals belie one of the sharpest and most deliberate songwriting minds in music today. Suggested donation \$10. [www.altuck.ca](http://www.altuck.ca).

NOVA SCOTIA  
NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE



organized in  
partnership with the  
Pictou Renaissance  
Society

- Thank you.
- Social Sciences Humanities Research Council
  - Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage
  - OCAD University
  - Pictou Renaissance Society
  - Pictou Business and Marketing Society
  - Gordon Chapman's Plumbing and Heating
  - Family and Friends
  - The Artists of the W(her)e Festival
  - Rosemary Donegan
  - St. Clair Prest
  - Katherine Dennis
  - Beth Henderson
  - Karla MacFarlane
  - Marion and Gregg MacDonald
  - Luke Young



## W(here) we are.

*All communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined.* - Benedict Anderson<sup>1</sup>

Through collaboration, performance and storytelling, the **W(here) Festival** asks a pretty ambiguous question, “Where is here exactly?”<sup>2</sup> Some say Pictou County, Nova Scotia is a rural place, the home of the best pizza in Canada or perhaps evidence of a living Scottish legacy. However as borders shift, people migrate and technologies spread, this question of place is ever more at the forefront of local residents, agencies and artists’ minds. Like urban places, rural ones also struggle to re-define themselves in a new global context, combining established narratives and new ideas.

One day after a snowstorm in February, I drive along the Sunrise Trail, sun gleaming through the trees casting a web of shadows on the highway. When I was young, my family used to travel this way every summer passing little houses along the way to our cottage in Toney River. Although the drive was only 15 minutes or so from the town of Pictou, it always felt as if we were being transported into some other dimension where the rules of space and time were well, just different. With salt on our skin and the smell of clay in our noses we would walk barefoot through sand, hay and grass inventing new histories and games from the places we roamed.

In one such place, two points<sup>3</sup> away there stood a great mystery on the beach. My siblings and I would set off in the morning, backpacks filled with peanut butter sandwiches and Smarties™, tracing the shifting boundary between ocean and sand. After an hour of walking that seemed more like a week, we would round that final edge. *There it was!* A smooth beach with one gigantic rock smack dab in the middle of it. *A meteorite!* Rushing towards it, we ran our hands over its surface inspecting each dip, bump and crevice like true scientists would.<sup>4</sup>

Back on the highway, each house I pass reminds me that they too contain their own story-makers and storytellers. But how might we as individuals engage these perspectives, to encourage new ways of critical thinking about this place called Pictou County?

With this question in mind, the **W(here) Festival** was created. During the festival, local and visiting artists will lead audiences in a series of “field trips”, community-based art projects and nightly discussion events exploring the connections, layers and gaps between place, art and communities’found “here”.

Much of the **W(here) Festival**’s development stems from ideas of community-based ways of working. Consulting with residents and local artists, it was clear that their stories needed to be told. In a place where there are few galleries and large cultural institutions, projects must happen through collaboration and partnership with the local community.<sup>7</sup> This active networking is both a need and a goal. Events such as the festival launch and the community town-hall discussion foreground this social aspect. During the launch event, *kitchen pARTy*, local artists share a platform introducing their artwork to each other and the public. Like many other community projects, it is important that all share authorship for ultimately **W(here)** is a festival about and for the communities “here”.

I am on my way to visit Meh Yap<sup>8</sup> at her gas station in River John to discuss installing an art project by Sheila Wilson. As curator of **W(here)**, it is my hope to animate possibilities for connections such as this one, however I am also a traveler, a listener, a partner and a moderator amongst many individuals whose perspectives about this place overlap and undertow. Like incoming waves upon a beach each narrative builds upon the last. But it is possible or even necessary to know all of the waves that have come before and will come in the future? No. For when we watch the waves come in, it is the movement, the making, the telling of the beach’s story right before our eyes that we are drawn to. The beach is constantly evolving just like “here”.

And so, the **W(here) Festival** embodies this kind of movement. The festival is a 5-day active look at place-based practices in

Pictou County, a series of wave-like events, chapters rather than objects. Through walking and talking, we learn through storytelling.<sup>9</sup> The festival is an opportunity for creative exploration, bringing together visiting artists, a dispersed local art community and residents to learn from and add to ideas of “here” or where it might be.

*That day they landed at the point just above the Town Gut, which had been selected as the site of a town, as a part of the Company’s grant nearest to the entrance of the harbour. The prospect was indeed dreary enough. One unbroken forest covered the whole surface of the country to the water’s edge. All around stood the mighty monarchs of the wood in all their primeval grandeur, the evergreens spreading a sombre covering over the plains and up the hills relieved by the lighter shade of the deciduous trees, with here and there some tall spruce rising like a black minaret or spire above its fellows (57-8).*<sup>10</sup>

Traditionally artworks are selected and arranged before the public walks through the gallery doors. But here, the festival is an exhibition in-motion and viewers are participants. What will be said? Who will hear it? How will it be received? Participants are given the opportunity to interact and engage on various levels with artists who may surprisingly reflect or even challenge viewers experiences, landscapes and histories. In this way, viewers are an active<sup>11</sup> and important part of the festival ultimately choosing what will be remembered both collectively and individually.

For example, during *Walking in Place: Field Trips*, local artists and community members Susan Sellers, Raina McDonald, Sharon Nowlan, Linda Little and Sheree Fitch offer new ways of experiencing home territories through their own creative practices. Taking residents on four distinct journeys, each location is transformed through a process of exchange: storytelling, on-location performance and art-making. Following each other’s footsteps, asking questions, telling jokes; these are all a part of our experience of place and the art that is created around it.

*The mouth of the Scotch River estuary sparkled wide and blue to his left, the houses came closer and closer together on his right. He passed the first of the village churches and the liquor store. An ancient man hobbled from an old Dodge pickup towards the liquor store punching his cane into the air. When he reached the door he called out like a crow – whether in greeting or curse was not clear. The building swallowed his words and then the man himself. Cass passed the post office, the bank. Before the bridge, at the junction of the highway and the Station Road that marked the heart of the village, stood the Co-op, the hardware store, the drugstore. Still. Everything looked older, smaller, grayer, emptier than he remembered (22-23).*<sup>12</sup>

As I drive between Pictou and River John, I realize that this county is such a nebulous place. Made up of five small towns, numerous villages and winding roads, forests, and shorelines in-between I notice how the direct and physical experience of this geography defines how I move through this place. Like the first European settlers who came to these shores, my experience and how I remember “here”<sup>13</sup> is also impacted by the physical. And while there are unique land formations simultaneously there are the same Tim Hortons<sup>4</sup> here and across the country.

I pull into the Lee Tik Service Centre in River John. Inside, two older ladies in sun-bleached sky-blue uniforms greet me with generous smiles and a questioning look. I ask for Meh and one clerk shuffles off to the back room, past the rubber boots and the racks of VHS tapes and DVDs. Meh emerges smiling ear to ear and immediately exclaims that I look like my brother. Although she hasn’t seen me for years she recognizes me. I realize at this moment, that I am not a free-floating entity here - an objective academic - but an imbedded member of this community (mind you, one that is from both here and away).

We all have many identities. Pictou County’s 250 years of written plus more of oral history tells an ongoing narrative of constantly

<sup>9</sup>Storytelling is often said to be quite natural to Maritimers. But whose stories are implied here! Ian MacKay challenges this idea of an “essential and unchanging solidarity of traditional society” (12) opening up the possibility for multiple and simultaneous perspectives. (Quest of the Folk: Anti-modernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994)

<sup>10</sup>Rev. George Patterson’s text includes many early oral histories of the region. These indented paragraphs draw from local fiction, music and history of the region. (A history of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia. Montreal: Dawson, 1877)

<sup>11</sup>Grant Kester sees conversation as an “active, generative process that can help us speak and imagine beyond the limits of fixed identities” (8). (Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art. London: University of California Press, 2004)

<sup>12</sup>In Linda Little’s novel, *Scotch River* the main character Cass returns home with a mysterious land claim after years living out west. *Scotch River* is a fictional rendering of the very real River John in Pictou County. (Scotch River. Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2007)

<sup>13</sup>There is also a political dimension to this geography. For example, the British Crown who desired new economies in Nova Scotia promised many poor farmers free farmland to settle there. However when they arrived they found an immense forest instead. Today residents are threatened by encroaching wind turbines that also promise new economies yet impact property value.

<sup>14</sup>Social geographer Michael Woods describes the global countryside as a place where the local and the global are networked together in “millions of dynamic meeting-points, where different networks, flows and processes are knotted together in unique ways” (291). This is evident not by the Tim Hortons franchises themselves but in how we interact with them. Many Tims are genuine community points of exchange, meeting places, and sponsors of local sports. (Rural. New York: Routledge, 2011)

<sup>15</sup>What is Canadian? Himani Bannerji investigates how Canada “as a nationalist project is perceived to be homogenous, solid, and settled entity” (73). In reality, Canadian-ness simultaneously creates “feelings of belonging and alienation” (66) for many not of Anglo-European descent. (Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender. Toronto: Canadian Scholar’s Press, 2000)

<sup>16</sup>Miwon Kwon explores notions of site-specific art as it relates to the social world around it. Often this work is informed by a broad range of disciplines creating a more discursive space, “an extension of the community rather than an intrusive contribution from elsewhere” (6) (One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Locational Identity, 2004)

<sup>17</sup>For example, one of the most profound narratives that has overshadowed many who live in Pictou County is that of the Westray mining disaster in 1992 where 26 men were killed.

<sup>18</sup>In the past, residents migrated to Pictou County to find work close to home. Today many move between home and away, taking seasonal or contractual work in places such as Halifax, Toronto or Fort McMurray.

<sup>19</sup>Yi-Fu Tuan argues that our sense of home or “centre” is not a geographical location but a concept in mythic thought (150). In this way then, home is a personal experience derived from many senses and not simply a fixed physical location. (Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977)

<sup>20</sup>Most county health services, high schools, shopping and recreation have merged, most recently exemplified by the Pictou County Wellness Centre currently under construction.

<sup>21</sup>These lyrics are from The New Highway, a song by Pictou musician and songwriter Dave Gunning. (Two-bit World. Pictou: Wee House of Music, 2004)

<sup>22</sup>Lucy Lippard notes how experiential watchfulness helps focus community endeavors, art or otherwise, in becoming ‘social catalysts’ as opposed to ‘shrines’ (37). The former being much more encouraging of growth. (Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society. New York: New Press, 1997)

<sup>23</sup>Lippard also notes the idea that place is defined by lived experience which incorporates ideas of land, history and culture (5). (Lure of the Local)

shifting communities. Those who visit, live or have lived here (Canadian,<sup>15</sup> Mi’kmaq, Scottish, Black, French, Gay etc.) all produce histories, songs, stories and artworks. Culture then is continually made and unmade, told and forgotten by its artists, writers and historians.

Exploring ideas of communal memory through social<sup>16</sup> interaction, visiting artist Sheila Wilson has been interviewing residents, searching for River John’s legendary turn-of-the-century racetrack. This project, *The Invisible Inside the Visible*, will be installed at Meh’s gas station during the **W(here) Festival**. Wilson has asked residents to draw where they think the racetrack might be. There is something decidedly magical about the artist’s revival of a physical site from oral accounts alone. In this way, Wilson’s project is both an spoken archive and a visual treasure map to the past.

Wilson’s project is also a good example of how the community’s past and present industries impact “here” as well. Mining, fishing, forestry, tourism and at one time, racing, were all a part of larger economic histories of Pictou County. Like the various terrains and multiple identities found here, economic narratives also overlap and blend into one another. These stories strongly affect family histories,<sup>17</sup> individual perspectives, lifestyles and future goals. Traditionally much of the work in Pictou County had its own sense of identity as well. One was a fisherman, a miner, a liberal, a conservative, etc. While this brought a sense of comradeship (great physical work adding to a certain heartiness of character) today many people feel they must move away to find work<sup>18</sup> Some return home<sup>19</sup> periodically while others are beginning to consolidate<sup>20</sup> in the larger New Glasgow area (moving away from maintaining distinct town-mentalities). Thus, work continues to shape how residents see this place.

*Now the mainstreet’s dark and silent  
Not a shadow or a sound  
But midnight brings the spirits out  
From the coal mines in the ground  
In my dreams they all come back again  
The good folks of the day  
They’re all trying to save the life they knew from going  
Down the new highway*<sup>21</sup>

This is all to suggest that perhaps ‘place’ is not just one thing, but a combination of partial knowledges passed on, community interaction and direct experience. And while memory is important, so too is the importance of observation, acuity and the present moment. It is here<sup>22</sup> that the **W(here) Festival** seeks to bring new energy and new criticality to the story of Pictou County.

Visiting artist Marlene Creates’ artistic career brings human experience, memory and the land together. Her project for the **W(here) Festival**, *Award Ribbons for Pictou County*, speaks to multiple senses of place<sup>23</sup> by asking residents to share their most meaningful locations. Travelling from site to site, numerous award ceremonies will be performed with residents marking locations with a ribbon. By awarding unlikely places of celebration, Creates’ gesture reminds us that when we tell a story, we also affirm its subject, giving it official significance. It is possible that new sites will be discovered, old ones re-discovered and others re-imagined. Again, this project gives individuals a chance to participate in the making of the work itself, adding layers to the imagined community. In addition, the award-winning sites will be translated to an online map, a virtual<sup>24</sup> layer, with the potential for global audiences to access “here”.

After our chat and taking some photos outside, Meh emerged again, this time from the kitchen. Waving her arms she rushed me through, past my 4 egg rolls I had just ordered simmering in hot oil. “Come here. You must meet Raymond!” she exclaimed. Raymond was sitting with a package of coconut cookies and *The Chronicle Herald* at the high table in the middle of the convenience store. You could tell this was a meeting place for the latest village news and Raymond was the kind of guy who knew it all. He and I spoke of local history, national politics and even the best driving routes to Whitehorse.

Historically, rural Nova Scotians have been presented with a sort of rugged romanticism. Folklorists like Helen Creighton travelled from city to country, recording songs and stories of local people, creating a singular mythology of the Nova Scotian, an idealized “fisherfolk”, that was upheld for many years. These notions gave rural places a Scottish authenticity<sup>25</sup> to bank on and cultural products to market. Today however, rural residents and artists are active story-tellers themselves. They too are migratory, moving between urban and rural geographies and social structures. In many ways we are of multiple places and are constantly moving between them.

*“Where are you from?” he asks as the car moves forward, “from Cape Breton,” I say and tell him the name of my home town.  
“We are too,” he says, “but we’re from the Island’s other side. I guess the mines are pretty well finished where you’re from. They’re the old ones. They’re playing out where we’re from too. Where are you going now?  
“I don’t know.” I say. “I don’t know.” (50-51)*<sup>26</sup>

One way to create a more complex approach to storytelling is to highlight multiple voices and invite them to speak for themselves. Seasonal residents and film-makers Katherine Knight and David Craig of Site Media Inc. engage this process in their project, *Memory Factory*, that highlights the Maritime Packers lobster cannery in Caribou, NS. Craig and Knight bring local stories to life through online documentary film vignettes, historical research and still image. Ultimately, *Memory Factory* is an interactive online repository<sup>27</sup> of local stories that captures what life was like for the employees and residents at the factory. An important part of Pictou County’s economic history, many of the workers were brought here each spring, creating temporary communities. Living on-site they created an dynamic culture, making music, telling stories and working long hours together. Today, the factory no longer exists, nor condominiums stretch out over the grassy beach where once boats would haul in their catches. This project will be launched during the festival’s closing event.

But what does making and experiencing art through communities in rural places such as Pictou County offer? Much has been discussed above about the importance of sharing residents’ multiple perspectives. Collaboratively broadening world-views we begin to look for new ways to connect, to imagine community, to critique the status quo and to visualize new futures! The **W(here) Festival** is but one way to engage. In a way, the festival is an opportunity, an exciting think-tank event to consider where we are and where we are going through creative practices: discussion events, field-trips, artist projects and new technologies.

On a curatorial level, I argue that art practices and engagements in rural places teach us how to re-examine the familiar, re-imagine place and make change on a more human-scale. Projects tend to take a long time to develop here and their legacy felt long after. Unlike cities where cultural products come and go almost on a daily basis, here change can be profound, slow and incredibly meaningful. In addition, projects out “here” can often be over looked, ephemeral.<sup>28</sup> But indeed, the old divide between city and country is a tired one.<sup>30</sup> Instead, the projects, stories and actions of the **W(here) Festival** suggest new simultaneous territories and methodologies that are rich and complex.

On the way back home to Pictou, I remember the half-way house, as we used to call it. Half yellow and half white, it marked the boundary between our summer and fall. On one side imagination ran wild and on the other it was back to school, friends and the future. It is my hope that the we expand our imaginary boundaries about place, art and community during the **W(here) Festival**. I look forward to hearing your stories.

*And so, this is the end... but it’s only the end of this volume of the past and present in Pictou. The Pictou Parade will go on long after you and I have fallen out of the procession. (114)*<sup>32</sup>

- Mary MacDonald grew up in Pictou County and is the curator of the W(here) Festival.

<sup>24</sup>While physically visiting awarded sites provides an embodied experience, interacting online can only be done so through representation. Reesa Greenberg adds that virtual spaces offer “opportunities to record aspects of exhibitions that, until now, have remained invisible or under visualized” (9). The virtual map features at-a-glance cohesiveness, global access and an archive of video interviews with residents about each location. (“Remembering Exhibitions”: From Point to Line to Web.” Tate Papers 12. http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/issue-12, 2009)

<sup>25</sup>Ian MacKay challenges Creighton and other homogenous views of Nova Scotia identity by applying a postmodern critique of structures of power. More often than not, this authentic Nova Scotian identity is used more by the Department of Fisheries (294) and other provincial authorities for tourism ends than for actual residents. (Quest of the Folk)

<sup>26</sup>Alistar Macleod is a renowned Atlantic author whose stories lament the loss of family identity and a Scottish heritage. Mixing oral and contemporary literary forms this excerpt is from the short story *The Lost Salt Gift of Blood*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976)

<sup>27</sup>Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook assert that in new media art works, even though the site is “immaterial, it can also be ‘located.’” (120) This hybridity between the site specific and the online is an interesting link to think about with ways global technologies can be incorporated into artworks about place. (“Introduction to Rethinking Curating.” *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010)

<sup>28</sup>Many of these workers were from away, Acadian women for example.

<sup>29</sup>The same could also be said here for the East itself at times and other more remote locations of Canada!

<sup>30</sup>This is also reflected in the history of museums. Grant Kester suggests that “rather than posit a hierarchy between museum based art and projects developed in non-art environments, it is more appropriate to think of these as two equally productive sites, each with its own appropriate strategies and potential compromises” (189). (Conversation Pieces) I take issue here with the term “non-art environment” maybe unconventional-art environments is more suitable.

<sup>31</sup>Michael Woods states that seen from a relational perspective, the rural consists of many dynamic intersections and narratives where various networks, flows and processes are knotted together in unique ways. (291). (Rural)

<sup>32</sup>Roland H. Sherwood, a popular writer for the *Pictou Advocate* published an anthology of Pictou stories in 1945. (*The Pictou Parade*. Sackville: Tribune Press, 1945)