

Conference celebrates a decade of archeology, research at Bird Cove

The dead continue to bring economic life to the Northern Peninsula.

A new conference has been scheduled for the Bird Cove-Plum Point area that promises to bring archeologists from as far a field as Siberia.

The Amina Anthropological Resources Association (Amina) and the Big Droke Foundation will host guests at the Plum Point Motel and the local museum from Sept. 3-6, 2008.

"It will celebrate a decade of research from Bird Cove to Pond Cove," said Amina president Latonia Hartery. "Some of the research we've done here has had global implications."

The Maritime Archaic, Groswater and Dorset Paleoeskimo all toiled to live and love on the Dog Peninsula thousands of years ago. The remains of those lives, carved into bone and rock, show how an arctic people survived relatively warm summer seasons.

"Beaver, scallops, clams, birds, caribou, they had a more generalized diet. They would also live in tents rather than the semi-subterranean houses with thick walls they inhabited during winter," explained Ms. Hartery of what's been learned from the 38 sites found in the Bird Cove to Pond Cove area.

Academic presenters will include Russian scholar Dr. Andrei Tabarav and the chair of the University of Calgary Archeology Department, Dr. Brian Kooyman. Cow Head's renowned Daniel Payne will bring his fiddle to a music night and authors Donna Morrissey and Kevin Major will discuss their books.

"A volunteer committee is helping organize the event, led by local resident Irene Myers," said Ms. Hartery. "We're hoping as many local residents as possible will attend."

Dale Kennedy is a Bird Cove resident who will be there.

Of course, he's also helping organize the conference and has been working with Amina and Big Droke since it began in the area.

"I caught the bug back when I was a kid, from movies and books. Visiting the Port au Choix and L'Anse aux Meadows sites helped as well," said Mr. Kennedy. "Apart from tourism dollars and community pride, one of the virtues of the work here is that young people get to experience the different disciplines and become interested in them."

Paleontology, botany, history, archaeology, geology... there's tons to learn.

"The last 10 years have been really exciting, a roller coaster ride."