

Symposium bringing focus to accomplishments at Bird Cove

Scholars, performers, filmmakers and authors on a provincial, national and international level are coming to Bird Cove in September to attend a four-day symposium.

Entitled 'Bird Cove and Beyond: Celebrating a Decade of Regional Archeology on a Global Scale', the conference is hosted by the Amina Anthropological Resources Association (AARA) and the Big Droke Foundation. The gathering is aimed at celebrating the cultural achievements of communities in the area from Bird Cove to Pond Cove.

"The archeology of this location has importance that reflects the scale of this conference," says archeologist Latonia Hartery. "In the last 10 years we have contributed greatly to furthering the historic and pre-contact periods of the Island's history, as well as demonstrating incredibly interesting links between Newfoundland, the Arctic and other parts of Atlantic Canada."

The conference takes place at a variety of venues Sept. 3-6, 2008, including the Bird Cove Interpretation Centre, Plum Point Motel and Thirsty's. A variety of activities are slated to take place at these locations, including a showing of the film *Passage* by Gemini award winning filmmaker John Walker, readings by accomplished Newfoundland writers such as

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Bernice Morgan, author of *Random Passage*, and Kevin Major, who wrote *As Near to Heaven By Sea*, and an opening address by Saqamaw Misel Joe, Chief of the Mi'kmaq First Nations.

The conference culminates with an evening devoted to recreating Newfoundland's history and distant past through songs of traditional and international music.

Scholars attending the conference from Newfoundland, Canada, the United States and Siberia are speaking on a wide variety of interconnecting topics relevant to the region. They are also tackling current global topics such as climate change.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the committee organizing a symposium in the Bird Cove-Pond Cove area in early September are: (l-r) – Irene Myers, Big Droke Foundation; Latonia Hartery, AARA president; and Darlene Mahar, administrative assistant with the Big Droke Foundation.

"In addition to showcasing research, the conference enables us to come together as a community to celebrate the unique identity and culture of rural Newfoundland and Labrador,"

notes Irene Myers, vice-president of the Big Droke Foundation.

Organizers say the community effort is reflected in the openness of the conference –

the symposium is tailored for all audiences and promotes the importance of elders as an integral source of knowledge in keeping rural Newfoundland traditions alive. Elders Edmund

Gould of Bird Cove and Elva Spence of Plum Point are giving the official welcome to all participants during the opening reception.