Six Periods of Community Communication Special Events in Newfoundland and Labrador

1. 1979 - 1989: Memorial University extension service television transmitter projects. In 1979 the MUN extension service media unit set up a television transmitter in Trinity. Between 1983 and 1989 the university facilitated transmitter projects focusing on public discussion of particular issues facing rural communities. These included projects in: Trinity, November 28 - December 2, 1979; Rocky Harbour, Sally's Cove, 1980; Nain, September, 1980; Witless Bay, 1982; Admiral's Beach, May 12-14, 1983; Winterton, February 5-7, 1984; Robinsons, June 6-8, 1984; Bell Island, November 27-29, 1984; Buchans, May 7-9, 1985; Cape Shore, October 2-4, 1985; Burin Peninsula, October, 1985 (Eight communities); Gander, November 12, 1985 (Transmitter supported local cable television); Branch, December 10, 11, 1985; Humber Valley, December 10 -12, 1985; Fogo Island Project, April 1 (Little Seldom), April 2 (Shoal Bay), April 3 (Fogo); Petty Harbour Community Television (Seven hours on Avalon Cable) June, 1987; Pasadena (satellite uplink), January 23 - 24, 1988; Port Blandford, April 7 - 8, 1989 (last project to fully utilize an educational technology crew from the university). (Also efforts in Musgrave Harbour, Gander Bay, Shea Heights.)

2. 1989 - 1991: Memorial University extension service support for groups utilizing cable television community channels. Once local volunteer groups were formed, with extension support, local cable company owners, such as Phil Keeping and Alvin Gale, bought equipment. But by the end of the 80s, there was a shift from media technology to adult/popular education - the people took control of the technology. In practical terms this meant that technical crews were no longer sent out from St. John's (There was no money for crews anyway. The university cut the media unit in 1985 and absorbed most of the staff into MUN educational technology). Rural volunteers utilized locally owned cable systems. But the difference was also philosophical - popular education methodology meant "we have no media experts but rather co-participants sharing in a communication/education experience. We don't teach but rather create learning situations and popular education resource materials." MUN field workers were asked to help local groups organize while technical/education support was provided by one extension staff member. Special events in Placentia (BAY-TV); St. Bride's; Clarenville (SCAN-TV); Flower's Cove, and St. Anthony.

3. 1993 - 2003: Federal government supported participatory communication. This era involved multiple stakeholder/community projects. The core partners included the Community Education Network; the Long Range Regional Economic Development Board; Conservation Corps Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Appalachia School Board. Supporting federal government departments included Human Resources Development Canada; the Office of Learning Technologies; Environment Canada, and the Rural Secretariat. This approach continued after the extension service was eliminated in 1991 - in long term multi-community, multi-stakeholder projects such as Communication for Survival; Sharing Our Future, and Enlarging the Circle.

In 1993 the Port au Port Community Education Initiative supported a series of community television forums on the Port au Port Peninsula (Lourdes, La Grande Terre and Cap St-Georges).

Communication for Survival (1995 to 1997) was funded by Human Resource Development with inkind contributions by a multiplicity of partners. Local committees in three sub-regions chose a variety of appropriate participatory communication tools (such as community newsletters, poster/brochures and b/w photography) but there was a focus on community television community forums. In 2001 (during the Sharing Our Future project) the communication tool changed from cable television to community FM/internet radio. The participatory communication projects were no longer tied to cable television studios but the change of technology has presented new challenges. Funder was the Office of Learning Technologies with in-kind support. Enlarging the Circle was funded by the federal Rural Secretariat and included nine community radio special events in 2003. All events were in western NL and the main focus was enhancing capacity for local leadership, community forum and an introduction to the search conference. Tuning in to Climate Change (2003) was funded by Environment Canada and coordinated by the Conservation Corps NL. See Table 1 for additional details.

4. 2004 - 2008: Discrete community radio projects funded by a variety of sources. Principal partners accessing federal funding included the Community Education Network and Memorial University CURRA. Ivan Emke of Memorial University wrote applications for funding (the radio component of the CURRA and two Twillingate events). Ryakuga Communications provided in kind support. Support came from Human Resources Development Canada, the provincial Rural Secretariat, the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) and the New Rural Economy Project 2.

Human Resources Development Canada continued to support the Burnt Islands projects up until 2007. Events in Burnt Islands led to the creation of Burnt Islands' new community radio station - CHBI - 95.7FM. The Community - University Research for Recovery Alliance began to support community radio during a festival radio project in Bonne Bay. Co-ordinated by Ivan Emke, the New Rural Economy Project 2 sponsored a final event in 2008. The NL Rural Secretariat and the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Newfoundland and Labrador Division sponsored an event in 2004.

5. 2009 - 2013: The NL Rural Secretariat and Ryakuga Communications community radio projects. Most special events in this period (12 of 30) were supported by the provincial Rural Secretariat. In Bay St. George (March 22 - 27, 2010) the first special event to feature a week of theme days was held - each with its own coordinating group. The Sonic Potluck Celebration was a partnership of the Rural Secretariat, the Long Range RED Board, Communities In Schools, the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism and the College of the North Atlantic. On Bell Island (March 14 - 20, 2011), the Town of Wabana and St. Michael's school hosted a week long simulcast, supported by the Rural Secretariat.

Many of the projects during this period were festivals where local committees accessed a mix of federal and provincial funding. On the Cape Shore (May 17 - 19, 2011), for example, the Cape Shore Community Radio committee used stereo FM radio to broadcast the Fatima Academy Spring Celebration in St. Bride's, Point Lance and Branch. The event was also webcast as QuickTime MP4. In Norris Point (May 14 - 25, 2009) the Voice of Bonne Bay community radio

committee, Trails, Tales and Tunes Festival committee, the Bonne Bay Heritage Corporation and Ryakuga produced the second radio broadcasts of the TTT festival from the cottage hospital. The event was also webcast over multiple years. Also in Norris Point (July 22-25, 2010) The Voice of Bonne Bay (VOBB) and Ryakuga collaborated to broadcast/webcast Norris Point Come Home Year on Ryakuga's 102.5 FM station. In Corner Brook (February 20 - March 1, 2009) journalism students from the College of the North Atlantic worked on the broadcast of the ECMAs. This was also a kickoff event for the Bay of Islands community radio group.

The Irish Business Partnership - Government of Newfoundland and Labrador - sponsored five events on Fogo Island. In Tilting (September 19 to 23, 2012), for example, Feile Tilting 13 was combined with Newfoundland Labrador Irish Connections for a celebration of Irish/Newfoundland Culture, broadcast on 105.9 in Tilting and 102.5 in Fog Central. September 19-23, 2012 Tilting was celebrated as a National Historic Site of Canada and Newfoundland's first provincial registered Heritage District. Ryakuga partnered with the Town of Tilting, the Ireland Business Partnership; the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Fogo Island Co-op to broadcast Feile Tilting for several years. From August 5-12, 2012 the communities of Fogo Island celebrated their Island Vision with a week of community radio.

Ivan Emke of Grenfell Campus accessed funding for two CURRA events and Grenfell collaborated with the French Shore Historical Association to host Conche Radio 103 FM May 9-10, 2011. In Bonne Bay (October 20 - 23, 2011, participants at the Network 11 Unconference created a provincial network of community communications practitioners. The Network 11 networking event hosted by the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital (Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Center), the Voice of Bonne Bay (VOBB), and the Bonne Bay Marine Station and was supported by the provincial Rural Secretariat, Memorial University Grenfell Campus and the Red Ochre zone board.

Advanced Education and Skills supported an event in Cuslett (federal/provincial funding). Nunatsiavut and Canadian Heritage supported two festival events in Labrador.

Note: The above description is modified from http://www.ryakuga.org/ryakuga/literacy/.

6. 2014 - 2019: Two year collaboration with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador. Discrete community radio projects funded by a variety of sources

The festival events in Labrador continued until 2017. The tenth anniversary of the Feile Tilting was in 2019 (We were working on a joint Irish NL project – Marconi 2020 – discontinued because of the virus.) As well as the Tilting festivals and island wide development collaboration project was funded by The Fogo Island Economic Development Partnership - Fogo Island Co-operative, Shorefast and the Town of Fogo Island.

Three projects took place in Placentia and on the Cape Shore in multiple communities with transmitters linked through the internet, perhaps unique for Canadian special FM events. There was also a project in Ferryland.

In 2015 Ryakuga partnered with Grenfell for three Bay St. George participatory special events, collaborating with NAWN, Les Terre Neuviens Francais and the Community Education Network. Grenfell also supported projects in St. Anthony, Conche, Rocky Harbour and Norris Point.

Miawpukek First Nation and Ryakuga broadcast and webcast the 2015 PowWow.