

Home from The Sea

Help Write a Chapter in Our History



Home from The Sea
Sealers Memorial in Elliston



Above: Sealers walking in a line to pelt, 1939. Source: William Edgar and Joan Waddell
Opposite Page: Sealers travelling over ice floes with SS *Adventure* in background, 1915. Source: Walter Edward Davidson

Letter from the Honourable John C. Crosbie

Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador
and Patron of the Sealers Memorial Campaign



I have always believed that the best way to move forward is to truly embrace our past. In recent years, a central thread in our province's historic tapestry has been misunderstood and often misrepresented.

Through sheer necessity, those who have made a home on these coasts—going back to the earliest Aboriginal people—have been sealers. It was the Innu and Inuit who showed the first Europeans the value of this resource.

In fact, it was oil from the seals off Newfoundland and Labrador that fueled the earliest street lamps of London. Yet there has been little recognition of the contributions of sealers to our society and economy. With *Home from The Sea*, we are working to change that.

Two years ago, the Elliston Heritage Foundation approached me. This group recognized that the 100th anniversary of the 1914 sealing disasters was fast approaching and no memorial existed commemorating those lost in the tragedy. Nor did any memorial exist to the countless Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have lost their lives working in the seal fishery before or since.

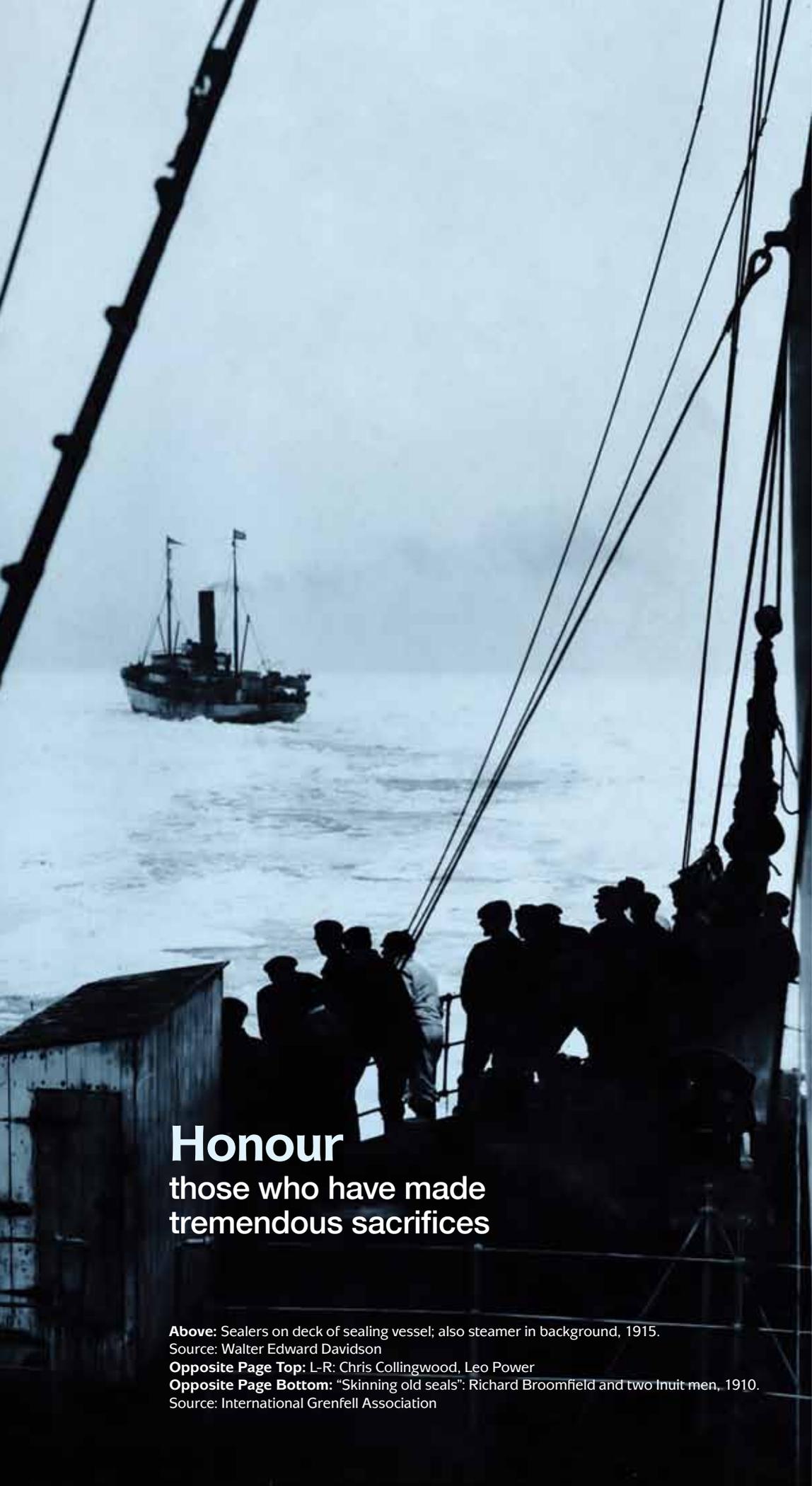
I am convinced that the time has come for this memorial. We remain a society that makes its living from the sea. And from industry to labour groups to communities to families, we continue to stand shoulder to shoulder in our prayer that everyone who heads out on the water and the ice—whether a sealer, a fisher or an oil rig worker—will come home safe and sound.

It is with great pride that I invite you to join with me and other Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as we commemorate the sacrifices of those who faced hardship and danger to support their families and build our communities. In doing so, they helped lay the foundation for the amazing opportunities we enjoy today.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Crosbie".

The Honourable John C. Crosbie, PC, OC, ONL, QC
Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador





Honour those who have made tremendous sacrifices

Above: Sealers on deck of sealing vessel; also steamer in background, 1915.

Source: Walter Edward Davidson

Opposite Page Top: L-R: Chris Collingwood, Leo Power

Opposite Page Bottom: "Skinning old seals": Richard Broomfield and two Inuit men, 1910.

Source: International Grenfell Association

Letter from the Campaign Co-Chairs



We live in a time of unprecedented prosperity for our province, having realized our aspiration of becoming a “have” province with a bright future. As co-chairs of this two million dollar campaign, we believe that it is incumbent upon our people, in these good times, to remember those whose sacrifices laid the foundation for our present prosperity.

While the seal fishery has played an important role in the year-to-year existence of our communities, it has also helped shape our culture and our society. There is hardly a family in our province that does not have some connection to the seal fishery, and this is true of the members of this committee as well.

In addition to personal family heritage, the story of the 1914 sealing disasters has been etched into our collective psyche since we first read Cassie Brown’s *Death on the Ice* in school. We are honoured to now lead a project that finally attempts to address these pivotal events, and create a home for the stories and the memories that go along with them.

We are also proud to work with the members of the Elliston Heritage Foundation, whose vision made this project a reality. They are a determined and enthusiastic group who show us that anything is possible when you approach a cause with passion.

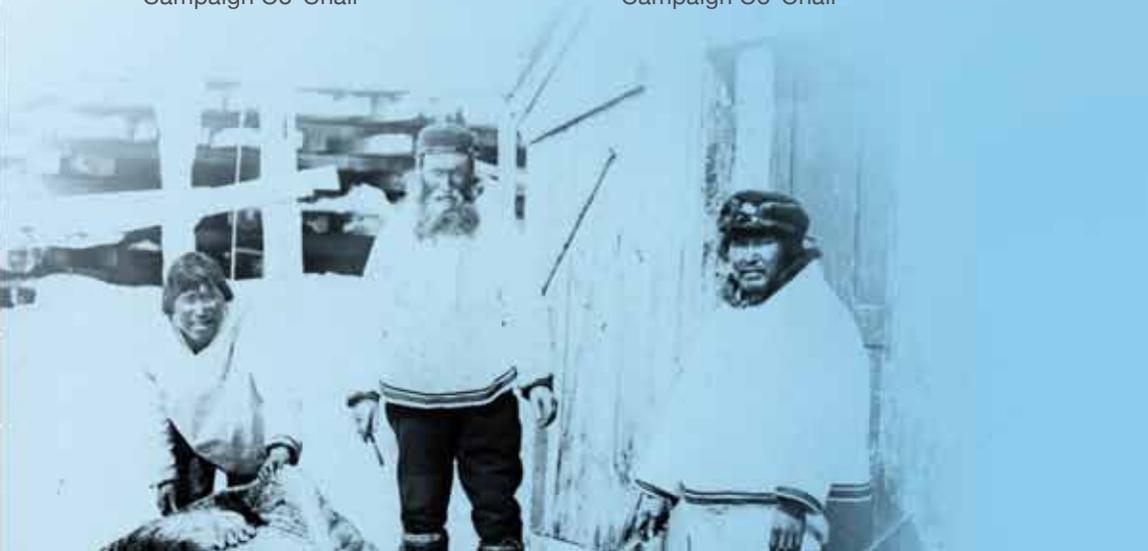
Ultimately, this committee is unanimous in its belief that we as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians must recognize where we have come from to truly understand who we are and who we must become. Please join us in building more than a memorial, but in writing an important chapter in our history.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Collingwood".

Chris Collingwood
Campaign Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leo P. Power".

Leo Power
Campaign Co-Chair



THE PROJECT

A Home for Memories, Stories, Reflection

The spring of 2014 will mark 100 years since 251 of our province's fathers, sons and husbands were lost in two separate sealing disasters. The 1914 SS *Newfoundland* and SS *Southern Cross* disasters have become defining stories. Its narrative threads are long and resonate widely among writers, poets, songwriters, visual artists and documentarians both here and away. Yet until now, there has been no one place to draw those threads together.

With your help, in the spring of 2014, we will unveil a memorial to sealers and an interpretive home for their stories. The memorial is both a reconciliation of the loss of life from the 1914 disasters and, in the larger context, a recognition of the lives and work of all sealers and their historic place in the economy and social fabric of our province. This site will draw those seeking to understand, remember, reflect and learn.

Elliston, Trinity Bay

Making a home from the sea

This campaign was initiated by the Elliston Heritage Foundation in 2008 "with the initial goal of creating a lasting memorial to those who lost their lives." The small community of Elliston is a fitting site for the memorial as it suffered a significant loss when eight of its twelve sealers were lost in the 1914 SS *Newfoundland* and SS *Southern Cross* disasters. Also, Elliston is undoubtedly a suitable location as its rich sealing history helped sustain generations. As an interpretive home, it stands for all of our communities in which men and women have toiled to make a living from the sea.

Many regions of the province have been and continue to be deeply involved in sealing, and the Bonavista Peninsula is no exception. Locating the memorial there will complement the many existing cultural and heritage destinations in the area and contribute to the ongoing revitalization of our rural communities.



SS *Southern Cross* commanded by Capt. George Clarke. Source: Maritime History Archive

The sealers memorial is a unique venture, the first of its kind in the world.

One Home, Three Elements

The vision for the project incorporates three elements.

Memorial Sculpture - *Bonds that endure*

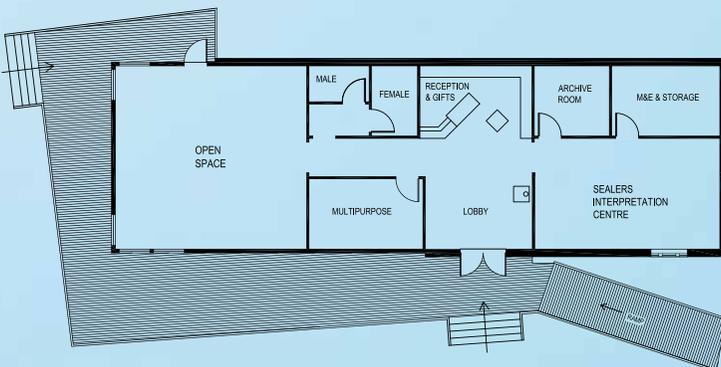
Created by renowned bronze sculptor and visual artist Morgan MacDonald, the sculpture will be a representation of father and son Reuben and Albert John Crewe, residents of Elliston who perished in the 1914 SS *Newfoundland* sealing disaster.

Memorial Site - *A place for reflection*

From the focal point of the sculpture, the surrounding site will be designed with two purposes in mind. Firstly, it will provide opportunities to recognize those who have made this project a reality. Secondly, it will provide a natural space to view the beautiful bay and reflect on the lives of the brave men and women who faced the sea with all its challenges, dangers and promise for the future.

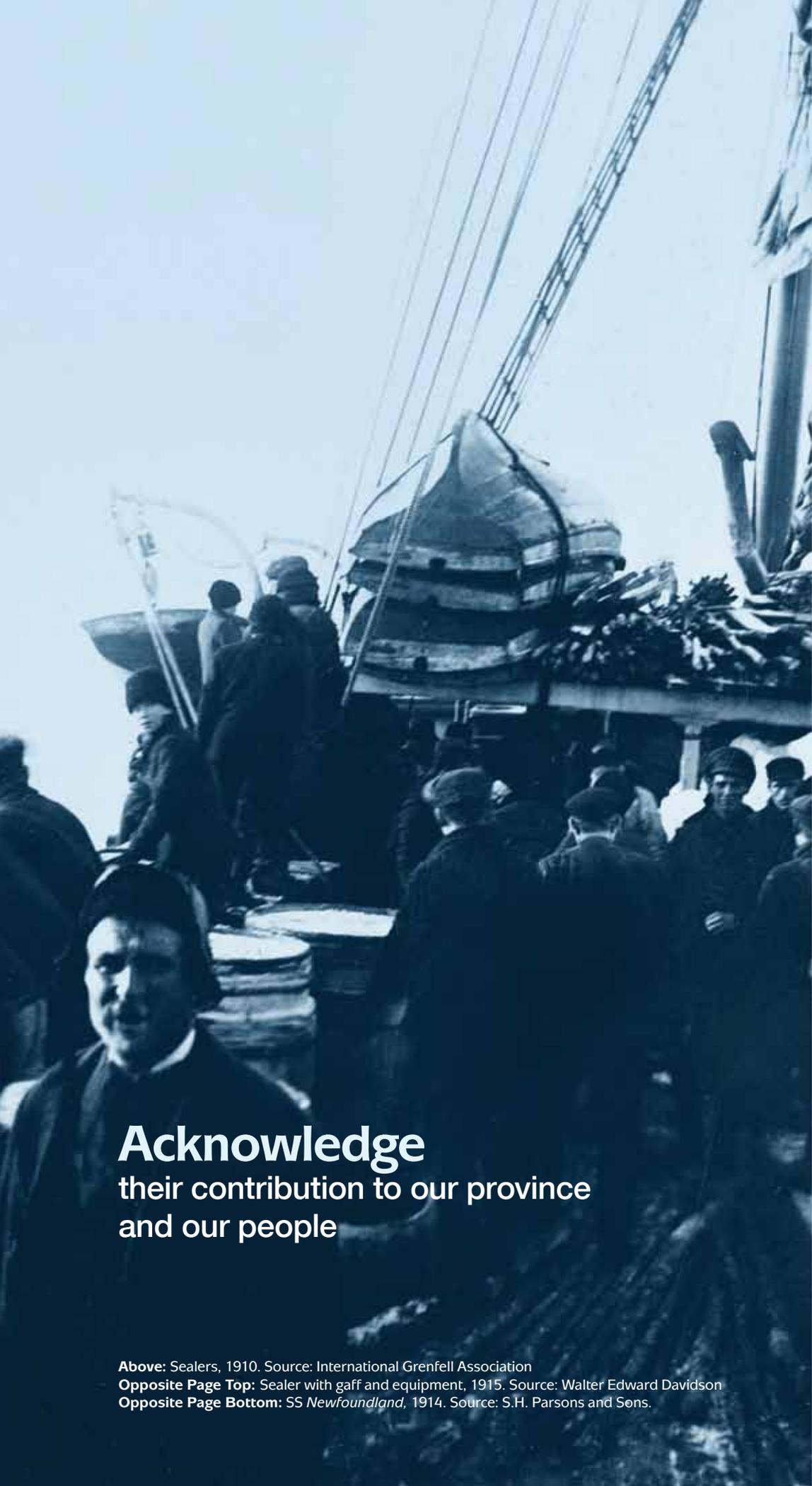
An Interpretation Centre and Walk - *Chapters in our history*

A former schoolhouse in the Town of Elliston will be retrofitted to become home to the many stories that will be told. Their chapters will range from the lives of the first sealers who visited this coast, to the context of the 1914 disasters, to the economic and cultural history of sealing and its effect on our province today. This centre will be connected to the memorial site by an interpretive walk.



Top: Sealers Interpretation Centre Conceptual Drawing, PHB Group Inc.

Bottom: Sealers Interpretation Centre space plan, PHB Group Inc.



Acknowledge
their contribution to our province
and our people

Above: Sealers, 1910. Source: International Grenfell Association

Opposite Page Top: Sealer with gaff and equipment, 1915. Source: Walter Edward Davidson

Opposite Page Bottom: *SS Newfoundland*, 1914. Source: S.H. Parsons and Sons.

THE 1914 DISASTER

Those Who Didn't Come Home

The Newfoundland and Labrador spring sealing industry was far more hazardous than any other local fishery at the turn of the 20th century. Sealing ships would steam or sail into the dangerous ice floes off Newfoundland and Labrador's coast where large masses of ice and sudden blizzards could cause ships to become stranded and damaged. Sealers might spend up to 12 hours walking on the ice fields. When foul weather struck, their only option was to attempt to return to their distant ships guided only by the sound of a whistle.

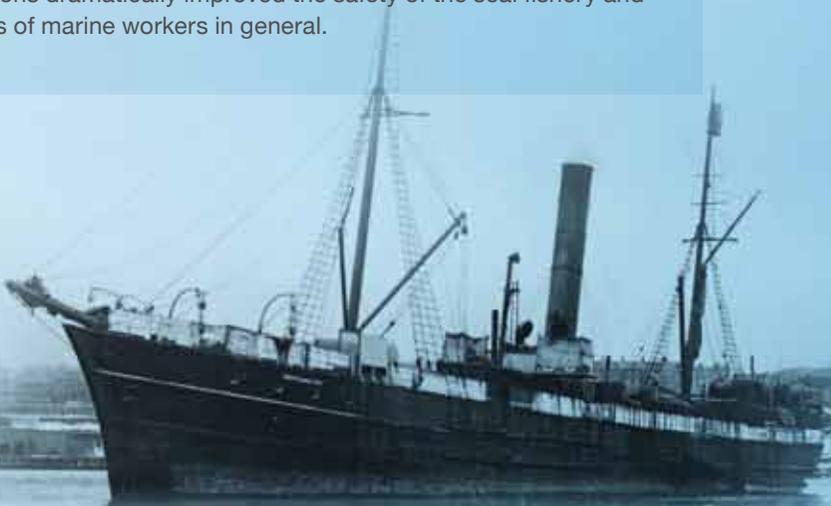
On March 30th, 1914, 166 men left the SS *Newfoundland* and headed towards the SS *Stephano* seven miles away. Thirty-four chose to turn back as the weather worsened while 132 decided to press on. Reaching the ship, they were told to harvest 1,500 seals before returning to the SS *Newfoundland*. The SS *Stephano* then left the men. They were now nine miles out, the storm rising around them. For the next 48 hours they were lost in a vicious blizzard, the captain of each ship assuming the men had found refuge on the other. In that time, 78 men were lost, many disappearing into the frigid waters.

In that same storm, another sealing vessel—the SS *Southern Cross*—sank while returning from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, taking with it another 173 men. These were huge losses in a country of only 250,000.

Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage

Change for the better - *Finding light in the dark*

It is a sad truth that tragedy is often a catalyst for positive change. A host of legislative changes were enacted as a result of the 1914 disasters to improve working conditions for sealers. In the end, these regulations dramatically improved the safety of the seal fishery and the lives of marine workers in general.





REUBEN & ALBERT JOHN

One Story Among Many

In 1911, Reuben Crewe was one of a handful of sealers who swam to safety when their vessel sank in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Afterwards Reuben's wife, Mary, insisted that he give up sealing. She could no longer bear the sleepless nights of worry for his safety.

In 1914, the Crewe's son, Albert John, was 16 and eager to go sealing. He secured a berth on the SS *Newfoundland* after much negotiating with his parents. Reuben, well aware of the dangers of sealing, reluctantly went with his son in hopes of keeping him safe.

As the search for the SS *Newfoundland's* crew went on, rescuers found Reuben and Albert John. They were frozen in an embrace, the father attempting to shield his teenage son from the elements. Mary recounted later that she was awakened the night of the disaster to see Reuben and Albert John kneeling at her bed and that she was struck by the look of peace on their faces.

While this scene provides the most compelling and heart-wrenching image of the disaster, and the inspiration for the memorial sculpture, it also embodies the essence of the *Home from The Sea* campaign. It carries with it stories of courage, resilience, family ties and communities rallying together in times of tragedy. As a sea-going people, these are stories which continue to resonate with us today and help define who we are.

with thanks to Bruce Whiffen

Above: Sculpture of Reuben & Albert John, Sculptor Morgan MacDonald

Opposite Page Top: Sealers looking over deck of steamer, 1915. Source: Walter Edward Davidson

Opposite Page Bottom: SS *Adventure* in ice, 1915. Source: Walter Edward Davidson

Their stories are our stories and matter still today

Families

At its peak in 1857, over 14,000 men from communities all over Newfoundland and Labrador participated in the seal industry. They took extraordinary risks and endured harsh working conditions to support their families. Over the years, hundreds of men lost their lives. As descendants, we need to celebrate their lives by making a permanent home for their stories of courage, sacrifice and contribution.

Communities

From the early days of our history, there were two key sustaining resources for coastal communities; people even called them King Cod and Queen Seal. For communities whose very foundations are rooted as much in the bounty of the seal fishery as the cod fishery, the Sealers Memorial in Elliston provides common ground for all communities to write chapters in our shared story.

Businesses

From offshore oil and gas to fishing and sealing, to modern marine technology, our economic success will always be tied to the sea. In addition to giving back to communities that gave so generously to build a strong economy and society, the Sealers Memorial in Elliston provides the opportunity to educate and promote a culture of safety for future generations of workers. There is no better way to honour these marine workers than by ensuring that we continue to learn from their sacrifice.

Modern Workers

People who work at sea undertake extraordinary risks to earn a living and share a unique bond with our natural environment. For them, home is a point of inspiration and motivation. *Home from The Sea* is what we all wish for and look forward to. This is an ideal time and project under which to unite and demonstrate our gratitude for the hard work and countless sacrifices upon which our prosperity depends.





Shape our future

as we continue to build awareness
and education

Above: Man jumping off the deck toward a seal, 1939. Source: William Edgar and Joan Waddell
Opposite Page Top: *SS Florizel* bound for icefields, 1914. Source: Alfred Cecil Hale Bowen
Opposite Page Bottom: Sealers on ice with gaffs; sealing vessels in distance, 1915.
Source: Walter Edward Davidson



HOW YOU CAN GIVE

There are so many ways to get involved in our two million dollar capital campaign and share in the pride of being part of a unique effort.

Giving

- Give a cash gift directly to the Sealers Memorial campaign
- Give building supplies for the memorial site and/or interpretation centre
- Transfer appreciated stocks to the capital campaign
- Give matching gifts (for example, an employer may match an employee gift)
- Give a group gift - service club, workplace fundraiser or sports team
- Organize an event and contact the *Home from The Sea* campaign office at (709) 753-0794 for assistance or visit our website at homefromthesea.ca

Gift Plans

- Benefit from our recognition program when you give \$5,000 or more

Gift Plan	Gift Level
Leadership	\$600,000
Visionary	\$100,000
Anchor	\$50,000
Cornerstone	\$25,000
Foundation	\$10,000
Monumental	\$5,000
Community Leader	\$1,000
Founding Families	\$500
Groundswell	\$25

Charitable Donation Number: 84626-1220-RR0001



RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Leadership: 2 donations

Provincial and Federal Government:

- Name added to chosen location at interpretation centre
- Designated officials invited to speak at two special events
- Listed on all communications materials
- Recognition in ads, website and social media promotions
- Press event announcing gift

Visionary: 2 donations

Large corporate and labour:

- Name added to chosen location at interpretation centre
- Designated officials invited to speak at two special events
- Listed on all communications materials
- Recognition in ads, website and social media promotions

Anchor: 3 donations

Large corporate and labour:

- Name added to chosen location at interpretation centre
- Designated officials invited to speak at two special events
- Listed on all communications materials
- Recognition in ads, website and social media promotions

Cornerstone: 24 donations

Large corporate and labour:

- Name added to chosen location at interpretation centre
- Listed on all communications materials
- Recognition in ads, website and social media promotions

Foundation: 5 donations

Small to medium enterprises:

- Name added to chosen location at interpretation centre or elsewhere on site
- Listed on all communications materials
- Recognition in ads, website and social media promotions

Monumental: 12 donations

Small to medium enterprises:

- Name added to chosen location at interpretation centre or elsewhere on site
- Listed on all communications materials
- Recognition in ads, website and social media promotions

Community Leader: 40 donations

Communities through municipal donation or fundraising event:

- Name on community giving plaque on site
- Recognition on website and social media promotions

Founding Families: 100 donations

Families are invited to collectively raise funds:

- Name on founding families plaque near memorial statue
- Recognition on website and social media promotions

Groundswell: 2000 donations

Personal contributions:

- Recognition on website and social media promotions



Landing survivors, 4 April 1914. Source: S.H. Parsons and Son.

In Memorial of 78 Brave Newfoundland Sealers

from *Haulin' Rope & Gaff: Songs and Poetry in the History of the Newfoundland Seal Fishery* by Shannon Ryan and Larry Small, page 93.

Sad comes the news from oe'r the sea
They left their homes with happy hearts,
To fill our hearts with dread,
In health and spirits gay,
To tell us that the ones we loved
And bid their friends a fond adieu
Are numbered with the dead.

As they sailed out that day;
A husband dear a loving son,
The pride and beauty of our land
Or one we did adore,
Who knew no dread or fear,
Died on the bleak and northern floe
None thinking as they left their homes

Alas, we'll see no more.
That death was drawing near.
May God who does things for the best
We pray to give relief,
To mothers, wives and children
To bear this heavy grief;
And may they see a brighter land
Most fervently we pray;
For these brave souls who lost their lives
Upon that fatal day.

This composition is dedicated to those "Who lost Their Lives in a Blizzard at the ice March 31st, 1914" (Ryan and Small 93). At the end of the piece, Ryan and Small state: "This Broadside is in all probability the work of Johnny Burke. It was copied from an original now in the possession of Mr. Herbert Cranford of St. John's. Courtesy of Paul Mercer" (93).

Please join us in honouring the past, informing the present and creating a legacy for the future. Now is the time. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Capital Campaign Committee

Chris Collingwood, Co-Chair
Leo Power, Co-Chair
Carson Noel
Lee Shinkle
Anne Whelan
Tim Powers
June Perry

Architect

PHB Group Inc.

Auditor

Grant Thorton LLP

Bank

Bank of Nova Scotia

Elliston Heritage Foundation

Myrtle Stagg, Chair
Neal Tucker, Vice-chair
Gary Oldford, Treasurer
Bernice Tucker, Secretary
Nancy Cook, Public Relations
Scott Baker, Director
John Grant, Director
Derek Martin, Director
Harriet Tilley, Director
Sheilagh Guy Murphy, Honourary Chair

Advisory Committee

His Honour John Crosbie, Honourary Patron
Chris Collingwood, Chair
Leo Power, Finance Chair
Dr. Melvin Baker, Secretary
Ray Andrews
Bill Barry
Ches Crosbie
Michael Crosbie
Rob Crosbie
Nancy Cook
John Kearley
Sheilagh Guy Murphy
Frank Pinhorn
Dr. Shannon Ryan
Lee Shinkle
Myrtle Stagg
Bernice Tucker
Dr. Ron Whelan
Jim Winter

Campaign Planning, Marketing & Communications

Pilot° Communications



Home from The Sea
Sealers Memorial in Elliston

www.homefromthesea.ca