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Monthly Newsletter
2024 Fulbright Project

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Green Gables Heritage Place, the inspiration for the place setting in the novel Anne of Green Gables. Cavendish, Prince Edward Island

An Lùnastal [August]

Monthly Recap

Much like June and July, the month of August has been a blur and packed with a full schedule of events and Summer happenings. Labor Day weekend marked the end of many regularly scheduled summer square dances, but luckily Monday night dances at Brook Village Hall — my personal favorite — and Saturday night dances at the West Mabou Hall will continue through the Fall! I've spent a lot of time this month running to and fro event to event around Cape Breton and mainland Nova Scotia. One unique event I attended was Nipugt Mawiomi, a forest concert featuring artists celebrating Mi'kmaq, Gaelic and Acadian cultures. The event was especially focused on honoring the unique traditions of different cultural communities through music. During my time in Cape Breton and with my Fulbright project's focus being primarily on presenting an understanding of Scottish-Gaelic traditional music in relation to contemporary technologies, it was wonderful to spend an afternoon celebrating and being immersed in the many musical traditions and sounds from Cape Breton.





(Left) A crowd at the Forest Gathering concert on August 18th in Pipers Glen / Egypt Falls.
(Right) Whale Cove Beach, Cape Breton



Sunflowers on the grounds of Green Gables Heritage Place, PEI

This month I was able to spend another week at The Gaelic College during an adult learning week to learn more about the time honored traditional craft of weaving. During the Summer months, the Gaelic College offers both youth and adults cultural learning opportunities in a variety of different course offerings focusing on Nova Scotia's Gaelic cultural traditions. These courses range from learning instruments like fiddle, piano and guitar accompaniment, harp, bodhran, and piping to Gaelic language learning, singing, step dancing and weaving. Back in May I attended a two week Gaelic language immersion course at the Gaelic College and have been looking forward to another opportunity to learn more about local cultural traditions. After taking a short introductory class in weaving back in the Spring in Mabou at An Drochaid, I've been inspired to learn more about this creative traditional practice. I was able to spend a full week in the weaving studio at the Gaelic College learning more about the creative process and art.





Handwoven projects created at the Gaelic College August 2024.

The practice of weaving is ancient and is one of the oldest crafts in human history going back thousands of years. Before the industrial revolution, fabric and textiles weren't readily available and producing cloth was done in the home, often using materials found in nature, like linen, which is made from the fibers of a flax plant. People across cultures worldwide have also been creating cloth materials from wool for centuries. The process of making cloth, be it from linen, wool fibers, or other materials, is lengthy and involves several steps. It begins by prepping the materials to be turned into treads, to tediously threading and preparing a loom for use, to the actual process of weaving threads into a cloth. Weaving traditions in Nova Scotia are connected to practices originating in Scottish Highlands and were brought to Cape Breton through the immigration of early Scottish peoples. There is also a rich tradition of weaving in Appalachia, where settlers had to be self-sufficient living in isolated areas. With most cloth being produced by factories in the modern day, weaving your own cloth is no longer a necessity, but there is still a thriving community of artistic weavers and learning opportunities worldwide.



“Anne’s room“ at Green Gables Heritage Place. The museum is designed to recreate the setting and atmosphere of the early 1900s, reflecting the time period experienced by the characters in the novel Anne of Green Gables.

Also this month, I made the trek back to PEI, this time for a long weekend with friends visiting the island to take part in the full Anne of Green Gables experience! An afternoon visit to Green Gables Heritage Place which was the real life inspiration for the setting of the 1908 classic novel *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery and The Anne of Green Gables Museum was an inspiring visit to be had. Author Lucy Maud Montgomery’s manuscript for *Anne of Green Gables* was denied by several publishers for years, when it was finally published it was a best-selling novel, and helped her to achieve success as a published author.







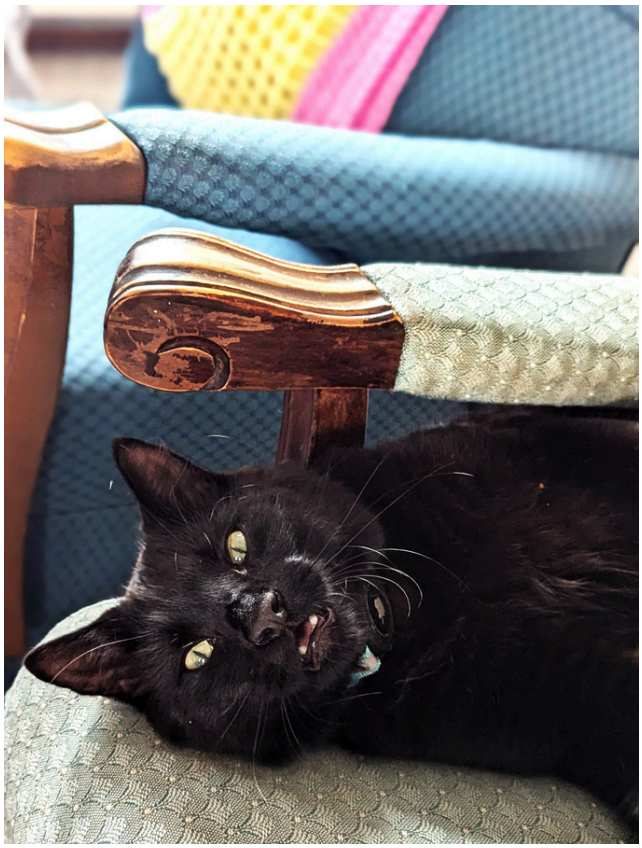
(Top Left) Kindred spirits reunited. (Top Right) The Anne of Green Gables Museum and family property of author L.M. Montgomery. (Below) The Lake of Shining Waters.







(Top) The Margaree Highland Games. (Above Left) Theatre crowd at Anne of Green Gables: The Musical. (Above Right) Night lunch plate and tea during a Maryvale Square Dance. (Below Right) Ollie the Cat, Mabou's friendly feline (Bottom Right) Bayberry leaves.





Fulbright Project Updates

In August I began the in depth analysis phase of my Fulbright project and throughout the month of September, I'll continue analyzing interview transcripts along with prepping the materials I've recorded this year to be deposited into the Beaton Institute archives. Analysis is a lengthy step, and with double the anticipated amount of interviews planned for the project, I'll be using the month of September to focus solely on this work. It's an exciting stage to be diving deep into the many viewpoints of interviewees with discussions surrounding the impact of contemporary technologies and globalization on Cape Breton traditional music. After analysis is complete, I'll move onto post production of the audio stories and spend the winter months editing the project. The timeline of releasing the first podcast episodes in Spring of 2025 is still planned, along with the launch of a project website. The second phase of the project is the creation of a companion documentary acting as a visual component to the audio stories podcast and planned to be developed and released by the end of 2025.





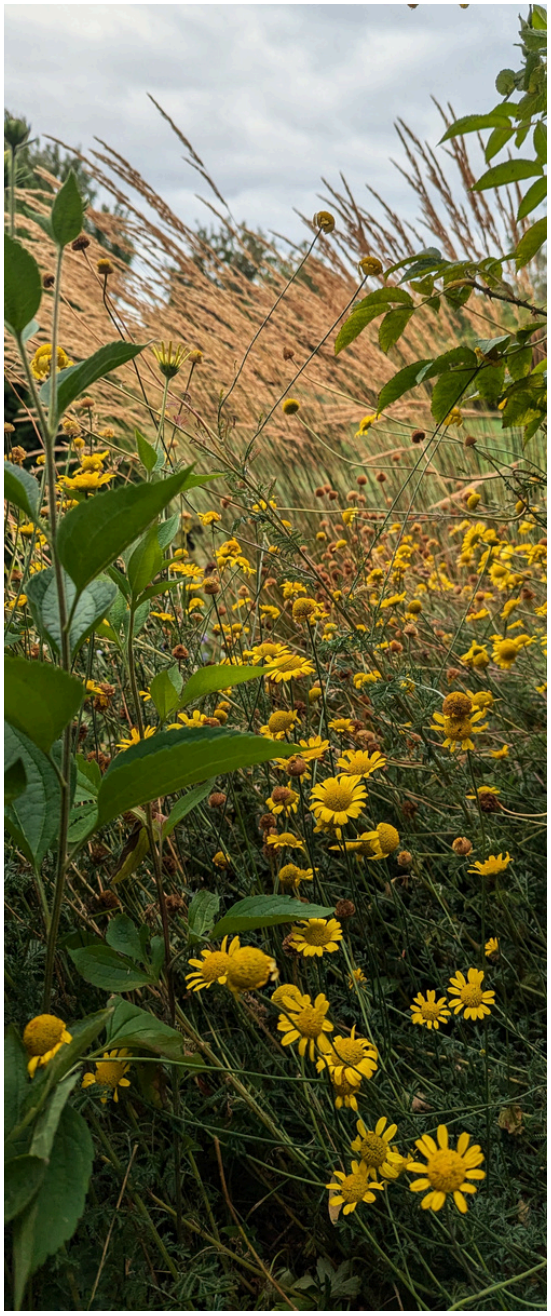


(Top Left) In the kitchen at Green Gables. (Top Right) Scene from the Garlic Gala at Big Barn Little Farm in Antigonish, NS. (Bottom) A late Summer scene on West Mabou Beach.

Check out the video below - or click here to access

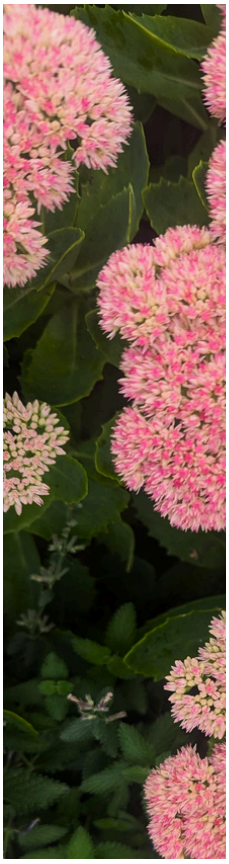
too see what I've been up too during the month of August!











Looking Ahead

As mentioned, September is shaping up to be a month focusing greatly on Fulbright project work and interview analysis, with the occasional weekly dance or two! Summer is hanging on and the air is getting cooler with Autumn on its way. The anticipated annual Celtic Colors International Festival is right around the corner on October 11th - 19th, and until then, I'll be enjoying the last few days of Summer.

Am fear nach cuir 's an mhàirt, cha bhuan e 's an Fhoghair.
[Who doesn't sow in March will not reap in Autumn.]

-Toni

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