

Shorefast Foundation: The Fogo Island Experience

Integrated Approaches to Coastal Community
Survival and Development



Fogo Island & Change Islands

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The Humble Fish that Changed the World

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- The Shorefast Foundation was a \$16M Project announced on January 23, 2009
- Three funders:
 - Government of Canada (\$5M)
 - Government of NL (\$5M)
 - Shorefast Foundation (\$6M....plus...)
- A project led by the arts; bringing together the unique characteristics of Fogo Island and Change Islands to appeal to geotourists from around the world

Finding new ways with old things....

Background

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Cultural & economic resilience for Fogo Island and Change Islands

- Lead with the arts to create a future built on our past
- Become a destination for meaningful experiences with the arts, culture, food and nature

Shorefast Vision

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- As philanthropists / social entrepreneurs, we want to partner, invest & be catalysts
- Our projects are a point of departure, not a point of arrival

Shorefast Goals

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- Entrepreneurial drive combined with strong social purpose
- Shorefast is a registered charity that functions as a social entrepreneurship:
 - Using business minded ways of achieving social ends
- 100% of surpluses are re-invested in the community

Social Entrepreneurship



"We are all inventors, each sailing out on a voyage of discovery, guided each by a private chart, of which there is no duplicate. The world is all gates, all opportunities."

Ralph Waldo Emerson



- Know who we are
- Innovate but be true to who we are
- Know what's going on in the world
- Know our markets; find our niche

Shorefast Approach



- Culture has to be lived; we must be careful not to trivialize it
- There are no better guardians than the ghosts of the people who came before us
- Must build on what was and what is

Shorefast Beliefs



Focused on Geotourism & the Arts:

- The Arts Corporation
- The Inn
- The Business Fund

Primary Shorefast Projects



Marine Interpretation Center

- Site for the first annual World Oceans Day Event on Fogo Island
- Site for the New Ocean Literacy Programming

Community Initiatives





Marine Interpretation Center

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Traditional Boatbuilding

- 300 year old craft being lost
- The Great Fogo Island Punt Race is in it's 4th year
- Made 2 documentary films
- Established largest collection of Traditional Wooden Boats
- Now shifting our focus to training a new generation of boat builders

Community Initiatives

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Worlds End Theatre Company

- A theatre company which produces professional theatre reflecting the diversity of life on the islands



Community Initiatives

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Partridgeberry Festival

- A fall festival celebrating the partridgeberry
- Alongside local agricultural products and local art and craft

Community Initiatives

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Important community relationships:

- Fogo Island Co-op
- Agricultural Co-op (Community Gardens)
- Wind & Waves Artisan Guild and other Crafters (Quilting/Rug Hooking/Knitting)
- Fogo Island Central Academy
- 50+ Club
- And others.....

Community Initiatives

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Build on the tangible & intangible assets of Fogo Island to create a world-renowned, high-end "Geotourism Destination"

The Tourism Goal

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"Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – the environment, heritage, aesthetics, food, culture & well-being of local people".

Jonathan Tourtellot,
National Geographic Traveler

Geotourism

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- Projects must be transformative to local economy
- Recognize that doing something bold makes other things seem possible
- Want to find ways of collaborating with other NL sites to offer a comprehensive experience to guests
- Must continue to benchmark ourselves internationally
- Our projects fit with the vision articulated by the Government of NL

Guiding Principles and Observations

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• **Strategy #1: Utilize the natural resources of Fogo Island to generate sustainable economic activity**

- Hiking, kayaking, boating, fishing, berry-picking, caribou, icebergs, whales, squid jigging, bird watching, the Funks and the learnings of the Great Auk, Tilting heritage designation, nature studies & lectures

What Needs to be Done: A Six Part Strategy

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• **Strategy #2: Utilize the cultural/heritage assets of Fogo Island to save a traditional way of life and attract international visitors e.g.**

- traditional crafts; music; storytelling; mummers; traditional houses and buildings; wooden boats and boatbuilding skills; performance and exhibition spaces; festivals and regattas; build on the mystique of the cod (art, history, cuisine)

What Needs to be Done: A Six Part Strategy

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• **Strategy #3: Invest in the visual & performing arts to create an international center of excellence as well as showcase a rich local cultural heritage, e.g.**

- An arts residency & production program
- Artists studios
- Artists reside in traditional houses
- Art exhibit and performance spaces
- Art becomes an integral part of community life

What Needs to be Done: A Six Part Strategy

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• **Strategy #4: Create assets that will be demand generating:**

- *A world class inn*
 - *heritage library, art gallery, conference facility & e-cinema*
- *Internationally recognized regional cuisine*
- *Progressive use of architecture & design that is leading-edge, locale appropriate*

What Needs to be Done: A Six Part Strategy



• **Strategy #5: Stimulate and support local small business growth and employee skill development to levels demanded by a world class travel destination:**

- *Shorefast Business Fund*
- *Training Programs*

What Needs to be Done: A Six Part Strategy



• **Strategy #6: Strategic Use of Media to communicate with key audiences**

- Target market is international
- Wealthy individuals with niche interests
- Small groups, especially in the arts
- Capitalize on the growing demand for travel destinations that offer unique, authentic experiences, exquisite comfort and distinctive cuisine

What Needs to be Done: A Six Part Strategy



The Tower Studio: Shoal Bay



- Program in two interactive parts
 - Residency program
 - Production program
- International selection panel
 - Open call for artists of various disciplines
 - Invitations
- Contemporary art gallery at the new Inn

The Fogo Island Arts Corporation



- This million dollar fund is focused specifically on Fogo Island & Change Islands
- We offer micro-finance funds to individuals starting or expanding businesses that fit the master plan
- We offer business coaching
- The fund sends a clear message about priorities, direction, intent & commitment

The Business Assistance Fund



- Design architect Todd Saunders; managing architects Sheppard Case; Built by Fogo Islanders
- Open all year
- Will be among the exclusive rural inns of the world
- Expected to open Spring 2012.

The Fogo Island Inn



- The site has its own presence & melancholy
- Must have a strong sense of place
- A contemporary building but hearkens back to a simpler time...where time itself isn't obliterated by the movement of everything
- Has an inviting, flexible and warm nature
- World class but not pretentious
- In a place that is both wild and safe

About the Inn



WHITE MODEL RENDERINGS

FOGO ISLAND INN

Fogo Island
Newfoundland
CANADA



SAUNDERS ARCHITECTURE

www.saunders.no



- A living place where local people and guests come together
- A double victory: good for local people & good for guests
- An important and new part of an old continuity
- **Not** a theme park for all things "outport"
- **Not** over-refined, over-manipulated or contrived
- People leave feeling calmer and clearer

About The Inn



- Most will be have "been everywhere" and "seen it all"; looking for a deepening of experience; want to learn
- Many want to escape the modern disease of boredom caused by "too much"; looking to quiet their souls & rediscover the subtlety of life
- Want to slow down....give feelings an opportunity to lead; to connect with the earth again
- Want to balance living well with living responsibly

Profile of the Guests



- None of us is as smart as all of us
- Goal is to help give life and personality to the Fogo Island Inn...so that the inn tells our story
- To create a successful emotional asset and a successful community asset....that will become a successful commercial asset

Design Philosophy



- Look to the **punt for Inspiration...** constrained by time, money, materials it is:

- Poetic and pragmatic
- Complex & simple
- Rough & gentle
- Built for work, for fun & child-like
- Of this place ; of these hands



Design Philosophy

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- Goal is to hire and train local people
- Bring the training to Fogo Island
- Use existing programs (eg. HNL); partner with local institutions
- Work with partners to develop programmes to fill the many gaps
- These programmes can be made available to others in the Province

Training Approach

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- Hospitality: *"the friendly & generous reception of guests & strangers"*
- Tourist: *"Someone who is travelling usually for sightseeing"*
- Guest: *"someone who is invited to the home of another"*

The people who come here are **guests**, we have **invited** them

Important Words

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"The best and most beautiful things in this world cannot be seen or even heard, but must be felt with the heart."

Helen Keller

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- " A place that both exists and is still being formed"
- This is an ambitious & challenging plan...it is a journey
- ...We are all part of the ongoing creation of this place

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