Acquisition of Holy Angels Property Inspires and Stimulates New Partnerships

On May 30, 2013, New Dawn Enterprises announced its purchase of the former Holy Angels property in the Northend of Sydney. The sale, which was shared with the community the following day at a celebration on site, includes the school, convent, Marguerite Bourgeois house and 2.77 acres of land.

“From the outset, this has been a conversation characterized by great excitement and collaboration”, says New Dawn Director of Operations and Special Projects, Norma Boyd. “We are overwhelmed by the positive response from the community, by the many ideas shared with us thus far, and by offers from individuals and organizations to work with us and support this project as it unfolds”.

Through multiple preliminary conversations and consultations undertaken over the last year and a half, as the purchase of the property was considered, we have assembled an outline of what we believe to be possible in this space. At the same time, we have come to appreciate that the vision for this space must be a living and breathing entity, something that grows and changes along with us, something that although guiding, is dynamic enough to accommodate the new ideas that emerge as new individuals, organizations and businesses join the conversation and their own synergies, needs and aspirations become evident.

Three months after the purchase, on July 23, the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, Nova Scotia Rural and Economic Development and Tourism, and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality announced funding for a Holy Angels Future Uses Study. This Study will help New Dawn to better understand how a centre for arts, culture, creativity and innovation can best be of use to artists and businesses looking to forge new relationships and to create new art forms, products and productions.

The process will allow New Dawn, in a more formal way, to begin conversations with the community about their vision for such a centre and the ways in which it can facilitate access to the arts, a local culture of innovation, and improved quality of life for all. While the study will involve further architectural assessments and the drafting of a business plan, broader and deeper commu-
Community consultations represent the heart of the effort. The study is scheduled to begin in early September 2013 and wrap up in January 2014.

Over the summer, New Dawn issued a public Request for Expressions of Interest for the Future Uses Study. Study proposals, submitted at the end of July, were characterized by considerable expertise in the field of arts and culture development and innovative, community-based approaches to the consultations. New Dawn is now in the process of reviewing these submissions and selecting the consulting group best suited to lead the work that lies ahead.

For updates on the study, open calls for community participation, and a summary of findings visit www.newdawn.ca.

New Dawn would like to acknowledge and thank the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame for their ongoing guidance and support over the last year as we sought to learn about and assess the opportunity at hand. Theirs is a legacy of education, of the value and transformative potential of arts and culture, and of helping people in this community to find their gifts. It is one which we carry forward with us as we contemplate and realize the regeneration of this property.

Annual Dinner Highlights a Busy Year
On July 13th we were joined by over one-hundred of our friends for the New Dawn Annual Dinner. With Helen MacDonald, past Chair of the Board, as Master of Ceremony we enjoyed an evening of conversation, updates, and recognition to our community leaders. This year, a new feature was added to the program; a video which replaced the traditional written Annual Report. The video used the power of storytelling to provide insight into New Dawn’s work over the past year. It was produced by Darcy Campbell of Shot on Site Media and will be featured on the newly revised New Dawn website which will be unveiled this September.

Following last year’s theme of supporting local farmers, we were served a delicious meal from Chef Ardon Moffard, of Governor’s Pub & Eatery who prepared the meal using locally grown food. We were also delighted to be joined by Jeremy White, owner of Big Spruce Brewing. Big Spruce is a new organic brewery located in Nyanza, just outside Baddeck. Jeremy brought along portable kegs to serve his delicious brew to our dinner guests.

Rankin MacSween closed the evening with insightful and humorous words of reflection. Rankin shared stories of partnership; he presented perspectives on our community’s challenges; and he recounted the adventures of one exceptionally clever Boisdale cow.

Thank you to all who joined us, and to those who helped to make this year’s Annual Dinner a success!

Retirement of Director, Blair Kasouf
We would like to extend a special thank you to Blair Kasouf for his time and dedication as a Director on New Dawn’s Board. Blair recently retired after serving seven years on the Board, making many valuable contributions to New Dawn conversations and initiatives. When asked to reflect on Blair’s involvement Rankin MacSween is quick to point out that “Blair is a man of action; he never missed anything, he has a notable commitment to this community, and he took his Board appointment incredibly seriously. If you had five hundred people like Blair you could achieve great things”.

While New Dawn will miss having Blair at the Board table, there is no doubt that his work will continue to reverberate throughout New Dawn and the many organizations he supports.
To recognize Blair’s contribution to New Dawn a special donation was made on his behalf to a group he has worked closely with - Community CARES Youth Outreach. Community CARES has been working with young people on the Northside of Cape Breton for the past 12 years. Community CARES provide space, resources and a supportive environment where youth can take control of their own lives, engage in leadership opportunities, and participate more fully in the community.

John Currie: Exemplary Community Leadership

One of the highlights of the Annual Dinner is the presentation of New Dawn’s award for Exemplary Community Leadership, and this year was no exception as Steve Lilley surprised this year’s recipient, Mr. John Currie.

“We couldn’t be more delighted to recognize John’s contribution and leadership to our community. John has received awards across the country and it is long overdue that we publically acknowledge his accomplishments here” says Rankin MacSween.

In 1976 Mr. Currie took the bold steps of uprooting his family and business to move to Cape Breton Island. John became a pioneer in the local business community as he developed one of the first high tech, private sector firms on the Island, Internav Ltd.

New Dawn is proud to acknowledge Mr. Currie’s vision, leadership and fortitude through his dedication to and support of innovation here in Cape Breton.

The Exemplary Community Leadership plaque, now bearing John Currie’s name, hangs proudly in the New Dawn boardroom. Congratulations to John and the Currie family.

Homecare Celebrates 25 Years

This year New Dawn Homecare celebrates its 25th Anniversary and commemorated the milestone by hosting a staff/volunteer family picnic at the Holy Angels property in the Northend of Sydney on Saturday, August 24th. Over 70 staff, volunteers and families joined for a sunny afternoon of BBQ, treats and children’s activities including a magic show personal caricatures and face painting. Sabrina Vatcher was delighted with the turnout, “it was really fun to get everyone together on such a beautiful summer day. Our staff and volunteers work so hard and give so much; we wanted to organize this picnic to show our appreciation.”

New Dawn Homecare has served families in the Sydney and surrounding area since 1988, providing housekeeping, personal care, meal preparation, respite, footcare and blood collection to clients of all ages.
Caregiver Education Series Starts October 8th

New Dawn Homecare, in partnership with the Caregivers Nova Scotia, will host a Caregivers Education Series in Sydney starting this October. The Caregiver Education Series is a weekly event open to anyone who is caring for a loved one - possibly an elderly parent or someone living with physical disabilities. The series aims to provide information and support to caregivers and will cover such topics as providing personal care, making the home safe, feeding persons with dementia, exercise for caregivers, and a host of other relevant themes. Sabrina Vatcher, Manager of New Dawn Homecare is delighted to be involved with this project “we frequently meet people in our community who struggle with day-to-day issues that come with caring for a loved one; often they do not know what programs are available. Through this series we hope to provide information and connections to help people live happy and healthy lives while caring for others. This is also a great way to bring caregivers together in a casual setting to share common experiences.”

One of the unique add-ons to the series is that free respite care will be available for those who would not otherwise be able to attend. By offering this service, we hope to remove barriers to those who care for their loved one. The respite care is limited and will be offered on a first-come-first-serve basis. To arrange for respite to attend the series, please contact New Dawn Homecare at 562-2444.

The Caregivers Education Series will start Tuesday, October 8th and will run every Tuesday for a total of eight weeks. It will be held in the relaxed setting of the former Holy Angels Convent. The series is free, thanks to funding made available from the New Horizons for Seniors Grant. Registration will be limited to 15 participants. For information, or to register please contact New Dawn Homecare at 562-2444 or email newdawn@newdawn.ca

Cape Breton University Supports Meals on Wheels

Jennifer MacKinnon, Coordinator of New Dawn Meals on Wheels would like to send a heartfelt ‘thank-you’ to Cape Breton University for supporting New Dawn Meals on Wheels.

At the Creative Community Business Conference held in July, CBU made a donation to Meals on Wheels in lieu of presenting the conference’s guest speakers with gifts. Each donation was made in recognition of the guest speaker.

CBU’s support will go a long way to help us deliver Meals on Wheels to people in our community!

Bank of Montreal Joins New Dawn for Volunteer Day

Jennifer MacKinnon, Coordinator of New Dawn Meals on Wheels, was delighted when she received a call from the local Bank of Montreal inquiring about volunteer opportunities with New Dawn Meals on Wheels. June 5th was BMO Volunteer Day across North America and they marked the occasion by joining forces with our Meals on Wheels volunteers. Six BMO staff members helped package meals, deliver them to clients, then ended the day by playing BINGO with New Dawn Guest Home residents.

John Clarke, Manager of BMO on Welton Street has this to say about the experience: “we all knew volunteering is an important part of our community life, but we all left with a better appreciation of the need, and how we can do something about it. Your own dedication and compassion has generated six new ambassadors for Meals on Wheels”.

Jennifer would like to extend her appreciation to John and staff at BMO for a wonderful experience.

Guest Home Enjoying a Busy Summer

To those who participate in, or follow the events of New Dawn Guest Home it’s likely of no surprise to hear that the past few months have been bustling with activities.

The residents of the Guest Home and the residents of New Dawn Home Living kicked-off the summer with Canada Day
celebrations including a BBQ and Music DJ for approximately 150 residents, staff and families. In early July they went to Mira Provincial Park for a 6-day camping trip where they enjoyed bonfires, BBQs, and swimming. They also went to the Highlands for a day of whale watching off the shores of Ingonish. Action Week in Sydney provided a lot of fun for the residents, including the final concert and fireworks. To top it all off, last Thursday they spent the afternoon at the beach in Jamesville, followed by a BBQ at Guest Home Manager, Janet Gillis’ home.

Gennie MacDonald, Activities Coordinator at the Guest Home says “it is a lot of fun to get out and enjoy all that Cape Breton has to offer in the summer. I think this may have been our busiest summer yet”.

Guest Home has more outings planned for the fall, including a day at the Two Rivers Wildlife Park as well as a trip around the Cabot Trail.

In the spring edition of the New Dawn Enterpriser we told you about the journey that seven Guest Home residents, one Home Living resident, and three staff are taking to Disney World. This trip has been booked and the travellers are geared up for their departure on September 17th.

We wish you safe travels as you create lasting memories!

**Congratulations Graduates!**

Graduation celebrations were energetic this year as students from New Dawn College received their diplomas. In total, 135 students graduated from New Dawn College programs this May. We look forward to following their progress, and supporting them on their journey to employment. Congratulations Graduates!

**Rental Properties Get a Fresh Look**

Capital renovations are currently underway at MacLeod Heights, New Dawn’s apartment complex on Alexandra Street. Among the renovations is the replacement of the siding which will transform the building to a colourful red, green and blue, similar to the units at New Dawn’s Pine Tree Park. Once complete, the maintenance crew will begin renovations at New Dawn’s Havlock St. and York St. apartments.

**New Dawn Highlighted at Citizen-Led Development and Social Innovation Conference**

New Dawn was one of eleven organizations across North America highlighted at the Citizen-led Sustainable Change conference attended by more than 150 community development practitioners, policymakers, researchers and funders from across Canada and the United States. The conference was hosted by the Coady Institute and the StFX Extension Department.

In addition to presenting at the conference, New Dawn was invited to participate as a case study that was being undertaken by the Coady Institute to explore Citizen-led development and social innovation in the North American context. Through this process, a number of people including New Dawn directors, staff and partners were interviewed to gain understanding of the history, successes and challenges New Dawn has experienced as a Community Development Corporation. “It has been a learning journey for us as we reflect on where we began and where we are today” says Norma Boyd, Director of Operations and Special Projects.

The purpose of the research is to learn from examples of initiatives for social, economic and environmentally sustainable
change that have started at local levels and have proceeded to have influence and impact on a wider scale.

The New Dawn case study was completed by Dr. Juliet Merrifield, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Adult Education at StFX, and is expected to be published along with the eight other studies this fall. The other organizations include Ecotrust Canada (BC), Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation (San Diego, CA), and Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (Toronto).

**New Dawn Participates in CBU’s Conference on Creative Community Business**

In July, the Community Economic Development Institute of the Shannon School of Business hosted a multidisciplinary conference on Creative Community Business.

The conference program included captivating panel presentations that discussed current practices, challenges, and emerging trends in community business. New Dawn’s leaders were invited to participate in two of the presentations.

For a panel titled *Creativity & Innovation*, Norma Boyd and Erika Shea joined panelists Laura Schneider of CBU’s Art Gallery, and New Dawn Board Director Jennifer Currie of the Cape Breton Music Industry Cooperative (Jennifer is also with CBU and is a Director on New Dawn’s Board).

Norma and Erika provided insight into New Dawn’s early vision of the Holy Angels property as a mixed-use space with sustainable living, working, co-working, performing, and gathering spaces that draw in and amplify this community’s creative, innovative and forward-looking energies.

On the final day of the conference Rankin MacSween shared the stage with Rupert Downing, Executive Director of Victoria’s Community Sector Planning Council and Stewart Perry, long active in community economic development (CED) in the U.S. and Canada and is a long-time friend of New Dawn. Together, they presented a provocative discussion on CED lessons and future trends. CBU captured this dialogue on video and we look forward to sharing it on our website.

**Reading Room to Share**

Christie MacNeil, archivist and collections manager in the local culture and heritage sector has provided her expertise to assist New Dawn in creating its own small library collection – one it intends to share with the community. The work was undertaken to catalog existing material and provide a Reading Room for public access.

New Dawn currently maintains the modest library at its office located on 75 Prince Street which is open to anyone who is interested in accessing the material. The majority of the published titles deal with education and community development topics while the grey literature consists of annual reports, financial statements, governance documents and general reports relating to Cape Breton economic development.

To access the Reading Room, or for a listing of the content, please contact Mary Keeping by phone at 539-9560 or by email at newdawn@newdawn.ca.
New Dawn Partners with the NS Community Sector Council to Host Regional Hub

Earlier this summer, New Dawn was named one of six organizations across Nova Scotia to serve as a hosting agency for a new provincial Community Sector Council that will work with non-profit groups. As host organization, New Dawn will provide a home for the Community Sector Council Convenor, the person responsible for creating a hub for the Cape Breton region. Once the Convenor is in place, he/she will work with the Council to organize a six-module training workshop for non-profit organizations, and will begin connecting with non-profit organizations throughout the Cape Breton region.

New Dawn is delighted to partner with the Community Sector Council for this initiative. For more information about the Community Sector Council visit www.csc-ns.ca

Homecare Shares Stories of Safety Success

In May, New Dawn Homecare was invited to participate in the 1st Annual Prevention and Safety in the Workplace Conference in Sydney. Sabrina Vatcher, General Manager of the Healthcare Division, participated in the conference as a panelist to address the topic of safety best practices and ways in which local companies have succeeded in building a strong safety framework.

The Cape Breton Partnership, in cooperation with Workers’ Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education and the North American Occupational Safety and Health Week, hosted the conference with more than 200 participants.

"Because we work in people's homes, we don't have one workplace; we have over a hundred," says Sabrina. "That is why implementing a safety program and getting staff involved and interested in safety was so important to us, to ensure our workers are kept safe no matter where they are working."

"Since we implemented our safety program we have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of injuries. We talk about safety every single day at New Dawn. We really enjoyed participating in the conference and gathering ideas as well as sharing our success stories with our safety colleagues at the symposium so that we play our part in making sure every Nova Scotian comes home safe and uninjured from work."

Do You Have a Story to Share?

If you have a story to share in the New Dawn Enterprise please contact tanya@newdawn.ca.