Table Activity: Storytelling and Public Awareness

*Participants at the **2026 CBLIP Partner Update Event – Honouring Our Stories** were asked to consider how storytelling could be leveraged to build stronger public awareness of the benefits of immigration in Unama'ki – Cape Breton. Each bullet below represents a post-it note contributed by a participant.*

Connecting through **personal** story-sharing:

- Conversation circles at YMCA or other (focus on members sharing stories to share knowledge and resources)
- Success stories
- Testimonials, learning shared history
- Intergenerational storytelling (over food, children's books, other?)
- Cabot Trail Writers Festival storytelling
- *Dear Neighbour* event – sharing at a personal level
- Re-living the story and experience and feel
- Living library activity
- Testimonials (building connections, learn about each other)
- Human lens
- Intentional interactions about personal experiences (ex. Host a monthly cafe)
- Not just #s on the spreadsheet (to share the stories)
- Stories from Cape Breton
- Substance use and addictions stories
- Saved a cottage and listened to the stories about the history of the cottage and learning its history. "Takes a village" to be welcoming to newcomers. Storytelling is a big part of sharing experiences and connecting so finding ways to connect that way.
- Sharing stories on community TV like Telile that people in the community can see and connect with newcomer stories. TV, Radio, social media snippets would make it easy for people in community to engage

Storytelling through **the arts:**

- Storytelling through workshops (e.g. lantern making)
- Using art (e.g. pottery, dance, music) as ways to tell stories and invite people
- Storytelling through art (ex. Lumiere art performances)
- Drum circle
- Cultural fashion show – story and craft of garment

- Crafts – get together
- Give opportunity to create theatre production about a person's arrival
- Community based art activities where it brings various people (newcomers, community members, Mi'kmaq people) to paint on canvas to tell stories of their journeys in life and how things are similar to each other's stories

Food and gardening as vehicles for sharing stories and building connection:

- Activities around food
- Food-from-back-home workshop
- Multicultural events (stories through food)
- Vietnamese pho 😊
- Bread from different countries
- Potlucks! 😊
- Storytelling through food sharing (cultural foods). Yum!
- Sharing together and building welcoming over a meal
- When June shared about sharing a meal – community meal
- Community gardens – food hubs
- Garden full of flowers from all over the world + seed giveaway of species from around the world
- Gatherings where people share "seeds" from different countries to share and take home to grow

Celebrations and events to share **culture**:

- Intercultural storytelling – international "tea party" – every cultural has a tea, share it and share stories
- Storytelling through ceremonies
- Through 'tea parties' and meet people where they're at!
- Attend pow wow
- New Dawn Newcomer Centre's annual Kwe' Unama'ki – Hello Cape Breton multicultural festival
- Festivals that honour different cultures, religions
- Mawio'mi – powwow
- Events in communities that encourage people from different cultures to wear their cultural clothing and do storytelling circles

Activities to build **connections and friendships**:

- How will we make newcomers feel welcome in community (how to play sports)
- Matchmaking
- Finding common ground!
- Connection between people who are second generation (or before) with recent newcomers
- Friendships from different places
- Sleepover at the castle (on the highway near Nyanza)
- Slowing down to BE – be together, be welcoming, be you
- In person connects and resources
- Social events – share stories
- Local coffee club/community coffee drop ins
- Welcome Network Richmond County

Building connection through **sports and recreation**:

- Integrate into recreation activities such as outings or dances
- Build recreation activity around a person and culture (example: learn to make dumplings)
- Sports – recreational leagues
- Events that newcomers can experience Cape Breton 101

Knowledge and skill sharing:

- People's school (community teach-ins, outdoor classrooms)
- Skill trading (e.g. bike repair, mending clothes, emptying your inbox LOL!/organizing files
- Use elders as resource for knowledge
- Wordle (app) with words from different languages, once solved you get the full definition or story
- Workshops and information about laws in Canada for newcomers
- It would be great if they could actively help social workers with immigration, navigating the immigration system

Sharing stories through **social and mainstream media**:

- Social media posting – show identity and mission of organization through storytelling from community members
- Public storytelling activities

- Radio interviews with different newcomers and locals
- Public education (community engagement events)
- Sharing stories on community TV like Telile that people in the community can see and connect with newcomer stories. TV, Radio, social media snippets would make it easy for people in community to engage
- Myth busting campaign re. immigration etc.