How cultural heritage can contribute to community development and wellbeing

Contribution to book "Researching Happiness: Qualitative, Biographical and Critical Perspectives" Edited by Mark Cieslik (Northumbria University) and Laura Hyman (Portsmouth University)

Claire Wallace, University of Aberdeen
David Beel, MMU

Abstract

The paper looks at how cultural heritage can help to create dynamic rural communities using notions of the circulation of cultural, social and economic capitals. There is no one model of how cultural heritage can be used and different communities approach their heritage in different ways. An important factor is the local ownership and control of this heritage which then grows to have further ramifications for the communities in question enabling further community development. Cultural heritage generates social and cultural capital by helping to mobilise community participation, which in turn helps to create the "community" in question. It contributes towards wellbeing by helping to create pride and esteem related to a sense of place. This also has economic benefits by attracting tourists and keeping local businesses afloat. The paper will focus upon two case studies to illustrate how community development and wellbeing grew from cultural heritage. In particular, we examine the challenges of community-based research into wellbeing and how to understand wellbeing in community settings. The paper argues that wellbeing can be seen as a collective rather than only an individual characteristic and illustrates the role of qualitative research in understanding this.

Most approaches to happiness are quantitative and based upon individual responses to a narrow range of survey questions such as “life satisfaction” ratings. I have myself carried out a lot of research along these lines (Abbott & Wallace, 2012). The qualitative approach to happiness in the context of sociology and anthropology is still emerging with contributions like those of the authors in this volume (Cieslik, 2017)(Hyman, 2014; Thin, 2012). However, this is also often focused on individual wellbeing. Yet it is undoubtedly the case that certain places have higher wellbeing than others. For example the Western Isles and Orkney often come out top in the ONS surveys of happiness in Britain even though they are not particularly wealthy places. At a cross national level, the Scandinavian countries are usually shown to have higher wellbeing than other parts of Europe. At a more localised level, there have been efforts to understand community wellbeing (White, Sarah, C. with Blackmore, Chloe, 2016) but we are still left with the tantalising question: why are some communities more conducive to wellbeing than others? This paper is an attempt to provide some answers.

Community wellbeing as an element of happiness research is a rather nebulous concept because first of all it is not clear how collective wellbeing amounts to more than the individual wellbeing of its members and secondly because it is not clear at what level “community” takes place (see (Phillips & Wong, 2017). Whilst usually referring implicitly to a geographical location, community can also refer to the kinds of networks of affective connection and social ties that constitute people’s lives – and in a globalised and digitally connected social world these than be increasingly complex and manifold (Hobsbawm, 2018) (Rainie and Wellman 2012). Elsewhere we have described the ways in which information technology impacts on these local affiliations (Wallace & Vincent, 2017). Here we look more explicitly at one aspect of community wellbeing – that of cultural heritage. In doing so we argue that wellbeing is a property of communities rather than only of individuals. This therefore goes beyond the conventional view of individual happiness.

One way of understanding wellbeing as a collective property is to consider the interactions of cultural and social capital and the way in which these convert into economic capital. Cultural heritage can be seen as an aspect of collective cultural capital and here we would draw upon Bourdieu’s discussion of these issues. Bourdieu defines cultural capital is the set of attributes, dispositions and ‘taste’ that is valued in a given society (Bourdieu, 1984) and reproduces elite positions through the artefacts and knowledge that embody cultural goods. Whilst Bourdieu was concerned with society as a whole, we can also consider the generation of cultural capital within specific locations where the valuing of particular artefacts, expertise or knowledge has more specific meanings. Bourdieu was concerned with cultural capital mainly as a form of inclusion/exclusion in hierarchal social relations. We argue that we need to look at how cultural capital is generated at a community level from the bottom up. In other words, we stand Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital on its head to show how this is generated by locational communities from below rather than by hegemonic authority from above (Beel & Wallace, 2018). In order for heritage from below to be generated and shared, it relies upon social capital – or participation in associational life and the mobilisation of resources at a community level - that represent a collective rather than just an individual asset (Putnam 2000). Whilst Bourdieu sees social capital as the property of networks, Putnam sees it as

the property of communities – something which adds an intangible value to community membership. Hence when considering both social and cultural capital from a community perspective they can be seen as a collective rather than an individual resource.

Here we show how cultural heritage can help to develop rural communities, generating community wellbeing at a collective level and making them better places in which to live. This can happen in many different ways, reflecting different kinds of grass roots movements. Cultural heritage can take many forms including intangible cultural heritage such as songs, music, and skills, and tangible cultural heritage in the form of buildings, monuments and landscape. Rural communities can be home to both types. Far from being just about the past, cultural heritage is about how this develops into networks, activities and resources, which are situated in the present and can help shape positive trajectories into the future, enabling community "resilience"(Beel et al., 2016).

In this paper we consider two case studies - Portsoy and the Outer Hebrides – and we argue that cultural heritage can add real value to communities by helping to build a sense of place, generate social capital and mobilise community participation. The two case studies below illustrate how cultural heritage can be an important element of community wellbeing with significant economic ramifications. In this way we consider the conversion of different types of capitals – economic, social and cultural – in particular settings (Bourdieu 1986). After describing two case studies we shall consider the implications and the challenges that the community approach brings to happiness studies.

The two case studies were chosen because they formed part of a study of the implications of digital communications for rural development [1]. The role of cultural heritage emerged in these discussions with communities as a key concern of communities themselves – it was something people locally cared about. Whilst we looked at a number of different communities in the context of these funded projects, the two used here were good examples of successful cultural heritage projects. The reasons for this success and threats to it are discussed at the end of this chapter. The projects enabled us to do extensive fieldwork in these communities and to interview different participants over a period of time. They were more recently (2018) followed up for the purposes of this article.

Case Study 1: Portsoy

Portsoy is a small former fishing community on the North coast of Aberdeenshire with a resident population of around 2000. Created as a "Burgh of Barony" ,or independent town, by Mary Queen of Scots in 1550 it opened for trade in 1693 to become an important international trading harbour. The old warehouses still dominate the harbour side. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it became a fishing port centred on catching of salmon in nets from the sea. Like many of these peripheral coastal communities, it has latterly suffered decline especially after the

[1] This emerged from the dot.rural Digital Economy Hub funded by the Research Councils UK between 2009 and 2015 EP/GO6651/1 and Culture and Communities Network+ EP/KOO3585/1, 2012-2016 and EVIDANCE "Exploring Value in Digital Archives and Commainn Eiachdriadh" AH/L006006/1 2012-14

Second World War, as the economic basis for much of the prosperity vanished with the demise of this kind of salmon fishing and the movement of other fishing to larger deep-water ports. It became instead more of a dormitory town with an ageing population as young people moved out in search of education and jobs and older people moved in to retire to a seaside location where property prices were relatively low. Many who grew up there moved back to retire. The oil industry boom since the mid-1970s touched Portsoy by providing lucrative employment for some people 50 miles away in Aberdeen. By the 1990s it had a collection of historic but collapsing old buildings - more evidence of a neglected past than a happy future.

Portsoy was always a picturesque town with a thriving civil society. However, one transformative initiative was the creation of the Portsoy Traditional Boat Festival. Established in 1993 to mark the 300th Anniversary of the "New" Harbour (built in 1825) and celebrating its restoration, it originally took the form of a small sailing regatta. However, it has since grown to include boat racing, displays of boat building, traditional music and dancing, traditional food and crafts and attracts upwards of 16,000 people over a weekend in June.

The revival of cultural heritage helped to boost the prosperity of the town and encouraged the further restoration of old buildings. The many activities spawned by these heritage activities led to the creation of "Portsoy Community Enterprise" an umbrella organization for managing some of them. Hence, when the Aberdeenshire Council decided to relinquish control of the Portsoy campsite, this organization stepped in to take it over and this has provided an important income stream for Portsoy Community Enterprise. It further restored some ruined buildings at the far end of the campsite, which had been used for sail making in the nineteenth century, to become a Bunk House for visitors in 2017.

A community leader who was one of the key people involved in developing the Boat Festival and CEO of the Portsoy Community Enterprise explained to us how the Boat Festival transformed into various other projects, including restoration of local buildings and opening of a local museum:

> Yes, it started off as boats….it was very much about boats and round the harbour there were stalls which included community organisations, the RNLI (Royal National Lifeboats Institution) and others…Music was also there, but incidentally..the music developed steadily… I am not sure when food first appeared…So it kind of, yeah, grew like Topsy, I can't think of any other way to describe it. But I think, wittingly or unwittingly, the intention was always for it to be a celebration of the cultural heritage of the area. I think it's taken a while for that to be put down on paper but I think it had naturally become that and the music was always focused more on traditional music and of course the area is very rich in traditional music. And the food was always local. What I term 'artisan' companies demonstrating and selling their products. So it kind of grew by chance and then again, probably more unwittingly than wittingly, it began to evolve into this encapsulation of the cultural heritage of the North East (of Scotland).

The Boat Festival concentrated on traditional sailing craft - both lovingly restored and newly built ones. Consequently, an interest in intangible cultural heritage was

generated through the revival of boat building skills and activities that take place throughout the year and have educational outreach to young people.

> Yes, basically, it was difficult to practically give something to the community (from the Boat Festival) other than the commercial opportunity that it provides for local traders. So we thought : well, what could we do? And we thought, 'let's focus on youth' and that started with the music and we got Youth Music, YMI funding, and started a programme which has run for seven years. We bring in tutors, go into primary schools and work with them on traditional music… and that culminates in a concert which is held at the festival. And that has grown in stature and proved very, very, popular….. The next stage was that we did the same thing for sailing. So we provided opportunities again, for primary school children to learn about sailing and we must have had, over the years, in excess of a thousand children. And it went through a sort of metamorphosis in that it went from just learning how to sail, to learning how to build a boat.

This in turn had an impact on tangible cultural heritage through the restoration of many of the old buildings.[2] The first building to be restored was the Salmon Bothy (restored in 2009), the storage warehouse for salmon at the time of the fishing industry. It consists of a large stone building, originally constructed in 1834, where the temperature could be kept constant for salmon stored prior to transportation by train to other parts of Great Britain. The Salmon Bothy is now a museum housing a range of traditional fishing implements and information. The restoration of the enabled a meeting hall to be built at the top of the building and it is famed for its knitted mural spanning one wall. Local women knitted a harbour scene of Portsoy - much like a locally produced version of the Bayeux tapestry - and is an example of the use of traditional skills as well as being a work of art, in its own right. The meeting hall is used to house a lively folk club and other community events including storytelling, sea shanty singing, film screenings and so on.

> (The Salmon Bothy meeting room) has spawned a number of groups which didn't exist before, which is interesting - like the knitting group, the painting group, the craft group…the upstairs facility seemed to be the catalyst that got those groups going and that's been hugely encouraging and very exciting to see. The other thing is that the acoustics are good, so it has become a centre for traditional music and in fact… the Bothy group was created that meets monthly and has its own festival in May of each year (

The success of this enterprise was followed by the opening of another community museum in the old bakery when the individual who inherited this property opened it to the public and housed some local artefacts and materials. It is the home of "Portsoy Past and Present" which collects stories, poems in the local Doric dialect and hosts a lively Facebook page where photos are posted and discussed as well as a website where articles and stories are published.

[2] Tangible cultural heritage is drawn from the UNESCO definition referring to landscapes, buildings and monuments, whilst intangible cultural heritage refers to such things as songs, crafts, traditions, drama etc. and was first codified in 2003

Volunteering has had a strong tradition in Portsoy, but these activities reinforced it. Other community activities emerged involving volunteers, including a Thrift shop opened in empty retail premises, which annually donates up to £2000 the town. Another empty retail outlet was opened for the local crafting community to rent space and sell their goods. Volunteers likewise maintain the local clifftop walk and other foot and cycle paths around the town and there are plans to develop more. These activities have helped to harness local volunteer effort, engage local people, improve the local area and create a sense of pride and progress that have improved the town in many different ways.

The benefits of these activities were reflected in the money raised for community improvements, sponsorship for different activities and making Portsoy an attractive and vibrant place to live. This in turn encouraged people to move in and restore some of the old buildings for residential use. The two hotels, ice cream parlour, fish and chip shop, various cafés and bakeries and an antique shop were all helped to thrive by the resulting influx of visitors. The high levels of participation are reflected in the vibrant and active Community Council (the lowest tier of elected Governance in Scotland and staffed by volunteers). Nevertheless, several issues that need tackling have been identified by the Community Council, including the lack of transport facilities as well as health and social care coverage associated with an aging population in a rural area. A wellbeing approach helps us to identify and appreciate the local embeddedness of these kinds of activities.

Thus it is clear that both social and cultural capital play a role in the development of Portsoy as a community and that the two capitals interact economically as well. Hence, wellbeing needs to be seen in terms of the interplay of participation and social networks and the way in which cultural heritage acts as a spur to this. In the case of Portsoy, the cultural heritage was “discovered” and even invented by the local activists in the form of the Boat Festival and subsequent activities.

Case Study 2: The Comainn Eachdraidh in the Outer Hebrides

The Outer Hebrides consists of a string of Islands on the westernmost fringe of Scotland. Their scattered and remote populations, numbering 27 000 altogether, include a strong Gaelic-speaking element. Cultural heritage plays a very important part in these small settlements. This is borne out by the fact that most villages host a Comainn Eachdraidh (CE) or Historical Association and nearly all residents are members of it.

The CE Movement began in the 1970s with a very specific political and cultural purpose: the collection and preservation of highland and island cultures, with reference to Gaelic. The first phase of the project took place from 1976 to 1982, beginning in Ness where the first CE started. It began with the key aim to create *“an awareness of the cultural identity and community history as a means to boosting morale and promoting a discriminating understanding of the past and of its influence on the present”* (Mackay, 1996). It is from this position that over the subsequent years, new CE groups began in different areas of the Hebrides.

Today, twenty CEs are currently active in the Outer Hebrides all of which are entirely independent of one another. Each group has its own members, committee and collections, and are dedicated to researching their own localities. The different groups collect a wide variety of materials relating to both their tangible and intangible heritage. In this case the intangible heritage consists of knowledge of oral histories, songs, genealogies of people in the area, Gaelic place names, poetry and song. Tangible heritage might include school log books, diaries, fishing boat records, recipe books, "rolls of honour" for those lost in the War, crofts, gravestones and archaeological artefacts. The history of the area is often traced through the changing ownership of crofts, some of which is documented and some is based upon tacit local knowledge of families and locations.

Some CEs have opened museums, and these are often housed in the old school houses - the need for the school houses having changed with the centralisation of the school system. Elsewhere they are housed in people's private houses or other buildings that can be communally accessed (Tait, Wallace, Mellish, McLeod, & Hunter, 2011). Where the school house has been repurposed, this often includes a café and meeting rooms (staffed by volunteers) as well as a display of artefacts whose relevance is determined by their location in the local community. Hence, these artefacts have a meaning according to how they are embedded in local community relationships.

Some of the museums have developed further functions. For example, one Commain Eiachdriadh located at Ravenspoint on the Isle of Lewis has developed further activities including Gaelic language teaching courses, a book publishing enterprise, a local shop and in 2015 was putting in a petrol station for locals who would otherwise have to travel many miles to fill their tanks As in Portsoy, cultural heritage encourages many ancillary activities that are valued by the local community and which arise from their needs.

The Commain Eiachdriadh involves volunteers who meet on a regular basis to sort through photographs and other documentation and to exchange information about them. This is cross checked against an index of information about people living in the area, school records and so on, representing a mixing of volunteers' 'living knowledge' with what has been recorded. This is a highly social activity as volunteers reminisce and tell stories about the documents.

This also highlights something else about the process of maintaining and producing archives: the sense of self-worth that members gain from their participation in the process of producing the archives. Neil Thin in this volume has discussed the importance of conviviality to wellbeing. These meetings were an opportunity to develop it. Despite it being slow and highly time consuming, many still took great pleasure from these activities. For the volunteers, the contribution of their own knowledge and remembering people, places, and events together with others, gave them great satisfaction. Furthermore, the desire to comprehend personal and community histories and genealogies often acts as the 'spark' that draws people into being involved with CE. As one of the contributors told us:

> I just, again, came to Comann Eachdraidh, I don't know how, it's so long ago I can't remember! I suppose I was always interested in my roots and I had an uncle who was very interested in genealogy and I suppose I just got

> into it that way and here I am, decades later and that's it: once you are in, you are in, you are hooked! Decades later and that's it.

Some of the CEs are linked through an electronic database organized by an organisation called Hebridean Connections (https://www.hebrideanconnections.com). This organisation originally contacted us for help in setting up digital archives that would enable the data to be linked across the Islands and is searchable by people external to the community – for example people researching their ancestry. With a long history of emigration to the New World, this is an important source of information about both real and virtual visitors. However, some CEs are fiercely protective of their collections and will not allow them to go on line (Beel & Wallace, 2018).

Hence, whilst cultural heritage plays an important part in the life of people in the Outer Hebrides, this takes a different form to Portsoy. It is related to the Gaelic language, to a local sense of independence and opposition to mainstream historical narratives and is anchored in the remote life of islanders, many of whom have personal connections to their history. Portsoy, by contrast draws upon more mainstream narratives of cultural heritage, working together with Historic Scotland, Museums Scotland and other organisations. However, Portsoy has likewise invented an important connection with the past through the traditional boat building festival and related activities, whilst the Portsoy Past and Present also connects individuals to events, families and friends in living memory, mainly through Facebook.

Both are examples of rural cultural heritage, its relation to the generation and circulation of social, cultural and economic capital and how this leads community development. These are all foundations for community wellbeing. In the next section we look at some of these connections in more detail.

Cultural heritage and cultural capital

Rural cultural heritage can include a range of things as being designated as worthy of recognition and preservation. However, local communities create their own cultural heritage informally, irrespective of official definitions of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Each suggests a different form of recognition and preservation (Giglitto, 2017). In the case of the former it can mean the restoration and protection of important physical features. In the Outer Hebrides this was old school houses (most of the school houses dated from the 1960s), some crofts (dating from the end of the nineteenth century but mostly later) and the artefacts they contained. The tangible cultural heritage reflects the tradition of hard scrabble subsistence croft farming and the culture that it sustained. In Portsoy tangible cultural heritage is mainly focused on the rich collection of traditional buildings in the area from a much earlier period - from the 17th Century onwards – reflecting its rise and fall as a Burgh town. In the case of the intangible cultural heritage, it might mean the creation or recreation and transmission of recognized crafts, knowledge and activities. This suggests that such activities are rooted in local knowledge and culture which is ongoing and living tradition rather than part of an extinct legacy. In the case of Portsoy this was focused upon the revival of the tradition of boat building as well as knitting, whilst in the Outer Hebrides the ongoing knowledge of landscape

and people as well as the Gaelic language was the most important element of this activity.

An important aspect of this recognition is the ownership by local communities and the engagement of community members through “heritage from below” – without this interest the knowledge will disappear and the buildings decay (Robertson, 2012). Cultural heritage is therefore as much about the current creative activities of local communities who help to create heritage as it is about any “objective” classification by international organisations such as UNESCO. The relevance associated with both types of cultural heritage depend upon their meaning in everyday life and are therefore not mummified museum objects but rather activities and collections that gain their recognition from the interactions of communities around them. Since they are embedded in communities with different kinds of social and economic characteristics, cultural heritage can take very different forms and can be shaped in very different ways, as our two case studies make clear.

The key to these initiatives is that they were local. This was not about mainstream “high” cultural heritage in the same way, as say, a stately home and less formal than an officially recognised UNESCO designation. Rather, cultural heritage arose organically from remembering and celebrating the life and work of people in a particular locality and it was embedded in the present day lives of people within that locality. Cultural heritage remembers both the economic (fishing, crofting) and the cultural (Gaelic language, Doric dialect, traditional music) legacy of the past but recreates it in the present. These were geographically and economically marginalised people whose lives would otherwise be forgotten. Cultural heritage is thus meaningful only insofar as it has meaning for local people. In this sense rural cultural heritage represents an alternative to mainstream historical discourses and the values they represent.

Cultural heritage and social capital

Social capital as a set of connections (Bourdieu, 1983; Lin, 2001) and as a potential for political change (Putnam, 2000) is generated by voluntary work and participation. Communities rich in social capital have many volunteers and this makes them better places in which to live. We have already described the prevalence of this but the sense of connection to the community and to others in the community is in this way reinforced. In Portsoy, this was achieved through the volunteering activities at the museum and elsewhere and this was also the case in the Western Isles, where the Comainn Eachdraidh provide a vehicle and a focus for participation. In both communities a variety of organisations for volunteering provided a spread of activities (Beel et al., 2016).

In both communities it was pointed out that whilst it was often the same people who became involved in multiple organisations and were important nodes for social capital and provided community leadership (Wallace, Vincent, Luguzan, & Talbot, 2015). This was nevertheless a way of providing access for others who might not have been quite so involved, so that there was a range of different forms of participation. Previously we have argued that community leadership works best where it is spread around several people and organisations rather than relying on one or two people who might die or move away (Wallace et al., 2015).

Strong social capital has long been associated with wellbeing both as a collective and an individual good (Pichler & Wallace, 2009). The reinforcement of connections and collective purpose provides a collective form of social capital, or social cohesion, whilst the individual ties to the organisations and to one another provide individual inclusion. At a national level, collective social capital is more sustainable and has more impact than individual social advantage (Pichler,Wallace 2009). Collective social capital is more than the sum of its individual parts. Social capital has also been shown to be related to individual wellbeing at a national level – people feel good because everybody feels good. If this works at a national level, why not at a local level? The fact that cultural heritage of the kinds we describe here is organized in a bottom up fashion means that it is stronger and more sustainable than top down efforts to mobilize communities.

We have explored elsewhere the role of cultural heritage and cultural capital. Cultural heritage provides the opportunity to generate locally produced cultural capital "from below" which as a value and a currency in local communities (Beel & Wallace, 2018; Robertson, 2012). Hence, local knowledge is an important part of local community identity.

However, social capital generated in this way still depends upon having appropriate community leadership with the ability to raise money, write grants and make connections with external organisations. In Portsoy, for example, this involved contacting grant awarding organisations to raise many different sources of funding and making personal connections with companies who were prepared to offer sponsorship (for some years the Boat Festival was sponsored by Aberdeen Asset Management). The role of community leaders such as the CEO of Portsoy Community Enterprises can be crucial in this respect, making connections between public authorities, funding bodies and private sponsors. Inevitably there is disappointment where companies or organisations are not interested or withdraw their sponsorship for whatever reason. Although millions of pounds were raised, this is an ongoing and continuous activity so social capital can also break down with discontinuities of funding.

Both case studies illustrate the role of community mobilization to raise funds, to buy land, to build boats and to restore buildings. These activities create collective enterprise that enables engaged communities. Even if not everyone was involved in each of these case studies a large part of the population were involved in one or other activity.

The large numbers of volunteers in each case study is a testament to the force of community mobilization. Whilst other things can also mobilize communities (for example protests against the siting of windfarms) cultural heritage provides a strong incentive to get involved. The aging population (especially large in the countryside as people retire there) provides a readily available pool of volunteers and the relatively educated character of incomers means that they are keen to explore local history. Community mobilization around cultural heritage encourages the empowerment of local residents which helps to ensure more mobilization around this or other activities. Rather than dividing incomers from natives it provides a common activity and source of pride for both groups (Beel and Wallace 2019).

In the Outer Hebrides, the shared experience of participating, collecting and listening with others; the sense of producing something of worth for the community and its ability to bring people together, contributed to a sense of wellbeing and cohesiveness. As one member of the Commann Eiachriadh on Lewis stated it:

> I think the word in itself says that: 'community'; because it is bringing something together which is common to us all. We don't get together that much, as a community, as people here – as they used to in the past. And if you've got something like this and it will drag people together, then it's a good thing. We need something in our communities actually to keep the people coming together as a community and if we didn't do it, it would be just another bit that was lost.

Hence, key to the process of understanding how cultural value is constructed by different CEs, is understanding how, in a very 'on-the-ground' way, it is embedded into the everyday lives of many Islanders. Ingold (2000) would label this the *taskscape,* and it is useful to think of community heritage in relation to this term, especially when thinking through how cultural value in this setting relates to notions of dwelling and place identity. The following quotations are from two different Commann Eiachdriadh member on Lewis:

> I think it's very much an island thing as well, I'm not sure they have the same commitment on the mainland to recording the local history, I don't know if it's the same anywhere else but certainly in the Islands it's always been the case; they've always held on to their oral history.
>
> Perhaps because people didn't move much in the old days so…we're all related to each other just about in here so there's not the same turnover of people, well until fairly recently, people coming in and out didn't happen so there's more of a sense of identity.

The value of community mobilization is that it then leads to other things. In the Outer Hebrides, shops, cafes, land purchase etc. grew out of the Comainn Eachdraidh. In Portsoy the campsite, Bothy, museum and boat building sheds grew out of the Boat Festival.

> I mean, come the Boat Festival, there must be circa 300 people involved in the community and that's fantastic…We're just very lucky – we've got a lot of people who are prepared to put in a lot of very hard work. People who are very competent as well…. I think it's involvement, I think it's because it is something that people can involve themselves in and truly contribute to. (Community Councillor Portsoy)

Yet with these kinds of community initiatives, there is the danger of a disproportionate amount of the work falling on the shoulders of a few people, mainly volunteers, leading to burnout (Woolvin, 2012). There is also the danger of disconnected activities reflecting different community factions. All communities have social and political divisions which can lead to animosity and undermine social capital. Where there is good community leadership it can help to bridge these differences but elsewhere it can be divisive (Wallace, Vincent, Luguzan, Townsend, & Beel, 2017). Respondents in Portsoy insisted that interest was spread across the

community with some volunteers being involved in some activities and others in other activities, whilst there were also people who were involved in all or most of them. In the Outer Hebrides an interest in cultural heritage helped to bring together the potentially divisive fractures between incomers and local as well as between Gaelic and non-Gaelic speaking communities.

Cultural heritage and a sense of place

A sense of place suggests a rootedness in a landscape rather than just a place where you happen to live. Here, agency lies with the community to present and articulate their historical sense of place for their own purposes. In the Outer Hebrides this is reinforced through the archival work undertaken by the CE volunteers and the ways in which members of different historical societies reflect upon their desire to represent their histories and to tell the everyday stories about their communities.

In the Outer Hebrides, where there is reference to a previous era of clearances, dispossessions and subjection to (and often oppression by) landlords, the historical narratives of place take on a political dimension. In the present day, it is also an assertion of identification with locality against the more sweeping nationalist heritage claims that miss out the finer grained and every day social histories of place (Mason & Baveystock, 2008). For Creswell such community archives represent spaces of *'marginalised memory'* that draw *'attention to the things people push to one side and ignore, the things that do not make it into official places of memory'* (Cresswell, 2011). Furthering this point, MacKenzie argues that cultural heritage projects in North West Sutherland are a method of rehabilitation in collective psyches for dealing with past grievances:

> Part of that bold, collective, effort to turn around centuries of dispossessions, defined not just through the Clearances, but also through more contemporary loss - of people, of jobs, for example, in the fishing and forestry sectors and of the houses which have been turned into holiday homes. These collective projects are about re-mapping the land in ways that suggest an alternative imaginary to that aligned with processes of dispossession and the practices of privatisation and enclosure that have underpinned them (MacKenzie 2010:163-164)

Hence, in this context cultural initiatives are part and parcel of *'a culture of resistance'*, in that they chart cultural territory - the '*reclaim[ing], renam[ing], and reinhabit[ing] [of] land'* that precedes '*the recovery of geographical territory' (*209-226) (Said, 1994). The process of collecting these marginalised memories is one that seeks to disrupt conventional knowledge-power asymmetries, especially those associated with official histories, by creating their own places of memories and documenting them through archives. This links to other studies in this volume which illustrate the role of struggle and conflict in achieving happiness. For each of the CE groups there is a micro-politics that '*can affect [shared] heritages and through which attempts can be made to reorganise time and space as memory is mined, refigured and re-presented'* (Crouch & Parker, 2003). Articulations of (historical) place, space and hierarchy drives their activity to collect, research, preserve and present own place histories and heritages. As one member of the Commann Eiachdriadh stated it:

> Not people looking in and telling you what you should be doing or exploring your differences and making out that you are freaks because of what you believe in, what you do, way of life and so on. So I think that's the strength of a Comann Eachdraidh – showcasing ourselves.

Robertson (2012) discusses the fact that it *'is both a means to and manifestation of counter hegemonic practises'*(Robertson, 2012). The very purpose is hence to articulate a position that does not conform to a top down narrative but aims to represent those more 'ordinary' lives and incumbent practices that go along with their history. Central to these arguments is place, identity and a notion of dwelling (Ingold, 2000) that builds over time and reinforces each in relation to the heritage the communities wish to create. This reflects on the types of materials that are collected in these communities. In the context of the Western Isles this further builds upon a relationship in the Gaelic communities between sense of place, identity and possession whereby *'attachments to place are intrinsic to identity, rather than to buildings or monuments'* (Robertson, 2009:154). It is the history of dispossession and the 'colonial' legacy this has created that greatly shapes the rationale and need for such community-level collections.

As local history groups, CEs aim to present an historical sense of place, which is tied to the land (crofts) and the people who lived on those crofts, who are often connected genealogically to current members. This link between land, people and place is probably unique to cultural heritage in comparison with elsewhere in the UK; few places can represent such a lineage. It is also a strong political statement with regards to land tenure, an exceptionally contentious issue in the Islands (Hunter, 1976). In this respect the archive represents a form of historical continuity. The archive is therefore a testament to these continuing connections showing that whilst landlords might have come and gone, many of the tenants remained. The connection to Gaelic place names reinforces this connection.

Nevertheless, many who lived there did not have these historical roots and did not speak Gaelic either. But moving to such a remote location is already testimony of a commitment to a particular way of life. The remoteness of the places meant that people had to depend upon one another no matter where they came from and new comers were just as active in the historical associations and in preserving cultural heritage as local people. Indeed CE activities helped to bridge the differences between incomers and locals.

At the time of the research there was a community buy out of land around Ravenspoint, something made possible by legislation in Scotland (Mackenzie, 2013) but requiring the mobilization of collective resources and raising substantial financing. This gives communities real control over their physical spaces and can provide power sources and other financial advantages – for instance through erection of wind turbines or setting up hydro-electric plants.

For Portsoy this kind of visceral connection to the landscape was less obvious, as was the political dimension of reclaiming rights. However, many of the community were descended from the fisher folk of the past or were involved in this activity (crab lobster creels, line fishing) in the present day so the connection between sea, harbour and livelihood was maintained. The Salmon Bothy and the Sail Bunk House reinforced these maritime connections, as does the Traditional Boat Festival and this

was the rather unique aspect of cultural heritage in Portsoy. Furthermore, the village museum located in the bakery was owned by a descendant of the baker. Therefore, cultural heritage was built around the social and economic relationships between people and landscape in the past, continuing into the present.

Despite the significant influx of new residents, people identified with the place through "elective affinity" if they had moved there (Savage, Bagnall, & Longhurst, 2005), reinforced by ties of social capital and volunteering. Great pride was expressed in the town and its achievements as it became famous locally and regionally for the traditional boat festival. Whilst some felt overwhelmed by the large influx of visitors even they acknowledged that this had helped to create a strong outward facing image for the town.

> But there is an awful lot of people who are and there's pride in it – people who like to say "Yeah, I'm from Portsoy." To see how often almost across the country now and increasingly overseas people say "Portsoy – yes the boat festival". I think all those things mean that there is an energy and it's self-driving." (Community Councillor Portsoy)

In terms of the more recent past, the photos displayed at "Portsoy Past and Present" helped local people to identify school friends and relatives as well as events and places in the recent past. We have demonstrated elsewhere that a virtual community can be important for reinforcing a real one (Wallace & Vincent, 2017). In this respect the websites for the different festivals helped to create a sense of place in the virtual world as well as the real one (Hampton & Wellman, 2003).

Hence in different ways, cultural heritage had helped to reinforce and create a sense of place in both regions, albeit in different ways. By accessing cultural heritage, even those who had moved to the regions recognized the distinctive identities that had been created and felt a pride in the achievements of their community. Indeed, it was one of the factors that made these communities attractive ones to which to move. Therefore, these communities were more than just residential areas. Pride in a place and strong sense of identity is associated with wellbeing in the sense that it creates a sense of inclusion, empowerment and connection (Abbott, Wallace, & Sapsford, 2016).

Cultural heritage and community

We have mentioned previously that one of the problems of defining community wellbeing is the lack of clarity about what "community" is. I It is seen as a target of public policies, but often in the sense of making up for some deficiency or social problems. Community can merely mean a residential area, but it traditionally implies a more collective identity and set of relationships that go beyond this (Delanty, 2003). Hence, whilst communities usually imply a residential area, not all places form communities. Indeed, communities can increasingly become virtual. Wellman and others have argued for new forms of community constructed on line, rather than being location based (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). However, the virtual community as an extension of the residential community through Facebook groups, WhatsApp, email lists, websites and so on are an increasingly important aspect of local social relationships (Hampton & Wellman, 2003; Wallace et al., 2017).

In contemporary Europe, communities are no longer a set of ascribed relationships that arise out of a place of birth as was set out in the classical literature (Tonnies, 2002 (1887)). The increasingly mobile populations of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries mean that communities are places where people might choose to live, and they may likewise choose to engage or not to engage in local social relationships. They may even be virtual rather than geographical and the virtual set of community relations can help to reinforce the geographical ones. Rural communities are often ones of choice as people move to rural areas precisely in search of a "community" and an imaginary set of "cosy" social relationships and interactions (Pahl, 1965). Although Pahl was critical of this "community in the mind" created by incomers, we can also see this as a way in which community is positively constructed and acted upon, much in the same way as the nation state described by Benedict Anderson was based on an "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983). Although residents might not know everybody in the area and may or may not be constrained by their social relationships with them, they might feel themselves to be part of community nevertheless.

Cultural heritage helps to create a sense of place and a community as people engage with aspects of their history and recreate different kinds of tangible and intangible heritage. The community thus created may or may not correspond with Local Authority boundaries but do create the "community in the mind" which has real implications for the activities and actions of people on the ground.

Risks for cultural heritage and community wellbeing

Throughout this paper we have tended to emphasise the positive aspects of cultural heritage and community. However, we have deliberately chosen examples where the two came together and were particularly successful. Both Portsoy and the Outer Hebrides were exceptional in their own ways. There are also examples of unsuccessful initiatives as one of the community leaders in Portsoy told us:

> I've come across examples of where the Local Authority tried to run festivals or tried to set up museums. An interesting example of that is the Buckie Drifter, which actually I thought was a very, very good museum. It failed. And it failed because there was no community involvement – or insufficient community involvement.

Our particular examples worked because of the strong grass roots involvement of residents. It was emphasised to us that it was important to have a broad range of volunteers, not a particular clique and to be fairly open to involving others. They also worked because there were competent community leaders and conflicts were minimal or had been resolved.

A source of risk for community cultural heritage projects is funding. Whilst there are a variety of funding sources, these tend to be project based so that when the funding runs out, the project might grind to a halt unless alternative funding can be found. Often projects rely on a variety of funding sources which may have specific conditions attached and which may or may not complement one another. For example, in the case of Hebridean Connections, the virtual website that connected

the CE, the project's existence was dependent on funding that was raised and the main mobilization depended upon the employment of outreach workers. When their funding ran out, so did some of the activities that had been started up. Therefore, there is always a problem of continuity in these kinds of community run enterprises.

The Portsoy community acknowledge that their projects are fragile, based upon existing funding which is usually temporary in nature. The Portsoy Community Enterprise partnership was a way of trying to develop income-generating projects such as the campsite and the bunk house (which had so far failed to break even). The traditional boat festival was always in danger of costing more to put on that it could generate through takings, given that it was now an undertaking too large to be managed by volunteers alone. Sources of funding were often intermittent . The Heritage Lottery Fund has been an important source of funding (but depends upon people buying lottery tickets). Local Authorities have traditionally provided some funding for these kinds of projects. With austerity budgeting since 2008, their programmes have been drastically reduced and are likely to be reduced further in future. With essential services now increasingly having to depend upon volunteers and charity fund raising, there will be increased competition for resources and cultural heritage might be seen as a luxury that we can no longer be afford.

However, cultural heritage can be an important source of direct and indirect income for communities. This can include tourism, support for local businesses, employment generation and so on. It is thus clear that cultural value can build economic value.

Conclusions

In this article we have looked at the role of cultural heritage in community development and wellbeing through the example of two rural communities in Scotland: Portsoy and the Outer Hebrides. We have argued that community heritage can be an impetus to the circulation of cultural, social and economic capital within communities. In this way it was stimulus to both community development and community wellbeing. Cultural heritage reinforces a sense of place and encourages community mobilization..

Our contribution to knowledge through this work is firstly to look at community wellbeing as an important aspect of "happiness" research and to try to understand the collective as well as individual connotations. Secondly, we have emphasized the importance of qualitative research, including both field work and interviews in understanding how community wellbeing and cultural heritage are connected. Thirdly, we would argue that cultural heritage and wellbeing should be key components of community development, thus extending that paradigm in a way that begins with how communities themselves define their needs. In this way, cultural heritage can be a form of community empowerment through mobilization of resources. But the local ownership of heritage is an important factor.

A limitation of this research is that by collecting the story that communities want to tell of themselves, we tend to emphasise the positive rather than the negative aspects of community development. Likewise, we have focused on two "success

stories" or well-functioning communities rather than problematic ones, which are more commonly the focus of community development programmes.

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