



RECENT SETTLERS

TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND SPEAK

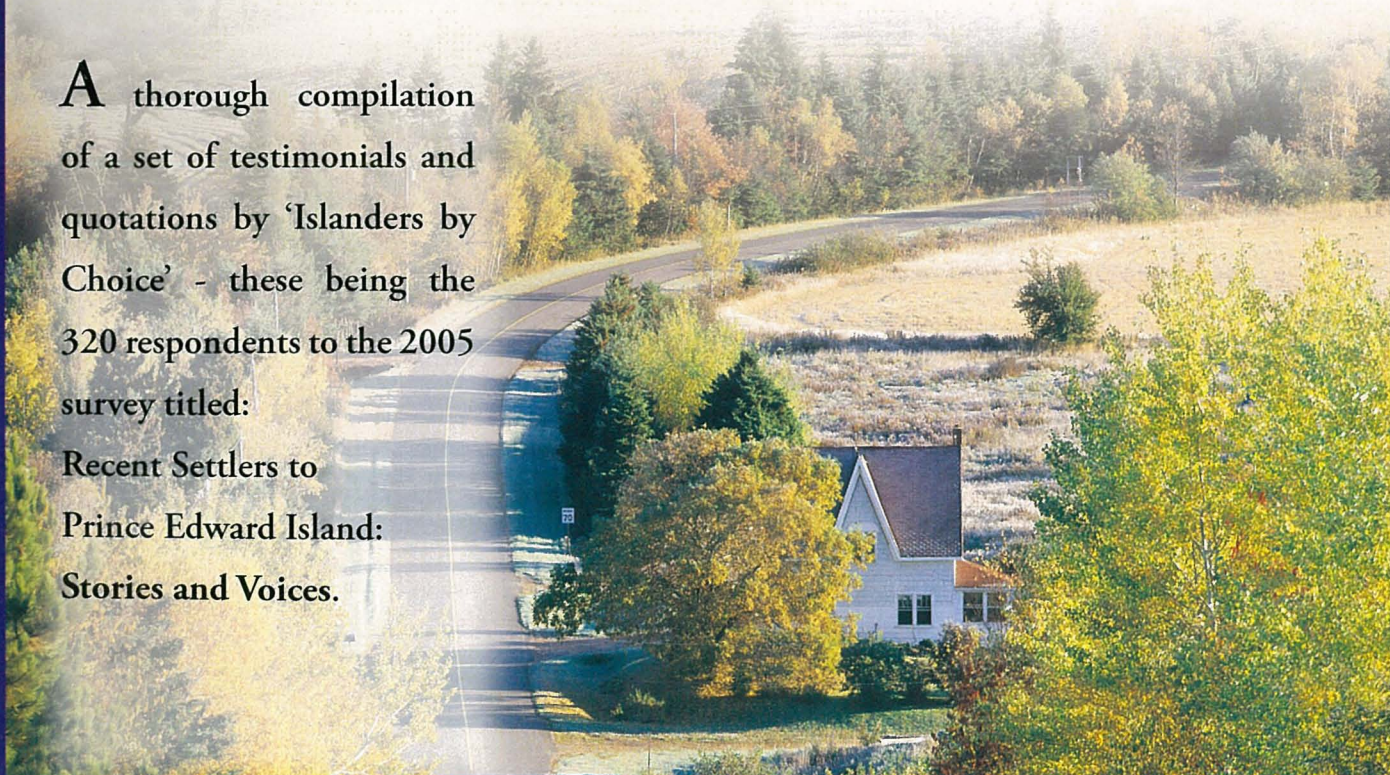
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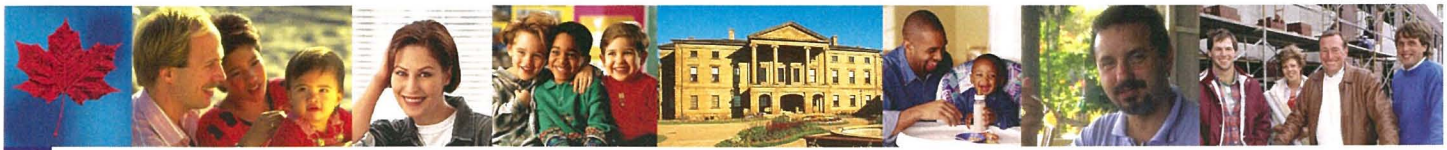
SELLING POINTS

REGARDING PEI

A thorough compilation of a set of testimonials and quotations by 'Islanders by Choice' - these being the 320 respondents to the 2005 survey titled:

Recent Settlers to
Prince Edward Island:
Stories and Voices.





Recent Settlers to Prince Edward Island Speak: Positive 'Selling Points' Regarding PEI

Compiled by

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for

The Population Secretariat

Provincial Government of Prince Edward Island

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A Note of Thanks

This report is one of two documents that mines more deeply and exhaustively the rich database of personal stories and opinions that have been forthcoming from the 320 respondents to the survey of recent settlers to Prince Edward Island. (This has been published separately as: Baldacchino Godfrey (ed.) (2006) *Coming to, and Settling On, Prince Edward Island: Stories and Voices*, Charlottetown, Canada, University of Prince Edward Island with the kind support of the Population Secretariat, Provincial Government of Prince Edward Island, ISBN: 091901349X.) This 84-page document, complete with a copy of the questionnaire used in the study, is freely and readily available from the web-site of the PEI Population Secretariat (www.gov.pe.ca/immigration), or from my moderated 'island studies' web-site (www.islandstudies.ca/Settlers_to_PEI/). The latter web-site also includes a brief executive summary in both French and English.

It has been a privilege to note that, since this pioneering report was published in February 2006, a number of initiatives that have been suggested therein, including specific recommendations by its respondents, have already been taken on board. This includes the preferred usage of "islanders by choice" (now the title of the electronic Newsletter of the PEI Population Secretariat), and the compilation of a customized handbook for Newcomers to PEI. The PEI Population Network, where I represent the University of Prince Edward Island, has clearly also established itself as a clearing house for all local initiatives that seek to attract and/or retain people to this, Canada's smallest province.

My special gratitude to **Elaine Noonan**, Executive Director of the Population Secretariat; her staff members **Erin Docherty** and **Joanne McQuaid**; **Robert Maddix**, Regional Advisor for the Rural Secretariat; and the 320 respondents to the 2005 settler survey, whose poignant narratives speak louder than words.

Godfrey Baldacchino

*Charlottetown, PEI, Canada
February 12, 2007*



Organization of Material

This document is a compilation of a set of testimonials by 'Islanders by Choice', these being the 320 respondents (179 females; 141 males) to the October-December 2005 survey titled: Recent Settlers to Prince Edward Island: Stories and Voices. They are therefore quotations, drawn from hard copy or electronically deposited interview scripts, reporting the thoughts, suggestions and experiences of a diverse collection of individuals, possibly united only in the fact that they moved to (try to) settle on Prince Edward Island between 1997 and 2003.

There are responses from 90 different respondents in this compilation.

These responses are an outcome of three different prompts in the 25-question survey questionnaire that was used in the 2005 study. These prompts invited respondents to tell, in as much detail as they wished, the story of (1) why they moved to PEI in the first place – Question 21; (2) why they had (so far) chosen to stay – Question 22c; and (3) whether there was anything else they wished to add- Question 25.

The responses are not doctored in any way, except to correct the spelling of some obviously mis-spelt words.

The responses have also not been edited, except in having been identified as having something positive to say about Prince Edward Island. Thus, these narratives come in a variety of lengths: most are short and terse, but some are wordy and fairly descriptive. Sections identified as “. . .” within the quotes means that a section of the narrative has been lifted and not reproduced because it discusses a personal matter or mentions a name or location which, if disclosed, would compromise the anonymity of the respondent.

It must also be remembered that responses represent the perceptions of those who articulated them. They are biased and carry the prejudice of whoever uttered them; but this does not make them readily dismissible as erroneous, false, malicious or unfair. They are perceived as true by those who expressed them, and while readers may be pleased to agree with comments that confirm and correspond to their own ideas, they should also spare no effort in understanding comments which do not necessarily conform to what they see as accepted truths. As proposed by sociologist William Isaac Thomas: “If people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” This effort is necessary to appreciate the reasons why respondents may have views that are not shared by the reader, from there for the same reader to move on to develop a critical appreciation of the reasons for this, and ultimately perhaps to be in an informed position to do something about them, should that be felt necessary.

Thomas, W. I. (1966) 'The Relation of Research to the Social Process' in M. Janowitz (ed.), W. I. Thomas on Social Organization and Social Personality, Chicago IL, University of Chicago Press, pp. 289-305.



General Recommendations

No attempt has been made to group or analyze the quoted responses which follow by theme. This has already been done, albeit with a smaller and more selective database, in Baldacchino (2006: 32-38). In that document, the specified positive 'selling points' for PEI were mainly organized around the following five themes:

1. The desire to move in order to be close to family members, and to be close to one's family roots. These respondents are almost equally divisible into three broad camps, reflecting their ages and marital status. The first are younger, usually married, and have a concern with 'growing their kids' in a relatively safe and secure environment. The second are middle-aged and have a concern to care for older relatives, usually parents. The third are close to, or in, retirement and see PEI as an attractive retirement destination.
2. The attraction of actual or potential job or business prospects. Specific workplaces – like the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI), federal government departments like DVA and ACOA, and some private firms - were mentioned.
3. Available and affordable housing or building lots.
4. The sedate tempo, rural-urban balance and overall 'quality of life' of 'the island' – a welcome contrast to the stress, burn-out and higher crime rates of 'the city'. The 'quality of life' factor includes the lure of the ocean and beaches and the relatively mild weather.
5. The availability of adequate education and training institutions. An institution like UPEI is singled out as a key magnet of immigrants for both its educational programmes, and for faculty and staff recruitment.

The absence of thematic profiling of the quotations below is deliberate, since these responses are best appreciated holistically rather than thematically. Moreover, the richness of the material deserved being showcased as such. It will be up to readers to discriminate within the data, as they may see fit.



Content Analysis

Content analysis is essentially a method that enables a researcher to discriminate between and within large amounts of textual data, and systematically identify its properties, such as via the frequency of keywords most used, or by detecting the more important structures of its communication content.

A content analysis of the statements which follow (in the English Language only) reveals the frequency of usage of what are likely to be key expressive nouns and adjectives:

Pull-factors to PEI: Child / Children / Kids / Kid (mentioned 67 times in the statements that follow below)
Family (mentioned 50 times);
Work / Job (50 times);
Time (41 times);
Love / Loving (19 times);
People (15 times);
Housing / Property (14 times);
Community / Communities (14 times);
Slow / Slower (13 times);
Peace / Peaceful (11 times);
Affordable (10 times);
Ocean / Water (9 times);
Rural (8 times);
Lifestyle (8 times);
Friendly / Friendliness (7 times);
Access / Accessibility (5 times);
University (5 times);
Education (5 times);
Cost of living (5 times);
Attractive (5 times);
Nature (4 times);
Other terms – quiet, gentle, happy, health, relaxing – are mentioned less than 4 times each.

Push Factors to PEI: City (mentioned 22 times in the statements that follow below)
Stress (mentioned 9 times);
Crime (5 times);
Crowds (3 times).

A human and community centered way of life, combined with affordable housing, a 'small town' feel, job availability and a variety of natural assets, give Prince Edward Island a distinctive draw.



Tabulation of Statements

My sister and family live here, my brother moved here for employment prospects in construction, I came to attend university, and my parents came to be closer to family and retire. The quiet pace of living and church family both drew us here as well.

A friend of ours was planning to relocate to the island. She mentioned the idea of coming east. I had never thought about this and dismissed it, although after some encouragement and the fact she had had a real estate book sent out we decided to at least come out and have a look as we did have a house hunting trip paid by the military. We arrived here for our one week visit in April '96. During an ice storm I will add. We had contacted a realtor prior to arrival as to some of the area that may be attractive. We toured the island for the entire week, seeing both ends and the middle. We both fell in the love with the island, loving the rural nature.

I was working at an Occupational Therapist in Saskatoon. I was not entirely happy with my work environment and saw a job posting for a Research Analyst in PEI. While this wasn't exactly my professional background, I applied as I was interested in working in the area of research for the government and I wanted to return to the Maritimes to be closer to my family and a more peaceful lifestyle ... There was a definite draw back to the Maritimes after having spent time away from the Maritimes since I was 14 (I had moved away to go to school in the US.) I wanted to be closer to my family in New Brunswick and I wanted to be in a quiet, slower-paced environment.

Housing on PEI is more affordable than in Ontario therefore we were able to add to our retirement savings when we sold our house in Ontario and purchased one on PEI.

PEI offered the opportunity to invest in the business of choice at an affordable and acceptable price.

I had completed my postdoctoral fellowship in Texas and was looking for work in Canada. I was invited to submit an application for a maternity leave that was available in the Department of Family and Nutritional Sciences at UPEI. There were not many other universities I was willing to consider as my experience in the academic environment had generally been negative. However, I found the Family and Nutritional Sciences Department was full of fairly normal, supportive people and that the prospects looked good for my research area. I was able to extend one contract into a second one as a result of significant success with the Atlantic Innovation Fund. Eventually, a tenure-streamed position became available which I am now in.

We liked the friendliness of the people and thought that PEI was pretty.

At an animal welfare meeting in Montreal in October 2001, I met a faculty member from PEI. Her persistent e-mails and the Dean's e-mail led to an interview in March 2003. There was snow on the ground. The people were so kind, and the island was so beautiful.



When I boarded the plane at the PEI airport, I was crying. I didn't want to leave. As a frequent speaker at conferences all over the U.S., Australia, and England, I have met many wonderful people. But the people on PEI were most gracious. And, they also had a great sense of humour.

My family was amongst the first Scottish settlers to arrive in PEI on the Brig Alexander in 1772. PEI was always home, although we lived 'away'. Every time we came to visit, it just felt right and for 10 years prior to moving here, this is where I wanted to be.

Because of training and involvement with computers, I met an interesting person in an online chat program and accepted an invitation to holiday on PEI after a year of conversation by computer and telephone. I was completely smitten with the beauty of the island and it reminded me of Scotland, where I had lived as a child. After returning seven more times over the next year, and becoming more fond of the Island each time, I was persuaded to move to PEI to live with the person I visited.

I wanted to go to college to gather some skills in the information technology field. I could have either gone to Halifax or Charlottetown. I checked out both in the late summer (August) and Charlottetown was by far the more beautiful. Also, though I am not a big fan of rural communities, I also don't like major urban areas either. For me, Charlottetown offers the perfect balance. These two things probably influenced me the most and still do to this day.

I lived on PEI in 1997 for one year and worked during that time. My experience here was wonderful. People were caring, generous and the younger people were open-minded... I like the rural community without high rises and a reasonable cost of living. No guns.

I knew of 5 potential places/towns in the world that could provide professional opportunities for both my partner and I. Two were in US (we do not want to live there); 1 was in New Zealand (too far from Europe); and the last 2 in Canada (Guelph and PEI). We chose PEI... Getting out of a big city was desirable at that point in my life.

I was 'burnt out' working in Ottawa, and my substantive position in the Public Service had been moved to Charlottetown, so we followed the job. Also, we had lived here on two previous occasions.

We were at a life transition time: kids mostly grown and out of the house and my husband had the opportunity to accept early retirement. As my job was portable, we began to actively look at communities in the US (our native country) and in foreign countries. We wanted to start or acquire a small business that we could operate in addition to my primary profession. Prince Edward Island seemed to meet all our requirements: business opportunities, a welcoming community, provincial interest in immigration and a unique quality of life.

I first visited the island as a teenager on a second language bursary program at UPEI and loved every moment of that summer! Returned years later with my husband and two



young children for a summer visit with friends from Nova Scotia during which we purchased, rather impulsively, a piece of ocean frontage on Howe Bay. We returned the following two summers to set up camp there (cooking tent and sleeping tents under a big orange canopy!), had a wonderful time, but then weren't able to come for a number of years as our business was growing at home in Ontario and requiring more of our time and attention. We then reluctantly made the decision to part with our island property, but resolved to build a cottage on it first in order to make some financial sense of the original purchase. Thus, our whole family came to the island in May of 1999, after a six or seven years' absence, with the intention of putting up a building on our lot over the summer months. There were four kids by now whom I was home-schooling (as I had been since our older son turned 6). They all welcomed the prospect of 'applied mathematics and geometry' and the learning of new practical skills as well as the idea of being a serious part of a family project such as the one we were contemplating! While our intention had been to build a cottage in order to maximize our profit when selling the property, the more progress we made on the cottage and the more time we spent at Howe Bay and on the island, the less keen we became about actually having to part with it. We started to wonder if we might be able to keep it by offering it for rental during the summer months. Upon our return to Ontario, we posted some pictures on the web and were successful in booking all of our summer weeks during the course of that winter. The opportunity then presented itself to purchase the neighbouring lot to that of our cottage. By August of 2001, we had sold our Muskoka home and were moving to the island to build a permanent home on that second lot. We have now built a third large oceanfront cottage at Howe Bay and continue to attract many visitors every summer.

I have come first here in summer of 1992. The people and the place clicked with me immediately. In 1996, my wife joined me for a visit and told me point blank that this was a place that she would consider living in.... We came to PEI because of my job, first and foremost; but, the ability to live with reduced stress, spend more time with family, spend much less time commuting, are also important.

We lived a 1.5 hour drive north of New York City. We lived through September 11 2001 and the after-effects, which included a dramatic change in the quality of life, especially for our 3 children in school. Schools became very security conscious with constant lockdowns, police, etc. The environment of heightened security and fear was certainly a major factor in our decision to look for opportunities to move back to Canada. We were also attracted to no longer commuting and ease of access to amenities.

The need to slow down, enjoying the peace PEI had to offer was very attractive. Compared to Ontario, the air quality, slower pace of life and relatively safe environment for our children was very important. In selling my husband's dental practice and our home, we were able to relocate here, renovating an older home we had purchased two years earlier.

Family emigrated to PEI in 1978 when I was 9, went to school here, left PEI for Europe at 17, settled in London, UK. Married, divorced, developed environmental illness and high level of stress living in city. Family crisis here in PEI brought me back for a visit



and I decided to leave the stress of London and come to PEI for a while. Decided to try to stay, went to college to retrain and increase chance of finding a job that would let me stay here - a big struggle. Ended up getting federal government job, and getting married. Have now bought a house, plan to grow old here.

I had been working overseas for five years. My daughter, an Island resident, became pregnant and I decided to re-settle on the island as I did not want my grandchildren to grow up not knowing their grandmother.

Safety & security. Lower levels of crime.... Our daughter had chosen to attend UPEI and started in 2002 with a view to completing her degree and then entering the doctorate at the AVC. We originally came as a vacation and to get her settled. We fell in love with the people and the place and decided we needed to do something about it.

While neither my husband nor myself were born on PEI, having both moved here as small children (3 and 5 years), we both consider ourselves 'islanders' since we spent all of our growing up years here. We both left PEI at age 22 (met at UPEI) and went to graduate school at McMaster in Hamilton. 15 years later, I found myself still living in Hamilton with a stressful job I didn't like, children spending too much time in daycare and my husband commuting 3 hours a day to and from Toronto to work. Life was not fun and something had to change. We both wanted to come home, with the expectation that our family life would improve without my husband commuting hours per day and with the support of family nearby. When he was up for his sabbatical, we decided to "come home" for a year. I took a year's leave of absence from my position and we moved to PEI. We had a year to sort out jobs in order to stay.

I lived in Brandon, Manitoba, for six years and it just wasn't for me anymore. But the main reason is that my father's family lives on PEI and I haven't seen them for a long time, and thought that it would be fun to grow up with them. I have visited the island during my summers and found it to be a beautiful and lively place. Very relaxing and friendly people.

Originally, I moved to PEI because of a sense of geographic 'fit' - the landscape, scale, and because it was an island. I was completing my graduate studies and my thesis topic related to fisheries management. However, the reason for staying had to do with ease of lifestyle, first as a student, and then as a new professional. It was freeing to be in a milieu where risks were possible, and where one might assume multiple personas. Urban environments are not as pliable. They demand a clearer identity, there is less room for experimentation. On the grand scheme, PEI has been good to me. It is a place where I have been able to spread my wings. My first five years here were not easy, but with a bit of imagination, and some effort I was able to obtain very worthwhile employment (albeit, short-term for the most part). When I left PEI in 2001 I was ready for a different challenge. I wanted the experience of working in the centre, and a different kind of intellectual stimulus that is bred from diverse and complex environments. So, off I went. In a nutshell, I had a very positive professional experience. Unfortunately, my personal circumstances changed dramatically. ... Financial strain, personal trauma, and isolation eventually prompted me to return to PEI, after 14 months working in Ottawa ... The



presence of an established community of friends (dating back to my first move to PEI in 1996) has been key; as is proximity to creative writing community and resources; and strong personal relationships.

I left PEI for school. Honestly, I was not always certain that I would return. I didn't plan that far ahead. Being a student, my life followed the path of career opportunities and PEI was and is not a place of great career opportunity for me. However, in doing my own thesis (of a very similar topic to this research) I was fortunate to be able to listen to the stories of people returning to PEI after living off the Island for many years. I heard the advantages and disadvantages, the losses and benefits experienced and the complex reasons for their returns. Then I began to consider factors that were important to me in my life: being close to my family, having a decent job, and being able to have a good quality of life. I didn't really think that I would be able to be content far removed from my family. At the same time as this, just prior to my return to PEI, my grandfather passed away. Having experienced that loss, family became all the more important to me. So, I decided to return to PEI shortly after that. Reluctantly, I have to say that I am one of those people who feels a great sense of loss not living on PEI. I am not trying to be dramatic about it, but I just miss the physical place and, more importantly, my family.

From the time of my first visit to PEI in 1991, I perceived that the Island would provide a culturally comfortable environment, an adequate opportunity to develop a new vocation, and that the Maritime Provinces constitute a world-class vacation destination.

The crime where I was currently living was becoming a bit overwhelming. My job was going no where and there was actually more opportunities at work (i.e. Veterans Affairs Canada) in Charlottetown than in Nova Scotia, since my department is a Head Office in Charlottetown and there are more opportunities. I couldn't afford to build a new home in N.S. as property was more expensive in the immediate areas. Building a home on PEI was more affordable. The cost of living on PEI was much lower and I tended to spend less on entertainment and shopping on PEI. My parents and all family members were on PEI and I wanted to be closer to them. The way of life on PEI is slower, more relaxing, and much more enjoyable for getting married and starting a family (which was the main reason).

The schooling for my son would be better and he would get what he needed and the island way of living which I thought were best more laid back than the city, even though the pace has picked up quite a bit in the past few years, it is still better than the city and people here are nicer in general.... Better place to raise kids without having to worry about things like drugs, violence that we would worry about in the city.

We thought it would be good to slow down a little in terms of career demands ... We absolutely love the beaches of PEI and live near the National Park.

I wanted my child to experience a more rural, 'small town' way of life, having been born in Montreal. I have small town roots and felt he should experience that way of life, also so he could better decide where to settle as an adult to start his life. We had come 10 years previous for a vacation and loved it. Revisited for a family wedding and decided I



would love to try to move here for (mainly) the reasons stated above.

My family vacationed here from the time I was 4. I have always felt attached to PEI. After applying for nursing positions here for 7 years, I was finally offered a job. Coincidentally it was going to be the last year I was going to apply because I felt that they did not want people "from away". Everything in my heart was calling me to PEI so I resigned from a great Monday-Friday position, packed up in the middle of blizzard and started driving. From the second I crossed the bridge, I have felt that I am "home" despite the many, MANY prejudices I've experienced due to being "from away". My roots are Irish so I should have been able to walk right in. The majority of nurses who moved here when I did left shortly after because of the way they were mistreated. The reasons for leaving have far outnumbered the reasons for staying, but my heart is attached to the province. I will never leave... Moving here meant taking a large cut in pay, taking a loss on my house, and increasing my cost of living. I moved and stayed because I truly WANT to be here.

I wanted to be close to my family of origin. In addition, there were good job opportunities for someone who is unilingual English.

We love it here. It is so peaceful and unspoilt. Our little home town had been consumed by the impact of growth from Toronto and it is increasingly a 'foreign' place to return to, though most of our family is still there. Growth has the potential to ruin the best that PEI has to offer. Fortunately, we have noted that growth does not occur at the same pace and the 'island population' seem to be able to absorb the current rate of growth without losing all sense of community, such as is happening in Ontario. We joke about being 'from away' but it has never been a serious factor causing us to feel unwelcome. Quite to the contrary! I suppose you find what you are looking for. We have found lots of good neighbours and friends! It is hard to describe but I think the most attractive quality is an intangible 'quality of life' factor. The pace of life, the tenor and tone of people's interactions, the interconnections between people and families, the very fact that we can relate to news events as reported and happening right here, the very low rate of traffic fatalities, and the lack of violence and criminal activity on the island all contribute to that intangible quality.

My husband and I moved from PEI to Toronto in 1993 for university and work related reasons. After 10 years, my husband had built up a successful company and I had built up a successful career and we left both behind to raise a family on PEI. Living in the greater Toronto area for 10 years with gang violence, traffic jams, sub-divisions with houses touching each other, the glow of city lights always in the backdrop at night, it was time to raise a family 'back home'. We left our career and business and started again from scratch.

The Island was an attractive place for us as we have a young family and we were tired of the stresses of life in the Middle East. We were also seeking a laid back lifestyle, close to family and friends where we could raise our children in a safe and familiar environment.

My move to Prince Edward Island was rather sudden and unexpected. I graduated from



high school and did not wish to continue in Québec's system of education. I began to explore other options for post secondary education. I after plans to go to Halifax fell through due to house, UPEI was suggested and I decided to look into it. UPEI offered a small close-knit learning community and a easy transition from grade 11 to post-secondary education. PEI appears extremely safe to my family and therefore they supported my decision.

Opportunities for career advancement brought us here, strengthened by the perception that Charlottetown offered a great quality of life to raise two young children.

I had lost so much as a result of my illness, including my job and my home. I had property here that was left to my family by my father and there were family supports as well as the medical and community supports I needed to recover. Housing was accessible and affordable and the rural environment provided a stress free atmosphere to truly recuperate.

We always loved the Island when we visited here on Vacations. Our initial plan was to have a bed and breakfast in the old homestead. My parents live one hour away in Nova Scotia so we are close to them.

We were unsatisfied with our quality of life in London, Ontario, and thought it as good a time as any to make a move. We had lived on the Island in 1986 and felt we had not given it a sufficient "go" at that time. We wanted to own our own home and buy some land.

We were living in an apartment building downtown Vancouver and knew that buying a home meant living an hour or more outside of the city, a \$300,000 plus mortgage or living in a condo. Neither of us liked the suburbs of Vancouver either. We were getting tired of the crowds of people in the city and missed our families. My wife is a registered nurse and at the time PEI was offering up to \$5,000 moving expenses; so we decided it was the right time to go back.

I lived away from P.E.I. for 35 years, and the older I got the more important it was to return here. I brought the last of my 3 children here as a 15-year old in 1998. I now regret that I didn't raise all my children here so they would have a strong sense of 'place'.

I was encouraged to apply for a job at UPEI. I decided to apply to test the waters. I had been teaching at the University of Toronto where life was good but stressful and I worked all the time. I wanted to explore a change in lifestyle.

I visited my grandparents as a child & loved the rural way of life in Rock Barra. I wanted to build a summer home but then I began to visit in fall/spring/winter and realized I would actually love to live here year round (If I could find a decent job).

I needed a change from a clinical/frontline setting - too many years working with an offender population. Also, I was growing tired of southern Ontario (urban growth and all that comes with it, like pollution) When Correctional Service Canada opened the



Addictions Research Centre, I expressed an interest. The rest is history. The move was also welcomed by my spouse. She has family in Moncton, NB.

My wife and I decided to leave the US in late November 2000, after the US Presidential election was stolen by a right wing cabal. We investigated several areas, including Regina, Red Deer and Whitehorse. We chose PEI because of affordable housing, friends who spoke very highly of the Island, scenic beauty and very helpful immigration personnel. We immigrated through the Provincial Nominee Program.

Family was the driving factor initially. Housing was affordable, the cost of living was affordable, and I could use PEI as a base to travel more... At the end of the day, in the larger cities I lived in, I realized that ultimately it was a small town atmosphere I was seeking. I would go to the same restaurants, grocery stores pubs etc. to get some sense of community in a place where you often didn't know your next door neighbour.

Some frustration with my previous employment, and encouragement from friends on PEI to relocate were factors. Increased accessibility via Confederation Bridge made it an option that we would not have considered prior to its construction.

PEI was attractive because it was not too far from our families in Newfoundland, was a fairly small place (we had both lived in larger cities and preferred smaller towns) with a reasonable cost of living, and of course because there was a job available.

The possibility of a safer and better future for my children.

We both wanted to live here because of the housing prices, smaller communities, great beaches, etc.

We had decided that children in the UK grew up far too quickly and were worried about our daughters' teen years. We went onto the MLS site and scrolled down the provinces and found a place called Prince Edward Island. We looked at properties and on the government website and decided that this island was ideal, laid back, great property prices meant we could get rid of our mortgage. I read the immigration act online and discovered the province had a nomination process, which we applied for and were successful and moved here within a year of deciding to emigrate. We thought PEI would be a good place to bring up children. We could live anywhere in the world as we have an internet based business.

Every year or second year for 12 or 13 years, we visited PEI for our vacation, in August and September, staying at a cottage on the shore with no electricity, a wood stove, a water pump in the yard and an outhouse. We loved every minute of our time on the Island. So peaceful. So beautiful. So welcoming. So much to do. We purchased land and eventually built our dream home on beautiful PEI ... I would include the fine weather as a major reason for moving to PEI. Also, another major reason for moving here would be the fine opportunities to garden, eat fresh produce including fruits, vegetables, pork, beef, chickens, ducks, eggs, all available by being grown yourself or from a local farmer. Oysters, lobster, scallops, mussels, cod, all fresh or available from a local fisher.



My own family as well as my wife's all live in Eastern Canada (defined as Toronto to PEI, in this case). Living in Northern BC, we were four days of constant driving or \$2,000 of plane tickets to take ourselves and our kids to see family. With young children it seemed more and more important to move somewhere closer to family. I have family here and my wife and I had vacationed here nearly every summer and loved the area. When my wife saw a posting for nurse positions that would cover moving expenses, we figured it was an opportunity. I thought I could use the EI benefits that come with moving for a spouse's work to subsidize starting a private practice as a therapist. In the process of networking to establish a practice, I was pleasantly surprised to land work in my profession of choice. We have been here 3 years now and feel good about the move. We find PEI's social environment a little conservative and slow to welcome those who weren't born here (I have grown to find the phrase 'from away' terribly offensive) and there is a disappointed satisfaction with entitlement, but in living across the country we have learned that everywhere has its quirks.

Living in Toronto, there was a high crime rate. After having my son, I realized that I did not want him raised in that environment.

Simplicity of life, school less competitive, safe place to live.... Toured around 4 provinces, liked PEI because quality of life was simple and safe. PEI also provided opportunity to mix with the Canadian culture and not live in an all Asian community.

I decided to come to PEI based on my previous experience during my internship. It seemed like the island could offer me a life-style that I was looking for.

We were recently married at the time and about to start a family. We thought PEI would be a better, safer place to raise our children, rather than a big city.

In 1998, my wife and I were in need to move to a more family-friendly life-style than the one available in Toronto. Also, we were about to adventure into starting our own business; we believed that PEI would be the ideal place for a new life.

We were at a point in our lives and careers where we could choose our path in life. Career or family. If we were to remain working in Toronto, we would have the lifestyle of a 'Dual Income, No Kids (DINK)' family. If we were to leave Toronto, we had to decide how we would support ourselves. We decided to take a chance and see what life would bring us. We quit our jobs, sold our house, moved to PEI with no job, no house and decided to start an international freight forwarding business from Charlottetown.

I decided to move to PEI because my mother had a cottage there and I also had a cottage there. I wanted to enjoy the natural environment and find employment so that I could benefit from easy access to my summer property.

Slower pace of life, cleanliness of environment, friendly people, relatively good weather... I always wanted to return to an ocean-side home and out of a big city.



It was a time in our family's life where a major change was both possible and sought. Our children were at an age where moving school would have been increasingly disruptive had we delayed the move, and from a lifestyle point of view, we had decided that having more time to spend with each other was our top priority. It was therefore an easy decision to sell the dental office and adopt our new lifestyle.

While living in Saudi Arabia, we felt intense pressure from our families to move back to North America where it would be safer. At first, we thought our only option was to move to a big city for my husband's work. However, when a job for my husband became available in Charlottetown, we immediately seized the opportunity to move back to the Maritimes, where it is safe and the pace of life is slower (less of a rat race).

We thought that PEI would be a good environment to raise children and liked the friendly attitude of most people. We were attracted as well to the vacation destination qualities, such as beaches, water, cottages, etc. ... We were looking forward to the "adventure" of living in an area of Canada where we had only visited a couple of times before and to the opportunities that may become available to us in a smaller, rural community. We were also looking forward to leaving the "rat race" environment of the city (crowds, traffic, pollution, rising housing costs, etc).

I originally came to PEI because of UPEI. Small University, reasonable expenses (tuition, rent, etc.), and 'small town' feel of Charlottetown, but still a city.

My main reason for moving home to PEI was because of an elderly mother who was not in good health. After spending 25 years away, and visiting at least once a year, I realized time is too short and wanted to be able to spend time with my mom. It was a dream I always had to be able to move back so I did some job research and with the help and support of family we were able to achieve this. My mom died a year after I moved, so I am forever grateful I moved when I did, and now you couldn't get me to leave.

My husband always wanted to live in the Maritimes. So we started vacationing in different areas and provinces in the Maritimes and since our first trip to PEI in 1992, we knew that we could live here. The beauty of the landscape, and it seemed gentler here. On our first trip here, we bought a cottage lot. Then my husband had the opportunity to retire after 33 years at Chrysler and he was only 52. He was young enough and my career was portable (as a registered massage therapist). We decided to move here full time, not just as 'cottage' people. We bought a fine home and 59 acres (40 wooded and trail through it and 2 large duck ponds that Ducks Unlimited created for us) and we love it!

We had purchased land on PEI early in my husband's military career. The plan was to eventually retire on PEI. We spent all summer vacations building our retirement home. Our children had a place to call home since we moved every 2 years (postings). When my husband got posted to Ottawa, we chose to move myself and the teenage children to a safe nurturing environment. My husband retired 2 years later.

I left PEI in 1988 to pursue graduate studies and to see what there was beyond these Island shores. I left by ferry, before the bridge was built. The morning I left, I watched



PEI disappear in the fog as the ferry sailed from Borden. I turned and looked straight ahead toward the mainland and thought to myself, "I may never come back." And I was fine with that thought. I had no plan to return. Fourteen years after I left, I decided to return. I had the offer of a meaningful and secure job on PEI, which is the only condition under which I would have returned. I gave up a great position in Boston and left behind many good friends and a fine group of colleagues. The decision to return to PEI was much more difficult than the one to leave PEI. My wife and our son are Boston-born. My wife and I both had strong family ties to Boston. It was a place of tremendous opportunity. In the end the decision to move to PEI came down to 3 primary factors: (1) a secure job that truly interested me, (2) the opportunity to be close to my aging parents, and (3) knowing that the Island would be a good place to live and to raise a family.

We simply grew tired of living in a city. We could not let our children out of the house without very close supervision, and we never felt like we were part of a 'community'.

After spending 37 years in aviation maintenance and 26 years with Air Canada, I was a victim of the airlines' economic downturn and was made redundant. The local job market in the Vancouver area had nothing to offer in the aviation field. Looking in other provinces, I found out that Atlantic Turbines had a vacancy for a production manager and here I am!

I was starting to dislike the crowds and concrete of city living - missing the ocean and open spaces.

I was transferred here with a retail company I worked with. My wife and I decided to take the position only after we found a church of like faith with ours and a Christian school where we could educate our children.

We wanted to run our own business. PEI is a key tourism destination in Canada, where land is still affordable.

I had moved to Texas after graduating from university due to the lack of work in the Maritimes. The original plan was to move back in 1 year. 11 years later my grandparents were declining in health and I missed the ocean and the island life. We noticed when we were home in the summer that they were actually recruiting health care professionals to the island, so it seemed like the right time to move.

We wanted to raise our children in a more relaxed environment than a big city, at least for their early years. Just before we left Ontario, the Progressive Conservatives took over in a sweep and there were radical changes in how the provincial government operated. Workfare, major cuts to social programs, infrastructure, environment and the arts... we did not like the direction that the province was headed. My wife is from PEI and had some family here - so we thought it would be a good place.

We were living in the Northwest Territories. Our children were reaching school age and my husband was tired of the politics in his job. We wanted our children to have the advantage of education in a more 'mainstream' society, especially 'French immersion'



which was not offered where we lived. My sister was living here and was anxious for us to come. I have family in NS and my husband has family in NB, so this was good neutral ground.

My husband used to live here and always wanted to come back. We could sell our house in England and build a house here and have no mortgage. There is little stress here and we can be anywhere we need to go in ten minutes. It is a very beautiful place to live. Activities for children are very inexpensive and it is a very safe place for children to live. Also in life you regret what you do not do more than what you do and I didn't want to be sitting in England wondering what it would have been like to live in Canada.

Hospitality and Friendly Islanders. Affordable Real Estate. Pollution free. No traffic jams. Minor crime. Lovely nature. Privacy.

Hospitality, beautiful nature, affordable housing, a lot less pollution than in Hamilton ON. Clean water on our property. Privacy.

I have been in Vancouver in Canada since 2001. I came to Vancouver for my daughters' education. I love Canada. I decided to immigrate to Canada. I was looking for immigration. PEI Immigration Programme was good for me. I visited PEI for my immigration interview. I was attracted to PEI people's kindness, beautiful scenery. So I decided to move to PEI.

We came to PEI because of hockey! We came as tourists for hockey summer camps for our children in Summerside four times, and decided to change our life. We visited the Island and fell in love with it and decided to move.

We lived in a Chinese Community in Toronto for 7 years before moving to PEI. Neither of us knew English except for a little learnt at work or talking to friends. A male friend from our Chinese community was moving to PEI to start a new life and he encouraged us to come with him - just for a visit of 12 weeks to decide whether we liked the place. One of us absolutely loved it; the peaceful surroundings and the opportunity to have our own house. But my spouse was not so sure because she doesn't drive and PEI did not offer public transportation. We returned to Toronto; but the crowded city, traffic and insecurity made us decide to come and live in PEI - so, 6 months after, we came back to PEI and started looking for a house. We tried to start a business selling plants, but that did not work. We are both looking for good jobs and will do everything we can to stay - but if nothing comes up soon we may have to move to another province for better job opportunities.... PEI offers safety, security and peaceful feeling.

We needed to expand our production capabilities. We were having a difficult time finding people and space in southern Ontario with which to grow. A real estate agent had a brother-in-law on Slemon Park's board of directors and told him we were looking to expand. Slemon Park and the Provincial Government approached us with enough data to show that there were enough demographic and monetary reasons to expand in PEI. Our business started operations in June 2000. By November, it became evident that I needed to re-locate from the plant in Ontario to the new plant in PEI to get the facility up and



running. We moved here in January of 2001.... The labour pool available to grow our business was good. The Provincial Government and HRSDC offered us financial incentives to locate the company here. Slemon Park Corporation was very accommodating to the needs of our company.

My husband and I had visited a friend vacationing in PEI for about three years. We fell in love with the scenic beauty of the island and the more tranquil pace of life. Less crowded living space, uncrowded highways, etc., had a great appeal for a retired lifestyle. We felt living in a more rural environment would have less crime, more traditional values and more friendly and sincere people than in a large city. We also felt that all of these benefits would not necessarily be offset by the typical drawbacks of “country life” in that Charlottetown, for its size, offers some of the big city attractions, e.g. restaurants, theatre, entertainment, excellent food shopping, albeit on a smaller scale, with the proximity of Halifax and possibly Moncton rounding out the selection. We imagined gaining all these benefits above, while possibly acquiring land, home, etc., at perhaps less cost than in other areas of the country.

Ma famille est toute ici et ça faisait déjà 15 ans que j'étais partie. Je me sentais de plus en plus éloignée de ma famille. Ainsi, la circulation routière dans le sud de l'Ontario est horrible et je passais beaucoup de temps sur la route pour me rendre au travail. J'avais hâte à quitter cet environnement congestionné. L'événement du Sept 11, 2001 m'a aussi marqué et fait réaliser que la vie est trop courte pour vivre dans un endroit où tu n'es pas totalement heureuse... Il existe une communauté francophone dans laquelle je peux facilement m'intégrer.

Nous avons besoin de 'décompresser' de la vie tumultueuse de Montréal. Le travail en milieu hospitalier au Québec était devenu pénible et malsain. Depuis les derniers 20 ans je venais régulièrement à l'IPE pour mes vacances. Reçu un offre d'emploi. Nous aimons aussi les aventures, alors nous avons décidé d'y venir. Les gens semblaient beaucoup moins stressés et c'est ce que nous recherchions.

Fatiguer de la vie à Montréal, fatiguer de toujours courir. Être plus près de la nature. Me retrouver et retrouver un équilibre.



