

# Travel to Newfoundland and Labrador with Author Necie Mouland



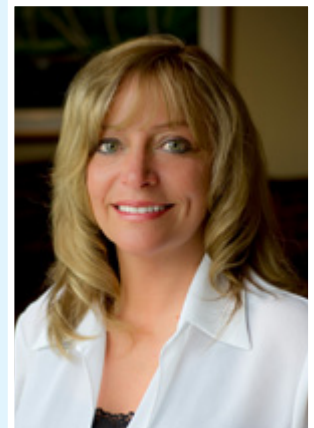
**The people who live in the picturesque Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador** have a colorful approach to all aspects of life. Author Necie Mouland writes children's books extolling this unique part of the world. Mouland's books are designed to appeal to Newfoundland and Labrador natives as well as the rest of the world, those whom they refer to as "comefromaways." These books reflect Mouland's efforts to record the province's ancient, distinctive customs before they fade away. "As the world modernizes, some of the traditions and old ways are becoming less commonplace," Mouland explains. "I decided to write and illustrate children's books to preserve our culture and heritage as a means to share it with the world."

Mouland grew up in the small fishing village of St. Bernard's, Newfoundland. Today she lives just outside the capital city of St. John's where she works as a web designer for the provincial government. Due to limited work opportunities, many natives of Newfoundland and Labrador have had to move to other areas over the years. In recognition of those who have been forced to leave the area, many communities on both the island and the mainland plan "Come Home Year" celebrations, offering a reunion of sorts during a week of festivities. "All these little towns turn into bustling

places as people return to see friends and family," Mouland says. "It's a very special thing."

When St. Bernard's celebrated its "Come Home Year" in 2007, Mouland designed a website for the event. As a way to raise money for a church in the community, she wrote *There's No Place Like My Newfoundland and Labrador Home*, a children's book about growing up in the province. The book was such a hit that Mouland even received an invitation from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to talk about it on television. "That was a 'pinch me' moment for sure," she says.

That's how it all started, but as Mouland puts it, "That was quite a few books ago." She's since followed up with *Jack Likes Salt Fish and Scrunchions, Do You?, Bays, Bights and Tickers, Pop's Rubber Boots, The Great Ferryland Dig* and *You're Some Crooked*. Mouland has also illustrated a Newfoundland and Labrador coloring book.



Mouland's delighted that her books have ended up all over the world. "Many of my books leave the province to go to people who once lived here, such as grandchildren of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have moved away to ensure they learn about their roots, to people who have visited our beautiful home and fell in love with it, or people who simply have an interest in the province," she explains. She added that Newfoundland has taken on a new, sentimental significance for the thousands of Americans who were stranded there in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks when the U.S. airspace was closed and airplane travelers heading for American airports had to remain there until airplane travel was resumed.

Isolated by its geography, the province retains much of the heritage of the Irish and English who settled there. "There's so much history and culture here," Mouland says. "For so many years the bulk of the province's population lived on the island of Newfoundland, untouched by the outside world. There are still places today where if I dropped you there, you'd think you were right smack in the middle of Ireland."

The province boasts intriguing place names such as "Nickey's Nose Cove" and "Indian Tickle," which lend themselves well to children's books. "Kids get a kick out of the funny names," Mouland says. While she has written these books for children, they've found favor with adult readers, too. "I've been happy to find out that there's not really an age group for my books."

One of Mouland's favorite topics to write about is the unique food served in Newfoundland and Labrador homes. Her books introduce treats such as "fish and brewis" (often served with small pieces of fried pork fat called "scrunchions"), "toutons," "molasses buns," and "figgy duff." Mouland also focuses on the celebrations that bring families and friends together around a shared meal. "In a world of fast food, it's important to remind people about the value of eating real food in the company of those we love," says Mouland.

Children especially seem to enjoy learning some of the Newfoundland and Labrador jargon Mouland uses in her books. "If you eat way too much, you say you're 'stogged,'" she explains. "If you're in a bad mood, you're 'crooked,' and if you're a mischievous little rascal, you're a 'sleeveen.' Kids love that one."

Soon, Mouland will be releasing *A Newfoundland and Labrador Christmas Wish*, a book about the province's

unique Christmas traditions. "One of the biggest differences is that Christmas lasts for twelve days," she says. This latest book will also delve into the dying art of mummering, a Christmas tradition where a group of people wearing masks

and strange costumes go from door to door. "These costumes are nothing you'd buy in the store," she says. "There might be someone with gloves on their feet or all wrapped up in a pair of ugly curtains. The more outlandish they look, the better!" If allowed inside, the mummers will sing and dance as the residents try to guess who they are. "It was once a big part of the Christmas celebration, but now you see it less and less."

Mouland says she plans to continue to write about her beloved homeland. "With a place as rich in history as Newfoundland and Labrador, there are endless topics. I love to paint a picture of what it's like here. I'm so happy to be able to share my little corner of the world with everyone."

For more information about Mouland and her books, visit [www.overtheclothesline.com](http://www.overtheclothesline.com). ●

