Building Sustainable Communities with a Sense of Place:

A Case Study of the Far South of Tasmania

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Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or graduate diploma in any University or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

Kim Menadue

Date: 22nd

Abstract

In an era marked by globalisation and increased time-space compression sustainability has emerged as the preferred framework within which to act and think about the future of local communities. The impacts of globalisation have been uneven and the narrative of rural communities is characterised by a decline in quality of life and draws attention to the struggle of many communities to keep abreast of rapid social, environmental and economic changes. Globalisation has had impact on the structure and meaning of places and also on how places are experienced and conceptualised.

Sense of place is an important concept that provides insights into the subjective meanings attached to place. Using a qualitative approach, this research explores the relationships between sense of place and sustainable community development in the Far South of Tasmania. In seeking to understand these relationships the study focuses on exploring the links between i) sense of place and social well-being, and ii) sense of place and empowering the community. Multiple methods of data collection incorporated an analysis of local history, participant observation, and in-depth interviews with community members. Analysis of the field data obtained through both in-depth interviews and participant observation has shown that sense of place is a factor that both drives and impedes the social well-being and empowerment of the community. Members of the community indicated that sense of place is a rich source of social well-being that incorporates connections to the environment, notions of care and a sense of belonging. Sense of place may be a potent motivation for participating in bottom-up approaches of community development. However attachments to place may also be associated with unequal power relations, intolerance of difference, lowered levels of trust and capacity to cope with change. Fostering sustainable development in the Far South may be contingent upon the capacity of the community to deal with differences and conceptualise place in new ways that incorporate the flux and flow and multiple identities of place that so powerfully characterise local history.

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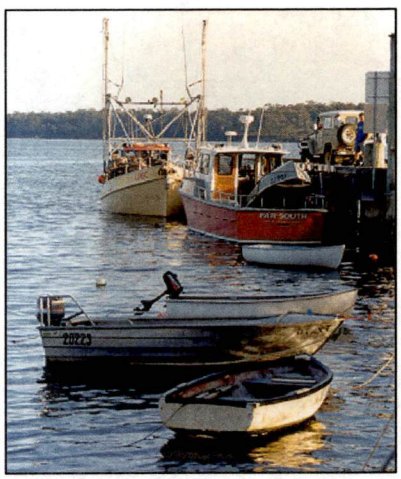
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION



1.1 Overview

Located deep in the Far South of Tasmania at the end of the southern-most road in Australia is a place called Recherche Bay. Adjacent to the South-West National Park, Recherche Bay is also a gateway to the expansive Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. Skirting the shores of this large bay are clusters of homes and shacks located within townships named during eras gone by. Leprena, Moss Glen, Catamaran, Cockle Creek. Recherche Bay has been home to Aboriginal tribes, whalers, convicts, pioneers, bushworkers, saw-millers and coal-miners. Today, industry has largely gone and there are few permanent residents; the dwellings are mostly shacks and camps utilised by people during the summer months and public holidays. There are appealing sandy white beaches framed by the Southern Ranges, and the bay provides a popular fishing ground and shelter from the prevailing westerlies for recreational and commercial fishers (Figure 1.1).

In recent years there have been few changes to everyday life at Recherche Bay. It is a fairly quiet place, busy only during the summer months, and there is a familiarity amongst the people who have grown to know one another year after year. But there are changes in the wind for the people who have connections to Recherche Bay. A corporate investor has proposed a multi-million dollar tourist development be located in one corner of the bay at Plantar Beach.

Some of the locals are in favour of the development. After all the bay has been used by people in the past, and the tourist venture is just another way of using the land which may bring people back into the area. Others believe the area desperately needs employment and that the development will offer opportunities for young people and give them reasons to stay. The place might come alive again. Services such as roads and electricity might be upgraded. There are also people who argue against the development. The proposal locates the tourist resort inside the National Park, and some people argue a venture of this type is yet another example where an 'outside' developer can use big dollars to 'muscle in' and exploit the natural and cultural assets of an area. Such a development, it is argued, will compromise both the values held by local people and the environment. Others argue a project of this type will irrevocably change the character of the area for the worse. Clearly, Recherche Bay means different things to different people.

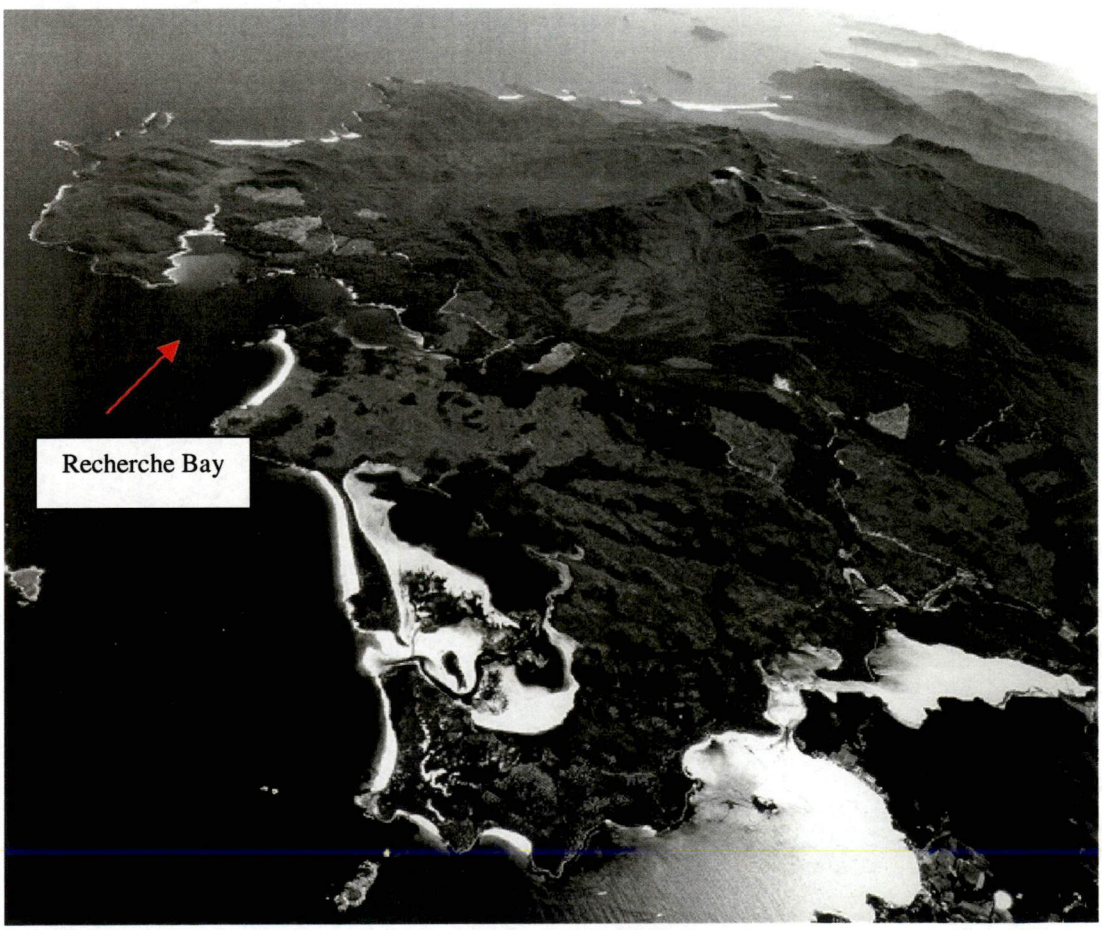


Figure 1.1 Aerial photograph showing Recherche Bay. The expansive Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area extends to the South and West (Lands Department of Tasmania, date unavailable due to missing files within the department).

The story described above is just one example of change currently challenging the rural community located in the Far South of Tasmania (

Figure 1.2). Coping with change may be made more difficult by the increased time–space compression which typifies change. In the backdraft of the global spin, the community of the Far South, which was once populous and flourishing, now struggles to provide employment opportunities, and rationalisation has meant the loss of economic and social infrastructure. Banks, schools, industries and services have closed down. The pattern of decline is a feature common to rural areas around Australia and has fuelled much discussion about the effects of globalisation and the capacities of local communities to cope with change. The story of change also brings to the fore the diverse meanings that people attach to place. People experience places in different ways and may forecast different visions for the future. Difference is a part of community. However, dealing with difference in empowering ways is challenging for communities whose members value equity and fairness.

People, places, and relationships change. A recurrent theme in the literature of sustainable community development is the need for further research into the social dimensions that foster sustainable communities. Using a case study approach, I aim to explore the role that sense of place could play in fostering a sustainable community in the Far South of Tasmania (hereafter referred to as the Far South). The study contributes to the growing literature which directly addresses the relationships between two urgent imperatives: the dynamic and powerful social dimensions of place, and the need to create sustainable communities. In order to achieve the aim of the research I have asked two primary questions. What is the role of sense of place in fostering social well-being? And, what is the role of sense of place in empowering communities to take responsibility for their needs? To come to understand these relationships I used a qualitative approach to investigate community members' sense of place and perceptions of community development. Combining both field research and a literature review enabled an exploration of possible links between sense of place and fostering sustainable communities.

Sense of place is often associated with sentiments for place, attachments to place, notions of home, a sense of belonging, and cultural identities. Sense of place may be considered an elusive concept; however, for the individual, attachments to place may be vivid and meaningful (Tuan 1974). The significance of such attachments is

expressed by Relph (1976:41): a "deep relationship with place is as necessary, and perhaps as unavoidable, as close relationships with people: without such relationships human existence is bereft of much of its significance". As illustrated by the story of Recherche Bay, it may not be until an individual's sense of place is threatened by change that sense of place values are articulated.

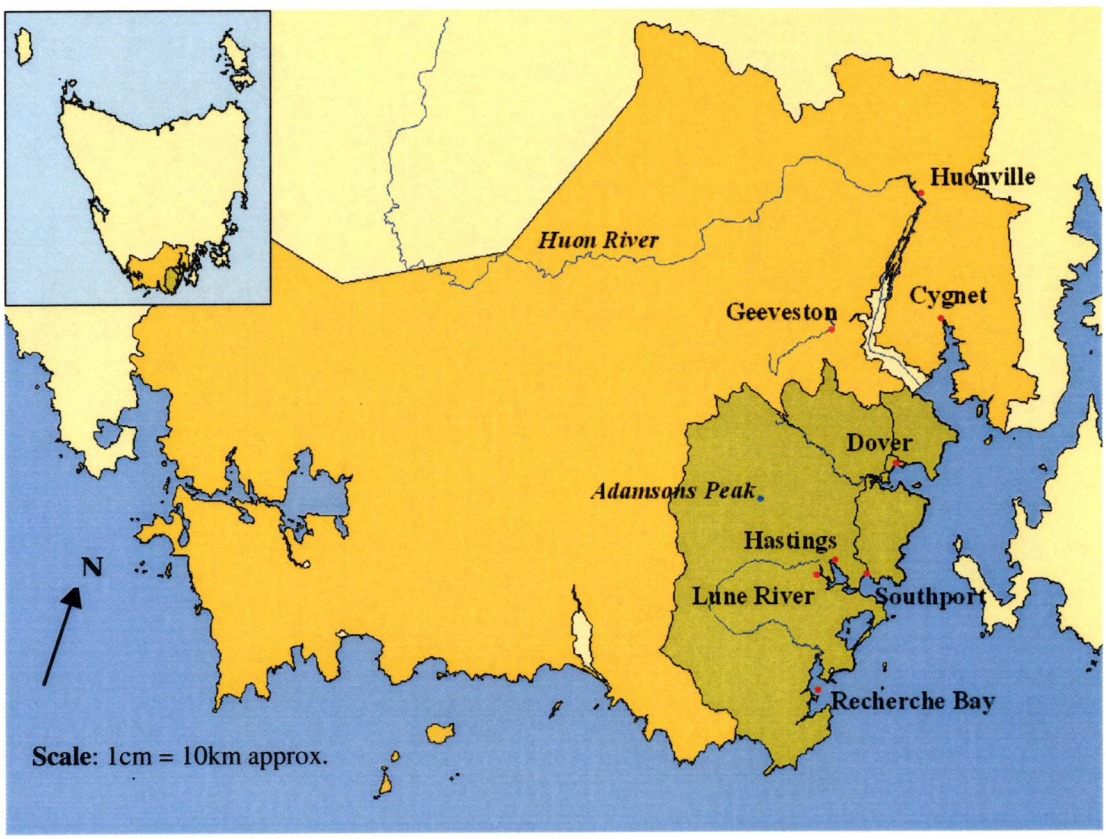


Figure 1.2 Map showing the Municipal Boundary for the Huon Valley (orange), and the Far South study area (green). Inset, map of Tasmania.

Sources: ABS 1996: Tasmanian municipal boundaries, DPIWE 1999, 1:25000: roads. Map created by Denbeigh Armstrong, September, 2001.

Community development focuses on "building active citizenship, to allow a capacity for community determination of needed initiatives, and in the best cases, a community's identification of its strengths and capacities rather than its disadvantage" (National Community Housing Forum 2000[1]). Accepting community

[1] References accessed from the internet do not show page numbers.

development as a key component of sustainable communities, my research has been guided by a number of objectives. I seek to understand how sense of place may be conceived as a social good that may both drive and impede the social well-being of the community. I seek to explore how sense of place may both drive and impede the community to become empowered to take responsibility to meet their own needs. I seek to understand the cultural fabric of the community through time and consider the meanings that may be drawn forth to help build a sustainable community.

1.2 Mapping the Terrain Ahead

Chapter Two explores sense of place in more detail and forges theoretical links between sense of place and sustainable community development. Using literature drawn from a number of disciplines, I describe some of the impacts of globalisation on notions of place, as well as places in the rural context. Emphasizing the need to consider a conception of place marked by changing cultural meanings, difference and flux, I outline how sense of place may affect the social well-being of communities. Considering the need to empower communities, I focus on describing how sense of place affects processes of sustainable community development. Particular attention is given to the role of sense of place in building social capital and the imperatives for developing an approach to planning that embraces the significance of a sense of place.

Guided by an ontological framework that esteems the importance of local narratives and experiences of place, Chapter Three outlines the case study and qualitative approach used to collect data. The chapter describes how in-depth interviewing and participant observation were used to glean insights into participants' sense of place, and their perceptions and experiences of community development. The chapter also describes how hermeneutics and triangulation were used to analyse data.

Chapter Four traces the multiple identities of place through time. An interpretation of historical sources reveals that the landscape is imbued with diverse cultural meanings. There is a history of globalisation in the Far South and themes of resource-dependency are linked to cultural identities characterized by change, flux, and unequal power relations through time. Communities of the Far South have had challenging times and the sense of community is characterised by a spirit of resilience.

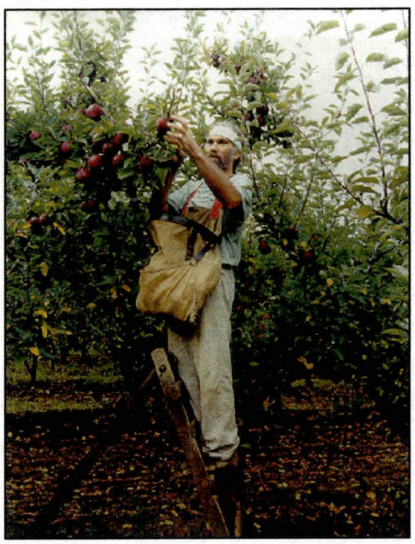
In Chapter Five themes from the literature are woven through the case study data to interpret the findings. This chapter describes participants' sense of place is a strong source of social well-being that is shadowed by the effects of unequal power relations which stem from economic driven rationales. Exploring participants' sense of place elucidates themes which relate to the capacities of the community to cope with change, deal with difference, and build social capital. These themes are integral to the empowerment of the community.

In Chapter 6 I draw the findings together and make conclusions about the relationships between sense of place and sustainable community development. I highlight the significance of the study and make recommendations for further research.

Before exploring the theoretical considerations of this study, it is important to point out that the story that unfolds in the pages ahead is a singular interpretation created with the assistance of a small but diverse group of community members who each have their own distinct stories. The views and sentiments that are expressed here are not necessarily representative of the wider community in the Far South.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS



2.1 Overview

In this chapter I explore the relationships between sustainable community development and sense of place. In place-based literature I have mainly drawn on discussions from human geography, ecophilosophy, environmental ethics, phenomenology of place, cultural identity, sociology and cultural heritage. The literature on sustainable community development has been drawn mainly from rural studies, cultural heritage, work in community development, social capital, government policy, and planning theory.

Based on a review of the literature, discussion focuses on the impacts of globalisation on notions of place and sense of place. I then explore some of the impacts of globalisation on rural places, tracing a narrative characterised by change and decline. I then focus on some of the responses to globalisation in processes used to foster sustainable communities. I briefly summarise four of the main characteristics of sustainable communities, namely, to foster ecological integrity, economic security, social well-being, and to empower communities to take responsibility for their own needs. In this research I focus on the relationships

between sense of place and i) social well-being, and ii) empowering communities. The decision to focus on these two characteristics was informed by the prevailing themes in the literature pertaining to sustainable communities. Finally, having established theoretical links between sense of place, social well-being and empowering communities I turn to a discussion outlining various implications of these for planning practices and sustainable communities.

2.2 Globalisation: Impacts on Place and Sense of Place

Since the 1990s interest in place has been fuelled by growing awareness of the forces and impacts of globalisation. There is a theme in the literature which emphasises globalisation as arising from economic rationalism, resulting in increased speed and intensity of change (see for example, Harvey 1989; Jacobs 1995; Massey 1991a). Time-space-compression refers to "the movement and communication across space, to the geographical stretching-out of social relations and to our experience of all this" (Massey 1991a:24). Globalisation has had impact on the structure and meaning of places and also on how place is experienced and conceptualised. Commentators on place have taken a variety of positions on the conceptualisation of place and sense of place in a globalising world.

2.2.1 Place, Space and Sense of Place

Place is an inherently geographic phenomenon that incorporates notions of space and time (Relph 1976; Sack 2001; Tuan 1977). Place "mixes nature and culture and hybridises both" (Sack 2001:243-244). In exploring the human experience of place and space, Tuan (1975:164-165) makes the following distinctions:

> [s]pace is abstract and it lacks content; it is broad, open and empty, inviting the imagination to fill it with substance and illusion ... Place, by contrast, is the past and the present, stability and achievement ... [Place] is a construct of experience; it is sustained not only by concrete, timber and highways, but also by the quality of human awareness.

Place then is more than physical construct. Places are also social constructs imbued with meaning. Elsewhere, Tuan has written that what "begins as undifferentiated

space becomes 'place' as we get to know it better and endow it with value" (Tuan 1977:4). As centres of felt value places are "the primary means by which we are able to use space and turn it into a humanized landscape" (Sack 2001:233).

Sense of place reveals a great deal about the experience and structure of place (Pred 1983), and is a concept that has been variously interpreted as incorporating place-related subjective values. Tuan (1974:4) for example, used the term 'topophilia' to describe "the affective bond between people and place". Rose (1995:88) suggests it is "the way people feel and think about places", and for Kneafsey (1998:112) it is "a sense which enables people to feel that they 'belong' to a place, or that a place 'belongs' to them". Summarising various definitions from the humanistic tradition, Pred (1983:49) suggests that "place is never merely an object. It is always an object for a subject. It is seen, for each individual as a centre of meanings, intentions or felt values; a focus of emotional or sentimental attachment; a locality of felt significance".

2.2.2 *The Unsettling of Place, the Individual, and Relationships with Nature*

Various authors have emphasised how disruption to and fragmentation of place can leave the individual 'homeless' and searching "for secure moorings in a shifting world" (Harvey 1989:302; see also Arefi 1999; Berry 1997; Hay P. 1994; Hay R. 1992; Relph 1976). Robert Hay (1992:101) states, for example, that increasing mobility

> may promote individual freedom and appreciation of one's nation, but it tends to erode the development of a strong, *local* sense of place. *Time* in one familiar bioregion, not periodic, long-distance migration, is needed to build place ties through stability and continuity. Modern life tends toward excessive mobility and migration, fragmenting lives as we rush along through them.

Modernisation then is sometimes associated with superficial experiences of places that subsequently relate to senses of place that are less deeply felt. For example, Relph (1976) suggests that individuals' experience of place has become dominated by touristic look-a-like places, kitsch objects, and 'homes' which are merely houses. Various commentators also stress that modernisation has lead to historical discontinuities between generations and loss of cultural identity through

homogenisation and commodification of place. On the homogenisation of place, Davis (1996:179) explains:

> [o]ne of the wonders of modernity (and post-modernity) is its ability to grind up everything it touches into a homogenised blend. It is a blend (we often call it 'culture') of anonymity and consumerism.

Globalisation has also had impact on the relationships that people have with the natural environment, drawing the attention of commentators from various domains of thought (see for example, Hay, R. 1992; Hay, P. 2001; Norton and Hannon 1997, 1998; Relph 1976; Sack 2001; Seamon and Mugerauer 1985; Zarsky 1990-1991). With globalisation there has been a deep separation between culture and nature and these trends are epitomized by increasing urbanization, commodification, and the desacralization of human relationships with nature. Spretnak (1997:66) explains:

> [m]odernity situates humankind in a glass box on top of nature, insisting on a radical discontinuity between humans and the rest of the natural world. It frames the human story apart from the larger unfolding story of the Earth community.

The alienation of humans from nature can be typified by treating nature as something to be "subdued and exploited rather than understood, respected and co-operated with" (Wright 1991:25). According to Zarsky (1990-1991:22), economic and ecological interests have collided, and the natural world is treated as "limitless and costless". There is no notion of reciprocity and the "natural environment is treated as a free commodity".

The spiritual impoverishment of some individuals associated with globalisation, has also been partly attributed to an increased focus on electronic milieu (Hay, R. 1992:92). Arefi (1999:181) comments on the impact of cyberspace which can weaken "the communal ties and bonds that were once considered the main characteristics of place-bound communities". For Arefi, the proliferation of secondary (instead of face-to-face) contacts "lays more emphasis on the quantitative rather than the qualitative aspects of place".

Nevertheless, definitions of place that stress some "long, internalised history" (Massey 1991a:29), and are bound to community have been criticised as nostalgic and perpetuating mystical ideals of place-based communities characterized by face-to-face contact, stability and homogeneity (Chekki 1997). Iris Young (1990:229)

argues that the ideal of community has undesirable political consequences and "denies, devalues, or represses the ontological difference of subjects, and seeks to dissolve social inexhaustibility into the comfort of a self-enclosed whole". In support of these re-conceptualizations of place and community, various commentators advocate the richness, vitality and liberating influences of cyber communities that are free from the constraints of time and space (see for example, O'Mahoney 2001; Rhinegold 1993; Stephens, Middleton and Fusco 1999).

Thus, notions of place begin to become more complex. Some authors emphasise the loss of meaningful connections to place and draw attention to place-based communities. Definitions that emphasise place-based communities are particularly useful because they draw attention to the sometimes tenuous relationships humans have with the natural environment. Other authors emphasise more "extroverted" (Massey 1991a:28) conceptions of place and community. Before I explore definitions that emphasise a politics of place, it is important to make clear that considering the merits of the different views presented on notions of place, I adopt a view similar to Relph (2001) and believe that definitions of place can involve choosing *from* the different views rather than *between* them.

2.3 Place: Making Space for Difference in a Globalising World

In a globalising world, defining place as fixed, homogeneous and stable has been viewed as insular, exclusionary and as perpetuating social inequalities (see for example, Massey 1991a; Rose 1995; Young, I. 1990). Sennett (1997) warns that place-making "based on exclusion, sameness, or nostalgia is poisonous medicine socially, and psychologically useless". Alternatively, places might best be conceived as continually evolving with changing cultural meanings, and permeable boundaries (Hall 1995; Massey 1991a; Rose 1995; Rutherford 1990). Acknowledging the social inequalities in communities may also be important and require a nuanced definition of place which considers a politics of difference. Attention to social inequalities may require a sense of place which considers inclusion of the Other and of the "interrelations between people and places with tolerance and humility" (Rose 1995:117). The Other can be defined as "the socially marginalized, the less powerful, the working class, black, female, gay, lesbian, disabled, the geographically peripheral" (Rose 1995:104).

In order to define the identities of place, Tuan (1977:178) suggests that place reflects the cultural values of people and that identity of place is achieved "by dramatizing the aspirations, needs, and functional rhythms of personal and group life". Considering a politics of difference then, it follows that places can be conceived as having multiple identities (Hall 1995; Massey 1991a).

In conceiving identities in a globalised world, places can be linked to places beyond, for "we need a sense of place and a sense of the space around that place, for it is the surrounding space that defines our places and shapes our sense of who we are" (Tuan (1971) cited in Norton and Hannon 1998:232). Massey (1991a:25) argues for a "progressive" and "global sense of place" - one that is "extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local".

Considering a politics of difference it is important to make clear how 'community' is conceived in this particular study.

2.3.1 Place Matters and Community Matters

Community means both "what is together as one [a body politic] and the sense of being bound, obligated or indebted together [a social contract]" (Stratford and Davidson 2001:5). Acknowledging the politics of difference that may exist in the communities in the Far South, however, draws attention to communities of interest. Communities of *place* and *interest* may not necessarily be mutually exclusive but, as Gibson and Cameron (2001:10) point out, can have different requirements that need to be integrated into agenda that support community transformation. Therefore I refer to the 'community of the Far South' which incorporates a number of place-based and interest-based communities that are perceived as connected by a social contract. Acknowledging diversity in a community allows for the multiple attachments to place an individual may have. The importance of accepting diversity is highlighted by Peter Hay (1994:np) who states that if "we are to recover community; if we are to recover place; if we are to recover home; we must put diversity up there with the primary social values: autonomy, justice, freedom, equality".

Having established foundational information on the impacts of globalisation on notions of place I now turn to review some of the impacts of globalisation relevant to the rural setting in which this research is conducted.

2.3.2 Globalisation and Rural Places

Relationships with the natural environment are paramount and integral to daily life in rural areas. Rural life may be characterised by "biological productivity (in the form of farming, forestry, wildlife and fisheries), recharge of water supplies, availability of non-renewable mineral and energy stocks, and 'positional' amenity" (Selman 1996:145). Rural communities often depend on the availability of natural resources for their very survival and it is in these communities that some of the effects of globalising processes are most pronounced (Davidson 2000a).

The literature describing rural places is characterized by a narrative of decline where small towns are struggling to survive amidst immense social changes, changing market demands, advancing technology which affects employment opportunities, and loss of population – particularly of young people (see for example, Alston 1999; Kenyon 1999). Rural areas can be remote and show trends of out-migration to urban areas (Keller 2000), and to "sponge regional centres" where access to preferred services is available (Forth 2000). The enduring realities of rural economies and cultural life are "high unemployment; persistent poverty; deteriorated social well-being; lower earning; and diminished health care" (Keller 2000). There is a trend to an "urban-rich and rural poor type society" (Forth 2000).

Rural areas in Australia have been part of global markets since colonisation (O'Toole 2000; Young, J. 1995-96). What is different now, however, is the speed and intensity of change (Massey 1995; Relph 2001). Increased time-space compression has created a situation where the quality of life for the members of rural communities has declined – this outcome is widely accepted in the literature, although there is debate over the impacts of different contributing factors. Kenyon (2000), for example, states that policy for building regional centres has "actually sucked the life out of many of the surrounding towns around them". O'Toole (2000) suggests that corporate enterprises as well as public policy have contributed to the decline. On the other hand, Forth (2000) suggests that rural decline is part of an inevitable historical process and should be accepted as such. He argues that factors such as droughts,

floods, bushfires, plagues of pests, environmental degradation of farmland, advancing technology, improved transportation and re-routing of highways are causes of rural decline, and that rationalisation-privatisation of government services and policies is a consequence.

> Though the loss of services, such as the closure of the local bank, cinema or pharmacy, are highly significant in explaining small town decline, they are essentially the consequence of both population loss and reduced demand for essential and non-essential services (Forth 2000).

In response to this situation, Forth (2000) advocates that in order to avoid pockets of disadvantage for "certain small towns in rural Australia facing ongoing decline the best long-term 'solution' for those who wish to leave, may involve a *managed* movement of population into larger viable regional centres". It is not within the scope of this research to tease out the questions of managing the movement of people from rural towns whose viability may be considered tenuous. Rather, my concern is with cultural processes and the actions rural communities are taking to revitalise and affirm identities of place; it is "through communal response to change and threat of change that much of the sense of attachment to place is articulated" (Hay P. 2001:158; see also Norton and Hannon 1997, 1998; Stocker and Pollard 1994; Williams and Stewart 1998).

2.4 Summary

Amidst the forces of globalisation, narratives of place are sometimes characterized by a crisis of identity, loss of community, and deep separation between people and nature. In such a schema the development of a sense of place may be superficial. The narrative of place also stresses the need to consider a politics of difference and re-conceptualize place as having porous boundaries and multiple identities. In the rural context globalisation has resulted in some local places struggling to keep abreast of rapid transformation: people are being up-rooted; the viability of towns is being questioned; natural resources are being depleted; and the inequities between the urban rich and rural poor are increasing. Places can no longer be viewed as stable and homogeneous; they are characterized by heightened transformation, heterogeneity and flux.

Given this background, discussion can now focus on responses to globalisation and the implications for sense of place. This discussion assumes that some globalising trends are largely unsustainable. Sustainable development has emerged as the preferred framework within which to care for places and bring communities back within the carrying capacity of the Earth.

2.5 Building Sustainable Communities

Ratified and endorsed internationally, various interpretations of sustainable development have emerged among national and sub-national governments and communities (WCED1987; UNCED 1992). The enduring themes of sustainable development nevertheless challenge commonly held conceptions of progress and draw to attention the meaning of relationships amongst people and the ecosystems of which we are a part. These ethical relationships are central to the principles of sustainable development. The *Caring For the Earth Strategy* for example, emphasises the need to consider equity and the needs of future generations;

> [d]evelopment should not be at the expense of other groups or later generations. We should aim to share fairly the benefits and costs of resource use and environmental conservation among different communities and interest groups, among people who are poor and those who are affluent, and between our generation and those who will come after us (cited in Holdgate 1997:64).

In the sense that place allows for "the weaving together of social relations and human-environment interactions" (Adams et al. 2001:xiv), sustainable development is centrally concerned with places. Fundamentally, as the agents in charge of changing places (Sack 2001), our awareness of and reflections on the significance of sense of place are core business of sustainable development.

In discourses of sustainable development "place and scale are critical" (Halseth and Lo 1999:800). Sustainable development is a "global action plan" (Jacobs 1995:109). However, it is also a flexible framework of principles that can be adapted to the needs and aspirations of local communities. As Halseth and Lo (1999:800) state: "there is no single formula to remedy a community's ills. The uniqueness of place precludes this". Commenting on the local-global framework of sustainable development, Holdgate (1997:228) states:

> the 'local' is the dimension of real meaning. It is the place where activities must be carried out, where complexities, conflicts and knots are apparent and not disguised by an abstract planning language, and where environmental care or disruption and neglect have direct, immediate and severe consequences for people's health, well-being and income.

Stressing the local dimension and need for active citizenship and a sense of stewardship, sustainable community development and sustainable communities are "logical partners" (Bridger and Lulloff 1999:378) and an integral component of sustainable development.

Sustainable community development emphasises an integrated approach and is essentially concerned with "whether the economic, social and environmental systems that make up the community are providing a healthy, productive, meaningful life for all community residents, present and future" (Hart 2000). In the literature there are a growing number of case studies which describe the re-vitalization of various rural communities and towns (see for example, Armstrong 2000; Cameron 2000; Malone 2000; Middleton 2000; Stocker and Pollard 1994; Trainer 2000; Young 1995-1996). These case studies provide analyses of the various ways in which the members of rural communities are choosing to adopt sustainability as the preferred framework within which to act and think about their future, for it "is within communities that people can most easily bring diverse interests together, identify and agree on goals for positive change, and organise for responsive action" (President's Council on Sustainable Development 2000). Stressing the importance of empowering communities through bottom-up processes of community development, these case studies illustrate many of the characteristics of sustainable communities. The *Caring for the Earth Strategy* (cited in Holdgate 1997:226) defines a sustainable community as one which

> cares for its own environment and does not damage those of others. It uses resources frugally and sustainably, recycles materials, minimizes wastes and disposes of them safely. It conserves life-support systems and the diversity of local ecosystems. It meets its own needs as far as it can, but recognizes the need to work in partnership with other communities.

In the literature the particular characteristics of sustainable communities are broadly represented as a) fostering economic security, b) maintaining ecological integrity, c) fostering social well-being, and d) empowering communities to take responsibility for their own needs. A summary of each of the four characteristics is presented in Figure 2.1. A detailed explication of two of the characteristics, namely, fostering social well-being and empowering the community is given in sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2. Within these discussions theoretical connections are made to notions of sense of place. The importance of exploring these links is stressed in the literature that endorses the need to incorporate social dimensions more effectively into processes of sustainable community development. Pepperdine and Ewing (2001:70) state, for example, that "a systematic approach for considering the social dimensions of sustainability is not well developed in Australia, or internationally".

Sense of place values draw attention to the highly variable and special relationships individuals and communities have with each other and their local environment. As an integral component of sustainable community development, sense of place may be gaining status as an important consideration in natural resource management (Robertson et al. 2000; Stedman 1999; Williams and Stewart 1998), and cultural heritage management (AHC 1994; AHC and CRC 2001; Australia ICOMOS 1994; Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992). Sense of place is useful because, for example, it addresses "the culture-nature dialectic" (Norton and Hannon 1998:231) and, with its breadth of meanings can encourage the rediscovery of quality of life as opposed to a focus on quantitative aspects (Jacobs 1995). In the literature, however, a detailed analysis of the dynamic relationships between sense of place and processes of sustainable community development is not well explained. In this regard, I seek to understand the relationships between sense of place and social well-being, and empowering communities to take control of their needs.

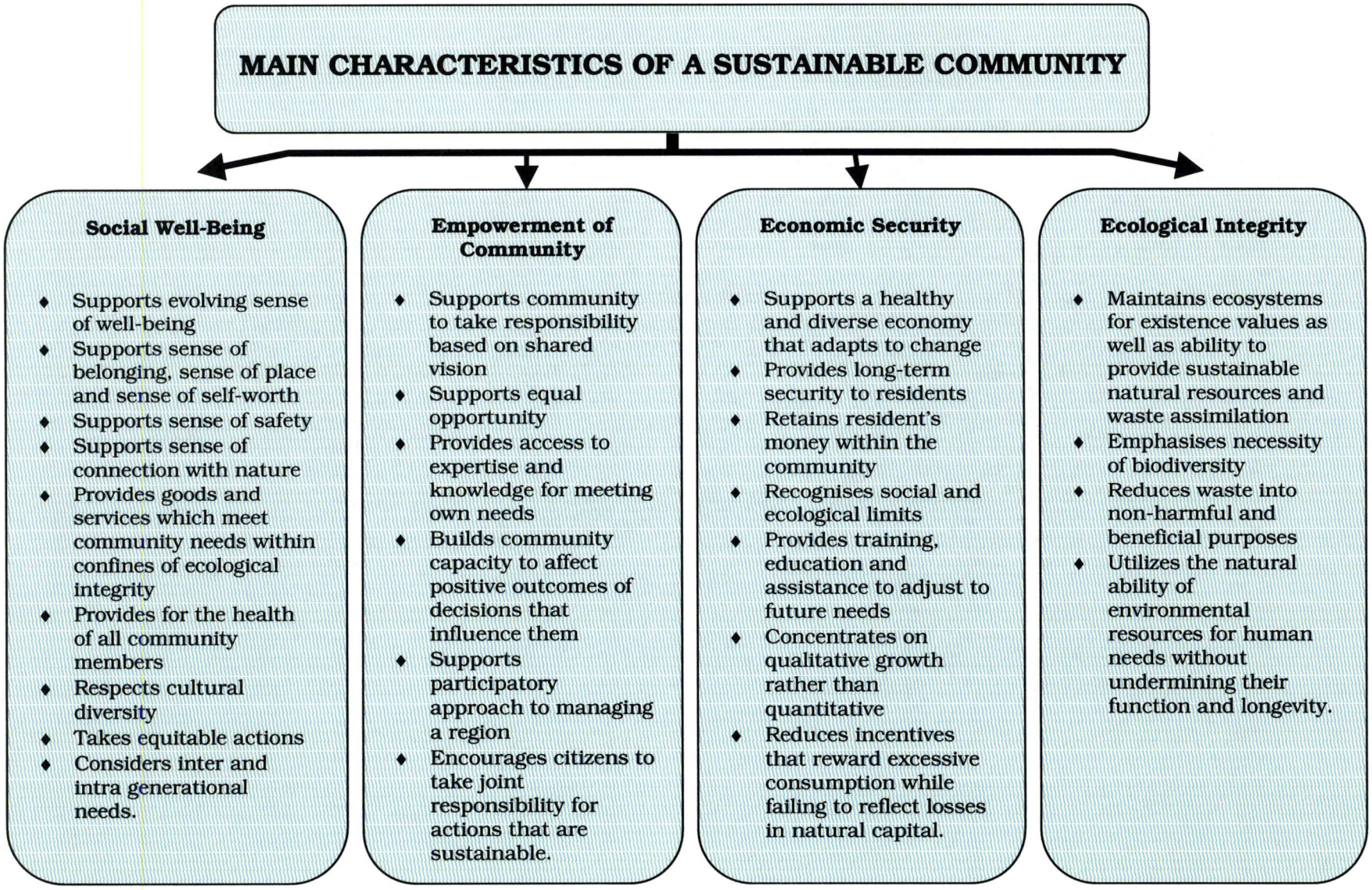


Figure 2.1 Characteristics of a Sustainable Community

Source: Adapted from Flint (2001)

2.5.1 Sense of Place and Social Well-being

The sustainable communities model outlined in the previous section (see Figure 2.1) endorses the significance of the person-place relationship by acknowledging sense of place as a central consideration of social well-being. Jacobs (1997:57) makes the link between personal well-being and social well-being. He argues that private consumption generally contributes to personal well-being, but many "social goods do not make us better off as individuals; rather, they help to create a better society in which we as individuals then live". In this discussion I focus on ways that sense of place can be conceived as a social good and therefore contribute to social well being. Understanding how sense of place is related to social well-being may be an important step in the process of sustainable community development that assists community members to identify the significances of places, their contribution to certain qualities of life, and the need to take responsibility for their care.

Discourses of social well-being are related to notions of health and quality of life. Nielson (1999:65), for example, suggests that definitions of health might best be considered to include freedom of disease, and also "the capacity to meet human needs for physical, mental and social well-being". Quality of life can be broadly defined as "an individual's perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns" (WHO 1995, cited in Department of Health and Human Services 1999:46). Therefore, quality of life refers "not simply to the quality of individuals life, but also to that of our collective life as society" (Jacobs 1997:57). Sense of place has various associations with qualities of life that are linked to notions of home.

The depth of meaning of place for the individual is well supported by phenomenologists who profess that place gives meaning and purpose to an individual's life (Buttimer 1980; Relph 1976; Tuan 1980). Seamon (1982:132, cited in Hay, P. 2001:157) suggests that sense of place has been enlarged to incorporate the "emotional range of feelings that attach to place to include care, sentiment, concern, warmth, love, and sacredness". Intimacy and attachment to place are associated with a sense of belonging and notions of home.

Home has been interpreted in various ways. Rutherford (1990:24) emphasises that home is an internal feeling when he says, only "when we achieve a sense of personal integrity can we represent ourselves and be recognised – this is home, this is belonging". Other authors imply that it is also an internal feeling yet one attached to a place outside the individual. For example, Relph (1976:40) suggests home may be "an attachment to a particular setting, a particular environment, in comparison with which all other associations with places have only a limited significance". Buttimer (1980:170) encapsulates the dynamic relationship between place relations when she describes place as consisting of home and horizons of reach. It is the "lived reciprocity of rest and movement, territory and range, security and adventure, housekeeping and husbandry, community building and social organisation". With globalisation it may be useful to conceptualise home with wider spatial relations, and Massey (1994) suggests that individuals may have multiple homes.

Home is important for sustainable community development because it is associated with significant meanings and makes connections between the individual and society. Indebted to Martin Heidegger, Relph (1976:39-40) suggests that:

> [h]ome is the foundation of our identity as individuals and as members of a community, the dwelling place of being. Home [is an] irreplaceable centre of significance ... It is the point of departure from where we orient ourselves to the rest of the world.

A sense of home may incorporate ethical ways of living and caring for things. For example, Heidegger (1956:25) states that to be human "is to have existential 'place' but this 'place' must become the house of our Being in which our ontological dimensions, our being here, unfolds and finds fulfilment". For Heidegger (1971:149), Being entails dwelling. To dwell is to "be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature".

For Heidegger, the fundamental character of dwelling involves sparing and preserving. "Real sparing is something positive and takes place when we leave something beforehand in its own nature, when we return it specifically to its being, when we 'free' it in the real sense of the word into a peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature" (Heidegger 1971:149). Building on this notion Peter Hay (2001:261) suggests that sparing

"extends beyond a passive commitment to personally spare, to a duty to actively resist the vandalism others would inflict upon one's home". In other words it "entails a steward's duty of protection. To sit passively by and acquiesce in the destruction of one's home is to fail one's duty to take all steps possible to 'care' for one's dwelling".

An ethic of stewardship is a strong theme in discourses of sustainable community development. For example, the notion of primary environmental care combines both social and environmental interests and describes the

> process by which local communities – with varying degrees of external support – organize themselves and strengthen, enrich and apply their means and capacities (know-how, techniques and practices) for the care of their environment while simultaneously satisfying their needs (Holdgate 1997:228).

In both notions of sense of place and sustainable community development can be an ethos of caring which is concerned for a quality of life that rejects the discontinuity between humans and the natural world and urges us to "connect anew with our larger context; the Earth, the cosmos, and the sacred whole" (Spretnak 1997:66).

Sense of place is a valuable social good because it brings to the fore human relationships with nature and other social values. In cultural heritage literature, for example, attachment to place is recognized as a social value which "embraces the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment to a majority or minority group" (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992:23). Social values are part of the cultural significance of places and help identify

> places that are worth keeping because they enrich our lives – by helping us understand the past; by contributing to the richness of the present environment; and because we expect them to be of value to future generations (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992:15).

Acknowledging the breadth and diversity of values that may be incorporated in sense of place could aid in finding a new way of defining a wealthy society: one in which clean "air and water, wilderness, biodiversity, culture and the sense of community is created and valued" (Jacobs 1995:114).

A central tenet of sustainable community development is consideration of the quality of life for future generations. Implicit is an ethos of care. Futurity requires long-term commitment to initiatives and strategies which foster both ecological and communal well-being as suggested in Local Agenda 21 (UNCED 1992). Sense of place values are recognised as scaled in time and "emerge intergenerationally as the community accommodates itself to its habitat; new practices are adopted and passed from generation to generation in an ongoing process of culture-building" (Norton and Hannon 1998:130). Sense of place may be a valuable tool for sustainable community development because it can "create a temporal dimension in what is otherwise only a spatial landscape" (Lopez 1996:11). Knowledge passed down through generations may inform decision-making that can help create and secure a quality of life for future generations (Berry 1997).

Sustainable community development requires a commitment to care for place pro-actively. Nevertheless, sense of place values are often expressed under duress and in response to threat of change. "Shared perceptions of change often generate community articulation of ties to place that otherwise remain latent" (Hay P. 2001:158; see also, Buttimer 1980; King and Clifford 1985; Norton and Hannon 1997, 1998). Under threat, the expression of sense of place values may be a positive force for action. Massey (1991a:24), however, suggests such expressions of sense of place may be defensive, reactionary, and result in "certain forms of nationalism, sentimentalised recovering of sanitised heritages, and outright antagonisms to newcomers and outsiders". This kind of expression is commonly referred to as the NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) Syndrome (Norton and Hannon 1997; Stocker and Pollard 1994). Holdgate (1997) warns that NIMBYism may be associated with absolutism and promote hostility between industry and communities. According to Holdgate (1997:290) action for sustainability "demands a rational attitude towards industrial actions on the part of the community, based in turn on openness, good information and consultation".

Clearly, for sustainable community development to work the challenge lies in harnessing local sentiment that is expressed in response to perceived threat of change. Opportunities may exist to translate attachments to place "into a positive force for democratically supported change" (Norton and Hannon 1997:235) and promote a democratic ethic which might entail: you "may not do x in my backyard;

furthermore, if you cannot find some other community that democratically chooses to accept x, then x will cease" (Norton and Hannon 1997:244).

Harnessing local sentiment may be supported by the establishment of cultures whose members value difference and multiple identities of place. Valuing the diversity in a community will require re-organizing systems to be inclusive and democratic.

> Sustainability will demand changes in governance at all levels from the global to the local ... and governments and governance systems must help sustainability to happen, and shield those on the ground against exploitation and appropriation (Holdgate 1997:xiv).

Yet, it is not just governments that need to change. Choosing to foster sustainable communities makes exacting demands on citizens to be willing to work together and actively participate in community development processes that identify and care for the well-being of everyone. In a society where it is acknowledged that the breadth, diversity and meaning of sense of place values is important, social well-being can be fostered and citizens may be better equipped to become empowered to take responsibility for meeting their own needs. Harnessing sense of place values draws attention to processes of community building and possibly to planning practices that can empower communities.

2.5.2 Making Links: Sense of Place and Empowering Local Communities

Democracy involves "actions of government that are responsive to the needs of people and communities who live most intimately with their resources and within their habitat" (Norton and Hannon 1998:141). Various strategies endorsed by the Australian Government indicate an approach to community development that endorses community self-help[2]. The *Stronger Families and Communities Strategy*, for example, aims to identify and support potential community leaders who live in socially disadvantaged areas, develop the skills of volunteers, and encourage people to participate in community life (Commonwealth of Australia 1999). Such strategies

[2] Other government strategies that focus on community development include, for example, the "Regional Australia Strategy 1992", and the "Rural Communities Programme and Rural Plan 1998". The Australian Government also made a commitment to Local Agenda 21 at UNCED in 1992.

may incorporate 'bottom-up' community development and emphasize increased community participation and strengthening the capacities of communities to meet their own needs.

In a review of the intentions and outcomes of government self-help strategies, Herbert-Cheshire (2000:203) questions the validity of such strategies and suggests they may be "indicative of an advanced liberal form of rule which seeks to 'govern through community'". According to Herbert-Cheshire, self-help strategies may in fact increase the burden of responsibility on already struggling communities. However, for advocates of endogenous community development, growth from within provides the opportunity to increase the capacity of communities to cope with changing circumstances, and empower communities to develop capacities and maintain long-term sustainability (Ife 1995; Kenny 1994; Kenyon 1999; Kretzmann and McKnight 1993).

In the literature is a growing number of case studies which cover the success of various rural communities whose members are using bottom-up approaches to take greater control over their own future (see for example, Armstrong 2000; Cameron 2000; Malone 2000; Middleton 2000; Stocker and Pollard 1994; Trainer 2000; Young 1995-1996;). The success of these approaches is far reaching and includes improvements in the status of cultural celebrations, infrastructure, economic security, environmental integrity, and employment opportunities. Citizens have engaged in processes of community development which involve various styles and approaches to community building (Ife 2002; Kenny 1994; Kenyon 2000). Sannoff (2000:6) defines community building as

> a holistic approach that focuses its efforts on people. It is dedicated to the idea that residents must take control of their destiny and that of their communities. Community building grows from a vision of how communities function normally, where community members create community institutions that help to achieve their aspirations as well as strengthen community fabric.

Emphasising sustainability and the participation of the collective, community building may require that citizens be aware of their responsibilities as the main agents in place-making activities (Sack 2001). Place-making is a social process and sense of place can be an integral part of bringing community members together to

participate, share and learn from each other. "Sustainable communities don't happen by accident; they happen by design with a sense of place" (Flint 2001). Together, as part of the cultural meanings in place, sustainable community development and sense of place can be powerful ways of caring for and maintaining the integrity of place.

A number of community development strategies have been developed that integrate notions of sense of place[3]. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), for example, have suggested a useful strategy for building communities from the inside – out, and that focuses on a community's assets rather than its needs. The strategy is relationship-driven and the "strong internal focus is intended simply to stress the primacy of local definition investment, creativity, hope and control". The Common Ground initiative also focuses on community-based actions that emphasise local distinctiveness. King and Clifford (1993:7) suggest that focussing on local distinctiveness is "as much about the commonplace as about the rare, about the everyday as much as the endangered, and about the ordinary as much as the spectacular".

Part of the success of these strategies may be the focus on the everyday experiences of local people and the meanings derived from their attachments to place. Everyday experiences that are so intimately entwined with places may be considered extraordinary, worthy of celebration, and powerful in their meaning. King and Clifford (1993:12) suggest that focussing on the distinctiveness of places is not so much about diversity, "but recognises that heterogeneity suggests richness: historical, cultural and ecological". Processes of community building may require that members have a sense of place and make conscious those experiences and attachments that can often be taken for granted.

Sense of place is more than a 'feel good' concept, however, and may often draw attention to conflict and difference in communities of place (Massey and Jess 1995). Processes of community development that do not incorporate strategies to deal with difference may risk increasing tension and divide in a community. Therefore, what may be important in community development processes is not so much the

[3] Other community development strategies which embrace sense of place values include the "Identity Distinct" initiative (Tasmanian Regional Arts 2001); Cultural Mapping (Greg Young 1995); and The Study Circle Kit (Sheil 1999).

acknowledgement of difference and sameness, but the act of identifying sameness and difference, and learning to accept the plurality of place (Relph 1976).

Empowering communities to take responsibility for their needs does not always mean the right decisions will be made. Norton and Hannon (1998:137-138) recognise that whilst local cultures

> do sometimes destroy their resource base, local control has the advantage that information feedback loops are shorter and local populations may have to live with the consequences of reduced opportunities and economic options more directly than do national and international corporations or national governments.

Most importantly, the primacy of responsibility is with members of the local community who, in taking stewardship for their locale, also need to develop resilience to "withstand and recover from disturbances in economies, communities, and ecosystems" (Flint 2001). For rural communities whose economies are often so exposed to the vagaries of ever-fluctuating global markets, resilience is essential for providing economic security to residents of a community.

Sense of place encompasses a wide variety of values and can bring people together across different forums thereby promoting the density of aquaintanceship in a community. "High density of acquaintanceship can be seen as an important aspect of feeling part of a community" (Flora and Flora 1993:52). Organizing communities to interact and identify diverse and common interests as well as bridge ties across those interests can be viewed as part of a process which builds social capital (Cox 1995; Warner et al. 2000). Building social capital may be essential for empowering communities to take control of their needs.

2.5.3 Social Capital

Much attention has been given to the idea that social capital will enable citizens to create the society they want (Cox 1995; Flora and Flora 1993; Lappe and Du Bois 1997; Putnam 1995). In an evaluation of definitions of social capital, Adler (1999) surmises that, social capital "encompasses a very broad range of phenomena and concepts: *inter alia* informal organization, trust, culture, social support, social exchange, embeddedness, relational contracts, social and interfirm networks". Social capital is a public good (Putnam 1995) and, according to Cox (1995:17),

"should be the pre-eminent and most valued form of capital as it provides the basis on which we build a truly civil society". Social capital may be an important consideration for the empowerment of communities as it can provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of relationships among community members that may also influence quality of life. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services (1999:76), in Tasmania, found that

> Tasmanians who trust other people and institutions to act in their best interests report a much higher subjective quality of life than those who have a relatively low level of trust in other people and institutions.

Issues of equity are important in discourses of social capital. In a study of rural communities, for example, Warner et al. (2000) found that communities with high levels of social capital engaged in public debate where differences were appreciated and alternatives were discussed. These findings reinforce the need for places to be conceived as having permeable boundaries and horizontal networks that help community members see issues more broadly. In support of this view Grootaert (1998:8) notes that with horizontal networks "members are more likely to contribute because they have a better chance of obtaining their fair share of the benefit". This may not always be the case.

> Social inequalities may be embedded in social capital. Norms and networks that serve some groups may obstruct others particularly if the norms are discriminatory or the networks socially aggregated. Recognizing the importance of social capital in sustaining community life does not exempt us from the need to worry about how that community is defined – who is inside and thus benefits from social capital, and who is outside does not (Putnam 1995).

The implications of embedded social inequalities for a sense of place include the gross inequities which may arise in unequal power relations among people: the result is that senses of place can be overridden and obscured (Rose 1995). The inequities that may be embedded in insular forms of social capital may reinforce the need to promote inclusion and embrace diversity and difference in processes of community building. Incorporating the multiple meanings of and attachments to place that may be inherent in a community has important implications for planners, for as Sandercock (1998:109) suggests, if "we want to foster a more democratic,

inclusionary process for planning, then we need to start listening to the voices of difference".

A range of urban planning, environmental planning, and community development planning literature reveals a variety of ideas about the significance of sense of place and various ways to deal with difference. I have limited this discussion to several key factors that I consider important in designing an approach that links sense of place and planning for sustainable communities.

2.5.4 Planning with a Sense of Place

Empowering communities does not mean they necessarily have to work alone and confine their networks within the community. Flora and Flora (1993:48) point out that quality networks "include establishing linkages with others in similar circumstances and developing vertical networks to provide diverse sources – both within and outside the community – of experience and knowledge". Planners can play an important role in helping communities build social capital, manage change and become empowered to protect local distinctiveness and develop those things that are considered important in the everyday life and future of a community. Sense of place can be an important concept in helping to inform and guide the planning process. As has been noted, sense of place can be shrouded by notions of 'backward thinking' nostalgia, and themes of anti-development portrayed through NIMBYism (Hay P. 1994; Healey 1997; Norton and Hannon 1997; Massey 1991a). Nevertheless, attachments to place may be a signal for issues pertaining to social well-being and harnessing local sentiments can be a way of increasing participation in processes of community development. Therefore, to assist in empowering communities to meet their needs, one of the key responsibilities for planners may be to fundamentally acknowledge the array of meaningful and emotional attachments to place of individuals and communities: after all they are "real and valid feelings" (Hay 1994:np; see also Sandercock 1998). According to Johnston (1994:8) recognizing the importance of the attachment of people to place is

> [a] mark of respect for the culture of a community of people, an acknowledgement of their right to expression through place, [and] a reinforcement of identity.

Acknowledging the significance of sense of place might best be achieved through collaborative approaches to planning that stress participation and "building up relations of understanding and trust" (Healey 1997:311, see also Taylor 1998). Hampton (1999:168) suggests that effective "public participation enables participants to become aware of values which they had not previously considered and enables opposing groups to consider or develop new values which might resolve conflicts". Relations among planners and community members can be bridged through dialogue that is mutually respectful, and that calls to consciousness an awareness of "those taken-for-granted ideas and practices within one's personal world" (Buttimer 1980:172). Through dialogue, sense of place can be realised and articulated, and may help community members learn from each other, and make judgments and decisions that will enrich place, for as Sack (2001:238) suggests, being "aware is better than not being aware, and being more aware is even better". Collaborative planning approaches may also contribute to social capital because it

> focuses attention on the relational webs or networks in which we live our lives ... Each of these relations links a person to others, to ways of doing, seeing and knowing. These relational cultures will vary in their spatial reach and temporal span (Healey 1997:57).

Learning through mutually respectful dialogue is important in planning; so is coming to know and understand through a variety of other methods. According to Sandercock (1998:217) "a more democratic and culturally inclusive planning must draw on many ways of knowing, and must develop a sensibility which is able to discern which ways of knowing are most useful in what circumstances". In an "epistemology of multiplicity" Sandercock (1998:5) suggests that as well as scientific and technical knowledge alternative sources may be used. For example,

> experiential, intuitive, local knowledges; knowledges based on practices of talking, listening, seeing, contemplating, sharing; knowledge expressed in visual and other symbolic, ritual, and artistic ways rather than in quantative or analytical modes based on technical jargons that by definition exclude those without professional training.

Valuing alternate ways of knowing can reveal the diverse "cultural layers" (Healey (1997:64) in a community and allow for the expression of emotional attachments to place across a variety of forums. With multiple ways of knowing the landscape can

be a resource as well as a cultural landscape (Dyck 1998; Robertson 2000 et al.; Williams and Stewart 1998), and sense of place can be integrated in planning processes, celebrated, protected and perhaps grieved for. Sandercock (1998:208) emphasises the importance of memory: "since nobody knows how to put a dollar value on memory, or on a sense of connection and belonging, it always gets left out of the model". In the face of change there is a "need to remind ourselves of the importance of memory, and of ritual in dealing with loss".

2.6 Conclusions

In the plight to build sustainable communities notions of place are important. Place draws attention to the relationships humans have with each other and the local environment. In a globalising world places might best be conceptualised in terms of flux, heterogeneity, and as having porous boundaries and multiple identities. Amidst globalisation, the citizens of some rural communities are struggling to keep abreast of the rapid changes brought about through time-space compression. Emphasising the responsibility and power that people have in making places, exploring links between sense of place and sustainable community development has drawn to attention the multiple ways that sense of place is associated with ethics of stewardship, futurity, and equity.

Sense of place acknowledges the deeply felt meanings that are sometimes associated with connections to places. Understanding the significances of places can help identify factors associated with quality of life, and also promote care for places in ways that protect local distinctiveness and consider the needs of communities now and in the future. Sense of place may be a source of shared values and difference in a community. NIMBYism characterised by absolutist values, bounded conceptions of place, and intolerance of difference, may be detrimental to community development processes and perpetuate unequal power relations, divide and conflict. Harnessing local sentiment into democratic and equitable community building processes may offer opportunities for community members to learn from each other and build trustful and respectful relationships that help empower the community. In

order to achieve these outcomes it is important to develop a sense of place that accepts change and shows humility towards Others. A collaborative and inclusive planning approach might best capture the significant meanings associated with sense of place through incorporating a multiplicity of ways of knowing.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The literature review presented in the previous chapter links this study to a wider interpretive community and therefore forms part of the methodology of this research (Bradshaw and Stratford 2000). This chapter details other methods and processes which have also been used to systematically gather information to gain an understanding of the relationships between sense of place and sustainable community development in the Far South.

The methodology is characterized by a qualitative approach. This chapter details the reasons for using a qualitative approach, and defines and justifies the use of a case study. Three main methods were used to obtain data for this research, namely participant observation, in-depth interviewing and an interpretive analysis of historical data. In this chapter I first outline the particular dimensions of participant observation relevant to the empirical context of this research. The discussion of participant observation is a detailed account which adds to the transparency and meaning of the interpretations gleaned in this research. In-depth interviewing was also used to obtain data and so I also outline how the sample was selected, and how interviews were conducted, coded and analysed using hermeneutic processes. Finally this chapter elaborates on the method used to research and analyse historical data.

3.2 Why Use a Qualitative Approach?

The choice to study the relationship between sense of place and community development was inspired by my re-location to the rural setting in the Far South. Previously I resided in an urban setting and the contrasting experiences in quality of life in these two settings, and a growing sense of place in the Far South, inspired me to try and understand such changes.

I began a literature review. Readings centred around the major themes of place, sense of place, sustainable community development, citizenship, social capital, planning, qualitative research methods, human geography, cultural geography, and local history. Data base searches helped me source scholarly journals, monographs, newspaper articles, parliamentary papers, government policy documents, and theses. I also began to talk to people; community members, local historians, university colleagues and supervisors, and family. Consequently I accessed other resources such as video recorded material, audio material, and photographs. These conversations and the literature review helped me to tease out initial thoughts on the topics of interest and engage with my interpretive community to assess what has already been studied in similar areas. Opening conversations with my interpretive community early in the research was part of a process of earning trust in and establishing the credibility of my work (Bradshaw and Stratford 2000).

Having gained a depth of theoretical contextual information, I refined the research and posed an initial question: What are the relationships between peoples' sense of place and sustainable community development in the Far South of Tasmania? I decided upon an open-ended exploration concerned with people and place; an inquiry located within the field of cultural geography; an inquiry into the meanings in people's everyday lives (Jacobs 1999). The literature review has been a continual process occurring as an integral part of every phase of the research process; occurring even as I write now.

Researching sense of place required an exploration of inter-relationships among individuals, their interactions and attitudes to the local environment, and their experiences of all these. I was also concerned to understand the structures and processes of community development that were occurring in the Far South and their relationship to sustainable development.

Considering these characteristics, I decided the research question was best explored by adopting a qualitative approach. Such an approach allows for findings to emerge and for multiple methods to be applied as the inquiry unfolds. A generic definition of qualitative research is offered by Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3):

> [q]ualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world.

3.2.1 Using A Case Study

To the case study of the Far South the main qualitative methods I applied included participant observation and in-depth interviewing. Spending time in the field enabled meaningful relationships to develop between members of the community and me (the researched and researcher), and for a depth of understanding to occur (Patton 1990). As Geertz (1973) suggests, using an ethnographic approach produces data that are rich and complex and focussed on the local and particular. Meanings are grounded and theory "is conceived not in terms of logical deductions but relations between observed phenomena" (Eyles 1988:4). Such an approach ensures that interpretations of meanings cannot be separated from the relevant contexts of meanings and purpose (Boyles 1994; Evans 1988; Eyles 1985).

The main reasons for choosing a qualitative approach are now explicit. Other advantages and some of the disadvantages of using this approach will become apparent as details of the associated methods and techniques are described, a task logically commenced with an exposition of the case study.

Using a case study has enabled me to 'tease out' and come to know the complexities and particularities of meanings in the everyday lives of people who reside in the Far South. These meanings are seen as inherently interesting in their own right (Platt 1988), and valued for their contribution to the story of, in this instance, the experience of life in the Far South. The findings of this research may also be legitimately generalized to other cases (Platt 1988). For example, Stake (2000:443)

suggests that people "find in case reports certain insights into the human condition, even while being well aware of the atypicality of the case".

The case study has provided a "bounded system" and a beginning for "systematizing" (Platt 1988:1) the task of gathering detailed information about for example, the history, the physical setting, and economic and political contexts. Several of these details helped inform how I defined the boundary for the case study.

3.2.2 Defining the Case Study

The case study has been delineated by knowledge of the distinct networks of social relationships and cultural characteristics which are set amidst and influenced by the unique biogeographic features of the Far South. In the catchment of the Far South coastal townships merge with waterways on one boundary, and also with the Southern Forests and Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (see Figure 3.1).

In Section 2.3.4 I suggested the Far South comprises numerous place-based and interest based communities. The boundaries around the inherent communities of the region are considered porous which reflects connections with, for example, the neighbouring Huon Valley. These connections include many social and cultural characteristics as well as shared local government - the Huon Valley Council (see

Figure 1.2). Conceptualising the communities of the Far South with porous boundaries also reflects the spread of spatial relations and increased time-space compression that is apparent in a globalised world.

The total population of the Far South is approximately 1341 (based on ABS 2001). Re-configuration of the collector districts used in the 1996 census make it difficult to make conclusive statements about changes in the total population, however it is unlikely there have been any significant changes. For example, the population of Dover has risen from 481 (1996 ABS), to 489 (ABS 2001); and the population of Surveyors Bay, Walpole, and Police Point has fallen from 284 (ABS 1996) to 277 (ABS 2001). The transient nature of the population which is made up of many shack-owners may also make it difficult to determine changes in population.

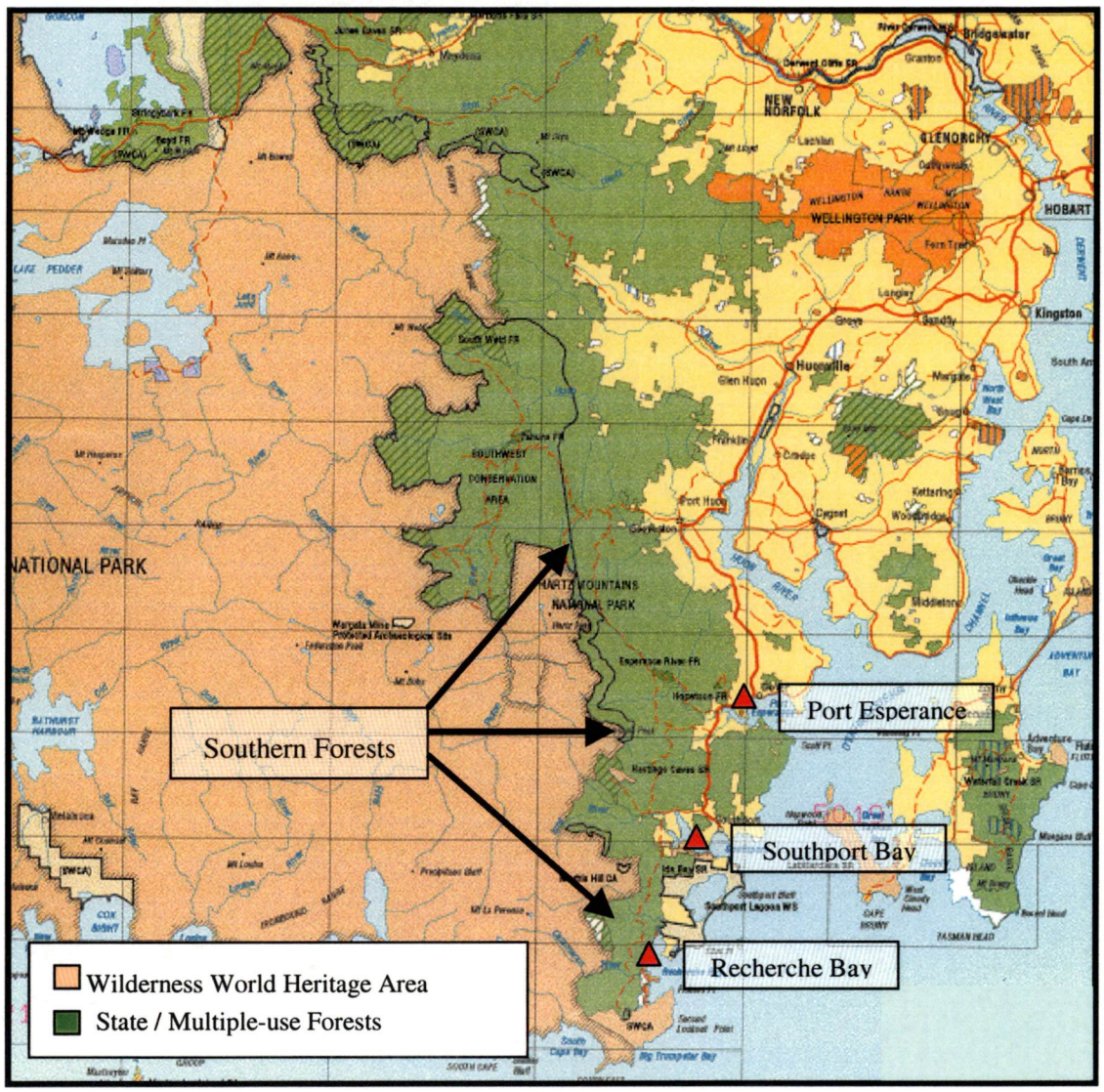


Figure 3.1 Location of the Southern Forests, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and three main bays in the Far South. Scale: 1:500 000

Source: Public Land Use Commission 1995, Tasmania Land Map, Recreation Areas and Land Divisions, Additional Land Classifications 1995, Map 1.

Dover, located in Port Esperance (see Figure 3.1), may be considered the main service town for the region. For example, in Dover there are retail outlets, the District High School, post office, health centre, child-care centre, church, police station, art gallery, On-line Access Centre, Hotel, and Returned Servicemen's League. Emphasising the collective identity of the Far South, in recent years the owners and managers of many local businesses and associations have adopted the

term "Far South" as part of their namesake. For example, The Far South Wilderness Company, The Far South Tourism Network, and Far South Regional Arts. A tourist sign at Police Point welcomes visitors to the Far South and the local newspaper has recently changed its name to "The Far South Bush Telegraph". The Far South is more than just a location; it recognizes shared culture, interdependencies among people, symbolic values, and helps define an identity for the community.

3.3 Participant Observation and Reflexivity

I have participated in the everyday life of the community of the Far South. As a resident I have a certain knowledge of the happenings in, for example, local politics, local industry, and local community events. I have been exposed to social conventions, gossip and behavioural norms. These types of interactions are also shaped by influences such as my personal history, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity, and by those of the people in the setting (Denzin 2000). A central tenet of the qualitative approach is to acknowledge and seek to understand the interactions between the researcher and the researched. I am an active participant in the social world which is being studied. "This is not a matter of methodological commitment, it is an existential fact" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983:18). The role of participant observer is defined by Boyle (1994:162), who says that participant observation "combines participation in the lives of the people under study while maintaining some professional distance that allows for adequate observation and recording of data".

Because of "the direct personal experience" and opportunity to learn the "basic beliefs, fears, hopes and expectations of the people under study", as well as the opportunity to observe people as they go about the tasks of daily living, Boyle (1994:162-3) advocates that complete immersion in the culture of the community being studied may be considered "ideal". However, Boyle (1994:166) verifies that the success of this position to produce good theoretical explanations is contingent upon "the reflexive nature of the ethnographic experience". Reflexivity may be defined as "a conscious experiencing of the self as both inquirer and respondent, as teacher and learner, as the one coming to know the self within the processes of research itself" (Lincoln & Guba 2000:183).

As reflexive participant observer I have become conscious and critical of my status as insider and outsider, fluxing between the emic and the etic perspective (Boyle 1994; Dreher 1994). I have noticed the "fluid process involving changes in [my relationship] to the subject community in the course of the research" (Evans 1988:204). Using my existing social network as a basis for participant observation I have branched out to the unfamiliar (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983) and met new people and learned about their lives, acquired new knowledge about different community organizations and their membership, explored new roads and neighbourhoods and noticed different vistas, cultural landscapes, and evidence of history. Throughout the research process my awareness of local political, social and cultural events has been heightened and intensified. Within acceptable ethical norms – my community knows that I am exploring our mutual and distinctive understandings of place and everyday meaning – I have listened, observed, and asked questions in both formal and informal contexts in order to help clarify meanings related to both community development and sense of place. As I have gone about my normal everyday tasks I have been and remain a researcher, open to opportunities to gather data and glean insights into the communities and places I study, and exposed to the spontaneity of everyday life and the events and interactions that occur. I have also been and remain overtly the researcher seeking to engage in conversations - or informal interviews (Fontana and Frey 2000) with individuals to enhance my understanding of certain phenomenon pertinent to the study. For example, whether a historic fact, community facility, or annual event, I deliberately sought out information to help deepen my understanding of the nature of community development and sense of place in the Far South.

Seeking a position that is 'marginal' to the community is difficult but rewarding (Evans 1988; Smith 1988). With regard to this position Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:100-102) state that there "must always remain some part held back, some social and intellectual 'distance'. For it is in the 'space' created by this distance that the analytic work gets done". Using critical reflexivity, my personal experiences of sense of place and community development are used to help grasp the cultural meanings of people and place, and to direct my research. Ultimately, this experience "provides an insider's account with an outsider's detachment" (Eyles 1988:9).

As well as participant observation I acquired information through in-depth interviews with selected participants. Used in combination, participant observation provided a depth of experience for testing out theories based on interpretation of the interview. The following discussion on the use of in-depth interviewing will draw out the dynamic between these two methods.

3.4 In-depth Interviewing

Immersed in the cultural context of the Far South as participant observer, I entered the field to conduct in-depth interviews with twenty participants. I interviewed to understand rather than explain (Fontana and Frey 2000) all participants' sense of place and their experiences and perceptions of community development in the Far South. I adopted a semi-structured approach which promotes open-ended responses and allows for spontaneity during the interviews (Minichiello et al. 1990:92). My inquiry was centred around specific themes:

What are the attachments to the landscape for this individual? What feelings are associated with communal life for this individual? What factors contribute to the quality of life for this individual? What does the history of the Far South mean to this individual? What are the experiences of this individual in processes of community development? What does this individual perceive as being the drivers of and impediments to community development in the Far South? How are current community development processes and practices impacting on the individual's sense of place? What role is this individual's sense of place playing in community development in the Far South?

Selecting a small number of participants enabled me to gain detailed and rich information. According to Minichiello et al. (1990:96) the "in-depth interview is used to gain access to, and an understanding of, activities and events *which cannot be observed directly by the researcher*". I sought details of the everyday lives of participants and in this way viewed my role as a facilitator helping to assist the individual uncover those underlying and often subconscious meanings.

3.4.1 Selecting the Sample

Seeking a diversity of views and points for comparison, twenty participants were selected using both criterion sampling (Patton 1990) and snow-ball sampling (Minichiello et al. 1990; Patton 1990). The particular criteria for participation were:

a) the individual had either lived in the Far South for a minimum of 20 years, and /or

b) a community leader

Considering criterion (a) time in place was considered important as it offered the opportunity to develop familiarity with the everyday and seasonal cycles of life in the Far South (Tuan 1975; 1980). Using this time frame did not preclude the possibility that individuals would not have a sense of place, for as Tuan (1975) reminds us, attitude toward a place is also important. Certainly when analysing participants' sense of place it became clear that there are varying intensities of attachment to place (see section 5.2.1). Considering criterion (b), a leader was considered an activist in the community who was recommended by participants as someone who regularly acted on behalf of the community (Patton 1990). Community leaders resided within the community of the Far South. Valuing the thoughts and experiences of each gender, I interviewed five males and five females for each criterion.

To begin interviewing I used my existing knowledge of the community and selected two participants who were actively and more obviously involved in community development leadership roles. Subsequent participants were selected using 'snow-ball sampling', that is:

> using a group of informants with whom the researcher has made initial contact and asking them to put the researcher in touch with their friends; then asking them about their friends and so on (Minichiello et al. 1990:225).

Snow-ball sampling enables contact and work with people from outside existing social networks. As a method of selection it fostered the inclusion of participants from diverse backgrounds and locations across the geographic area of the case study. I sought information-rich cases, described by Patton (1990:169) as "those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research".

3.4.2 Gaining Ethics Approval

Prior to entering the field to conduct in-depth interviews I sought ethics approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Tasmania. Successful application ensured that the proposed method was congruous with national research standards regarding the morality of the practices to be used in the field, the integrity of the researcher, and the rights of the participants in the study.

Approval for the study to proceed was granted as part of a wider research project being conducted by members of the Sustainable Communities Research Group at the Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania (see Armstrong 2000; Davidson and Stratford 2000).

3.4.3 An Invitation to Participate

I approached prospective participants with openness and respect. Generally, initial contact was made by phone. This afforded the opportunity to introduce myself, explain the purpose of the research, and invite the individual to participate. Follow-up was made by a visit, generally to the person's home, to deliver a formal letter of introduction (see Appendix 1). Importantly, this letter outlined the research purpose, gave brief definitions of key terms, and an overview of what the person could expect if he or she chose to proceed and participate in the study. The letter also explained that the study had been approved by the Ethics Committee and provided contact details for further information or for complaints to be heard. The letter assured anonymity and confidentiality of information.

At this initial meeting I also gave prospective participants a sheet containing sample interview questions (see Appendix 2). These questions were provided to give them some indication of what to expect during interviews, to expand on the definition of sense of place and community development, and to prompt them to reflect on and become consciously aware of their sense of place and experiences and perceptions of community development in preparation for the interview.

Each interaction with prospective participants was regarded as an opportunity to build trust and rapport with participants. Trust is considered essential for the success of interviews (Fontana and Frey 2000:655), and Dunn (2000:68) suggests that rapport "may increase the level of understanding you have about the informant and

what they are saying". On meeting individuals I was aware that my status as participant observer appeared to work to my advantage. Participants were curious, they sought to know, for example, which house I live in, with whom I live, and how long I have lived in Southport. Some participants were already familiar with these facts. Morse (1994:27) considers that familiarity "with the setting or previous acquaintance with the participants dulls the researcher's ability to view the setting with the sensitivity one would have when seeing it for the first time." In my experience however, deliberate vigilance to the dynamic cultural landscape and frequent conversations with my interpretive community, enhanced the depth of understanding I achieved. Conversation with participants was relatively easy and friendly; there was commonality in the language that constituted our dialogue and connections were made that showed our shared cultural context. The result, I sense, was to reduce inhibitions (Kearns 2000; Dowling 2000), although later, during interviews I also felt at times that my 'insider status' may in fact have worked in reverse, and participants relayed reluctance to reveal certain details of their lives and experiences to me.

Approximately one week after the initial meeting, prospective participants were contacted by phone to confirm their involvement. Upon acceptance, a time was arranged for us to meet again. One person who was invited to participate declined further involvement due to personal commitments.

3.4.4 Conducting the Interviews

The interview centred around themes relevant to the research and facilitated an exploration of those meanings that were important to the participant. Generally it occurred in the participant's home, although on occasion it was conducted at the participant's work-place, my home, and once, sitting on a local jetty. The duration of the interview was generally one hour and with the consent of participants each interview was recorded and later transcribed. In short, I sought an approach that was relaxed and reassuring for participants. I was alert to body language and grateful for the commonality in our language gained through sharing the cultural context.

During interviews I was aware of the influence of power dynamics and the potential modifications to behaviour and responses made because of who I am and what I unavoidably bring to the research situation. For example, I am relatively new to the

community, a female, a representative of an academic institution, belong to a certain socio-economic group, and my local knowledge is different from others. The implications of these potential power dynamics is described by Kearns (2000:111) when he says "our difference in terms of key markers of societal power (or lack thereof) contributes to our (in)ability to be 'insiders' and participants in the quest to understand place". On dealing with power dynamics a reminder of the necessity of reflexive critical interpretations in the social research process is provided by Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:15) when they state "how people respond to the presence of the researcher may be as informative as how they react to other situations".

3.4.5 Producing Transcripts

Using tapes and text I had the opportunity to re-visit the interview situation and "reveal previously un-noted recurring features of the organisation of talk" (Silverman 1993:116). Interview tapes were transcribed verbatim. The printed texts were then returned to participants so that they could review the interview content and add or delete comments as deemed appropriate. This step forms part of a checking procedure which adds rigour to the study and opens the work "to the scrutiny of interpretive and participant communities" (Bradshaw and Stratford 2000:47). Allowing participants to view their transcripts encouraged their further involvement and gave me the opportunity to clarify any questions I had regarding content and meaning.

A collage of information was beginning to build and at this point my on-going interpretations of the data were largely superficial. I had reached a stage of readiness to begin to deepen my understanding of the data through more in-depth analysis.

3.5 Understanding the Data

Once the data had been transcribed and edited by the participants, the text was systematically organized using NUD*IST 4 software (Gahan and Hannibal 1998). This computer program facilitated the multiple coding of data and allowed concepts to be examined from various angles. The process was emergent, flexible, and highly recursive (Peace 2000). Through the process of coding the data I became more

intimate with the material and themes and sub-themes emerged directly from the text. Themes were influenced but not confined by the questions I asked, and the interpretations I made were influenced by the literature review. Central themes emerged from the data through a search for repetitive ideas, values, sources of attachment to place, and concerns. Themes that emerged from coding the data are summarised below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Themes that emerged from the data

Themes

- Sense of Place
  - Geographically defined
  - Time in place
  - Strength of attachment
  - Local knowledge and experience
  - Historic details
  - Nostalgic sense of place
  - Cultural heritage
  - Threats, internal, external
- Sense of Community
  - Levels of trust
  - Community spirit
  - Participation levels
  - Strengths, weaknesses
- Community Development
  - Attitudes to top-down approach
  - Attitudes to bottom-up approach
  - Perceptions of sustainability
  - Common ground
  - Visions for future
  - Attitudes to change
  - Attitude to difference
  - Partnerships
- Social Well-being
  - Lifestyle factors
  - Qualities of environment
  - Nature-based attachments
  - Social ties, family ties
  - Identity, positive, negative

Through the process of organising the data, analysis and theorisations continued to unfold; this is possible using a hermeneutic process.

3.5.1 Using Hermeneutic Processes

In the search for theoretical understanding I have asked at the micro level of the particular community: *What values are reflected in the behaviours I see and conversations I hear? Which of these values reflect individual's sense of place? What values are reflected in developments occurring within the community?* At the macro level of general society I have asked: *What are the forces at play helping to shape the community of the Far South? And how is the community responding to those forces?* Seeking new metaphors and ways of thinking (Kincheloe and McClaren 2000) I began to forge theoretical links between the two levels of

understanding and ground my findings contextually to 'test out' the relationship between sense of place and community development in the Far South. This 'testing out' and development of theories is an ongoing process throughout the research with no expectation of ever concluding with a finite, correct interpretation (Schwandt 2000). The process is creative and emergent; as new knowledge is constituted it is fed into theory generation (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983). To build and validate these new levels of understanding I employed a hermeneutic approach.

Using a hermeneutic analysis I came to understand the parts in relation to the whole and the whole in relation to the parts (Minichiello et al. 1990). The approach was cyclic and brought "...the concrete, the parts, the particular into focus, but in a manner that ground[ed] them contextually in a larger understanding of the social forces, the whole, the abstract (the general)" (Kincheloe and McLaren 2000:286-87). Understanding the parts in relation to the whole is echoed by Massey (1995) when she stresses the need to re-conceptualize places as consisting of social relations stretched across space and that incorporate interconnections between the local and the global. When analysing the data, changing back and forth between the whole and the parts deepened my understanding of the data and revealed multiple meanings and relationships between sense of place and sustainable community development. Hermeneutics is a technique used throughout the research process and the interpretations I have made are special insofar as they are viewed through a "socially constructed interpretive lense" (Kincheloe and McLaren 2000:287) that is inherent in who I am and the world views I hold.

Seeking to understand the influence I may have on the analysis of the data I wrote field notes to address such relationships as: *How does my identity influence the nature of the fieldwork undertaken? How does my identity influence the interactions I have with community members? How does my identity influence my writing? What is my sense of place? How does my sense of place influence the interpretations I make?*

The findings of this study are situated in changing historical, human, and cultural dimensions. As Smith (1988:34) comments the "meanings associated with everyday life, like those associated with literary texts, are inherently unstable". Using a critically reflective approach and the hermeneutic circle to develop theory helps to add rigour to interpretations made through the practice of participant observation.

"But, acknowledging that no observations or interpretations are perfectly repeatable" (Stake 2000:444) I have employed triangulation as a "process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation" (Stake 2000:443).

3.6 Triangulation

Sharing the sentiments of Bradshaw and Stratford (2000:46) I agree that it is "no frivolous thing to share, interpret and represent others' experiences". Thus, considering the need to respect participants' experiences and ensure rigour and trustworthiness in my research I have employed triangulation. This strategy of checking appropriate procedures in my research and checking inferences involved using multiple data sources, methods and theories (Eyles 1988). By using triangulation I could check inferences from the data for equally illuminating similarities and differences, and sought to overcome the limitation of any one method by using the strength of another. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:199) what results from triangulation is

> not a combination of different kinds of data per se, but rather an attempt to relate different sorts of data in such a way as to counteract various possible threats to the validity of our analysis. One should not, therefore, adopt a naively 'optimistic' view that the aggregation of data from different sources will unproblematically add up to or produce a more complete picture.

Part of triangulation incorporated understanding the local history of the Far South and relating themes from this interpretation to the analysis of data collected during the field research.

3.6.1 Understanding the History of the Far South

To achieve an understanding of the history I have used various primary and secondary historic resources including written texts, archaeological reports, newspapers, video material showing interviews with older residents, photographs, and transcriptions of oral history. I have sought information from several local historians and also made various field excursions to visit sites of particular historical significance, for example, the raised tramway at Cockle Creek and the relics of whale

stations remains in Southport Bay and Recherche Bay. Historic details obtained during interviews with participants were also valuable.

I explored the history chronologically, seeking to identify themes that have influenced the development of the community over time. Similarly to the interpretation of the qualitative data, there is an implied subjectivity to the interpretation of the historical data. Striving for an interpretation of the data that is proper to it (Ricoeur 1965), I have contemplated and reflected, sought multiple view points where possible, and incorporated processes of hermeneutics.

3.7 Conclusions

A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate to explore the relationships between sense of place and sustainable community development because it allows meanings to emerge from the data, and for multiple methods to be applied as the research unfolds. A qualitative approach made my status as resident of the community visible in the research process and incorporates consideration of the different influences this may have on the collection and analysis of the data. An interpretation of the history of the Far South provides contextual information for the analysis of case study data. Using multiple methods that incorporate reflexivity and hermeneutic processes affords the opportunity to develop a deep understanding of the varied and meaningful relationships that are endemic to the Far South.

Having described the methodology what remains to do is share the findings of the historical analysis and field research.

Chapter 4

A HISTORY OF THE FAR SOUTH

4.1 Overview

A public car park overlays an old timber mill site. A rotting steamer ferry lies in the muddy shallows of Ida Bay. The monument at "Tomb Beach" commemorates the convict lives lost in the shipwreck of the George III, which now lies buried beneath the sea. The bush has reclaimed whole towns. Throughout the Far South, these signs in the landscape of times past are more than a backdrop to place; the landscape is infused with the meanings of the everyday lives of the forebears of place. These meanings demonstrate beliefs, values, and ways of being in the world. But these meanings from the past also belong to the present and future. Meanings travel through time and "draw forth the many pasts and stake out the times" (Stoddart 2000).

In this chapter I seek to trace the major themes and driving forces shaping the development of the community. A review of the history reveals the weaving together of diverse of cultures and meanings imbued in the landscape. I track a history of the local effects of globalisation and highlight the connections that the Far South has with places beyond. There are stories of a trail of industries that have carved out the forests, farmed the land, and taken from the sea. Communities have been built around these industries and the historic details reveal how the growth and

decline of the community has mirrored the growth and decline of resource-based industries. There has been much flux and change in the landscape of the Far South, yet meanings of beauty, power, dependence, and resilience endure.

Engaged in the production of a narrative about these histories of the Far South, this chapter adds a depth of meaning to the research necessary for understanding the present relationships between sustainable community development and sense of place. Time is important, for as Jacobs (1999:15) comments socially "constituted meanings do not simply pop up overnight; they are attitudes and practices that operate in and through place. Indeed, it is often the duration of time that helps to naturalise certain ways of seeing".

Viewed as a point of departure for findings presented in Chapter 5, this chapter is also a point of return for conclusions made in Chapter 6, for as Young (1995-1996:128) suggests, history "provides a strategic guide and facilitates the recycling of good ideas". In this way the layered meanings in the landscape of the Far South provide "momentum" and a "cultural trajectory" (Strang 1997:59), helping to create the fabric of everyday life in both the present and the future.

4.2 Indigenous Cultural Layers Through Time

My review of Aboriginal history in the Far South is brief and I am conscious that in writing about aspects of the history of the South-East Tribe, and Tasmanian Aboriginal people more generally, the interpretations I make create a story told from a white persons perspective. My aim is to draw attention to the significance of Aboriginal meanings that are part of the culture in the Far South. A more detailed understanding of Aboriginal culture would demand a separate study.

Early in 1793 members of the French expedition led by Bruni d'Entrecasteaux made the first recorded European contact with the local inhabitants of the Recherche Bay area (Labillardiere 1971). The French had arrived at the "maritime homeland" (Fraser 2001) of the Lylequonny band of the South-East tribe of Tasmanian Aborigines. The South-East tribe is an ancient people whose culture has weaved meanings into the landscape over at least 36,000 years (Ryan 1996:xxii).

Through the writing of Labillardiere (1971), one of the French expedition's naturalists, insights are given into the interactions that occurred between the

explorers and the Lylequonny over several days. The French were on a mission of good will, in the name of science, and "for the glory of France" (Prosser 2001). They were curious about the Aboriginal people and the cultural exchanges with the Lylequonny formed part of their data collection. According to Labillardiere's journal (1971:295-315), several mutually satisfying days were spent with a band of Aborigines in the Recherche Bay area (refer Figure 1.1). Songs and music, clothing, language, shell necklaces, and food were exchanged. Labillardiere portrays several extraordinary acts of trust which occurred between the two cultures. For example, an Aboriginal woman allowed her child to be cradled by several of the explorers. An Aboriginal man accepted an invitation to board the *Recherche* (one of the expedition ships), and accepted a rooster as a gift there. The Aborigines assisted the white men along the shore and cleared the path for those unaccustomed to walking on the uneven and slippery ground. Labillardiere (1971:302) tells of the Aborigines "uttering cries of joy" on sighting members of the expedition, and talks of his own regret at having to leave the "good savages".

The curious and respectful attitudes that characterise the interactions between the French explorers and the Indigenous people, as portrayed by Labillardiere (1971), is in contrast to those of the British who soon followed with a mindset firmly on 'civilizing' the Tasmanian landscape. According to Hall (1995:208), cultural identities can be created by "a complex combination of *continuities and breaks, similarities and differences*". A history of the Indigenous cultural layers in the landscape of the Far South draws attention to these characteristics and the subsequent transformation of Aboriginal Identity. Under the force of British rule from 1803 new meanings were woven into the lives of the Llylequonny people. Similarly, the culture of the Llylequonny and Tasmanian Aboriginals more generally was to influence the settlement, survival and cultural identity of the British colonisers in a foreign land (Boyce 1996).

Histories of the colonisation of Tasmania trace the invasion, warfare and resistance by the Tasmanian Aboriginal people who sought to defend their land (Reynolds 1995; Ryan 1996). Although officially the Aboriginal people were protected by British law this was not enforced, and from 1824 to 1831 many Aboriginal people were shot during what may be viewed as a "legitimate war against an invader" (Reynolds 1995:207). Most of the Aboriginal people who survived were taken to

islands in Bass Strait by the 'conciliator' George Augustus Robinson whose mission was to 'Christianize' and 'civilize' the surviving Aborigines (Ryan 1996:124-159).

The exile on the Bass Strait islands ended in 1847 and Aboriginal people were returned to the familiar territory of the Nuenone tribe at Oyster Cove (in the south-east of Tasmania). For some of the 46 survivors, they were again "in sight of their birthplace, their spiritual homeland" (Pybus 1991:161). In the squalid conditions of a derelict convict probation station many people died, but there are also stories that track the continuity of Aboriginal populations and transformation of Aboriginal identity. In the Huon Valley, for example, Fanny Cochrane-Smith married and raised a family with her husband William Smith (Pybus 1991). It has been suggested that Fanny Cochrane-Smith was a successful businesswoman and pillar of the community who was extremely proud of her Aboriginality. She was able to integrate the beliefs of her traditional culture with those of her white husband (Pybus 1991). There were also Aboriginal women who survived in sealing colonies on the Bass Strait Islands where new Aboriginal communities emerged (Ryan 1996).

Stories of the emergence of new Aboriginal communities are symbolised by continual struggles to legitimise Aboriginal identity. A recent collection of writings from members of the Aboriginal community in South-East Tasmania (including the Far South) relates the difficulty to come to terms with the political issues, fight for social justice, and need to affirm the changing Aboriginal identity since colonisation. Myths and inaccuracies written into white histories are slowly being corrected and a better understanding of the Aboriginal cultural landscape is being communicated today (Boyce 1996; Reynolds 1995; Pybus 1991). Ryan (1996:xxx) notes that "ownership of Tasmanian Aboriginal history by Aboriginal people is now firmly on the agenda. It poses exciting challenges for the future of Aboriginal history in Tasmania". As one community member expressed, new relationships and better understandings of cultural identity are being established.

> I mean ... Historically it's a mess. We've been pushed under, haven't we? But people aren't as bad as what they used to be. They're starting to accept us. The way to deal with it is more communication. It's surprising how many people are here who are Aboriginal – there's more here than you realize. But there would be still some of them that wouldn't let on" (cited in Friend 1992:6).

Helping to build better understandings of Aboriginal identity in the Far South, the South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation aims to represent the concerns and aspirations of all members of the Aboriginal community within that region (SETAC 1994). In order to achieve this the corporation emphasises a co-operative approach that enables knowledge and experiences to be shared. According to Dillon, (1994: 1) such an approach can meet the need to "reclaim our heritage and take up our rightful place within the broader community".

The multiplicity of meanings in the landscape of the Far South begin to inter-weave. Aboriginal meanings in the landscape persist into and through the colonial landscape which came to dominate the Far South.

4.3 The Ocean: An Early Link to Places Beyond

On their annual migration from Antarctica to warmer northern waters, Southern Right Whales come to rest and breed within the sheltered territories of Recherche and Southport bays. This knowledge spread amongst the colonists and by the 1830s shore-based whaling gangs were establishing along the coast (Evans 1993:7). So began a new wave of cultural practices and the Far South was established as an important link in global markets. Teams of men competed for the whales, seeking to earn a living from the oil and bone which supplied mainly London markets. As well as the bay whaling, there were also large ocean-going vessels which sought pelagic species and came to harbour in the southern waters; mostly at Recherche Bay (Poulson, B. 2002, pers.comm., 20 May) but also at Port Esperance through to the 1930s (Beechey and Baker 2001:164-167).

The whaling industry was valued for the oil, which provided illumination for lamps, and bone for fashion items, and also because it was "vital in the economic development of the colony" (Parks and Wildlife Service 2001). Whaling provided employment and cycles of trade and interdependence. Craftsmen were needed to repair the open boats and merchants gathered to support the growing industry (Kostoglou 1994a:10). With this economic growth a transient, seasonal community grew. Land was surveyed and the coastline assumed a streetscape. At one time four hundred men and women were rumoured to be "living in rustic squalor around Recherche Bay" (Kostoglou 1994a:11). An official township named Ramsgate was declared at Recherche Bay, although it was noted to have little community identity

(Poulson, B. 2001, pers.comm., 20 November). The whaling communities had a reputation for undesirable behaviour, and the first magistrate was appointed early to Southport in 1838 (Evans 1993:27).

Perhaps there are elements of heroism in the pioneering spirit of these people whose seafaring occupation entailed great risks, courage, and hardship. But there is also a shadow. The unregulated rate of slaughter and targeting of breeding animals could not be sustained. By the 1850s the migratory whale population to be found in southern waters had been decimated and "hunted to the brink" (Kostoglou 1994a:11). As a result, the whaling industry in the Far South dissolved and people reliant on the industry moved on.

The whaling era marked the beginning of various meanings which have become patterned into the landscape of the Far South. For example, whaling was the first industry linked to global markets whose waves of growth and decline influenced community development. There are also warnings of over-exploitation and resultant decimation of natural resources: a pattern repeated in, for example, the oyster industry (Calder 1882) and scallop industry (Perrin and Croome 1988). For the whalers, the ocean was not only provider of resource, but also a means of passage for trade linking the Far South with global markets and suppliers of goods closer to home at Hobart Town. As will unfold, such dependency on the water for resources, access and transport is a theme that is integral to the growth and cultural identities of the community of the Far South.

4.4 Landscapes of Beauty and Exploitation

The French explorers of the 1790s were captivated by the beautiful and sublime nature of the landscape. They were, according to Labillardiere (1971:103), "filled with admiration at the sight of these ancient forests in which the sound of the axe had never been heard". Anchored in Recherche Bay Admiral d'Entrecasteaux wrote about his first impressions of the land:

> [i]t would be vain for me to attempt to describe my feelings when I beheld this lonely harbour lying at the world's end, separated as it were from the rest of the universe – t'was nature, and nature in her wildest mood. At each step we met here the beauties of that nature abandoned to herself, there the marks of her decay, trees of an immense height and proportionate diameter, their branchless trunks covered with evergreen foliage, some looking as old as the world; closely interlacing in an almost impenetrable forest, they served to support others which, crumbling with age, fertilized the soil with their debris; nature in all her vigour, and yet in a state of decay, seems to offer to the imagination something more picturesque and more imposing than the sight of this same nature bedecked by the hand of civilized man. Wishing only to preserve her beauties we destroy her charm, we rob her of that power which is hers alone, the secret of preserving in eternal age eternal youth (cited in Hogg 1937:58-59).

The antithesis of the beauty and wildness of nature in the Far South, and the making over of the land to be viewed as a resource for industrial purposes is an underlying theme that recurs throughout the development of the Far South. Later, a report by Surveyor Calder in 1847 (cited in Brand 1990:168) stated that the supply "of all description of timber here is inexhaustible". Eager to supply timber for the growing colony and overseas markets, such reports were viewed favourably by the colonial government. Convict labour provided the means for the colonial government to first access the timber and marks a shift in the changing identity of the Far South.

With the establishment of convict probation stations at Southport in 1841 and Port Esperance in 1845 (Brand 1990), exploitation of the Southern Forests began in earnest[4]. Felling of trees initially followed the curve of the coastline where the timber was pitsawn and split[5], and readily accessed by boats for transport. As well as timber-getting, the industrious activities of the convicts made other significant impacts on the landscape, greatly diversifying the use of land for the purposes of

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[4] There is evidence of incidental timber-getting prior to this time. An "experimental" ship load of timber is recorded to have left the shores of what would later become Southport. The shipload of 200 tonnes of timber was loaded on board the *Harcourt* bound for London in 1829 (Kostoglou 1994b:46).

[5] Pitsawing involved digging a ditch alongside a felled tree, placing skids across the ditch and rolling the logs onto the skids. The pit was deep enough for the sawyer to stand in, his partner would stand on top of the felled tree and the saw would be worked vertically cutting the timber into workable sizes (Kostolglou 1996:40).

settlement. As Poulson (1999:6) reports, the convicts "laid miles of tramways, built bridges, made bricks, obtained limestone, built boats, cleared land, cultivated gardens, fished and constructed a parade area on piers [...] and started a road to Dover." On obtaining their freedom many ticket-of-leave holders volunteered to stay on and worked as timber fellers and splitters (Kostoglou 1994b:11). The convict era also marked the beginnings of a sporadic coal industry in the Far South, providing the labour necessary to export 1300 tonnes of coal (of poor quality) to Hobart in 1842 (Bacon and Banks 1989).

As Tasmanians prepared themselves for self-government and the cessation of the penal system in 1854 (Brand 1990), the convict probation station at Southport closed in 1848, and at Port Esperance in 1847. In anticipation of the influx of settlers in search of the timber, the colonial government set about surveying and apportioning the land into allotments and townships. Kostoglou (1994b:11) notes that free farmers "had however, already established themselves in the more extensive and choicer acreages around these towns, and saw little incentive to buy into the Government town blocks." Settlers began to make their way south and build solid foundations for community. Entrepreneurs, bushmen, merchants, and families were attracted by the opportunities for timber-getting and sought to eke out a living based on the opportunities in the timber industry. The first steam-mill is reported to have been established in the Recherche Bay area in 1854, and by the 1870s the "small-scale shingle splitters and their ilk were increasingly absorbed or evicted by the larger entrepreneurs now staking out the forest" (Kostoglou 1994b:13).

4.5 Civic and Industrious Times

From the 1850s to the early 1900s the timber industry established a firm foothold in the growth of the community of the Far South. Trees were transformed into logs, sleepers, planks, palings, off-cuts and sawdust; each phase adding value to the timber. In turn, the timber was used to help establish the colony and build, for example, houses, bridges, jetties, and roads (Kostoglou 1996). Timber was also important for ship-building. On writing of the Huon region, Young (1995-96:119) notes that from "1841 until well into the 20th century ship-building was a major regional industry and ships were also a major export even though they don't appear

as such in the export figures because of the unofficial and personal nature of the transactions".

Employment was plentiful during this period and the pattern of community development followed that sawmills were not erected around any particular township; rather, the townships were erected around the mills. Larger mill-sites had associated dwellings and services for the workers and their families, for example, a general store, butcher, blacksmith, and carpentry shop. These were "company-controlled townships" (Poulson, B. 2001, pers. comm., 20 November) such as at the sites of mills at Hastings (1870-1918), Raminea (1870/71 - 1974), Southport (1876-c.1921), Catamaran (1885-1945) and Strathblane (1856-1913) (Kostoglou 1994a and b). The companies controlled the provision of goods and set prices in the towns; company control was a contentious amongst community members. Beechey and Baker (2000:53) report that this "system generally known as the 'truck' system, was entrenched in most mill communities, was greatly patronised, much favoured by its patrons and much criticized by some, especially by those outside the system". Company control is a theme that re-emerges throughout the development of this resource-dependent community in the Far South.

With the introduction of the mills and other mechanised practices, production and infrastructure gradually increased, although the scale of operation still supported family owned businesses (Kostoglou 1996:24). Miles of tramways criss-crossed terrain extending inland seeking virgin forests; and jetties extended further out to sea to provide anchorages for larger ships. Jetties became a meeting point for people, a nexus for exchange of goods, and a link to mainland and international markets. Beechey and Baker (2000:9) note that until "the early 1870s timber from Esperance was sent to Hobart by barge. Much of it was then transhipped to larger vessels sailing for the other Australian colonies and further abroad. These expensive and time-consuming practices began to be replaced in the 1870s by direct shipment from Esperance". Such advances reflect the expansion of the economy and growing autonomy of the community at the time.

Aside from the timber industry there were other significant layers etched into the cultural landscape. Mixed farms afforded subsistence-style living. Encouraged by the colonial government, farming activities such as grazing and orcharding overlayed the freshly cleared land. At Recherche Bay and in the vicinity of Lune River,

settlements were established with a view to extracting coal. This industry was characterised by a stream of 'openings' and 'closures', and complicated by high costs, risk to lives, and the tenuous supply and poor quality of the coal. Nevertheless, it was a significant thread in the development of the community (Bacon and Banks 1989).

Life in the Far South has been indelibly linked with the sea. In the absence of roads, boat traffic abounded and fish was fresh meat for the locals who developed a taste for crayfish, oysters, and a variety of scale fish, including Barracouta, Kingfish, Trumpeter, Garfish, Carp, Bream, Trevalley, Flounder, and Flathead (Calder 1882). A visitor to Recherche Bay in 1869 observed that

> [t]he people belong to the order Amphibia, and they pass as much of their time in boats as on shore; in fact in winter this is the only mode of communication, the tracks then being in many places underwater. The School Master collects his scholars every morning except Saturday, which is a holiday, by boat [...] nearly everyone has also his boat... (*Weekly News*, March 6, 1869).

The sheltered bays of the Far South were home and safe anchorages for commercial fishers who waited in ready for the good weather and access to the rugged and reefed coastline. Nutrient-rich waters were productive fishing grounds but the over-exploitation of fish sourced from the waters of the Far South was cause for early concern. For example, a Royal Commission on the Fisheries of Tasmania reported in 1882 that the "destruction of our principal oyster-beds and the present scarcity of oysters, referred to elsewhere, are attributed partly to reckless unrestricted dredging continued until the beds were wholly destroyed", and the "destruction of crayfish is stated to be carried on at a rate exceeding the natural increase" (Calder 1882:xv). In response to these threats and largely due to the appointment and foresight of Fisheries Inspector William Saville-Kent in 1884 (Harrison 1988), the use of science began to forge new ways of managing marine resources in the Far South. Statistics on fishing methods, areas caught, catch efforts and landings became enmeshed in structuring regulations and fishing practices. The scene had been set for the modern day fisheries that would follow (see section 4.7).

Beyond the indelible and increasingly diverse imprint of resource exploitation, however, the landscape held other meanings. Mutually supportive links had been

generated between industries providing economic support for families who, in turn, generated civic activities that built community. Life at the Hastings Mill, for example, is described by Poulson (1999:6) as having excellent housing, a Congregational Church, a Good Templars Lodge[6], its own cricket team, and gardens where "workers were encouraged to spend their leisure time on Saturday afternoons growing vegetables". Mill-based company towns were larger and more permanent places which helped establish community identities. These private towns "quietly" gained government recognition and public services such as schools, churches and post-offices were provided (Kostoglou 1996:42).

The increased infrastructure and activities may be symbolic of a growing civic society and community spirit. For example, in response to ridicules and reports of uncivil behaviour in the Huon, one proud local resident of Southport replied in writing with a spirited threat of declaring independence from Hobart.

> Oh yes Mistress Hobart, we may be a very rough unpolished set, but recollect diamonds in the rough have the true grit after all, and if we were to turn to ship our few millions of feet of sawn timber, the hundreds of thousands of palings, etc. with a small matter of 30,000 or 40,000 worth of fruit yearly, direct to foreign ports, getting returns in the shape of tea, sugar, and a few other small fixings, just in the way of ballast, you know, I don't think you'd cry encore (*The Mercury*, 26th July, 1881).

The writer goes on to espouse the fine equipment to be found at Graves Mill (1876-c.1898)[7], a busy shipping schedule, and the necessary conveniences and infrastructure to run "the model mill". Further, the writer adds details of recent improvements at Southport.

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[6] The Good Templars were a social organisation that advocated abstinence from alcoholic drinks and notably encouraged the participation of women in its activities. A number of lodges operated throughout the Far South from 1874 (Beechey and Baker 1997).

[7] In 1898 Mr Graves divested the mill to his son in law Mr William Georgeson and Robert Hay. In 1902 this partnership was dissolved and Robert Hay operated the mill until 1921-25? (Kostoglou 1994b).

> We have a newly-erected and comfortable police cottage, occupied by an efficient officer, the graceful curve of whose vest shows that the sea breezes of Southport are efficacious; a telegraph and post office, a handsome Catholic church, and a small building in which occasional services are held by the Church of England clergyman; and last, a good school (Mr Mason, master), whose books show an average of 29. This place can also find its cricket club numbering 20 broad-shouldered, stalwart young fellows.

The story so far illustrates that towns in the Far South developed in relative isolation. With the initial guidance of the Road Trusts (established in 1856) foot-by-foot of muddied and rocky links were continuing to forge more accessible pathways within and between the settlements (Jones 1988). Progress was slow and the journey to Hobart was particularly arduous. With the growing popularity of cars in the 1920s, water transport was soon superseded by road transport (Plummer, C., 2002, pers. comm., 8 August). It was usually a significant undertaking to travel between settlements and further a-field to Hobart; this isolation speaks of a need for the community to be resourceful and independent, to subsist and also pull together in times of sickness and need. For example, Steve Hay (cited in Poulson 1999:20) recounts that

> if somebody fell sick in those days it was often touch and go. When Billy Curran was kicked by a horse and remained very sick they put him in a whaleboat and six men rowed him to Hobart. It was stormy. The trip took a day and a night.

4.6 Power, Decline, and Determination

The turn of the century marks new dimensions in the cultural landscape of the Far South. During the economic depression of the 1890s there began a demise in the larger mills which relied on "advance high volume order for their survival" (Kostoglou 1996:25). Increasing costs involved in accessing virgin forests also affected the sawmilling businesses. Times were tough for the community of the Far South. In 1898 a decision was made by Tasmanian Government which has had far-reaching impacts on the community of the Far South. This decision changed policy in favour "of large scale foreign investment in the publicly owned forests of Tasmania" (Row 1980:99). 'Concessions' entered the dynamic cultural landscape and brought a new wave of resource use and development. This decision meant that

easy "access to abundant, cheap yet valuable raw material was offered as the inducement for large scale private investment in the necessary plant and machinery, capital being seen as the scarce commodity and large scale activity as the most desirable mode" (Row 1980:97). The forests which had traditionally been the domain of local, family owned businesses were to become corporatised and monopolised by foreign investors and industrial giants such as the "Huon Timber Company and Tasmanian Timber Company [which] entered the timber getting boom and irrevocably determined the requisite scale of future operations" (Kostoglou 1996:24).

The legacies of this decision is discussed at length by Margaret Row (1977) in a case study of the Huon Timber Company and the Crown. Undoubtedly there were short-term gains for communities and a "flood of investment in timber getting enterprises" (Kostoglou 1996:24) caused the government to prosper for a time. In summary, Row (1980:100) notes that the "pendulum had swung from penalising the exploiter of the forest to the other extreme of putting his interests first". The State Government's[8] approach, which supported large scale resource use and development, was perpetuated with the pulpwood concessions of the 1930s. Large scale exploitation of forest resources is evident with the clear-fell practices of today.

Henry Jones and Company is another 'industrial giant' which has had far reaching impacts on the development of the community in the Far South. This company, lead by Sir Henry Jones, greatly influenced the organisation and developments in a burgeoning orcharding industry, and the continuing smaller operators in the timber industry. Kostoglou (1996:31) explains that

> Mr Jones gradually bought up large numbers of insolvent or inefficient sawmills and put them to work producing case timber and larger sizes for export abroad. By the First World War, his acquisitions had staved off the death of this industry in Tasmania, and the man became in his own right the most dynamic timber getter of all.

Many portable "spot mills" or "box mills" operated across the Far South employing up to half a dozen men who could salvage the remaining stands of trees left in the

[8] With Federation in 1901 the Colonial Government became a State Government (Green 1956).

wake of the larger businesses. These mills were important until after World War II to supply the timber necessary for the fruit boxes needed in the orcharding industry.

The industrial activities in the early 1900s speak of carving and shaping and re-shaping the physical landscape. But these industrious efforts were frequently wiped out by fire. Bushfires and mill-fires threatened lives and devastated the "freshly cut green timber from that morning" (Hitchens 1993). People's homes, businesses, livestock, jetties, boats, tramways and other civilizing signs on the landscape became charred and ashened. On returning home after a bushfire, Hitchens (1993) recalls "we saw our chimney, our flat iron on the fire, and the kettle hanging on the hook...that was all that was left of our place...but we were alright". The fired landscape of the Far South speaks of loss, fear, challenges, determination, and new beginnings. Some people moved on, but the fire-dependent Eucalypts regenerated and many homes and businesses were rebuilt.

With the onset of World War One a lot of men left the community. Soldiers were "sent off with fond farewells, supported with parcels while on duty and welcomed home with great enthusiasm" (Beechey and Baker 2000:146). Today, memorials, gravestones, trophies, photographs, the Returned Servicemen's League, the Anzac Day traditions, mates and memories endure and endear people to war-time meanings inscribed in the cultural landscape of the Far South.

During the period c.1912-1920 there was also a down-turn in the timber industry. Much of the forest had been cut out and the huge bushfires of 1913 had destroyed a significant amount of the remaining prospective timber (Kostoglou 1994b). The ebbs and flow of these economic activities had a multiplicity of ramifications for the community. There was stagnation as mills became idle, and there was movement as "the workforce moved out *en masse*" (Kostolglou 1996:42). Civic life was affected. On weekends, for example, the land was turf, field, and pitch bringing people together for leisure, spectating, and competition. Football and cricket were popular sports and often teams were made up of mill employees. However, the "consequent shifts of the working populations resulted in changes in the availability of players and the formation of teams" (Beechey and Baker 2000:156). A declining population signalled the demise of many sporting associations.

After the 1920s the community had "lost much of its economic punch" (Poulson, B., 2001, pers.comm., 20 November), but many community members continued to enjoy social traditions and cultural events. Regattas were popular events on the ocean and river front where boat races and axe-cutting competitions entertained the spectators. Balls and 'grand concerts' were held and a night out at the movies with music provided by 'the player' was followed by dances; the fox-trot, old time waltz, square-dance, and drills – many social times were tapped out on the wooden floors of community halls around the towns (Beechey and Baker 2000). There was movement between towns as people travelled to events to recreate, and socialise with neighbours. A broader sense of community was evolving as collective organisations became more established. For example, the Esperance Municipal Council was declared in 1906, and various sporting competitions developed. The spirited Esperance Football Association (established in 1922) fielded teams from Southport, Dover, Raminea, Glendevie, and at one point in time Catamaran. A women's hockey competition broke away from the Huon Association and formed the Esperance Association in 1925 (Beechey and Baker 2000:158). One local resident described the development of Dover from the 1920s: "It's a town that never ever took off and grew rapidly. But it has just quietly developed. You know, you'd see a house would go up here and a house would go up there".[9]

The strength of social ties was to pull the community through the desperate times of the depression years in the 1930s. Algie Smith (1993) reflected that during the depression "there was no work anywhere, you couldn't buy a job if you had a thousand pounds". Of the timber operations Kostoglou (1994a:13) wrote that several "smaller sawmilling operations picked over stands of remaining old growth and better quality regrowth throughout the late 1930s and 1940s, but these operations were family concerns and offered no greater scope for employment". Larger mills were closed for periods of time and workers were left idle. During these difficult times Bert Price (1993) remembered that "everyone was out to help each other." Shop-keepers let bills go, others supplied free meat, clothing was passed on, and if there was any spare food it was shared amongst others. One local community

[9] This quote is from a conversation I had with an anonymous community member on November 13th, 2000.

member said: "there are always people who don't like the big man, but during the depression, my family, my wife and two children, we had no money. If it hadn't been for Henry Jones we wouldn't have survived. He leant us money to tide us through to the next season, and he didn't charge interest".[10]

Jones influence was equivocal nevertheless. From the 1940s to the 1970s row upon row of fruit trees lined the increasingly patch-worked landscape of the Far South. Quality produce and efficient packing operations became the pride of the community (Beechey and Baker 2001). Orchardists looked to nature to provide, timely rains, gentle winds, and warm sunshine to meet the heavy market demand for fruit between the 1940s and 1970s. Over these nature-related dependencies there was also laid chemical-related dependencies and, arguably, dependencies on the likes of Henry Jones. Changing market trends and the introduction of fertilisers and pesticides killed off the natural system used until the first decade of the twentieth century (Geeves 1988:123). In an article which raises the historical problem of cultural devastation and the demise of social capital in the Huon region, John Young (1995-96:123) argues that the hierarchical control evident in the orchard industry "fostered a condition of virtually permanent indebtedness to the middlemen, who exported the apples and supplied chemicals on credit. Orchardists were in a condition of dependent obligation". Young goes on to explain the exploits of Henry Jones who is reported not just to have monopolised the supply of fertiliser, but also controlled the refrigeration space on board ships. He writes:

> Henry Jones provided all the orchardists required, lent money and gave credit, often informally, but only to people who continued to ship through him and did nothing to incur his displeasure (Young 1995-1996:124).

Moments of power and threads of competition are laced into the cultural landscape of the Far South. There are also moments of loss and disempowerment contrived both from within the local community, and also because of external factors. In the 1970s, for example, Britain joined the European market: one of the main factors that led to the collapse of the apple industry in the Huon Valley (Young, J. 1995-1996).

[10] This quote is from a conversation I had with an anonymous community member on January 21st, 2001.

Increasing mechanisation and continued promotion of large-scale forestry practices with decreased downstream processing have progressively excluded the local worker from earning a living. The last steam driven mill in Tasmania was burnt down (and not re-built) at Raminea in 1974 (Kostoglou 1994b). The demise of the orchard industry and small-scale forest operations calls to attention a decline in employment opportunities, prosperity and community spirit. For example, The Southern Forests Community Group (cited in Young, J., 1995-1996:127), reports that,

> [t]he southern forests yield significant wealth, but not for this community. Our share ... comes mainly as welfare payments, and rather than the dynamic, prosperous community to be expected in such a well endowed region [the Huon Valley] we are plagued with social problems directly related to the lack of local jobs and economic opportunities.

Charlie Plummer (cited in Poulson 1999:21), a long-term resident of the Far South, recalls that,

> one period south of Dover, there had been 25 box mills each employing five to eight men. But cardboard ended the need for case timber, and the creation of the Area School at Dover meant the closure of all the local schools. We lost our social centres and concerts. A lot of life went out of all the small towns. The bushfires of 1967 were the final blow.

The history of the Far South reveals that the flux and flow of the community was sometimes related to fluctuations in global economic activity, sometimes related to natural disasters, yet more often was perhaps a combination of both. Following the devastating bushfires of 1967 many people moved on from the Far South. However a significant number stayed - many of whom have helped re-build the community into what it is today.

4.7 Some Variations on Themes

At this stage in the story of the Far South events and factors begin to merge with the memories and sense of place of participants – the matter of analysis and discussion in the following chapter. Nevertheless there are still several junctures and transformations in the cultural identity of the Far South that need further explication to set the scene for the journey into the analysis of participants responses.

Together with the adaptation of existing industries in line with sustainable management practices, several new industries have brought hope to some members of the community of the Far South. Niche markets, for example, have been identified and new ways of using the rich natural resources of the Far South have been created. During the 1960s and 1970s, for example, Asian markets were identified and an Abalone Fishery was established (DPIWE 2001). This new industry brought new faces, new wealth, employment and activity to the community. These trends were repeated with the establishment of Marine Farming during the 1990s (Stanley 1993). The mouth of the Huon River and Esperance Bay are full of technological equipment and infrastructure for two large salmon farms. The cool southern waters are considered ideal for growing quality fish to fill niche global markets (Stanley 1993). Gluts in the global salmon market, however, are a reminder of the contingency of these industries on external factors[11]. Nevertheless, the aquaculture industry provides much employment for the local community and one community member described the industry as "Dover's saviour"[12].

Patterns of resource dependence continue to influence the cultural identities of the Far South yet there are new twists and turns in the management of these industries that impact the community in new ways. Contrary to the assessment provided by the early colonists, no longer can the forests and sea-life be viewed as inexhaustible resources. In the search for an integrated approach that balances economic, environmental and social concerns, fisheries along with the forestry and agricultural industries are continually being transformed. Management practices reflect increasing regulations, scientific innovations, environmental monitoring and re-structuring in line with concerns for a balanced and sustainable approach (DPIWE 2001; DPIWE 2002; Commonwealth of Australia 1999). Issues of sustainability have become a daily concern for many members of the community in the Far South.

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[11] An article in *The Mercury* on 27th June, 2002, reported that Tassal, one of the two aquaculture farms located in the Far South had gone into receivership. Although there is still much information to be divulged regarding this situation it draws attention to the prospect of the continued pattern of the rise and fall of the community associated with resource dependency.

[12] This quote is from a conversation I had with an anonymous community member on November 13th, 2001.

Natural resources in the Far South continue to be exploited but there has also been increasing recognition of the significance of the wildlife, ancient plants, natural beauty, and rich cultural heritage associated with the forebears of place. The declaration of a myriad of reserves, sanctuaries and the South-West National Park have imprinted the idea of preservation of the natural environment into the cultural landscape of the Far South. Perhaps the most significant conservation area is the vast Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area that spans the south-west (see Figure 3.1). Declared in 1982, this area is recognized internationally for its natural and cultural significance (PWS 1999). Along with ideas of preservation, increasing recognition of the natural and cultural values of the area may be associated with renewed vigour in a tourism and ecotourism industry that has grown throughout the 1990s and early 21st Century[13].

4.8 Conclusions

The history of the Far South shows that there are successive layers of meaning imbued in the landscape. These layers of meaning reflect the construction and reconstruction of the cultural identity of the Far South through time. The natural environment gives the Far South its character which, over the course of time, has been variously interpreted as a natural resource, a place of beauty, rich biodiversity, cultural significance and area for conservation. Excessive resource exploitation has occurred in the past and is a strong reminder of the acute need for effective management of the natural resources. A pattern of resource dependency has been a major influence in creating the flux and flow of community development in the Far South. Other factors such as war, depression and repeated devastation by fire have also influenced the development of the community. People have come and gone from the Far South, which emphasises that diverse people have influenced the transformation of the area's cultural identity through time. There are cultural layers in the local history which speak of rise and fall in community spirit. The community

[13] A meeting organised by a local tourism group, "The Far South Network" (20th May, 2002), generated discussion on the growth and future direction of tourism in the Far South. There was general consensus among those that attended that infrastructure and focus on tourism in the Far South had grown during the 1990s.

has shown elements of civic-mindedness, and through challenging times has shown resilience and resourcefulness.

A history of resource-based industries as well as colonisation and migration are evidence that the Far South has been impacted by globalisation over a long period of time. Global relations are thus part of the uniqueness of the Far South. The control of natural resources in the Far South is associated with uneven power relations. Increased corporatisation and government control has meant the local community has had less control over the management of local resources. Increasing technology, over-exploitation of natural resources and changing global markets have been associated with a decline in employment levels at the local scale.

This history has tracked the successive layers of cultural meanings through time. Gaining insight into the historic meanings associated with the Far South is necessary for understanding the analysis of the case study data that will follow in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

FORGING THE LINKS

5.1 Overview

In this chapter I give an interpretive analysis of the case study data, obtained through in-depth interviews and participant observation processes described previously (see Chapter 3). The sense of place values discussed in what follows, are derived from the array of emotional attachments expressed by participants and how they pattern and conceive places. When understanding sense of place it is important to remember that place is not "simply the experience and conceptualisation of place ... life, existence, places-in-the-world seem to intrude and become manifest in sense of place" (Eyles 1985:129). The interconnections between local and global scales evident in participants' sense of place has drawn my attention to the salience of hermeneutics and the need to understand the parts in relation to the whole.

This chapter is organised in two main sections. Firstly, I identify themes from participants' sense of place which link to social well-being. The contrasting values expressed by participants have varying links with the social well-being of the community and highlight the number of ways sense of place is conceived as a social good. Particular themes in the data are linked to notions of home, connections to natural and cultural heritage, patterns of resource dependency and power relations, family and lifestyle values. Secondly, I build on my understanding of social well-

being and explore participants' sense of place with a particular focus on dynamic social relations in place. In my search for links with social well-being and community empowerment I found that sense of place is both driving and impeding the empowerment of the community in the Far South. Analysis of the data reveals sense of place may be associated with resistance to change, intolerance of difference, and reinforce a sense of powerlessness. More positively, sense of place draws attention to the assets and shared sources of attachment among members of the community. Sense of place is associated with shared sentiments of care and concern for the future of the Far South and this may be helping to build social capital.

Throughout this chapter I draw attention to the comments of participants through the use of italics. Direct quotes from participants are referenced to the NUD*IST 4 code number (refer section 3.5). Material gleaned through participant observation is not overtly identified as such, for it is an integral part of my interpretations. Nevertheless, some of the meetings and events I attended during the field research and that have been explicitly referred to in this chapter are referenced in the footnotes. Conclusions for this chapter are reserved for Chapter 6 where I relate the findings to the selected literature.

5.2 Linking Sense of Place and Social Well-being

5.2.1 Conceptualizations of Sense of Place

Sense of place is linked to a multiplicity of sentiments. Intimacy with and openness to place were evinced in certain participants' comments. For example, one participant stressed the need to have an "*inside feeling – a readiness to be open to the land and culture in which you find yourself, either through inheritance or through accident*" (57-57). An attitude of openness to the landscape may reflect elements of empathetic insideness which demands "a willingness to be open to significances of place, to feel it, to know and respect its symbols" (Relph 1976:54). Supporting these

outcomes Deborah Wace[14], a resident of Lune River, suggested that even though a person may not be born in a place, a person can still develop love, respect and a depth of commitment to place.

Examples of empathetic insideness among participants that suggest an ethic of reciprocity allows a sense of belonging and home to be cultivated by participants. Perhaps, as Massey (1994) suggests, an individual can have multiple homes. Nevertheless, in developing a sense of home it is important to consider time in place, for as Tuan (1975:164) suggests, experience "takes time. Sense of place is rarely acquired in passing. To know a place well requires long residence and deep involvement". One participant suggested, for example, that a sense of belonging was increased by sharing certain personal events with community over time: "*going through your marital break-up and everybody knowing about it, and seeing you go through that. Um, having a friend die, an elderly friend, and going to the funeral with all the people, having the kids you taught have babies and children*" (108-110). However, Tuan (1975:164) qualifies the characteristics of time in place when he says

> [i]f it takes time to know a place, the passage of time itself does not guarantee a sense of place. If experience takes time, the passage of time itself does not ensure experience. One person may know a place intimately after a five-year sojourn; another has lived there all his life and it is to him as unreal as the unread books on his shelf.

Time in place is important, but developing a sense that shows a thorough understanding of the significances of place may require a certain attitude. Lopez (1996:11) suggests that the key to achieving a reciprocal relationship "is to become vulnerable to a place. If you open yourself up you can build intimacy. Out of such intimacy will come a sense of belonging, a sense of not being isolated in the universe".

[14] Deborah Wace was one of a number of residents who presented stories, songs, and poems at a community evening held at the Raminea Hall on the 2nd October, 2001. An evening of "Community Stories" formed part of the Bicentennary of Federation celebrations.

Several participants suggested a sense of place that was connected to wider spatial relations. For example,

> *I've evolved my physical sense of place to this land over a relatively short period of twenty years. But I bring with it an ethic about what a sense of place is from my life ... I've got a very Scottish sense of place that comes through having a highland grandfather, and therefore that whole Scottish link of clan and land and family. I've got an indigenous sense of place, of how spirit is in a place because of my indigenous ancestry that comes from North America* (57-57).

This conceptualisation of sense of place can be contrasted with other participants whose sense of place was deeply embedded with particular localities in the Far South. Rose (1995:97) states that "senses of place can draw on one or more geographical scale[s]: a sense of place may be intensely local, or it may refer both to the local and the global". Demonstrating a sense of place on a local scale, one participant stated that "*it would take a bomb to get me out of Dover*" (74-77); another couldn't imagine living anywhere else (31-32); and yet another said this place "*will always be my home and I'll always be interested in everything that happens*" (35-36). These examples of local senses of place may reflect elements of existential insideness which is the "insideness that most people feel when they are at home in their own town or region, when they know the place and its people and are known and accepted there" (Relph 1976:55). For participants with an attitude of existential insideness, place was clearly a part of identity which brought feelings of security, comfort, pride, and affection for place.

Attitudes of existential insideness can be contrasted with those of another participant, whose sense of belonging to place was more ambivalent: "*I always looked at it that it was just a pin on the earth, it doesn't necessarily have to be Dover, it was just where I was*" (23-24). This participant's sense of place reflected elements of 'incidental outsideness' which describe "a largely unselfconscious attitude in which places are experienced as little more than the background or setting for activities and are quite incidental to those activities" (Relph 1976:52). This particular participant's sense of place can be interpreted as dominated by instrumental values whereby place was related to work issues and viewed predominantly "as a means to an end" (Eyles 1985:124). Many participants commented that they took elements of life in the Far South for granted. For example, "*we sort of take it all for granted I s'pose because*

it's there all the time" (29-30). Another participant commented that "*if you've grown up with it ... it's always there*" (11-11). Relph (1976:52) suggests that "incidental outsideness is probably a feature of everyone's experience of places, for it is inevitable that what we are doing frequently overshadows where we are doing it, and pushes places into the background".

Relph (1976) suggests that individuals may slide between levels of insideness and outsideness[15]. In terms of social well-being, participants suggested that a sense of belonging is associated with attitudes of insideness and linked to individuals feeling comfortable, relaxed and accepted in the community. Sentiments of home that are linked to the Far South are associated with feelings of pride, understanding and openness to the significances of place. Attitudes of reciprocity may foster an awareness of the diversity of significances of place and can better support "living in some sort of ethical unity with a place" (Lopez 1996:11). Intimacy with place may also be associated with knowledge and experiences that build a "storied relationship to place" (Lopez 1996:11). Participants suggested that experiences in the natural environment are a particularly rich source of knowledge and social well-being in the community of the Far South.

5.2.2 Sense of Place: Building a Depth of Knowledge and Experience

The natural environment may be a common denominator for the community of the Far South in the sense that it is "a source of shared meaning and emotion, whether liked or disliked, whether tasteful or ugly, because it is shared experience" (Riley 1992:27). Interpretation of conversations revealed that the natural environment is a rich source of attachments and shared meanings for the community of the Far South, but it is also the source of a complex web of contrasting lifestyles and different value systems. The contrasting values expressed by participants have varying links with the social well-being of the community and highlight the variety of ways the natural environment is conceived as a social good.

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[15] It is important to make clear that the use of notions of inside and outside is not meant to reinforce notions of bounded places. Rather, insideness and outsideness may be considered zones of possibility and draw attention to an attitude of openness to the significances of place, which does not necessarily imply a bounded conception of place. In fact, Relph (1976) suggests such a conception of place may help to blur physically and culturally defined boundaries.

Life in the Far South is intimately entwined with the natural environment. One participant described the natural environment as "*all pervasive*" and said that "*you're slapped in the face with it in somewhere like this ... you've either got to get on with nature down here, or get out*" (86-86). Amongst other things some participants looked to the natural environment for subsistence values and to gain a livelihood. Dominant occupations include agricultural farming, forestry, fishing and aquaculture. In these occupations workers are required to engage intimately with the natural environment, creating a lifestyle influenced by the day-to-day weather, the climate and the seasons. As one participant stated, "*we are greatly governed by the weather*" (27-29). Nature guides the sense of time and activities of people who are required to work with nature; the weather, climate, ocean currents and seasons on which they are dependent are out of their control. In another sense, the relationship with the natural environment conjures attitudes of working against nature, of trying to control it. As one orchardist explained, "*of course you're always on the lookout for injurious things to the fruit, such as black spot, or coddling moth or something. And it's sort of a continual battle between man and nature*" (20-21).

Through intimate links with the natural environment, people who work and live in the Far South may have a wealth of knowledge about the nuances of the natural environment. Participants suggested the significance of knowledge and experience built through time was sometimes taken for granted. For example, one participant stated:

> *I guess you don't really value it [knowledge and experience about everyday life]. You take all these things for granted. And you don't realise their value until you get someone from outside the district and you're with them and they may start to ask questions - you know, you might point something out to them which you take as normal everyday thing ... I've seen the full life cycles, which they haven't* (19-19)

Knowledge and experience associated with a sense of place may be important for the social well-being of the community on a number of levels. Berry (1997:149) suggests that a "healthy culture holds preserving knowledge *in place* for a *long* time. That is, the essential wisdom accumulates in the community much as fertility builds in the soil". Knowledge and experience built over time may be considered part of the "fabric of the future" (Norton and Hannon 1998:131) and used as "the starting-point" (Rose 1995:89) for assisting the sustainable management of natural resources.

Williams and Stewart (1998:18) suggest sense of place "can be the shared language that eases discussions of salient issues and problems and that affirms the principles underlying ecosystem management". Sagoff (1993:360) suggests that if

> you want to understand what makes the economic uses of environmental resources sustainable – if you want to know how places survive the vagaries of markets – then look to the relationships, cultural and political, of the people in them. Look for their affection not for efficiency as the trait with which people treat their surroundings.

Moving beyond the realms of efficiency, focussing on participants' affectionate ties to place gave insight into the diversity of values that contribute to quality of life in the Far South.

5.2.3 Sense of Place: Broadening the Horizons of a Quality of Life

The aesthetic values attached to the natural environment express one way that place identity is recognised, articulated and reinforced by the communities of the Far South. Aesthetic value, in the context of cultural heritage, is taken to include elements with counterparts in nature. Aspects of sensory perception

> may include consideration of the form, scale, colour, texture and materials of the fabric; the smells and sounds associated with the place and its use (Marquis-Kyle and Walker, 1992:73).

Many participants expressed strong emotional attachments to the stunning beauty, satin ocean, green forests, and harsh environment which was a source of inspiration, pride and identification with place[16]. One participant said "*I think the water is beautiful. I love the water. It's like a changing picture*" (11-11). Various participants suggested that it was a privilege to live in the Far South because of the beauty and peaceful qualities. Certain icons in the landscape were also a particular focus of meaning and helped define identification. For example, participants expressed great affinity for Adamsons Peak, the prominent mountain on the western

[16] These descriptive comments were recorded at a meeting facilitated by Tasmanian Regional Arts, held at the Dover Art Gallery on 29th June, 2001. The meeting launched a community arts project entitled "Identity Distinct", which aims to celebrate a sense of place.

skyline, appreciating its changing moods, noting the impending weather, and admiring its beauty.

Participants indicated attachment to aesthetic values was a rich source of social well-being that shaped identity. Aesthetic values were sometimes threatened by, for example, loud log trucks, salmon pens obscuring the view of the water, clear-felling and controlled burns. One participant said, for example,

> *I s'pose the most threatening thing to my sense of being here is what outside people can do to the environment around me, like I've seen one particularly beautiful hill near our place that has been logged and a plantation put in and that's detracted from what I consider to be my all over quality of life* (93-94).

As indicated by this statement, the visual impacts of industry may often be symbolic of deeper questions of environmental ethics, power relations and sustainability. Another participant expressed a different opinion of visual impacts: "*as far as I'm concerned the clear felling of trees does look awful for a time. But it grows so quickly. You know, its progress, as long as it's managed all right" (50-50).*

Participants sometimes associated aesthetic values with wilderness values. For example,

> *I was actually choosing to come and live in the wilderness. Um, I mean there it is, all out there on our horizon. You know, we're girthed by it, by mountain and sea, this incredible wilderness, this amazing metaphor for what remains in, on the planet, and how lucky we are to have it* (26-26).

A definition of wilderness suggests that it "is the raw material out of which man has hammered the artefact called civilization" (Leopold 1949:188). Wilderness is commonly associated with remoteness and naturalness (PWS 1999:91). Wilderness formed part of the diversity in the landscape that was part of the appeal of living in the Far South for some participants.

Referring to the uniqueness of the Far South, one participant stated:

> *I think it is a combination of this area having everything, in terms of sea, mountains, wilderness, agricultural landscape, the very human landscape at the edge of very threatening wilderness. There's that geographically, so you can go to the beach if you want, you can climb a mountain if you want, not that I do much of it, there's wild areas, there's country towns, there's access to people and things happening* (44-44).

Quality of life in the Far South is sometimes linked to the quality of the natural environment. Prominent amongst participant remarks was reference to the clean water and clean air: "*You want to breathe it*" (78-79). The natural environment was also imbued with spiritual meanings. For example, participants alluded to feeling nourished by the natural environment; it provided a "*refuge in a very chaotic world*" (22-22). For several participants wilderness was associated with existence values. Referring to the close proximity of the South-West wilderness, one participant stated, "*I just feel wonderfully that it is there*" (60-61). This sentiment may be considered an 'existence value' which is defined by Jacobs (1995:114) as meaning people "want them [parts of the environment] to exist, irrespective of any conceivable 'use' they might get from them". Existence values may be important for sustainability because they can extend the concept of wealth beyond the material and recognise "that not all values are derived from market consumption".

Cultural Heritage Values

Although participants suggested different strengths of attachment to heritage, most participants acknowledged the contribution of cultural heritage to the social well-being in the Far South, and sometimes to the nation and wider global relations. Cultural significance refers to "the qualities that make a place important. Significant places help us to understand the past, they enrich our life now, and we expect them to be of value to future generations" (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992:12). One participant suggested that the history of the Far South is an educational source with "*elements of morals, and integrity, and ethics, and our sense of who we are and what our country* is" (61-62). Several participants suggested the heritage of the place was an important part of their identity as well as a rich source of community identities. Although cultural heritage is important as a basis for significance in place,

identification with place is always shifting and open to new interpretations. Relph (1976:47) suggests that the meanings

> of places may be rooted in the physical setting and objects and activities, but they are not a property of them – rather they are a property of human intentions and experiences. Meanings can change and be transferred from one set of objects to another, and they possess their own qualities of complexity, obscurity, clarity, or whatever.

Although cultural heritage was considered important to social well-being, many participants suggested that local heritage was not well understood amongst the community. A number of reasons are suggested, including the loss of evidence of history through bushfires and people passing on, lack of awareness, as well as "*a lack of preservation of Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage down here*" (18-21). There was a sense of loss: there is "*so little that remains of history down here*" (58-59). Awareness and understanding of heritage may be important for the social well-being of the community because it can help in making decisions about how to care for places (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992).

Participants sometimes related the significance of the natural and cultural heritage to attachments associated with family and lifestyle values.

Family and Lifestyle Values

Western lifestyle has been characterised "as acquisitive and consumerist, with an emphasis on work as a valuable and fulfilling activity" (Bliss 1993:426). Arguably, lifestyles dominated by growth-oriented economies and materialism have contributed to the current ecological crisis and concerns for sustainability (Davidson 2000b; Jacobs 1995). For participants in the Far South, however, materialism and consumerism were not dominant themes. In fact, participants frequently made comparisons between the rural lifestyle and urban lifestyle to emphasise non-consumerist and materialistic lifestyle values. Tuan (1974:102) says "the virtues of the countryside require their anti-image, the city, for the sharpening of focus, and vice versa". Relief from consumerism was often associated with simplicity, affordable living, and non-materialism, for example, you are "*not being lured to expensive restaurants for restaurant meals, you're not being lured out to the cinema, there's no pressure on you to wear the kinds of clothing you have to wear when you live in the city*" (49-49).

Coupling relief from a consumerist lifestyle with the virtues of the natural environment, one participant said that the values of the country lifestyle for children included

> *that ability to just run wild and the education that real life gives you. Living with nature and being able to experience it seemed to me to be an incredibly important education to give children straight up - before they got mixed up in the nasty realm of consumerism* (14-15).

Another participant stated that "*we were looking for an environment where our kids could grow up, where we would have some control over it, and we felt that we weren't going to have that control in the city, and we needed a sort of a country upbringing*" (22-26). The Far South was also valued by participants because a slower pace of life provided the opportunity to spend more time with children. Valuing place for younger generations is important for sustainable communities because it implies an ethic of futurity and need to consider the quality of life intra-generationally (Holdgate 1997).

Part of the appeal of the lifestyle in the Far South was associated with high levels of independence and freedom of choice. For example,

> *nothing is forced upon you down here, it's sort of, if you want to do something you do it, if you don't, you don't, you know, if you want to stay at home for the weekend you can, and if you want to be your own person on the weekend you can, and there's no real driving pressure either at work or at home ... apart from the pressures you make for yourself* (31-32).

Self-determination reflects individuals' rights to make decisions for themselves and may be considered an important factor for individual and social well-being (Christchurch City Council 2002; Lloyd 1999). The right to self-determination was reflected positively by various participants and was associated with privacy. Several participants reflected positively on owning land and the amount of physical space around their home which gave a sense of privacy and independence. One participant suggested: "*I get a feeling that people value privacy, and value creating their own world, and because they've chosen to live there, it indicates that they want a bit of privacy and a bit of alone-ness*" (87-88). For some participants isolation was viewed as a desirable aspect of the lifestyle and considered an asset rather than a disadvantage for the community. For one elderly participant, however, the absence

of public transport meant isolation from services and community had become the source of loneliness and frustration (74-75). For long-term sustainability with equity, the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services (1999:9) states that

> the key is to create the conditions for healthier communities; to build individual, community and institutional capacity to promote health and wellbeing and to ensure inclusiveness so that no individual, population group or community is left behind.

In this respect, geographical proximity to services may be considered essential for quality of life (Sarantakos 1998). In recent years there have been many changes to the provision of services in the Far South. Participants' attitudes to change reflected variously on the quality of life associated with these changes.

5.2.4 Sense of Place and Attitudes to Change

Chapter Four emphasised that there have been many changes in the cultural landscape via the impacts of forces internal and external to the community. Participants expressed a variety of sentiments toward the advent of change. For some participants there was a certain acceptance that change was a natural occurrence and ties to place could be broken: "*this is what has happened over the years. When the industry was there, I mean, the township was there - and when that folded up there was no work for the men - naturally, well they had to move out. So things have just come and gone*" (130-130). Various participants alluded to scepticism and resistance in the community to embrace new things: "*they're going to resist, they're going to fight it*" (56-59). Industry-based changes highlighted contrasting and sometimes conflicting representations of place (see section 5.4.3), but were also associated with progress and employment for the community: "*there was a bit of a split in the community [when the fish farms were introduced], because there was a lot of people who didn't agree with it. I couldn't understand it because I thought well, it's another industry and it's a wonderful industry for this community*" (107-110).

Change was sometimes associated with nostalgia, for example, "*it worries me a bit that all the ideals that these older people have strived for, may be fading away*" (62-62). Massey (1991a:24) suggests that nostalgic ways of thinking may be linked to senses of place that are reactionary and self-enclosing. Peter Hay (1994:np) suggests

that nostalgia should not to be feared or denied. Nostalgia is a way of expressing emotion: "the very essence of attachment to place". Perhaps, as Eyles (1985:124) does, it is best to think of nostalgia as both positive and negative:

> [in] the sense of longing for something, or more usually somebody, no longer attainable it is negative because it fills many people with remorse regret and sadness. But it is also a positive, in that the act of remembering the shared times of the past often results in contentment and a kind of happiness.

Among participants changes were frequently associated with the opportunity for an improved quality of life and demonstrated that participants embraced changes for the future. For example, they were enthusiastic about tourism developments, educational training opportunities, enterprise developments, new people arriving into the community, and the growth of cultural events. Many suggested that the rate of changes experienced by the community into the future may be slow. For example, "*I think it will mosey on for the next few generations, much the same as it is today. But I do see a population increase. Like a lot of the places in Tasmania are going backwards, whereas I think we will slowly gain momentum*" (101-102).

Change was sometimes associated with power relations and reflected a lowered sense of social well-being in the community. One participant stated that there was a community perception that people were powerless to improve their individual or collective circumstances: "*people get trodden on over and over and over again. Decisions get made at government levels, at corporate levels and there is stuff all you can do about it*" (73-74). Many participants referred to the loss of control over resource-based industries. For example, "*there are some things that we don't seem to have much control over. Things like the forest industry - sort of local control. There's probably not much you can do to change or modify that at all*" (170-171). According to Massey (1991a:25-26), power relations incorporate the social differentiation caused by the power-geometry of time-space-compression. Not only are there "differences in the degree of movement and communication, but also in the degree of control and of initiation". This inequity results in a situation where the "mobility and control of some groups can actively weaken other people. Differential mobility can weaken the leverage of the already weak. The time-space-compression of some groups can undermine the power of others". Various studies of the Huon Valley reflect inequity in the power relations between industry and local government.

Referring to a study of citizenship and dependent communities in the Huon Valley (Davidson and Stratford 2000), Davidson (2000a) notes that there has been an over-reliance on others to make decisions and argues that "economic dependency produces communities that are insufficiently flexible and resilient in the face of globalizing changes". Davidson reports that Huon Valley communities are characterised by political alienation, feelings of disempowerment, non-participation and cynicism toward local government. These types of sentiments are echoed in a study of community sustainability in Geeveston and Cygnet in the Huon Valley (Armstrong 2000), a review of the Franklin community, also in the Huon Valley (Young, J. 1995-1996), and by many people interviewed in the Far South in the present study.

Participants conveyed a sense of loss and powerlessness that has been perpetuated in the Far South through rationalisation of services and industries. For example, many participants' sense of place was threatened by closure of the local library and banking facilities. Several participants expressed concern that the Far South did not have a local resident as an elected representative in local government[17]. Other government infrastructure, such as the regional office of the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service and Forestry Tasmania have recently withdrawn from their base at Dover to relocate to other parts of the Huon Valley. Participants reflected a loss of control over the ability to provide for younger members in the communities. Young people were "*being lured off into money paying jobs*" (55-55). Many participants suggested that there was a community perception that the Far South was disadvantaged: "*a backwater*", "*dead*", and the "*woop-woop*" (94-97). According to one participant, "*people leave because I s'pose there's nothing here to keep them here*" (73-76).

Evidence of economic restructuring in the Far South may demonstrate grids of power in conceptualisations of sense of place and the way that decisions by some groups can dominate the sense of place of other groups (Rose 1995). Identities of places may be seen as a product "of social actions and of the ways in which people construct their own representation of particular places. It is people themselves who

[17] At the time of interviewing, the Mayor of the Huon Valley Council, Greg Norris, a resident at Police Point, passed away. He was the only representative of the Far South on the Council.

make places, but not always in circumstances of their own choosing" (Massey and Jess 1995:134). According to Gibson, Cameron and Veno (1999:19), how a community copes with change may depend on the rate of change and how the community positions itself with respect to the change. A community's perception of a change event

> plays a crucial role in determining its impacts and the responses that are made to it. How change is represented and understood – as normal or abnormal, natural or unnatural, imposed from outside or emerging from within, as random or somehow selective – will make a significant difference to the ways in which communities and community members relate and respond to the change process (Gibson, Cameron and Veno 1999:19).

The sentiments of many of the participants often reflected that change has been perceived as imposed on the community, which has sometimes generated feelings of loss of control. Changes in the Far South also illustrate that sense of place is a dynamic concept which challenges conceptions of "sense of place and identity which perceive themselves as stable and fixed" (Rose 1995:116). For example, "*I think that in the minds of the people who lived here, they consider all of us as intruders, and historically we are, culturally we are. They lived down here for a couple hundred years [sic] nobody came, nobody went, so it's quite normal for them to feel that way*" (82-83). Rather, cultures are "fluid and dynamic, evolving as we make and re-make them through our efforts to 'make sense' of ourselves and the world around us" (Healey 1997:62).

Increased time-space compression may also make it difficult for the community in the Far South to cope with change (Gibson, Cameron and Veno 1999). A sense of place that conceives cultural change and flux as natural, may help the community to cope with change and better position itself into an empowered state (Gibson, Cameron and Veno 1999). To take control of change is an important capacity for rural communities and may be considered "a precondition to the uptake of sustainable practices" (Armstrong 2000:64).

5.3 Summary

Most participants expressed a sense of belonging which was associated with notions of home and a sense of care. With an attitude of openness to the many levels of significance in places, sense of place may contribute to understanding the meaningful relationships in place and give direction on how best to care for places. Sense of place gives insight into meaningful relationships in place and draws attention to those factors that the community values and that may contribute positively to social well-being. Attachments to the natural environment are a particularly rich source of social well-being and are associated with a host of aesthetic values, lifestyle factors and family values. Many participants conceived that the Far South was a positive place to raise a family, although the rich sense of social well-being which made it a good place was sometimes shadowed by insecurity and a sense of powerlessness to be able to make decisions for future generations. Sense of place has been affected by economic restructuring. A lowered sense of social well-being was reflected in interpretations of place that were characterised by loss and decline.

With an awareness of the relationship between sense of place and social well-being in the Far South, I will now turn to a consideration of the links between sense of place and empowerment of the community. Central to this discussion is a consideration of how elements of social well-being are affecting the ability of members of the community to work effectively as a collective to deal with difference, take control of change, and build social capital.

5.4 Linking Sense of Place and Empowering Community

5.4.1 Making a Choice to Become Empowered

Rural life has often been portrayed as idyllic – although it has also been noted that this reputation is not always justified (Sarantakos 1998; Healey 1997). Indeed, a review of the factors associated with positive social well-being in the Far South reveals that community members are enmeshed in "lifeworlds" (Seamon 1979) that offer the opportunity to lead fulfilling and meaningful lifestyles in an aesthetically beautiful rural landscape. However, entwined in the social relations of the community are meanings attached to place that are "riven with internal debates"

(Healey 1997:175). Influenced by different cultures and worldviews, place is imagined differently by different people (Massey 1995) and, as has been described by participants, is often a source of conflict and division amongst community members. Exploring the case study data revealed that attachments to place may be associated with inequitable power relations and bounded conceptions of place that affect the capacities of the community to build trust, deal with differences and cope with change.

The analysis of the data below begins with a consideration of the choice the community is making to become empowered and the attitudes toward bottom-up approaches to community development.

Embracing the challenge to transform cultural meanings and become empowered, many participants relayed a spirit of optimism, commitment and determination to overcome threats to attachments to place. In many instances the individual's sense of place was a trigger for community action and the challenge was to "*try to translate it [threat] beyond the emotional response into something lived*" (59-61). Participants suggested there is a growing sense of stewardship that may be driven by a realisation that "*in fact we are the most suitable to do it really*" (67-67). Another participant suggested "*we had to reinvent ourselves according to the identity we felt*" (35-35). According to Healey (1997:66), acknowledging power relations involves realising that

> [p]ower relations are not outside us. They are part of us, and they exist through us. Through our relational webs, we continually reaffirm them, modify them and challenge them. We interpret rules, we make resources work in new ways, we re-think our ideas and assumptions, we turn our protests into transformative ideas. As human agency, despite the continual constraints on us, we thus have some power, the power to choose, to invent, to think differently.

Analysis of the case study data revealed that there is much evidence of the success of community-driven processes in achieving the provision of infrastructure and services, as well as creating employment, and encouraging sporting and cultural activities in the Far South. Several groups have also organised to exercise stewardship over parts of the local natural environment. Specific examples of

community driven projects include organising for a community bank[18]; facilitating an "eHeritage" project which will preserve some of the history of the Far South electronically (Poulson 2002:22); and organising a "Streetscape Committee" which aims to beautify and improve the streets of Dover. Many other examples of community-driven processes will be illustrated as this chapter unfolds.

Other advantages of using a bottom-up approach identified by participants include the ability to be sensitive to the cultural heritage of place, tailor-make policy to meet community needs and "*couch it*" (70-71) in terms the community members can understand. A bottom-up approach was suggested to increase a sense of community ownership of projects, and build upon existing networks: "*needs of already existing organisations, with already existing plans, and requirements, and ambitions*" (73-74). Part of the social well-being of the community is the rich knowledge, experience and understanding of the natural and cultural heritage that exists in the community (see section 5.2.2). Drawing on sense of place as part of community building processes may offer the opportunity to bring to the fore the intimate understanding local communities may have about the social and environmental relationships of an area (Norton and Hannon 1998; Sheil 1999).

Participants suggested a bottom-up approach could build and draw on the human capacities in the community. The various strengths that were identified included the diversity of people who were, for example, multi-skilled, knowledgeable and resourceful, and who sometimes possessed strong leadership skills. Leadership is vital for rural communities. Leaders can help define a shared vision, encourage the commitment and energy necessary to adapt to changed circumstances, encourage recognition of a community's place in a changing global market place, foster a team environment, and facilitate efficient use of a community's resources (Coker and Burgess 1998, cited in Freeland and Burgess 1999).

Interviewing community leaders gave particular insight into, for example, the passionate spirit for place that motivated their actions, persistent efforts to overcome lack of resources, and awareness of the need to instil confidence in the community

[18] Organising for a community bank has been a long process supported by many members of the community. The decision to finally proceed with the community bank was made in June 2002. The bank will be a branch of the Bendigo Bank and will operate in both Dover and Geeveston. This is the first community-owned bank in Tasmania (*The Far South Bush Telegraph*, July 2002:25).

through ownership of community development processes. For example, one leader remarked "*if they're [community projects] not going to be seen by the wider community as belonging to the wider community, then they'll be lost*" (78-81). Indeed, effective leadership in rural communities may emphasize processes that move "choice and resources closer and closer to where the activity is happening" (Russell 1999).

Sense of place may be helping to empower the community by being a trigger for action and, embraced in bottom-up processes, may draw attention to the values, assets, knowledge and experience in a community which influence social well-being.

Having established that members of the community have made a choice to become empowered, I will now turn to a discussion that draws attention to some of the findings that linked sense of place to social capital.

5.4.2 Sense of Place: Building Social Capital?

Interpretation of the data revealed a strong sense of community on the one hand, yet there were also themes which related to lowered community spirit, trust and participation. In a positive sense, many participants commented on the caring nature of people towards other community members. For example,

> *historically they've got a good reputation of banding together in times of crisis or in times of need, you know if somebody - if there's a death in the family its pretty well felt by all the community and they will all sort of pitch in to help that person* (57-60).

Community spirit was often viewed as increasing because it was noted there was a growing number of community-driven initiatives, organisations and events. The commitment of volunteers was much admired and appreciated amongst participants: "*they make this place a fantastic place to live*" (93-94). Voluntary work was often seen as a necessity for raising money, building infrastructure, organising community events, and building stronger relations. For example, "*it's bringing people together, where everybody is equal and it establishes a bond amongst those people that wouldn't exist if we were all at the markets selling our stalls*" (59-60).

Many participants appreciated the friendliness and familiarity amongst people. For example, "*in a country town you have to deal with your neighbours, you have to deal with a huge variety of people. They're not just bodies behind counters*" (52-52). Participation in community activities, it was suggested, increases trust and strengthens networks;

> *the benefits of things like the fire-brigade and the committee work and whatever, is that people are brought together that may not normally have a friendship or whatever, and even though you may not develop friendships as such, you get some sort of, well the potential for being comfortable with those people* (72-73).

According to Putnam (1993:173), any network of "civic engagement is an essential form of social capital: the denser such networks in a community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to co-operate for mutual benefit". Indeed there are many signs of a "co-operative culture" (Sheil 1999) in the Far South. For example, one participant was encouraged by the progress of such a "*disparate and sporadic*" community (123-125). Participants suggested that networks in the Far South may be strengthened by information flows facilitated by the local newspaper, as well as the much noted "grapevine" that speeds heresay information around the community. According to Warner et al. (1993:3) the benefits of networks are that they "link people to other resources and ideas and promote communication and collaboration".

Signs of public spiritedness and co-operation may be linked to qualities of a civic community. Putnam (1993) associates civicness with active participation in public affairs, strong horizontal networks, political equality, solidarity, trust, and tolerance.

> Citizens in a civic community, on most accounts, are more than merely active, public-spirited, and equal. Virtuous citizens are helpful, respectful, and trustful toward one another, even when they differ on matters of substance (Putnam 1993:88-89).

Although there are many signs of civicness in the Far South, perhaps triggered by needs associated with protecting a sense of place, there are also elements of mis-trust and intolerance of difference. Networks and relations among the community are sometimes noted to be unhelpful and even damaging to community relations. The "grapevine" is a strength and a weakness in the community and was often related to "*their [community's] ability to gossip! ...they can be just as nasty as they are*

supporting sometimes" (79-80). A persistent theme that emerged from the data that may hinder the growth of social capital related to bounded views of place, and uneven power relations.

The arrival of 'newcomers'[19] in the Far South is sometimes related to lowered density of acquaintance and a decline in community spirit. For example, one participant stated: "*when I was a young fella everyone knew each other. Like in this day and age half the people that live in Dover wouldn't know the other half sort of thing*" (45-50). Another participant said, "*there's a lot of people that haven't got their roots sort of established here and they're 'out-of-towners' if you like, and don't share the visions of the oldies*" (57-60). Yet another participant questioned the integrity of newcomers and labelled them "*drop-outs from the mainland*" and "*unstable*" (97-98). Newcomers were often identified as 'green', which fuelled a much debated political and social division amongst the community. In this regard Massey (1991a:24) warns that longing for coherence in a community is exclusionary and can create "antagonism between newcomers and 'outsiders' ". Rather, Massey and Jess (1995:150) urge that an alternate sense of place may recognize that there "has already been influxes of outsider and outside influences. These have been absorbed in the past – they are indeed now part of the very character of the insiders – so why prevent more outside influences now?".

One of the reasons for resistance to change may also be related to bounded views of place. One participant refused to accept the exclusionary views of community members: "*for them they are territorial, for them boundaries matter, for them you know, accepting change is obviously very difficult*" (89-90). Massey and Jess (1995:162) suggests that in a globalised world, bounded views of place are "always 'artificial'. They are socially constructed lines which inevitably cut across other flows and interconnections which construct the space in which we live". Conceiving place territorially also portends the influence of power-relations and the degree of social equity amongst the community of the Far South. In terms of social equity,

[19] Generally, participants distinguished that 'old settlers' referred to people whose heritage was connected to the Huon Valley, and 'newcomers' (also called 'blow-ins' and 'out-of-towners') referred to those people who have spent varying amounts of time in the area, but who do not necessarily have any local family history.

Rose (1995:99) asks two pertinent questions: "Whose sense of place is more powerful in a particular situation? Whose sense of place has to fight to be expressed?"

There was often reference amongst participants to being labelled a newcomer which sometimes generated feelings of exclusion and low levels of trust. The "*bloodstock*" (91-92) of newcomers in a community was unknown and sometimes generated suspicion:

> *there's such a lot of new people, and I'm not sure there's a lot of good people amongst them. But, they're not people that older people know, and perhaps it's human nature to be a little bit suspicious of the unknown* (100-100).

One participant referred to the exclusivity of "*the landed gentry*" (91-92), and another reflected that "*people still, you know just a few days ago say, oh, because you've only been here eleven years, oh, you're not a local yet*" (89-90). Rose (1995:116) suggests that the "politics of claiming to be an insider are also often the politics of claiming power". Further, Rose argues sense of place is part of the politics of identity that can be a way of regulating meaning and defining the Other. Sense of place can construct a "certain understanding of difference. Difference – different social groups, different cultures – is not seen in its own terms, but is perceived only in relation to the identity of the observer". Rose (1995:105) concludes that the idea of the Other "emphasizes the emotional dynamics of power relations".

Stressing the importance of trust for effective collective action, Gambetta (cited in Putnam et al. 1993:164) notes that "it is necessary not only to trust others before acting cooperatively, but also to believe that one is trusted by others". In response to lack of trust, several participants suggested intolerance of newcomers was not a 'fixed' condition, but a process whereby acceptance was gained over time and with involvement in community activities. One participant suggested that spending time with older members of the community was needed and provided a way "*just to sort of get your roots into the community I guess*" (26-28). Participants suggested that people needed the chance to get to know you and "*see that you're just like them and trying to go through life*" (89-90). Another participant suggested acceptance depended on listening: "*if they listen, if they're prepared to listen to some of the*

people who have lived here for a while, and get to realise what the different things mean to us" (131-132). Indebted to Putnam (1993), Cox (1995:19) suggests that the

> more we work together with others in environments which encourage co-operation the more likely we are to trust others, and the occasional failures of trust will be less damaging. Social capital is therefore increased by use.

Thus, sense of place may hinder the growth of social capital when it is associated with bounded conceptions of place as well exclusionary views that are intolerant of difference. Community development that promotes civicness in the community may help to increase levels of trust and break down barriers associated with accepting diversity. Participants indicated that the challenge to increase tolerance of difference is made more difficult by contestation of place.

5.4.3 Sense of Place and Contested Interpretations of Place

Participants' sense of place often focussed attention on contested interpretations of place. Contestation drew attention to threats to sense of place and is often an indicator of divide and conflict in the community. In the community of the Far South, particular sources of contestation relate to forestry activities and tourism.

The logging of the Southern Forests (see Figure 3.1) is a contentious issue among community members. Some participants' sense of place reflects the position that the forests are being mis-used which is lowering the quality of life now and for future generations. Several participants are angry at being denied access to State Forests, and believe the forest industry is "*clearing too much for very little benefit*" (115-120). Some participants oppose the undermining of spiritual, aesthetic and natural heritage values of the forest (refer section 5.2.3), with the "*sorry use*" (51-51) for woodchips. One participant said, "*we feed greedy global aspirations from these foothills here. That's what our trees are doing. They're [supporters of forestry industry] not building real futures for ourselves*" (53-54). Attachments to place that advocate the protection of the forests can be opposed to those that promoted their continued use for industrial purposes.

For example,

> *people don't realise the re-growth of the area, and they see it just as the initial devastation. They don't see that's how its grown and been, I mean it's been felled several times, a lot of the area because timber was so big in the early days. We were sort of built on timber* (50-50).

Although often associated with a decline in employment, several participants maintained that the Forest Industry was still important for the community. One participant stated:

> *I firmly believe that this area, it has to work the forests to survive. It's one of the assets we've got. I believe we should work it, and there's always a better way of doing anything. And hindsight's a wonderful thing, but the dollar's also a wonderful thing. And there's things you can do now with machinery that you couldn't do thirty years ago when it was just manual, and as a resource becomes scarcer, you'll use it more* (76-77).

According to Massey and Jess (1995:172) when places are contested protagonists argue for "*their* representation to prevail". The Southern Forests, for example, are a shared source of attachment in the community, but are interpreted in different and competing ways. Contestation may be associated with divide and lowered levels of trust in the community: "*the main difference is between people of the Green persuasion and the Rednecks. Although I think people of the Green persuasion have got the upper hand nowadays. It never was like that.*" (151-152). Cox (1995:34) associates lowered levels of social capital with communities whose members "turn inwards, form cliques, resist change and exclude those who criticise". Conflict was also evident in participants' narratives related to tourism development.

Most participants think that tourism is important for the future of the Far South, but there are many reservations about the appropriateness of different types of developments. The example of the proposed development at Cockle Creek described in Chapter One, for example, highlights some of the concerns of participants and illustrates that tourism in the Far South is a particular source of debate. As one participant suggested, "*but you have all these differences and cultures within the community and so I can't pick out and say everybody in the community accepts tourism*" (50-51).

Many participants express particular concern for the impact on the natural environment as well as other quality of life issues. For example, "*its always nice to have an area that's quieter, and if you're going to have lots of tourists it isn't going to be quieter*" (47-48); and "*tourism can easily lead itself to a subservient society where we become the doormat for people to come and see and say, oh isn't it wonderful, wipe their feet and go*" (72-72). Other concerns relate to the types of employment opportunities that may be generated. One participant suggested "*we don't just need jobs, we need careers for young people*" (96-96). Indeed, tourism has been associated with negative impacts on attachment to place, such as "general disruption of residents' lives owing to increased population during the tourist season, increases in crime, displacement of residents by new development, conflict in values, and impacts on the local culture" (McCool and Martin 1994:29). Further, McCool and Martin (1994:34) report that people "highly attached to communities viewed the costs and impacts of tourism as well as the equitable sharing of those costs with tourists with more concern than those relatively unattached". Also considering the various impacts of tourism, Lankford (1994:42) suggests that resident groups may differ significantly in their acceptance of tourism developments, compared to government employees, local business operators, and other decision makers.

Thus, contestation draws attention to shared sources of attachment in the community, and also the different ways that places are imagined. In striving to empower the community participants suggested several strategies to help overcome differences.

5.4.4 Building Community with a Sense of Place

In order to empower the community, a number of participants emphasised the need to find the common ground. For example,

> *I came here as a very ardent Greeny in the midst of a bunch of Rednecks, I've certainly modified my opinion, and a lot of local people have modified their opinions too. And we can meet on common ground* (95-96).

Helping to create opportunities for building trust across a diversity of networks (Flora and Flora 1993), one participant suggested, "*it's also important to have lots of community processes on the go, so lots of people who hold all sorts of different ideas can actually share in something on common ground*" (73-73). Overcoming

difference and finding the common ground can occur through collaborating across cultural differences. Healey (1997:64) suggests

> the way through the dilemmas of collaborating across cultural differences is firstly to recognise the potential cultural dimensions of differences ('where people are coming from'), and secondly, actively to make new cultural conceptions, to build shared systems of meaning and ways of acting, to create an additional 'layer' of cultural formation.

Many participants suggested the history of the Far South was playing an important role in building trust relations and finding the common ground. Various history projects and events have occurred in the Far South which have created opportunities for dialogue among community members and for working co-operatively. For example, the "Back to Recherche Day" (71-72) invited community members to celebrate the history of the Bay; an oral history project culminated in the production of a book entitled "Battlers from the Bush" (103-107); and the 'saving' and restoration of the Old School Building (which was due for demolition) involved volunteers talking to a lot of people historically connected to the building and school (103-107). One participant suggested history may be helping to empower citizens and transform their identification with place:

> *They come in with new eyes and they go, "oh, but tell us more about the heritage, tell us more about this, tell us more about that", and so its actually re-generating interest in ourselves - in the community. Why could they be interested in me and where I come from? Or interested in the knowledge, my sense of local knowledge because, I mean society in general has got to the stage where people in towns like this, part of the disempowerment process is its lack of recognition, or acknowledgement of incredible knowledge! Incredible stores of human resources* (33-34).

Heritage may also be a significant part of transforming the individual's identification with place through development of the tourism industry. King (1999) suggests that "action to conserve heritage can be a particularly potent stimulant for local development and community revitalisation". Indeed, many participants suggested that the way of the future for the community is through developing the tourism industry, and heritage places could be an important component. One participant said

that "*if the area's going to survive and keep its schools and give people a reason for living here and all that, it needs the economy of the tourist to work in together*" (60-63).

The development of the tourism industry in the Far South draws attention to the importance of strengthening networks. Stressing the need for caution, one participant said, "*yes, we can increase tourism but how we do it is important*" (42-46), and another suggested, "*it's a very fine line for how you see development go ahead*" (47-48). With the aim of taking some control over the development of tourism, existing tourist operators in the Far South have recently formed the "Far South Network". In particular, the group aims to raise the profile of tourism in the area, protect the natural and cultural heritage of place, and create partnerships between, in particular, the forest industry, fellow tourist operators in the Huon Valley, the community in the Far South, and the Huon Valley Council (Wright, R. 2002, pers. comm., 10 January). Creating meaningful alliances may be an important strategy for the "Far South Network", considering that the "preservation of local values comes from the consistent agreement of community residents, local leaders, professional experts, and policy makers" (Lankford 1994:35). According to Kneafsey (1998:114), tourism need not be viewed as a homogenizing force, but as contributing to on-going processes of change. In tourism development the commodification of resources may be "mediated through resilient local social relations, whilst at the same time creating new social relations which overlay the existing foundations within a particular place".

There are many examples of partnerships between community, local government and other bodies that may be increasing the civicness of the community in the Far South. The Dover District High School, for example, has embarked on an innovative partnership with a local Aquaculture firm to deliver a nationally recognised community-based Vocational Educational Training program (*Far South Bush Telegraph,* July, 2000:8). This program has created opportunities for students to "*use those communication networks that they're used to having in their local area. But extend them wider to give them another context*" (44-45).

Hindering the development of partnerships and efforts of community-driven initiatives, however, are factors related to low levels of community participation and trust. Although most participants considered local government was important, low

levels of trust and disempowerment, in particular, characterized the relationship between citizens and local government. For example, one participant suggested,

> *I think the locals have gone out of it to a big degree. Amalgamation[20] started it. I think today there's so many rules and regulations you have to have, it's all from the government. So I think the government has far more control over us now* (108-110).

These types of sentiments reflect a top-down approach was often characterised as generating a situation of "*oh boy, here come the experts again. They're going to sort us out*" (73-74). A civic community may incorporate vertical networks "with two-way flows of information" (Flora and Flora 1993:48) among various sectors and communities. Establishing alliances and partnerships is a "commitment to dialogue" and to be effective requires that all stakeholders "must be empowered to contribute, as partners, to the creation of the overall policy and implementation plan" (Russell 1999). There were a number of reasons forwarded for low levels of participation in the community, for example, feelings of burn-out, low levels of population, the transience of the population due to the high number of shack-owners, and low and falling numbers of young people. For example, "*it does worry me though, you know, nearly all the committee is up in years. What will happen when ... there's no more or less real young ones to take over. I mean, that's how it is with everything isn't it.*" (56-60). Freeland and Burgess (1999) suggest that burn-out in rural communities is not unusual and may be "exacerbated through the loss of young people from the communities".

Many participants reflected on the supposition that the cause of low levels of participation was due to apathy. For example, "*I think apathy will always be our biggest threat*" (70-71). Perhaps apathy is partly fuelled by a sense of disempowerment and feeling that an individual's "values and interests are not reflected in the policies that shape the larger society" (Lappe and Dubois 1997). Increasing levels of trust are a major strategic issue of governance for the Huon Valley Council (Stratford and Davidson 2000:9).

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[20] In 1993 the Esperance Council (of which the Far South was part) amalgamated with the Port Cygnet and Huon Councils to form the Huon Valley Council.

For many participants it is important that the community develops through individuals learning to take responsibility for change. For example, "*I think the core thing is that people are taking responsibility, that's really the essence of it*" (129-129). According to participants, developing the capacities to listen to each other and compromise may strengthen levels of cooperation. Working together is said to generate feelings of success, confidence, inspiration, and a sense that "*we are not alone*" (91-91). Developing a sense of place that shows humility, tolerance of differences and the capacity to consider the well-being of the community is considered a key component in learning to co-operate and accept change:

> *one of the interesting things of working with the community groups is you have to back-step. You can bring forward all your knowledge and what your experience is to help with what the problem is or the situation, but I think its important that we learn to go beyond our self needs, and then I think that will lead towards creating community as such* (123-125).

5.5 Summary

Sense of place is an important concept that can give insight into some of the dynamic relationships that constitute everyday life. Participants suggested that often the everyday meanings in life may be taken for granted; however, drawing these meanings to attention has given insight into the unique ways in which local and global relations meet in the Far South. My interpretations of participants' interviews revealed the multiple ways sense of place can be conceived as a social good that is contributing to the social well-being of the community. The natural environment is a particularly rich source of attachments that contributes positively to the social well-being of the community. The natural environment is also a source of contestation which draws attention to diversity in the community and the need to deal with differences.

Power relations are embedded in the cultural fabric of the Far South and sense of place may be an important factor that can fuel citizen action to take control of change. Hindering this process, bounded conceptualisations of place may be divisive and indicate intolerance of difference and allude to lowered levels of trust.

Empowering the community in the Far South, sense of place is foundational in bringing people together to share knowledge and experiences and, when combined with the capacity to work collaboratively, is helping the community to strengthen networks, build partnerships, and create new layers of meaning that find the common ground.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS

The narrative of rural communities is characterised by the uneven impacts of globalisation and often draws attention to a decline in quality of life and a struggle among members of many communities to keep abreast of rapid social, environmental and economic changes. The *central concern* of this research has been to gain an understanding of the role of sense of place in helping to build sustainable communities. Specifically, I have been concerned to understand the relationships between sense of place and social well-being, and empowering communities to take responsibility for meeting their own needs. The research *is significant* because it explores the meaningful and dynamic relationships people have with places, and *contributes* to the growing literature which provides important insights into the social dimensions of sustainability.

Using a qualitative approach I have explored and become intimate with those everyday meanings associated with sense of place and community development that are endemic to the local community in the Far South. Helping to ensure rigour in my research, I adopted multiple methods to explore these meanings, including participant observation, in-depth interviews and an interpretation of the history. A depth of understanding was enhanced through the use of reflexive and hermeneutic

processes. Fluxing between emic and etic perspectives I gained detailed, rich information that has enabled me to relate the findings from the case study to the selected literature.

I have established that the community of the Far South reflect many of the characteristics of decline shared by other rural communities across Australia. The Far South is primarily a resource-dependent region open to the vagaries of ever-fluctuating global markets, and technological change has reduced employment opportunities. In recent years there has been significant rationalisation of services and infrastructure. There is a particular concern among community members about providing employment opportunities for young people in the future. Contrary to trends suggested in the literature, there has been no significant change in population levels between 1996 and 2001 in the Far South.

In order to empower communities it is vital they develop the capacities to cope with change. There is a sense of loss of control and disempowerment amongst community members associated with recent social, environmental, and economic changes. Comparable with other rural communities across Australia, citizens in the Far South are choosing to take control of change and have engaged in bottom-up processes of development that entail taking responsibility for meeting their own needs. Through exploring participants' perceptions and experiences of community development, I have shown that their sense of place is variously linked to this plight through connections to social well-being and empowerment of the community. Developing a deep understanding of these connections has been enhanced through understanding local history.

The local history suggests that the community has been linked to places beyond for a long time, and that social, economic, and environmental changes have occurred because of internal and external forces on the community. I have noted that people have come and gone from the Far South, and factors such as devastating bushfires, over-exploitation of natural resources, changes in technology, war, corporatisation of industries, and new policy that affects the management of industries has continually pressed the community to create new layers of meaning in the cultural landscape of the Far South. These layered meanings and patterns of flux and flow in the Far South endorse ideas of place as being dynamic and having porous boundaries. In short, change has always been part of the cultural fabric of this community.

Furthermore, I have suggested that the capacity of communities to cope with change is made increasingly difficult by the speed and intensity of changes experienced in recent times. Meanings drawn forth from local history show that the strength of social ties created through participation in communal activities is vital in assisting community members to be resilient and adapt to change. Exploring participants' sense of place, and perceptions and experiences of community development has given particular insight into the complexities surrounding social capital in the community today. The need for strong communal ties characterised by trust and attitudes of reciprocity is strongly endorsed in discourses of sustainable community development. Social capital is considered a key component that fosters social well-being and empowerment of the community.

Concerning social well-being, sense of place is a useful concept because it shifts the emphasis from quantitative meanings that characterise the prevailing paradigms associated with liberal democracy, and draws attention to qualitative aspects of life. Refracting my own work through the literature I have demonstrated that the meaning and intensity of attachments to place may vary amongst individuals and is often closely associated with a sense of belonging and notions of home. Even with time-space compression I have stressed that the notion of home is an important concern for sustainable community development because it is a centre of felt significance for individuals and can be linked to active stewardship for places, an attitude of reciprocity, and concern for futurity. Sense of place also acknowledges historicity as a meaningful part of the cultural fabric of place and can bring to the fore local and inter-generational knowledge about the significances of place. Time in place is an important consideration, but I have emphasised that an attitude of openness and reciprocity is needed to develop meaningful connections to place (Tuan 1975).

Fostering social well-being, I have linked sense of place to a complex web of contrasting lifestyles and different values systems. Sense of place is associated with sentiments of pride and affection, acknowledgement of the cultural significance of places, aesthetic values, wilderness values, existence values, and family values. Understanding these relationships and the significant meanings attached to them may assist to care for them.

Understanding attachments to place has given insights into contested interpretations of place, unequal power relations, and lowered levels of social well-being. Feelings

of powerlessness and lowered levels of control and initiation of change generated from within the community can be linked to social differentiation caused by the power geometry of time-space-compression (Massey 1991a), the tradition of resource dependence in the community, lowered levels of participation, and recent rationalisation of services and infrastructure. Nostalgic senses of place have been linked to attitudes that embrace and resist change and therefore both drive and impede social well-being and empowerment of the community.

In the face of decline and concern for social-well being, members of the community of the Far South are choosing to take control of change by engaging in processes of community development characterised by bottom-up approaches. People in the Far South care about the integrity of places, quality of life, and opportunities for future generations. The local community has provided an example of how bottom-up processes are a means of translating emotional attachments to place into something lived. In this regard, themes in the literature endorse the success of bottom-up processes for increasing the capacity of communities to cope with change and become empowered. The community shows elements of public spiritedness and has achieved many outcomes using bottom-up approaches. Supporting these processes I have suggested that sense of place is helping the community to identify their strengths, assets, and needs. Indeed sense of place can be a potent and positive catalyst for motivating community members to participate in community building processes. Increasing levels of participation in processes of community development has been associated with sharing knowledge and experiences, increasing the density of acquaintanceship, levels of trust and strengthening networks.

Exploring sense of place and associated power relations has also demonstrated that sense of place can impede the empowerment of the community in a number of ways. Sense of place was sometimes conceived in ways that are territorial, intolerant of change and cultural diversity. Participants suggested that the arrival of newcomers was a particular source of divide in the community and was associated with lowered levels of trust and acceptance. Many participants however, adopted more open conceptions of place and culture and suggested that acceptance of newcomers and levels of trust with 'old timers' could be built over time and with shared experiences in community activities. These findings were confirmed by themes in the local history that emphasised the flux of flow of people and places, as well as in the

literature which stressed that places might best be conceived as heterogeneous, as having porous boundaries, and multiple cultural identities. Supporting cultural diversity is an important premise for social well-being, and discourses of social capital that emphasise the need to increase levels of participation have also endorsed these findings.

I have observed that sense of place draws attention to the multiplicity of meanings in the cultural landscape and exposes some of the disagreements among community members about the future directions of the Far South. Contested interpretations of place are associated with uneven power relations, conflict and divide among community members. Tourism and forestry activities were particular sources of debate in the community of the Far South. The industrial use of the Southern Forests has drawn attention to the idea that the notion of sustainability itself is a contested concept. Concerning tourism, the apprehension and negative impacts on sense of place and quality of life suggested by participants were confirmed in the literature which emphasised issues related to conflict in interests and values between tourism development and the local culture. I also outlined, however, that changes brought about by tourism could also be mediated through strong social networks. With the likelihood of future changes brought about by growth in the tourism industry, developing a sense of place that embraces the fluidity of cultural meanings might best help the community position itself to be empowered and an active player in bringing about changes that help protect local values and distinctiveness.

In this research participants demonstrated a strong awareness of differences and sources of conflict amongst the community. Many ideas and processes are already in place to deal with these differences in ways that are helping the community to find the common ground. History is playing an important role in generating interest about people and places and is the impetus behind a number of projects that have helped build co-operative relationships among a diversity of community members. Moreover, celebrating and increasing community members understanding about local history is helping to re-vitalize the community of the Far South; a finding that has also been confirmed in the literature. The need to find the common ground is enhanced by offering a variety of community processes for members to participate

in. Participants also suggested the success of community development was contingent on the individual's ability to take responsibility for change, and capacity to listen to others and learn to compromise.

Partnerships among stakeholders have been formed in the community of the Far South and I have suggested that they are indicative of empowerment of the community. However, participants expressed a degree of scepticism toward the helpfulness of 'outside experts' in meeting the community's needs. Community sentiment towards the local Council has reflected lowered levels of trust; a finding which has been confirmed in other case studies of the Huon Valley.

Acknowledging the power of sense of place and need for communities to develop meaningful alliances with 'outside experts', it is also important for planners to acknowledge the significance of sense of place values and learn to embrace the richness of their meanings into planning approaches. I have suggested that although sense of place is shadowed by anti-development themes associated with NIMBYism, there is a need to endorse democratic processes that are inclusive and that harness local sentiments into processes of community development. Sense of place is powerfully felt and is inspiration for actively caring for places and protecting and enhancing qualities of life.

Community members, leaders and planners alike might best embrace the significance of sense of place by using collaborative approaches which incorporate an "epistemology of multiplicity" (Sandercock 1998). As I have demonstrated with the methodology used in this research, exploring sense of place can be achieved by valuing local knowledge, listening to others, sharing stories and experiences, and observing patterns in everyday life and contemplating their meanings. I have pointed out that collaborative approaches to community development recognize the successive layers of meaning in the cultural landscape and can promote opportunities for community members to come together and share local knowledge and experiences with others. Identifying shared sources of attachment can form the basis for building meaningful relationships among community members and stakeholders. To work collaboratively requires that individuals develop a sense of place that shows humility towards Others, and that accepts the fluidity of cultural meanings and inevitability of change. In the Far South, sustainability provides a guiding framework for community members to continually create new layers of meaning that

help protect the distinctiveness of their local culture, as well as the local natural environment in which their lives are so intimately entwined. Using community driven processes to foster these outcomes can further empower the community to take responsibility for meeting their own needs.

Having outlined the main findings and drawn attention to their significance in relation to the selected literature, there remain certain openings for further research. I have explored relationships that pertain to two of the four main characteristics of sustainable communities, namely social well-being, and empowerment of the community. Therefore, in order to deepen the understanding of the role of sense of place in helping to build sustainable communities, there is a need to continue exploring links between sense of place and maintaining ecological integrity, and sense of place and fostering economic security.

This research has emphasised the success of bottom-up approaches to community development, however themes that relate to burn-out amongst community members suggest that there is a need to further investigate the impacts of increased responsibility on the community and aspects of governmentality.

Tourism emerged as a strong hope for the future development and sustainability of the community in the Far South. Further research could provide a more in-depth analysis of the visions and concerns of community members associated with tourism development. Clearly, sense of place is an important concept to consider in tourism development and developing a detailed understanding of the impacts that tourism can have on sense of place could assist the community to be pro-active in protecting local values and interests.

Social capital emerged as a major influence on the empowerment of the community. There is a need to build on the understanding of social capital presented in this research. This could be achieved by further exploring the power relations among the community which could incorporate investigating the development approaches used by community leaders, and also the success and meanings of both vertical and horizontal partnerships.

The multiplicity of meanings and complexity of relationships associated with sense of place has drawn attention to contested interpretations of sustainability. Further research into the meanings associated with sustainability could help determine the

levels of awareness and understanding the community has about notions of sustainability. Determining methods of increasing the levels of understanding of sustainability could further assist community members to define what their needs are, and how they might best integrate consideration of future generations.

Hence, there is wide and exciting scope for further research and the understandings that I have established can be viewed as one step along a continuing pathway that is helping to build sustainable communities.

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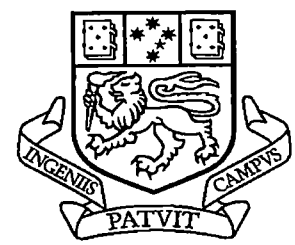
Appendix 1

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

Sustainable Communities Research Group

10th July 2000

Sense of Place and Community Development

in the Far South of Tasmania

Hello,

My name is Kim Menadue. I am a Masters student at the University of Tasmania conducting research to learn about aspects of community life in the Far South of Tasmania. In particular, I am interested in learning about people's sense of place and its relationship to community development. Sense of place generally refers to how people think and feel about place. It is the significance a place has for an individual or group. Community development can occur both formally and informally and includes elements that allow citizens to actively engage in identifying both community needs and community resources to meet them. Community development works toward creating a viable community where people work together to produce a high quality of life.

In order to gather information on sense of place and community development in the Far South, I will be interviewing approximately 20 people who have either lived in the Far South for a minimum of 20 years, and/or are currently involved in community development in the Far South. You are one of the people who has been invited to participate in this study. Your name was suggested through general discussion with other community members.

What to expect

At an initial meeting with me (Kim Menadue), you will be invited to discuss matters outlined in this information sheet and identify any topics that you do not want raised during a follow-up interview. If you agree to participate in this study, I would like to meet with you to record your views and experiences of sense of place and community development. Each interview is expected to take approximately 1hour and, with your permission, will be tape-recorded. I will later transcribe the interview and you will be given the opportunity to read the transcription from your interview and make amendments as necessary.

Your anonymity will be maintained throughout this study. Your name will not be used and particular care will be taken to omit any identifying statements that could link this study's results to individuals.

Concerns or complaints

Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without prejudice. You need only respond to questions that you feel comfortable to answer. The study has been approved by the University Human Research Ethics Committee.

If you have complaints of an ethical nature or complaints about the manner in which this project is conducted then you should contact the Executive Officer of the University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Executive Officer is Ms Chris Hooper, telephone 62 262763.

Need more information?

If you want further information on this study you can contact either of the chief investigators, Dr Elaine Stratford phone 62 262462, or Dr Jim Russell, phone 62 262835 during normal business hours. I can also be contacted by phone on 62 983202, or email jexsouth@netspace.net.au

Results of the Study

A final copy of the study will be available from the Centre for Geography and Environmental Studies at the University. A soft-bound copy will also be available upon request.

Thank you for your time.

Kim Menadue

Masters Candidate

Elaine Stratford

Lecturer

Appendix 2

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I have listed below a number of sample questions that may relate to your sense of place and also to your experiences and perceptions of community development in the Far South. The interview will be like a conversation and although questions will be similar to those exampled below, these particular questions may or may not be appropriate.

- What do you like/dislike about living in the Far South?
- Do you have a sense of belonging to a particular place? For example, Dover, Southport, the Far South, the Huon Valley, Tasmania, or some other place?
- How would you describe your sense of belonging/ or not belonging?
- What are the factors which affect your sense of belonging/ or not belonging?
- How would you describe the quality of life in the Far South?
- What do you feel are the strengths of the community in the Far South?
- What do you feel are the weaknesses of the community in the Far South?
- What direction do you see the community developing in the Far South? Do you think this is a good or bad thing? Why/Why not?