

## **It's The Economy, Stupid**

*David Campbell – A blog about economic development in Atlantic Canada*

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### **Homebody redux: The ties that bind**

Posted on [May 8, 2015](#) by [David Campbell](#)

*I really enjoyed the HOMEbody symposium in Fredericton this week. The average age in the room was likely 25 and they were talking about pretty important things. I realize that this cohort may not like what Richard Saillant has to say and there is no obligation for them to believe it but they should hear it and take the time to deliberate.*

*In a world where we are crumbling under the weight of our tweets, we are making snap judgments on big issues faster than ever. Even those in their 20s should listen and discuss his message on demographics, fiscal realities and natural resources.*

*The best part, however; was the storytelling. 20+ youngish NB leaders telling their stories about how they crafted very successful careers in the Drive-Through province.*

*For many years I have had a hunch that New Brunswickers don't feel as attached to their province as many others do (with the notable exception of Acadians). I don't have any hard data to back this up but my experience over the years is that we are not as tied to our communities and province. Once a Newfoundlander always a Newfoundlander. Folks from PEI seem to be attached to their land. Quebeckers are fighting the good fight.*

*New Brunswickers? I'm not sure. A while ago I had a good conversation with a guy who moved from here to Saskatchewan. He told me as soon as the airplane touched down on the Prairies he became a Saskatchewaner. I had another friend from high school who removed the fact he had lived most of his early life in New Brunswick from his bio because it wasn't a positive thing for his political career out west.*

*What binds us to this land? To our communities? To the province? Who are our cultural icons? Sports, music and art icons? Do we know? Do we celebrate them?*

*Part of the problem may be a lack of organizing event or concept. A big struggle or cause can bind people together but New Brunswick hasn't had much of that. We have just stumbled along as a province over the decades – not big crises – no big growth events – not much excitement – ho hum.*

*Which brings me back to the storytelling. Those 20+ NBers told fascinating stories of travelling the world and finding their way back to NB. Of moving here from far and wide and building successful careers here. Of overcoming challenges to win the big prize from little old New Brunswick.*

***They are dynamic, successful people in their fields from all walks of life – and doing it right here, yes, in the Drive-Through province. All the demographic and economic data I can spew forth will not inspire people as well as these stories. It's a good lesson for me, too.***

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