



Qikiqtani Truth Commission

Community Histories 1950-1975

Pond Inlet



Qikiqtani Inuit Association

Published by Inhabit Media Inc.
www.inhabitmedia.com

Inhabit Media Inc. (Iqaluit), P.O. Box 11125, Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 1H0
(Toronto), 146A Orchard View Blvd., Toronto, Ontario, M4R 1C3

Design and layout copyright © 2013 Inhabit Media Inc.
Text copyright © 2013 Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Photography copyright © 2013 Library and Archives Canada, Northwest Territories Archives,
and Tim Kalusha

Originally published in *Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Community Histories 1950-1975* by Qikiqtani Inuit Association, April 2014.

ISBN 978-1-927095-62-1

All rights reserved. The use of any part of this publication reproduced, transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, or stored in a retrievable system, without written consent of the publisher, is an infringement of copyright law.

We acknowledge the support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage Canada Book Fund program.

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts for our publishing program.

Please contact QIA for more information:
Qikiqtani Inuit Association
PO Box 1340, Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0
Telephone: (867) 975-8400
Toll-free: 1-800-667-2742
Fax: (867) 979-3238
Email: info@qia.ca



Canada



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

Errata

Despite best efforts on the part of the author, mistakes happen.

The following corrections should be noted when using this report:

Administration in Qikiqtaaluk was the responsibility of one or more federal departments prior to 1967 when the Government of the Northwest Territories was became responsible for the provision of almost all direct services. The term “the government” should replace all references to NANR, AANDC, GNWT, DIAND.

p. 20: In 1921, a party of Danish and Greenlandic scientific adventurers launched the Fifth Thule Expedition, a remarkable four-year venture moving from Greenland to Alaska, to document Inuit culture and, through archaeology and ethnography to investigate the origins of Inuit as a people.

p. 33: None of these things was harmful in itself, but they created new demands and new relationships.

Dedication

This project is dedicated to the Inuit of the Qikiqtani region.
May our history never be forgotten and our voices be
forever strong.



Foreword

As President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, I am pleased to present the long awaited set of reports of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission.

The *Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Community Histories 1950–1975* and *Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Thematic Reports and Special Studies* represent the Inuit experience during this colonial period, as told by Inuit. These reports offer a deeper understanding of the motivations driving government decisions and the effects of those decisions on the lives of Inuit, effects which are still felt today.

This period of recent history is very much alive to Qikiqtaalungmiut, and through testifying at the Commission, Inuit spoke of our experience of that time. These reports and supporting documents are for us. This work builds upon the oral history and foundation Inuit come from as told by Inuit, for Inuit, to Inuit.

On a personal level this is for the grandmother I never knew, because she died in a sanatorium in Hamilton; this is for my grandchildren, so that

they can understand what our family has experienced; and it is also for the young people of Canada, so that they will also understand our story.

As it is in my family, so it is with many others in our region.

The Qikiqtani Truth Commission is a legacy project for the people of our region and QIA is proud to have been the steward of this work.

Aingai,

E7-1865

J. Okalik Eegeesiak

President

Qikiqtani Inuit Association

Iqaluit, Nunavut

2013



Pond Inlet

Mittimatalik



Pond Inlet is a hamlet of 1,549 people, 92% of them Inuit. It is located on the east side of Eclipse Sound, about 700 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle on Baffin Island. The local name in the Inuit language is Mittimatalik, and the people of the region are known as Tununirmiut, which is thought to mean “people of the shaded place” or Mittimatalingmiut, meaning “people of Mittimatalik.” The hamlet shares its name with an arm of the sea that separates Bylot Island from Baffin Island. The place name “Pond’s Bay” was chosen by an explorer in 1818 in honour of an English astronomer.

The region has been occupied for four thousand years, through periods known to archaeologists as pre-Dorset, Dorset, Thule, and modern Inuit. Since the earliest times, people hunted on land, sea, and ice. Ringed seals, whales, and other marine mammals have been the most important part of their diet. Evidence of a rich material and intangible culture is provided by cultural objects preserved in the ground, most famously two superb shaman’s masks carved more than a thousand years ago, which were found at Button Point. Many of the present-day residents of Pond Inlet are related to families in Igloodik.

The Roman
Catholic Mission at
Pond Inlet, 1951
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA

The settlement grew along a shoreline inhabited as long as any other part of Eclipse Sound. The area's twentieth-century use by Qallunaat traders extended 65 kilometres from Button Point on Bylot Island to Salmon River near the hamlet. Trading establishments have only been here since 1903, when Scottish entrepreneurs set up a small whaling station at Igarjuaq. Over the next twenty years, Qallunaat managers opened a number of small stations scattered around this region. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) settled at the present site in 1921 and bought out all its rivals by 1923. The RCMP post dates to 1922 and two missions (Roman Catholic and Anglican) came in 1929. The site is convenient to ocean shipping during the short season of open water.



COMMUNITY TIMELINE

Outsider Events		Date		Inuit Experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Royal Navy resumes search for Northwest Passage 	Contact with Inuit during short navigating season	1818	Contact with Qallunaat during short whaling season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live off sea mammals and caribou throughout region
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial whalers extend range beyond the coast of Greenland to Baffin Island 		1820 to 1910		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gradually modify seasonal round to meet whalers at Button Point and elsewhere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search for lost Franklin Expedition 		1848 to 1859		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travels of Qitdlarssuaq and Oqe More contact with non-whaling personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decline of whaling and operation of year-round station 	Expanding Canadian government objectives and foreign interest in Arctic regions	1903	Living on the land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year-round access to trade goods and social exchanges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HBC post established at Pond Inlet RCMP post established Trial of Naqullaq Fifth Thule Expedition Anglican and RC missions 		1921 to 1945		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider range of imported goods adopted Employment opportunities with RCMP in immediate area and in High Arctic Spiritual and social changes brought by new religion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government interest intensifies School opens 		1945 to 1962	Disruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family allowances Tuberculosis epidemic and evacuations by <i>C.D. Howe</i> Residential school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tote road to Mary River is opened Pressure for school attendance 		1962 to 1964	Centralization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schooling for children Employment opportunities for men, not families
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth of government services at Pond Inlet 		1964 to 1975		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved health care Compulsory schooling Loss of dogs Less connection to the land New community institutions Diversified employment

Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta

ILAGIIT NUNAGIVAKTANGIT

Eclipse Sound with its many fiords forms the heart of Pond Inlet’s community land-use area. This area also stretches west towards Arctic Bay, south almost to Igloolik and to the Barnes Ice Cap, and east almost to Dexterity Harbour. This area adjoins the community use areas of Igloolik, Arctic Bay, and Clyde River. In the north, Pond Inlet hunters have used Bylot Island, Lancaster Sound, and parts of Devon and Ellesmere Islands.

Hunting was a complex and essential economic activity that varied by season, by species, and by place. It also changed over time, and individual hunters had their own habits and preferences. Fish weirs were maintained at the mouths of certain rivers. People moved onto the ice in spring and towards open water in summer, and then returned to many of the same wintering places year after year. The seasonal round was dominated by the ringed seal, caribou, and Arctic char, which were taken year-round with a variety of techniques, depending on the amount of sea ice. Narwhal and beluga whales were caught from January to August, and walrus, in a few places, from January to May. Polar bears, a highly valuable target both for economic reasons and for a hunter’s prestige, were hunted between January and June.

Different animals had their own habitat requirements and tendencies, which Inuit understood and acted on. Ringed seals could be hunted almost anywhere and at any time, in open water or through the sea ice and in tide cracks. The best places to hunt caribou were the north of the Borden Peninsula and in a large part of the southern interior of the region. Bears were taken at the mouth of Navy Board Inlet, and on Baffin Bay on the ice and in the water from Bylot Island southeast to Buchan Gulf. Pond Inlet hunters took walrus at the head of Foxe Basin and the mouth of Navy Board Inlet

(Wollaston Islands) and crossed Lancaster Sound to the south side of Devon Island. Narwhals were most commonly taken along the north and west shores of Eclipse Sound and all along Milne Inlet. A visitor reported that when these large mammals appeared “the entire village [was] consumed with excitement. No other game [had] a higher priority...” Bowheads were seen but almost never hunted. Waterfowl, including their eggs, were taken on the low flats of southern Bylot Island and nearby on Navy Board Inlet. Finally, char were speared during their spawning runs along the west side of Eclipse Sound, in the fiord to the south (especially at a place appropriately called Iqaluit), and in the Salmon River near Mittimatalik. Changes over

Harold Kalluk,
Gedeon Qitsualik,
Daniel Komangaapik,
Uirngut, Paul Idlout,
and Rebecca Qillaq
Idlout, cutting up a
seal, 1951

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA



time are also important for understanding the recent past. Caribou in particular have changed their range during the past century, and since 1964, the withdrawal of people from ilagiit nunagivaktangit into the settlement has left the outlying districts less visited.

Tununirmiut were known to travel great distances to hunt, socialize, and find places to live. In the 1850s a few families followed their brave but troublesome leader, Qitdlarssuaq (also known as Qillaq) and another leader, Oqe, on a decade-long migration north from Cumberland Peninsula. They lived for some time in Pond Inlet, but were then forced to leave with a group of about thirty-five people, about half of whom decided to turn back. The continuing group successfully navigated Lancaster Sound, and lived on Devon Island for five years, where they encountered two searchers of the Third Franklin Expedition, Augustus Inglefield in 1854 and Francis McClintock in 1858. Several years after learning about Inuit living on Greenland's coast, Qitdlarssuaq was determined to find them. Everyone followed him initially, but part of the group turned back under Oqe's leadership because the journey became so long and dangerous. Oqe's group died of starvation trying to return to the Pond Inlet area. Qitdlarssuaq's group also suffered from deprivation and personal animosities, but some members of the group were able to reach Greenland, 1,200 kilometres from their starting point, and become an integral part of Inuit life in Etah, Greenland. Qitdlarssuaq died around 1870 at Cape Herschel, trying to return to Qikiqtaaluk.

EARLY CONTACTS

In Baffin Bay, a warm current runs north up the Greenland coast, and a cold one along Baffin Island. As a result, the west side of Baffin Bay has historically been isolated from the Greenland shore by pack ice that prevented navigation until late summer. If Norse traders or explorers found a way through, they were not known to any Europeans who followed, including

William Baffin and Robert Bylot, who successfully circled Baffin Bay in 1616 while searching for a Northwest Passage. Two centuries later Commander John Ross of the Royal Navy repeated their venture, naming “Pond’s Bay” on his way south, and revealing a route that the Greenland whaling fleet could follow in their pursuit of bowhead whales.

This activity brought a sudden change for the Tununirmiut, who began to encounter the whalers, trade skins and ivory with them for manufactured goods, and occasionally salvage whale carcasses as well as timber along the coast.

The floe edge near Button Point became the annual summer rendezvous point for hunters and whalers. Whalers remained cautious—they did not enter Eclipse Sound until 1854 and they made their first voyage through Navy Board Inlet as late as 1872. Contacts gradually became more certain; some Inuit even boarded whaling ships at Button Point to be taken back to wintering grounds in Navy Board Inlet or Dexterity Harbour, and a Captain Bannerman returned regularly, bringing gifts for a child he had fathered. In 1895 Scottish whalers found the remains of several Inuit families, dead beside their tupiks, at Dexterity Harbour, casualties of either famine or infection.

Steam whalers continued to visit Pond Inlet until 1912, but in 1903, the focus for relations between Inuit and Qallunaat shifted to shore stations in Pond Inlet and Eclipse Sound. One whaling vessel was harvested off Bylot Island over many decades by Tununirmiut, who called the ship *Umiajuaviniqtalik* in reference to the solid, hard Norwegian oak that could be used to make ulus, qamutiks, and other tools.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF LIFE

In the next six decades, Tununirmiut experienced a long and gradual transition following their first exposure to year-round trading posts. In 1903

Eastern Arctic
Inuit at Pond Inlet,
July 1951
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA

a seasoned Dundee whaler, Captain James Mutch (Jimi Maasi to the Tununirmiut), set up a shore station near Pond Inlet. The Tununirmiut had little experience of handling large whaleboats, so Mutch imported two Inuit whaling crews from Cumberland Sound. They returned south after about five years, because very few bowhead whales remained to be caught. While their station at Igarjuaq existed, Pond Inlet was visited four times by the



colourful Quebec navigator, Captain Joseph-Elzear Bernier (or Kapitaikalak), who made three voyages in the government vessel *Arctic* and came back in 1912 as a private trader. Other competitors included an English adventurer, Henry Toke Munn, and an unfortunate Newfoundlander named Robert Janes. Janes was abandoned by his southern backers, and quarrelled with and threatened his Inuit companions, who put him to death to protect themselves. Janes was stopped from killing another man by Takijualuk (whom traders knew as Tom Kunuk).

This became widely known when the HBC installed a post at the present site of Pond Inlet in 1921, and a landmark trial in Canadian Arctic history followed. In 1923, the government's Eastern Arctic Patrol (EAP) came ashore with a magistrate at Pond Inlet to try three of Janes's Inuit companions for murder. One of them, Nuqallaq, was sentenced to ten years in prison in Manitoba. The trial was intended to show Inuit—and the rest of the world—that Canada would protect Qallunaat and enforce its own laws in the Arctic islands. Through the 1920s, annual visits from government and HBC vessels restored the reliable annual contact with the Atlantic world that Pond Inlet once enjoyed in the whaling era. In 1929, this stability encouraged the Anglican and Catholic churches to send missionaries to Pond Inlet in 1929, though the Tununirmiut were already mostly Anglican.

Canada established an RCMP post beside the HBC store in Pond Inlet, and began the long tradition of hiring Tununirmiut to work in the High Arctic. The first were Qattuuq, his wife Ulaajuq, and their four children in 1922. Men or families from Pond Inlet also hunted for the RCMP and travelled with them for great distances on Ellesmere and Dundas Islands between the wars. The Tununirmiut were especially valued because they understood the far northern environment and the winter months without sunshine. In 1934, the HBC moved fifty-two Inuit from Baffin Island to form a new settlement at Dundas Harbour on Devon Island. Eighteen of these Inuit were from Pond Inlet. The experiment was unprofitable because ice conditions made hunting and trapping hazardous, and two years later

the Cape Dorset and Pond Inlet families were sent to Arctic Bay to help support a new trading post there.

Another instance of Tununirmiut support for a national undertaking came a decade later, when Captain Henry Larsen planned the westward transit of the Northwest Passage in his tiny vessel, the *St. Roch*. At Pond Inlet in 1944, he hired Inuit to hunt, advise on navigation, sew clothing for the crew, and generally assist with the passage. These included Joe Panipakuttuk, his wife Lydia, his mother Panikpak and his six-year-old niece, Mary Panigusiq, a daughter of Special Constable Lazaroosie Kyak. Lydia was the first woman to travel through the Northwest Passage in both directions.

Panipakuttuk brought his companions home from Yukon to Pond Inlet, more than 2,500 kilometres, by sled over the next two years. Later, Mary Panigusiq had a particularly sensitive job in the 1950s as an interpreter aboard the new government hospital ship, *C.D. Howe*. The *Howe* patrolled the Eastern Arctic each summer and evacuated Inuit with tuberculosis to hospitals in the south. For six years, hundreds of frightened Inuit, separated from their families and surrounded by crew and officials speaking only French and English, depended on Mary for reassurance and to make their needs known, whether they came from Pond Inlet or from any of a dozen other Arctic communities.

In the 1950s, the government chose to move people from Nunavik to southern Ellesmere Island and Resolute Bay, places where game was believed to be more abundant and where their presence would assert Canadian sovereignty. As in 1934, Tununirmiut were recruited to share their knowledge of extreme conditions. In 1953, Simon Akpaliapik and Samuel Arnakallak from Pond Inlet were moved with their families to Ellesmere, while Jaybeddie Amagoalik was moved to Resolute Bay. They accompanied seven families from Inukjuak. In 1955, another group from Inukjuak were resettled in Grise Fiord and Resolute. The communities were not harmonious, in part because of friction between Tununirmiut and Nunavummiut. The people chosen for these ventures claim they were given assurances

prior to relocation that they would be allowed to return to their original homes after a year or two if they were dissatisfied with the new location. The government considered the relocations a success, but Inuit protested that they unwittingly participated in an ill-conceived experiment and demanded acknowledgement of government wrongdoing. In 1996, the Canadian government awarded \$10 million to survivors of the relocation, though it has never apologized for the hardships they endured.

Throughout six decades of gradual change, the Tununirmiut attracted attention from outsiders who eagerly published impressions of people and



Qimmi Douglas
Wilkinson,
Angutirjuaq, Mary
Aaluluq Kilukuishak,
Jobie Nutarak, Jimaima
Angiliq, and Asina
Qamaniqj, July 1951

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA

Inuit gathered in an iglu for their meal (still from the NFB film *Land of the Long Day*), 1952

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA



place. In 1921, a party of Danish and Greenlandic scientific adventurers launched the Fifth Thule Expedition, a remarkable four-year venture moving from Greenland to Alaska, to document Inuit culture and, through archaeology and ethnography, to investigate the origins of Inuit as a people. Some of the party's members, notably Therkel Matthiassen, spent time at Pond Inlet and included its sites and stories in their published expedition reports and memoirs.

Documentary filmmaker Doug Wilkinson also recorded life in the area. He spent a year on Eclipse Sound in 1953 living at an ilagiit nunagivaktangat

called Aulatsivik, filming Joseph Idlout and his family for the acclaimed film and book *Land of the Long Day*. Wilkinson lived with Idlout, the star of the film, travelled with him on seal-hunting trips, wore clothes made by Idlout's wife Kidlak, and recorded the annual visit of the *C. D. Howe*. Wilkinson presented a somewhat sentimental but informative portrait of life in northern Baffin Island during the 1950s. The work is also a poignant introduction to Idlout, whose relocation to Resolute Bay a few years later was not a success.

A contemporary of Wilkinson's, Oblate missionary Fr. Guy Mary-Rousselière spent a lifetime in the North as a priest, archaeologist, and recorder of Inuit life and traditions. His book on Qitdlarssuaq, published overviews and vignettes of North Baffin ethnography in *Eskimo*, several scholarly articles, and a 1971 *National Geographic* article called "I Live with the Eskimos," offered a wealth of information he acquired from his Inuit hosts. Also noteworthy is anthropologist John Mathiassen, who had the good fortune to stay at Aulatsivik in 1963, just as the old way of living on the land was nearing its end.

Idloujk and Kadloo
look at harpooned
seal on ice of Pond
Inlet, 1952

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA



People generally lived where hunting was best, but during the twentieth century, they also trapped white foxes for their skins. At one time traplines radiated out from the hunting settlements to cover the coastlines of Eclipse Sound and all its tributary fiords. Before 1959, trappers in the Pond Inlet area sometimes went north onto Lancaster Sound or even as far as Devon Island. The ilagiit nunagivaktangit on Baffin Bay trapped in three major fiords—Coutts Inlet, Buchan Gulf, and Paterson Inlet—along the coast from Button Point southeast in the direction of Clyde River. After 1950, the people who trapped there generally made their homes closer to Pond Inlet.

A careful observer described features of the seasonal round in the decades after the HBC arrived:

For at least four decades [1920–60] . . . the situation remained roughly unchanged, which does not mean that the same camps were inhabited year after year and by the same families. Spring was moving time. Then many families piled up their belongings on their sleds and moved to another location, usually to camp with relatives or friends or to exploit better hunting grounds.

Winter habitations had not changed much since the pre-contact period, except that some timber was available for frames and sheathing. A typical settlement had between four and six houses, all with their doors facing the sea. The basic structure was made of sod blocks around a framework of wood salvaged from various sources. A police report in 1959 stated:

The upper part of the walls and the roof are usually made of slats from packing cases obtained in the settlement . . . [T]he same house is generally used year after year. Moss is apparently used for insulation with an outside covering of a tent. The hole is then covered with snow and makes a warm dwelling.

The covering could either be the summer sealskin tent or canvas purchased in the settlement. Snow houses (igluvigat) were built when needed for use when travelling or camping on the sea ice. Summer tents were covered with sealskins, though canvas gradually replaced these. At freeze-up, people usually returned to a former wintering site and prepared it for the activities of the new season. This was also the time when families might leave one ilagit nunagivaktangat to join another one, sometimes in the same general area, but often as far away as Admiralty Inlet or Igloodik, where many people had relatives. This mobility within a larger region was another dynamic element in the way people lived on the land.

Oodisteets with supplies landed from the *C.D. Howe* (Harold Kalluk left and Ullatitaq right, carrying sealift supplies), July 1951
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA



In the 1950s, country food, notably meat, continued to be an essential part of the Tununirmiut economy, and hunting still occupied a lot of the people’s time. By the 1950s, however, many of their goods and their incomes were supplied from the South through trade, wages, universal social programs, and individual benefits. In 1959, Inuit here were reported to be earning almost \$40,000, although this misleading sum, like all statistics from the period, assigned no cash value to country food.

SOURCE OF INUIT INCOME AT POND INLET, 1950 AND 1959

	1950	1959	
Family Allowance	\$10,105	\$11,920	Notes: Relief in 1959 was unusually high because of a large number of returned hospital patients, and an increase in their rehabilitation ration.
Relief	\$218	\$4,600	
Fur, ivory, etc.	\$7,688	\$13,863	
OAA, OAP, etc.	\$304	\$1,630	
Local employment	\$802	\$7,000	
Other	\$1,724	—	
Total	\$20,841	\$39,013	

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Inuit children with
supplies for the
Roman Catholic
Mission landed from
EAP vessel *C. D.*
Howe, July 1951
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA

Despite a general continuity in the Tununirmiut way of life, sixty years of steady contact with incomers did introduce new elements of material culture. Imported manufactured goods, textiles, and foods steadily came into general use. (Tobacco was already a habit before 1900.) Wooden craft with outboard motors had replaced qajat for travel and hunting. Rifles and hand-operated sewing machines performed many of the tasks most essential to survival, and there was a growing demand even for luxuries unconnected with earning a living, such as radios, phonographs, and clocks. Yet



fundamental principles of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) continued: food, tools, and belongings were shared; meat was overwhelmingly the food of choice; and all generations worked together on the same daily tasks that ensured the survival of the group. Yet changes were increasing and many innovations, centred on the settlement of Pond Inlet, posed challenges to the continuity of the ilagiit nunagivaktangit.

In 1960, Pond Inlet was home to around fifty people, a majority of them Inuit, making up one-fifth of the population of the area. Services were limited—a single trading post, an RCMP detachment, and two Christian missions made up the outside agencies. The school was built in 1959, but did not open until 1961. Somewhat uncommonly, Inuit mined soft coal a few kilometres outside the settlement for local use and occasional export. Later the *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Report* would observe that the boundaries of trading areas dictated which people would move to specific communities:

By the time day and residential schools had been established in each settlement, every camp had clearly come to be seen as within the province of one or another HBC post. And when the occupants of a camp decided to move into a settlement, it was clear, in virtually all cases, which settlement it would be. Thus the Tununirmiut looked to Pond Inlet.

Sangussaqtauliqtilluta, 1960–1965

Disruption of Tununirmiut life centred around ilagiit nunagivaktangit began in the 1960s when the Canadian government began to implement de-

cisively its new program of northern economic development. In 1963, the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources made Pond Inlet the site of its biggest investment in municipal infrastructure in the Arctic. Upgrades included a two-bay heated garage, two new classrooms, and two eight-bed hostels, a walk-in freezer, a two-bedroom house, and maintenance work on existing buildings. A new bulk-oil storage tank and street lighting supported the developments. English-language schooling, centralized settlements, and wage employment for Inuit were key elements of the government program. Because of these changes, there was a dramatic shift in where the Tununirmiut lived. In 1962, 70% of Tununirmiut lived in ilagiit nunagivaktangit; in 1965, half of the Tununirmiut were living in Pond Inlet; and in 1968, 90% lived in town.

CHANGES IN WHERE PEOPLE LIVED

Year	Tununirmiut Living in Ilagiit Nunagivaktangit	Tununirmiut Living in Pond Inlet
1962	204	65
1963	201	79
1964	192	103
1965	144	155
1966	130	200
1967	93	254
1968	34	336

Some of the changes proposed by government (including schools and about thirty-seven low-cost housing units, erected between 1965 and 1967) were of interest to the Tununirmiut, while others were less so. What

intensified the disruption and its consequences was the federal attitude that there was no time to ask people, “How do you want to do this?” or even more significantly, “What do you want to happen?” Instead federal officials told the people, “This is what is going to happen.”

One of the first federal initiatives in Pond Inlet was to build a school and student hostels, which was accompanied by pressure on Inuit families to enrol their children. When northern officials began to insist on compulsory school attendance, many of the Tununirmiut faced a difficult choice. In 1965, the entire population of an *ilagiit nunagivaktangat* moved into Pond Inlet and the RCMP reported that they did so because people wished “to be close to their children attending the school.” Gamilie Kilukishak later told QIA researchers that he did not want his son to be living in a hostel, so in 1967 even though “nobody told me [to move], I wanted to follow for the love towards my child.” Similarly, the government’s provision of housing, with loans and grants to pay for the new accommodation, encouraged the Tununirmiut to move to Pond Inlet. Moses Kasarnak remembers, “We were directly told that if we moved we would get a house and that it would have a table and dishes.” By 1968, the RCMP observed that Inuit occupied forty-six homes of varied types, but housing was not always ready to accommodate those who were arriving in reaction to the enforcement of schooling attendance. Apphia Kiliktee remembered,

A teacher came down to our camp and told us that we had to go to school. . . . Knowing there was no housing in Pond Inlet, we ended up in a tent near the river. The whole winter we stayed in the tent. It was so difficult for us. We didn’t have any food to eat. Every morning we woke up to everything frozen. . . . All I remember is my grandmother trying to use a teapot to cook with.

It was two years before her family got a house and then twenty people had to share the 12-by-24-foot structure.

Other factors also influenced the Tununirmiut to settle in Pond Inlet. Wage employment was increasingly available and provided income to help support living in the settlement. The number of Inuit working full-time with Qallunaat agencies (DIAND, HBC, RCMP, and the nursing station) rose from seven in 1962 to twenty-three in 1968. In addition, the growing settlement required workers to keep its services operating. There were increases in seasonal employment as well, particularly in construction work. On the land, mining exploration and tote road construction to Mary River

Panikpakuttuk (centre) and Qajaaq (right), workers for the RCMP detachment
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA



(1962–65) provided summer work for up to eight men. As in the past, Inuit knowledge of the land was also in demand guiding the RCMP, sports hunters, and geologists, yet payment for their casual work was not always certain.

The disruption experienced by the Tununirmiut because of this rapid transition from living on the land to living in town was intensified by difficulties experienced in the key areas where their lives changed. Living in the town also brought Inuit into daily contact with white people. Elizabeth Kyak recalled that many Inuit felt they had to hide country food they were eating, and Elisapee Ootoova talked about being frightened by the appearance of Qallunaat.

The shooting of qimmiit by the RCMP was one of the clearest signals of the disruption in Tununirmiut life. Qimmiit were essential to their mobility and an integral aspect of everyday life at the *ilagiit nunagivaktangit*, so the unexpected and violent loss of a man's qimmiit was a painful wound. Manasie Amagoalik stated that he could recall the scene because “[his] father started crying and it was so unexpected. . . . The RCMP was standing next to [his] father and the dogs being shot, even the puppy running away from all the shooting. It ran to [them].” On top of the emotional impact of this loss, many Inuit suffered long-term hardships. Amagoalik underlined the consequences for his family:

We had no means of transportation, no Ski-Doo, therefore, no hunting. The only way was by walking. . . . We were also visited by sickness because we didn't have enough to eat. My father suffered a lot of hardship with no Ski-Doo and no dogs. He had to hunt polar bear by foot and by harpoon.

Between 1963 and 1968, the Tununirmiut experienced radical change, which created the centralized settlement of Pond Inlet. This change was initiated and largely shaped by the Government of Canada, which believed



that it understood what the results of its new programs would be. The Tununirmiut acceded to the general direction of centralization, but sought to maintain Inuit values and ways of doing things as their lives were transformed.

Six dog teams and sleds head west over the ice of Pond Inlet towards the settlement, June 1953

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA

Nunalinnguqtitauliqtilluta, 1965-1975

AGENDAS AND PROMISES

In 1965, half of the Tununirmiut lived in the centralized community of Pond Inlet, and ten years later all had their homes in the community. By 1975, the Tununirmiut knew the differences that living in town involved and laid out how they wished to live in the new environment. The Tununirmiut, whether through their actions, their refusal to act, or their words, made evident to southerners the Inuit values, activities, and seasonal practices that would be an ongoing part of their lives.

While people continued to leave the land, those already living in Pond Inlet began to come together, with some official encouragement, to create the habits and institutions they would require to live together in numbers much larger than before. Some of these challenges arose from the fact that Inuit were accustomed to living together in groups of ten, twenty, or thirty, not hundreds. Other difficulties arose from the sudden increase both in the number of resident Qallunaat and in the number of Inuit whose lives they were trying to influence.

Large communities in the Arctic were very different from small ones. In many cases, the ilagiit nunagivaktangit were home to people who were related by birth or marriage. In Pond Inlet, people would spend more time dealing with Inuit who were less closely related and less familiar to them. In addition, a number of very strong personalities were concentrated in a small space, some of them people who had often worked with Qallunaat, and others who had been the isumatat (traditional leaders) of multi-family hunting groups on the land.

The other main source of difference was the more frequent encounters, casual and official, with Qallunaat. For many Inuit men, that sort of contact had occurred a dozen times a year during trading trips to Pond Inlet. For many of their wives, mothers, and children, contact had been less frequent, limited to Christmas and a few encounters a year with a traveller on the land, usually an RCMP constable. In the settlement, schoolchildren regularly dealt with teachers but often this also would create awkwardness or even fear for the children and their parents. Many Inuit adults lacked confidence in their dealings with Qallunaat. As the Tununirmiut explained to Hugh Brody, they felt *ilira*, a fear of “people or things that have power over you.” In the settlement, there were many more opportunities to feel *ilira* in the face of the impatience, anger, or lack of understanding of non-Inuit. At the same time, the Qallunaat themselves were diverse as well as numerous, and their own rivalries and divisions could create friction for Inuit.

New routines were created around the fixed daily schedules of work and schooling. None of these things was harmful in themselves, but they created new demands and new relationships. People had to choose times and places to hunt, travelling out by snowmobile from a central base rather than by dog team or on foot from an *ilagit nunagivaktangat*. Many Inuit told Hugh Brody in the early 1970s not just of the scarcity of goods and services, but of the “confinement and inactivity” that came with settlement life, and he reported on the “quiet, understated dismay” many Inuit expressed in response to what they had lost.

SHAPING COMMUNITY LIFE

In the midst of these novel circumstances, Inuit found opportunities, collectively and individually, to begin to use for their own purposes organizations expressing Inuit values and choices. One such organization was the community council, organized by the DIAND settlement manager in 1965.

This unelected body drew its members from Inuit who had some experience working with Qallunaat and could speak up on matters of concern to the Tununirmiut. In 1975, the council gained hamlet status, a form of municipal self-government without municipal taxation, with the council and mayor elected by, and responsible to, members of the community.

Gradually a community life emerged that was no longer just the sum of older-style activities transplanted to a central location. An organization such as the Toonoonik–Sahoonik Co-operative became a significant force in the new economy and brought the Tununirmiut into an important regional movement. Founded in 1969, the co-op began by importing groceries and hardware and marketing Inuit carvings, furs, and luxury exports like narwhal ivory, and later began operating a hotel and a fishing camp for tourists and tendering successfully to deliver municipal services. Similarly, the Hunters and Trappers Association (HTA) was an essential tool for reorganizing traditionally valued activities that continued outside the settlement. The HTA in Pond Inlet, begun in 1970, helped Inuit adapt to territorial game laws, such as the polar bear quota and tag system.

The building of a strong sense of community was also evident in the community radio station opened at Pond Inlet in 1966. Thumbing their nose at Southern regulations, certain councillors intended the station to serve the settlement as well as people still on the land, using equipment that was already in the community without the required government licence. Daniellie, Qamaniq, Josephie, and two Qallunaat organized the station, which was soon on the air with volunteer announcers for two hours each evening with music, community news, and local announcements in Inuktitut and English. The station was briefly shut down, but the embarrassed authorities in Ottawa forwarded a small AM transmitter to Pond Inlet and accelerated their own plans for community radio throughout the Arctic. The pirate radio station, CHPI Pond Inlet, was adopted by DIAND and continued in service for several more years.

Most significantly, as officials developing federal programs began in the late 1960s to ask for Tununirmiut reactions and ideas, Inuit voices were

heard stating directly what the community valued and expected. In April 1968, Alain Maktar took part in the Baffin Region Eskimo Advisory Council Conference in Iqaluit, where he spoke clearly about changes that needed to be made in the schools.

We want the Eskimos to be taught in Eskimo. . . . There are four things we want them [children] to learn—hunting, building iglus in the wintertime, and sewing and the language. If they learn these things they will be able to live in the Arctic.

Inuit wanted these things to be taught by “older people.” The Qallunaat officials answered positively, but the system was slow and inadequate in integrating these important needs in the school curriculum.

Two Pond Inlet girls
wearing parkas

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA





Huge iceberg in the background, and two Inuit hunters, 1954

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA

By 1975, the community of Pond Inlet numbered 550 people. They were connected to the rest of the country via two or three regular aircraft flights per week from Resolute, using a new gravel runway on the hill above the settlement. Anik satellites linked them to other communities by telephone, and at home two churches, a K-8 school, an adult-education centre, a nursing station, an RCMP detachment, a motel, a post office, and a library

rounded out the available services. Some of the men had experience working with Panarctic oil exploration teams in the High Arctic. The Toonoonik-Sahoonik Co-operative was on course to become one of the largest and most diversified co-ops in Nunavut. The skills that the Tununirmiut brought with them into the community or acquired while working there were preparing them for the next great struggle—to get their ownership of the land itself recognized by the federal government and have it dealt with in a land claim. As Utoova told the researchers of the Land Use and Occupancy Project, the idea that a remote government owned the land was ridiculous and had to be set right:

Now I am hearing that it is not our land, that the Qallunaat have it as their land, as part of their land. Is it true that I am a poor little landless one? Is it true that I have no land? I must be pitiable! Since I was a small girl, I have thought this land, around here, was ours. Perhaps they will let us have a little land to live on!

Inuit have lived around Eclipse Sound for centuries. Since 1820, they were in contact with outsiders for over eighty years in the whaling era, for sixty years while living on the land and trading at permanent trading posts, and for fifty years while living in their centralized community, Pond Inlet. People in the region adapted to the new fox-trapping opportunities after 1900, but usually carried this out with more traditional hunts, especially for ringed seal and caribou. After 1950, the Tununirmiut felt the same pressures and attractions to a single central community as other inhabitants felt throughout the Qikiqtaaluk. They responded by leaving the land to live more or less permanently around Pond Inlet, where they found trade opportunities and other services, such as schools and nursing stations, and places where wage employment was available for some. By 1970, this centralization was virtually complete.

Qikiqtaaluk Communities



Endnotes

- Local history: Guy Mary-Rousselière, “Factors affecting human occupation of the land in the Pond Inlet region from Prehistoric to Contemporary Times”, *Eskimo*, 28, Fall-winter (1984-5), 13; Hamlet of Pond Inlet history, www.pondinlet.ca; many meticulously researched historical articles by Kenn Harper published in *Nunatsiaq News*; and Grant, *Arctic Justice*.
- Area histories: John S. Mathiasson, *Living on the Land Change Among the Inuit of Baffin Island* (Peterborough, Canada: Broadview Press, 1992); Bissett, *Lancaster Sound Survey*; Riewe, *Nunavut Atlas*; and Brody essay and other sections of Milton Freeman Research Limited, *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project*, edited by Milton Freeman (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1976),
- Moves quotes and seasonal round: Don Bissett, *Lancaster Sound Survey; An Area Economic Survey, 1967* ([Ottawa]: [Industrial Division, Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Development], 1968), p. 15.
- Winter house, 1959: Library and Archives Canada (LAC), RG 18 Acc. 1985-86/048 box 55 file TA 500-8-1-12, Conditions Amongst Eskimos - Pond Inlet, annual report by M. D. Nelson, 23 May 1960.
- Qitdlarssuaq: Mary-Rousselière, *Qitdlarssuaq*; Guy Mary-Rousselière, “Merqusâq (ca 1850-1916)”, *Arctic*, Vol. 36 online at <http://pubs.aina.ucalgary.ca/arctic/Arctic36-3-292.pdf>; Kenn Harper, “Qillarsuaq – Part 1” “Qillarsuaq – Part 2”, *Nunatsiaq News* (8 July 2009 and 16 July 2009), available online at: www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/taissumanni_july_10/ and www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/taissumanni_july_17/; and Dick, *Muskox Land*, pp. 99-105.

- Ocean currents and early exploration: Moira Dunbar and Keith R. Greenway, *Arctic Canada from the Air* (1956), pp. 93-94, 134, and 424-25; W. Gillies Ross, *Arctic Whalers, Icy Seas: Narratives of the Davis Strait Whale Fishery* (Toronto, Canada: Irwin Pub, 1985); W. Gillies Ross, *Whaling, Inuit, and the Arctic Islands* (1980) pp. 235–51; LAC, MG29 A58, Whaling Logs Collection; and Basil Lubbock, *The Arctic Whalers* (Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1937).
- Takijualuk: Kenn Harper, “Arctic Secrets: Jamie Florence at Bylot Island – Part 2”, *Nunatsiaq News* (25 October 2012), available online at: www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674taissumani_oct._26/.
- Whaling: J.S. Mutch, *Whaling in Ponds Bay* (New York: New Era Printing Company, Lancaster, Pa, 1906). Anthropological papers, written in honor of Franz Boas Professor of Anthropology in Columbia University: presented to him on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his doctorate, ninth of August, nineteen hundred and six (New York: Stechert, 1906), pp. 485-500.
- Mary Panigusic Cousins: Kenn Harper, “Remembering Mary Cousins”, *Nunatsiaq News*, www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/Remembering_Mary_Cousins/.
- Doug Wilkinson: Douglas Wilkinson, *Land of the Long Day* (New York: Holt, 1956). (book and 1952 film).
- Idlout relocation: Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes); Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994), pp. 184-187.
- Inuit income: LAC: RG85, Vol. 1207, File 201-1-8 Pt. 3, Cantley to A/Chief, 19 Nov. 1952, “Sources of Eskimo Income for Year ended June 30, 1951” and for LAC, RG 18, Acc. 1985-86/048, Box 55, File TA 500-8-1-12, Conditions Amongst Eskimos - Pond Inlet, annual report by M.D. Nelson, 23 May 1960.
- Move to Pond Inlet Quote: Milton Freeman Research Limited, *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project - Volume 1*, ep. 158.
- Table 2: Data from the annual reports of RCMP detachments issued as “Conditions amongst the Eskimos” reports and other accounts of gov-

ernment activity were reported in the Government of Canada's annual *Government Activities in the North*.

- Decision-making: Comments by T. Stewart, April 18, 1968 as reported in an unpublished report titled *Pre-Conference Discussion, Baffin Region Eskimo Advisory Council Conference, Frobisher Bay, Northwest Territories, April 16-20, 1968* available at the AANDC Library, Gatineau, QC.
- Gamilie Kilukishak: QIA, 1 July [2005], Gamilie Kilukishak.
- Moses Kasarnak: QIA, 17 February 2005, Moses Kasarnak.
- Apphia Kiliktee: QTC, 11 December 2008, Apphia Kiliktee.
- Elizabeth Kyak: QTC, 10 December 2008, Elizabeth Kyak
- Elisapee Ootoova: QTC, 11 December 2008, Elisapee Ootoova.
- Manasie Amagoamalik: QTC, 19 December 2008, Manasie Amagoamalik.
- Ilira: Rosemarie Kuptana, "Ilira, or Why It was Unthinkable for Inuit to Challenge Qallunaat Authority", *Inuit Art Quarterly*, 8, 3 (1993), pp. 5-7 and Hugh Brody, *The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, Farmers, and the Shaping of the World* (New York: North Point Press, 2001), pp. 42-44 and 217-18.
- Brody observations: Brody, *The Other Side of Eden*; and QTC, 10 March 2009, Hugh Brody.
- Co-op and the community council: John S. Mathiasson, *Living on the Land Change Among the Inuit of Baffin Island* (Peterborough, Canada: Broadview Press, 1992).
- Radio: Robert G. Mayes, *Mass Communication and Eskimo Adaptation in the Canadian Arctic*(1972), pp. 49 and 125; and "Pirate Radio Station – Alias CHPI – Pond Inlet", *Arctic Circular*, 18, 3 (1968), pp. 37-38.
- Maktar: *Pre-Conference Discussion, Baffin Region Eskimo Advisory Council Conference, Frobisher Bay, Northwest Territories, April 16-20, 1968*.
- Utoova: Milton Freeman, *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project*, Vol. 1, p. 236.
- Hunting: David S. Lee and George W. Wenzel, "Narwhal hunting by Pond Inlet Inuit: An analysis of foraging mode in the floe-edge environment" *Études/Inuit/Studies*, 28, 2 (2004), pp. 133-157.

Much Canadian writing about the North hides social, cultural, and economic realities behind beautiful photographs, individual achievements, and popular narratives. Commissioned by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, this historical work and the companion volume of thematic reports weave together testimonies and documents collected during the Qikiqtani Truth Commission.

As communities in the Baffin region face a new wave of changes, these community histories describe and explain events, ideas, policies, and values that are central to understanding Inuit experiences and history in the mid-20th century.

