Kimmirut

Qikiqtani Truth Commission

Community Histories ***1950–1975***

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Dedication

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

About This Report (2024 Edition)

This report was originally produced by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) from reports drafted by the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) in 2010 and published by QIA in 2013. In 2024, QIA updated the reports by reinstating footnotes, correcting official place names, making minor corrections to grammar and syntax, correcting maps, and changing some images. The Inuktitut versions also added footnotes.

Foreword and Introduction texts from the 2013 edition are found at the end of the 2024 report to provide context about the work of the QTC.

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Kimmirut

The southernmost community on Baffin Island, Kimmirut[i] is located at the northeast end of Glasgow Inlet, beside the mouth of the Soper Heritage River, which runs through Katannilik Territorial Park. Originally known as Lake Harbour, in 1996 the hamlet changed its name to Kimmirut, which means "heel." It was named for the distinctive rocky outcrop located nearby, known to locals as "the heel" because it looks like the back of a foot. The people of the area call themselves Kimmirummiut. In 2011, the community's population was 455.

Inuit have inhabited the region along the central southern coast of Baffin Island for thousands of years and have been in contact with Qallunaat for centuries. Kimmirummiut were among the first Inuit in the Qikiqtani Region to have extensive Qallunaat contact, even if it took decades before they began living in the settlement that became Kimmirut.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the arrival of various Qallunaat agencies, including the Anglican Church, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), and the RCMP, led to changes in the patterns of travelling for hunting and visiting other groups in the region. By the 1950s, a majority of people still lived in ilagiit nunagivaktangit,[1] but many families were making regular seasonal visits to the Qallunaat enclave, then called Lake Harbour, for trade, medical care, or seasonal employment opportunities.

During the 1950s, the population of the Kimmirut area began to decline. Some people left to find employment in Iqaluit, which was growing quickly in response to combination of military and government[ii] activities. Other people left the area because they or their family members were sent south for medical treatment. The number of ilagiit nunagivaktangat declined as remaining families preferred to live closer together. The loss of nearly 80% of the area's qimmiit[iii] during a rabies outbreak in 1960 was a tragic event for the community. Although the dog

i This report uses current geographical place names unless another name is used in quotation or citation.

ii This report uses the term "government" to include all the bodies that existed under Canadian federal legislation to serve and control people, mostly Inuit, in the Qikiqtani Region. These bodies exercised all the powers that were distributed among federal, provincial and municipal orders of government in the rest of Canada. In Ottawa and locally, most government programs in the Qikiqtani Region were delivered by the Northern Affairs Branch and the RCMP. Inuit had no voice in their own government, and there were no legal codes to protect their individual or collective rights.

iii Qimmiit means *Inuit sled dogs* (singular version of the Inuktitut word is qimmiq).

population improved through careful management and sharing of teams by families, the loss was compounded by more rigorous enforcement of the Ordinance Respecting Dogs in the settlement in the following years.

Worried that the HBC post at Kimmirut would close due to the combination of fewer hunters and lower fur prices, the government took limited action during the 1960s to provide a school, more medical services and southern-style housing for Inuit moving into the settlement. It was during this period that dramatic social, economic, and political changes affected everyone in the region. By 1969, only one ilagiit nunagivaktangat remained in the area.

Kimmirummiut established a settlement council in 1970–71. Like other places in the Qikiqtani Region, the people of Kimmirut are determined to sustain Inuit culture and knowledge despite a century of changes that were largely outside of their control and often against their interests.

Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta

The term "Taissumani nunamiutautilluta" means "when we lived on the land." It reaches back thousands of years. The era's end date depends on the community, but it is generally around 1955, when most Inuit were living in government-chosen settlements and participating in the cash economy.

ILAGIIT NUNAGIVAKTANGIT

Kimmirut is located at the northeast end of the long Glasgow Inlet, at the head of North Bay. North Bay has long bays and inlets that create dramatic tidal occurrences, such as reversible falls, tidal bores, and boiling rip tides and falls. Located approximately 18 kilometres from the open sea of Hudson Strait, Kimmirut is sheltered by rocky hills and mountains that have made the community's harbour one of the most important in the region. Larger vessels usually anchor at nearby Westbourne Bay, while the smaller ones navigate the narrows to anchor at Kimmirut.[2]

Hudson Strait, which separates Baffin Island from the Ungava Peninsular, never freezes over, but the land-fast ice can extend more than 20 kilometres seaward. The strait features strong currents and large tides up to 15 metres.[3] In late June and early July there are a few hours of twilight, and during the winter solstice, the sun rises above the horizon for about an hour.[4] The combination of open water and ice fields, and the size, position, and topographic features of the Kimmirut region combine to create extreme shifts in weather and temperatures throughout all seasons. Breakup generally occurs between July and August, and freeze-up occurs towards the end of November.[5]

The North Bay region has a long history of human occupancy dating back to the pre-Dorset period.[6] Archaeologist Moreau S. Maxwell reported on an ancient house site that was likely occupied for thousands of years:

> *About 100 to 150 people lived then in eight to ten camps along this coast of Baffin Island. For nearly 2,000 years the same sites were occupied by Dorset-culture people, the giant Tuniit of Inuit legends and tales. And after them this coast was home to about 250 Thule-culture Inuit in ten or twelve camps.*[7]

In the 1970s, for the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project, Kimmirut resident Pauloosie Lyta described one of the most important connections between modern Inuit and Tuniit by explaining, "A long time ago there used to be [some] Tuniit. These people were two or three feet taller than us, but they used to do the same things that we do. They used to live on meat."[8]

The knowledge that Lyta referenced about Tuniit was only passed on through words and stories, but a broader type of Inuit knowledge that is attached to experience and a deep understanding of the environment and human relationships is also important. The term Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) used to describe Inuit knowledge, translates as "that which Inuit have always known to be true."

It contains essential information about how people can hunt animals in the seasons when they are most abundant, and at places where they are most easily taken by spear and harpoon, or, later, by firearms. Inuit hunters understand that different animals have their own habitat requirements and behaviours. Hunters adapt their seasonal hunting and settlement patterns accordingly.

Kimmirummiut land-use area extends almost 500 kilometres along the central–southern coast of Baffin Island from Amadjuak Bay to Resolution Island. For seasonal rounds, people moved through the interior lands of the southern Meta Incognita Peninsula, among the river valleys that stretch north towards Frobisher Bay and Amadjuak Lake. Important hunting areas included the North Bay area, Crooks Inlet, Markham Bay, and Big Island. As late as the 1960s, ilagiit nunagivaktangit were also found in Carew Bay, Shaftesbury Inlet, Observation Cove, and Balcom Inlet, and as far south as Middle Savage Islands and Pritzler Harbour.[9]

Today, Kimmirummiut hunt ringed seals at breathing holes and along the floe edge in January and February. In March, they launch boats from the floe edge to hunt for bearded seals and the occasional beluga whale. In the winter months, hunters also travel inland to hunt caribou and trap fox. By April or May, Kimmirummiut hunt seals that are basking on the ice. As the floe edge retreats and becomes a less stable surface for travelling, harvesting moves to Hudson Strait. In June and July, Kimmirummiut travel to inland lakes to fish for Arctic char, or to the Middle Savage Islands to hunt ducks and collect eggs. The summer months provide for a great and varied diet. Ptarmigan, Arctic hare, geese, and berries are all harvested. In fall, belugas and walrus are hunted. While small numbers of the animals are harvested, they contribute significantly to qimmiit and human food needs and are often cached for the winter.[10] After the beluga harvest, hunters renew their intensity of hunting seals along the coastline and in the bays. As the ice thickens, and seals begin to make their breathing holes in the ice, the seasonal round renews itself.[11]

In an interview with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) in 2004, Goteleak Judea recalled how his family was always moving with the seasons.

> *Yes, they always moved depending on the seasons. In the fall and winter when we lived at the camp, they hunted for animals to get some oil for the lamp, food for people and dogs; that's how things were back then. During the winter they would be trapping for foxes, hunt[ing] seals; they used the dog teams for transportation to hunt.*[12]

For Kimmirummiut the pursuit of sea mammals has been the most important of all hunting activities, but caribou were also important to the local economy. During the last century, however, the range and number of caribou in the region declined. At the same time, the government limited the caribou-hunting season. In 1955 RCMP Constable G. C. Barr wrote to his superiors in Ottawa about the impact of the hunting regulations on communities and clothing.

> *This lack of owning Caribou clothing is thought due to the fact that the Eskimo is only allowed to hunt Caribou during August and part of September and at that time of year the animals are miles inland and not all the men can arrange the necessary trip to secure these beasts. This curb on the length of the season that Caribou may be hunted, in the writer's opinion, must be continued in this district for some years to come, because from reports received this year from the Natives, Caribou are still not too plentiful in this district.*[13]

During the 1970s, many hunters were still reporting that the decline in caribou populations was influencing the number of caribou hunts.[14]

For many Kimmirummiut, artwork has also become an important source of income and cultural life. Three types of soapstone are found in the region, including white, green, and black. Marble is quarried in the Markham Bay area and in the Soper River valley. Semi-precious lapis lazuli, also found in the Soper River Valley, is inlaid into marble and soapstone carvings. Elijah Michael, Simeonie Aqpik, and Pauloosie Padluq are some of the community's famous carvers.[15]

EARLY CONTACTS

The Kimmirummiut were among the first Inuit in the Qikiqtani Region to have extensive Qallunaat contact with explorers, whalers, and HBC personnel. Beginning in the early 1800s, vessels travelling through Hudson Strait navigated close to the northern shoreline between the Middle Savage Islands and Markham Bay because of wind and ice conditions. At times, the ships became stuck in the ice, at which point people made the difficult journey to the whaling ships to trade. Furs, walrus tusks, whalebone, oil, and clothing were traded for saws, needles, knives, iron, and other goods. Qallunaat logbooks and memoirs of the period tell us that Inuit were keen and proficient traders.[16] For generations, Kimmirummiut had already been hunting whales from qajait (kayaks) or umiat (skin boats), often using narwhal-tusk weapons or metal knives that they tied to a paddle.[17]

More sustained contact began after 1860, when whaling ships began making annual visits to the area on their way to the rich whaling grounds along the western shores of Hudson Bay.[18] In 1877, the first seasonal whaling station was established at Spicer Island, about 100 kilometres west of Kimmirut, and it operated year-round after 1880. Kimmirummiut were hired on ships as crew or at the station, while others visited the station to trade furs and other goods.[19] The station was abandoned in the early 1890s due to a decline in the number of whales and a reduced demand for whale products. For the next decade, Kimmirummiut had only sporadic contact with Qallunaat. Beginning in 1900, a Scottish firm, the Tay Whale Fishing Company, began operating a mica mine at Kimmirut, which was the first mine on Baffin Island to employ Inuit labour. While the exact number of employees is unknown, their involvement was well documented by the missionary Archibald Lang Fleming, who was in the area between 1909 and 1911. Between 1902 and 1907, the mine produced an annual haul of between two and seventeen tons, with both Inuit and Qallunaat miners.[20] The Tay Whale mine (and dozens of other small mica mines in Canada) closed in 1913 when alternatives to mica for manufacturing were found and costs rose during the First World War.[21]

The whaling ship *Active* that recruited Kimmirummiut as whaleboat crews and hunters for summer operations in Hudson Bay and dropped off Scottish quarrymen to the mica mine also picked up hunters and their families (usually around eighty people) for transport to Fisher Strait or Roes Welcome Sound in search of whales, walrus, and seals. As published in Dorothy Eber's book, *When the Whalers Were Up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic*, Ikidluak recalled that some of his earliest memories were onboard the *Active*.

> *I was born when the ship Active was coming up around here … They would look not just for whales but for walrus, seals and square flippers, too.*
>
> *I don't remember them catching whales, but I do remember when they got some walrus. I remember the women taking the blubber off the walrus … I don't know how many, but there were lots of women scraping. Some were just standing by to help. The women were working while the men were out catching the walrus.* [22]

Kimmirummiut were, in fact, the skilled hunters; the Scottish "whalemen" were often relegated to inferior tasks because they lacked the knowledge required to hunt in the region.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF LIFE

The impact of the increased Qallunaat presence in the area during the early 20th century was felt by all families. During the early 1900s, the importance of fur as a commodity began to rise. The faltering whaling industry and declining whale stocks compelled whalers to increase trade with Inuit to supplement their diminishing income from whaling alone. These new opportunities for trade impacted hunting and settlement patterns, as Inuit increasingly incorporated trapping into hunting expeditions to meet new trade demands.

Whalers had introduced new technologies and forms of exchange in the Arctic. New materials, such as firearms, became important parts of the Inuit economy and changed hunting techniques. The need to acquire ammunition committed Inuit to trade relationships.[23] The introduction of the whaleboat had less of an impact, but still influenced hunting techniques. Inuit found whaleboats more durable, convenient, and efficient than their umiat. As a result, people became more dependent on trade in daily life.

Anglican congregation at Lake Harbour (Kimmirut), [1932]. ***Credit:*** *David L. McKeand / Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds / Library and Archives Canada / e008440851-v6.*

Access to alcohol and exposure to infectious diseases, including venereal disease, was another element of Qallunaat contact. While alcohol did not have a significant impact on daily life, in part due to the fact that it was only available for the short periods that people were whaling, infectious diseases had a lasting impact. Historical records from other parts of the Arctic show that whalers introduced venereal diseases to Inuit populations, which contributed to sterility, an increased number of miscarriages, and numerous cases of congenital syphilis.[24] While the same types of records are not available for the southern Baffin Island region, it is very likely that the local population also experienced similar health problems.

Other legacies of the whaling era can still be seen in today's naming practices. Whalers who were unable to pronounce Inuit names simply assigned new names to the workers. Names such as Charlie, Jim, and Adam became popular, and Inuit soon adapted them into Inuktitut. John became Joanasie, Jacob became Jaycopee, and Adam became Aatamii.

The foundation of the Qallunaat enclave that preceded the hamlet of Kimmirut was an Anglican mission set up in 1909 by W. J. Bilby and Archibald Fleming.[25] From their small cabin, Bilby and Fleming travelled to local ilagiit nunagivaktangit preaching Anglican morals and beliefs in English and offering basic reading and writing skills. Fleming, who eventually became the Anglican Bishop of the Arctic, began learning Inuktitut from his Kimmirut pupils.[26] His autobiography, *Archibald the Arctic*, while told from a Qallunaat perspective, provide a glimpse into life and experiences of Inuit in the early 20th century. In one story, Fleming tells of preparing to leave Kimmirut for a new posting in 1910. Fleming knew that Haley's Comet would be visible in the northern sky just before he was to leave. Days before the event, Fleming requested that people look for a comet, but they were skeptical about his ability to predict such an occurrence. When the comet appeared, Fleming attributed

Inuit astonishment to their perception that he could predict the future, saying:

> *It was a dramatic spectacle, but the Eskimos were even more affected by it than we were. They clamoured to know how I could foretell its coming … This incident raised me to a level far above the native conjurer and contributed greatly to the willingness of the people to listen to my teaching then and in the years to come.*[27]

It is interesting to note what appears to be a lack of effort to explain the science behind his prediction of the event. Fleming was happy to allow people to believe in his magical powers of prediction. Sociologist Marybelle Mitchell insightfully observed that "apparently, he was unaware of the irony of using conjury to fight conjury."[28] While the comet story may have been magical thinking on Fleming's part, the arrival of the Anglicans and the establishment of a mission greatly increased the exposure to Qallunaat practices, beliefs, and moral codes. The Anglicans tried, in vain, to convince the government to assist them to establish a permanent hospital in Lake Harbour, rather than in Pangnirtung.[29]

In 1911, the HBC also arrived in the area, intent on taking advantage of the increasingly profitable fur trade.[30] Oola Kiponik recalled how her family was moved to the ilagiit nunagivaktangit, Appatuuqjuaq, "so they could get lots of furs" for the company.[31] The new post, established under the management of William Ford, provided a more permanent place for trade in lieu of the intermittent and now declining whaling presence. While its arrival did not result in any immediately significant changes to the material culture, in a short time it became the most important Qallunaat institution in the area.

By the 1920s, the Canadian government had begun to direct more of its attention towards the Qikiqtani Region. The Eastern Arctic Patrol (EAP) was established in 1922 to carry administrators, RCMP officers, supplies, and medical service to missionary and trade enclaves in the region. In 1924, an RCMP post was erected at Kimmirut.[32] The three main Qallunaat institutions—missionaries, traders, and RCMP—were now firmly in place at Kimmirut and prepared to keep watch over Inuit.

Occasionally, other Qallunaat came into the area. Dewey Soper travelled with his wife and son to Kimmirut in 1930 on behalf of the government to study wildlife, survey uncharted areas, and make other scientific recordings.[33] In 1934, the HBC governor Sir Patrick Ashley Cooper and Lady Cooper visited the settlement. The event was marked by a huge celebration of "sports, games, and contests, and of course presents for every man, woman, and child."[34] Piloted by an Inuk man, Navalio, the HMS *Scarborough* visited Kimmirut in 1937, and during the Second World War, the United States established a radio and weather station at Kimmirut that closed down at the end of the war.[35]

By the 1950s, the annual cycle of Inuit in the area regularly included seasonal visits to the Qallunaat enclave at Kimmirut generally during ship time for trade, medical treatment, or potential employment opportunities. Many people also visited during the holiday season at Christmas in order to participate in the festivities. Gordon Rennie, an HBC manager who married into a Kimmirut family, told the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) about the early years after his arrival in the settlement in 1949.

> *People gathered in the community and pitched tents. It was a holiday atmosphere. We only opened the store when people had something to trade. People did a lot of trapping. Throughout the year, they also did a lot of carving. They used green serpentine and black stone, highly polished. We used to get ivory tusk production from Igloolik. We brought it down and bagged it out. We would give it out. People would give them back completed and I would put an evaluation on the ivory carving.*[36]

Sangussaqtauliqtilluta, 1950–1960

The term "Sangussaqtauliqtilluta" means "the time when we started to be actively persuaded, or made to, detour or switch modes." Combinations of both externally driven and local pressures detached individuals, families and kin groups from life on the land and moved them towards government-directed settlements.

The Kimmirut region experienced two sudden changes in the period after the Second World War. In the QTC community histories these sudden changes are referred to as Sangussaqtauliqtilluta or "disruptions" to underline the fact that people went through enormous changes in a short period of time. Not all changes were harmful, but they all required an effort to adapt customary ways of thinking and living to new conditions. In the earlier period, Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta, Inuit families had been tightly connected to one another in daily and seasonal activities. A "service centre" like Kimmirut existed only to provide trade goods and other imported services to people who continued to live in dispersed groups around their regions. After the Sangussaqtauliqtilluta period, people became centralized in the community and moved outwards from it to carry on their traditional activities.

The outside events that caused so much change in the lives of Kimmirummiut were the growth of Iqaluit in the 1950s and the federal government's decision to apply so many policies and laws in the communities. In 1947, fourteen ilagiit nunagivaktangit were counted; in 1953, only five remained, including a large group of people at Pituqqiq.[37] Nevertheless, almost all Inuit continued to live on the land rather than in the settlement until the 1960s. In 1954, the settlement's population was reported to be around 30, with 265 Inuit coming in to trade.[38] Various factors likely accounted for the shift in population from smaller to larger ilagiit nunagivaktangit. Better rifles and motorboats allowed more animals to be harvested within a smaller area. Some families decided to move near or into Kimmirut so their children could attend school or because family members found seasonal employment. The major contributing factors to the changes in the size and number of ilagiit nunagivaktangit was probably the loss of family members to southern sanatoriums and the movement of entire families to Iqaluit. By 1962, only 127 Inuit were reported as trading at Kimmirut.[39]

Schooling was offered in Kimmirut during the first half of the 20th century by the Anglicans with the government contributing a blackboard, a few books, and little else. In the fall of 1949, the government sent a welfare teacher, Isabell D. Erickson, to the settlement to operate a school in conjunction with a nursing station. The school operated until the end of July 1950, when it was decided to discontinue the "teaching experiment" as the government was unsure how to provide education to the children in the area. Issues with attendance probably played a role in the program's cancellation. Until 1968, Kimmirut did not have a hostel for children to stay at while attending school. Because of this, many children were only able to attend during the summer months when their families were in the area. After this, schooling was once again left to the responsibility of the missionaries or the nurse.[40]

In 1951, plans were made to introduce a co-operative boat-building project through the HBC that would train and employ local Inuit to manufacture boats for sale in the Arctic.[41] The HBC was responsible for providing materials and "all normal costs" associated with building the boats.[42] Five Inuit were selected for the program—Napatchee, Noah and Kapee from Kimmirut; and Sheookjuke and Davidie from Kinngait.[43] Training and work began in 1953.[44] Accounts differ about why the project was delayed. Government records indicate that it was due to a measles outbreak in Kimmirut during 1951, while HBC sources state that there were difficulties in transporting the shipwright from Iqaluit to Kimmirut. Likely, it was a combination of events.

Over the initial five-month period of the project, five 27-foot whaleboats were built. The boats were fully equipped for sailing and had metal built into the bow for use in ice.[45] The government considered the project to be successful, but observations by the RCMP and ethnographer Nelson Graburn, who was sent to study Kimmirut in 1960, challenged this perspective. The RCMP attributed the problems to a lack of an effective Qallunaat foreman,[46] but Graburn explained that Inuit did not completely endorse the

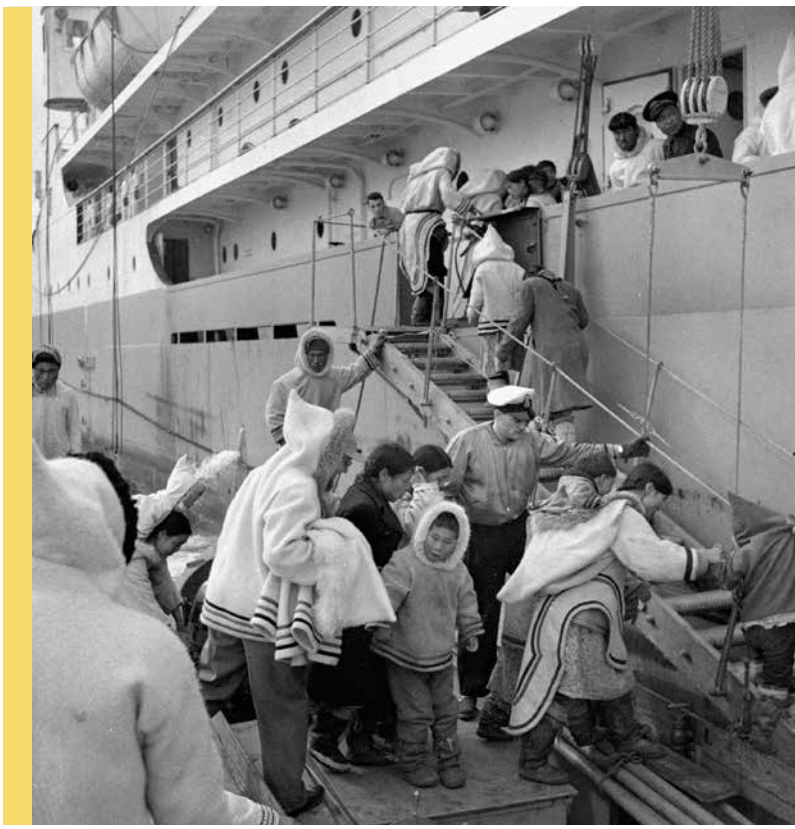
project. Although trained and skilled, many felt that they could make more money hunting. Many stayed with the program only to "please the Company."[47] One of the unexpected outcomes of the program was the amount of extra lumber that was available in the community. Graburn reported that in 1960 all families in Kimmirut had houses, most of which were constructed from wood left over from the HBC and boat-building operations, as well as from the dismantling of a former weather station.

The need to keep the "Company" (the HBC) happy was closely linked to fears that it would close its Kimmirut operations. The HBC was a monopoly—Inuit could only purchase rifles and food and sell skins, carvings, and handicrafts through the post. In 2008, Elisapee Itulu told the QTC that her father had felt "controlled" by the HBC and was made to come to Kimmirut to help with the boat-building project.[48] When speaking with the QTC in 2008, Terry Jenkin, a former RCMP officer stationed in Kimmirut in 1957, recalled the lack of communication between Kimmirummiut and Qallunaat. "It was quite a small community. There was not a lot going on. Not a lot of interaction between cultures. The largest barrier was language. They lacked the ability to communicate with each other."[49]

This lack of communication may also have fed into the lack of acceptance by Inuit of the boat-building project. This, in addition to the poor tools provided, often resulted in poor output. While the irregular offers of schooling and the boat-building project would have had small impacts on settlement patterns, they do not particularly account for the transition from many smaller ilagiit nunagivaktangit to fewer, larger ones that took place during the 1950s. The loss of people to hospitals in the south and to Iqaluit, on the other hand, would have significantly affected the region's population. A loss of family members would have put a strain on many of the smaller ilagiit nunagivaktangit, resulting in families having to integrate with othergroups and build new relationships to survive.

Except for annual visits by medical personnel on the *C. D. Howe* and first aid by the RCMP, Kimmirummiut had little access to government-supplied health services. By the 1950s, very few vaccines were developed, and visitors and traders could introduce new diseases easily into communities. Influenza was always a problem, as were childhood diseases such as whooping cough and measles. In rare instances, Inuit were infected by botulism from local sources. In 1946, for example, an outbreak of botulism from eating infected meat killed almost everyone in one ilagiit nunagivaktangat.[50]

The first nurse, Nurse Rundle, arrived at Kimmirut in 1950, but was killed in February 1953 after a rafter in the supply warehouse collapsed on her. The wife of an RCMP member later replaced her.[51] This was not unusual, as many RCMP officers who were married to registered nurses were selected for postings in the north.[52] While nurses could treat minor ailments and diagnose diseases, surgeries and any other treatments requiring specialized medical equipment, such as respirators, needed to be done in a hospital, and this generally required sending people south.



Inuit board the C.D. Howe for medical examination and eye check. Medical personnel arrived by the ship once a year to conduct these checks, and if Inuit were found to be in need of treatment they were forcibly evacuated to the South, [1951].
Credit: *Wilfred Doucette / National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque / Library and Archives Canada / PA-189646.*

The number of people being evacuated south each year for medical treatment and the amount of time they were away would have considerably affected the ilagiit nunagivaktangit structure. When the ship arrived at Kimmirut in 1955, for example, a tuberculosis X-ray survey was conducted and sixty people were found to be active cases and were evacuated.[53] The following year another twenty-five people were evacuated and thirty-five people returned.[54] These numbers probably included Inuit from the Kinngait region as well, as they fell under the same district. Nevertheless, the loss of so many people, even for only a year, would have had a significant impact on those left behind. Families were incredibly interdependent—removing even one member could be devastating and often resulted in the remaining members having to adjust their patterns or relocate to other ilagiit nunagivaktangit or even the settlement.

Fear of being sent south was widespread among Inuit because they saw so many people go away and never return to their homes for various reasons, including requiring rehabilitation in the south for the rest of their lives or dying. In 1955, the RCMP said that Kimmirummiut were now avoiding the settlement at ship-time because they had no desire of "being evacuated to the 'Land of No Return.'"[55] In 2008, Elijah Padluq shared with the QTC the impact his mother's evacuation had on him and his family. "As soon as my mother left, my father, my brother, Josephie and I were the only people left in our home. It seemed as if the backbone of our home was gone. It was really hard on us because she was our home."[56]

Inuit building a Peterhead boat for the Hudson's Bay Company at Kimmirut, [1958].
Credit: *Charles Gimpel / Library and Archives Canada / e004923448.*

Padluq was relatively lucky; his mother returned the following year. Others would never see their loved ones again, an experience that still haunts Elijah Mike. His mother and his older sister, Saata, were evacuated south for treatment and never returned. Unfortunately, Elijah was never able to get the full story of what happened to them:

> *Up to today, I think maybe they're coming this time and I have never been told where they are buried. I have tried to find out but they just said that they are not there. Where are they? This hurt me a lot. I've been waiting for my mother and sister for a long, long time.*[57]

In addition to the impact of medical evacuations, many Kimmirummiut were choosing to move away in search of work. By the mid-1950s, fox trapping had become a mainstay in the region's economy. However, during the first half of the decade, the fox market collapsed while the cost of goods available through the HBC increased.[58] The income earned from trapping no longer provided enough credit to purchase supplies. This left many Inuit looking for other income opportunities, and Iqaluit, only 130 kilometres away, offered such prospects.

Iqaluit's growth was rooted in its development as a defence establishment, first during the Second World War, and then later as a communications and transportation hub for the eastern section of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line. Thousands of military personnel and construction contracts poured into and through Iqaluit, and the economy of the area exploded. Inuit from all over were attracted by the potential opportunities for employment. In contrast, wage employment opportunities in Kimmirut were limited. While some people were employed with the boat-building project or working seasonally in general labour positions during the summer, Iqaluit was a much larger centre, with far more opportunities. Additionally, the wages offered in Iqaluit were significantly higher than

those at Kimmirut.[59] Some people also remember being asked or told to go to Iqaluit, as workers were needed. Judea Goteleak told the QTC, "From Kimmirut, we were asked to go work in Iqaluit because there was hardly any help to take supplies off the ship."[60]

For the above reasons, many Kimmirummiut were moving to Iqaluit. The population of the region dropped from 243 in 1957, to 174 in 1958, and to 120 in 1960.[61] The nursing station closed during the summer of 1959, and a year later, the Anglican minister, Reverend Mike Gardener, was sent to Kinngait.[62] Gardener told the QTC that Bishop Fleming decided that it was a "waste to have a minister posted in Kimmirut when there's Kinngait waiting with many more people."[63] By that point Kimmirut was losing people to both Iqaluit and Kinngait.

The mass migration of people away from the Kimmirut region continued through 1959, but by 1960 had begun to slow. The reality of life in Iqaluit was beginning to show by this point. Shack villages, insufficient housing, overhunting, and a community separated along racial lines were only some of the problems arising. Anthropologist Nelson Graburn observed that, in Iqaluit, "Many unpleasant social and material phenomena had arisen, with consequent widespread social and emotional conflict." Additionally, "Many unpleasant experiences with Whites were encountered, e.g. RCMP shooting of dogs, [and] seduction of women under drink."[64] In contrast, Kimmirut's appeal rose because the settlement maintained a continued connection to the land and traditional way of life. People still depended on the land—not the settlement—for their survival. Nonetheless, by 1960, Kimmirut's population had shrunk by half and government administrators started to worry that the settlement, which was one of the oldest government-supported enclaves in the region, might cease to exist. [65]

Nunalinnguqti-tauliqtilluta, 1960–1975

The term "Nunalinnguqtitauliqtilluta" means "the time when we were actively (by outside force) formed into communities." Nunalinnguqtitauliqtilluta conforms to the period when the population the Qikiqtani Region was overwhelmingly concentrated in 13 communities where people worked with little or no continuous time living on the land.

AGENDAS AND PROMISES

As After the population decline of the 1950s, Kimmirut's population remained steady in the 1960s and began to grow in the 1970s. In 1960, the RCMP provided contradictory information about the population of the region. One report said that only 12 Inuit lived year-round in the settlement; others lived in four winter ilagiit nunagivaktangit with populations varying between 11 and 30 individuals.[66] By the mid-1970s, the majority of Inuit in the area lived in Kimmirut. In 1977, there were just shy of 250 people living in the community, of which 95% were Inuit.[67]

The government took limited action in developing education and housing options in Kimmirut in an attempt to help support and maintain the settlement. By the 1960s, the settlement included the HBC buildings, RCMP post and buildings, the Anglican mission and outbuildings (unoccupied), the Indian and Northern Health Services nursing station with an office residence and power plant, and an Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Arctic Unit, which was only occasionally equipped.[68] The boat-building program still employed between five to six people each summer, and most of the other men were able to find at least short periods of summer employment. Other employment included one caretaker for the INHS, a special constable and part-time special constable with the RCMP, and the HBC clerk.[69] The economy was still primarily based on seal hunting and fox trapping, supplemented by handicrafts (mainly carving), wage labour, and

social payments such as family allowances and Old Age Pensions.[70] A 1963 government report noted that "at least 85% of the present families depend on hunting."[71]

At this time, local leaders, including Inuit Anglican leaders, played a large role in encouraging people to stay in Kimmirut.[72] They were generally Elders (named in 1966[73] as Akavok, Davidii, and Santee), whose hunting and social experiences could be relied upon when it came to providing guidance on both economic and spiritual matters.[74] These people also played a general leadership role in the Kimmirut community. With the Anglican minister gone, they were also responsible for overseeing religious services. Graburn reported that the system was "very self-sufficient" and "thoroughly integrated with the traditional authority structure."[75] In 1967, another federal government researcher reported that the social structure of the community was very similar to what would be found in an ilagiit nunagivaktangat. Family ties remained strong and leaders held significant influence.[76]

Despite the stabilization of the population, the Canadian government was still concerned that the massive migration away from Kimmirut during the late 1950s might result in the HBC closing for lack of business. With the closing of the mission and the nursing station, there was little left in the settlement. This also raised concerns among Kimmirummiut who relied on the HBC for trade. In 1963, a government report noted:

> *Conversely, the rapid demise of [Kimmirut] has led to some of the agencies there "packing their bags", a sense of insecurity amongst the Eskimo population, and the threat of the immediate disappearance of the whole community. This would not be so bad if it were not for the fact that [Kimmirut] is one of the few places left with abundant natural resources, and has a fairly good social and economic base and potentialities.*[77]

In light of these concerns, the Canadian government sought to maintain the population and the level of services offered in the settlement by pressuring people to leave ilagiit nunagivaktangit for Kimmirut.[78] Ikkidluak described how the government exerted itself:

> *We were at Pituqqiq, where we wintered. We were repeatedly asked to move to Kimmirut. Even the policemen were coming in to ask us to come. I pretended not to hear them but they kept coming back. So in spring, they came again by boat to ask us to come and we finally said yes in 1968 … I didn't want to move but I had no choice but to say yes … They were really persistent even though we didn't want to come here. They told us that our kids had to go to school.*[79]

He added, as did other people speaking to QIA and the QTC, that the promise of a house was one of the inducements and unkept promises associated with coming into the settlement.

The pressure for Ikkidluak and others to move likely intensified in 1968 because a new two-room school was about to be opened in Kimmirut. While a summer-school program was started in 1959 for children who were travelling to the settlement with their parents, attendance continued to be governed by hunting conditions.[80] In 1963, for instance, the summer-school teacher reported that school attendance had been poor because "the rising value of seal skins had caused many of the people to remain in their winter camps during the summer."[81] All the same, in 1963, the summer-school program gave way to a year-round school and a permanent teacher was assigned to the community.[82] Classes were held in the abandoned nursing station, rather than a purpose-built school.[83] The school was temporarily shut down in November 1964 when the teacher resigned due to ill health, but another teacher arrived in May 1965.[84] The first permanent school was the one that arrived in 1968.

Another focus was on housing. While government officials wanted to combat the migration of Kimmirummiut to Iqaluit in the early 1960s, they were still determined to maintain a policy of dispersal rather than centralization in the Kimmirut region. Beyond the housing provided by the various agencies, there were no southern-style houses sent to Kimmirut until 1962. Elijah Mike remembers some of the dwellings people lived in:

> *[W]e used to have huts with driftwood. Sometimes they didn't even have any. Once they had them up, some of them had old canvases and other materials put on top. For insulation, they used plants from the ground, and when the hut was finished, we would use it all winter.*[85]

In 1962, four houses arrived at ship-time, all of which were intended to be erected in ilagiit nunagivaktangit, not the settlement.[86] Unfortunately, all arrived with shattered windows. In 1963, five additional low-cost houses arrived, and two more were ordered for 1964.[87] It was not until years later that housing specifically meant for the settlement was sent north.

In 1966, the Anglican mission re-opened in Kimmirut. By 1967, approximately 60% of the Inuit population was reported to be living in the settlement. Only three ilagiit nunagivaktangit remained in the region.[88] Many people who had owned houses in ilagiit nunagivaktangit brought the houses with them when they relocated to Kimmirut. In 1967, the settlement itself received ten new low-cost rental houses and a metal-sheathed building to house generators. Twelve more were received the following year. By 1968, the RCMP reported that many ilagiit nunagivaktangit were closing down and people were moving to the settlement to take advantage of the housing. By 1969, only one ilagiit nunagivaktangat remained, but the RCMP expected it would be abandoned once housing in Kimmirut became available.[89]

Not all Inuit wanted to move to the settlement—many felt pressured by Qallunaat to move. Goteleak also spoke with the QIA about the conflict created between his grandfather and his uncle over the decision to move into the settlement:

> *There started to be conflicts between my grandfather and Joanasie Lyta [the camp leader] because we were told to move to Kimmirut. We didn't listen for about two years. They didn't want to move to Kimmirut. They did not want to leave the camp due to hunting and Kimmirut's harbour froze in the fall earlier than where they lived.*[90]

Eventually, the threat of a suspension in family allowance payments resulted in their decision to make the move.

> Ooloosie and Joanasie were husband and wife. They had [a] hard time when they were told that they would not be receiving anymore child allowance if they don't move to Kimmirut. That is why we moved to Kimmirut.[91]

Goteleak remembered his grandfather saying, "We will survive, but life will be harder, we should just say yes."[92]

SHAPING COMMUNITY LIFE

After moving into the settlement, Inuit confronted laws contrived for southern conditions, as well as a wide range of policies concerning welfare, housing, education, and health care that seemed to change year by year. Kimmirummiut also contended with cultural shocks, including the loss of qimmiit through disease and destruction under the Ordinance Respecting Dogs.

A decimating rabies outbreak among the qimmiit population in 1960 combined with dramatic swings in sealskin prices likely contributed to the decision made by some families to move to the settlement to take advantage of government services and possible job opportunities. The epidemic resulted in a loss

of more than three-quarters of the qimmiit population in the Kimmirut region. Taqialuk Temela recalled for the QIA in 2004 his memories of when the qimmiit were sick:

> *Yes, I remember at least once that dogs were really sick, and they would get rabies. I was assigned to kill the dogs that got rabies by shooting them. Even if you shot them, they never died with a 22 gun. You had to shoot them again and only then they would die infected with rabies. We lost many dogs from that sickness; rabies. I only remember once when we lost dogs through rabies.*[93]

The loss of qimmiit affected the 1961–62 winter-fox-trapping season and ultimately the incomes of many Kimmirummiut. Between 1955 and 1960, the average income from trapping had been $7,500, but in 1961–62, it dropped to only $4,600.[94] Trappers had to pool their qimmiit in order to attend their traplines. The RCMP report for the year noted:

> *In most cases the dogs are pooled so that two men can travel over a lengthy trap line, but this means the other men have to remain home waiting their turn with the dogs, consequently the traps are unattended over a long period of time.*[95]

While this was a severe blow to many families whose travel, trapping, and hunting would have been affected, no immediate large-scale movement into the settlement was reported or any significant adjustments to settlement patterns noted at the time. It was hoped that by 1963–64, the qimmiit population would have restored itself.[96] Unfortunately, the ordinance also affected Kimmirut qimmiit. Since 1950, the Canadian government had considered Kimmirut a settlement, meaning that the ordinance extended to its residents. The ordinance required that qimmiit be tied up at all times while in defined places, including settlements, but there were also cases where dogs were killed in camps in the Kimmirut region in contravention of the ordinance.

The QTC heard from multiple witnesses in Kimmirut that their qimmiit had been shot or that they had been told to shoot them during this period. This probably happened during the summertime when families temporarily relocated to the settlement. Mary Pudlat recalled for the QTC when her husband's lead qimmiq was killed by the RCMP:

> *Our camp was a place called Pitiqqiq. While we lived at Pitiqqiq, Jutai, my husband, came over to do some trading with the Hudson's Bay Trading Post here. That day when he came in the RCMP shot his lead dog. Back then, it seemed the RCMP officers were trying to kill all lead dogs … He was sad to part with his lead dog and after they shot it, Jutai brought it to the front of the RCMP house. He was frustrated and the people here knew what he had done because they watched him pull the dead dog right to the RCMP officer's house.*[97]

Joannie Ikkidluak was a dogcatcher in Kimmirut for a period and recalls being told by the RCMP to shoot qimmiit that were running around loose. Ikkidluak sometimes caught the loose qimmiit and held them for a short period, but many were never claimed, and he ended up having to shoot them. Ikkidluak remembers that some people were very unhappy with him killing qimmiit, and at one point, he was even summoned before the community council.[98] "All the Inuit people used to scold me. That would make me feel bad. These were the dogs that made us survive in the past."[99]

While there were reports of the qimmiit population recovering from the 1960 epidemic, the combination of disease and shootings must have resulted in too few qimmiit to create full dog teams. Years later, in 1978, the *Nunatsiaq News* reported the first dog

team in fifteen years arriving into the community. Malcolm Farrow, principal of GREC, arrived from Iqaluit on March 20 with his team of six Eskimo dogs. George Pitsula, a local resident, remembers that last dog team, belonging to the Killiktee family, coming to Lake Harbour in 1963.[100]

The lack of qimmiit resulted in many people having to purchase snowmobiles in order to hunt and get around. However, while snowmobiles reduced the amount of food required to feed qimmiit, they were also unreliable and expensive to maintain. Goteleak Judea spoke to the QIA in 2004 about how different it was to use a snowmobile, and how they could break down easily, leaving you stranded.

> *Back then, I had a snowmobile after we were told to kill our dogs. I walked more than once after my snowmobile had broken down. If I had dogs they would have never broken down, when my snowmobile kept breaking down. One time it was so hard when I was walking home thinking if my dogs weren't killed I would be dog teaming instead, and I wouldn't be walking, thinking this way alone it was not an easy moment thinking about it. But everything has its way of passing.*[101]

A boom in the sealskin market followed the outbreak in 1960. New techniques were introduced to improve the preparation of seal pelts, and the increased use of sealskins in European clothiers created a bigger market for Inuit.[102] Skins that sold for $4.00 in 1955 sold for $17.50 in 1963. In the Northwest Territories in 1961–62, there were 10,470 sealskins traded for $48,689. By 1963–64, 46,962 pelts were traded for $691,707.[103] The rise in income earned by Kimmirummiut saw a corresponding rise in the purchase of imported hunting equipment, such as snowmobiles, canoes with motors, and motors for larger boats.[104] The boom was short-lived, however. By the latter half of the decade, sealskin prices dropped because of the impact of animal rights protestors on European purchasers.[105] Up until this point permanent movement into the settlement had been slow; however, more and more Inuit began relocating in order to take advantage of government services and the small amount of employment opportunities available in the settlement.[106]

After years of living on the land, settlement living required some getting used to. The community had never had a full-time government administrator or facilities that lent themselves to the social development of the community. Nevertheless, Kimmirummiut centralized and adopted the tools of modern governance (elections, petitions, lobbying) quickly, while steadfastly insisting that Kimmirut develop according to their needs.[107]

The Kimmirut Settlement Council was formed around 1970–71 and began petitioning for much-needed services such as a proper nursing station. Concerns were also expressed about the lack of telephone services in 1973.[108] The community eventually received telephone and television service in 1979.[109] Kimmirummiut also played a role in discussions over exploratory drilling in Davis Strait during the late 1970s. Local newspapers reported that attendance at community meetings was good, as residents expressed their concerns over the need for adequate consideration of the potential impacts on the environment, wildlife, and Inuit lifestyle and livelihood.[110]

In 1976, the council expressed concern over the southern-style education system. Chairman Maliktoo Lyta told Commissioner Stuart Hodgson:

> *We want our children to learn our traditions and not forget the old ways. I personally went to school for a short time and have forgotten many things. If we forget and our parents die it will be impossible to learn our traditions.*[111]

Lyta called for more money to help teach cultural inclusion in the schools. Even today, Kimmirut is known for maintaining strong ties to traditional Inuit culture.

Conclusion

Kimmirut's history demonstrates repeatedly the determination of Inuit to use their own talents and resources to create cohesive communities rather than places of government convenience. Kimmirummiut worked together to construct an all-weather airstrip during the early 1970s. Despite frequent requests to the government for assistance, and frustrated by the absence of any government action, they took it upon themselves to construct one capable of handling Twin Otters and Skyvans. Constructed over two summers "with wheelbarrows and picks and shovels and the use of a fron-end loader," the new airstrip was completed on October 21, 1974.[112] Local governments supplied lights and beacons the following year.[113] This was a tremendous feat, considering less than ten years earlier officials reported there was "practically no possibility of building any sort of airstrip nearby [Kimmirut] because of the uneven nature of the land."[114]

Other achievements included the incorporation of the Kimik Cooperative Association, which was created to market Kimmirut carvings.[115] Kimmirummiut had a long history of carving, dating back to the time of the whalers. While James Houston noted during his visit to Kimmirut in 1951 that soapstone carvings of human and animal figurines had not yet become a "trade item," the industry had begun to expand by the mid-1960s. An Area Economic Survey estimated that annual carving incomes had almost doubled between 1962 and 1967 from $7,300 to $12,400. Carving provided a suitable supplement to traditional harvest activities and an alternative to wage employment in a community where wage employment had never really been plentiful.[116] In 1978, at least 50% of the adult residents of Kimmirut were active carvers.[117] By 1983, the Northwest Territories Department of Economic Development and Tourism estimated that Kimmirut exported approximately $350,000 worth of arts and crafts in that one year alone.[118]

ENDNOTES

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3 William B. Kemp, *The Harvest Potential of Inuit Camps: A Quantitative Summary of Findings from Research Carried Out in an Isolated Camp of Inuit Hunters on Southern Baffin Island* (Montreal: Dept. of Geography. McGill University, 1975), 17.

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17 Dorothy Eber, *When the Whalers Were Up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic* (Boston: D.R. Godine, 1989), 32.

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20 Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 83.

21 Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, *Settlements of the Northwest Territories*; and Archives of Manitoba, Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), Collection E.118, George Alexander Gall Collection, File 5, Lake Harbour, 1922–1923 (Section III), "A Brief History of Lake Harbour from the NWT Data Book, 1982–83", 1 January 1982.

22 Eber, *When the Whalers Were up North*, 86.

23 For detailed analysis of the changes that occurred because of the introduction of firearms, see Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 6.

24 Ross, *Whaling and Eskimos*, 121.

25 HBCA, Collection E.118, George Alexander Gall Collection, File 5, Lake Harbour, 1922–1923 (Section III), "A Brief History of Lake Harbour from the NWT Data Book, 1982–83", 1 January 1982.

26 Fleming, was also known as the "Flying Bishop", and would later become the Church of England Bishop of the Arctic (1933–1949.)

27 Archibald Lang Fleming, *Archibald the Arctic* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1956), 86.

28 Marybelle Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 101.

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31 Eber, *When the Whalers Were up North*, 150

32 HBCA, Collection E.118, George Alexander Gall Collection, File 5, Lake Harbour, 1922–1923 (Section III), "A Brief History of Lake Harbour from the NWT Data Book, 1982–83", 1 January 1982; Milton Freeman Research Limited, *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project–Volume 1*, 128.

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Foreword (2013)

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

Introduction to the Work of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission

This work began with the breaking of a long silence. In the 1990s, Inuit made great strides in taking charge of their own affairs through the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and the creation of Nunavut. They were then ready to examine the past, including the harm done during the period of greatest change, from 1950 to 1975. They wanted to understand more about their own lives and those lived by their parents, grandparents, and siblings in an era that was profoundly marked by game laws, residential schools, medical evacuations, substantial population movements, and broken promises about housing and jobs. One especially sensitive source of anguish and disturbing memories was the government's campaign to eliminate qimmiit (Inuit sled dogs) from the settlements. Qimmiit were often shot without warning by the RCMP and others, leaving many people without any means of winter transportation. In a culture where qimmiit were vital to hunting and travel, and valued as companions, this campaign struck very close to the well-being of every Inuit family. The history is still a painful wound for many Inuit in the Qikiqtani Region.

For a long time, many Inuit grieved in silence. Others spoke out in anger, aware that their experiences seemed to follow a pattern that was hard to decipher, but was important for understanding the problems in communities today. These feelings led the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) to interview Elders in 2004 about various issues related to moving into settlements. In 2007, the QIA created the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC), a forum where Inuit could speak openly about difficult events in the decades after the Second World War and understand more about how communities took shape and the true costs of the changes. The QTC's investigation had two closely related activities. The first was to gather testimonies about events between 1950 and 1975 from Inuit who had lived through this difficult period, as well as from their children who continue to remember the suffering of their parents and other relatives. Commissioner Igloliorte and QTC staff travelled to all thirteen communities in the Qikiqtani Region between January 2008 and May 2009, and invited all interested residents to share their memories and feelings about how their lives had changed. They also held hearings for the Inuit community in Ottawa, and paid return visits to all communities in early 2010 to report on findings and ask for comments on proposed recommendations. Including interviews that the QIA had already conducted in 2004, the QTC had testimonies from approximately 350 individuals. Hearings were conducted with more flexibility than normal legal proceedings, but to emphasize the seriousness of the task, Commissioner Igloliorte asked all witnesses to affirm that they would tell the truth to the best of their knowledge. He also respected the decision made by a few individuals to keep their experiences private.

In addition to learning about events and impacts through testimonies, the Qikiqtani Truth Commission also completed an extensive archival research program and interviewed Qallunaat who worked in the region during this period. Among the people interviewed were several retired RCMP officers, government officials, and academic researchers.

The Evidence

THE WITNESSES

The QTC is indebted to the many men and women who attended meetings and opened their homes to give their testimonies. People welcomed the commission warmly into their communities and spoke freely and honestly about their lives. Without their testimonies, the commission would not have been able to fully appreciate what happened to Inuit during this period of immense transition. They also provided very thoughtful and constructive feedback and suggestions regarding the kind of recommendations that would promote reconciliation between Inuit and government. A full list of individuals is included in the List of Witnesses on the QTC website.

ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The QTC's research team collected and reviewed accessible archival and secondary sources for the period in focus, 1950 to 1975. This included examinations of relevant records from Library and Archives Canada, as well as the Archives of the Northwest Territories, the RCMP, the Hudson's Bay Company, and Anglican and Roman Catholic bodies. Thousands of documents were digitized for the QTC's research database.

MAPS

Maps provide important details about how Inuit lived and used the territories surrounding their present-day communities. These maps reject a common idea in the south that the Arctic is "empty." In addition to showing the sites of ilagiit nunagivaktangit, details on twentieth-century maps include place names indicating how Inuit knew and utilized the land, along with their travel routes, and the best places for hunting. This kind of information began to be set down on paper before 1840. However, some of the most thorough maps are those created by Inuit for the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project (1976) and the Nunavut Atlas (1992).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (2024 EDITION)

The reports drafted in 2010 for the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) were prepared under the direction of James Igloliorte, Commissioner, and Madeleine Redfern, Executive Director, QTC. The Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) project managers in 2013 were Bethany Scott, Navarana Beveridge, and Sandra Kownak.

The primary authors of most reports were Julie Harris, Contentworks Inc. and Philip P. Goldring, Ph.D. Writing and research support was provided by Joan Bard Miller, Francis Levésque, Ryan Shackleton, Frank J. Tester, Anna Gilmer, Alice Glaze, Teresa Iacobelli, Natascha Morrison, Linda Radford, Dr. Yvonne Boyer, and Brian Cameron.

The translation team for the reports produced in 2013 included Jay Arnakak, Mali Curley, Julia Demcheson, Veronica Dewar, Elisapee Ikkidluak, Emily Illnik, David Joanasie, Leonie Kappi, Pujjuut Kusugak, Nina Tootoo, and Blandina Tulugarjuk. Additional translation for the 2024 editions was provided by Ruth Kadlutsiak.

The work of the QTC would not have been possible without the financial support of the following organizations: Qikiqtani Inuit Association; Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated; Makivik Corporation; Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation; First Air; Air Inuit; Unaalik Aviation; Kenn Borek Air Ltd.

The 2024 editions of the QTC reports were prepared by Julie Harris, Augatnaaq Eccles, Zarina Laalo and Anne Brazeau of Contentworks Inc. under the direction of Inukshuk Aksalnik, Jennifer Ipirq, and Simon Cuerrier of QIA.

For many years, Inuit Elders in the Qikiqtani (Baffin) Region have been haunted by a deep sense of loss as they remember how their lives changed in the decades after 1950. The thematic reports and special studies in this collection explore themes that emerged during the work of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission. What started as an inquiry into the slaughter of sled dogs quickly grew to include other experiences of profound colonial change.

Commissioner James Igloliorte's Final Report, titled *Achieving Saimaqatigiingniq*, and 22 companion thematic and historical reports published by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association in Inuktitut and English weave together evidence from testimonies and documents collected during the Qikiqtani Truth Commission about the consequential 1950–1975 period.

QTC Report Collection

Aaniajurliriniq: Health Care in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Achieving Saimaqatigiingniq: Final Report of the Commissioner of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission

Analysis of the RCMP Sled Dog Report

Igluliriniq: Housing in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Illinniarniq: Schooling in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Nuutauniq: Moves in Inuit Life in the Qikiqtani Region to 1975

Paliisikkut: Policing in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Pivalliajuliriniq: Economic Development in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

Qimmiliriniq: Inuit Sled Dogs in the Qikiqtani Region, 1950–1975

The Official Mind of Canadian Colonialism

Arctic Bay (Ikpiarjuk) Community History, 1950–1975

Clyde River (Kangiqtugaapik) Community History, 1950–1975

Grise Fiord (Ausuittuq) Community History, 1950–1975

Igloolik Community History, 1950–1975

Iqaluit Community History, 1950–1975

Kimmirut Community History, 1950–1975

Kinngait Community History, 1950–1975

Pangnirtung Community History, 1950–1975

Pond Inlet (Mittimatalik) Community History, 1950–1975

Qikiqtarjuaq Community History, 1950–1975

Resolute Community History, 1950–1975

Sanikiluaq Community History, 1950–1975

Sanirajak Community History, 1950–1975

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