




Qikiqtani Truth Commission

Community Histories 1950–1975

Clyde River

Qikiqtani Inuit Association

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Qikiqtani Truth Commission

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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.

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

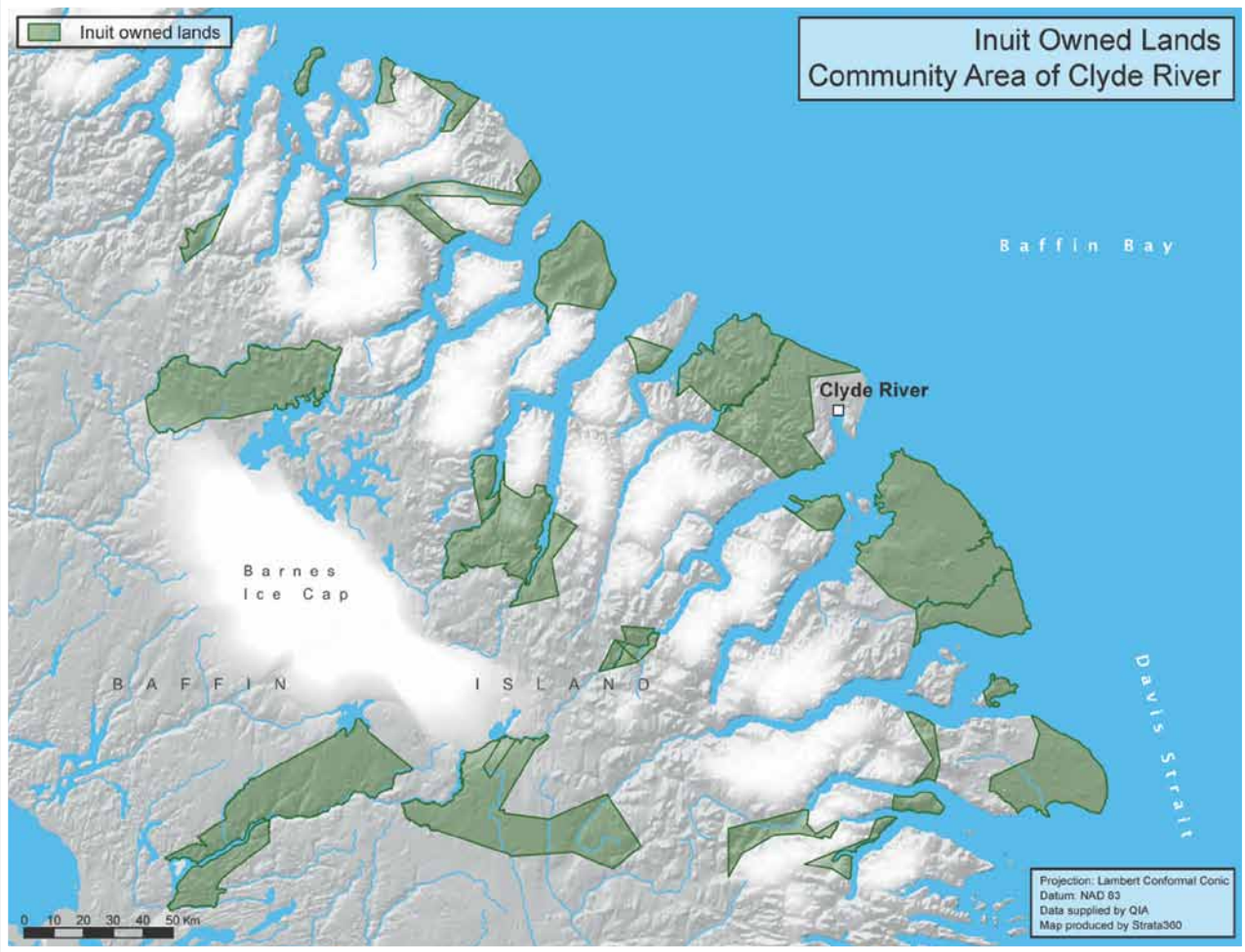
they can understand what our family has experienced; and it is also for the young people of Canada, so that they will also understand our story.

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


Inuit owned lands
Inuit Owned Lands
Community Area of Clyde River
Baffin Bay
Clyde River
Barnes
Ice Cap
BAFFIN ISLAND
Davis Strait
0 10 20 30 40 50 Km
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: NAD 83
Data supplied by QIA
Map produced by Strata360

Clyde River

Kangirqtugaapik

The hamlet of Clyde River is located on the east coast of Baffin Island on the western shore of Patricia Bay. The nearby fiords stretch towards the oldest ice cap in Canada, the Barnes Ice Cap, and are known for having some of the most spectacular scenery in Canada. Clyde River is also known locally as Kangirqtugaapik or Kangitluraapik. The words mean "a nice little inlet." Inuit of Clyde River call themselves Kangiqtugaapingmiut. They are well known for their commitment to maintaining Inuit knowledge and for their artwork, especially soapstone carvings and silkscreens.

The land-use area of Clyde River is generally considered to start in the north at Buchan Gulf and reach to Home Bay in the south. Historically, the Clyde River region was irregularly populated as people moved throughout the area taking advantage of the local resources. The arrival of whalers and trading companies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries changed local settlement patterns. The establishment of the short-lived Sabellum Trading

and Gold Company at Cape Henry Kater, and the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) at Clyde River, attracted people to the Clyde River region. At the same time, the HBC relocated a number of families from Kimmirut, Cape Dorset, Iqaluit, and Pangnirtung to the area, increasing the population and impacting mobility. The construction of the weather station in 1942, and the Long Range Navigation station (LORAN) and RCMP detachment in 1953–54, amplified the Qallunaat presence at Clyde River. Kangiqtugaapingmiut took advantage of the new prospects for trade as well as the increased opportunities for wage employment. With the arrival of government programs in the 1960s, the population of Clyde River doubled as people moved off the land and into the settlement. In 1970, the decision was made to move the community from the east to the west side of Patricia Bay, where it is still located today. Over the years, Kangiqtugaapingmiut have continued to work to combine their traditional way of life with community life.

When the LORAN station closed in 1974, Clyde River's population had reached 357. On July 1, 1978, Clyde River received hamlet status, and by 2011, the population had grown to 934. Today Clyde River is home to the Ilisaqsivik Society, dedicated to promoting Inuit culture and language. It is also the location of the main campus of Nunavut's new cultural school, Piqqusilirivvik, which officially opened on May 4, 2011.

Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta

ILAGIIT NUNAGIVAKTANGIT

Present-day Clyde River is situated on a shallow gravel ridge on the north coast of Clyde Inlet. The Inlet, extending 100 kilometres into the central-east coast of Baffin Island, is typical of the many deep fiords and inlets that define the ragged coastline of the area. North of Clyde River, a low coastal

plain extends from the coastline inward for several kilometres. To the south, a low terraced plain runs parallel from the coastline inward and connects with low-lying hills. There is a distinctive rise known as Black Bluff on the eastern shore of Patricia Bay that reaches a height of 478 metres. As one of the highest features in the area, the black cliffs serve as a landmark for local Inuit travelling through the area. Other prominent features in the area include the numerous ice caps and glaciers located in the interior of eastern Baffin Island, the most notable being the Barnes Ice Cap, Canada's oldest and one of its ten largest.

Clyde River was originally located on the eastern shore of Patricia Bay, but surface conditions forced the settlement's relocation to the western shore in 1970. The soil along the eastern shore is composed of silt and fine sand mixed with clay and gravel. Runoff from the nearby hills kept the ground wet throughout the entire melt season, making for poor building conditions.

The Clyde River region roughly stretches from Buchan Gulf in the north to Home Bay in the south, a distance of over 400 kilometres. The early history of the area is the subject of oral accounts and studies by Qallunaat researchers. Details with regard to early Inuit settlement and migration patterns prior to the arrival of Qallunaat whalers and trading companies are vague. Early documentation produced by Franz Boas in 1888 implied that the area was only rarely inhabited and rather acted as a buffer between the Akudnirmiut of Home Bay and the Tununirmiut of Ponds Bay (Pond Inlet area). Boas suggested that these two groups visited the area at irregular intervals, but that Clyde River did not, itself, have a distinct Inuit population. He noted that Akudnirmiut regularly travelled to the islands in Home Bay to hunt caribou during the summer, or to Isabella Bay, McBeth Fiord, and Inugsuin Fiord, south of Clyde Inlet, to reach the lakes and rivers important for fishing Arctic char or hunting walrus (Inugsuin Fiord). Farther north, Boas reported that Tununirmiut occasionally used the areas around Buchan Gulf and Cambridge Fiord. It is important to note that Boas never travelled to Clyde River himself, but rather only reached as far as Home Bay, 200

kilometres to the south. A 1928 census conducted by Therkel Mathiassen in Pond Inlet echoed the above findings, while also noting that a small number of Tununirmiut were loosely connected to Akudnirmiut near Clyde River and Home Bay, suggesting that both groups may have travelled throughout the Clyde River region more often than previously assumed. This is supported by the fact that William Edward Parry, while on a British Admiralty expedition in September 1820, met a group of Inuit near what is now Clyde River. When compared with Kangiqtugaapingmiut memory and oral history, evidence further suggests that people occupied areas throughout the Clyde River region for multiple years and that it was more than a "void to be traversed as quickly as possible." A 1903 Canadian Geological Survey expedition to the area on the SS *Neptune* estimated the population of the area near Clyde River and Home Bay to be around ninety.

Based on immersive fieldwork with local people using local knowledge and oral histories, George Wenzel, a cultural anthropologist and geographer, described the general east–west seasonal cycle of Inuit in the Clyde River region. During the winter, ilagiit nunagivaktangit were commonly set up near the headlands of fiords to take advantage of the seal-hunting grounds. Spring, summer, and fall settlement patterns were more transitory. In May and June, groups would move west to take advantage of the fishing sites. Ilagiit nunagivaktangit were occasionally erected in areas where stone weirs or walrus haul-out locations had previously been constructed because of the relative permanence they provided. In the summer, people travelled along the river valleys towards inland caribou grounds. They returned in the autumn, arriving at the fiord heads in time to take advantage of the char fishery. The cycle would finish in the winter, with a return to ilagiit nunagivaktangit near the fiord headlands. A typical pattern of travel consisted of sealing at various fiords in the winter, fishing at the heads of fiords in May and June, passing inland to hunt caribou through the summer, returning to the fiord heads for autumn char fishing, and then returning to the winter ilagiit nunagivaktangit by boat or over ice to hunt seals.

Three species of seals were hunted. The ringed seal, the most important in terms of food, fuel, clothing, and tools, was found all along the eastern coast of Baffin Island from Buchan Gulf in the north to Cape Hooper in the south. Favoured sealing grounds were located at Scott Inlet and Alexander Bay. During the winter, breathing holes were used for hunting, and in both the winter and spring, large leads and cracks in the sea ice that formed off many of the headlands and peninsulas—such as Cape Christian (Pinguajuk)—were used whenever possible. Open-water hunting was concentrated around fiords and islands. Bearded seals were hunted during the late summer on floating ice pans and at the mouths of fiords and bays during the early fall. Hunters often reported Scott Inlet, Eglinton Fiord, the mouth of Inugsuin Fiord, and Isabella and Alexander Bays as the most important areas for hunting ringed and bearded seals. Harp seals were hunted in a small area near Cape Christian, about 10 kilometres off the coast, but were of less economic value.

Man and woman stand outside a house in Clyde River holding a large seal skin

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Polar bears were another important resource for Inuit in the region, and probably accounted for a significant portion of their meat each year. Hunting generally concentrated around small areas associated with bears' feeding and denning locations, with most polar bear hunting occurring on the land and sea ice between Cape Hooper and Buchan Gulf.

Walrus, belugas, and narwhals, with narwhals being more common to the area, were hunted when they fed in the shallow fiords and inlets during the fall where hunters could take advantage of open water. Caribou hunting and fox trapping took place year-round and wildfowl were often taken during these hunting trips. Weirs were used to catch char in the region's fiords, rivers, and lakes. There were two fish weirs where Clyde River meets Clyde Inlet.

EARLY CONTACTS

Prior to the twentieth century, there was very little contact between Inuit and Qallunaat in the Clyde River region. In 1818, a Royal Navy explorer, Captain John Ross, named many features along the west coast of Baffin Bay and Davis Strait, including Clyde River and Clyde Inlet. The original purpose of the Ross expedition was to locate a northwest passage, but, while surveying Baffin Bay, Ross missed the entrance to the Lancaster Sound passage and instead turned home. On his way, Ross very roughly mapped the coastline, but made little effort to contact Inuit or study conditions ashore.

In September 1820, William Edward Parry explored Lancaster Sound as part of a British Admiralty expedition, providing the first documented contact with Inuit in the Clyde River area. After encountering a group of whalers who reported seeing Inuit near the entrance to Clyde Inlet, Parry stopped overnight at Patricia Bay. The meeting place was at or near the present-day summer and autumn ilagiit nunagivaktangat known as Supaigaiyuktuq, approximately 20 kilometres from what is now Clyde River. There, Parry met seventeen Inuit with whom he traded, noting that they were in

possession of beads and metal goods and providing descriptions of their clothing and dwellings in his records. This was probably the first introduction that local Inuit would have had to rum. Parry also reported that the group was preparing to move to a nearby winter ilagiit nunagivaktangat, approximately 2 kilometres away. Clyde River oral accounts explain that this winter ilagiit nunagivaktangat is the same as a current archaeological site containing collapsed dwellings identified as being Thule in origin. Kangiqtugaapingmiut explain that similar dwellings were used throughout the region as late as the 1970s. It has yet to be confirmed, however, whether anyone living in Clyde River today is a descendant of one of the people Parry met in 1820.

People living in the area also came into contact with whalers from Scotland, England, and America. Stations for hunting, securing supplies, rendering blubber, and trading with Inuit were set up by whalers along the coastline. Larger stations were established in the north in the Eclipse Sound area and to the south in Cumberland Sound. Small temporary stations were constructed at Clyde Inlet and Cape Henry Kater. However, ice conditions in the Clyde River region effectively limited whalers' access to the area, resulting in little use of the stations. Until recently, ice lasted until late August, which made landing on the coast difficult.

The whalers' focus on the areas to the north and south of the Clyde River region, as well as the travel patterns of Kangiqtugaapingmiut meant that there was limited contact with Qallunaat within the region during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition to the whalers' presence, the establishment of trading posts at Pond Inlet (a small fur-trading post in 1903) and Kivitoo (Sabellum Company in 1916) drew Inuit away from the Clyde River region, attracted north and south by the prospects of trade. This resulted in even sparser occupancy of the Clyde River area. This changed in 1923 when the Sabellum Company and the HBC moved in. The Sabellum Company established a post on Henry Kater Peninsula, and the HBC on the site of what would become the original community of Clyde River, on the east side of Patricia Bay. When the Sabellum Company closed in 1926 after the death

of Mr. Pitchforth, the post trader, the HBC became the primary Qallunaat influence in the area. This new, permanent trade presence drew Inuit who had previously been attracted north and south, back to the region to trade.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF LIFE

Trade with whalers and trading companies such as the Sabellum Company and HBC, impacted the day-to-day life, and settlement and mobility patterns of Kangiqtugaapingmiut. Through trade, new technologies such as tobacco, guns, ammunition, fox traps, hatchets, telescopes, pots, musical instruments, sewing machines, and other items led to changes in hunting techniques, diet, and clothing. In addition, contact with Qallunaat, while for the most part peaceful, introduced new diseases, such as influenza, measles, and venereal disease.

The arrival of the new HBC post at Clyde River and the temporary Sabellum Company post at Cape Henry Kater provided a new means for accessing trade goods through trapping. While trapping was a relatively new activity for Kangiqtugaapingmiut, it did not significantly alter traditional hunting patterns because fox trapping occurred on the sea ice in conjunction with the seal hunt. In reality, while furs were the sole source of income for many years, trapping specifically did not assume great importance among Kangiqtugaapingmiut. They continued to rely almost completely on hunting during the 1920s and 1930s.

Trapping and trading, however, did influence the choices people made about where to live. Reports from the HBC and Sabellum Company, as well as RCMP patrol reports from the Pond Inlet Detachment, shed light on the Clyde River region's settlement patterns during the early 1920s and 1930s. Reports maintained that the posts at Pond Inlet and Kivitoo had left the Clyde River area scarcely settled. RCMP reported only four ilagiit nunagivaktangit in the Clyde River region. Kangiqtugaapingmiut memory, however, suggests

that there were more winter ilagiit nunagivaktangit located throughout the Clyde River region. Feeling that the area lacked inhabitants, the HBC relocated a number of trappers and their families from Lake Harbour, Cape Dorset, Iqaluit, and Pangnirtung between 1935 and 1940 in an attempt to increase the post's profitability. As the fox trade was considered strong in those locations, it was felt that the trappers were adept and able to adjust positively to the move. The family that had formally assisted the Sabellum Company at Henry Kater was one of the relocated families. When many people who had moved north or south from the Clyde River region to be closer to the trading posts in Pond Inlet or Kivitoo, returned, they supplemented and at times replaced the relocated families, and the population in the area increased.

In 1928, RCMP reported eight Inuit living within 25 kilometres of the post at Clyde River. They reported two families at Dexterity Harbour, three families at Scott Inlet, one family at Eglinton Fiord, and three at Cape Henry Kater. All were reported to be living with sufficient access to game. Almost ten years later, RCMP reported two families at Scott Inlet, two families living at the Clyde River post with four families located within a few kilometres, and ten families in the Home Bay area. By the early 1940s, settlement had begun slowly migrating towards the "core" of the Clyde River region. At the same time, locations such as Eglinton and Sam Ford fiords, which had previously seen sequential occupation by different families, were now home to more stable ilagiit nunagivaktangit, such as Natsilsiuk, Nasaklukuluk, Akuliahatak, and Aqviqtiuq. Estimates of the population during the 1940s indicated that between 140 and 180 people lived between Coutts Inlet and the Henry Kater Peninsula. The extended stays at the winter ilagiit nunagivaktangit may have been the result of the increase in population, creating constraints on regional mobility.

Up until the Second World War, the HBC was the primary Qallunaat presence in the Clyde River region. In 1942, the US Army Air Corps established a weather station for the Crimson Route on the eastern shore of Patricia Bay next to the HBC post at Clyde River. Responsibility for the station

was transferred to the Canadian Department of Transport (now Transport Canada, TC) in April 1945; the station was eventually closed in 1963. A concentration of Qallunaat men were now found in Clyde River working at the HBC post and at the weather station. The enclave provided Kangiqtugaapingmiut with limited opportunities for wage employment. Along with the decline in fur prices during the Second World War, the attraction of wage labour as an alternative source of income rose in importance. Social benefits, especially family allowance, old age pensions, and welfare support were also introduced during this time. Combined with the arrival of military facilities at nearby Cape Christian in the 1950s, Kangiqtugaapingmiut faced new challenges as they adapted to a new, mixed economy of hunting, trapping, and wage employment and increased Qallunaat presence in the area. By 1953, the Inuit population of the Clyde River region was 147. Only 20 people were living in the settlement of Clyde River itself—2 Inuit working for the HBC post, 2 employed as support labour by the US military, their families, and a widow. The majority of people in the area continued to live on the land outside the settlement, only travelling to Clyde River when the annual supply ship arrived to trade, to receive medical care, or to accept social transfer payments.

Sangussaqtauliqtilluta, 1953–1960

The Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line was a joint US-Canadian project consisting of a series of radar sites across Alaska, Canada, and Greenland designed to provide advanced warning of a Soviet attack over the polar region. At the time, it was considered to be one of the largest construction projects ever attempted. In 1953–54, the US Coast Guard established a long-range

navigation site for the DEW Line at Cape Christian, approximately 20 kilometres north of Clyde River on Clyde Inlet. First known as DOPE 2, it was later renamed the US Coast Guard LORAN Station, Cape Christian. The site included a main station, garage, airstrip and terminal, antenna, fuel storage facilities, and storage buildings. The LORAN site remained the responsibility of the United States until 1974 when it was abandoned. At that time, all existing materials and facilities were left in place and the site was transferred to the Canadian government.

Unlike many other DEW Line installations, the LORAN station at Cape Christian did not employ Inuit labour. Nevertheless, many Kangiqtugaapingmiut were attracted to the area out of curiosity, to take advantage of discarded building materials, or in hopes of potential employment. The RCMP arrived to open a new permanent detachment at Cape Christian in 1953 where they were expected to enforce rules to stop fraternization between Inuit and military personnel and to keep Inuit away from the LORAN station.

Almost as soon as the RCMP detachment began reporting, it expressed concern about Inuit "loitering" at Clyde River. "Loitering" was a term used by the RCMP to refer to time spent by Inuit in Qallunaat enclaves or settlements while socializing, looking for work, or waiting for services, such as health care. Loitering was strongly discouraged, but the procedures and policies were contradictory and confusing to Kangiqtugaapingmiut. Sam Palituq explained to the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) that many Kangiqtugaapingmiut came to Clyde River as a necessary part of their seasonal routine. "When we came for re-supply in the spring, the whole family came here, to Clyde River . . . We came here to get some supplies." Also, at ship time, many Kangiqtugaapingmiut were hired by TC and the HBC to help unload and handle the freight, and were paid an hourly wage. Due to the sheer volume of supplies, many Inuit received substantial incomes from the few weeks of work. The majority of supplies for Clyde River were sent by ship, with three to four vessels, including chartered steamships, Canadian Coast Guard vessels, and HBC supply ships, making up the annual shipping

Canadian Coast Guard helicopter takes off in front of building near group of Clyde River residents

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season. What air transport that took place was via float-equipped aircraft during the summer and ski-equipped aircraft during the winter. However, periods during which the planes could land was short and the facilities at Cape Christian were used only in cases where air transport was necessary and unavailable another way.

At the same time, RCMP instructed Kangiqtugaapingmiut that they needed to come to Clyde River for annual medical check-ups and X-rays by staff on the *C.D. Howe*. Following instructions, Kangiqtugaapingmiut moved close to the settlement in the spring, waiting for medical officials

to arrive. Since many Kangiqtugaapingmiut did not have their own water transportation, they remained in the area until freeze-up, unable to return to their ilagiit nunagivaktangit at Scott Inlet or Home Bay. RCMP reported that, in 1953, Kangiqtugaapingmiut owned only two small, unpowered wooden boats and one eighteen-foot canoe with an outboard motor. In fact, the officers writing the reports recommended that more boats be provided to allow people to return to their homes more quickly.

While the RCMP discouraged Kangiqtugaapingmiut from visiting the LORAN station at Cape Christian, they also managed some of the selling of crafts, clothes, and furs by Kangiqtugaapingmiut to US Coast Guard and TC personnel. The amount of trade appears to have been substantial. The weather station cook left with eight polar bear skins, twenty blue fox furs, and six white fox furs under an export permit in 1951 before the RCMP arrived. It was rumoured that he also purchased and sold a number of other furs and country produce to the ships and planes that visited. As soon as the RCMP arrived, however, Kangiqtugaapingmiut were discouraged from visiting the LORAN station, and rather had to go through the RCMP to sell their products to the military personnel.

In 1957, the RCMP declared the loitering problem to have been "solved" through a policy of encouraging Inuit to return to their ilagiit nunagivaktangit and convincing Qallunaat to stop giving excess materials or food (termed "handouts" by the RCMP) to Inuit. Discouraging certain behaviour on the part of the RCMP probably had a strong effect among Kangiqtugaapingmiut. Johanasie Apak remembers: "At that time, our parents listened to what they were told. As soon as they were told to do something, they went ahead and did it. That is how it used to be. I've done it myself. We were all scared of the Qallunaat." However, the decline in what was perceived as loitering may have correlated with changes in sealskin prices. In the postwar years, prices were low until 1958, when they increased, eventually reaching a high of $25 per skin. Because of the low prices, more Kangiqtugaapingmiut probably looked to wage employment such as unloading ships, construction

or labour jobs, or trade opportunities with Qallunaat, to supplement their incomes. To do so they would have needed to be near the settlement. The increase in prices in 1958, combined with an increased demand for carvings and the now well-established distribution of family allowances and welfare, brought Kangiqtugaapingmiut income to a new high, potentially allowing more time between necessary trips to the settlement.

In the 1960s, it was clear that Kangiqtugaapingmiut were taking advantage of new economic opportunities and services associated with the settlement. This meant that more people were deciding to live in Clyde River. In 1961, the Inuit population of Clyde River was 32; by 1964 it would reach 107, although it dropped to 91 two years later, and by 1969 it had reached 210. Four major winter ilagiit nunagivaktangit with a total population near 60 were still active outside the immediate Clyde River area in the early 1960s. Two ceased before 1965, and a third by 1968 precipitated by ill health and accidents resulting in the remaining people moving to the settlement. These ilagiit nunagivaktangit were at Akuliahatak at Eglinton Fiord, Naiaunausaq–Alpatuq at Henry Kater Peninsula, Natsilsiuk near Scott Inlet, and Nasalukuluk at Sam Ford Fiord. At the start of the decade, RCMP also reported families residing at smaller ilagiit nunagivaktangit located at Cape Hewett, Inugsuin Fiord (Piniraq), and just outside of Clyde River.

Nunalinnguqtitauliqtilluta, 1960–1975

AGENDAS AND PROMISES

The establishment of military facilities in the North and general social and political changes in the postwar period led the Canadian federal government

to develop a newfound interest in what it termed the "welfare" of the Inuit. Efforts were made to implement a number of programs throughout the Arctic aimed at providing services considered essential for all Canadians. The most significant and far-reaching programs were in the fields of education, health care, and housing. They standardized administrative and logistical procedures and policies, while also centralizing the delivery of services in government-chosen places, including Clyde River. The fate of Kangiqtugaapingmiut families was closely tied to the way in which the programs were delivered and managed. Housing, in particular, was used to entice Kangiqtugaapingmiut to move to the settlement. However, the rapid increase in the settlement's population resulted in the need to address developmental constraints posed by building conditions on the east shore of Patricia Bay. By 1963, discussions were underway to relocate the settlement to the west side of the bay, although the move itself was not completed until 1970.

Federal authorities believed that education and training would provide Inuit with access to more of the economic opportunities available to Canadians. In 1960, the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (now Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, AANDC) delivered a school to Clyde River. The school prompted renewed concern among the RCMP about the potential for loitering. Constable R. E. Boughen reported that Kangiqtugaapingmiut were bringing their children to the settlement for school but waiting around for a few days. He cautioned that it could lead to parents hanging around to avoid "breaking up" the family. Again, the RCMP approach to loitering was contradictory. Children were being encouraged to attend the new school, but the RCMP and others saw negative consequences if parents and siblings were expected to live apart from the students. Inuit and most Qallunaat understood that children were an integral part of Inuit life and that families relied on their labour, keen eyes and ears, and companionship. As Jason Palluq recalled, "I was in school for a very short while, maybe a year, but my parents needed my help with day-to-day things." Many adults might have wanted to participate in

Homemaking class, Clyde River
NWT ARCHIVES

night classes as well, which were likely offered in the community since the inception of the school. In 1973, adult educator Larry Okkumaluk expressed his pleasure in the demand for adult classes, citing the positive reception to classes in the previous years. Two eight-bedroom hostels meant to house children so that the parents could return to their ilagiit nunagivaktangit arrived in 1962, but were not erected, as they were missing parts needed for construction. Nonetheless, many parents probably would have felt uncomfortable leaving their children in the hostels, instead choosing to remain close to the settlement.

Health care services eventually arrived in Clyde River, too. Since its inception, the HBC post officer had acted as the lay dispenser. When medical advice was needed, the doctor at Pangnirtung was contacted by radio. With the construction of the LORAN Station at Cape Christian, the US Coast Guard doctor would examine people if the illness was severe, but this was not common practice. In the fall of 1956, an unknown virus killed seven people in the region. The RCMP complained that the lack of facilities likely caused the deaths of some who might have otherwise been saved. "This office has an ample supply of medicine but the district is in dismal need of a locale to treat such emergencies. To effectively nurse gravely ill patients in a filthy, damp, cold and seamy duck tent in sub-zero temperatures is indeed a very difficult task." In 1957, the RCMP submitted their first request for a nursing station, however it would be over a decade before one arrived. An Indian and Northern Health Service (INHS) short-stay cabin was constructed in 1963, but no staff was provided. In 1965, the HBC post

Mother and child, 1950

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officer was still acting as the lay dispenser. It is unclear when the first nurse arrived at Clyde River. RCMP reports suggest one was expected in January 1969.

Between 1950 and 1969, the *C.D. Howe* made yearly summer trips to the Eastern Arctic. The ship was specially designed to carry medical supplies and personnel and would stop at settlements to screen for tuberculosis. Among Inuit, the ship caused a great deal of anxiety, as once onboard for testing, those that were infected were transported at very short notice to hospitals in the South where they were treated for months or even years. Many never returned, having died while away. In his 1988 study on tuberculosis, P.G. Nixon noted that approximately 70% of Kangiqtugaapingmiut over the age of twenty-five had, at one time, been hospitalized in the South. The removal of so many people would have had a devastating impact on the close kinship groups that made up the ilagiit nunagivaktangit in the Clyde River area. Families were incredibly interdependent, so removing even one member could be devastating, and often would result in the remaining

Family outside of skin tent, August 26, 1932
NWT ARCHIVES

members having to abandon their ilagiit nunagivaktangit and move into the settlement. The leader at Natsilsiuk was evacuated south for tuberculosis treatment in 1959 and his three-year absence and subsequent need for constant medical care upon his return resulted in the entire community's move to Clyde River in 1962. Dissolution of other ilagiit nunagivaktangit under similar conditions, as well as moving to accompany children attending school, meant more and more Kangiqtugaapingmiut were relocating to Clyde River and were in need of housing.

Inuit moving to the settlement had access to a limited number of prefabricated houses in the 1960s. Prior to this, there were few Southern-style houses in the community. In 1955, surplus US Coast Guard Atwell huts had been provided to Inuit employed by TC and the HBC, but by 1957 rotting boards and tears had rendered them useless. By 1960, the RCMP reported that most houses in the Clyde River area were made out of scrap wood, canvas, and sod.

Kangiqtugaapingmiut visiting the settlement during the winter of 1963 expressed a desire to obtain a house. By 1964, there were five welfare houses and five low-cost houses in the settlement. Unfortunately, this number still fell far short of demand, and the majority of Kangiqtugaapingmiut still resided in makeshift shacks. Levi Illingayuk recalled, "We were told that there was appropriate housing available. When we moved, there wasn't any housing available." Johanasie Apak shared a similar memory with the QTC. "The Qallunaat who were at the DEW Line had real houses. The Inuit didn't have real houses . . . They had qarmaqs, some had their own shack, that way they were able to have a house." An Inuit survey conducted in 1965 compiled by the Public Housing Section of the AANDC reported that many of the houses consisted of only one room, often occupied by entire families. There were eighteen one-room houses for an estimated Inuit population of 238. One one-room house was home to eleven people. In discussing life in the settlement, Kangiqtugaapingmiut recall that they were promised good housing and low rents when they moved from the land. Johanasie Apak

remembers having to pay more and more for rent once he received a house. "We started renting at $2.00 per month. Later on . . . three-bedroom housing cost $15.00 per month. We were told that it would be this way, but today, it is now almost impossible."

In 1963, the rising demand for housing prompted discussions of a large-scale building program at Clyde River. The current settlement (located on the east side of Patricia Bay) had been constructed on muskeg over permafrost and there was no local source of gravel closer than 5 kilometres. With the runoff from the surrounding hills, the poor soil conditions in the area, and the lack of proper drainage the ground stayed wet throughout the melt season, providing for poor building conditions. There was simply not enough room at the current settlement site to accommodate future expansion, so recommendations were made to find an alternative townsite. In 1967, an Ontario engineering firm recommended relocation across the bay based on soil analysis and discussions with the "departments involved and with the local residents." Nevertheless, there were a number of problems with the new site, too. While the old site became very wet and swampy during summer, the new site was battered by winds and snow during winter. The existing site had been occupied by generations of families because there was rarely any wind and it had good landing beaches for canoes, factors that also led the HBC to choose the location for its post. In spite of various concerns, however, seven new houses were erected on the western shore of Patricia Bay in 1967 as the start of a new settlement location.

The settlement move was poorly managed and there were construction delays that eventually forced a motion in the NWT Council in 1969. This motion ultimately suggested that the NWT government refrain "from moving the present town site and . . . develop the present town site at greatest speed possible to alleviate the over-crowding, the poor health conditions, and the poor education facilities."

As part of discussions on the motion, Simonie Michael elaborated on the "deplorable conditions" at Clyde River. The school that had been operating

since 1960 was now housing more than eighty-eight children. Although a larger school had been delivered in 1968, it was still sitting on the beach due to construction delays. While the construction crews had erected three new houses, they now occupied them, leaving Kangiqtugaapingmiut living in "cracker-boxes," using oil drums as stoves, burning whatever they could find to heat their homes. In addition, the settlement still had no nursing station. By 1969, out of a total population of 266 in the Clyde River area, 210 lived at Clyde River, with only four Inuit living at Cape Christian and the remaining people in four outlying ilagiit nunagivaktangit.

NWT Commissioner Stuart Hodgson visited Clyde River during the spring 1969 and reported a divided community, with Patricia Bay separating the old townsite and the new townsite. Two boat accidents in the summer of 1969, resulting in two deaths, illustrated the physical dangers

Inuit women and children outside of buildings in Clyde River

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of the division. The people at the new townsite had witnessed the accident, but no boat was available for a rescue. Arnaq Illauq lost her husband during one of the boating accidents, as she explained to the QTC. "During the construction of the houses around 1969, my husband tried to cross from there to here and drowned. They never found his body. When I tried to get some compensation from the place he worked at, nobody listened to me. We never received any compensation. That really affected my life."

The divisions in the community were taking their toll. In late 1969, the regional administrator, J. B. H. Gunn, recommended that the community be reunited as soon as possible at the new location. The remainder of the old townsite was relocated during the spring and summer of 1970, although some buildings, such as the TC buildings, remained at the old townsite. After the move, the RCMP detachment relocated from Cape Christian to the new Clyde River site and an airstrip was developed north of the community. Some dwellings remain near the old site, but they are used only during spring and summer.

Shaping Community Life

During the 1960s, the majority of Kangiqtugaapingmiut had moved into the community of Clyde River, encouraged directly and indirectly by the promises of education, health care, and housing. While centralization facilitated government logistical concerns and the administration of the area, for Kangiqtugaapingmiut it represented new challenges that had to be overcome, as Johanasie Apak remembered. "[Community life] was okay at first because there were only a few families that lived here. When more people started moving here, more problems started." Hunters were no longer living in areas they were familiar with, choosing instead to move as they pleased to follow game. They now found themselves in a more concentrated

community, meaning they had to travel farther to hunt. Settlement living also meant more qimmiit were living in one place, resulting in increased potential for the spread of disease among qimmiit and for conflict between humans and qimiit. These challenges effectively led to a transition among Kangiqtugaapingmiut from owning dog teams to owning snowmobiles. By the 1970s, in order to pay for things like housing, as well as snowmobiles and their maintenance, Kangiqtugaapingmiut were fully embracing the notion of a mixed economy.

Prior to any major centralization at Clyde River, RCMP had reported little to no disease among qimmiit in the Clyde River region. From 1964 to 1968, after many Kangiqtugaapingmiut had moved into the community, they reported no disease at all. This is contradictory to evidence presented by George Wenzel, who conducted fieldwork in Clyde River during the early 1970s. Wenzel reported that there "was a massive die-off of dogs from two major episodes of canine distemper between 1964 and 1966. Clyde Inuit estimate that at least 500 dogs died locally." This would have greatly diminished the qimmiit populations, affecting Kangiqtugaapingmiut hunting patterns and techniques, as qimmiit were relied upon heavily for transportation.

At the same time, with high numbers of qimmiit now living in close proximity, the likelihood of conflict between qimmiit and people resulted in strict enforcement of the Ordinance Respecting Dogs by the RCMP. As part of the ordinance, qimmiit were required to be tied up at all times. This was contradictory to traditional Kangiqtugaapingmiut habits when it came to taking care of their qimmiit. In addition, qimmiit were particularly known for breaking free, and when they did, they were often shot. Many Kangiqtugaapingmiut shared memories of their qimmiit being shot. In an interview with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Jacobie Iqalukjuak remembered the day in 1964 when three of his qimmiit were killed:

> The first time that I found out dogs had to be tied was when we came to Clyde River to buy supplies. We were told to tie them up

> as it was not allowed for dogs to be loose . . . Three got killed. One of them I still envision to today. That dog was shot from a distance and it did not die. It was dragging its behind, bleeding. It could only use its front legs. As it approached me, it was watching me, it hurt so bad watching that particular dog. I can still see it in my mind. I did not know why they were being shot. I assumed that maybe I was not allowed to get my dogs ready for travelling in that particular area. I started tying my dogs to any rope that was available. I wanted to leave as soon as possible because I needed the rest of the dogs to get back home.

While many Kangiqtugaapingmiut received no explanation as to why their qimmiit were being shot, some were told it was to inhibit their travel. Johanasie Apak told the QIA, "We were told not to have dogs any more. We would live in the community and not travel outside it." This may have been to encourage movement into the settlement. A 1968 Area Economic Survey suggested that the reason migration to Clyde River had been slower than to other communities may have been due to its accessibility. Distances from the surrounding ilagiit nunagivaktangit were shorter in terms of boat or dog team, or even snowmobile. Shooting qimmiit would have limited the ability of Kangiqtugaapingmiut to travel to and from the settlement, ultimately resulting in many moving into the community. Regardless of the reasons provided, the loss of qimmiit had deep impacts on Kangiqtugaapingmiut. Mary Iqaqrialuk remembered how the loss of their qimmiit affected her husband:

OPPOSITE PAGE: Man and boy being on a qamutik being pulled by sled dogs, 1950
NWT ARCHIVES

> We were not told why [they were killed]. They were our only form of transportation. It was very hard on my husband. He had the responsibility to feed us, but he did not have the means . . . His mind was not normal as he used worry about where the next meal would come from.

Two dogs outside canvas-covered shacks

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

These devastating losses, whether from disease or strict enforcement of the Ordinance, resulted in a dramatic shortage of qimmiit by the end of the 1960s. By 1971, there were only 185 qimmiit left in the area. In place of qimmiit, Kangiqtugaapingmiut turned to newer technology such as the snowmobile to maintain their ability to hunt and travel. RCMP reports during the 1960s note the rise in snowmobile ownership in Clyde River. The first two autoboggans (enclosed tracked vehicles) owned by Inuit arrived in Clyde River in 1962. By 1964, there were an additional five snowmobiles. Two more were reported purchased in 1966.

The cost of a new snowmobile was still quite high for a casual wage earner. Johanasie Apak remembers, "I had a Ski-Doo at that time, I didn't get it right away although they were quite cheap, about $700 to $800. It

seemed very expensive at that time." However, despite their costs, it was more than just a desire to own a snowmobile—it was a necessity. The centralization of the population that occurred at Clyde River during the 1960s meant that an increased number of hunters were competing for game in areas close to the community. To reach more remote hunting grounds by qimmiit was difficult and time-consuming, and many hunters had lost their dog teams to disease or shootings. As well, by the late 1960s, caribou herds had moved. They were now found over 145 kilometres up Clyde Inlet. Snowmobiles made it easier to reach these distant hunting grounds quickly.

By 1967, RCMP reported that all full-time employees had purchased snowmobiles and younger men in the settlement aspired to do the same. "[M]ost of the younger men are saving for skidoos and are only resorting to the dog team as a last resort." Between 1953 and 1966 the number of full-time wage earning jobs in Clyde River had increased from three to seven. Kangiqtugaapingmiut took advantage of the limited temporary employment opportunities. By early 1969, there were twenty-one snowmobiles reported in Clyde River, seven being new 1969 models purchased with summer construction wages. Two snowmobiles were also owned by people in outlying ilagiit nunagivaktangit.

The use of snowmobiles also changed how and what Kangiqtugaapingmiut hunted. In 1967, an RCMP officer commented on the changes in the efficiency of hunting with a snowmobile by writing "an animal seen is invariably an animal killed." Without qimmiit, no time was needed to hunt for dog food. Unfortunately, snowmobiles could be unreliable and dangerous to run on the ice. In 1967, two young men drowned when their snowmobile broke through the ice at Clyde River. Snowmobiles also placed the owner in a position of dependency on the HBC (until the arrival of local co-ops) for fuel and replacement parts.

During the 1960s, in an effort to supplement their income, Kangiqtugaapingmiut worked to develop local carving and handicraft initiatives in their community. As early as 1960, the schoolteacher was encouraging local

Three Inuit boys with Cooey rifles
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

women to make dolls, miniature articles, and souvenirs. By 1962, they were reporting good returns. In April 1968, the previous school principal, John Scullion, organized the Nanook Group of Clyde. With financial assistance from the federal government, the group purchased soapstone carvings from local Kangiqtugaapingmiut and sold them with a 50% mark-up to local buyers, namely government and military personnel. In 1974, the Qimikjuk Cooperative replaced the Nanook Group and the first coffee house was opened in the Nanook Building. In 1975, the Igutaq Group was launched in an effort to revitalize the craft industry at Clyde River.

By the end of the 1970s, Clyde River had a population of approximately 340 people. There were about fifteen permanent jobs and five part-time

wage positions, including seven that were held by women. Incomes generally came from trapping, seasonal labour, and the sale of carvings and handicrafts, or a combination of the three. Some Clyde River men also left to work at the Nanisivik mine at Strathcona Sound, but usually only when fur prices were low. This ensured that hunting continued to play a strong role in Kangiqtugaapingmiut life well into the 1980s. At the same time, ringed seals, and hunting in general, provided every hunter with an opportunity to secure resources for his family, as the minimum return was always food. The continuing relevance of hunting and sharing food also maintained a strong community environment in Clyde River. On July 1, 1978, Clyde River received hamlet status.

Early contact documentation and Inuit memory describe the Clyde River region as being populated by a migratory culture made up of a combination of Akudnirmiut and Tununirmiut moving along east-west cycles following seasonal game and other food resources. The arrival of trading companies in 1923, and the HBC especially, set the tone for the area's future settlement. Subsequent relocation of outside families to the area, combined with the new attraction of local trading opportunities, changed traditional settlement and migratory patterns. Over time, increases in the Clyde River region's population led to long-term occupancy of ilagiit nunagivaktangit. While the majority of Kangiqtugaapingmiut continued to live in seasonal ilagiit nunagivaktangit through the 1940s and 1950s, by the 1960s, with the introduction of government programs, the trend towards centralization had set in. As more and more people moved into the settlement, new challenges arose as Kangiqtugaapingmiut attempted to merge their traditional way of life with that of the Qallunaat. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Kangiqtugaapingmiut adjusted to the growing prevalence of a mixed economy, while maintaining a strong cultural identity. Today Clyde River is home to the Ilisaqsivik Society and the main campus of Nunavut's new cultural school, Piqqusilirivvik. The region is also known for its stunning scenery.


Qikiqtaaluk Communities
ELLESMERE
ISLAND
Grise Fiord
Resolute
DEVON ISLAND
Lancaster Sound
Baffin
Bay
Arctic Bay
Pond Inlet
Clyde River
BAFFIN ISLAND
Davis Strait
Taloyoak
Igloolik
Hall Beach
Qikiqtarjuaq
Gjoa Haven
Kugaarjuk
Pangnirtung
Cumberland Snd.
Foxe
Basin
Repulse Bay
Iqaluit
Cape Dorset
Frobisher Bay
Kimmirut
Baker Lake
Coral Harbour
Hudson Strait
Chesterfield Inlet
Rankin Inlet
Whale Cove
Arviat
Hudson
Bay
Sanikiluaq
Qikiqtaaluk Communities
Other Nunavut Communities
Non-Nunavut Communities
1:10,000,000
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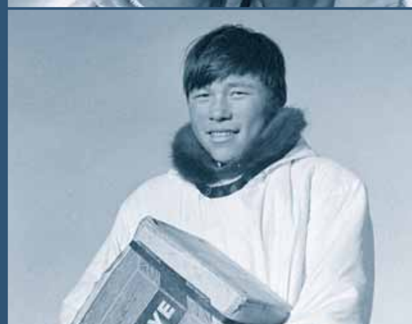
- Sources of income: Wenzel, "Sealing at Clyde River, N.W.T.: A Discussion of Inuit Economy." Études/Inuit /Studies Vol.13, no.1 (1989): pp. 6-15; and Wenzel, "The Integration of 'Remote' Site Labour into the Inuit Economy of Clyde River, N.W.T.," *Arctic Anthropology* Vol. 20, No. 2, (1983), pp. 79-92.



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.

INHABIT COMMUNITY SUPPORT
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