



Tugâpvik NUNATSIAVUT

Work begins on Illusuak Cultural Centre

In an effort to highlight the importance of promoting and preserving Labrador Inuit culture, and to raise awareness of the need for a cultural centre, the Nunatsiavut Government held a ground-breaking ceremony and unveiled the new brand for Illusuak in Nain on September 3. As a follow-up, a reception was held in St. John's on October 16 at the Johnson GEO Centre. Their Honours, Lt. Gov. Frank Fagan, and Patricia Fagan, were among the more than 150 invited guests, which included various dignitaries, federal and provincial officials, members of the arts and culture community, business and corporate leaders and Beneficiaries living in the St. John's area.

All members of the Nunatsiavut Executive Council were also in attendance. The well-received event featured a number of presentations, as well as drum dancing and throat-singing performances from Kilautiup Songuninga (Strength of the Drum).

Labrador Inuit need and deserve a place where our culture, language, traditions, stories and experiences will be shared and celebrated, revitalized and enhanced, preserved and protected; a place for generations of Labrador Inuit to come together; a place that will encourage increased tourism to the region; and a place that will offer multiple opportunities for employment and support economic growth in our region.

Illusuak will become a hub of cultural activity that will generate exhibits and programs that will travel to other communities to strengthen cultural connections and shar-



Groundbreaking ceremony in Nain.

ing of traditions, stories and experiences throughout Nunatsiavut.

The Nunatsiavut Government has worked diligently since 2005 to see the construction of a cultural centre. Since then, world-renowned architect Todd Saunders, who you may know from his work on Fogo Island, has worked with the Nunatsiavut Government to prepare an initial concept of the proposed facility, to be built in Nain. A comprehensive business plan has been prepared, an exhibit and programming plan process is under way, and consultation has been held with Beneficiaries of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement at the community level.

The Nunatsiavut Government has worked with all levels of government to
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Phase one of construction includes a breakwater, building area site work, and drilling and installation of piles.

secure the necessary funding to establish the centre. In fact, about two-thirds of the estimated \$15 million needed to complete the project has been secured.

While the project is yet to be fully funded, a decision has been made to move ahead with construction.

Nillik Construction, a subsidiary of the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies, has been contracted to being construction of the facility in a phased approach. Construction will only proceed on each phase on direction and approval of the Nunatsiavut Government and is subject to obtaining sufficient financing for each phase.

Phase one, which is currently under way, involves the construction of breakwater, building area site work, and drilling and installation of piles. Phase two will include concrete building foundations and building enclosure weather tight, and the third phase includes interior work and project completion.

Illusuak, which in English means sod house, will be a centerpiece for the community, meant to be used as a “living room” that will give Inuit of all generations a place to gather and strengthen their connections to each other and to

their culture. The name, which resulted after consultations with elders, is appropriate because the facility is to be a gathering place.

Illusuak will house a theatre that will support audio-visual presentations, film screenings, lectures and live musical and dance performances, and will become a touchstone of cultural expression in the community. It will also house a gift shop to be operated by a local craft association. The shop will be a showcase for regional artists and craftspeople to display and sell their work. Books and other materials published about the region will also be available. As well, there will be an opportunity to connect programming and workshops held at the centre with products sold at the craft shop – partnership opportunities with other craft shops on the Labrador coast. There will also be a café that will give people a place to gather to share stories. Traditional and wild foods will be available with recipes gathered from all over Nunatsiavut.

The permanent exhibits to be housed in Illusuak will present broader stories of Labrador Inuit history, culture, traditions and shared experiences. Travel-

ling exhibits will be developed to share more detailed and regionally-specific stories. Both types of exhibits will include images, artifacts and objects, and will be produced in both Inuktitut and English.

Over the past three years, the Nunatsiavut Government has held a series of exhibit storyline workshops and public engagement sessions with Labrador Inuit in communities within Nunatsiavut, as well as other parts of the province, to identify the important stories of our people and our land.

These workshops and consultations have deeply informed the development of the design and structure of the exhibit and the stories that will be told therein.

Scholars, academics and regional experts have also been involved in developing the preliminary themes and storylines for the exhibits.

When complete, Illusuak will be a testament to decades of hope, aspiration, hard work and dedication to the belief that Labrador Inuit need a place to celebrate and grow our rich cultural lives, and that we need a place to tell our stories and share our stories – with each other, and with the world.

Inuit remain concerned about sustainability, health of caribou

Following community consultations, members of the Nunatsiavut Assembly met in Hopedale on November 19 to discuss the sustainability and health of the George River and Torngat Mountains caribou herds.

“The priority for Labrador Inuit is to do everything we can to ensure these two caribou herds are able to sustain us for generations to come,” says Nunatsiavut President Sarah Leo.

The elected officials discussed the continued decline of the George River and the low numbers of the Torngat Mountains caribou. They unanimously agreed to support several measures that can assist in the recovery of this important food source for Labrador Inuit.

President Leo indicated that the Nunatsiavut Government will pursue the following measures for George River caribou:

- Support the Ungava Peninsula Aboriginal Round Table (UPCART) to complete a management plan in a firm timeline;
- Continue to lobby the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, as per previous recommendations, to lift the current five-year ban to allow an aboriginal harvest. If

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the ban for an aboriginal harvest is not lifted, the Province must enforce it fairly and equally across the board;

- Continue to support the recommendation of no harvesting;
- Work with all stakeholders to continue and increase research; and
- Continue to pursue alternate country food sources.

With respect to the Torngat Mountains herd, the Nunatsiavut Government will meet with Makivik Corporation to discuss appropriate management measures, and to look at a possible freeze on harvesting until more data is gathered to understand the population trend for this herd.

The governments of Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec have failed in the management of caribou,” says President Leo. “The Nunatsiavut Government on its own, in consultation with the Torngat Wildlife and Plants Co-management Board, Makivik Corporation, and through participation in the UPCART, will do all we can to ensure caribou will sustain Labrador Inuit and the other aboriginal groups on the Ungava Peninsula for generations to come.”



Members of the Nunatsiavut Assembly gather for a group photo following the election of AngajukKât in September.

Busy times for Archaeology Office

The Nunatsiavut Archaeology Office has had the busiest field season by far this year. It began with a trip to the Torngat Mountains National Park where staff was invited to assist in student programming for Students on Ice, and in an archaeological survey in Saglek Fiord to determine a suitable satellite camp that would not disturb any archaeological sites in the area. Although the Students on Ice were iced out of the bay, staff were able to conduct an historic mapping survey of Hebron, in order to support a sustainable tourism plan for the area, and to protect archaeological and historical features.

Following the visit north, staff met with Bill Fitzhugh of the Smithsonian Institution aboard the Pitsiulak, a 49-foot research vessel, in order to conduct an archaeological assessment of Double Mer near Rigolet, most of which had never before been systematically surveyed. With the assistance of two Smithsonian students and the guidance and advice of local residents from Rigolet, including Victoria Allen, Melva Williams, Jim Allen, Kristy Sheppard, Eldred Allen, Linda Palliser and Harvey Palliser, we recorded 30 sites in the Double Mer, Backway, the Narrows and Groswater Bay. While most were of Inuit origin, a recent First Nations and some Maritime Archaic sites were also recorded. Staff also tested a newly built drone at Eskimo Island, which provided aerial photographs of this significant site.

In September, the office was very fortunate to be able to visit dozens of new sites in the Nain area. The sites had been previously noted, but not precisely located in order to monitor and protect them. A survey was conducted of the south side of Satoosak Island, in search of an unrecorded 18th Century sod house whose occupants, the shared families of Sikkuliak and Kigluana, were listed in a Moravian census records in 1774 and 1777 (Taylor 1974:75). While the sod house was not located, a total of 14 new sites were recorded, the majority of which were Inuit tent rings and caches, as well as a small scatter of chert flakes representing a palaeo-eskimo site. As well, seven Inuit tent rings were recorded on Kikkertavak Island.

Staff also re-visited the site of the 1927-28 Rawson-MacMillan Subarctic Expedition station in Anaktalak Bay, where the remains of a Model-T snowmobile had been recovered earlier this year. This visit was primarily to recover any missing pieces of the machine, to conduct a metal-detecting survey to determine if more were buried beneath the ground, and to take up the grid that had been established in 2013. Once again, the drone flew just above the site to capture a complete aerial image before removing the grid. Staff also ventured to the other side of the river, where a few twisted pipes were observed scattered up towards a waterfall. These were the remains of an attempt to supply running water to the station, which had twisted and

split as winter set in. The snowmobile is currently on its way to Port au Choix, Newfoundland, where a machinist will work on the engine, transmission, driveshaft and differential. It is hoped the machine back with the engine running next shipping season.



Aerial view of part of Rawson MacMillan Subarctic Expedition Station.

Staff also visited an intermediate Indian site on Hillsbury Island, which consists of several stone hearths and scattered flakes and tools of various kinds of colourful chert. The site is in danger of erosion by modern snowmobile trails, which needed to be observed for future protection plans. On the way to the site, several Dorset tent rings were recorded at an unusually low elevation. By all accounts, at the time the Dorset are said to have occupied the coast, this site would have been submerged in much higher sea levels. Whether the Dorset were still in Labrador when the Inuit arrived is an interesting question that researchers have not yet resolved and this new site on Hillsbury Island likely contains important new information on this subject.

In Nain, the Moravian church stabilization project has been underway since September, and staff sought to understand the complex archaeological record of the mission complex in anticipation of some ground disturbance taking place during construction. Fortunately, no archaeological features were disturbed during the project, and staff managed to dig three test pits that revealed the depth and location of a church that had burned in 1921, retrieving hundreds of artifacts that will help interpret the long history of the area. Along the way, we spoke often to community members that stopped by about the history of the mission complex and the purpose of the excavation. A Career Day was also held with students from Jens Haven Memorial School who participated in the excavation and recording of archaeological features.

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On a clear day in October, staff stopped in at Kauk to retrieve the radiator of the Model-T snowmobile, which was being kept in a nearby cabin belonging to Richard White. The building was originally constructed as Trading Post by Richard's grandfather and namesake in the early 20th century. It is now a recognized heritage structure and archaeological site. Staff was able to secure permission from Richard to retrieve this key piece of the Model-T in time to ship all the parts south for restoration. Along the way, another possible Dorset tent ring lying was found at an unusually low in elevation, as well as several nearby Inuit tent rings.

Finally, staff endeavored to visit Skull Island before the end of the boating season, and carefully picked a clear, still

day to travel towards this outer island with Nain's Conservation Officer, Simon Kohlmeister. There, camouflaged on a boulder beach, were the remains of a dozen early Inuit boulder dwellings once visited by Susan Kaplan in 1987, of diverse shapes and sizes, many of which contained inner chambers, nooks and caches. A large circular feature, 7.5 meters wide, stood out starkly amongst the other dwellings, and by the inner circle of seats that ringed the interior, gave the distinct impression of a more communal purpose. Kaplan suggested that it may have served a judicial purpose, or been a place to decide important matters to Inuit at the time. While the exact purpose of the site remains to be seen, it is a unique feature to the Nunatsiavut coast that has now been thoroughly documented, and may be protected and understood in the years to come.



Students from Jens Haven Memorial School during Career Day at Nain Church.



Simon Kohlmeister sitting in the remains of a large, multi-tiered boulder structure at Skull Island.

Women's History Month contest winners announced

In recognition of Women's History Month, held in Canada every October, the Nunatsiavut Government, through its Status of Women's office, provided Beneficiaries of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement the opportunity to participate in photo and writing contests.

Beneficiaries were open to submit essays, short stories, and poems in the writing category. Photo entries centered around family, traditional and community. Ethel Hunter of Hopedale was the winner of the writing contest, with her short story submission *My Grandmother, My Midwife*. The winner of the photo contest was Kimberly Voisey of Nain for a photo of herself cleaning a seal skin. Each received an Ipad Mini for their winning submissions.

The Status of Women's office would like to thank everyone who submitted entries to the contest.



Winning photo.

Ottawa urged to settle class-action lawsuits

The Nunatsiavut Government is once again appealing to the Government of Canada to settle class-action lawsuits filed by survivors of residential schools in Newfoundland and Labrador.

“Many of the survivors are Beneficiaries of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement who never received an apology and were excluded from Ottawa’s 2008 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement,” notes Nunatsiavut President Sarah Leo. “The Government of Canada’s assertion that residential schools in this province fail to meet the criteria set out in the Settlement Agreement is unjust.”

The 1,000 survivors, many of whom are Labrador Inuit, have filed five separate class-action suits. The trial was expected to go ahead in mid-November, but lawyers representing the parties that operated the schools (the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Moravian Mission and the International Grenfell Association) were not ready to proceed. The trial has been postponed, and is not scheduled to get under way until next September.

“We are disappointed in the postponement, but more disappointed in the Government of Canada for allowing this matter to drag on,” says President Leo. “It’s disheartening to know that many former residents have passed on without an apology and without being compensated for the pain and suffering they endured.”

In a letter dated March 10, 2014, President Leo called on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to appeal for justice in this matter, and asked that the Government of Canada agree to attend mediation with other parties to the class-action in an attempt to find an out-of-court settlement.

“The prospect of a resolution fair to all parties is greatly enhanced if the parties would talk,” President Leo wrote. “Otherwise, wounds which separate Inuit in Newfoundland and Labrador from reconciliation with Canada will remain unhealed.”

The Prime Minister’s office acknowledged receipt of the letter, but no response has been received to the request for mediation.



Banners unveiled

To honour and give recognition to the Labrador Inuit residential school survivors, the Department of Health and Social Development commissioned Sanaguativut Nunatsiavut Visual Design, Nunatsiavut Government’s graphic design department, to produce a series of pop up banners. The banners tell the stories of former residential school survivors. The series was unveiled during the September sitting of the Nunatsiavut Assembly in Hopedale.

2015 – 2016 ASSEMBLY CALENDAR

3RD ASSEMBLY SITTING	SPRING SESSION	JANUARY 19 – 23
3RD ASSEMBLY SITTING	SPRING SESSION	MARCH 2 – 6
3RD ASSEMBLY SITTING	SPRING SESSION	JUNE 1 – 5
3RD ASSEMBLY SITTING	FALL SESSION	SEPTEMBER 21 – 25
3RD ASSEMBLY SITTING	FALL SESSION	NOVEMBER 23 – 27
3RD ASSEMBLY SITTING	SPRING SESSION	JANUARY 18 – 22
3RD ASSEMBLY SITTING	SPRING SESSION	MARCH 7 - 11

Inuit Health Study

Exploring connections between diet and mercury in Lake Melville

Over 1,300 Inuit in Rigolet, North West River, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Mud Lake took part in the Lake Melville Inuit Health Study, which concluded its field research in October. This study, which is led by the Nunatsiavut Government and the Harvard School of Public Health, is part of Lake Melville: Avativut, Kanuittai-linnivut, a broad research and monitoring program jointly developed by the Nunatsiavut Government and Memorial University to better understand the potential downstream effects of the Lower Churchill project on Inuit community health and well-being. It will help Labrador Inuit to better understand the sources of methylmercury (MeHg) in Lake Melville, and the current situation with regards to MeHg exposure and concentrations in their food items from Lake Melville, such as fish and seal.

This research was initiated because many Inuit living on Lake Melville are concerned about changes that have taken place from past flooding of the Churchill River, and future changes that may occur when more flooding takes place. It is hoped that this information will be used to make sure that



PHOTO (credit Ryan Calder): A few of our Lake Melville Inuit Health Study research assistants: L-R (back) Jamie Jackman, Debbie Hynes, Abigail Webb, Gabby Flowers, Lianna Rice, (front) Marina Biasutti-Brown (Study Coordinator), Diedre Park.

the Lake Melville environment and vital sources of Inuit country food are protected well into the future.

The study began in March 2014 with a country food survey to find out what types of food were being eaten during the winter season. Another survey was conducted in June for the spring hunting and fishing season, and in September for the summer fishing season. Hair samples were also collected in June and September, and over 500 of these are now being analyzed for mercury levels at a Harvard lab. Twenty-six Inuit research assistants were hired

and trained to carry out the surveys and hair sampling.

Results of the study will be known by spring 2015. Individual hair sample containing mercury levels will be mailed out to each person who provided a sample by March, and a summary of study results by community made available to each community by May. Project scientists will visit each community to present and discuss the study results.

Thanks to everyone who participated in this study. Your interest and willingness to give your time to this study is so appreciated and will help generate strong results.

Inuit Bachelor of Education Program

Openings available for entrance July 2015

Are you interested in becoming a teacher in Nunatsiavut? Would you like to be a teacher who speaks Inuttitut? If so, there is an opportunity for you to join the IBED program currently in the pre-education year of the program.

To qualify for entrance into the IBED program to be offered in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, commencing July 2015, you must have the following courses completed with an overall average of at least 65 per cent by June 2015:

- 6 credit hours in English;
- 6 credit hours in Math or 3 credit hours in Calculus;
- 6 credit hours in Psychology;
- Science 1150 and 1151; or 9 credit hours from 3 separate Science areas; and

- 6 credit hours from Anthropology, Archaeology, Economics, Folk lore, Geography, History, Linguistics, Political Science, Religious Studies or Sociology.

If you have had previous university studies and have met the requirements, or can meet these requirements by June 2015, then we would like to hear from you! If you are interested and want more information please contact:

Lucy Brennan Program Director-PSSSP
Phone: (877) 777-2589 Fax: (709) 754-2587
E-mail: lucy_brennan@nunatsiavut.com

Jodie Lane Education Manager
Phone: (866) 923-2361 Fax: (709) 923-2360
E-mail: jodie_lane@nunatsiavut.com

Another successful moose harvest in Gros Morne National Park



Nunatsiavut Government staff travelled to Rocky Harbour on October 27, and partnered with four local hunters to take part in the harvest.

For the second year in a row the Nunatsiavut Government has been successful in obtaining a special allocation of moose in Gros Morne National Park. A total of 47 animals were harvested this fall, and the meat will be distributed through the community freezer programs.

The severe decline in the George River caribou herd has caused a shortage in traditional country food relied upon by Labrador Inuit. While moose is no substitute for caribou, the meat will be a welcome addition on the tables of many Labrador Inuit this winter, particularly elders.

In an effort to bring the hyper-abundant moose population in Gros Morne National Park down to a more sustainable level, Parks Canada issues 1000 licences annually, with 50 licences being made available to non-profit groups. The Nunatsiavut Government applied for 24 licences in 2013 as a pilot project. Based on the success of the 2013 project, application was made for 40 moose in 2014. Parks Canada approved the request in September, and offered to provide an additional 10 licences if the allocation was reached in a timely manner.

Following the approval, Parks Canada staff in Rocky Harbour began to arrange the details of how the moose would be harvested. The intent was to utilize a helicopter to access the remote areas of the park, to avoid harvesting animals that would be available to the local residents. Four Nunatsiavut Government staff travelled to Rocky Harbour on October 27, and partnered with four local hunters to take part in the harvest. Parks Canada staff provided logistical support throughout the project, and Universal Helicopters provided air support. The 47 moose were harvested by November 1.

The animals were transported daily from Rocky Harbour

by a refrigerated reefer to a butcher in Hawkes Bay, where they were skinned and processed. On all, about 19,500 pounds of meat was packed and transported by truck to Happy Valley-Goose Bay for distribution to all Nunatsiavut communities, as well as to the Inuit Community Corporations in Happy Valley-Goose Bay/Mud Lake and North West River.

The antlers will be utilized by the Department of Health and Social Development for craft programs.

A big thank you to Parks Canada staff for the logistical support and to the Ulapitsaiijet (people helping people) committee for their roles in the project. Without their assistance, this initiative would not have been possible.



Todd Broomfield with a large bull moose.