

The shared stories of people and plants

Summer 2014 Update



Visits to Makkovik: June 23–29, July 16–29, August 9–24, September 12–17 (2014)

Erica Oberndorfer, PhD student (Carleton University)

Purpose of the visits:

Last summer, I spoke with Makkovimiut about the cultural role of plants in the lives of people. This summer, we are looking at the role of people in the lives of plants. Many memories and stories about plants are connected to family places around Makkovik. We are looking



at the plants of family fishing areas, commercial fishing areas, and tenting areas to see how different activities at these places have helped shape plant communities, and also to better understand how the lives of people and plants are interconnected.

Activities:

Many of our days this summer were spent on the land, taking notes on the different species of plants that grow in different habitats at fishing areas. We also focused on what kinds of

plants are growing at former houses, gardens, sheds, and tent sites. We learned more about these family places by speaking with people in



t o w n ,
and by
reading
through
archives.
T h e
work is
ongoing,
so if you
w o u l d
like to
talk to
us about

some of these places, we would be happy to speak with you: Tom's Cove, Ikey's Point, October Harbour, East and West Turnavik, Ironbounds, Malona Point, Topik Point.



Jessica Winters, Research Assistant:



Jessica Winters has been working as a research assistant with this project for the past three months. She has been involved in every part of the project, from field work, to historical research, to learning from Elders, to creating paintings of plants for a Makkovik plant guide. As you can tell from the summary of projects below, Jessica has also been extremely involved in developing programs for youth in Makkovik



around plants, and in contributing to DHSD events. In addition to her research on plants, Jessica was also responsible for leading Northern Ranger tours for Tourism Nunatsiavut. Her talents and hard work have supported and enhanced the project in many different ways. Thank you, Jessica – it has been a pleasure working with you. Best wishes for a great year at university!

Jessica's research summary:

“My summer working for Erica was nothing short of incredible, and I definitely learned more than I would sitting down in a classroom. Being able to go off on the land studying old fishing sites was an amazing opportunity. Besides being allowed to spend my whole day outside, I got to learn some very interesting things about plants, the land, animals and more from Erica. I got to talk to elders, who so kindly shared with me their traditional uses for plants. I got to do field work with a botanist and research other careers, which gave me more insight to what I want to do career-wise. I got to develop programs for youth in Makkovik, teaching them what I learned about plants and how to incorporate the environment with art. Having 10+ hours of field work in one day has definitely prepared me for the type of career I'd like to be in, wildlife biology. The weather and temperatures we faced while doing field work has made me better at things like safety preparation and survival skills. I am so lucky to have experienced this job, I learned so many things that are beneficial to life in Labrador, and I got to do real field work which I'm hoping will be a major part of my job some day.”



Other projects this summer:

In July, we had the international grand premiere of "Amos' Amazing Travelling Adventure", a



Amos' Amazing Travelling Adventure:
From Makkovik to Bhutan in slides and film

Thursday July 17
7:00 pm, Community Hall

Please join us to hear more about Amos' journey
Musical introduction by Kendra Jacque
Refreshments and door prize

short film about the journey of Amos the doll (made by Margie Broomfield) from Makkovik to Bhutan (near Tibet). Kendra Jacque opened the evening at the Community Hall with a beautiful violin performance, and everyone enjoyed

Blanche Winters' fine catering while watching a slide show about Makkovimiut craftwork and sewing as it travelled to Bhutan. This artwork



was featured at the Bio-Cultural Festival at the 14th Congress of the International Society of Ethnobiology, from June 1-7, where each item was raffled in support of conservation projects. I presented certificates of thanks to everyone who contributed work for the Bio-Cultural Festival, which included photos of the lucky winners in Bhutan. We then settled in with our

popcorn to watch the film, which can now be viewed online through the project Facebook page: Makkovik – People and Plants.



FROM MAKKOVIK TO BHUTAN

Craftwork and Sewing from Makkovik at the 14th Congress of the International Society of Ethnobiology, June 1-7, 2014 - Bumthang, Bhutan

*Presented in appreciation to Mrs Mary B Andersen, in recognition of
your contribution to this international conference
Thank you - Nakkumek - Kadrin chhe*

Jessica developed and hosted a weekly craft night for youth throughout the summer, where kids created artwork with plants and other things that they found outdoors. It was a



popular activity and there was always a good crowd at the Craft Centre on Tuesday nights! The craft group worked together to create a kids' guide to plants

in Makkovik. Jessica helped the young artists identify and collect plants on a walk outside, and Mrs Annie Evans taught the group about

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Please contact Erica Oberndorfer:

personal info removed

On Facebook: "Makkovik - People and Plants" ~ University page: <http://straightupnorth.ca/Sikuliriji/Oberndorfer.html>

Nakummek! ~ Thank you!

the plants back at the Craft Centre. Thank you to Aunt Annie for sharing her time and knowledge with the group, to Jessica for the idea and for putting the book together, and to all the craft night group for their great artwork. If anyone would like a copy, please let us know.

Jessica designed a fantastic plant scavenger hunt for Trout Fest. It was a great challenge for the teams, starting with puzzles to put together and decipher, and then a race around town to



find and photograph plants. Congrats to all the teams on their success! We also had a fun time learning to build aquariums at another of Jessica's activities for Trout Fest, with 25 kids at the Community Hall – thank you to Tobey C for helping out. Jessica researched and designed posters about plant foods and medicines for the DHSD Diabetes Dinner, and prepared another poster and

plant teas for Culture Supper. I'd like to thank the Elders and team at DHSD for once again welcoming me to their dinners, where I presented a slideshow and continued my losing streak at bingo.

In 2012, people allowed me to collect small pieces of their rhubarb leaves to see if we could learn more about how different rhubarb patches in and around Makkovik may be genetically related to each other. The leaves are still at the laboratory for testing, so please stay tuned for more news on this, hopefully by spring.



Next steps:

I will be in Makkovik in fall 2014 to listen to suggestions on developing a guide to plants of Makkovik. During each visit, I continue to



return printed transcripts of previous conversations about plants, to make sure all information is accurate, and to discuss how people would like their knowledge about plants to be shared with others.



Thank you



I would like to thank Carol Gear for her ongoing guidance and support of this work, and for all the time she dedicates to this project. I would also like to thank guides Sheldon Andersen and Todd Broomfield for being so generous in sharing their time and experience with us. A great many people in Makkovik continue to support and contribute to this project – without all of you, this work would not be possible.



Visit report completed Oct 2, 2014

I gratefully acknowledge my research support:



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Nakummek! ~ Thank you!