

Pangnirtung Trip Report (April 29 – May 19, 2004)
Summary of Gita Laidler's First Research Trip for "Ice, Through Inuit Eyes"

Purpose of the trip: to meet and interview community members (elders, active hunters, and other local experts) about sea ice, and to experience the ice myself through trips on the sea ice, to the floe edge.

Purpose of this report: to update the community members of Pangnirtung on: i) who I interviewed; ii) topics discussed in the interviews; iii) interview highlights; and, iv) my future research plans.

Who I interviewed →

With the help of Andrew Dialla and Eric Joamie translating, the following people consented to being interviewed, and provided a valuable contribution to this research project (shown in alphabetical order).

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ○ Lazarusie Ishulutak (2 interviews) | ○ Enoosie Nashalik (2 interviews) |
| ○ Joanasie Maniapik (2 interviews) | ○ Mosesee Nuvaqirq |
| ○ Jamesie Mike (2 interviews) | ○ Joanasie Qappik (2 interviews) |

Topics discussed →

- Previous experience with researchers, or results of previous research
- Experience with sea ice
- Place/seasonal ice feature names
- Wind directions and influence on sea ice formation and movement
- Currents and influence on sea ice formation and movement
- The importance, and uses, of sea ice
- Weather prediction techniques
- Wildlife uses of the sea ice
- Hunting on sea ice
- Noticeably warm or cold years
- Rare or notable sea ice features/events
- Scientific methods of studying the ice, and how (or if) Inuit and scientists should work together
- The meaning of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*

Interview highlights →

- Approximately 91 Inuktitut words relating to sea ice were described and explained
- It is hard to answer some questions because ice conditions have changed so much
- Noticeable sea ice changes:
 - the freezing process is different, sea ice takes longer to form and is forming later
 - the ice is thinner and softer
 - the cold water under the ice is now deeper
 - seals are not getting enough time to moult on the sea ice (affecting fur colour and quality) and it is harder to hunt seal pups
 - the ice breaks up sooner and faster

- A harpoon is the most reliable way of gauging ice safety, but other methods may include:
 - checking ice thickness through a seal hole
 - note – it is hard to assess ice safety from a snowmobile, more guesswork is involved and there is concern for people traveling at high speeds
- Ice formation and safety depend on currents, winds, moon stage, and amount of snow that fell while the ice was forming (strong winds around Pangnirtung result from a funneling effect produced by fiord formation)
- Glacier calving influences ocean temperatures and freeze-up timing
- River flow influences sea ice deterioration (especially when it has a high sediment load)
- It is hard to predict weather conditions/changes today
- It is very important to have first-hand experience on the sea ice, especially to use and understand Inuktitut sea ice terminology
- Sea ice is a bringer of life
- There is dissatisfaction with the use, and intended meaning, of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*
- It would be good to work with scientists, but there must be a fair sharing of knowledge
 - it is important to record Inuit knowledge and observations for future generations
 - scientists should have more hand-on experience
- It is very important to bring back research project results, through means such as:
 - written report (bilingual, Inuktitut and English)
 - public forum
 - audio/visual materials
- There is interest in learning more about scientific sea ice studies, and results (changes area getting so dramatic that hunters need and want extra knowledge and assistance)

Future research plans →

- **July – October, 2004** → I will transcribe the interviews and begin organizing and analyzing them. I will copy all the audio and video files to tape to be deposited in Pangnirtung on the next research trip. I will digitize the maps drawn in interviews, and acquire satellite imagery to investigate ice conditions/changes in different areas around Pangnirtung and Cumberland Sound. I will plan and organize future research trips.
- **December, 2004** → return to Pangnirtung for a 3-week field research trip.
- **February, 2005** → return to Pangnirtung for a 1-month field research trip.

Thank you for hosting me in your community, and for all your support. A special thanks is extended to all those who participated in the interviews and sea ice trips. I am very grateful to the Nunavut Arctic College, the Angmarlik Visitor's Centre, and Parks Canada for providing interview space when needed. I would also like to thank Joanasi Maniapik and Eric Joamie (among others we met up with later) for a very informative and adventurous sea ice trip to Nasauya Point.

I once again enjoyed my time in Pangnirtung, and I look forward to returning and working with you in December. Feel free to contact me any time with comments, questions, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Gita J. Laidler