

Pangnirtung Trip Report (December 2 – 17, 2004)
Summary of Gita Laidler's Second 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 as it is forming.

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 translating, the following people consented to being interviewed, and provided a valuable contribution to this research project (shown in alphabetical order).

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|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| ○ Joavee Alivaktuk | ○ Manasie Maniapik | ○ Joopa Soudluapik |
| ○ Manasa Evic | ○ Manasie Noah | ○ Paulosie Vevee |
| ○ Jaco Ishulutak (2 interviews) | ○ Lootie Nowyook | ○ And one hunter who wished to remain anonymous |
| ○ Mosesee Keyuajuk | ○ Peterosie Qappik | |
| ○ Michael Kisa | | |

Topics discussed →

- Previous experience with researchers, or results of previous research
- Inuktitut terminology linked to sea ice conditions, travel, and use
- Wind and current influences on sea ice formation and movement
- The importance, and uses, of sea ice
- Wildlife uses of the sea ice
- Hunting on sea ice
- Noticeably warm or cold years and/or 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 75 Inuktitut words relating to sea ice were described and explained, on top of the 91 words already discussed in the spring, 2004 research trip
- It is hard to predict weather conditions/changes today and the weather seems to shift more frequently
- Sea ice travel safety
 - Always bring a harpoon to check ice thickness, it is hard to tell only by sight
 - Snowfall hides dangerous ice conditions, and contributes to such conditions by insulating newly formed ice so it is worn out from the currents underneath
 - Moon cycles and tidal stages have a strong influence on ice conditions and safety
 - Wet or dark spots on the ice are cause for caution, and checking with a harpoon
 - Rushed travel or hunting leads to more accidents on the sea ice
- Tidal cracks are found at almost every point of land, and are great locations for seal nets

- Sea ice is very important for seal moulting, denning, and raising the young pups
- Noticeable changes
 - The floe edge is closer to town, Cumberland Sound is not *nunniq* (frozen over) as much; therefore, some of the best commercial fishing areas are not accessible
 - Winds are coming from all directions (instead of predominantly northwest winds); warming trends may be linked to changing wind directions
 - More polar bears are noticed around the community
 - Some areas are not freeze as solidly as they used to, which affects travel routes
 - Melt stages are happening much quicker, highly influence by windy conditions
- Learning about sea ice and terminology is most effective when actually traveling on, and experiencing, difference ice conditions
- There is considerable interest in working with scientists to study the sea ice
 - Increased access to satellite imagery is desired
 - Scientists should spend more time in the community, working with hunters over a longer period of time
 - Study results must be returned to the community
- There is dissatisfaction with the use, and intended meaning, of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*
 - The term is used too often, and is not well understood

Future research plans →

- **February, 2005** → third research trip to Pangnirtung (February 1 – 21...completed)
- **January – April, 2005** → transcribe, organize, and analyze interviews from December and February trips; copy original audio and video files to be deposited in Pangnirtung during the spring research trip; digitize the maps drawn in interviews; acquire satellite imagery of the Cumberland Sound area; plan and organize future research trips.
- **April, 2005** → return to Pangnirtung for a 2-week field research trip, and to collaboratively revise Inuktitut terminology and interview gaps.
- **July – December, 2005** → finalize transcripts and digitized maps; begin detailed analysis of information collected.
- **Spring, 2006** → make final results available; undertake a reporting trip to Pangnirtung once results have been fully reviewed (with Andrew Dialla and my committee members).

Thank you for hosting me in your community, and for supporting this research project. A special thanks is extended to all those who participated in the interviews and sea ice trips. I am very grateful to The Hamlet Office and the Hunters and Trappers Association for allowing the use of their buildings for interview space. I would also like to thank Joavee Alivaktuk for the hands-on learning opportunities provided by a "walking interview" on the newly formed ice to take pictures and video of sea ice conditions.

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

Sincerely,

Gita J. Laidler