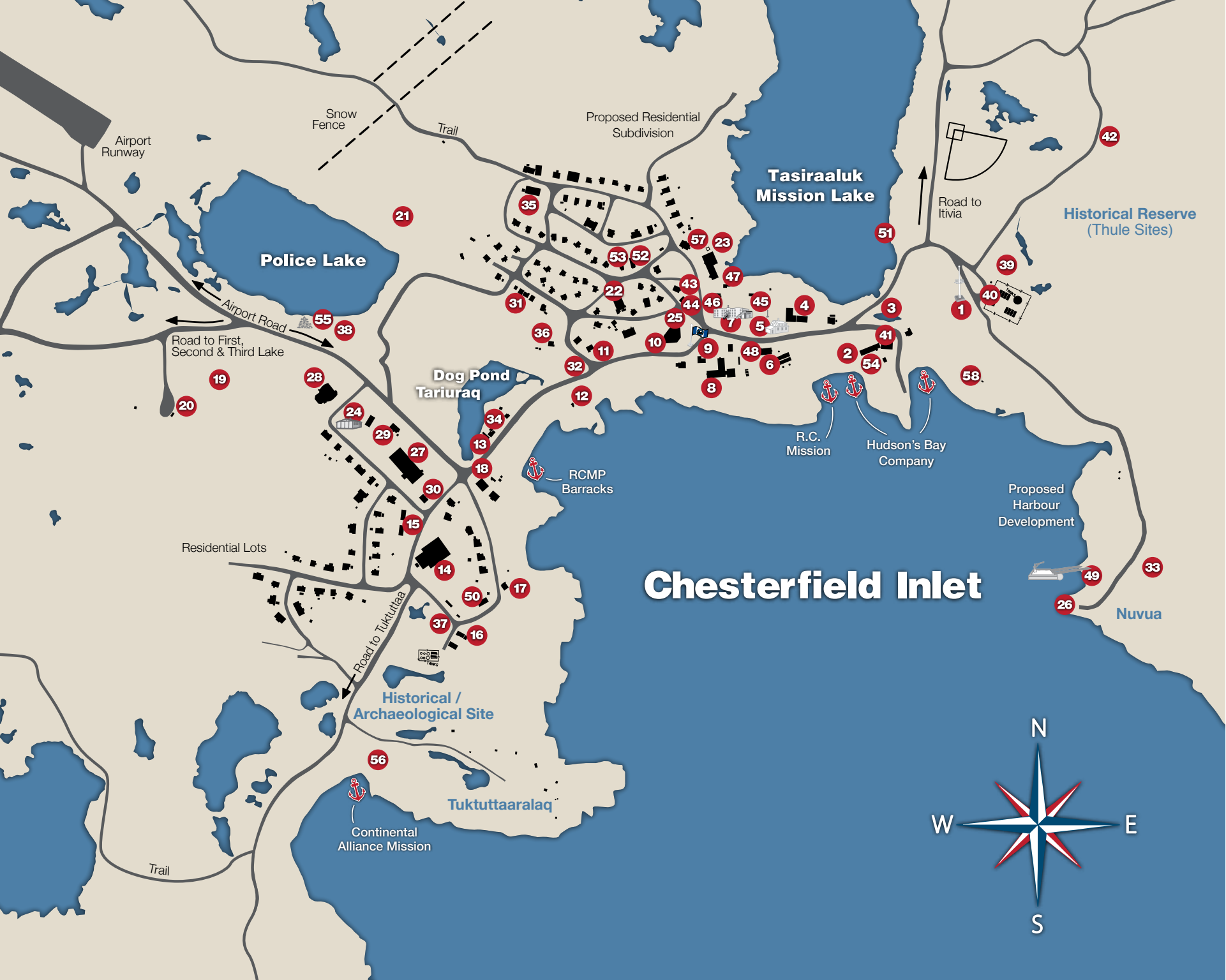




A Journey Through Time

A Guided Walking Tour of Chesterfield Inlet





Points of Interest

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1 Ship's Mast | 18 RCMP Detachment | 39 Whaling Boats |
| 2 Hudson's Bay Company Complex (now store warehouse) | 19 Grave Site of RCMP Officer's Wife | 40 Hudson's Bay Company Fox Fur Drying Shed Site |
| 3 Pig House Site | 20 Water Reservoir | 41 Northern Store |
| 4 Current R.C. Mission | 21 Community Cemetery | 42 Beacon Tower |
| 5 Original R.C. Mission | 22 Pitsiulak Co-op Warehouse | 43 Daycare Centre |
| 6 Mission Shed and Quonset Hut | 23 Health Centre | 44 Former RC Mission Residence |
| 7 Ste. Theresa's Hospital and Mission outbuildings | 24 Former RCMP Compound | 45 Greenhouse |
| 8 Sir Joseph-Bernier Federal Day School (first school; now hotel) and Pitsiulak Co-op Store | 25 Community Complex | 46 Mission Chicken Shed |
| 9 Nunavut Arctic College - Learning Centre | 26 Community Dock | 47 Mission Shed, Freezer |
| 10 Turquetil Hall Site | 27 Noel Nuvak Arena | 48 Mission Power House |
| 11 First doctor's House | 28 Naja Isabelle Home | 49 Floating Dock |
| 12 Waterfront Area | 29 Conservation Office | 50 Former DOT Weather/Research Station |
| 13 Iqalukpik Fish Plant | 30 Chesterfield Inlet Development Corp. | 51 Float Plane Dock Site |
| 14 Victor Sammurtoq School | 31 Kingnguvaq Ltd. | 52 Housing Workshop Site |
| 15 DOT Buildings | 32 Elders Home Care | 53 Chesterfield Inlet Settlement Office Site |
| 16 Power Plant | 33 Community Freezer | 54 Hudson's Bay Coal Storage Site |
| 17 First Radio Station | 34 Dog Pound Site (fence) | 55 Inuksuk |
| | 35 Housing Association | 56 Former Continental (Alliance) Mission Residence (In Inuktitut, Ajuqiqtujiirlak) |
| | 36 Rec. Hall Site | 57 Former Health Centre |
| | 37 DOT Garage Building Site | 58 HBC Shed Site |
| | 38 RCMP Barracks Site | |

A sure sign of previous habitation, a tent ring on the tundra near Chesterfield Inlet - Lee Narraway, August 2002



Chesterfield Inlet Then and Now

Welcome to the “original” Arctic community, Chesterfield Inlet, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2011. The story of the hamlet of Chesterfield Inlet goes back to the early 20th century when the Hudson’s Bay Company and the Roman Catholic Church established permanent operations at this location in 1911.

By the time the Bay arrived, the Inuit in this area had already met and worked with the *qablunaat* or Europeans. When the Hudson’s Bay Company schooner *Pelican* unloaded materials for its first building at Chesterfield, Inuit came from their camps to see what this new group of arrivals were planning.

The Inuit have inhabited this area around Chesterfield Inlet for over 4,000 years. Around 1000 A.D., the Dorset culture, followed by the ancestors of the modern Inuit, the Thule people, spread across the Arctic and down the Hudson Bay coast. When the climate cooled, interaction between widely separated inhabited areas became difficult and each group of Inuit adapted to inhabited resources. A number of regional cultures emerged.

In the area, around Chesterfield Inlet, two of these Thule sub groups were prominent. One group is known as the *Qaernermiut*, the northernmost sub-group of the Caribou Inuit. The other group was the *Aivilingmiut*, who relied more on the resources of the sea, the Repulse Bay area. The *Qaernermiut* lived and hunted in the Baker Lake (*Qamani’tuaq*) area. They relied largely on caribou and fish. The group closest to present day, Chesterfield Inlet (*Igluligarjuk*) area, were the *Tariurmiut*, who lived along the coast.

For hundreds of years they moved up and down Chesterfield Inlet, travelling inland in search of caribou, and then returning to the coast to obtain food from the inlet and the bay. As patterns of travel were established, so were central camping areas. Over the centuries sod and stone houses were built on these sites, and a type of village started to emerge, the Thule sites. One of these sites is located just outside of Chesterfield Inlet, and this site may have had a population of several hundred inhabitants before any early European explorers ever sailed into the area along the coast and north of the inlet.

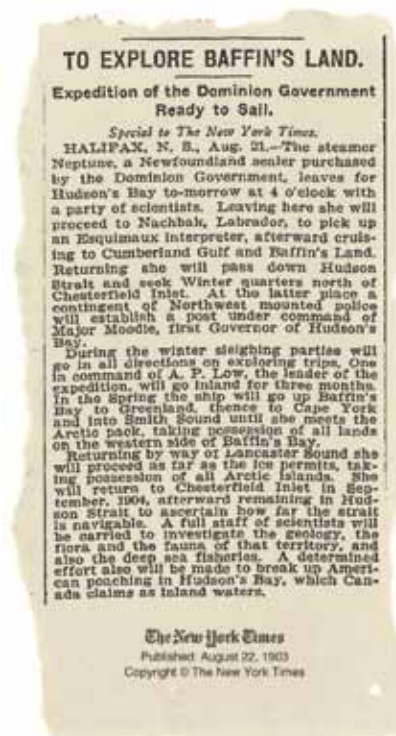


A number of Thule sites near Chesterfield Inlet were surveyed and excavated in the 1920s by Peter Freuchen and Therkel Mathiassen, Danish members of the Fifth Thule Expedition, headed by Knud Rasmussen. In 1968, under the direction of Charles Merbs, the Northwest Hudson Bay Thule Project (NHBTP) (or the Sixth Thule Expedition to insiders), began excavating several archaeological Thule sites at *Qamaurvik*, *Silumiut*, and *Igluligarjuk* sites. Allan P. McCartney led the team excavating sites between Chesterfield Inlet and Wager Bay, including the large classic Thule *Silumiut* site.

Some Inuit history was preserved for hundreds of years in the form of stories and legends passed from one generation to the next. Today, residents of Chesterfield Inlet can recollect some of the early era of the commercial whaling, the arrival of the Northwest Mounted Police, the early Hudson's Bay Company post and its traders, and the first Missionaries, a legacy of more than 100 years.



Caribou can often be spotted near Chesterfield Inlet - Lee Narraway, August 2002



ABOVE the New York Times announces the sailing of the Neptune, en route to Chesterfield Inlet, August, 1903.

RIGHT the first Northwest Mounted Police post in Hudson Bay, at Fullerton Harbour in 1904 - JD Moodie, RCMP Historical Collections, P-164/4.

Early Visitors

Likely the first visitor was Sir Thomas Button in the small ship *Discovery* in 1612-13, when he explored Hudson Bay. For the next 150 years, a number of other British explorers visited the Inlet, in search of the elusive Northwest Passage to the Orient.

In 1747, Captain William Moor identified Chesterfield Inlet as a potential route to China. The Hudson's Bay Company took an immediate interest in this new possibility and supported further exploration by John Bean and William Christopher. Bean failed to find the Inlet, but Christopher explored Chesterfield Inlet, reaching the end of Baker Lake on his second trip in 1762. He recorded the absence of a westward passage to China, but noted sightings of whales in Hudson Bay, which led to the start of commercial whaling activity in the area.

Early whaling efforts were unprofitable and it was not until the mid 19th century that whalers returned to the area. They visited regularly until the early 20th century, often overwintering. They hired Inuit to hunt caribou and other game to provide fresh meat to prevent scurvy, to act as guides

during winter travel by dog team, and to make and repair traditional Inuit clothing. Ippaktuq Tasseok, known as "Harry" to the whaling crews, is mentioned in the logs of whaling ships for delivering food and messages to the overwintering crews. He worked mainly for the Americans, appearing in the logs of the *Alexander* (1886-1887) at Marble Island, and the *Canton* at Depot Island, (1893-1894) and Cape Fullerton (1895-1896). He was also mentioned in the New York Times, December 10, 1905, as the messenger who brought a letter from Captain Roald Amundsen to Captain George Comer.





Some whalers wintered at Depot Island, where remnants of whalebone and wood and metal artifacts can be seen. There are stone structures too, made by the Inuit or perhaps the Thule - tent rings, food caches, fox traps and kayak cradles, in Inuktitut, *Qajakuvik* (singular) or *Qajakuviit* (plural). Some Scottish and New England whalers used other anchorages among the islands and along the coast because they felt the Depot Island harbour was too shallow. The inner harbour was less than five fathoms deep, but it was said to be ice free earlier in the summer.

From the late 1700s onwards, the Hudson's Bay Company sent schooners north from Fort Churchill each summer to trade with the Inuit. Depot Island was the northern limit of these voyages. North of Depot Island, trade was controlled by European and American whalers.

Exploration of the northern coastline continued. Dr. John Rae wrote to the London Times in 1852 that he was planning a surveying trip of some 600 to 800 miles overland from Chesterfield Inlet to the Back River and by boat up the west coast of Boothia and return between July 12 and September 12, 1853. In the 1890s, the Tyrrell brothers, working for Canada's geological survey, canoed cross country from the Athabasca River starting May 22, to the mouth of Chesterfield Inlet and then as winter drew in, to Fort Churchill by September 3, 1893.

Captain George Comer, originally from Quebec, and one of the last of the New England whaling captains, refers to large numbers of muskox, caribou, seal, walrus, and bowhead being taken by Inuit for subsistence and trade with the whalers. Comer wintered at Cape

Fullerton in 1897, after a successful summer taking six whales.

The whalers operated on a seasonal basis from their vessels and from shore stations where large vats were built for storing the rendered whale oil before shipment to European or American ports. The Inuit were employed as harpooners and oarsmen in smaller whaleboats and some Inuit were paid with boats of their own. The whaling crews stayed on board the mother ship, or rendered the whale blubber on land.

The Government of Canada first appeared in the area in 1903, when the *Neptune*, carrying Royal Northwest Mounted Police, geologist A. P. Low, and others, overwintered alongside Comer's ship *Era* at Cape Fullerton. The ship was on a combined sovereignty and exploration voyage.

The same year, George Comer recorded that Chesterfield Inlet was one of the locations where Inuit gathered to trade and seek employment. Guns and sturdy whaleboats were probably the most significant trade items. Then, in the early 1900s, the value of white fox pelts made land-based Arctic trading posts possible, year round. This coincided with the decline of the whaling industry, and by the time the whalers departed, life along the northwest coast of Hudson Bay had changed considerably.



ABOVE interior of a double igloo, Fullerton Harbour - RCMP Historical Collections, P-164/41.

LEFT the steamer Arctic overwintering in the ice at Fullerton Harbour - G Moodie, RCMP Historical Collections P-164/19

The Community Story

By the early 1900s the whalers were followed by traders, and in turn by missionaries and then doctors, nurses, teachers and government administrators. They provided the services which attracted the Inuit.

Chesterfield Inlet grew into the major centre north of Churchill, Manitoba, serving as a trans-shipment point for supplies for other Hudson's Bay Company posts. As the largest Roman Catholic mission in the area, Chesterfield Inlet was known as a medical and education centre.

The opening of a nickel mine in Rankin Inlet in the mid-1950s almost spelled the end of Chesterfield Inlet. The Hudson's Bay Company post closed from July 31, 1961 to March 9, 1964. Many people left for employment at the new mine, but when the mine closed, some families returned to Chesterfield Inlet. Br R. Bedard operated the trading post while the Bay was closed.

In 1976, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (then Fisheries and Marine Service) Canada established a research centre at Saqvaqjuaq Inlet about 40 km northeast

of Chesterfield Inlet in response to the need for more detailed knowledge of arctic freshwater ecosystems. The research centre was in operation for over eight years.

The mouth of the Saqvaqjuaq River was well used in the past. Remains of a saputit (stone weir) used as recently as the 1960s, can be seen at the head of the first rapids. On the northeast side of the river mouth, there are numerous caches, tent rings, and kayak stands and on the southwest side there are several semi-underground winter dwellings dug into a sandy hillside. Tent rings are found everywhere in the Saqvaqjuaq area. However, Inuit have not lived there permanently for several decades. Today it is visited only for a few days at a time by hunters and families fishing.

Today, Rankin Inlet is the main administrative centre in the Kivalliq region. Chesterfield Inlet continues as a small but well serviced community with wage employment available with the municipal and territorial government, Inuit organizations, Northern Store, Pitsiulak Co-operative Ltd., Naja Isabelle Home and local businesses.



Women in beaded amautis posed for Mrs. Geraldine Moodie, Major JD Moodie's wife, in 1904. Niviatsinaq aka Shoofly Comer, is seated, centre.- RCMP Historical Collections, P-164/21

About Your Walking Tour



The original Bay building in the eastern Arctic at Chesterfield Inlet - Anglican Church of Canada, Fleming Collection, P7516-308

The complete walking tour of Chesterfield Inlet takes approximately two hours. It does not include the Thule sites outside the community. If you are interested in visiting one of these sites, please contact one of the local guides or outfitters, or the local economic development officer. These archaeological sites are protected, and visitors are encouraged not to disturb anything they find.

Your Chesterfield walking tour starts at the Northern Store (formerly the Hudson's Bay Company post) and covers the east and west sections of the community. The location of many of the original buildings and current services are included on your map. Some of the historic sites also have signage. Permission is required to enter many of the original buildings listed in this tour, since they continue to be occupied. Public buildings such as the Northern Store, the Community Complex, and the modern mission church can be visited if they are open at the time of your tour. If you prefer a more detailed tour, please contact the Community Economic Development Officer at the Hamlet office

for information on guides or tour operators. Copies of the walking tour guidebook can be picked up at the hamlet office.

Visitors may photograph the sites and the buildings along the tour, but if you wish to include local residents in the photograph, you should request their permission first. The people of Chesterfield Inlet are a warm and friendly group and will be happy to assist you on your tour. Most speak English as well as Inuktitut, although some of the older people may speak only in Inuktitut.

Although most of the tour is along gravel roads within the community, there are parts that involve crossing over short stretches of rock and tundra. These sections are not difficult, but suitable footwear is recommended; ATV rentals may be available for touring certain sites.

Once again, welcome to Chesterfield Inlet, and enjoy your *Journey Through Time*, here in one of the Arctic's oldest settled communities.

Starting Your Tour



ABOVE Chesterfield Post, 1920s - Archives of Manitoba, HBCA 1987/363-C-28/4

RIGHT Inuit wintered in igloos until the 1950s. Igloos at Fullerton Harbour, 1904 - JD Moodie, RCMP Historical Collections P-164/45

Begin your tour at the Northern Store **(41)** at the east end of the community. Beside it **(2)** is the original Hudson's Bay Company post. Parts of this building date back to 1911. The architecture is typical of all early Hudson's Bay Company posts, with its white clapboard exterior, red trim and location near the waterfront. Captain G. Edmund Mack, one of the crew on the maiden voyage of the *Nascopie* which arrived at Chesterfield in 1912, described how supplies were landed: "The post had a particularly bad beach. Humping cargo on your back, in water up to the waist, was cold work till you got used to it."

Many of the Inuit who later moved to Chesterfield Inlet traded for at least part of the year at Cape Fullerton, in Inuktitut, *Qatiktalik*. This was the site of the first detachment of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. It was established in 1903 as a customs office to oversee the activities of the American whalers, to establish Canadian sovereignty, to administer whaling licenses, collect customs, and control liquor and to maintain order. The Fullerton harbour was a popular wintering

station for American and Scottish whaling ships, and a trading point with the Inuit. Although most Inuit had lived a nomadic lifestyle, they had developed an active trading relationship with the whalers. One valued trade item was beads, used to fashion ornate designs on parkas. Community elders who were born at Cape Fullerton in those days recalled wearing ornate parkas, and learning to play the concertina, introduced by the whalers.

Leonie Sammurtok recalls her father working with the early Royal Northwest

Mounted Police at Cape Fullerton. He went out on patrol with the policeman called Keekiaksik, (she didn't know his English name), to Repulse Bay and to other remote camps. In the spring of 1914, Leonie's father, Johnny Tamanguluk, set out by dog team to get the mail from Churchill, 700 kilometres south of Hudson Bay. Leonie and Mary Nuvak recall living at Cape Fullerton with their parents, during the whaling era.

The Royal Northwest Mounted Police post at Cape Fullerton moved to Chesterfield

Inlet in 1914, when whaling declined. Many Inuit families followed. Fullerton Post was used part-time for many years as a stop on patrols to Inuit camps along the coast and inland. Some Inuit who have travelled through Fullerton harbour for shelter have seen old memos or documents left behind by the officers. Many documents, which might have contained some history, were not preserved, and sadly some papers were used to start fires for warmth.

In 1916, W.O. Douglas sailed into the Arctic and served there for 17 years, first

with the RNWMP and then the Hudson's Bay Company. In the summer of 1919, he came to Chesterfield Inlet from Fullerton to meet the Hudson's Bay Company supply ship *Nascopie*. He had the *Lady Borden*, a tug capable of towing a barge with supplies. The Hudson's Bay Company was still doing some freighting from Chesterfield Inlet to Baker Lake, using one of the old, half-decked-over coast boats. Also in 1919, the *Finback*, the last of the New England whaling ships, struck a reef at Fullerton and sank.

By 1926, the Hudson's Bay Company post had extended its depot. Most of this large building was used as a warehouse for supplies for other posts in the region. It was also the storage area for thousands of fur pelts acquired in trade with the Inuit. A number of *Natsilikmiut* families from the north had travelled south to the Hudson Bay coast by dog team to seek trade or wage employment with the Hudson's Bay Company fur pelt trade or with the whalers in the area.



Insp. Beyts and Cst. Pasley leaving Chesterfield Inlet for Churchill, January 1915 - RCMP photo 4109



Residents of Chesterfield Inlet, 1927 - Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay



ABOVE Misiraq, Elizabeth Unurniq Tapatai and Mary Nuvak who lived this story. Baker Lake, 1926 – L. T. Burwash, Library and Archives Canada/PA-099412



ABOVE amphibious biplane on the beach by the Hudson's Bay post at Chesterfield, late 1920s - NWT Archives/Lorenz Learmonth N-1987-033:0498

RIGHT Inuit crew of the Fort Chesterfield, 1926 - NWT Archives/Lorenz Learmonth N-1987-033:0199

In the early days, Bay managers lived on the second level of the original Bay complex (2) that is now used for a warehouse, before the post residence was built.

By 1927, nearly 100 Inuit had chosen Chesterfield Inlet as their home base, moving to camps to hunt and trap, but returning to Chesterfield to trade, to meet with friends or family members, and to observe religious occasions. The Inuit continued to live in traditional dwellings, igloos in winter and skin tents in summer. A photo (left) shows the entire population of the community in 1927, when clothing and materials of the Euro-American culture were becoming more common.

By 1929, Inuit ran the supply ship that delivered trade goods to the smaller posts in Repulse Bay and Baker Lake. The Inuit had learned their seafaring skills from the whalers and continue to have excellent boat handling and navigation skills.

From the 1900s through the 1930s, the RCMP barracks in Chesterfield Inlet was the largest in the Eastern Arctic, and the force patrolling the area included Inuit as

well as southern Canadians assigned to this posting. A number of Inuit who had worked as "special" constables, interpreters or guides with the Northwest Mounted Police in the early 1900s, later worked for the RCMP barracks in Chesterfield. Their names were not listed in memos or sealed in records, their names were simply lost.





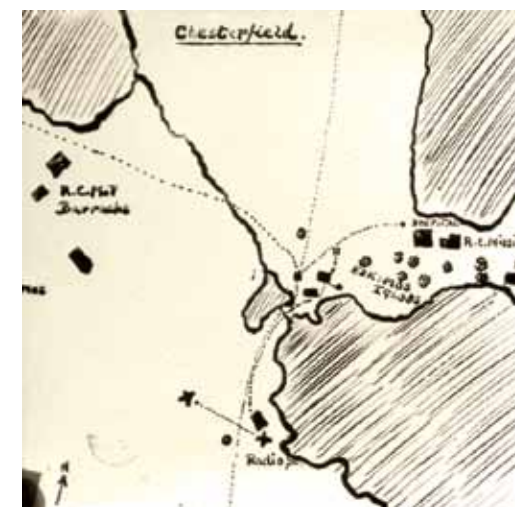
ABOVE Dr. Livingstone, dressed for winter in a caribou parka - NWT Archives/Leslie Livingston N-1987-019:0187
RIGHT the Mission brought in hens each summer - Courtesy Brian Lewis

By the 1930s, Chesterfield Inlet was a major centre in the Canadian Arctic. Attracted to the services, particularly medical services offered in Chesterfield Inlet, more Inuit spent longer periods of time in the developing settlement. Dr. L.D. Livingstone was the first resident doctor in the settlement, and by the mid 1930s the settlement boasted a three-storey hospital, which then and for many years after, was the largest building in the Canadian Arctic.

In Chesterfield Inlet in the 1930s, the Roman Catholic mission also provided much of its own food, and right up to the late 1960s, brought in several hundred hens each summer and pioneered a successful poultry operation long before anyone else had tried such a venture in the north. This was discontinued when aircraft began regular service to the settlement and the mission was no longer totally dependant on one ship per year to bring in supplies.



The Early Days



ABOVE sketch map of the southern end of Chesterfield inlet 1932 - Frank T. Davies, University of Saskatchewan
RIGHT whaleboats, offered to the Inuit as wages by the whaling captains - CEDO, June 2005

Head east from the Northwest Company store up the hill to the Petroleum Product Limited fuel storage area (40). There's a spectacular overview of the community and the waterfront. North of the community, just south of the beacon tower (42) and north of the airport runway are the Thule sites, in Inuktitut *Qarmarviniit*, which you can visit or see on a guided tour.

Before the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Roman Catholic Mission, this area was sometimes used as a rendezvous spot for whalers, who came to the area looking for Inuit to assist them. A few of the old whaling boats, traded to the Inuit in lieu of wages at the end of the season, can still be seen nearby (39). On the beach below you can see canoes and more modern aluminum or fiberglass boats. Small storage sheds along the beach house equipment needed for fishing and hunting.

Look out over the community, and note how it stretches around to the far western part of the bay. In the early days, the Hudson's Bay Company and the Mission were located at one end of the community, and Inuit set up their tents or igloos, in

Inuktitut, *Iglui*, near the mission (7) and the trading post (2). The RCMP was located at the opposite end of the community (38). In those days winter patrols were conducted by dog team, and the RCMP kept many dogs (34). Since these dogs were not pets, and could be dangerous, they were kept away from the existing settlement.

At the top of the hill, just off the road, there is a large white pole embedded in a concrete base (1). This is the mast of one of the early Hudson's Bay Company sailing schooners retired from service on Hudson Bay.





If the weather is favorable, you may like to take a walk along the road to the site of the community wharf **(26)**. In spring, residents snowmobile or ATV to inland lakes for Arctic char or lake trout fishing. In summer, fishing trips can be arranged with a guide or by ATV rental to inland lakes - first (*Puirsuk*), second (*Akulliq*) and third lake (*Amaruqtalik*), 10 to 25 km northwest from the community on a gravel road, or along the seashore for Arctic char. You might spot residents or visitors char fishing near the community dock.

In the summer, as well, you may be able to see “sea lift”, the annual resupply of the community by ship or barge. Ships and barges from the ports of Churchill and Montreal arrive between early July or August and early September, delivering construction materials, fuel, household furnishings, vehicles and non-perishable foods. Barges unload their goods at the waterfront near the Northern Store. Goods are then transported by vehicle and loader to sites around the community. “Sea lift” is an exciting time, when everyone is eagerly awaiting the year’s supplies.



ABOVE The public dock at Chesterfield Inlet - Lee Narraway, August 2002

LEFT Hopital Ste Therese at Chesterfield, 1947. At the time Inuit lived in tents in summer, igloos in winter - Library and Archives Canada/PA-210318

Residents await the arrival of the *Nascopie*, 1946 - George Hunter, Library and Archives Canada/e004665353



The Early Community



Hudson's Bay post, 1928 - NWT Archives/Lorenz
Learmonth N-1987-033:0469

Now return to the Northern Store **(41)**, and start your tour through the early days of Chesterfield Inlet.

The Hudson's Bay Company built its first permanent post in the Arctic in Chesterfield Inlet in 1911 **(2)**. The building that currently houses the manager of the Northern Store was part of the first building to be constructed during the time of the Hudson's Bay Company post. An addition to this building in the 1920s

increased it to its present size. In 2008 to 2009, the managers' staff house was renovated, and the old Bay complex was re-roofed and a new heating system was installed. (The original Hudson's Bay Company posts, across the Arctic, were sold in 1988 by the Hudson's Bay Company to a group of employees, who now operate the Northern Stores.)

When the store is open, check it out. The cash registers, charge card machines, and a wide range of merchandise have replaced the basic bolts of cloth, bags of flour, tea and sugar, and other trade goods stocked by this store until the early 1960s. If the manager is available, you may request a brief tour of the warehouse section of the building **(2)**, now used to store supplies and some furs, but initially intended for furs, and at one time seal oil. On the second floor, with its open beams, you can see where the original 1911 structure and the 1920s structure were joined. The sloped ceiling boards of the upstairs boast signatures of the famous (and not so famous) that have passed through or lived in Chesterfield Inlet over the past century.



The Pig House - Marion LaVigne, Outcrop. 1990



The meat rack and doghouse behind the RCMP barracks, Chesterfield Inlet - G. Moodie, Glenbow Archives NA-2306-15.

One floor beam portion is open on the second level. This supported a wooden hoist to lift dry goods and materials with a rope from the main floor of the warehouse. The original wooden platform hoist is now on display at the Hudson's Bay Company in Manitoba. For many years, before the arrival of the annual sealift, a number of square dances and often teen dances were held at the old Hudson's Bay Store warehouse.

The plaque near the entrance to the building shows two young Hudson's Bay Company apprentices, R.J. Spence and J.L. Ford, with a loft full of pelts, in 1928. The other photograph shows the HBC complex as it looked in that same year.

The Canadian Press reported in 1933 on the "annual Christmas ball" at Chesterfield. "It took place in the decorated storeroom of the post of the Hudson's Bay Company. An accordion, violin, mandolin and improvised drums furnished the music." Inuit, attired in elaborate costumes, "danced with the whites". The menu, according to the report, included deer shank and caribou tenderloin.

In addition to the main building, there are a number of smaller buildings used for storage and staff housing. Off to the northeast of the main Hudson's Bay Company complex was a small building in traditional HBC white and red, known only as the "pig" house (3). For many years, part of the annual resupply to the traders in remote posts included several live pigs. These pigs were housed in small buildings during the fall. When the weather turned very cold, they were slaughtered to provide fresh pork to the HBC staff.

Members of the RCMP, the Bay and the Mission were also expected to supply their own meat. For example, freshly harvested caribou and other wild meat would be hung to cure on the meat rack next to the RCMP barracks.

The Roman Catholic Mission



ABOVE Construction of the Roman Catholic Mission Church, Chesterfield Inlet, 1912 - Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay CHB 04 0005

RIGHT the Roman Catholic Mission at Chesterfield Inlet - Lee Narraway, August 2002

Head west, from the Hudson's Bay Company post area along the main road. The first large complex you will come to is the current Roman Catholic mission and church. The mission was built in 1954 and for over 30 years served as the recreational and social focus for the community, as well as its religious centre. The new church was completed 10 years later in 1964. If the church is open, drop in to see the stained glass windows which incorporate scenes of traditional Inuit life.

Further along the road is the original Roman Catholic mission. The story of the mission is told in a special plaque erected by the diocese to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the mission.

A biography of Bishop Turquetil mentions that as an Oblate priest, a year after his arrival in the Manitoba missions, he headed north during the winter of 1901, on snowshoes, to preach the Gospel to the Inuit, but a frozen knee obliged him to turn back. During the summer of 1906, he made another attempt. The young Norman missionary arrived at the *Sarvartuk*, the Kazan River, where he remained seven

months with the Inuit, studied their language, observed their manners and customs, and shared their meals of raw fish or caribou boiled over a fire of moss.

In July 24, 1912, Arsène Turquetil boarded the *M.S. Nascopie* at the port of Montreal. On September 3, the vessel dropped anchor at Chesterfield Inlet. With the authorization and encouragement of Bishop Ovide Charlebois, Bishop of Keewatin, Father Turquetil founded the first Catholic mission on the west coast of Hudson Bay. He named it 'Mission Notre Dame de la Délivrande', after a sanctuary devoted to Our Lady in Normandy, close to Reviers, his birthplace in France.

The plaque shows Bishop Turquetil in the late 1930s, with a photo of the structure in 1918, when a small addition



Notre Dame de la Deliverand, 1938 - A. Clabout, Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay



Statue of Jesus, the first statue brought into the Canadian Arctic by the mission – Lee Narraway, August 2002



RIGHT the original Notre Dame de la Deliverand - Archives of Manitoba HBCA 1987/363-C-28/13

FAR RIGHT The old Mission shed - Marion LaVigne, Outcrop, 1990

was being added. The building was moved from its original site when the new church was constructed and for years it stood empty. In the early 1990s it was renovated, and then used as a residence

for diocese workers who volunteered to live and work in Chesterfield Inlet. The original RC mission is now a rental residence for temporary contract workers in Chesterfield Inlet. Although visitors



are encouraged to read the plaques, they are asked to respect the privacy of the people who live in the building.

To the right of the mission there are several statues. The statue of Jesus was the first statue ever brought into the Canadian Arctic. Some of the original mission outbuildings are still visible. The mission powerhouse supplied power to all of the Chesterfield Inlet settlement, before a government power plant was built at the far end of town. Other mission buildings housed workshops or were used for storage .



A view from the new hospital in 1931. The mission church is on the left and the track used to haul materials to the site is visible on the right - Library and Archives Canada/e000945267



The largest building in the community is Ste. Theresa's Hospital. It was started in 1930 by Father Ducharme and Brother Volant of the Oblate mission, later assisted by Brother Paradis. It took them at least three years, from the first framework to the heating and plumbing system. The fact that the building is still standing and in use more than 80 years later, is a testament to their skills and craftsmanship.

The hospital was staffed by the Grey Nuns. The first baby born in the hospital, in 1931, was Alphonse Naukatsik.

Construction materials for Ste. Theresa's were brought in by ship, and had to be transported from the waterfront to the site. To move them, a narrow track was built and materials were winched up in carts. You can still see some signs of the track in front of the mission buildings. The plaque at the entrance to the hospital shows the track and a photograph of Sister Heroux, one of the first nuns to arrive in Chesterfield Inlet in 1931. She stayed for over 30 years, retiring to Nicolet in the 1960s.

The mission ship, *M.F. Therese*, that once brought staff and supplies, hit a reef and sank in 1944, carrying the mission's history with it. All aboard were saved, however. The mission celebrated the end of the war in May 1945 with balloons distributed to the children.

Additions enlarged the east and west ends of the hospital in 1949 and 1956. The ground floor once included a bakery and housed the Chesterfield Inlet post office. In 1970s, the main floor was used for retail.

Over the years, the hospital underwent many renovations. From 1978 to 2000 a



ABOVE a dog team hauling a boat over the shore ice, late 1930s - Prime Girard, o.m.i., Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay CHB 08 03646

RIGHT the "blue" house - Marion LaVigne, Outcrop, 1990

BELOW dog team ready for travel inland - Glenbow Archives NA-1727-1



series of upgrades and renovations brought the old building up to new fire standards. Leonard Putulik worked in maintenance for 51 years at the hospital, from 1949 to 2000. The building is now rented for office space by various organizations and Nunavut government departments.

The last Grey Nuns left Ste. Therese's Hospital in September, 1999. The hospital was administered by the Diocese until 2001, then by the Department of Health and Social Services, Government of Nunavut, until the new facility was completed. The hospital was replaced in January, 2005 by the Government of Nunavut with the new state of the art facility, Naja Isabelle Home. It was officially opened June 22, 2005, and named after Sister Isabelle, the administrator of Ste. Therese's Hospital.

Behind the hospital are a number of buildings now used for storage, with the exception of the greenhouse that once used to produce a small supply of vegetables. One building was a hen house for some 200 hens that provided more than enough eggs for the mission and

the community. Mission Lake, behind the hospital, was often used in the late 1930s as a landing site for the aircraft belonging to the diocese. In winter, the missionaries and Inuit working for the mission shoveled a runway for minimum pay.

The small frame house across from the hospital is referred to as the "blue" house. It was built by the mission in the early 1950s to house one of its Inuit employees and his family. At the time, Inuit were just starting to make the transition from igloos and tents to wooden houses. In the mid 1970s, this building housed researchers of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, working at *Saqvaqjuaq*. In the early 1980s, the building was used as a post-office, the local radio station



RIGHT the Federal Day School at Chesterfield Inlet, 1952. The building is now part of the Co-op hotel - JV Jacobson, Library and Archives Canada/PA-101066
BELOW Sr. E. Herauf with her students, 1957-1958 - Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay, SGM Collection CHB 05 00319



and later a temporary residence for Nunavut Arctic College Learning Centre staff, due to a housing shortage.

In front of the hospital, down a slope leading to the beach, is a long low building, which was recently renovated and now serves as a hotel . It is attached to the Pitsiulak Co-op store. The building was the first school in the Kivalliq, the Sir Joseph Bernier Federal Day School. Opened in 1951, it was operated by the federal government and staffed mainly by the Grey Sisters. Originally it was named after Captain Joseph Bernier, a prominent Arctic sea captain. It was later renamed after Victor Sammurtok Sr., a respected elder. The plaque on the building features Victor Sammurtok before he passed away in the early 80s and the complete Sammurtok family in the early 1950s.

The original two-classroom building was expanded to a four classroom building in 1955. At that time the school had eight teaching sisters and 80 pupils, many from communities around the Arctic. The school continued in this location for almost 40 years, and was closed when a new

school was officially opened September 12, 1989. The building was bought by the Arctic Co-operative Ltd. in the early 1990s to build a new Pitsiulak Co-operative retail store and the Tangmavik Hotel .

One of the original purposes of the school in Chesterfield Inlet was to train Inuit workers for jobs at the nickel mine, which opened in Rankin Inlet in 1957 during the Korean War, when the price for nickel rose sharply. The North Rankin Nickel mine was closed in 1962. Training programs in Chesterfield Inlet are now provided by the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut and Arctic College. The small grey building next to the former school is the Nunavut Arctic College Learning Centre that offers academic and training programs. The building was once used for cultural inclusion programs by the Victor Sammurtok School.

Across from Arctic College is the large community complex . It includes the administrative offices of the hamlet, a drop-in centre, local radio station and a community gymnasium. The plaque at the hamlet office shows Turquetil



The Hamlet of Chesterfield Inlet community complex - CEDO, September 2005





The Sammurtok family circa 1953. The Chesterfield Inlet School is named for Victor Sammurtok - Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay

Hall in the 1960s and Chesterfield Inlet graduate Tom Sammurtok, who later joined the territorial government.

The community complex was once the site of Turquetil Hall, the residence that housed Inuit children who came to Chesterfield Inlet to go to school in the 1950s and 60s. For many years it was the largest structure in the Arctic. In 1969, after 15 years in operation, Turquetil Hall closed its doors. By the 1960s, the government had built schools in other communities and children no longer had to leave home for their education. For more than a decade after it ceased serving as a residence, it was used as an adult education centre, post-office, local radio station, Pitsiulak Co-operative Store, arts and crafts, temporary hostel and office space. The building was maintained by the department of public works. It was finally torn down in the early 1980s.



TransAir DC-3 brings a welcome load of supplies - Dave Sinnott, 1960-1961

From the 1960s to 1980s, the territorial government began to develop northern settlements. The territorial government set up a settlement office to administer the community, the settlement council and the housing association was established, and began building public housing and recreation facilities. Facilities included, a rec. hall, where movies were shown and community events took place, and curling at the rink. In the late 1970s or early 80s, a portion of the rink roof collapsed and the roof was never replaced. Later, the settlement office burned down during a blizzard.

In the 1960s and 1970s, a number of Kivalliq students moved to Churchill, Manitoba to attend the Churchill Vocational Centre. Others travelled to Chilliwack, British Columbia for the Eskimo Heavy

Equipment Operators Course from April 22 to September 27, 1968, run by the Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian School of Military Engineering. Newly certified Inuit heavy equipment operators started work for the Settlement Council of Chesterfield Inlet, later joining the Arctic Airports and the Hamlet.

Heavy equipment that would be considered antique today was imported from the south to build roads and to provide other settlement services. Before a new airport runway was built in the late 1970s, landing strips for larger planes were cleared by removing snow with a Cat wheel tractor at Mission Lake or on the bay front of the community. In summer, Mission Lake and often Police Lake were used for landing small floatplanes.



Commercial fishermen moor their boats along the beach at Chesterfield Inlet. The catch is Arctic char, which is processed at the Iqalukpik Fish Plant. - Lee Narraway, August 2002

Later Development



This is the first doctor's house, built in 1929 - Marion LaVigne, Outcrop, 1990

Proceed west on the road which runs along the waterfront. In late August, beluga whales often enter into the harbour in front of the community, to feed on marine life or fish. You might spot the whales. Harp seals often can be seen along the Inlet in August, as well.

Across the road is the Elders Home Care Centre **(32)**. Across from the Elders Home Care there is a small house on your right where a road branches off to the north. This was the home of the first resident doctor in Chesterfield Inlet **(11)**. This house was built in 1929 for the Federal Department of Health, under the guidance of the Hudson's Bay Company post chief. It was used as the general headquarters of visiting health officials, and Dr. Livingstone was the first to live there for a few months in 1930. He later returned to Chesterfield Inlet as the permanent doctor in August, 1934. The following September, in the living room of this house, he was married to his fiancé on the day she disembarked from the ship carrying her to Chesterfield Inlet.

On your left is the waterfront area used by residents and local commercial fishermen **(12)** to anchor their small boats or canoes.

Further along the road is the Iqalukpik Fish Plant established in 1979 **(13)**. Here, fish, mainly fresh caught Arctic char, is processed for shipment to the Keewatin Meat and Fish Plant in Rankin Inlet. The commercial fishing season is quite short but you may see the plant in operation from July to late September. If you are interested in purchasing a fresh caught Arctic char at the plant you may contact the local Aqigiq Hunters and Trappers Organization.

Behind the fish plant is a small slough known as Dog Lake (dog pond). This is where the RCMP used to tether their dogs **(34)**. The current RCMP detachment is across the road **(18)**. The large new building clearly visible ahead is Victor Sammurtok School **(14)**. It is a school for local students from kindergarten to grade 12. When the school is open, check in at the principal's office or the District Education Authority office and you may be offered a brief tour of the building.



The Victor Sammurtok School - CEDO, October 2005

Across from the school are two large buildings established in the 1950s by the federal Department of Transport, mainly as residences for staff and visitors **(15)**. Two of the DOT buildings were demolished in the 1980s. The Government of Canada had a fairly large presence in Chesterfield Inlet from the 1920s to the 1960s. There was short lived DEW line activity in the settlement as well, but in the late 1960s and early 1970s, most of the government administration was assumed by the territorial government.

Many of the older buildings at this end of the community were used by the federal government and included a weather station **(50)**, research facilities and communications facilities. One small four-man party that lived here during 1932-33 provided Canada's contribution to worldwide research being carried out in the Second International Polar Year. Research done in Chesterfield Inlet in the magnetic hut that year later led to the determination of the altitude of the aurora, or northern lights. The magnetic hut had no windows and very small doors (to preserve heat). Their hut was the object of much curiosity, wrote Balfour W. Currie in 1932. "...[No one can] understand how [we] can work with the stars in a place without windows." Meteorological records were kept at Chesterfield Inlet by the Department of Transport and Environment Canada from 1932 through 1980.

A small grey house on the beach side, at one time a residence for the NWT Power Corporation, has also housed the first radio station in the region **(17)**, operated by the Canadian Corps of Signals in the late 1940s

and early 1950s. This communication link was remarkable at the time. Today, the community receives CBC radio, a local radio and CRTC cable-television through local Pitsiulak Co-operative Ltd., and other Canadian and U.S. networks via satellite.

The building at the end of the road is the community power plant, operated by the Qulliq Power Corporation. Electricity is generated with diesel fuel, and large tanks at both ends of town store a year's supply of diesel; resupplied annually by tanker ship. The Northwest Territories Power Corporation (now Qulliq Energy Corporation) marked 50 years as providers of energy services to Chesterfield Inlet 1948-1998. On April 1st, 1999, Chesterfield Inlet became part of the new Nunavut Territory.

Heading south you pass the school and the former Department of Transportation garage site **(37)**, and the former DOT offices and research station **(50)**. To the north and inland is a residential area. On the corner is the Chesterfield Inlet Development Corporation **(30)** that houses the Kivalliq Inuit Association, MLA Nanulik

riding and First Air. Turning left, you pass the Noel Nuvak Arena **(27)** home to Chesterfield's eager ice hockey players.

Most of the original RCMP buildings in Chesterfield Inlet were replaced with new infrastructure by the early 1980s. One small white building with red roof survives on the right as you turn the corner **(24)**. The sign on this building features one of the Inuit "special" constables, and a dog team, which for many years was the only form of transportation for police patrols to remote camps.

A monument **(19)** recalls a tragic northern story. It marks the gravesite of Maggie Agnes Clay, the wife of an RCMP officer stationed in Chesterfield Inlet. One day in September 1924, while her husband, Staff Sergeant S.S. Clay was away on patrol, she was attacked by loose dogs. There was no doctor or medical facilities. The mission priest amputated her leg in an attempt to save her, but Mrs. Clay died the next day, September 20, 1924. She was buried here in Chesterfield Inlet, and her grave continues to be maintained by the RCMP.



ABOVE the first radio station and DOT housing - Dave Sinnott, 1960-1961

BELOW the metal building on the far right is the magnetic observatory where a team determined the height of the Aurora in 1932-1933 - NWT Archives/Lorenz Learmonth N-1987-033:0124



Sergeant Alphonse Joyce, his wife and two children, with Monseigneur Turquetil and Pere Ducharme, catching the news on the radio, Chesterfield Inlet 1937 - Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay, CHB AD 06 0035



Further up the hill is the community reservoir, completed in 1991 **(20)**. For years, water for the community was hauled by water truck from first lake. Winter blizzards often prevented the trucks from operating and water was sometimes in short supply. Now water can be pumped directly from the lake and stored for future use. The existing water pump facility was replaced with a new water pump house for the reservoir in August, 2011 by the territorial government.

The Naja Isabelle Home **(28)** is a residence for children or adults with disabilities. It employs approximately 35 staff from part time personnel to full time registered nurses from the south. The RCMP compound once stretched from here to Police Lake, and south of the Inuksuk and Airport Road. The Inuksuk **(55)** was built in August 2006, by the Hamlet of Chesterfield Inlet to commemorate the first RNWMP post in the area and the early post established in Chesterfield Inlet.

From the reservoir, you can stroll across the tundra to one of several community burial grounds **(21)**. A large monument marks the



Panorama looking north from the Canadian Corps Signals - J. Lewis Robinson, of Mines and Resources Canada, August 1944

grave site of an Oblate father who died while serving with the Catholic missions in the Kivalliq. Other markers provide insight into the earlier days of Chesterfield Inlet. Since rock and permafrost make burial difficult, the Inuit follow a traditional method, which involves piling rocks over the grave. Visitors are reminded that they should not disturb any of the markers in these cemeteries.

Return to the community through the main residential area. Few of the early houses provided by the federal and territorial government remain, and today most of the homes are similar to southern housing.

You pass Kingnguvaq Ltd. **(31)**, a retail store, Calm Air agent and cartage and taxi service. To the left, towards Mission Lake, is the community Health Centre **(23)**, the northern version of a medical clinic. At one

time, the hospital served as both hospital and nursing station **(7)**, but the nursing station became a separate, government operated facility in 1979. The new Health Centre was officially opened October 9th, 1991. Staff includes two full time nurses, social services, two receptionists, a visiting doctor and dental clinic.

The second Co-op store was built where the warehouse is now **(22)**. In the mid 1970s, the Co-op expanded into a former Turquetil Hall building, to house a bigger store. Pitsiulak Co-operative Ltd. was incorporated in 1971. The Co-op has its building in the previous elementary school, and operates the Tangmavik Hotel, a retail store, craft and carving sales and the fuel service contract. Some crafts and carvings are available for sale in the store. Local carvers or artisans may also sell souvenirs.



Residential area, Chesterfield Inlet - CEDO, June 2005



Chesterfield Inlet with the Northern Store in the foreground - Lee Narraway, August 2002

The original store was located between the Hamlet office and the “blue” house.

The warehouse was built in the 1980s as a two-storey retail store and hotel. The retail store and post office were located on the lower level and the hotel on the upper level. This building is now used for a warehouse. On June 6th, 1990, the Pitsiulak Co-operative Ltd. purchased the former school from the government of Nunavut and this was converted into a hotel, manager’s residence and office space. Retail merchandise was sold on the second floor, with the food department on the first level. Later, the Co-op moved the entire retail store into the office rental portion of the old school. Pitsiulak Co-operative Ltd. celebrated its 40th anniversary on June 19th, 2011.

A small white building just north of the community complex used to be one of the RCMP barracks buildings. It was moved here from its original location and for a while served as a Pentecostal church.

Now make your way back to the community complex **(25)**. Chesterfield Inlet officially received hamlet status on April 1st, 1980. The first mayor elected in 1980 was Eli Kimmaliardjuk. The Hamlet Council consists of one elected mayor and eight councillors, which oversee the direction and operation of the community affairs. The hamlet is the second largest employer in the community. The complex, which was officially opened June 9th, 1985, is the focus for various recreational and community events and meetings. The radio station (93.3 FM), is open from 9:00am to 1:00pm on weekdays. In the mid 1980s, the Hamlet rented an office space to the post office and later, in 2000, the RCMP detachment, until new facilities were built.

The hamlet office is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday, and the gymnasium is open evenings for recreational events - volleyball, basketball or floor hockey, and other sports or organized social events. Visitors are welcome to join the sporting events. The drop-in centre access to Internet is available to the public.

Many thanks to everyone who assisted us:

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