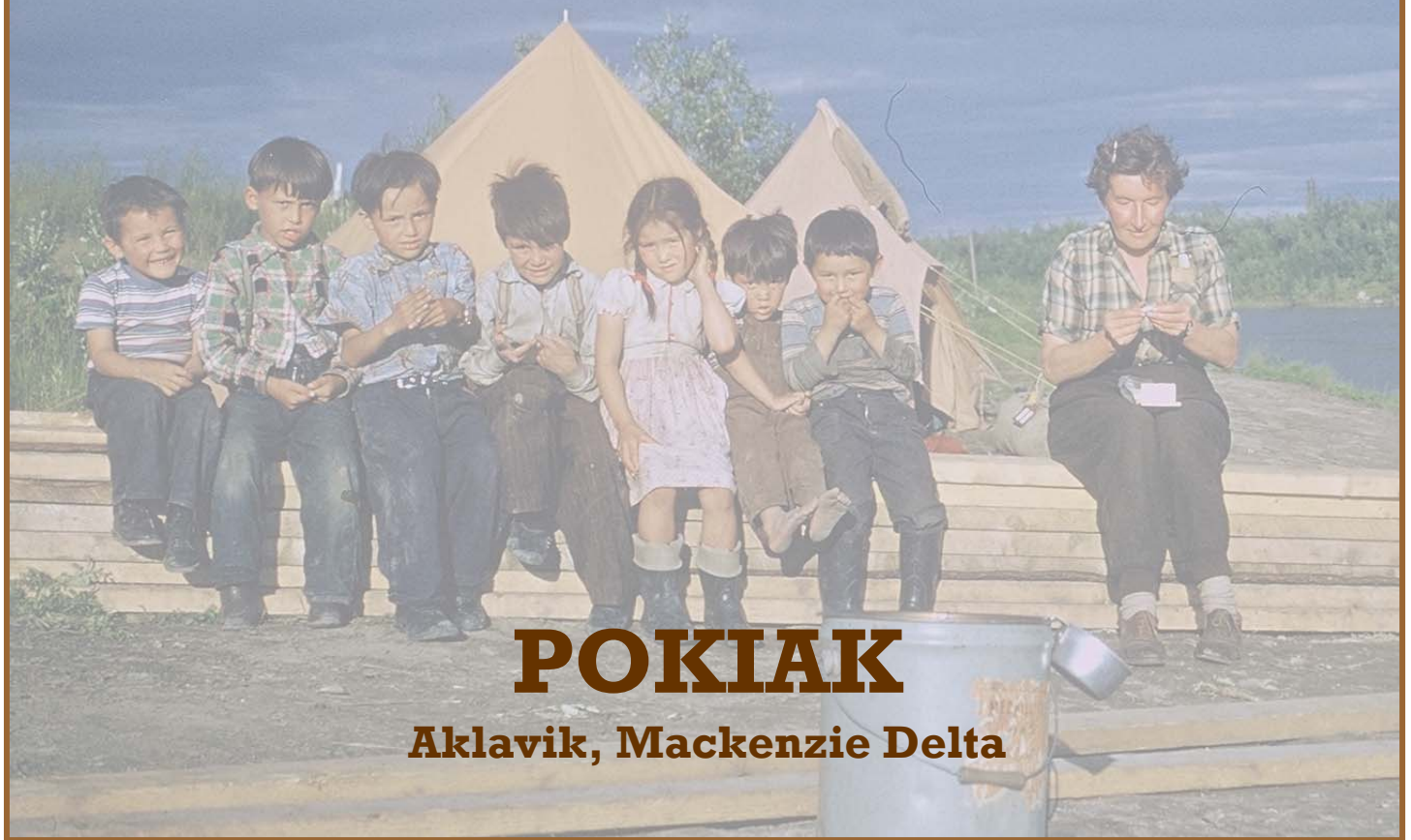


***Nomination Form for
Territorial Historic Sites***



POKIAK
Aklavik, Mackenzie Delta

Danny Lennie (?), Gordon Lennie or Ricky McLeod, Gordon McLeod, Tommy Adams, Mary Jane Lennie, Angus Lennie, Ricky McLeod and Netta Pringle in Pokiak, 1956
Photo credit: Gunther Abrahamson



Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute

Fort McPherson, NWT

Nomination Form for Territorial Historic Sites

MANDATORY INFORMATION

What is the name of the site you are nominating?

Pokiak

Why are you nominating this site? Why is it important to the Northwest Territories?

Pokiak is of great heritage value to the Northwest Territories because the site represents two separate and important identities: it is the original settlement of Aklavik, and it is an area where Gwich'in, Inuvialuit, Métis and others lived side by side. Additionally, several non-Natives resided there, generally those who had married into a local family. It was occupied from at least 1911 till the 1960s. It represents an important era in the Northwest Territories when immigration was adding to the already culturally diverse populations and changing the face of the north, and celebrates the multi-ethnic spirit of Aklavik, a major fur-trade social and economic centre. Pokiak also highlights and promotes understanding about its occupants – occupants that the normal historical literature often marginalizes. It celebrates a spirit of sharing, good times, and hard work fondly remembered by many Aklavik Elders.

Does the site have a story? If so, what is it?

Due to an increase in competition for trappers' fur from whalers at Herschel Island where prices were substantially cheaper than at Fort McPherson, around the turn of the twentieth century the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort McPherson decided to set up another post in the delta. Kenneth Stewart, known for his superior trading and organizing skills at Fort McPherson, was sent to establish the new post by Mr. John Firth of the Fort McPherson Hudson's Bay Company post. Stewart arrived in the area in 1911 and spoke with an Inuvialuit man, Pokiak. Pokiak's camp at the time was east of the current-day location of Aklavik at Jackfish Creek. Pokiak counseled Stewart to set up the new post on the south side of the channel, where erosion and flooding were less of an issue. Both Pokiak and Stewart moved to the southern site now called Pokiak, and set up camps and a trading post with two or three log buildings from the large trees available on the point.¹ Soon, other traders, including some from the coast where the whaling industry was dwindling, set up shop – some in Aklavik across the channel (Campbell 1987).

Northern Traders Ltd. had a post at Pokiak from around 1913-1938 (Usher 1971). The Northern Traders post was originally known as "Sinic" or Fort Scenic. It was sold to the HBC in 1938. Originally, the HBC post was located at Pokiak, it moved over to the

¹ Mary Kendi, April 12, 2007 discussed the three log buildings that Stewart constructed.

Aklavik side in 1924² – Aklavik was selected as being more appropriate for the steamboats to land, even though it was more subject to flooding and erosion. There were several sawmills at Pokiak as well – one owned by Roy Wright, and a later one owned by the government.³ There are some discrepancies in the dates of the traders opening in Pokiak – Wolforth (1971) indicates that the Northern Traders post opened first in 1912. Slobodin (1962) indicates that it was established in 1919. The Hudson’s Bay Company Archives at the Manitoba Archives only has records from 1929-1935.

A New Trading Post

Mary Kendi

So this old man Firth, he tell his boys, “One of you, you are going to trade stuff down and take fur for grub and whatever people want. You go down and take a load down and ... down this Peel River. Go have a look whichever way it flows. Find a place near the mountains and close to the coast. You put a town... where you could get caribou. Where there’s lots of fish and plenty of muskrat or rabbits. Look for that kind of place and [if] you think it’s good, then you settle there.”

Slobodin, an anthropologist working with the Teetl’it Gwich’in⁴ in the 1930s and 1940s, indicates that Aklavik was important as a frontier centre, with a highly-stratified population. The ‘classes’ he spoke of included those assumed to live on the Aklavik side of the channel, store owners, missionaries, and government employees. Slobodin indicates that the non-Native trappers were much further down the social scale and were considered, in attitude and lifestyle, to be included with the “half-breed” trappers (1971). Interestingly, the “half-breed” and non-Native trappers lived with the Gwich’in and Inuvialuit on the Pokiak side of the channel.

The higher-ranked representatives of the government, missions, and commerce are at the top, followed by the lower echelons in these fields. At the bottom of White society, and separated by a considerable social distance from the others, are the White trappers. Like the Orkneymen, “servants” of the Hudson’s Bay Company at the northern fur posts during the nineteenth century, they are engaged in production rather than as middlemen or administrators for the dominant society; and like the Orkneymen, they are ranked no higher than the acculturated half-breeds. Some White trappers are, in fact, of equal or higher class origin than most members of the frontier upper class, but the similarity of their economic pursuits to those of the natives, in addition to the anti-clerical and anti-government attitude of many trappers, has impeded interaction between trappers and other Whites. Conversely, there has been a remarkable convergence between White trappers and half-breeds in this region, not only in material culture and technology, but in attitude and outlook (Slobodin 1962: 37-38)

² Sarah Ann Gardlund indicates that the Hudson’s Bay Company moved in 1920, see below.

³ Richard Ross, April 12, 2007.

⁴ The Teetl’it Gwich’in were originally oriented towards the upper Peel River and nearby mountains, although in historic and recent times have settled in Fort McPherson, NWT, where the Peel River enters the Mackenzie Delta. Many Teetl’it Gwich’in moved to Aklavik and formed the Ehdiitat (or Delta) Gwich’in.

Bella J. Greenland, daughter of Kenneth and Annie Stewart, moved to Pokiak from Fort McPherson around 1915 with her new husband, Joe Greenland. She remembers that there was only a summer school there, taught by Edward Sittichinli, who taught the bible in the Gwich'in language. She lived in a large log house, which was eventually dismantled and moved across to Aklavik (from a 1981 interview, Campbell 1981).

Mary Kendi was born in Pokiak in 1915. At that time, Kenneth Stewart with the HBC and Joe Greenland were some of the few residents of the small community. Catherine (Stewart) and Lazarus Sittichinli, also newlyweds, arrived in Pokiak in 1916. Lazarus remembered that there were no Inuvialuit living in the area at that time, they lived further north on the Arctic coast. Lazarus and Catherine originally lived in a caribou skin house in Pokiak. However, Henry Stewart indicated that when he was school aged – probably around 1918-1922 – there was only one family, that of old Pokiak on the Pokiak Channel, living in Aklavik. Possibly most other families had moved to the new townsite or were out trapping. It seems like Henry Stewart did not include traders or other workers in his tally (Campbell 1981).

Based on archival photographs, it appears that after freeze-up people would walk between Aklavik and Pokiak.

Extract of COPE story by Sarah Ann Gardlund.

Aklavik as I Remember It

... The first fur trading company was the N.T. Company. They were the first ones to build their houses on this side of the river that is now Aklavik...

The Hudson Bay moved their buildings on this side of the river, that is Aklavik now, in 1920.

In the book, *Dog Tales and Mountie Adventures* by RCMP officer Robert Ward, at least one story about Pokiak is included. Ward provides some rare description about an unusual Pokiak character, but also includes information about living arrangements in the subdivision.

Joe Veitch was another character that lived in Aklavik at the time. His shelter was a 'tent-frame' which consisted of a wooden floor and two four by four side support walls for an eight by twelve canvas tent. Over the tent was a tarpaulin providing extra shelter. The tent was heated by a wood stove with a stovepipe shoved through the roof. The inside of the tent was crammed with Joe's possessions and it was not unusual for his pet cat to share some room with a large pet husky dog. ...

It is difficult to know whether all one heard was fact or fiction, but I suspect there was a grain of truth in the stories concerning this character. Joe had apparently been living up-river near Fort Norman at the end of the Second World War. He was reportedly caught stealing milk and subsequently charged with theft. The milk was apparently not for Joe, but for a young native mother with

child who was destitute. In any case, Joe was found ‘guilty’ of theft and sentenced to a short term in the Guardroom at Fort Norman. The R.C.M.P. at Fort Norman put Joe to work cutting wood for the detachment furnace. Some time later, when trying to use this firewood, the R.C.M.P. found that all the firewood was cut one inch too long for the firebox on their stoves. Meanwhile, Joe had moved down river to Norman Wells, no doubt chuckling all the way. It was reported that he acquired supplies and materials at the abandoned U.S. Army camp at Canol, and later set off down river to Aklavik by scow.

The camp of Joe Veitch was located on the Pokiak Channel, across the Peel Channel and about one mile from the main village of Aklavik. We had received information that Joe was making home-brew and this was a no-no under the terms of the Northwest Territories Liquor Ordinance. The information we received was somewhat unusual as the source stated that he had been present in Joe’s tent when the cat was crawling around the perimeter of the tent-frame and inadvertently stepped on the gauze stretched over the brew-pot next to the stove. The cat fell into the brew-pot and with a curse, Joe grabbed the cat by the scruff of the neck and held the dripping cat over the now exposed brew-pot, while he methodically squeezed the fluid from the cat’s fur back into the pot. ... Later, the Police made a visit to Joe’s tent and seized the brew before it was consumed.

...

Extract of COPE story by Sarah Ann Gardlund.

Life Story

... This is just a short note... We used to stay across the river. Our kids were small and we used to go out every spring, in March, to trap rats and stay out until the ratting was over. Then we came into town. Carl used to work for Stan Peffer putting up the store, him and Nels Leland, until they got started on the power house. Then we moved on this side of town. There were lots of people here then. I used to stay home with my kids looking after them and never used to think of babysitters. I did it all myself. Well, some people say those days are past. Maybe, I don't know. I never went out working until my youngest was going to school - then I got a job (and I liked my job very much)...

Pokiak is not mentioned often in *The Aklavik Journal: A Reprint of the Community Newspaper of Aklavik Northwest Territories 1955-1957*. This may be due to the acceptance of the community and location as a part of Aklavik. In the Break-Up 1956 issue, Bern Brown noted under “NEWS”:

During the week of June 17th tents began to appear across from Aklavik on the Pokiak channel, also the masts of schooners like the “Saucy Jane” which was first.
--

Pokiak remained the main settlement of Aklavik until as late as 1921, “...after some early difficulties experienced in docking river steamboats at Pokiak Point, both the Hudson’s

Bay Company and the Northern Trading Company (the successor to Northern Traders) moved to the present site in 1921” (Wolforth 1071: 46, referencing a Toronto Star article, February 1927).

Members of the Aklavik Historic Sites Nomination Steering Committee⁵ provided some further information and direction about Pokiak. Pokiak was a community in geographic and social terms - ‘just like a little town.’ Walter Jamieson, among others, lived on a surveyed lot, with metal posts. The Steering Committee indicated that Kenneth Stewart named Pokiak and Pokiak Channel after his good friend of the same name as a sign of respect and friendship.

Kenneth Stewart and Old Man Pokiak –

Annie B. Gordon

By the river, ...they have a bench. They sit there and...I just could picture [Kenneth Stewart] sitting there with that old man!... **He liked that old man so much, he told him that, “You see this river, we’re going to call it Pokiak.”** And so that’s how that ...river got named Pokiak. Pokiak Channel. ...when people ...become friends like that, you know they’re really close with one another. That’s how he was to that old man – that’s why he named that river after him.

Alfred Semple remembered numerous people important to the fabric of Aklavik history

lived in Pokiak, and reaffirmed the community’s multi-ethnic – in the local lingo ‘mixed up’ – identity, “Richard Ross’ dad, ...Albert Ross, used to live across there. And old J.J. [John Joseph Stewart]; Kenneth Stewart. And lots of other people. Just mixed-up peoples live across there. Tommy Wright, ah, Roy Wright.” Pokiak is remembered fondly by Aklavik residents and ex-residents who lived there. Catherine Semple said, “I remember lots of people used to stay there, and it’s good fishing there too! That’s where Richard Ross live... in summer he got dogs there and fish on the river and... **it’s a good place.**”⁶ Kenneth Stewart and his wife Annie were well-loved and respected members of the Aklavik community and were referred to as Abba and Amma, Gwich’in terms for ‘father’ and ‘mother’.⁷

The location of Pokiak is noteworthy – the immediate access to good resources such as a harbour and fishing were important resources for the Delta populations in the early twentieth century. The location was selected not just for economic reasons involved in the fur trade, but for the lifestyle as well. Annie B. Gordon indicates that when it was established, people were able to select any location to build a camp or community – pointing to the good availability and topography of the spot.⁸ Pokiak used to flood occasionally from the lake behind it, but not from the river. It is on high ground. There is a good fishing area at the point, and there is a sheltered area out of the wind making a

⁵ The steering committee consists of Richard Ross, Danny Greenland, George Edwards, Catherine Semple, Mildred Edwards, Annie B Gordon

⁶ Alfred and Catherine Semple, April 12, 2007

⁷ Annie B Gordon, April 20, 2007

⁸ Annie B Gordon, April 20, 2007

good harbour. Although few or no buildings⁹ are currently standing in good shape, in the past there were houses, cabins, warehouses, fish houses, smoke houses, stores, trading posts, and a sawmill. People lived there year-round. There is a good view of the mountains, Aklavik, and upriver from the location, and people had benches outside their houses for sitting and visiting.¹⁰ Children living in Pokiak during the early years may have attended residential schools in Hay River, although there was a day school in Aklavik more recently.¹¹ Tommy Wright remembers crossing the channel for school, “And we never missed any school. You know, we’d go across one day with a boat, next day we’d walking on the ice... Well, in the spring maybe when it was really dangerous, you know, you missed a little bit, but ...we prided ourselves in doing things.”¹²

Pokiak was not without electricity – a power line reached the community in the winter via poles set into the Peel Channel’s ice.¹³ Pokiak even had a local commercial vegetable supply: during the fall, Bill McNeely would sometimes arrive in Pokiak by boat from his trading camp further up the Mackenzie River at Travaillant River (Khailuk tshik) with vegetables for sale that were from gardens at his camp.¹⁴

Residents of Pokiak moved to Aklavik largely after the establishment of the new town of Inuvik in the 1950s.

Residents of Pokiak

Families living at Pokiak in the 1940s included:¹⁵

Walter (white) and Annie Jamieson (formerly Annie Tyrell; Gwich'in)
Mrs. Jane Leland (formerly Jane Phillips, Gwich'in)
Johnny (Métis/Gwich'in) and Louisa McDonald (nee Greenland; Gwich'in)
Old Jim and Eliza Firth (nee Bonnetplume; both Gwich'in)
Joe (or Jim) and Vivian Koe (nee Bell; both Gwich'in)
Old Kenneth and Annie Stewart (both Gwich'in)
Edward (white) and Maria Maring (nee Firth; Gwich'in)
Albert and Sarah Ross (both Gwich'in)
Dan McLeod (white - Scots) and Zenaide (Gwich'in)
Carl Gardlund (Scandinavian) and Sarah Ann Gardlund (Gwich'in)
Nels (Norwegian) and Maggie (Inuvialuit) Hvatum
Roy (white) and Gladys Phillips (Gwich'in)
Moise (Dogrib) and Catherine Mitchell (nee Stewart; Gwich'in)

⁹ A site visit is needed to determine the state of any remaining buildings

¹⁰ Steering Committee meeting, November 2006

¹¹ Alfred and Catherine Semple, April 12, 2007

¹² Tommy Wright, April 13, 2007

¹³ Richard Ross, April 12, 2007

¹⁴ Tommy Wright, April 13, 2007

¹⁵ From Sheila Greer’s 1999 place names database, source - Dolly McLeod

Later Hans and Kathleen Hansen stayed in the Mitchell house. During Tommy Wright's interview for this project, he prepared a list of people who stayed at Pokiak when he lived there:¹⁶

- Bill Day
- Walter Jamieson
- Jane Leland
- Cliff Moore
- Nizarr Sinchuck
- Jack Billips
- Kenneth Stewart
- Albert Ross
- Jim Firth
- Dan MacLeod
- Jim MacDonald
- Annie Anderson
- Johnny Lennie
- Archie Lennie
- Joe Veitch
- Nels Hvatum
- Edward (father) and James (son) Maring
- Donald Gordon
- Roy Wright (Tommy's father)
- Bill Vehus
- Pokiak
- Red Andrews

¹⁶ Tommy Wright, April 13, 2007

Growing up in Pokiak

Tommy Wright

Well, all I know is I grew up there, and, it was.. a great place. When we were growing up, all the people had a lot of respect for each other. And they helped each other.

And any kids, especially ...if anybody older than them told them something, told them to do something, or, gave them instructions? You did it. ...you might get a licking right there, if you didn't... You might have got a licking from them, you definitely would have got [one] from your parents. Because it was... different ...**we always thought it was different from across the river**, you know?...

Our grandparents grew up there, me and my grandparents grew up there, Richard Ross, his grandparents grew up there. You know, a lot of old people were around there, Old Kenneth Stewart and his wife lived there long ago. There was lots of old people. In those days people had very, very good morals... They believed in doing things right. ...If you got caught stealing, or lying, or anything like that, you were really in trouble.

...Anytime I think of Pokiak I always think of all the good things we did, good times we had. One time, here's an example of people helping each other. My dad had a sawmill. And, Buster and ...Dan MacLeod – ...his house was ...100 yards away from the sawmill. It was in the summer, and I guess there was a 'flu going around or something? So [it was] my dad and all us boys, there was five of us ...we worked on the sawmill all summer. So one got sick, so he said, 'well, go home.' And old Dan's sitting over there and he sees that, so he sends one of his boys to come and work on the sawmill. And pretty soon another one went home, another one came over. At the end, it was just my dad and the MacLeods were doing the sawing! **That's the way it was in those days.** You know, you helped each other, you did things, never even asked ...you just did it. ...When I think of Buster, and the MacLeods ... I always think of that. ...What a great, great way to live, in those days, you know? ... But everybody did things like that, really helped each other.

Bibliography

Benson, Kristi

2007 Ehdiitat Gwich'in Heritage Sites: Potential Heritage Conservation Zones.
Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute, Fort McPherson, NT. Report prepared for
the Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board.

Brown, Bern Will

1996 *The Aklavik Journal: A Reprint of the Community Newspaper of Aklavik
Northwest Territories 1955-1957.* Altona, Manitoba: Friesens.

Campbell, Myra

1987 *Aklavik: a community study*. Department of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories. Originally published 1981. Revised and edited by Pearl Benyk.

Greer, Sheila

1999 *Ehdiitat Gwich'in Place Names Research (Draft)*. Manuscript prepared for the Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute.

Slobodin, Richard

1962 Band Organization of the Peel River Kutchin. Bulletin 179, National Museum of Canada, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa.

Usher, Peter

1971 *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories 1870-1970*. Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa, Canada.

Ward, Robert D.S.

n.d. *Dog Tales and Mountie Adventures*. Self-published.

Wolforth, John

1971 *The evolution and economy of the Delta community*. Ottawa : Northern Science Research Group, Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

Primary Sources:

1. Interviews from Aklavik Heritage Conservation Zones project (Benson 2007):

Annie B Gordon, April 20, 2007

Mary Kendi, April 12, 2007

Alfred and Catherine Semple, April 12, 2007

Richard Ross, April 12, 2007

Tommy Wright, April 13, 2007

2. Aklavik Heritage Sites Community Steering Committee Meeting, November 2006:

Richard Ross, Danny Greenland, George Edwards, Catherine Semple, Mildred Edwards, Annie B Gordon.

3. Committee on Original People's Entitlement (COPE) stories.

Sarah Ann Gardlund. *Aklavik as I Remember It*

Sarah Ann Gardlund. *Life Story*

A Name of the Site

<i>Type of Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Information on use of name</i>
Present name(s)	Pokiak	

Traditional name(s)	
Original name	
Other historic names(s)	Sinik, Fort Scenic, Old Aklavik , Pokiak Channel
Official name	None, within the legal boundary of Aklavik.
Other names	
<i>Please include any information about the name i.e. what language it is in, the period when it was used...</i>	

B Geographical Location of the Site.

Where is the site?

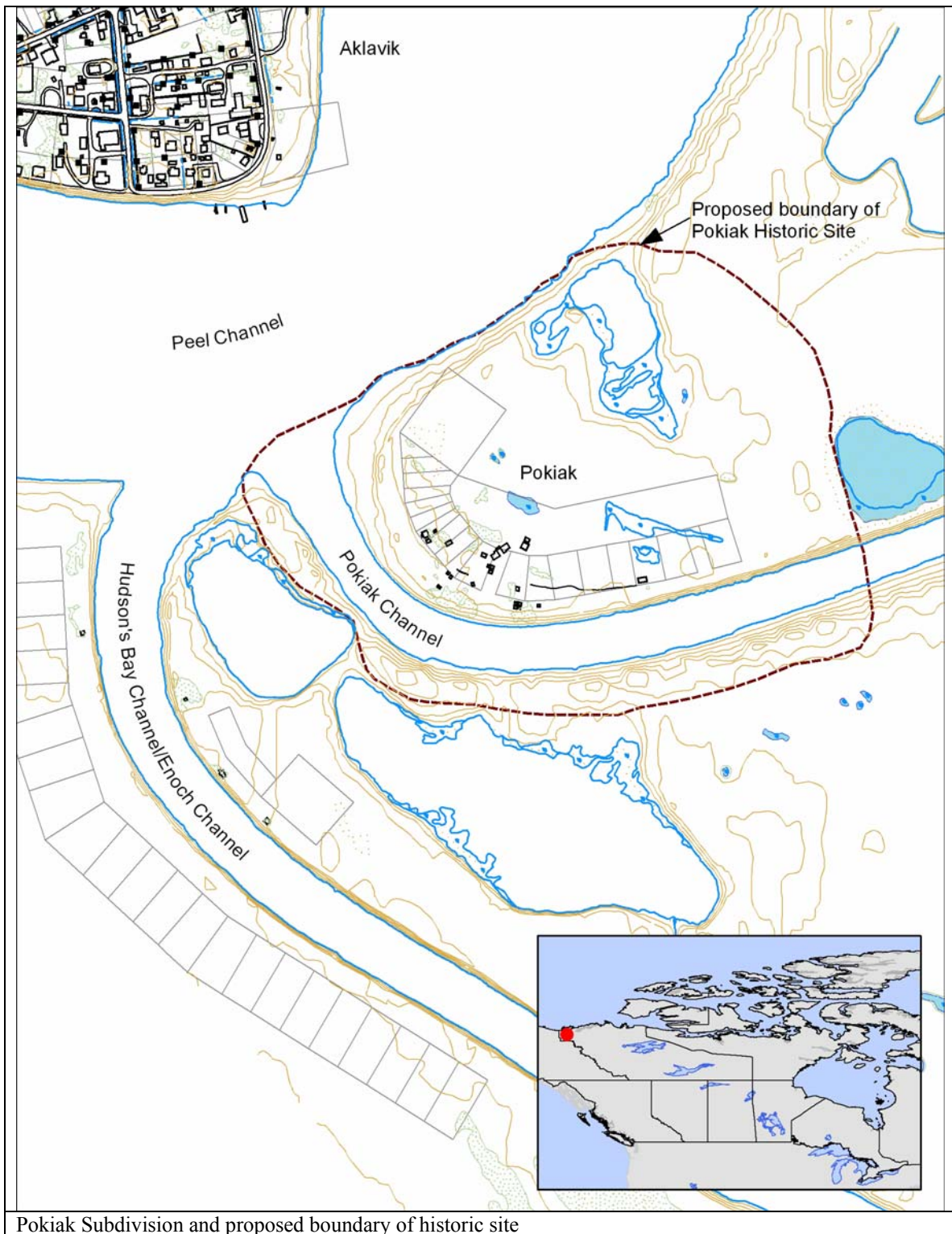
The site is located on the outlet of the Pokiak Channel across the Peel Channel from modern-day Aklavik, Northwest Territories. It is located on the west and east sides of the outlet. It is in the Mackenzie Delta.



Google Earth image of Aklavik, with a rectangle around Pokiak. The Peel Channel is the large main channel flowing around Aklavik. Pokiak is on the Pokiak Channel, and the channel to the southeast is known as Hudson's Bay Channel or Enoch Channel.



Image of the stage and warehouses for the Pokiak River Music Festival. Other houses are not visible, although the Aklavik Historic Sites Steering Committee indicates that there are probably more buildings in the willows. Image from Google Earth.

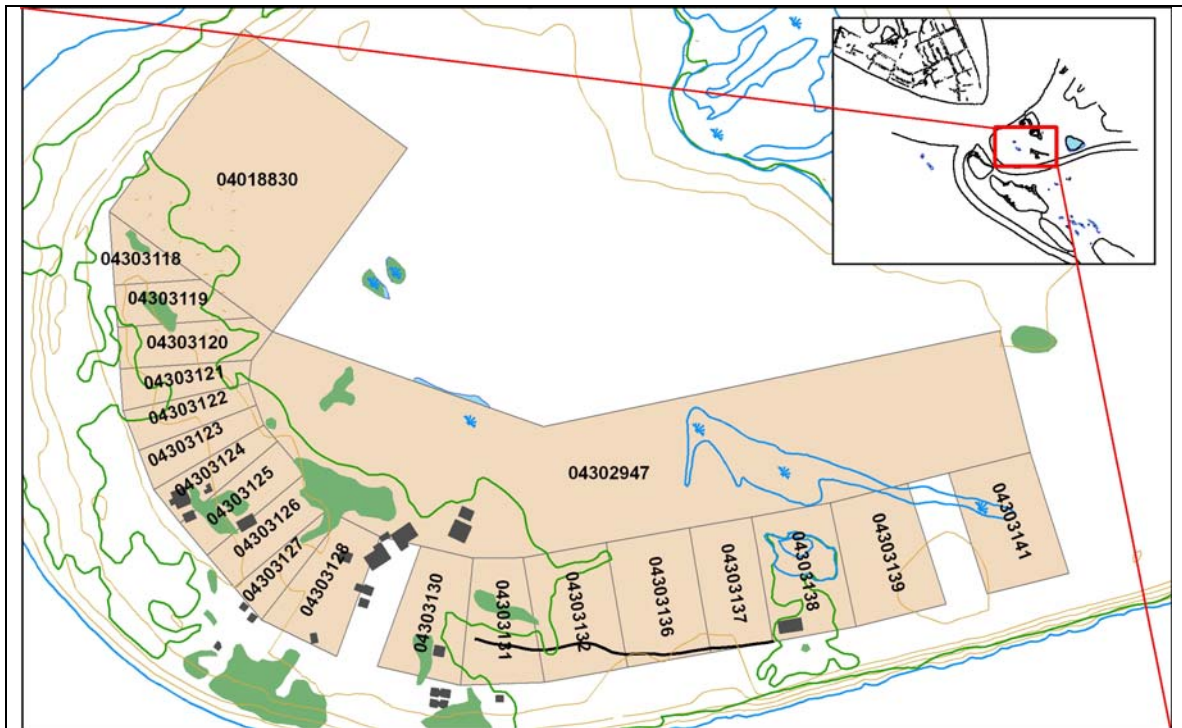


Other types of information will also help to locate the site. If you can identify it using any of the geographic description tools below, please do so.

Street address Numerous	
Legal address The site includes the private titled lots in the table below.	
Latitude / Longitude	68° 12' 45" N 135° 59' 45" W Datum: WGS84
Other method	

Table 1. Titled Parcels in Pokiak – east side of Pokiak Channel.

IS Number	Regional IS Number	Lot	Block	Plan	Contract	Land User	Land Owner
303141	04303141	112		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303139	04303139	111		33	Vacant	Not applicable	Commissioner
18830	04018830	1	1352	33	Reserve	Not applicable	Commissioner
303118	04303118	94		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303119	04303119	95		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303125	04303125	101		33	Vacant	Not applicable	Commissioner
303126	04303126	102		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303127	04303127	103		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303128	04303128	104		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303130	04303130	105		33	Vacant	Not applicable	Commissioner
303131	04303131	106		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303120	04303120	96		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303122	04303122	98		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303121	04303121	97		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303123	04303123	99		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303124	04303124	100		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303138	04303138	110		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303137	04303137	109		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303136	04303136	108		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
303132	04303132	107		33	Titled Lot	Private	Private
302947	04302947	475		2843	Titled Lot	Private	Private



Pokiak Lots

Add any other information that would help us to find the site

C Description of the Site

Please clearly describe what the site looks like.

The site is located on two points of land divided by a smaller channel. Several buildings are within the boundary of the site. The points of land are higher in elevation than Aklavik proper.

The MACA “ATLAS GIS” (<http://gis.maca.gov.nt.ca>) indicates that there are 21 building footprints on the east side of Pokiak Channel in Pokiak. There are also several buildings on the Hudson’s Bay Channel. There are also 24 vacant commissioner lots on Hudson’s Bay Channel, most of which are designated as Commissioner lots with the land user identified as “Federal.”

Add further information to describe parts of the site (if appropriate).

The GSCI recommends a site visit during the summer to catalogue the standing structures and visible remains of Pokiak. Currently there is at least one standing building.

What parts of the site must be preserved for it to keep its heritage value? For example, particular features of a building, views and vistas, space configurations, how the site is used, materials the site is made of, stories that go with the site...

The heritage value of Pokiak remains in its historical and multi-cultural associations more than the buildings at the site. Therefore, the stories and storytelling about the site are key

to valuing Pokiak as a heritage site. There are also buildings that are being vandalized which should be protected through education and other measures.

Please estimate (roughly) the size of the site

The site is approximately 500 meters northwest-southeast and 350 meters northeast-southwest. If the settlement on Hudson's Bay Channel is included, the measurements are approximately 650 m NW-SE and 900 m NE-SW.

**Please attach photos of the site if you can.
How many photos have you included?**

One

When were they taken? (rough date)

1956

Who took them?

Gunther Abrahamson



Photograph 1: "Netta and kids".

From left to right:

Danny Lennie (?), Gordon Lennie or Ricky McLeod, Gordon McLeod, Tommy Adams, Mary Jane Lennie, Angus Lennie, Ricky McLeod. Netta Pringle.

Which of the following best describes the type of historic place you are nominating?

(Choose one or more)

a	a ruin (archaeological remnant)	X
b	a sacred site	
c	a burial or grave site	
d	a trail, river route, road route or pathway	
e	a site traditionally used for a specific purpose or activity	X
f	a cultural landscape	
g	a special place the natural landscape (intangible)	
h	a special feature in the natural landscape (tangible)	
i	a man-made feature in the natural landscape	
j	a landscape that is part natural, part man-made	
k	a building	
l	a building and its property	
m	a structure (that is not a building)	
n	a complex of buildings & structures (one property)	
o	a streetscape	X
p	a historic district (streets and properties with buildings or structures)	X
q	a man-made landscape that includes many features	X
r	a place where early land occupation patterns can still be seen	X
s	another type of place (describe)	

D Use and Condition of the Site

How is this site used today?

This site is lightly used as a fishing or recreational area today. There is also a music festival held there called the “Pokiak River Music Festival.” The festival has not been operating for several years, although it often runs every year or second year depending on available funds for operation. The Aklavik Indian Band was the main organizer, by means of a working committee. The date for the PRMF varied, either in July, July or August.

Is this site currently under threat? If so, please describe the threat.

Some of the remaining buildings are being destroyed through vandalism – “after I moved this side, and my mom moved this side, ...I try to watch the house, you know, take care of it, sometimes go there camping in the summer, and then, then you go there some other time, and kids smash all the windows.”¹⁷

How would you describe the present condition of this place?

Condition	Yes/No	Comments
healthy	Yes	
whole		
good		
okay	Yes	
poor		

¹⁷ Richard Ross, April 12, 2007

overgrown Yes
falling apart Yes
being destroyed Yes

Who currently owns the site?

There are numerous owners, see above.

Are they aware and supportive of this nomination?

Support from all landowners is being sought from the GSCI for this nomination. Letters of support will be forwarded to the PWNHC as GSCI receives them.

If available, please attach a letter from the owner(s) indicating their support of this nomination. If not currently available, please submit one separately, using the file number Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre provides when it responds to the nomination.

Thank you for completing this nomination form.

Please tell us who you are, and where we can reach you

name	
organization (if any)	Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute
mailing address	Box 30, Fort McPherson, NT X0E 0J0
telephone	867-952-2524
fax	867-952-2238
e-mail	gsciexecutivedirector@learnnet.nt.ca
other	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Answers to the following questions are **not** required to nominate a Territorial historic site.

However, it will help us to process your nomination more quickly if you can provide **any** of the following information.

1) Do you have a personal attachment to this site? If so, please tell us about it.

The residents of Aklavik and Inuvik, who used to lived at Pokiak with their families, have a connection with Pokiak as expressed through numerous interviews with the Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute and through the Aklavik Historic Sites Nomination Steering Committee meetings. Pokiak is important for several broad reasons: it is the original settlement of Aklavik, and it was the subdivision where many Gwich'in, Métis, and other people separate from the 'government' town people lived.

2) Can you provide information to precisely identify the boundaries of the site?

See maps in section "B Geographical Location of the Site".

3) Has this site already been recognized as a historic place by another government or agency? If so, by whom and as what type of site?

Not that the GSCI is aware of.

4) Is this site presently occupied by someone who is not the owner? Please name (if known).

Not that the GSCI is aware of.

Does the present occupant know the site has been nominated as a Territorial historic site?
_____ (yes / no / uncertain)

There are no present occupants that the GSCI is aware of.

5) Has this site been maintained over the years by someone (who is not the owner or occupant)? Please name person and contact information (if known).

Richard Ross has conducted maintenance tasks on the house he grew up in.

Does this caretaker know the site has been nominated as a Territorial historic site?

Yes

6) Do you know of a person, group or organization that has stories, papers or historic photographs of the site? If so, please tell us who they are, and how we can contact them.

The Hudson's Bay Company (Archives?) has at least one picture of the site, as seen on page 188 of *Copplalook: Chief trader, Hudson's Bay Company 1923-1939* by A. Dudley Copland (1985). This photograph is of schooners and other boats in the channel in front of wall tents and log cabins.

The NWT Archives and some Aklavik residents may have photos of the Pokiak site in their collections. The following two have been identified from the Prince of Wales

Northern Heritage Centre Photo Archives database, online (arrows pointing at Pokiak have been added):

1.



Aklavik, 1952. [Aerial view].

Accession Info: *N-1979-062: 0134*

Date: *1952*

Restrictions: No restrictions to access.

Copyright: No copyright restrictions.

2.



Aklavik. [Aerial view].

Accession Info: *N-1979-062: 0370*

Date: 1952
Restrictions: No restrictions to access.
Copyright: No copyright restrictions.

7) Do you know where we can obtain additional information about the site?
(Please list the names of any books, articles, tapes, videos, or similar materials.)

The bibliography above; Buster McLeod (of Inuvik, former resident of Pokiak) was not interviewed in this process and will have many stories about Pokiak.

8) Have parts of this historic place been removed and relocated elsewhere. If so, what parts are they and how can we find them?

At least three buildings have been moved into present-day Aklavik.

9) Is this historic place a building or structure that has been moved to its present location from an earlier site? If so, please tell us what you know about when it was moved and where it came from.

Not that the GSCI is aware of.

10) Does your community support designation of this site?

Yes, through the Aklavik Historic Sites Nomination Steering Committee and the Ehdiitat Gwich'in Chief and Council— see attached letters.

If available, please attach letters of community support to this nomination. If such letters are not currently available, please submit them separately, using the file number Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre provides when it responds to the nomination.