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***Northwest Passage Historic Park  
Interpretive Plan***

***Type of Study: Plans/strategies***

***Date of Report: 1987***

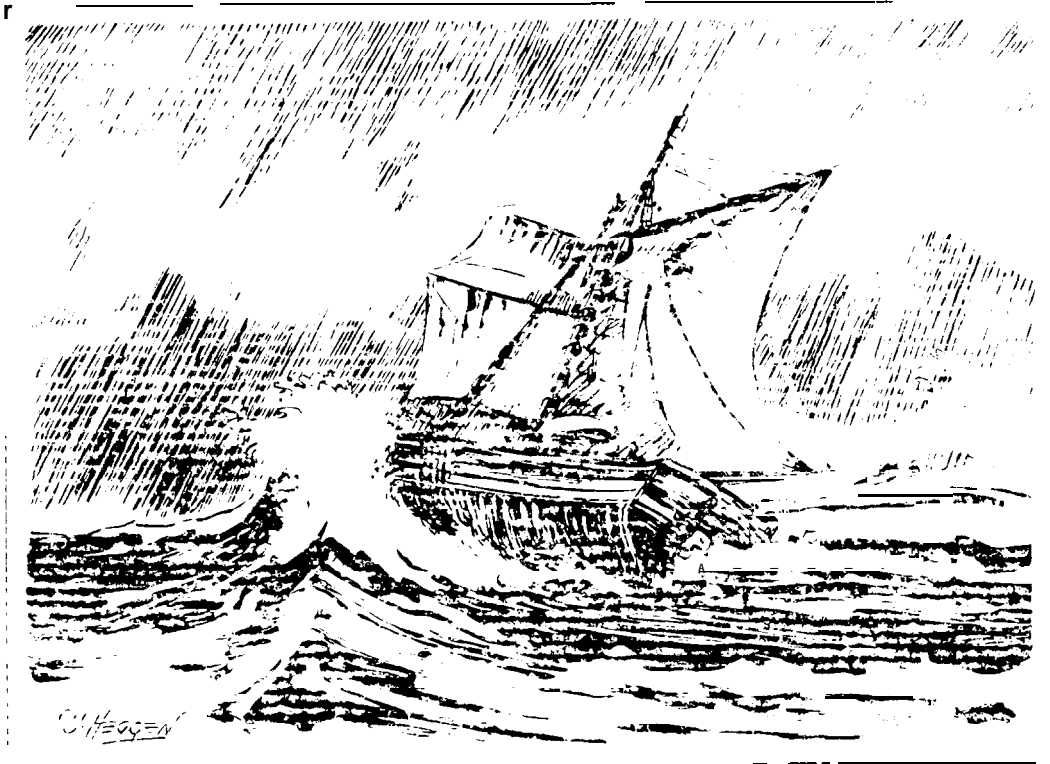
***Author: Prp Parks: Research & Planning  
Inc.***

***Catalogue Number: 11-8-43***

10-8-93

# Northwest Passage Historic Park

## Interpretive Plan



**PRP Parks: Research & Planning Inc.**

2031 Casa Marcia Cres Victoria, B.C. V8N 2X3 (604) 477-5000

# PRP Parks: Research & Planning Inc.

2034 Casa Marcia Cres Victoria BC V8N 2X3 (604) 477-5333

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March 23, 1987

Ms. Mary Stueck  
Regional Tourism Officer  
Economic Development and Tourism  
Government of the Northwest Territories  
Cambridge Bay, Northwest Territories

Dear Mary,

Enclosed please find the original and six copies of the Northwest Passage Historic Park Interpretive Plan. Also enclosed are a mounted set of display copies of the graphics, as per the contract. I hope you find everthing satisfactory.

I have enjoyed working with you and the people of the community on the project. I would certainly like to follow through with implementing Phase 1 and will look forward to hearing from you.

Have a good holiday.

Best regards,



Bruce K. Downie  
Consultant

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## BACKGROUND

The impetus for this project arose from The Arctic Coast Tourism Plan prepared for the GNWT and the communities of the **Kitikmeot** Region by the consulting team of Outcrop Ltd., The DPA Group Inc. and MacLaren **Plansearch**. The plan identified significant potential for the development of tourism opportunities in the Gjoa Haven Destination Area, and outlined a series of project proposals. One aspect of this potential is related to the historical significance of Gjoa Haven as a focal point in the exploration of the Northwest Passage. The tourism plan proposed the development of a "Northwest Passage Historic Park" at the community of Gjoa Haven. The park was proposed to focus clearly on Amundsen, his explorations and stay in Gjoa Haven. However, other Northwest Passage history, the Franklin and **McClintock** expeditions and the history of King William Island in general, and Gjoa Haven specifically, was also proposed to be included. Other projects that were similarly outlined included the development of Northwest Passage Coastal Tours, a community tour of Gjoa Haven, dog team excursions and upgrading of the lodge at **Chantry** Inlet.

This project has been undertaken to assess only the "Northwest Passage Historic Park" proposal in more detail and to provide a comprehensive plan for its implementation. It has not been assumed that the general direction emanating from the Arctic Coast Tourism Strategy is preferable or even appropriate. The scale of the tourism strategy project did not allow consideration of the detailed directions and feasibility of the projects proposed and thus cannot be assumed to be firm direction. Instead the ideas suggested have been investigated and an approach for developing an historic park concept has been described. This interpretive plan identifies goals and objectives for the park as well as appropriate interpretive themes and messages. Also included are recommendations for the development of interpretive facilities and media that could be used to communicate the identified themes and messages.

This plan has evolved from the review of a wide variety of information sources, discussion of the concept with people in the community, and an assessment of site and community resources. The interest and enthusiasm of members of the community is greatly appreciated and will be important in the successful implementation of the plan.

## RESOURCE ANALYSIS

### Resource Description

#### The Landscape:

The community of Gjoa Haven is located on a sheltered bay on the southeast coast of King William Island (68 38' north latitude and 95 53' west longitude). The area is predominantly sand and boulders to varying thickness covering limestone bedrock. Elevations in the area reach up to 50 m. above sea level. Bedrock predominates on the higher ground while coastal areas and other lowlands are more thickly covered with sand, gravel and coarse rock. This surface material is underlain by permafrost, with an active layer of between 1 and 1.5 m. In the summer there is little ponding of surface water because it soaks quickly into the active layer. Arctic tundra vegetation covers the area including a variety of small flowering plants, lichens and clusters of arctic willow in sheltered locations. This vegetative cover is important for protecting the loose surface material from both wind and water erosion.

There is good water depth in the bay, while the shoreline, especially along the eastern side, is shallow and the beach is sandy. These conditions provide good boat access and anchorage and is one of the important characteristics influencing the origin and growth of the community.

Gjoa Haven experiences a climate that is typical of the Arctic Island region. Mean daily temperatures vary from -36 C in January to +15.5 C in July. The months of June, July and August are the only ones in which the mean daily temperature rises above freezing. Annual precipitation is a low 8.4 cm. with the late summer and early winter months of August to October accounting for the majority of both rainfall and snowfall. Annual snowfall averages about 25 cm. but the impact of snowfall is felt mostly from the blowing and drifting brought about by the predominant northerly and northwesterly winds. Although not generally strong winds in the winter time, strong gusting is common.

#### The Community:

The community of Gjoa Haven is located on the eastern shore of the inlet. The resident population at the time of the 1981 census was 523, with 50% of that figure being under 14 years of age. Hamlet status was granted in 1980 and presently the Hamlet offices occupy a central location in the Community Hall which was opened in 1985. In addition to these offices the hall houses a gymnasium, community radio station, an office of the local MLA and the Council Chamber.

Across from the Community Hall is the Kekertak Cooperative Association's general retail outlet. The Coop also owns and manages the Amundsen Hotel next to the retail store. The hotel has 6 rooms providing good quality accommodation and meals. In addition, the community has a Hudson Bay store and a variety of other business services for local residents. Government services include a school, nursing station, RCMP office, and airport.

#### Historical Resources:

No extant resources have been identified to date within the community which relate to the visit of Amundsen. Other resources applicable to the general history of the community including the early operation of the Hudson Bay Company and the **Canalaska** Trading Co. are available, although only to a limited extent. The location of the most significant extant resources relating to **Amundsen's** voyage are in Norway. Collections of native cultural artifacts are also held in the National Museum of Canada in Ottawa (see other sources). The Gjoa has been returned to Norway and maintained in the Oslo Maritime Museum. There also exists a collection of photographs taken by the crew during the voyage. In Gjoa Haven, the characteristic of greatest historical significance to the Northwest Passage story is the site itself and the lack of extant resources does not diminish this significance.

The extensive written record of Amundsen's travels is available in his own published works. Documentation of the details and significance of his exploration is also available in the **anaylses** of other historians (see References). While other northwest passage explorers such as Franklin, are also relatively well documented, none relate as directly to the community as does Amundsen.

#### Resource Analysis:

As a result of its location and resources relevant to the proposed Northwest Passage Historic Park, the following key implications for planning and development of such a tourist related set of facilities should be noted. These assessments have been used in the development of the proposed goals, objectives and interpretive themes and facilities.

1. short visitor season - summer travel predominates in the **Kitikmeot** Region. The season is slightly extended for Gjoa Haven specifically because of the opportunity for dog sled outings in the spring and by the passage of cruise ships through the Northwest Passage in the late summer or early fall. Throughout this season visitor numbers will not be high and will be small groups or a few individuals, with the exception of the cruise ship visit.



2. guides for any travel beyond the community - the nature of the landscape and the unpredictability of the weather conditions make travel beyond the community impractical for any but the very experienced. The opportunity is thus significant for local guides to provide excursions. Opportunities for day trips and overnight trips to points of interest along the coast or to inland destinations could contribute significantly to the visitor experience of the area. Such trips could be effectively connected in theme and focus to the historic themes communicated in the Northwest Passage. Developing a range of opportunities would be a very helpful supplement to developing a significant visitor attraction that was focused on the identified historic themes.

3. distances are long and conditions unpredictable: time available for trips must be flexible - visitors should be made aware of the unpredictability of travel conditions in the region. However, by providing a range of activities that will be an attraction in spite of the conditions they will not be reluctant to come but rather incorporate more time into their schedule. Community based activities are very helpful in such bad weather situations. The Northwest Passage Historic Park concept makes an important contribution in this regard.

4. community focus is very important - From the perspective of the Northwest Passage the focus should be on interpreting the history of the site. The strength of the message and the advantage for Gjoa Haven over all other sites is the relevance of the location to Amundsen's Northwest Passage Expedition and the time he spent in the area.

## VISITOR ANALYSIS

## The General Context of Tourism in the NWT

Tourism is a significant growth industry in the NWT. Tourist traffic has been steadily rising until it is now estimated that the annual number of visitors exceeds the total population of the Territories. During their travels visitors are estimated to spend in excess of \$65 million each year. Transportation and accommodation account for the major expenditures with restaurant meals and souvenirs as secondary expenditures. June, July and August are the months that experience the highest levels of tourist travel. Levels are lower for September and lower still for the remainder of the year.

All parts of the NWT do not share equally in the current tourism boom. The Fort Smith Region receives most of the visitors and **approximately** one third travel to the Inuvik Region. Few visitors venture into the Central Arctic Region or the Keewatin and **Baffin** Regions. About **1300** people, mostly anglers, hunters, naturalists and canoeists, visit **the** Central Arctic Region each year.

## Activities

Shopping for crafts, fishing, visiting museums and historic sites, and nature studies/walks are popular pursuits among visitors to the NWT. It is assumed that similar activities would be popular with visitors to the Arctic Coastal Region and to Gjoa Haven in particular. Given these activities the following is a discussion of the implications for Gjoa Haven.

Gjoa Haven supports an active arts and crafts group. Kakavik Crafts is establishing a reputation for fine soapstone carvings. The community is already known for the unusual wall hangings and applique work made by local artisans depicting both legendary subjects and scenes from a life on the land. As the tourism industry grows so could the demand for **Inuit** arts and crafts.

Gjoa Haven is also noted for the number of resident dogsled teams. Trips by dog sled, like the three day Arctic Spring Adventure offered by **Opingak** Tours, could add to the area's tourist base especially during the spring months. Trapping, hunting and fishing remain important sources of food and income for members of the community. The reputation of nearby Chantry Inlet contributes to the tourism potential of the region. It has been described in the magazine Field and Stream as "... on of the best fishing areas in the **world**". Trapping, hunting and fishing trips could be offered separately or in conjunction with the dogsled trips.

Project Northwest Passage is a 33 day voyage on the MS Society Explorer through the Northwest Passage from Nome, **Alaska** to Nova Scotia. For almost \$15,000 individuals can become one of 106 passengers on board and can retrace the routes of the explorers stopping in several spots en

route including Gjoa Haven. The Lynblad Explorer, started in 1984, follows a similar route. The community has responded well to such tourist interest by providing activities, crafts and **cultural** demonstrations. The proposed Historic Parks and interpretive facilities detailing Amundsen's discovery of the Northwest Passage and his stay at Gjoa Haven would enhance visitor activities in the community for cruise ships visitors as well as others.

#### Tourism Potential

With careful promotion and execution tourism can have a more significant positive influence in Gjoa Haven. It is important to realize that other areas in the NWT, in Alaska and in Greenland are developing packages to attract visitors. To compete against the growing number of tour packages and destinations available a quality product offering a unique experience is needed. The history of the discovery of the Northwest Passage and **Amundsen's** stay in Gjoa Haven provide the background to develop a distinctive visitor attraction. This coordinated with other community efforts such as wildlife tours, guided hunting and fishing trips, arts and crafts could stimulate tourism in the community and establish a diverse industry providing important employment and economic benefits to the community.

#### Implications For Planning

A key requirement for successful planning of facilities for a Northwest Passage Historic Park is identifying market groups and planning to meet their needs and expectations. Likely target groups would be history enthusiasts interested in expeditions to find the Northwest Passage (frequently from countries associated with northern exploration such as the U.S.A., Scandinavia, especially Norway, Europe and Canada), travelers on route to other destinations, government employees interested in learning more about the history of the Northwest Passage, business travelers, and passengers on cruise ship tours.

There are several resulting implications for the Northwest Historic Park. Firstly, the focus of the park must be clear. **Amundsen's** voyage through the Northwest Passage and his stay in Gjoa Haven. Other places are connected with the discovery of the Northwest Passage but none to the same extent. This provides a high profile historic theme that is unique to this community. Secondly, visitor facilities must be flexible in capacity. For much of the visitor season the number of people visiting the community and the historic park will be low, however, the site must have the capability to entertain large numbers of visitors when cruise ships such as the MS Society Explorer make Gjoa Haven a port-of-call. Thirdly, having **travelled** great distances to reach Gjoa Haven visitors should be suitably rewarded for their efforts with an indepth interesting story of Amundsen's voyage and his stay among the **Netsilik** people. Sufficient treatment of the story and a variety of media which focus on the theme should be available for the visitor. Lastly, it is important to relate the interpretive material to the site.

The climate and physical environment had a major influence on the lives of Amundsen, his crew and the Inuit at the turn of the century and take a prominent role in the visitors' experience at Gjoa Haven today. A combination of experiences indoors where it is comfortable to spend time, along with experiences outdoors where a true sense of the environment and the conditions under which the events of the past took place, are crucial to a comprehensive visitor experience.

## INTERPRETIVE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The concept of a Northwest Passage Historic Park in Gjoa Haven and its success in meeting visitor expectations, relies on a clear focus of attention on **Roald Amundsen**, his voyage, activities on King William Island and his relationship to the native people. To set out a framework whereby this can be accomplished, the following goals and objectives for the historical interpretation at Gjoa Haven have been identified.

### Goals:

- \* to provide opportunities for visitors to appreciate and understand the significance of **Amundsen's** exploration of the Northwest Passage
- \* to provide opportunities for visitors to appreciate **Amundsen's** stay in Gjoa Haven and its implications as an interface of two cultures
- \* to develop major focal points where visitors will be able to relate to the early history of the Gjoa Haven area and which together will serve as an attraction for travelers to the north to visit the community

### Objectives:

- \* to encourage an appreciation by visitors of the goals, events and hardships of **Amundsen's** historic travels along the Northwest Passage and especially his stay in Gjoa Haven
- \* to encourage an appreciation by **visitors** of the native lifestyle and culture on King William Island at the time of **Amundsen's** visit
- \* to present the events and significance of **Amundsen's** historic travels along the Northwest Passage in the broader context of northern exploration
- \* to develop a series of interpretive opportunities within the community that will encourage visitors to experience and appreciate the physical characteristics of the site of **Amundsen's** sojourn and the land which continues to support the native people.

The goals recognize two major perspectives on **Amundsen's** visit to King William Island, the perspective of western society at the turn of the century and the significance of his exploration, and the perspective of the local native people. Within this context, the essential components of the story can be organized. It is important to recognize that by accepting these statements, a range of other topics will not be addressed or else relegated to a distinctly minor component of the historical interpretation. Examples of such topics are: the travels, hardships and accomplishments of other explorers such as Franklin, and the evolution of community based activities such as the trading companies, the church and government.

The goals and objectives also identify the need for a significant level of historical Interpretation to be developed so that it will serve as a visitor attraction. In conjunction with that it is considered important to spread the interpretive opportunities widely enough throughout the community so that a relatively large number of people, such as would be present during the visit of a cruise ship, could be involved at the same time.

## INTERPRETIVE THEMES

The common thread that will unite the historic interpretation of the Northwest Passage Historic Park is 'time'. The visitor is focusing on a three year period just after the turn of the century. It is then that Amundsen's voyage and the perceptions of one culture by the other take place. Certainly the context and the aftermath have a place in the story, but they must be minor **if** the continuity and integrity of the historic interpretation is to be maintained. Some awareness of the backdrop of previous northern exploration and the evolution of **Inuit** culture will be helpful in understanding the Northwest Passage story.

To reflect the importance of this focus on the period of Amundsen's visit, three integrated themes have been developed for the Northwest Passage Historic Park. Sub-themes have also been identified where the background or context to the period of 1903 - 1906 is especially important.

### \* Traversing the Polar Sea

The essence of the story of Gjoa Haven is the travel of European Explorers looking for a sea route to the Pacific. It is a key site for interpreting the story to modern day travelers because of its central location along Amundsen's route - the first successful navigation of the passage, and because of the length of time Amundsen spent at the site.

Sub-theme: Northern Exploration

The context for Amundsen's voyage is an important component of this theme. What explorers had gone before him and what had they contributed to his understanding of the north and his planning for the voyage.

Sub-theme: the Amundsen Expedition (1903 - 1906)

The success of Amundsen's voyage was not a simple accident, but resulted to a certain extent from a variety of critical aspects of his character and leadership. What were the personal qualities that were important for his successful leadership? What was the purpose of the mission? What difficulties did the crew encounter and how did they overcome them?

### \* Scientific Study

Typically northern expeditions were multifaceted. The impetus for this was a lack of knowledge of the northern environment and a relatively unpopulated and unknown territory. Charting territory and finding new routes and resources, were often supplemented by extensive data collection concerning terrain, weather, wildlife, vegetation, or other aspects of the environment. Amundsen's expedition was similarly organized. He was anxious to pursue studies of magnetism. This theme addresses this important aspect of the expedition and will be interpreted to convey some of the knowledge and experience gained in

their **study**. In particular the studies of magnetism were important in the selection of Gjoa Haven as the site for such an extended stay and the base for overland scientific excursions.

\* Living in Harmony with the Land

The arctic coast is a harsh and challenging land. Those people who live **in** harmony with the land do so with the resourcefulness and stamina that has been their tradition.

Sub-theme: evolution of the natives of the north coast

The cultural context of the **Netsilik** people encountered **by Amundsen** is an important component of this theme. Visitors should be able to gain an appreciation of their origins in the **Thule** traditions and their adaptation to the physical and climatic component of the land.

Sub-theme: the **Netsilik** way of life

Amundsen was very interested in the way of life of the native people, their food, clothing, methods of travel, hunting techniques, social interactions and community life. His interest in and sensitivity towards the native people allowed him to benefit from their experience.



## INTERPRETIVE MESSAGES

### 1. Traversing the Polar Sea

Sub-theme: Northern Exploration

- Northwest Passage - original motive was a shorter trade route
- **Boothia** Peninsula found to extend high into ice infested waters (1831 Sir John Ross)
- searching for the passage became a purely geographical problem
- early explorers - routes - expeditions beginning 1576 - **Frobisher**, Davis, Hudson, Ross and Parry, Franklin, McClure, **Kellett**, Amundsen, Bernier, Larsen
- Franklin expedition 1845 - route, equipment, etc. - comparison to Around sen

Sub-theme: the Amundsen Expedition (1903 - 1906)

\* Amundsen the man ( born 1872 Borge, Norway; died June 1928 trying to rescue the crew of the airship "**Italia**")

- early interest in exploration - read works of **Magellan**, Balboa, Columbus
- liked the Arctic explorers best; inspired by Franklin's early exploration in the **Arctic**; decided to become an Arctic explorer
- conditioned himself for an explorer's life - trained hard and alone at 18 entered U of Oslo to study medicine on the wishes of his mother
- mother died 2 years later - free to pursue his dream of polar exploration
- compulsory arm service - channel to discipline himself further first winter trek provided him with important lessons 1) preplanning necessary, 2) had to learn navigation, 3) don't take fool hardy chances
- read extensively during army training - biology, zoology, oceanography
- 1894-96 worked as a deckhand and read about navigation, ship operation after 3 years at sea he qualified for his mate's certificate
- 1897 mate on board the Belgian exploration ship "**Belgica**"; sailed to the Antarctic under **Lieut. de Gerlache** to study the magnetic pole
- received his master's certificate
- studied terrestrial magnetism under **Georg Von Neumayer**

\* the Gjoa

- built in Hardanger in the **Rosendal** shipyard in 1872, 72' in length, 47 tonnes, used as herring boat along the coast then sailed the Polar Sea
- small, light draught
- bought the Gjoa in 1900.
- alterations - petroleum tanks installed, **13 H.P.** motor the size and auxiliary power were advantageous for manoeuvring through ice, and narrow harbours and channels

\* the crew

- Captain **Roald Amundsen**
- Gustav Juel Wiik (born 1878) - **assitant** to the meteorological observations and second engineer
- Lieut. Godfred Hansen of the Danish navy (born 1875) - second in command, navigator, astronomer, geologist, surgeon, photographer, electrician, and explosives expert
- Sergeant Peder Ristvedt (born 1873) - first engineer, meteorologist, smith, **clockmaker**, copper and **tinsmith**, gunsmith
- Anton Lund (born 1864) - first mate
- Helmer Hansen (born 1870) - second mate
- Adolf Henrik Lindstrom (born 1865) - cook
- 6 dogs

\* the trip

- purposes - to make observations of the magnetic north pole, and to complete the NWP
- route - Left with 6 crew on the Gjoa midnight June 6-7 1903; towed down **Christiania** Fjord stopped at Horten for explosives; July 11th Cape Farewell, Greenland spotted; west coast of Greenland; July 24th spotted Disco Island and later anchored at **Godhavn**; Aug 8 reached Helm Island; Aug 15, **Dalrymple** Rock; Aug 20 into Lancaster Sound; Aug 22 Beechey Island; Aug 28, **Bellot** Strait; arrive Gjoa Haven;
- left Gjoa Haven August 13, 1905; first few days fought shoals and ice then threaded their way through maze of small islands into known waters; wintered at King Point on the Yukon Coast; rounded Barrow Point; reception at Nome, Alaska; reached San Francisco in October 1906; ship given to the city
- hardships - financial problems; weather conditions; almost lost rudder; fire on ship; bad storm; Amundsen at the wheel for duration of the storm; death of **Wiiks**; **Herschel** Island;

\* importance of Gjoa Haven

the pole is not good for an observation station even if its exact location had been known

- Amundsen had decided before he left Norway to set his instruments up where the inclination would be about 89 degrees, a requirement fulfilled by Gjoa Haven

## 2. Scientific Study

\* explanation of magnetism

magnetic force is different at every single point on the earth in its direction and intensity

at a given point subject to regular daily and annual variations, violent disturbances, and gradual displacements

magnetic variation related to latitude & longitude yields three charts two indicate direction of the force

1. in relation to N-S - can be observed with a compass needle  
known as deviation or declination  
shown by magnetic meridians (converge at 2 points)
2. in relation to the "horizontal plane"  
known as magnetic inclination  
apparatus called an **inclinorium** or dipping needle  
northern hemisphere north point dips  
southern hemisphere south point dips  
at the magnetic poles the needle is vertical  
inclination decreases proportionally away from the poles  
magnetic equator partly N and partly S of geographical
3. the intensity of the force  
most intense in the direction of the dipping needle  
imagine force split into horizontal & vertical components  
determine horizontal intensity  
horizontal intensity becomes infinitesimal near the poles  
2 methods of determining horizontal intensity

\* suitability of Gjoa Haven

- autumn storms had arrived
- the waters to the west were shallow
- uncertain to find a **harbour** further west  
narrow **harbour** entrance would prevent the intrusion of large masses of ice, small inner basin to reduce wind
- two streams and a large pond for fresh water
- no rocky land which, by the iron contained in it might have interfered with the magnetic observation.
- approximately 90 miles from the Magnetic North Pole, an excellent distance to make observations

\* the buildings

- the observatory "the Variation House"
- the Magnet - living quarters for 2 people
- observatory for absolute magnetic observations
- Uranienborg - an astrological observatory
- second magnetic observatory
- storage areas - provision store (sail covered); explosives shed far in-shore

\* instruments and measurements

- 14 magnets selected with care
- 3 dipping needles of different construction for determining inclination
- 2 instruments for determining declination  
set of self-registering variation apparatus (see illustration pg. 90); data recorded photographically; each had a small magnetic needle; 2 on a fine quartz thread, 1 responding to changes in declination, 1 responding to changes in horizontal intensity, 1 pivoted on bearings responding to changes in inclination

\* activities and excursions

- mapping East coast of Victoria Island up to 72 parallel
- trip by dog sled to Magnetic North Pole
- locates one of the sites where Franklin's men had perished
- building of cairn at Gjoa Haven to mark his accomplishments

3. Living in Harmony with the Land

Sub-theme: evolution of the natives of the north coast

\* prehistory

- cultural ancestry - **Thule**
- **Netsilik** are part of the Central Eskimo group which includes Copper, **Netsilik**, **Iglulik**, Caribou and **Baffin** Island Eskimos
- **Thule** culture originates in Northern Alaska; moved across the Arctic in two waves displacing earlier Dorset culture about 1000 **A.D.**
- Thule** Expansion Phase 1: across the Canadian High Arctic
- rapid migration and population expansion
- general warming trend allowed easier movement and fishing for bowhead whale
- **Thule** Expansion Phase II: completed by 1200-1300 **A.D.** into ecologically more diverse area across Southern Arctic Archipelago
- sites of **Thule** culture include **Malerualik** on King William Island
- **Thule** adaptation to Central Arctic: smaller winter communities; wide range of hunting techniques; harpoon and skin floats; new houses; adjusted to the resource base

\* reasons for differences in tribes known today

- cooling trend in the Arctic called "**Little Ice Age**" 1650-1850
- geographical distances between groups
- genealogical considerations

\* **Netsilik** and Copper Eskimo developed from **Thule** with local variations

- whaling economy never really developed
- economy based on caribou, fish and seal
- snow houses, not permanent houses
- **umiaks** lost, kayaks for inland use only
- marked simplicity to level of technology due to deteriorating environment

Sub-theme: the **Netsilik** way of life

- \* meeting the visitors - an account of the natives first meeting of Amundsen and his crew

- \* meeting the residents - an account of the explorers' first encounter with the people of King William Island
  - arrived at Gjoa Haven and found cairns and tent rings but no indication of time of use
  - first encounter - group of 5 men on October 29th
  
- \* Eskimo life as observed by Amundsen
  - foods of the Eskimo, hunting techniques
  - houses
  - clothing, utensils etc.
  - travel - methods and philosophy towards it
  - community life

## INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

This section **outlines** the recommended interpretive strategies related to the themes and messages previously discussed. It is assumed that the same theme and message structure will be used throughout the various facilities but will be presented in different ways and with a differing emphasis.

While the cost is an important factor of the plan's implementation and operation, many other factors such the degree and the quality of interpretation and the interest and capacity of the historic park concept as a whole have also been influential in the design of the recommended approach.

The recommended approach includes two phases in response to concerns over the possible total cost of the program. In spite of its higher cost, this approach provides much greater scope to develop a visitor attraction, provides a much stronger interpretive experience and provides a much greater impetus for economic benefit to the community. The second phase facility is a visitor centre and two possible concept designs have been included in the plan indicating the range of possibilities and the potential for cost saving at this particular stage in project implementation. The following description of the recommended strategy includes an outline of the components, preliminary designs and text for the interior displays, concept designs for other program components and the estimated capital and O & M costs.

FACILITY AND MEDIA COMPONENTS:

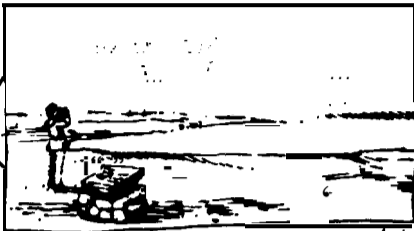
1. orientation and information displays

The purpose of these displays would be to make visitors aware of the opportunities for historic interpretation in the community concerning the Northwest Passage theme. They would advertise all of the various components of the interpretive program and encourage visitors to take advantage of the opportunities. The displays would be located at the airport and the Amundsen Hotel. They would be simple, graphic and inviting. The size of a large poster would be sufficient (approx. 60 x 90 cm.) and the displays should be framed, surface protected and wall mounted.

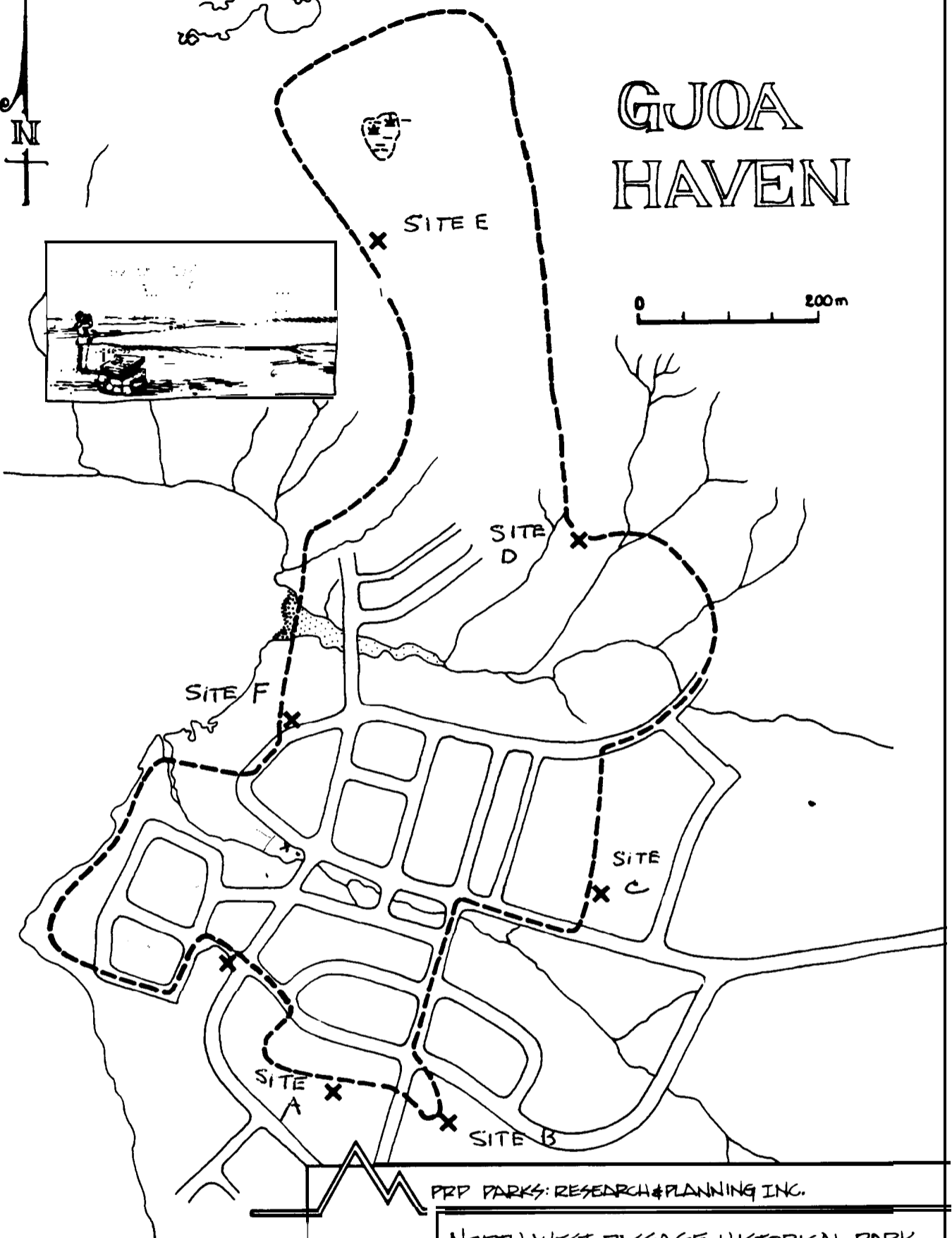
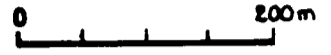
## 2. designated trail

The designated trail is provided to encourage visitors to experience the landscape in and around the community and to visit specific historic sites of significance to the Northwest Passage theme and the origins of the community. Six sites will be marked by interpretive signs along the trail (see illustration). The trail would be marked to begin and end at the Community Centre.





# GJOA HAVEN



PRP PARKS: RESEARCH & PLANNING INC.

1

NORTH WEST PASSAGE HISTORICAL PARK  
GJOA HAVEN  
HAMLET CENTRE DISPLAY

K. JOSEPHSON

### 3. trail interpretive signs

At key sites along the trail, interpretive signs would be provided to identify and interpret important site specific aspects of the historic theme. A total of 6 signs would be constructed according to the specifications in the concept design (see illustration). The signs would have a brief text (**approx.** 100 words) concerning the specific site and where appropriate a single photo or illustration. The signs are designed to provide for their removal and storage during the winter months. The following sites and topics should be addressed:

- a) site - the general location of the Magnet, the **living** quarters of two of **Amundsen's** crew;  
topic - the construction and location of the buildings;
- b) site - adjacent to the **existng** cairn and the location of **Amundsen's** observatory;  
topic - magnetic observations and the marble buried under the cairn;
- c) site - the schoolyard area and general location of the former lake;  
topic - living conditions experienced by Amundsen and his crew;
- d) site - gravesite;  
topic - remnants of the Franklin expedition;
- e) site - viewpoint at the north end of the bay;  
topic - the **harbour** and the suitability of Gjoa Haven as a stopping point; and
- f) site - the Hudson Bay complex;  
topic - history of present day community establishment.

POINT OF INTEREST  
CARN AND PLAQUE

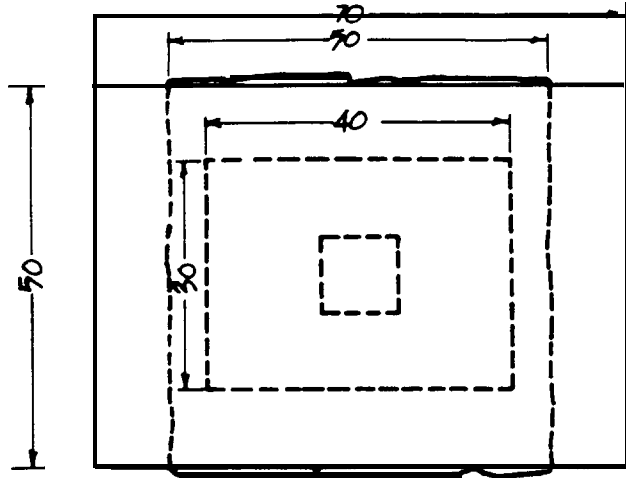
SCALE ~ 1:10

PHOTOS AND DRAWINGS SHOULD BE DRY MOUNTED, AND TEXT SILK SCREENED ON TO THE OAK PLAQUE.

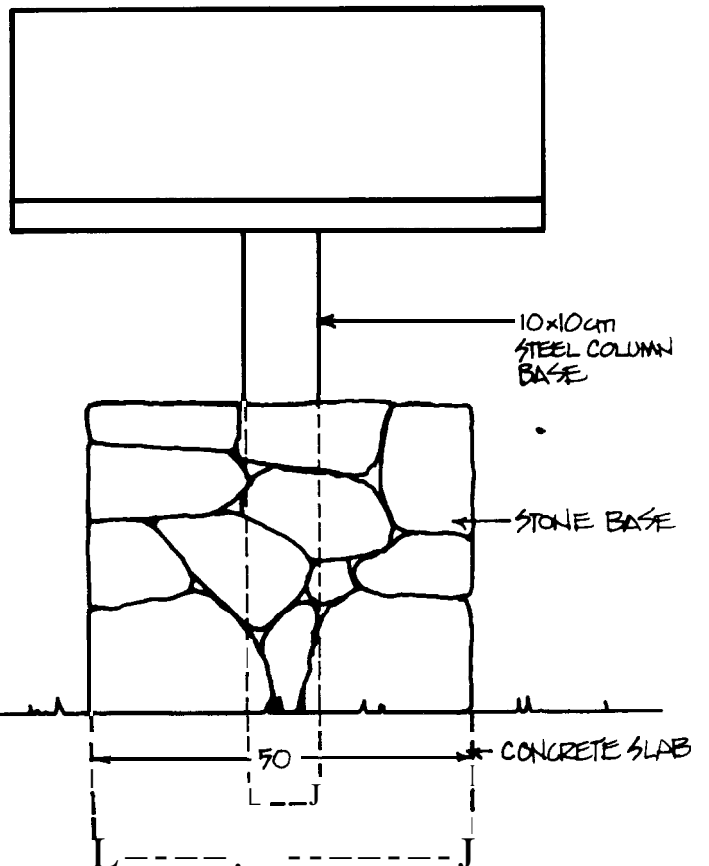
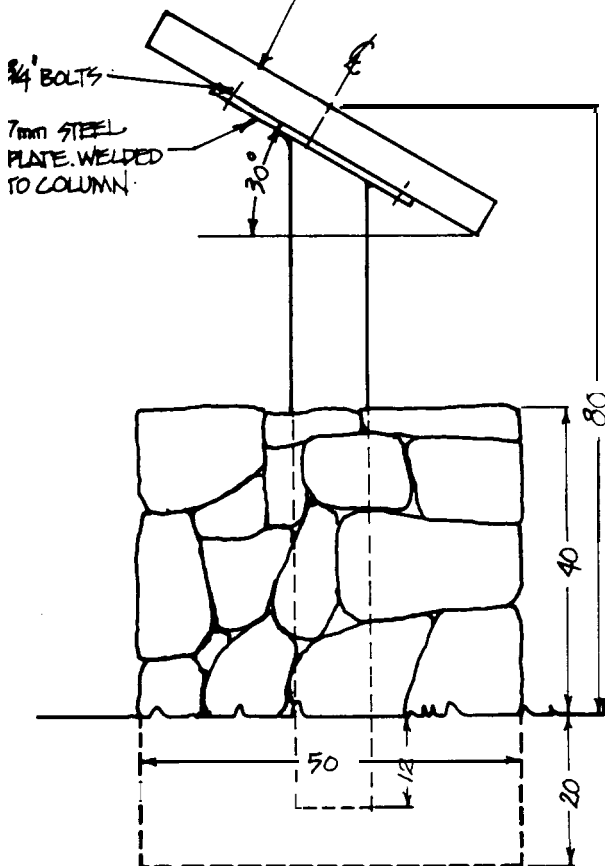
THE FINISHED PLAQUE SHOULD BE COATED WITH  $\frac{3}{16}$ " OF CLEAR PLASTIC RESIN.

THE PLAQUE IS ANCHORED TO THE METAL PLATE WITH 4 -  $\frac{3}{4}$ " ANCHOR BOLTS.

IT IS INTENDED THAT THE PLAQUES BE REMOVED AND STORED EACH WINTER.



5cm THICK OAK PLAQUE



PRP PARKS: RESEARCH & PLANNING INC.

2 NORTH WEST PASSAGE HISTORICAL PARK  
GJOA HAVEN  
HAMLET CENTRE DISPLAY K. JOSEPHSON

#### 4. brochure

A high quality booklet should be developed to serve as a guide to the designated trail and a background to the Northwest Passage Historic Park as a whole. To accomplish this it should provide interpretation **of** both individual sites and the general historical context. The booklet should be of sufficient size to contain a moderately detailed storyline and be a significant souvenir for visitors to take away with them. The booklet should be free of charge and be available in the Community **Centre** as a starting place for the trail tour of the related historic sites of community. A suggested format for the booklet would be:

- \* 15 x 23 cm size;
- \* vertical format;
- \* saddle **stiched**;
- \* **colour and black and white illustrations**;
- \* **approx.** 40 pages

The contents should follow the outline of themes presented earlier in this plan and then provide a site by site guide to the trail.

## 5. interpretive displays in the Community Centre

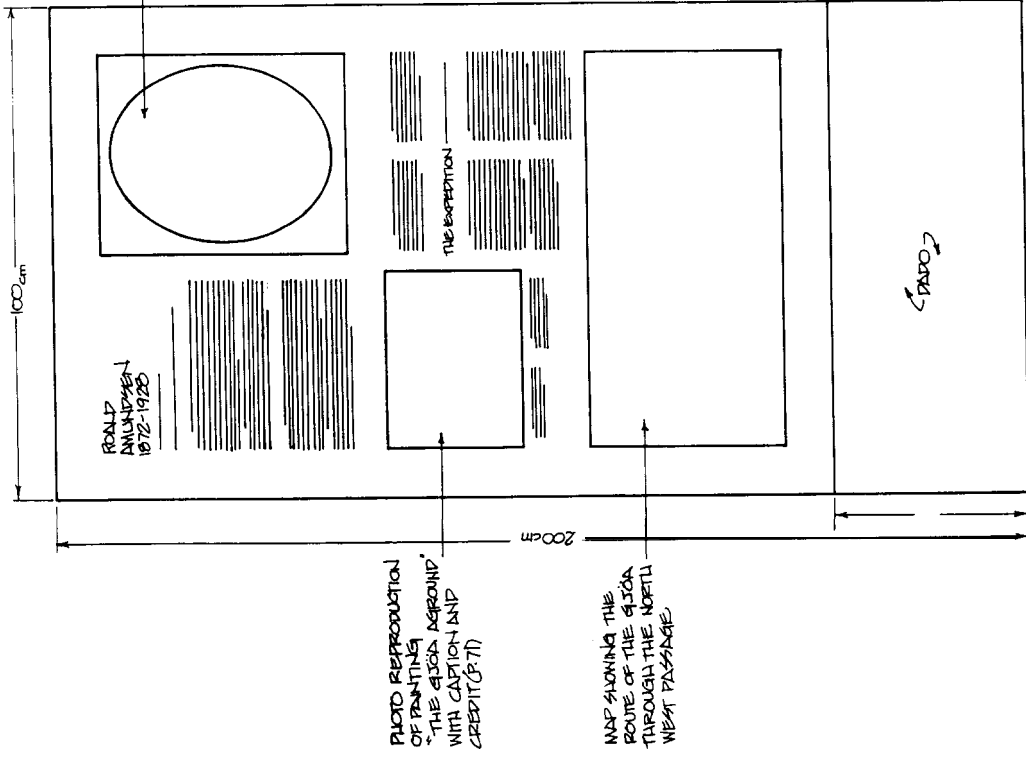
The purpose of these displays is to introduce the visitor to the historical themes and encourage greater interest in the specific sites and interpretive opportunities. The displays should provide an overview and historical context for the themes which will be developed further in the booklet and the **visiootr centre**. The displays should be located in the upper level hallway and will utilize the available wall space, the existing display cabinet (remodeled), and floor space along railings. Illustrations are provided of the location, design and specifications of the specific displays. Draft text of the displays has also been developed. Revisions in length **will** be required for design purposes.

In addition to the displays, artwork (photos & wall hangings) depicting the Northwest Passage themes could be effectively displayed on the walls above the upper lobby.

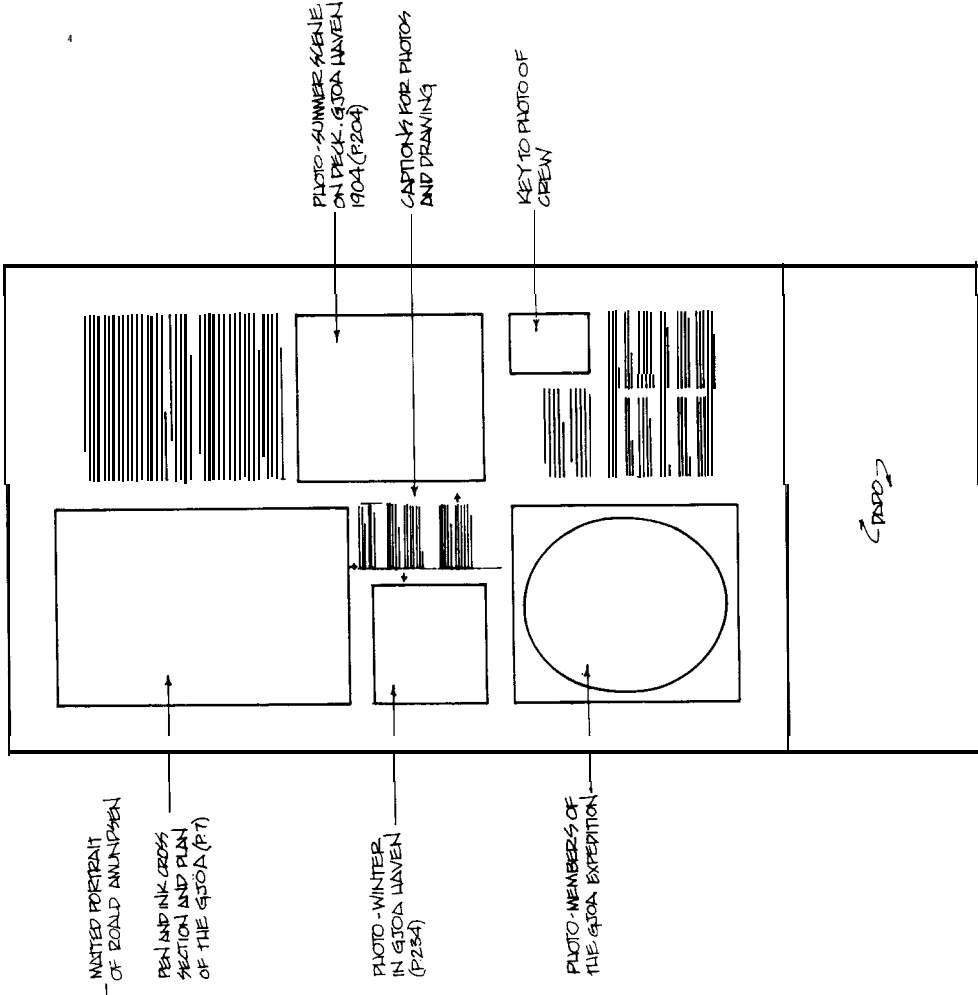
Some minor changes to the existing facilities in the upper level hallway will be necessary to most effectively incorporate the displays. Most significantly, the display cabinet will need to be remodeled including the removal of the built-in bench presently in front of the case. The area of the present bench should remain open allowing the public to approach the cabinet more closely. Matching carpeting will be required on the floor, however, the vertical wall areas exposed in the removal of the bench should be plastered and painted. A matching material to that used as a dado on the displays can be put in the space below the cabinet. Similarly the interior of the display case will be covered in the same material and the existing materials and wall surfaces will be removed.

Other changes to the hallway will include the addition of track lighting matching the existing track. This lighting will be added on both sides of the hallway **in** relation to the new display locations (see illustration). Also island seating will be added to the hallway in front of the displays (see illustration), as a substitute for the bent-h which is to be removed.



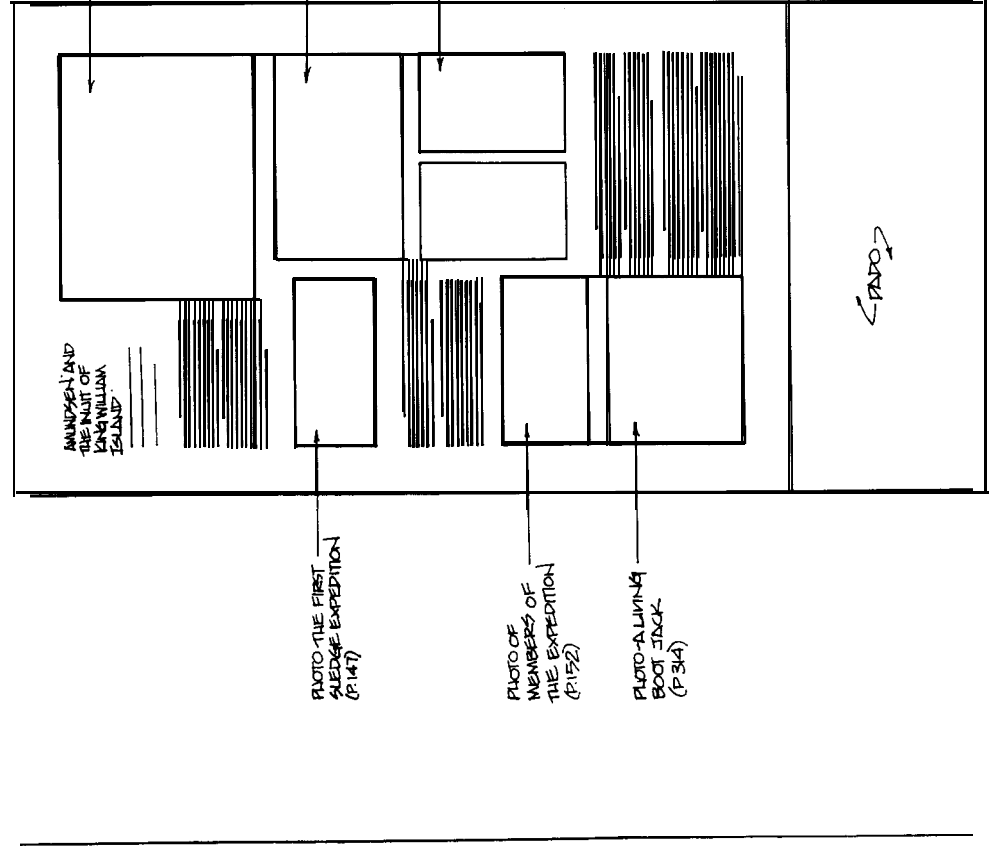


PANEL A

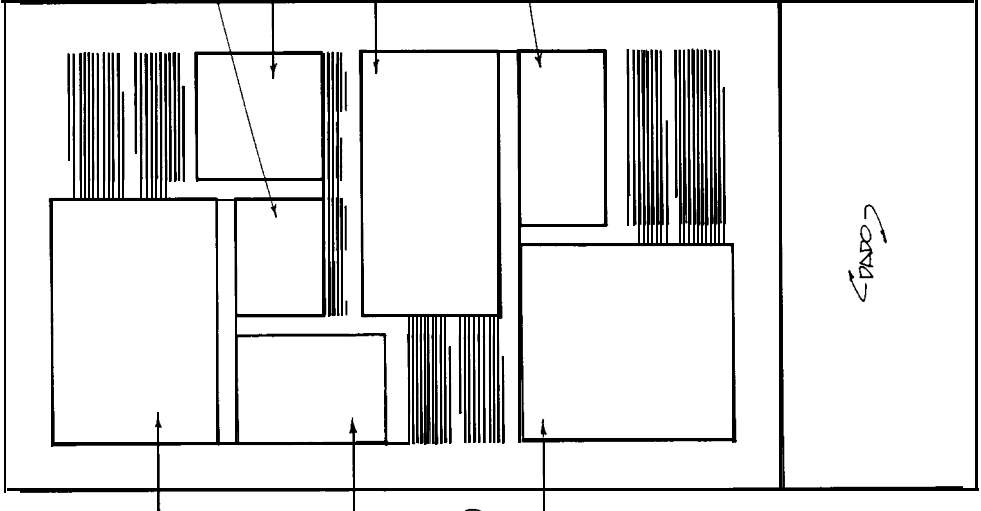


PANEL B

PREP WORK: RESEARCH & PLANNING INC.  
 4  
 NORTHWEST PASSAGE HISTORICAL PARK  
 GIJON HAVEN  
 HANUET CENTRE DISPLAY  
 K. JOSEPHSON



PANEL 'C'



PANEL 'D'

5

PREP PARKS: RESEARCH & PLANNING INC.

NORTHWEST PASSAGE HISTORICAL PARK

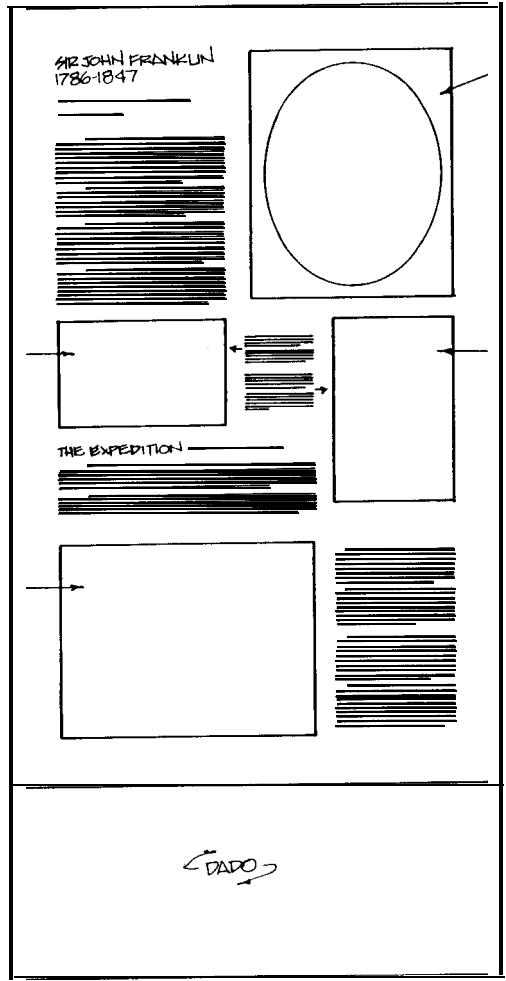
QJOIA HAVEN

UNIVERSITY CENTRE PARLANT

K. JOSEPHSON



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SKETCH OF HMS TERROR IN ICE

MAP SHOWING EXPEDITION ROUTES AND ALSO INDICATING CHARTERED COASTLINE

MATED OF PAN OF PR

CHART ISLAND OF PR

PHOTO VICTOR CAPTI

MCLIN MEET ESKIN VICTOR

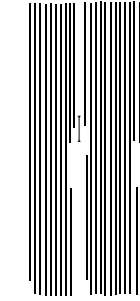
PANEL 'F'



ROBERT FRANKOZE LETTERING

# THE NETSILIK PEOPLE

ORIGINS



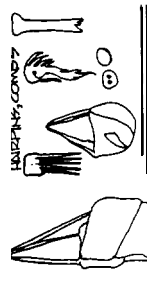
MAP OF CANADIAN ARCTIC SHOWING THULE EXPANSION AND PROBABLE ROUTES

PALE AND INK DRAWING OF THULE PEOPLE OR ARCHIVAL PHOTO OF NETSILIK

NETSILIK PORTRAIT MALE

NETSILIK PORTRAIT MOTHER AND CHILD

MAP SHOWING TRIBAL TERRITORY EARLY 20th CENTURY



HAIRpins, COMBS

QUIBOU

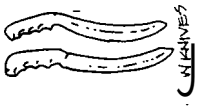
TRAINING

CHILD'S BOOTS

PARKA

PEAKS COUNCIL AT CENTER OF MAP AT CASE

HARDFOOT LETTER 7



KNIVES

ISALOO CONSTRUCTION

ISALOO INTERIOR

POSS BUILDING LOADS SUMMER TRAVEL

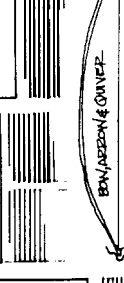
WINTER SLEDGE TRAVEL

TENT

PACKING UP TENT

LAMP (MORTIC-SHAPE) RUBBER POUNDER SCAPSTONE MORTAR

ICE HUT



BOW/ARROW OR QUIVER

EATING FISH

KNIFE

KNIFE

BOWL

PHOTO STALKING SEAL

FISHING AT WEIR

PHOTO OF KAYAK



KNIFE

4

223cm

PREP WORKS RESEARCH & PLANNING INC.

8

NORTH WEST PASSAGE HISTORICAL PARK  
QJQA HAVEN

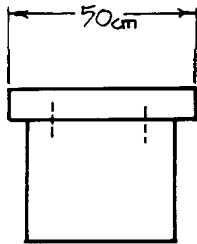
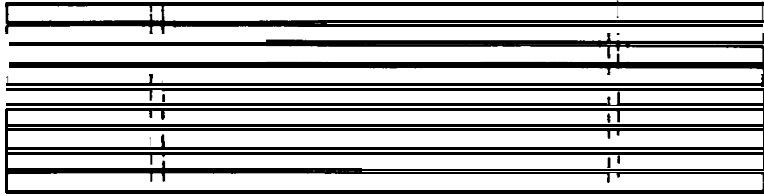
KIDDERMAN

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID

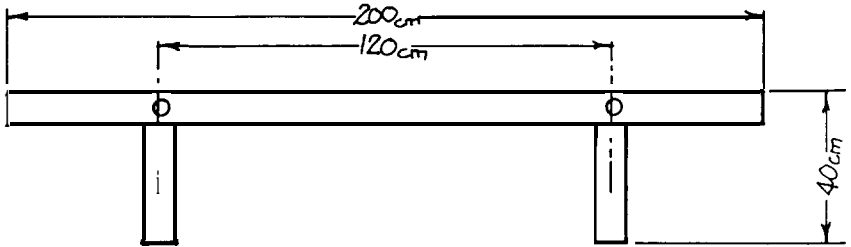
# BENCHES IN GALLERY WALKWAY.

SCALE ~ 1:20

TOP VIEW



END VIEW



SIDE VIEW

2 BENCHES TO BE CONSTRUCTED FROM WESTERN RED CEDAR.

BENCH TOPS CONSIST OF 9-4x9cm BOARDS GLUED & DOWELED TOGETHER WITH A SUITABLE SPACER OF THE SAME MATERIAL TO MAKE THE BENCH 50cm IN WIDTH.

THE BASES CONSIST OF 40x31x9cm SOLID BLOCKS OF CEDAR.

THE BENCH TOP SHOULD BE ANCHORED TO THE BASE IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE BOLTS DO NOT SHOW.

9	PRP PARKS: RESEARCH & PLANNING INC.
	NORTH WEST PASSAGE HISTORICAL PARK GJOA HAVEN HAMLET CENTRE DISPLAY
	K. JOSEPHSON

## 6. interpretive centre

The purpose of the interpretive centre is to provide visitors with a comfortable setting indoors in which to explore in greater detail the historic themes introduced in the displays and discussed in the booklet. While the displays in the Community **Centre** provide an overview of the themes, the **visiootr centre** space should be devoted to expanding on specific aspects of the themes and providing a range of different media to communicate the messages. The lounge area would encourage visitors to stay and spend time looking through available resource materials and view audio/visual programs that could be developed for use In the centre. The location of the centre is significant and provides an excellent view of the strait and the entrance to the **harbour**. Details of the proposed building and the interpretive displays are provided and a building plan is included.

### \* building

- approx. 120 sq. m.
- located in the vicinity of the site of **Amundsen's** living quarters and observatory (see trail illustration)
- oriented on the site so that the windows face south and west giving views of the strait and the **harbour**
- services and washrooms included (see plan)

### \* dioramas

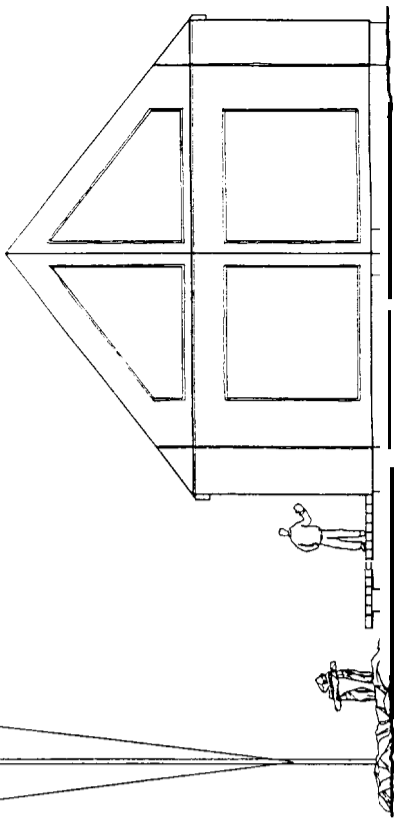
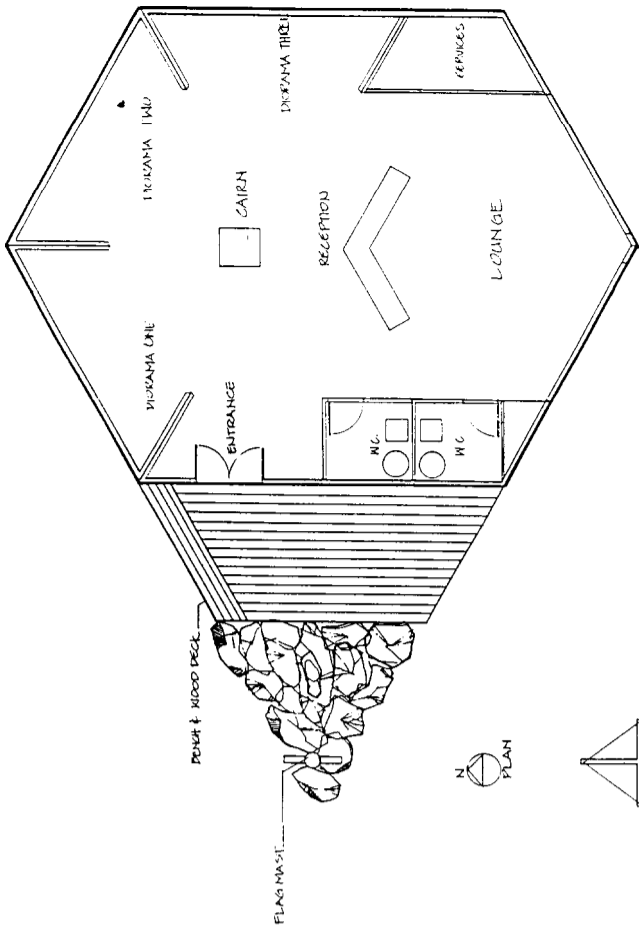
- interpreting each of the three themes (see illustrations)
- use of photos, artwork, and replicas of artifacts
- diorama 3 also to include a visitor activated sound system

### \* lounge and audio/visual *area*

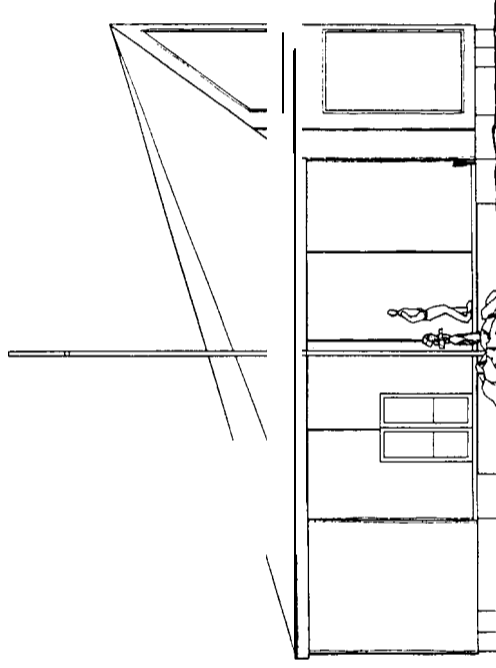
- comfortable seating
- bookcase, coffee table, end tables etc.
- windows covered by a solid, electronically controlled rolling drape from above (possibly created by local artists)
- projection screens also positioned to cover the windows and electronically controlled
- projectors (movie and **slide**) in bookcase for projection on both screens
- opportunity for displays of local craft samples that are for sale at the **Co-op**

This type of facility and the proposed design are considered an integral part of the historic interpretation program. Together with the other components they offer a program with significant advantages including:

- \* outdoors combined with space in an existing, central, public building as well as a central visitor interpretation centre
- \* provides a comprehensive interpretation of the themes
- \* provides a major visitor attraction in the community
- \* potential for the interpretive centre to be a focal point for visitors and residents to spend time, review available materials, view audiovisual presentations and socialize
- \* serves as a significant visitor activity in the community that would encourage other travelers to spend an extra day in the community or provide others with a bad weather alternative to their original plans
- \* provides a showpiece for local art and crafts - interpretive centre: displays of crafts, draperies, artwork in lounge and dioramas - Community Hall: wall hangings
- \* **could involve** the community in the construction of the building and site displays as well as in the preparation of many of the interior displays such as the dioramas and draperies in the interpretive centre, and displays in the Community Hall including wall hangings and cultural display materials
- \* available to wide ranging numbers of people



SOUTH ELEVATION

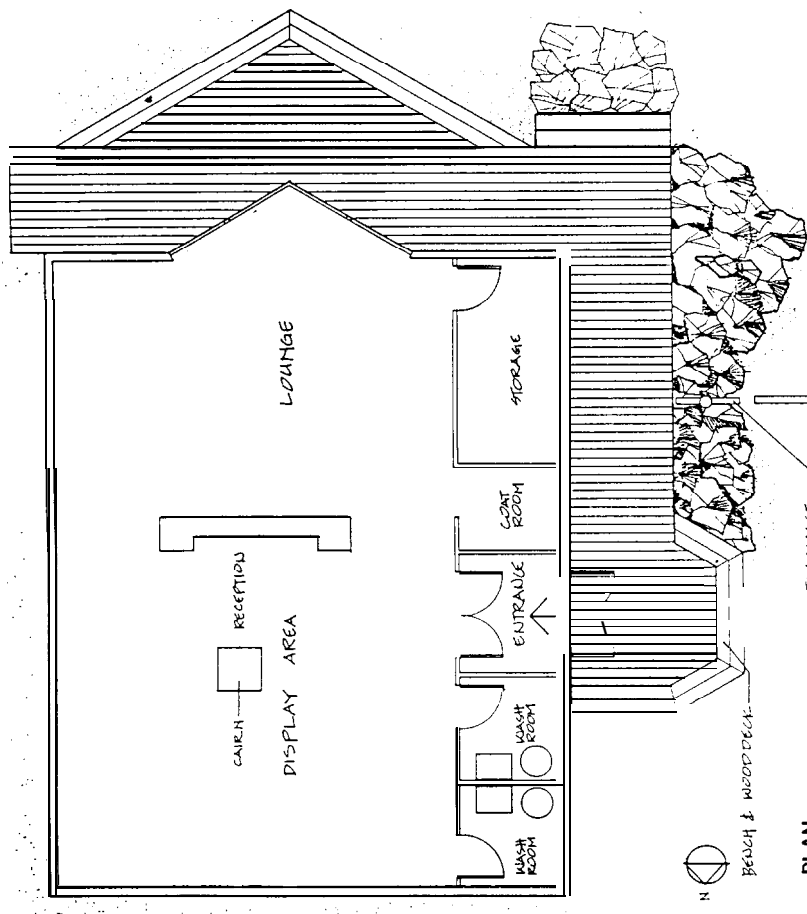


WEST ELEVATION

**gjoa haven interpretative centre**  
SCALE: 1:50  
IMAGE: RESEARCH & PLANNING, LLC

In the event that costs to complete the visitor **centre** as proposed seem unjustifiable based on initial levels of tourist use, an alternative facility has been illustrated. This alternative shows a building that is more multi-purpose in function and could be effectively used by community groups and as a centre of tourist information on the full range of recreational opportunities in the region. The interpretive display space is more flexible and **diormas** replaced by displays will be less expensive to produce and maintain. The cost of building construction will also be significantly reduced due to the rectangular shape and the regular roof lines. A building plan for such a concept and details of the building and displays are also included.

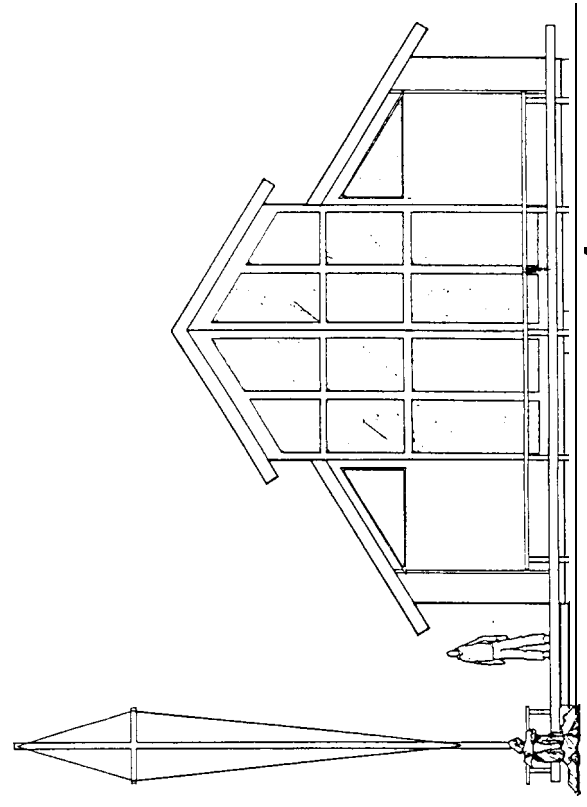




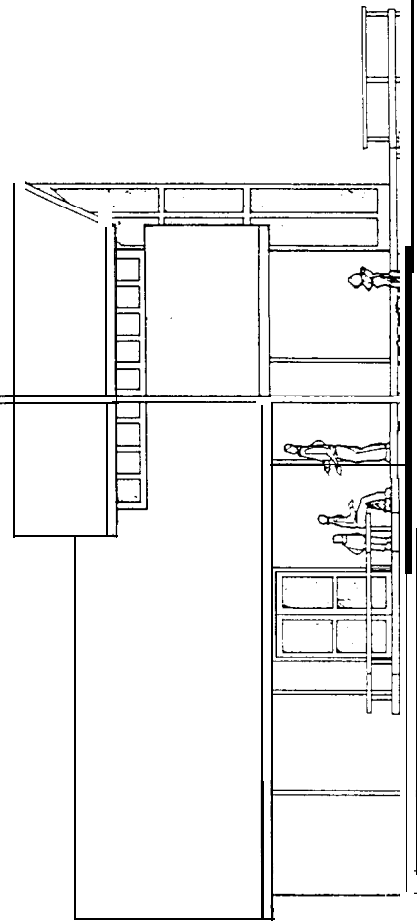
BEACH & WOOD DECK

PLAN

FLAGMAST



SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

# gjoa haven interpretative centre

PRP: PARKS RESEARCH & PLANNING INC.

SCALE 1:50

COSTS :

The costs for implementation of the concept are estimates only in constant 1987 dollars. Phase 1 costs are fixed, however, Phase 2 costs are shown as two alternatives according to the optional concepts for visitor centre construction and interpretation.

The Phase 1 costs include all display production costs, translation, shipping and installation. It is assumed that the building renovations, construction of trail cairns and installation of displays will be undertaken by the Hamlet.

1. capital

Phase 1:

- orientation and information displays	\$3,000.	
- designated trail and signs	\$9,000.	
- interpretive displays (Community Centre)	\$30,000.	
- modifications to the upper hallway (lighting, display case, seating)	\$8,000.	
- community made artifacts	\$5,000.	
- brochure	\$15,000.	
Phase 1 Total	\$70,000.	\$70,000.

Phase 2:

- building construction	\$125,000.	\$100,000.
- furnishing	\$20,000.	\$15,000.
- dioramas/displays	\$75,000.	\$35,000.
Phase 2 Total	\$220,000.	\$150,000.

TOTAL \$290,000. \$220,000.

2. O & M/year

- maintain trail and exterior displays	\$2,000.	
- building and display maintenance	\$6,000.	
- receptionist (2 months)	\$5,000.	
- brochure supply	\$500.	
TOTAL/YEAR	\$13,500.	

## DRAFT DISPLAY TEXTS

## 1. WALL MAP - "SEARCHING FOR THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE"

The dream of a northwest passage attracted centuries of northern exploration. As with other north american discoveries, the original motive for finding a northwest passage was a shorter trade route between the old world and the orient. However, in 1831 the discovery of the Boothia Peninsula by Sir John Ross meant that even if a route was found, it would extend high into ice infested waters rendering it useless as a trade route. In spite of such a realization, interest was high both among explorers and the public. Discovering the Northwest Passage became a purely geographical problem and one carrying with it considerable prestige.

## \* Martin Frobisher 1576

Amidst the competition among seafaring nations of Europe for the wealth in the New World and Spice Islands, Frobisher sought the northwest passage for England. Three vessels, the Gabriel, the Michael, and the Pinnate, set out in 1576 sponsored by the Muscovy Co. Only Frobisher boat completed the trip, discovering Frobisher Bay which he thought was the strait dividing America and Asia. Returning with a stone that was thought to contain gold, sparked two other major trips in 1577 and 1578 for which the objective was mining. Tonnes of worthless rock was taken back to England.

## \* John Davis 1585, 1586, 1587

Davis sailed north along the west coast of Greenland as far as supplies would permit then drifted south. All three of his voyages, in 1585, 1586, and 1587, followed the same pattern and were governed by the theory that at the top of the globe lay a vast ice free space which would afford a safe and easy short-cut to far western longitudes. This "Polar Basin" was the primary object of his search. Although making no startling discoveries he dispelled many travelers tales, discovered Davis Strait, and charted inlets and bays from about 72 N to Frobisher Bay.

## \* Henry Hudson 1610-1611

Beginning in 1607 Hudson began exploration for the Muscovy Co., attempting to reach China by way of the north pole, then again unsuccessfully by navigating the Northeast Passage. Again in 1609, this time for the Dutch East India Co., he tried the Northeast Passage but turned back and crossed the Atlantic to sail partly up the Hudson River. Then in 1610 he was employed by English to find the Northwest Passage. He sailed into Hudson Bay but became frozen in. Mutiny broke out in June, 1611. Hudson, his son and 7 other crew members were cast adrift in an open boat and never heard from again.

\* Sir John Ross 1818, 1829-33

Sir John Ross' first expedition was undertaken in 1818. He stopped at Lancaster Sound, thinking that the Sound was blocked by the Croker Mountains. Later, in a private expedition in 1829, Ross was the first to experiment with steam propulsion in the Arctic. The paddle-wheeler the 'Victory' was permanently ice bound and after 3 years Ross and his men escaped to the whaling grounds where they were given passage home. This expedition discovered the Boothia Peninsula which would project any possible Northwest Passage route north of the 74th parallel into ice-infested waters dispelling any thoughts of a practical trade route.

\* W. E. Parry 1819-20, 1821-23, 1824-25

Parry had sailed with Ross on his discovery of Lancaster Sound but unlike Ross believed that the Sound was an entrance to a great waterway and not blocked by mountains. He commanded his own expedition in 1819-20 and proved his belief. For his efforts he earned £500 offered by the Board of Longitude to the first vessel to cross the 110th meridian in high northern latitudes. A second expedition in 1821-23 found an entrance to Fury and Hecla Strait, another route to the Northwest Passage. Overland journeys confirmed the strait lead westward. On Parry's final expedition of 1824-25, his vessel, the 'Fury', was driven ashore by ice and so badly damaged it had to be abandoned.

\* Sir John Franklin (1845-1847)

In spite of the realization that the Northwest Passage would have little commercial value, the search was undertaken because of the prestige its discovery would bring. The British Navy felt extremely confident in the massive expedition they assembled and assigned Sir John Franklin as its commander. The expedition travelled into what is now known as Franklin Strait where it became ice bound, remaining there for two winters. With supplies running low and scurvy rampant, the ships were abandoned and the crew marched south towards Ft. Reliance. The entire crew of 129 had dwindled to 105 before the ships were abandoned in April 1848, and the remainder perished in the attempted escape.

\* Robert McClure (1850-54)

The British Gov't launched many expeditions in search of Franklin. One such expedition was headed by Sir Richard Collison, commanding the 'Enterprise' with M'Clure in command of the 'Investigator'. The ships became separated and continued the expedition separately. M'Clure sailed as far as Prince of Wales Strait, then sledged to the northern end of the strait and overlooked M'Clure Strait which Parry had reached in 1819. Continuing east, he reached the whaling grounds where he

obtained passage back to England. M'Clure was the first to travel the Northwest Passage though much of the route was traversed by sledge.

## 2. DISPLAY CASE

### 2.1 Left Side

\* Archaeologists have plotted the settlement of the arctic region by early Thule immigrants based on the recording of distinctive artifacts found at various locations. Two phases of Thule expansion across northern Canada are depicted on this map along with the location of some of the important archaeological finds.

\* Phase 1 resulted in migration from the north coast of Alaska across the high arctic to the northeast coast of Greenland during the eleventh and twelfth century. Phase 2 followed shortly after the original migration and extended over most of the southern arctic archipelago, the coast of Hudson Bay and the coastal mainland to the west. During this period the ecological diversity of the areas and the regional isolation of groups of people caused the development of distinctly different 'tribes' .

\* The evolution of culture from the Thule way of life to that of the Eskimo cultures of the historic period was largely brought about by environmental change. Deteriorating climatic conditions culminating in the "Little Ice Age" between approximately 1650 and 1850, caused abandonment of the High Arctic regions, primarily due to the decrease in the availability of marine mammals, especially the bowhead whale. In the southern Arctic Islands, adaptation to environmental change was possible since dependence upon whaling had not been as prevalent and the more common dependence on inland hunting of land animals could increase.

\* The Netsilik included several nomadic bands associated with particular hunting areas. However, the composition of local bands is variable and there are no distinct social or geographical boundaries among the groups . These bands shared a common material, social and intellectual culture with minor regional differences.

\* Caribou clothing was ideally suited for a hunting life in the arctic. The skin was light and soft , with dense, upright hair. Each hair was hollow, making the fur an ideal insulation against extreme cold, enabling the Netsilik to spend long periods of time outdoors in bad weather. Despite its thickness, this skin allowed the body considerable freedom of movement because of its light weight and softness.

\* Different kinds of caribou skins, cured in different ways, were used for a variety of purposes. Children's garments were made from the skins of the very young caribou. The heavy, thick hides of caribou killed in the late autumn were best suited for bedding material. The animals hunted in early autumn had the best fur for inner and outer clothing. The short-haired skin from the legs was used for making boots and mitts, because it was particularly resistant to wear. The white fur from the caribou's stomach was used for women's clothing or hair decorations.

\* Seal skin was considerably stronger and more durable than caribou skin and it was particularly useful during the wet, summer season because it was quite waterproof. Skins of adult female seals were preferred for making kayaks, while the unshaved skins of young seals were used for coats and pants. Skins for waterproof summer boots had to be scraped carefully and thoroughly, stretched and dried, and then chewed and softened. The thick skin of the great bearded seal provided material for boot soles and heavy thongs.

## 2.2 Right Side

\* The importance of snow and ice to the living conditions and activities of the Netsilik is evidenced by the extensive vocabulary for different kinds of snow depending upon its physical characteristics. Most importantly, the insulating properties of snow provided a warm winter dwelling. Beds, tables, doors, meat stands, windbreaks and a host of other uses made snow an integral part of the Netsilik life.

\* The 'pana', or snow knife, was the tool used in working snow. Usually it was a single piece of caribou antler, and only rarely was it over<sup>35</sup> cm. in length. The handle was indented so it could be gripped firmly. The slender knife made it easy to cut and trim the snow blocks for a tightly fitting structure. The 'pana' was a man's knife and was always carried.

\* Although ice does not have the insulating properties of snow, it was sometimes used in the autumn for house construction when it became too cold to be comfortable in a tent but the snows were not deep enough for igloo construction. These ice houses were rectangular structures with skin roofs.

\* Driftwood was rare, so wooden sledges were not common. Runners were made from frozen fish wrapped in sealskin with caribou antler pieces tied as crossbars with sealskin lines. A sludge of pulverized moss and water was then put on the underside of the runner in a thick coat, frozen, coated with ice, and rubbed with wet polar bear fur to produce a hard, resistant coat of ice that allowed the sledge to run smoothly.

\* A ring of large squarish stones marked the base of the traditional Netsilik tent. A single centre pole was then placed in the centre and attached to the largest stones by sealskin thongs from the top of the pole. Over this frame, a sealskin tent sheet was stretched and secured under the stones. A later version of the tent was borrowed from people in the Hudson Bay area elongated the shape of the tent by placing a small H-shaped beam at the top of the pole.

\* Oil lamps were an important household item. Used for cooking as well as heat and light, they were set on pieces of wood and set into the surface of the snow platform inside the house. A piece of sealskin might be put under the lamp to absorb oil seepage. The oil was collected by breaking down the fat in frozen blubber, using a blubber pounder of musk-ox horn. The oil was then burned in the lamp using a wick of moss.

\* With the coming of the warmer weather and the melting of the snow, sledge travel became increasingly difficult and was abandoned. Bearskins, or the skins of the large bearded seal, with the hair on the outside were loaded with material, folded up all around, and tied up with thongs on top and were pulled by dogs and men to replace the sledges.

\* To take advantage of the yearly migrations of salmon trout, the Netsilik built weirs to trap the fish which they then caught with their 'leister'. Throughout the summer, a more difficult lake shore fishing method involved the use of the fishing harpoon. This was a long wooden shaft with a long, barbed head attached at the end by a sealskin thong. After throwing, the weapon was retrieved by a long sealskin line attached to it.

\* During the winter, the Netsilik practiced the breathing-hole method of seal hunting, called 'maursurniq'. It was an elaborate and demanding technique requiring training, endurance and patience. The most important weapon was the ice-hunting harpoon. The strong, round shaft was made entirely of antler and was about one and a half metres long.

### 3. DISPLAY PANELS

#### 3.1 ROALD AMUNDSEN

Roald Amundsen's life long dream was the for the adventure of exploration. Born in Borge, Norway in 1872, his interest was sparked by reading the works of Magellan, Balboa, Columbus and others. Especially liking the arctic explorers, he was inspired by Franklin's early exploration.

Throughout his early years he trained hard and alone, conditioning himself for the rigors of an explorer's life and undertook extensive personal study of biology, zoology and oceanography. From 1894 - 1896 he worked as deckhand on the 'Magdalena' of Tonsberg which was seal hunting in the plover sea, avidly studied navigation and ship operation.

From 1897 - 1899 he sailed on the Belgian exploration ship the 'Belica' to the Antarctic under Lieutenant de Gerlache. This expedition was undertaken to study the magnetic pole. It was on this trip that Amundsen's vision of his own northern exploration was formed. He planned to fulfill his childhood dream of sailing the Northwest Passage and at the same time establish the present location of the north magnetic pole. The leading authority on magnetism, Georg Von Neumayer, who was very supportive and spent some time tutoring Amundsen. Amundsen then returned to Norway to promote and prepare for the expedition.

#### THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE EXPEDITION

Roald Amundsen was the first to navigate the Northwest Passage. Portions of the route had been explored previously but the waters around King William Island had proved to be the unsurmountable obstacle. Besides the navigation of this important and challenging route, Amundsen sought to locate the present magnetic north pole and record data concerning the terrestrial magnetism of this polar region.

Amundsen and his crew departed from Christiania, Norway on June 16, 1903. As the Gjoa headed westward along Simpson Strait amidst autumn storms, they found "the finest little harbour in the world." With such an excellent harbour as Gjoa Haven so near the North Magnetic Pole, Amundsen chose to establish winter quarters here. On September 12, 1903, the 'Gjoa' anchored in Gjoa Haven for the following two winters.

The expedition departed from Gjoa Haven on August 13, 1905, successfully navigated the shallow waters of Simpson Strait and emerged into known waters. They headed westward along the mainland coast to King Point on the Yukon coast where they spent the third winter in the Canadian Arctic. Leaving King Point the following year, the Gjoa completed the passage by rounding Cape Prince of Wales on August 30, 1906. The 'Gjoa' continued southward arriving in San Francisco in October of 1906.



### 3.2 THE GJOA

The Gjoa was built in the Rosendal shipyard on the Hardanger in 1872. Its original owner was Captain Asbjorn Sexe of Haugesund who used the 72', 47 tonne vessel as a herring boat along the coast. Sold in the 1880's to Captain H.C. Johannesen, the Gjoa then sailed the Polar Sea for many years. Amundsen purchased the boat in 1901, specifically looking for such a small, light draught ship. Some alterations were necessary for the voyage, especially the addition of a small engine.

"Petroleum tanks were built to the shape of the boat. Our little motor - a 13 HP - which was connected to everything that could possibly be driven with its aid, was easy to work and practical in every part. The motor was the pet of every one board. When it was not working we seemed to miss a good comrade. I may say that our successful negotiation of the North West Passage was very largely due to our excellent little engine."

Indeed, the ship's size and auxiliary power were advantageous for manoeuvring through ice, and narrow harbours and channels.

#### THE CREW

"I tender my warmest and most heartfelt thanks to the small party of brave men who followed me through the North West Passage and risked their lives to ensure the success of my undertaking."

"In May, 1903, the 'Gjoa' lay ready for departure and all who were to take part in the expedition assembled. Their names were:

First Lieutenant Godfred Hansen, born in Copenhagen in 1876. He was second in command of the expedition. During his term of service in the Danish Navy he had made four voyages to Iceland and the Faeroes and was warmly interested in Polar exploration. He was navigator, astronomer, geologist and photographer.

Anton Lund, first mate, born in Tromso in 1864. He had served for many years as skipper and harpoonist on the Arctic Sea.

Peder Ristvedt, born in Sandsvaer in 1873, took part as assistant, on my trial trip with the 'Gjoa' in 1901. He was our meteorologist and first engineer.

Helmer Hansen, second mate, born in Vesteraalen in 1870 and had served for many years in the Arctic Sea.

Gustav Juel Wiik, born in Horten in 1878. He had been trained at the Magnetic Observatory in Postdam and was my assistant for magnetic observations. He was second engineer.

Adolf Henrik Lindstrom, born in Hammerfest in 1865, was cook to the expedition. He had served as cook in the 'Fram's' second expedition."

## 3.3 &amp; 3.4 AMUNDSEN MEETS THE INUIT OF KING WILLIAM ISLAND

\* They appeared to be talking excitedly, pointing with their hands, laughing and gesticulating, without any noticeable indication of hostility. But suddenly they deployed in skirmishing order and advanced. . . . "Teima" I shout with all the power of my lusty lungs. The Eskimo stop short. Then I hear the call: "Manik-tu-mi! Manik-tu-mi! ' " . . . In a moment we fling away our rifles and hasten towards our friends . . . and we embrace and pat each other.

\* I now decided to accompany them on their way home to see where and how they lived. The Eskimo did not use anything in the way of ski, snowshoes, or the like, and I had all my work cut out to keep up with them on my ski. Nearing their camp it was almost completely dark. I did not know, at the time, that to an Eskimo it is a matter of complete indifference whether he travels in daylight or in the dark, in bright weather or in the thickest fog, in a storm or in calm, or in a snowstorm so thick he cannot see his hand before him.

\* The Eskimo is very careful of feet, not only in dread of getting them frozen but also for fear of sore-footedness, as he moves about on ice and stone-hard snow all day. He does not content himself with less than a five-fold foot gear.

\* My experience is that the Eskimo dress in winter in these regions is far superior to our European clothes. Dressed in nothing but reindeer skin, like the Eskimo, and with garments so loose and roomy on the body that the air can circulate between them, one can generally keep things dry. . . . Skin clothing keeps nearly as well without washing. A further advantage of skin is that you feel warm and comfortable the moment you put it on. Finally skins are absolutely windproof, which of course, is a very important point.

\* The best dish of all was reindeer's tongue, which almost "melted in the mouth." Eider ducks just at this time (late June), when they are migrating, are plump and of a very fine flavour. The fat round the seal flippers was also excellent, especially for bouillon. When the meat is prepared in this way it does not taste of fish oil, but rather reminds one of mutton fat.

\* But the Eskimo pudding, well . . . no thanks, he could not manage it! Once skinned the blood was carefully collected. Then the stomach was taken out of the animal. When the stomach was half emptied, they put the blood into it and stirred it round with a thigh bone. The dish thus prepared was blood pudding.

\* They first began seal fishing in the middle of January. I am inclined to believe that it was superstition which prevented them beginning earlier. As far as I could see, the moon had to have a certain position before they dared to go seal catching. They look upon the moon as an important sacred body, according to which they divide their time. The ir superstition often stood in their way.

### 3.5 SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

Sir John Franklin, a veteran of the Royal Navy and of arctic exploration, was appointed to the command of the expedition to traverse the Northwest Passage. Born 1786 at Spilsby, London, Franklin had entered Royal Navy as first-class volunteer at age 15, going on to serve as a surveyor and in various wartime endeavors.

Sir John Franklin's greatest fame, however, was not associated with his navel record but rather with two overland journeys he made to the Canadian arctic, for the purpose of mapping the northern coast of the continent and facilitating the discovery of the Northwest Passage. The first took place during the years 1819-1822 when Franklin ventured down the Coppermine River and along the coast. In addition to surveying, the members of the expedition took observations on winds, currents, tides, magnetic dip and variation, mapping nearly 600 mile of coastline.

On the second expedition, 1825-1827, Franklin and his men travelled down the Mackenzie River, with one party heading west to the Coppermine River and the other, led by Franklin, traveling east. On this trip he added another 800 miles to the known limits of the Polar Sea extending his discoveries to approximately half of the Arctic Coast of Canada and a considerable stretch of Alaska.

#### THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE EXPEDITION

The Franklin expedition was massive. Cpt. Sir J. Franklin in the HMS *Erebus* (370 tons) and Cpt. F.R.M. Crozier in the HMS *Terror* (340 tons) were in command of this 'assault' and 134 officers and men. It could truly be termed the 'Titanic of Canadian Arctic exploration'. The ships' hulls were reinforced with iron to meet the ice and they were lavishly equipped inside with hot water heating in the cabins, cut glass, delicate china, heavy silver, a library, and a barrel organ. The ships also carried a three year food supply, yet amidst this extravagant provisioning there was not a single sledge, tent, or pair of snowshoes.

After a very successful first season, they were blocked by ice to the west and so headed south, discovering a strait heading toward the known open waters of the mainland coast. However, again they were stopped by ice on Sept. 12 1846, at what was to prove to be their furthest advance.

On June 11, 1847, Franklin died suddenly at age 61. No indication of the cause has ever been determined. Throughout the summer of 1847 the ships remained fast in the ice. In the spring of 1848, after three winters in the Arctic, their supplies were running low, and deaths were increasing, likely due to malnutrition and scurvy.

Finally on April 22, 1848, with Crozier in command, the remaining 105 crew members abandoned the ships, planning to retreat to the mainland. Three days after leaving the ship they reached Victory Point and left a formal and concise note under a cairn:

"April 25, 1848

H.M. Ships Erebus and Terror were deserted on the 22nd of April 5 leagues N.N.W. of this, having been beset since 12 of September, 1846. The officers and crews, consisting of 105 souls, under command of Captain F.R.M. Crozier, landed here in latitude 69° 37' 42"N., longitude 98° 41' . . . start tomorrow 26th for Back's Fish River."

The retreat appears to have broken down in Terror Bay on King William Island due to sickness, exposure, and exhaustion. From there some of the men attempted to return to the ship while the rest continued. Nearly half the expedition is accounted for further along the route to the Great Fish River at Starvation Cove, on the Adelaide Peninsula.

### 3.6 IN SEARCH OF FRANKLIN

The search for the Franklin expedition is an effort unparalleled in marine history. Forty expeditions by sail and sledge were launched in the next 10 years to find Franklin and his crew. Many expeditions proved fruitless because it was not expected that the Franklin expedition had travelled south from Barrow Strait and certainly not attempted an escape to the mainland. The more successful expeditions were those of John Rae, James Anderson, and F.L. McClintock.

Dr. John Rae, a Hudson Bay Company surgeon and noted Arctic explorer, first learned clues to Franklin's fate from the Inuit near Pelly Bay. On an overland expedition in 1854, Rae was told stories that had been passed on to these Inuit from their people to the West. They told of 40 white men, looking thin and sickly, dragging a boat and sledges southward on the west coast. Rae was also told of cannibalism among the strangers and of a place with many dead bodies and graves on the mainland shore near what could be none other than the Great Fish River.

Rae's report that Franklin's men resorted to cannibalism caused quite a stir in England at the time and led to the public distrust of his report. Nevertheless, his story was confirmed by research in the early 1980's by Dr. Owen Beattie.

Following the information reported by Rae, the Hudson Bay Company responded by organizing an expedition to head down the Great Fish River in the spring of 1855 under the leadership of James Anderson. Although finding various articles from the Franklin ships in Eskimo caches, the results of the expedition were disappointing.

The most successful expedition was sponsored by Lady Franklin in 1857. Capt. Francis McClintock set out in the steam yacht the 'Fox' and was blocked by ice in Bellot Strait 14 months later. From there the expedition travelled overland in two separate parties investigating the shores of King William Island and the mainland coast in the vicinity of the Great Fish River.

Although they found many artifacts in the possession of the Inuit, conclusive explanations of the tragedy eluded McClintock's party. Hobson, in charge of the other party had been more successful, with the discovery a lifeboat mounted on a sledge containing 2 human skeletons and a variety of equipment and clothing, north of Cape Crozier. They also found the note at Victory Point left by Crozier and Fitzjames, thus confirming the fate of Franklin's expedition.

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### ARTIFACTS

a letter addressed to Bernier at the HBC from Amundsen when Amundsen was wintering at the spot where he erected the cairn near the spot where, according to Eskimo rumour, one of Franklin's ships lies submerged. Reported to be in the possession of Captain J. E. Bernier, the Arctic Explorer ("Lonely Memorial", in the Beaver, March 1935)

- Cairn on King William Island: to mark the success of his boyhood's dream at the spot which has since become a rendezvous for the traders and explorers in more recent years. (The Beaver, March 1935)  
RCMP later established "a chain of posts right up to the very spot where Amundsen built his cairn".

- Amundsen's chair. Paddy Gibson, manager of the Gjoa Haven HBC store gave the chair to Father Henry during his visit in 1938 and 1939. Now in the Churchill Eskimo Museum. see Choque 1985, p. 170.

\* Amundsen collection in the National Museum of Denmark and in Oslo includes weapons, sleds, cooking implements, clothing, samples of beadwork, fox pelts still on exhibit in Norwegian museums  
see Taylor 1974, Kugelmass pg. 75.

\* Netsilik artifacts collection assembled by Balikci for the National Museum of Canada  
see Balikci 1970, p. xiv

Dr. Helge Larsen of the Danish National Museum provided pictures of Netsilik men's and women's fur clothing  
see Balikci 1970, p. xi

### FILM FOOTAGE

\* film footage of Netsilik Eskimos enough for 10 hours edited film taken by Balikci (Dept. of Anthropology, University of Montreal) in connection with Educational Services Inc.; several trips between 1963 and 1966 produced 9 films; in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a curriculum development unit synthesized anthropological data, film material and teaching techniques to prepare a social science program for elementary schools  
see Balikci 1970

\* National Film Board of Canada. (1973) The Netsilik Eskimo Today 16mm, 18 minutes. Shows the settled community life of the north which has been established since 1965 under the auspices of the Canadian government replacing their traditional migrational pattern of life.

\* National Film Board of Canada. (1971) People of the Seal 16mm, 4 reels, 104 minutes. An examination of the lives of the Netsilik Eskimos of the Canadian Arctic, their work and play, and the ways in

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which they cope with the frigid climate of the North.

\* National Film Board of Canada. (1971) People of the Seal  
Videorecording, 2 cassettes, 52 minutes.

\* National Film Board of Canada. (1971) Yesterday, today: the Netsilik Eskimo 16mm, 2 reels, 58 minutes. Describes a day in the life of a Netsilik family, showing how they have changed from nomadic hunters to people dependent on services provided by the Canadian government.

\* Cavanagh. Music of the Netsilik Eskimo: a study of stability and change

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