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***Northwest Passage Historic Park - Draft  
Interpretive Plan  
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NORTHWEST PASSAGE HISTORIC PARK -  
DRAFT INTERPRETIVE PLAN

Sector: Tourism

11-30-20

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PROGRAM  
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NORTHWEST PASSAGE HISTORIC PARK

DRAFT INTERPRETIVE PLAN

PRODUCT  
DEVELOPMENT

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November, 1986

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

*(Bruce Downie)*

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NO! for Arctic

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 interim report 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. When the interpretive framework and interpretive strategies has been revised and approved, this plan will provide guidance for the more detailed description of the facilities and media that will be required in the development of the park's interpretive opportunities.

## 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) (see Fig. 1). 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

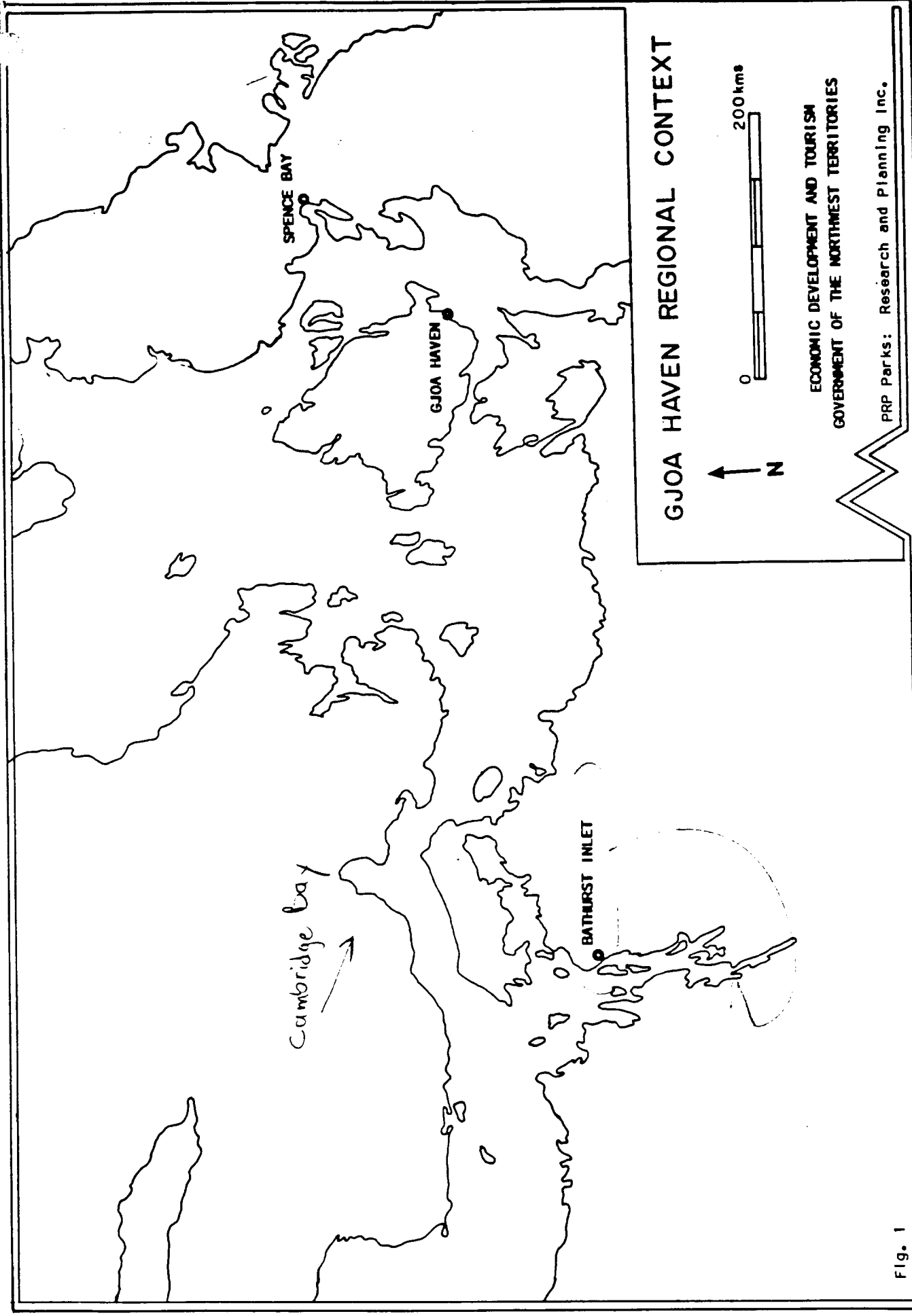


Fig. 1

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 (see Fig. 2).

#### Historical Resources:

(Model Express ...)  
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 Canalska 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.

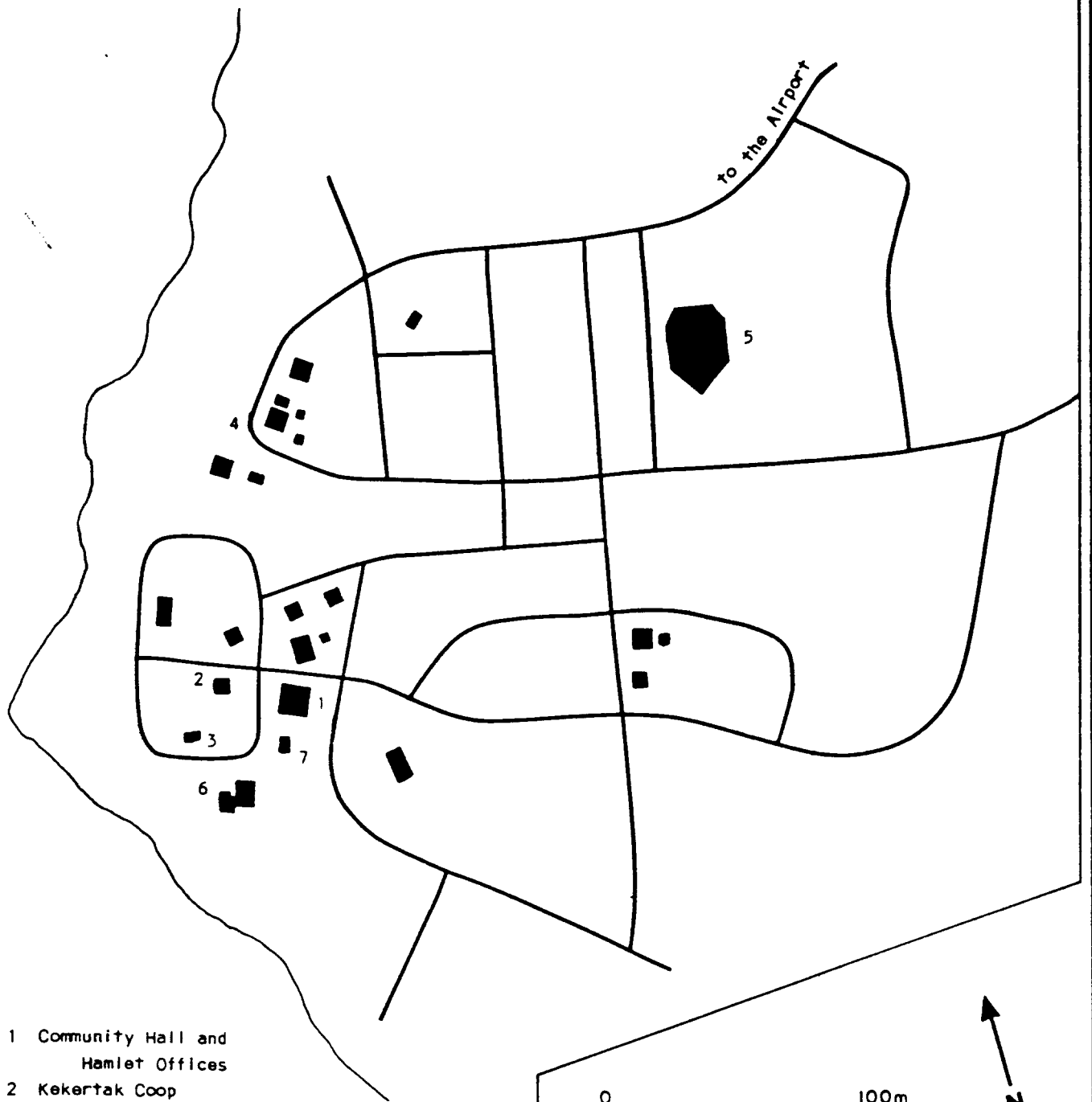
The extensive written record of Amundsen's travels is available in his own published works. Documentation of the details and significance of his exploration is also available in the analyses of other historians (see References). While other northwest passage explorers such as Franklin, are also relatively 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

# GJOA HAVEN



- 1 Community Hall and Hamlet Offices
- 2 Kekertak Coop
- 3 Amundsen Hotel
- 4 Hudson Bay Company
- 5 School
- 6 Nursing Station
- 7 RCMP Office

Fig. 2

0 100m



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM  
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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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 "... one 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 follows a similar route. The community has responded well tourist interest by providing activities, crafts and cultural demonstrations. The proposed Historic Park and interpret detailing Amundsen's discovery of the Northwest Passage a Gjoa Haven would enhance visitor activities in the community ships visitors as well as others.

↑  
be aware of large  
capital investments  
for cruise ship  
trade - it's only  
a few hours a  
year. Small scale,  
well done, my local  
flavour, works  
better anyway

#### Tourism Potential

With careful promotion and execution tourism can have a positive influence in Gjoa Haven. It is important to re: areas in the NWT, in Alaska and in Greenland are develop attract visitors. To compete against the growing number packages and destinations available a quality product of 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), travellers on route to other destinations, government employees interested in learning more about the history of the Northwest Passage, business travellers, 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 in-depth 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 travellers 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.

Northern Heritage Centre

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

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

*How much are local people (Inuit) interested in interpreting Amundsen? ? ? ?*

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.

*\* Do. NHC also this year (Karen)*

① \* 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 travellers 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?

② \* 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.

③ \* 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 — *no*
- early explorers - routes - expeditions beginning 1576 - Frobisher, Davis, Hudson, Ross and Parry, Franklin, McClure, Kellet, Amundsen, Bernier, Larsen
- Franklin expedition 1845 - route, equipment, etc. - comparison to Amundsen

*to reach Cathay for spices.*

#### 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 army 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) - assistant 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 Holm 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, \* Aurora Borea  
linked to  
also
- 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

→ no magnetic rock in surrounding land.

\* 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 I: 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
- geneological 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

\* any influence Europeans had on Eskimo life, traditions, etc.

## INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

### DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

This section outlines the optional interpretive strategies related to the themes and messages previously discussed. In each case it is assumed that the same theme and message structure will be used but will be presented in different ways. The most obvious factor distinguishing the options is the cost of their implementation and operation, although many other factors such as 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 options and in the recommended approach.

Three options are presented in order from the least expensive to the most expensive. The third option is the recommended approach. In spite of its higher cost, it 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. Each of the options includes an outline of the components, the estimated capital and O & M costs, and considerations concerning the approach that may be perceived as either strengths or weaknesses but should be considered in a decision on project direction.

OPTION 1

FACILITY AND MEDIA COMPONENTS:

- orientation and information displays
  - airport, hotel, Community Hall
- designated trail — *what does this include?*
  - linking specific relevant sites (see Option 3)
- interpretive displays
  - at designated sites
  - interpreting specific aspects of the site
  - display panels removed for winter
- booklet
  - providing interpretation of the general historical context and individual sites
  - includes a guide to the designated trail
  - detailed storyline
  - souvenir quality

COSTS:

- capital
  - orientation and information displays \$6,000.
  - designated trail \$3,000.
  - interpretive displays \$20,000
  - booklet \$30,000
  - Total \$59,000
- O & M
  - maintain trail and displays
  - booklet supply
  - Total

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

- inexpensive (capital and O & M)
- totally outdoors
- visitors carry away a high quality product
- does not involve the community in any significant way — *interpretation*
- available to wide ranging numbers of people

*Handwritten notes:*  
 people would be interested in this  
 by seeing the displays  
 they would be interested in this  
 they would be interested in this  
 they would be interested in this

OPTION 2

FACILITY AND MEDIA COMPONENTS:

- orientation and information displays
  - airport, hotel, community hall?
- designated trail
  - linking specific relevant sites (see Option 3)
- interpretive displays
  - at some designated sites
  - interpreting specific aspects of the site
  - display panels removed for winter
  - main displays in the Community Hall - upper level hallway
  - additional cabinets built to contain photos, artifact replicas, clothing, etc. relating to the three themes
  - model of the Gjoa built for display
  - cabinets along the same side as the existing cabinet
  - display materials (photos & wall hangings) on the walls above the upper lobby (see Option 3)
- brochure
  - a guide to the designated trail, providing interpretation of individual sites and the general historical context
  - moderately detailed storyline
  - high quality colour pamphlet

COSTS:

- capital		
- orientation and information displays		\$6,000.
- designated trail		\$3,000.
- interpretive displays		\$50,000.
- ship model		\$25,000.
- brochure		\$10,000.
- Total		\$94,000.
- O & M/year		
- maintain trail and displays		\$2,000.
- brochure supply		\$500.
- Total		\$2,500.

for year  
\$96,500



ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

- inexpensive (capital and O & M)
- outdoors combined with space in an existing, central, public building
- significant commitment of space in the Community Hall for display cabinets
- a reasonable range of interpretive opportunities and media, including written and illustrative material, artifact displays and contact with the environment
- could involve the community in the preparation of some displays such as the wall hangings and cultural display materials, and in the construction of display space in the Community Hall
- available to wide ranging numbers of people

OPTION 3

FACILITY AND MEDIA COMPONENTS:

- orientation and information displays
  - airport, hotel
- designated trail
  - linking specific relevant sites (see il
- interpretive displays
  - at some designated sites
    - interpreting specific aspects
    - display panels removed for win
  - displays in the Community Hall
    - overview and historical context for themes in upper level hallway
    - display materials (photos & wall hangings) on the walls above the upper lobby (see illustration)

*I prefer this as far as end of "interpretive displays" section*

*esp. use of Hall.*

- interpretive centre

- 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)

*- how long would building be in use? - is it multi-use or only for summer visitors? - if only for visitors high cost of maintenance during winter building closed.*

amas

- 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

ounge 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

*Centre is silly idea - can't afford to build it large enough to hold a ship-load - so folks would seek shelter at Hall, too - and absurd cost for brief uses. Do foreign*

- brochure

- a guide to the designated trail, providing interpretation of individual sites and the general historical context
- moderately detailed storyline
- high quality colour pamphlet

COSTS:

- capital

- orientation and information displays \$6,000.
- designated trail \$3,000.
- interpretive displays \$25,000.
- building construction \$125,000.
- furnishing \$20,000.
- dioramas \$75,000.
- brochure \$10,000.

- Total \$264,000.

- O & M/year

- maintain trail and exterior displays \$2,000.
- building and display maintenance \$4,000.
- receptionist \$5,000.
- brochure supply \$500.

- Total \$11,500.

*first year*  
\$275,500

*Cost estimates  
on construction  
& furnishing a  
building are as  
silly as the idea  
of the building.  
ditto O&M costs.*

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

- relatively expensive (capital and O & M)
- 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 audio/visual presentations and socialize
- serves as a significant visitor activity in the community that would encourage other travellers 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

*- in all cases community involvement could include meeting with local people and hearing stories of Amundsen's visit with long people who lived there or children of people who remember stories told → record stories.  
→ also meet with people to talk of them.*

## REFERENCES

### 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

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

*use of Baliki's  
films would be  
good (if local  
folks can bear  
it!)*

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