

Herschel Island Qikiqtaryuk: A Natural and Cultural History of Yukon's Arctic Island. Edited by Christopher R. Burn. Whitehorse, Yukon & Calgary, Alberta: Wildlife Management Advisory Council / University of Calgary Press, 2012. 242 pp. Photographs, illustrations, notes, references, index.

Qikiqtaryuk is the Siglitun¹ name for the solitary large island lying north of the Yukon territorial coastline in the Beaufort Sea. Also known as Herschel Island, it figured prominently as a settlement to northern peoples and in due course transcended the periods of “northern exploration and discovery” including whaling, missionaries, the fur trade, and, more recently, a brief period of oil and gas exploration. Its importance is recognized in the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) and in 1987 it was designated a Yukon territorial park. The closely entwined relationship between its natural and cultural heritage is the subject of the 2012 volume entitled *Herschel Island Qikiqtaryuk: A Natural and Cultural History of Yukon's Arctic Island*. Edited by Chris Burn, a professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University, the 242 page book provides a comprehensive and impressively illustrated account of Qikiqtaryuk's past and present, integrating cultural and natural history through a collection of contributions written by forty-three experts in their respective fields, most of whom have visited the island and over half of whom reside in Canada's North.

This comprehensive volume comprises four main sections bracketed by a three-part introduction and a three-part conclusion. The Introduction sets the stage, highlighting a rich social heritage resulting from encounters between Aboriginal and Euro-American cultures, and the island's contributions to sovereignty and economic development in the western Arctic. The second introductory section is dedicated to the history of the scientifically-literate and lauded Herschel family, for whom the island was named by Captain John Franklin. The next section provides history and explanations of place names.

An account of the island's natural and cultural history comprises the four main sections of the book: Land and Water, Flora and Fauna, People and Culture, and, finally, Conservation and Governance. The Land and Water section includes chapters on the physical setting, geology, climate, marine and sea ice environment, ice age past, permafrost, and coastal environments. Numerous graphs, tables, and other illustrations explain the processes that formed the island and that are responsible for its Arctic climate.

¹ Inuvialuktun dialect of the eastern Mackenzie Delta

Accounts of the flora and fauna of the island are described in twelve chapters devoted to vegetation, invertebrates, birds, mammals, and fishes. These chapters describe the main plant and animal types through excellent photographs, graphs, and tables that explain how environmental conditions control their distribution across the landscape.

The People and Culture section explores the history of human settlement. Starting with an account of Inuvialuit archaeology, a record of Inuvialuit ancestors is followed by descriptions of the impacts that whaling, missionaries, and fur traders have had on Qikiqtaryuk's story. Two last chapters describe the history of police presence on the island, and summarize the historic findings of explorers and scientists to the region.

The fourth section, Conservation and Governance, focuses on preserving existing buildings, park history, and how co-management within the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) is used to administer and direct the many ongoing activities and resources of Qikiqtaryuk. The IFA precludes any development within the park while maintaining harvesting rights for the Inuvialuit. Through a co-management model, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council works with Inuvialuit and territorial and federal governments to manage the park.

In the Conclusion, a short final word highlights promising progress in the evolution of research in the North, and also recognizes the important contributions made by northerners to research programs. Their local knowledge adds a depth of understanding accumulated over many years and provides the interdisciplinary perspective central to understanding the complex integrated facets of the North, as highlighted by research programs during the Fourth International Polar Year, 2007-2008. The next two parts provide brief backgrounds on the authors as well as a list of relevant publications for further reading. The final pages include a well-detailed index, useful for quick navigation to specific topics.

The book is written in an easily accessible style that meets the challenges of capturing the interest of a mixed readership. It provides clear explanations so that a non-specialist easily follows the breadth of the numerous topics covered, as well as enough in-depth detail for specialists. The content is highly informative and supplies a comprehensive coverage of the island's complex past. The book does not fall into any simple category and is in essence a hybrid of popular science, text, and field book. It would serve as a useful reference source to senior high school and university students. And it would be useful on site for any visitor to the island.

The book is beautifully presented and it is obvious that a great deal of attention is devoted to page design that complements the written content.

The numerous illustrations, including photographs, maps, and graphs, are of consistent high quality and provide a nice balance to the text that is arranged in three columns on each page, making it very easy to read. The figure legends are informative, and additional information is provided in neatly presented vignettes throughout the book. Each of the six sections is colour-coded along the outer page margin for rapid access. The book was designed and produced in Whitehorse, and printed in Edmonton, making it a truly Canadian product.

Overall, this volume rates very highly. It can be picked up and read cover to cover, or for a quick read, thumbed through section by section. Due to its well-thought-out layout, each page is almost stand-alone, with useful sub-section headings and supplementary information boxes. The book provides an enjoyable and informative description about the rich heritage of Qikiqtaryuk Island, and the relationship of people with the island's natural environment. It is a must read for those interested in visiting Qikiqtaryuk in the future, or a great read for those interested in learning more about this special place lying off the North Yukon coastline.

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***The Last Patrol: Following the Trail of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police's Legendary Lost Patrol.* By Keith Billington. Halfmoon Bay, BC: Caitlin Press, 2013. 192 pp. Illustrations, maps, index.**

In the winter of 1910-1911, Inspector Frances Fitzgerald and three other members of the Royal North-West Mounted Police perished while travelling from Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories (NWT) to Dawson City, Yukon. This famous event became known as the Lost Patrol. Roughly sixty years later, another group of men, led by Keith Billington, undertook a similar journey in commemoration of the Lost Patrol. In *The Last Patrol*, Billington recounts the narratives of both the Lost Patrol and the latter commemorative patrol, which he dubbed the Dempster Patrol. Thus, this book is both a personal memoir and a popular history. The narrative of the Dempster Patrol also contains various anecdotes highlighting the Gwich'in's historical connection with the region between Fort McPherson and Dawson.

The Last Patrol alternates between chronicling the Lost Patrol and the Dempster Patrol. Billington begins by describing how he became aware of the Lost Patrol while working as a nurse in Fort McPherson during the 1960s. As the Dempster Highway neared completion, Billington wished to undertake this expedition before the opportunity was lost to travel by dog