

◆ **Nunaaluk** ◆
A Forgotten Story
A Documentary by Louise Abbott

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◆ **Nunaaluk: A Forgotten Story** ◆ resurrects the story of a group of resourceful, independent Inuit who lived on Cape Hope Island (Nunaaluk, they called it--the big island) and got along well with their Cree neighbours in southeastern James Bay. They were forced to ◆ abandon their beloved island home when the government relocated them north to Kuujuarapik (Great Whale River) in 1960. The film features Mini Aodla Freeman; George Kudlu; the late Arctic photographer Fred Bruemmer; and Elizabeth Mark Maiczan. Louise Abbott directed the film and also did the principal cinematography. COTA (Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association) produced it. The film was premiered at the McCord Museum in Montreal on December 17, 2013.

◆ **Background to the Film:** ◆

◆ During the halcyon days of the fur trade in northern Canada, the Hudson's Bay Company sometimes hired Inuit to work in eastern James Bay because of their skills at running dog teams, hunting seals, and making skin boots. Over time, small groups of Inuit began to settle on coastal islands in the region. One of those islands, Charlton, was the ◆ terminus for HBC ships serving fur-trading posts in James Bay. Among the Inuit who settled there ◆ was an exceptional HBC ship ◆ pilot named George Weetaltuk.

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◆ Weetaltuk later moved his family to Cape Hope Island. Other Inuit families followed him. By ◆ the early 1930s, ◆ a small, but thriving, community had been established, with a boat-building and canoe-building business. ◆ It was the southernmost Inuit community in Canada. The HBC ◆ set up a post in Cree territory at Old Factory River and eventually on Old Factory Island. Some of the Cape Hope Inuit worked alongside Crees on Old Factory Island, which lies south of ◆ Cape Hope.

10pt;">Cree-Inuit relations were, by all accounts, harmonious. The Inuit learned to speak Cree to communicate with their more numerous neighbours, and the two groups celebrated weddings and Christmas together. ♦ In the late 1940s, the Cree Old Factory band voted unanimously to permit the Cape Hope Inuit to take a beaver quota from the Old Factory Preserve. </p> <p style="text-align: left;">But the lives of both the Crees and the Inuit were disrupted when the government decided to relocate them to a permanent settlement. In 1959 the Crees moved to Paint Hills (Wemindji); some Inuit families joined them. In 1960 the Inuit who had moved to Paint Hills and those remaining on Cape Hope Island were transferred to Kuujjuarapik. In the ensuing decades, the story of the Cape Hope Inuit and their Cree neighbours at Old Factory has been forgotten ... until now.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">♦What People are Saying about the Film:</p> <p style="text-align: left;">The response to Nunaaluk: A Forgotten Story has been heartwarming! Here are excerpts from a few viewers' email messages: </p> <p style="text-align: left;">"The film is so creative, from weaving in Fred Bruemmer's memories of George Weetaltuk and the lasting impact that relatively brief encounter had on him, to Mini Freeman's♦and George♦Kudlu's♦poignant memories about Nunaaluk. The filming is just superb, surely leaving no doubt in viewers♦ minds that Cape Hope [Nunaaluk]♦really is a very special place. I will watch Nunaaluk many more times for sure." M.♦</p> <p>♦"You♦did a wonderful little film; I was smitten during the whole thing by the beauty of this story and by the quality of images and moments created by your video." C.♦</p> <p>"[We]♦felt very privileged to attend the showing of your video and hear firsthand the reflections and memories of Mini and George, who are such an important part of this story. Their love of Cape Hope, their courage, and the skills they were able to impart to the Cree was very meaningful. The fact that these two communities, Cree and Inuit, once sworn enemies, learned to cooperate and respect one another is a lesson for all of us.♦♦</p> <div>size="2" face="Arial">"Your film was also photographed with great sensitivity and aesthetic taste. Congratulations. You and♦Niels obviously have great empathy with these people. How sad that Fred Bruemmer passed away on the very day this film was shown to the public for the first time. His legacy♦will live on in the memory of the aboriginal people whose lives he

touched, and in his photography."J.</div> <div></div> <div>"It was a pleasure to meet you and see your perfect little film. It really was just right." I.</div>