

FEATURE

Nunavut: Canada's newest territory

This is the first of a three-part article by Cramahe Township's Pieter Wyminga.

Last month, Mr. Wyminga was invited to visit his son Paul, a school teacher in Igloolik in Canada's newest territory, Nunavut.

Pieter left spring and the apple blossoms of southern Ontario to arrive to snow and sub-zero temperatures.

By Pieter Wyminga

My son Paul is a teacher in Igloolik, a northern community northwest of Baffin Island in the new territory of Nunavut. He invited me to come for a week's visit and I decided to take him up on the invitation.

Igloolik is the same distance north of Colborne as Kamloops, B.C. is west. Igloolik is in the same time zone as Colborne.

From Toronto, Air Canada took me to Ottawa. First Air flew me to Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut - a three-hour flight in a comfortable four-engine plane. We flew at least half the distance over snowy terrain. The connecting plane to Igloolik left two hours after arrival at Iqaluit. At the Iqaluit airport, a wonderful display of Inuit art caught my attention. While admiring the Inuit stone carvings, I learned the beginnings of the Inuktitut language. A large sign read, "Koviahokloki Iqaluitni

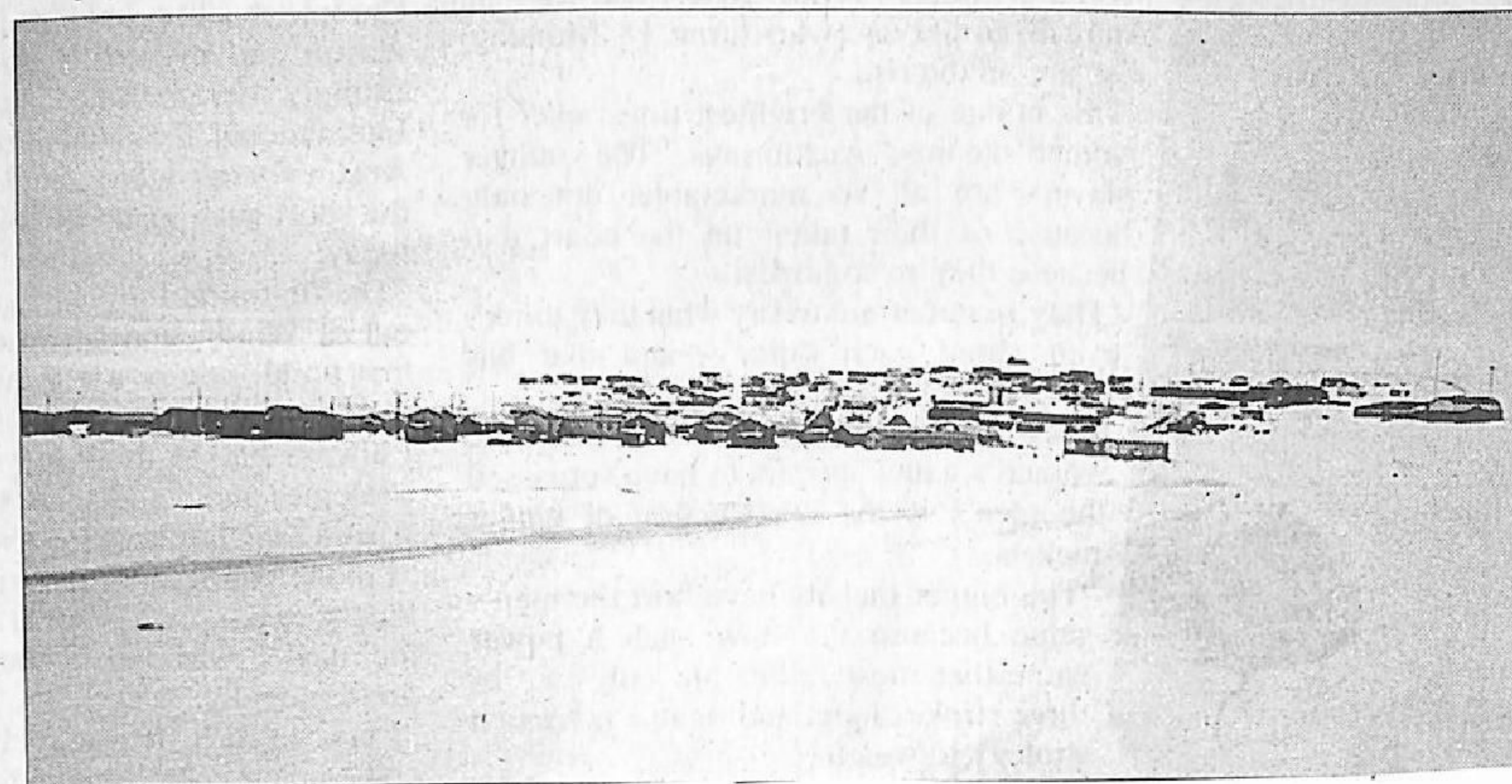
nately very short as the temperature was about -5 degrees C.

My entire trip to Paul had lasted about 10 hours and included three hours of stopovers. I had imagined landing on runners in the snow at Igloolik but the runways were cleared of snow. The pilot on the last leg of the journey was Inuit, Michael Inuksuk. He is the first Inuit pilot First Air employs. Local residents admire him as he is truly evidence of a native person achieving a significant level in the work force, a job that is still usually carried out by a southern Canadian.

On the plane were several mothers with babies. Paul told me later that for certain medical attention, these children have to be taken to a hospital in Iqaluit as the medical unit



Weather-proof: The Iqaluit airport features a display of Inuit art and artifacts.



It is snowing, which may play havoc with our plans to go camping during the long weekend. I hope the weather will let up as I

have looked so forward to a camping trip in the snow and fishing "through the ice", which is still many feet deep.

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On Friday, June 4, additional verbal reports and some paperwork was tracked down for the polls. On Saturday, June 5, the Returning Officer and staff knew they would have to break open one ballot box (usually forwarded to the central Elections Ontario office for storage) to obtain one poll tally. Approval was received from Toronto.

As Saturday, June 5 dawned, a preliminary count was predicted by 12 noon. That deadline was pushed back five times throughout the day.

Gone was the Election Night frenzy of media and onlookers when the exhausted tallyers emerged Saturday afternoon. There was an audience of one media person and two interested voters.

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