



*The following is distributed by L'nuey*

**For Immediate Release**



**Charlottetown, PEI – 15 May 2020**

## **Epekwitk's Mi'kmaq History Comes to Life**

Tignish? Tracadie? As many Islanders know, numerous PEI place names have a Mi'kmaq language origin. However, few people know what they mean.

In recognition of Aboriginal Awareness Week, L'nuey and the Government of PEI are partnering to recognize some of these locations and celebrate Prince Edward Island's Mi'kmaq history. At nine locations across the Island, heritage signage will be placed to highlight locations with names that have a Mi'kmaq origin or that hold particular importance to the Mi'kmaq people. These signs have been installed in Tignish, Portage, Crapaud, Tracadie, Borden, Fox River, North River, Panmure Island and at the Grand/Ellis River in Day's Corner.

Mi'kmaq place names are insights into the Island's geography and human history. Unlike many English language place names that have been transposed from locations in other countries or named after people, the Mi'kmaq names are rooted in a description of that specific location or highlight activities that would take place there.

Tracadie, for instance, has its origins in the Mi'kmaq word "Tlaqatik," which means "the place where people gather." Historically, the area that surrounds Tracadie Bay was a significant summer gathering place for fishing and preparation for the long winter to come.

Portage, known in Mi'kmaq as "Unikansuk," which means "portage trail." The Brae, historically, was a landing place for Mi'kmaq people coming across the Northumberland Strait from New Brunswick in the spring. They would travel up the Percival River, then travel overland through Unikansuk, in order to quickly access Cascumpec Bay and Malpeque Bay.

"The Mi'kmaq place names of Epekwitk are a window in a history that we all share as Islanders," said Chief Junior Gould of Abegweit First Nation. "There is a great deal that we can learn about Prince Edward Island through knowledge of these place names and what they mean."

"Names given by our ancestors for certain locations provide insights into the Mi'kmaq world view and our Mi'kmaq language," added Chief Darlene Bernard of Lennox Island First Nation. "These place names are very descriptive and rooted in natural and human history, in geography, and they provide a guide into how we traditionally went about our daily lives."

"One of the reasons Prince Edward Island is such an incredible place is because of the people. The cultural fabric of our province would be incomplete without our foundational Mi'kmaq traditions and language," said Premier Dennis King. "There is no doubt that we stand to gain a great deal when we take the time to learn from, recognize and celebrate our Indigenous history."

Aboriginal Awareness Week (May 19-22) has been recognized and celebrated across Canada since 1992 as an opportunity to create greater public awareness of the role of Indigenous People across the country.

- 30 -

For further information contact:

Sean Doke: [sdoke@lnuey.ca](mailto:sdoke@lnuey.ca) or [902.330.4420](tel:902.330.4420)

*L'nuey is an initiative focused on protecting, preserving, and implementing the constitutionally entrenched rights of the Mi'kmaq of Prince Edward Island.*