

YEAR IN REVIEW 2022-2023



L'NUEY
MOVING TOWARDS
A BETTER TOMORROW





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MESSAGE from

Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaw-Saqmaq Darlene Bernard

Kwe' Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq,

Four years ago, on September 28, 2019, L'nuey, the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative of Epekwitk (PEI), embarked on a journey that has seen remarkable growth and achievement. This initiative has become a vital force in advancing, implementing, and protecting the constitutionally entrenched rights of the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (PEI Mi'kmaq), guided by the leadership and wisdom of the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils.

The years since have been marked by significant accomplishments, and these milestones serve as both inspiration and a call to action for the future. Safeguarding our Mi'kmaq rights remains our number one goal, ensuring they are asserted, protected, and upheld for our people today, and for generations yet to come. We acknowledge and deeply appreciate the unwavering support and unity of our community throughout this journey.

We invite you to explore the following pages for updates across various fronts, highlighting some of the recent efforts and progress achieved.

L'nuey continues to uphold its three pillars: Negotiations, Consultation, and Governance Development. In the past year, these pillars have seen substantial advancements. As our organization grows, we have seen tangible outcomes brought to life, and fresh opportunities emerging.

We have had some great successes over the past year, with the signing of a Treaty Education MOU last fall, and the recent signing of the Hillsborough Park Project agreement. Through these initiatives, as well as others, we are making strides in educating Islanders about Mi'kmaq Rights, and working with governments to regain access to lands and resources as a key piece of reconciliation.

As stewards of our collective future, we remain steadfast in our pursuit of self-determination and prosperity within our community. While we have made significant headway for our communities and future generations, we still have much work to do. Challenges lie ahead, but we remain committed to overcoming them, knowing that we have the support and strength of our community.

Each member of our community is encouraged to actively participate and engage in these initiatives, as your involvement is vital for our success as a united Mi'kmaq Nation.

We extend a heartfelt invitation to join us as we chart a path to a brighter and better tomorrow, enriched by the legacy of our past and the promise of our future.

Wela'lioq - Thank You All



Chief Darlene Bernard



Chief Darlene Bernard of Lennox Island First Nation and Co-Chair of Epekwitk Assembly of Councils.



Chief Junior Gould of Abegweit First Nation and Co-Chair of Epekwitk Assembly of Councils.

EPEKWITH Assembly of Councils



The Epekwitk Assembly of Councils (EAC) is the joint forum that oversees and governs organizations that act in the shared interest of Abegweit First Nation and Lennox Island First Nation. Comprised of the full Councils of both First Nations, the Assembly currently administers two organizations that are provincial in scope: L'Nuey and the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI.

L'Nuey's mandate is focused on protecting and advancing the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq, including negotiations, consultation and governance development.

The Confederacy's role is to deliver shared programs and services on behalf of both First Nations, as well as serving as a Tribal Council, which provides services and technical supports to each First Nation's administration.

MESSAGE from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Reflecting on Another Year: L'nuey's Journey and Growth Continues

As we mark the passage of another year, it's astounding to realize that L'nuey was established four years ago. This period has brought its share of unexpected trials. Yet, amidst these challenges, we have also encountered remarkable opportunities and moved a tremendous amount of work forward.

Through all these experiences, the L'nuey team has remained dedicated, unwavering in our commitment to advancing, protecting, and implementing the rights of the Mi'kmaq across Epekwitk.

Our team has grown and we have seen a shift in how the public view Mi'kmaq issues and the greater goal of reconciliation.

The journey toward defining a process for N'in aq No'kmaq – Me and My Relations continues to progress, alongside another round of engagements with community members. It is the process by which WE, the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (and not the federal and provincial governments) determine who can exercise Mi'kmaw Treaty rights in PEI as a beneficiary of the Peace and Friendship Treaties. This is our first step in re-establishing self-determination.

This year we strengthened our team and our efforts by welcoming Engagement Officer Kiara Labobe, who has been engaging with community members to provide a foundational understanding of the Ni'n aq No'kmaq process. Kiara will continue to host engagement sessions and discussions to answer questions, provide information on the process and the work of L'nuey, and convey feedback from the community to the leadership.

The Assembly has had a very productive year with some big wins, as evidenced by these many accomplishments. L'nuey's Negotiation Unit is proud to have provided the technical support to the Assembly to advance this work.

- The landmark signing of the Hillsborough Park project agreement with the Chiefs of Abegweit and Lennox Island First Nations, which will provide land and opportunities to address the housing needs of First Nations urban community members and access to economic development. This was a direct result of a Duty to Consult request being bumped over from our Consultations Unit to our Negotiations Unit to create a win-win opportunity that served the needs of the province and the Mi'kmaq.
- Supported Lennox Island with the development of a Treaty Protected Fishery and related negotiations with Canada/Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
- Continued negotiations with Parks Canada toward a Co-Management Agreement of all Parks Canada administered sites in PEI, and continued negotiations toward the establishment of Pituamkek as a National Park Reserve.
- Secured a Land Advisor to help develop a plan that articulates the short and long-term objectives of the leadership for Mi'kmaq land growth in PEI.
- Established an in-house Archaeology department, a milestone and success for the Mi'kmaq, in an effort to begin to advance self-government discussions, and to support ongoing Negotiations.
- Advanced the Hog Island Specific Claim and Worell, Morell, Scotchfort Specific Claim, along with general specific claims research.

The L'nuey Consultation Unit continued its keen efforts to assert and protect Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. This is essential for us in holding governments accountable and ensuring that Mi'kmaq rights are not infringed or violated. This past year alone, L'nuey engaged with and responded to 250+ consultation notifications from Crown entities, encompassing both provincial and federal governments. A Duty to Consult notification was referred to the Negotiations Unit and eventually led to the successful signing of the Hillsborough Park project agreement, creating a notable win for L'nuey's priority to protect rights, while also supporting the leadership in leveraging practical and beneficial land and resource wins wherever possible. Furthermore, the Consultation Unit developed a streamlined comprehensive Consultation Process, providing a clear roadmap for how notifications will be addressed effectively and efficiently moving forward.

Our Communications team also had an eventful year, with the Juku'e podcast more than doubling our listens (from 6,000 to almost 15,000) and nine podcasts being released, numerous video campaigns produced in collaboration with our marketing agency, an active social media presence, continual additions of Mi'kmaq placename signage across the Island, and successful events like the second-ever Epekwitk Nationhood Gathering, 3rd annual Reconciliation Recognition Awards, and Province House smudging ceremony.

Our Pride and Progress, Connected by Home, and Defined by Home campaigns emphasized our connections to Epekwitk and to each other. We asked: "What makes you proud to be Mi'kmaq?", "What comes to mind when you think of Epekwitk/PEI?", and "What defines home for you?". These campaigns were tremendously successful in engaging and highlighting members from both Lennox Island and Abegweit First Nations, along with non-Indigenous Islanders, and viewed by tens of thousands across numerous platforms such as TV, digital, web, and social media.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq, for your invaluable contributions to L'nuey's communications, engagement sessions, Ni'n aq No'kmaq, the Epekwitk Nationhood Gathering, and more. Your insights and wisdom are cherished, as they drive our mission forward. The Mi'kmaq spirit embodies this resilience, strength, and community.

As we look back on a year that was both challenging and rewarding, my heartfelt appreciation goes to the entire Epekwitk Assembly of Councils for your guidance and support. To the devoted L'nuey staff and our esteemed partners, your diligence is commendable. And to the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk, it's your determination that ultimately propels us toward a better tomorrow. I eagerly anticipate the year ahead, and I'm profoundly honored to serve as L'nuey's Executive Director.

Msit No'kmaq - All My Relations

Jwooldridge

Jenene Wooldridge



GOVERNANCE and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Ni'n aq No'kmaq. Defining Who. Defining We.

Our identity as a Nation is grounded in our family roots and connections.

We are pleased to provide an update on the Ni'n aq No'kmaq process and the progress we've made in the past year. Once established, the Ni'n aq No'kmaq process will determine who can exercise Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Epekwitk. A few examples of this are who will be able to access hunting, fishing, and harvesting rights as a beneficiary of the Peace and Friendship Treaties. Ni'n aq No'kmaq will not impact or replace the Status system but will allow us – the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk – to collectively decide who we consider to be Mi'kmaq.

During the earlier phases of Ni'n aq No'kmaq engagement in previous years, we had numerous conversations with community members – the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk – covering various themes such as ancestry, culture, community ties, traditions, and Mi'kmaq identity.

However, one of the primary pieces of feedback we received was the need for further information to strengthen the foundational understanding of the process and related terminology. This year we strengthened our team and efforts by welcoming a new Engagement Officer, who has been engaging with community members to provide a foundational understanding of the Ni'n aq No'kmaq process. We will continue to host engagement sessions and discussions to answer questions, provide information on the process and the work of L'nuey, and convey feedback from the community to leadership.

Ni'n aq No'kmaq is a process for the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk, by the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk. It is a constant work in progress that becomes better suited for the Mi'kmaq of PEI with time and thorough community feedback.

Our work has only just begun, and it is important to see it through to protect the rights of future PEI Mi'kmaq generations and Epekwitk – our beautiful island we and our ancestors have called home for over 12,000 years.

NI'N AQ NO'KMAQ DEFINING WHO. DEFINING WE.

WHAT IS NI'N AQ NO'KMAQ?

Ni'n aq No'kmaq translates to
"Me and My Relations."

It is the process by which WE, the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (and not the Federal and Provincial governments) determine who can exercise **Aboriginal and Treaty Rights** in PEI.

It is the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq's first step towards re-establishing **self-determination**.



NEGOTIATIONS

Background

The existence and validity of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights have been recognized in Canada through many court decisions. However, the courts have only partially defined the nature and scope of the rights and the common theme throughout these decisions has been the court's direction or advice for government and Aboriginal people to resolve their issues and find fair solutions through negotiation, rather than litigation.

The Marshall Decision of 1999

The Marshall Decision of 1999 prompted greater collaboration between Lennox Island and Abegweit First Nation Councils on the protection and implementation of Mi'kmaq Rights in PEI and from the outset, the leadership has been clear that they are committed to negotiations as the preferred path to resolving that issue.

Framework Agreement of 2019

In January 2019, the Mi'kmaq-Prince Edward Island-Canada Framework Agreement was signed and established a process for the parties to discuss and advance Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, including the inherent right to self-government. It sets out the scope for government-to-government-to-government negotiation process.

As a result of the Framework Agreement, the "Main Table" was formed with representatives from each of the governments to explore the priority areas for initial negotiations, set out by the Assembly, including potential areas for self-government discussions. For further information and detail on the **Framework Agreement**, please visit www.lnuey.ca/negotiations.

The Negotiations Process

Negotiations Structure

The Negotiations Unit at L'nuey is comprised of the Director, Senior Negotiator, Assistant Negotiator, and Negotiations Consultant. Together they work with various colleagues and governmental officials to discuss and advance Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in PEI.



Why are Negotiations Necessary?

To redress centuries of neglect where Mi'kmaq were prevented from exercising their rights and meaningfully participating in cultural, social, and economic life on the island.

To move away from:

- the continued denial of access to land and resources.
- intergenerational impacts of colonialism.
- unresolved Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, including PEI land title.

To move toward:

- sustainable Mi'kmaq access to land and resources, compensation, fiscal fairness.
- implementation of Mi'kmaq rights – Aboriginal Rights, Treaty Rights, inherent rights to self-government.
- reclaimed Mi'kmaq self-determination.
- reclaimed Mi'kmaq self-government.
- strong, prosperous, healthy Mi'kmaq communities and people.
- supportive and collaborative government-to-government-to-government relationships.

The Process

- Ongoing governance capacity among the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq.
- Ongoing public awareness and education initiatives.
- Leveraging appropriate Canada and PEI legislative or policy opportunities.
- Strengthening the tools to protect and resolve rights issues.
- Explore opportunities to implement Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and negotiate these and other avenues to achieve concrete benefits for the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq.
- Negotiate per the Framework Agreement Work Plan and Activities – for access to land and resources, and self-government objectives.
- Negotiations arising from the Crown's Duty to Consult obligations for mutually beneficial solutions.
- Identification of past breaches, research, and negotiations for specific claims.
- Ongoing Parks Canada negotiations.
- Litigation where necessary, and only as a last result to negotiated efforts.

Main Table Negotiations

Negotiations related to Fishery.

In 2022 and 2023 L'nuey supported the Lennox Island First Nation Chief and Council in the development of a treaty protected fishery management plan and the related negotiations with Canada/Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The Lennox Island First Nation continues to implement their Mi'kmaq-managed, self-regulated Treaty Protected Fishery. All fishing activity is in accordance with the Lennox Island First Nation Lobster Treaty Protected Fishery Management Plan.

The DFO mandate to negotiate in the Atlantic Region expired in April 2023 and L'nuey is awaiting confirmation on whether the mandate will be renewed and, if so, the related details. While L'nuey is not actively negotiating with DFO until such time as DFO has a new mandate, we are maintaining open lines of communication to explore any additional opportunities to increase commercial fisheries opportunities for the First Nations in PEI and/or treaty protected fishery access. L'nuey provides negotiation support if mandated.

2022-2023 Negotiations Updates

Negotiations with Parks Canada (Co-Management Agreement)

Negotiations with Parks Canada continue to progress in a positive manner. The objective of these negotiations is to recognize and reconcile Mi'kmaq Rights in PEI with the current management and oversight of the National Park in PEI. Including respectful recognition of the proper role to be played by the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq in the co-management of the Park.

The draft agreement is nearing completion (at negotiators' draft). Once successfully negotiated, the Agreement will allow for defined governance roles for the Mi'kmaq and will help increase opportunity for the Mi'kmaq in participation of the Park's operations. An event and signing ceremony are expected to take place in 2023-2024 once the Agreement is finalized.

Negotiations on Lands

Since land for housing and economic development opportunities continues to be a priority identified by the Assembly as guidance for strategic land negotiations efforts, L'nuey has been focused on developing a tactical approach to land, per priorities identified by the leadership.

In this regard, to increase land resource capacity, L'nuey secured a Land Advisor to lead this important work of exploration and analysis of valuable and feasible opportunities with respect to land in PEI, to present realistic and sensible options to the Assembly on priority acquisitions. A GIS expert was also secured this year to assist in mapping tools and presentations for these acquisitions and their related decisions.

Archaeology

In an effort to begin to advance self-government discussions, and to support ongoing Negotiations, L'nuey established an in-house Archaeology department, a milestone and success for the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq. Work has begun, with the support of Parks Canada, for enhanced collaboration on archeology within the existing National Park and the planned Pituamkek National Park Reserve.

Discussions are currently underway with the Province of PEI to release data pertaining to the archaeological record currently held and managed by the Province. L'nuey is also in early discussions to strategically build critical capacity toward increased jurisdictional responsibilities in the future, with the initial priority being community awareness and engagement.

Additional Negotiations:

L'nuey is also mandated on behalf of the First Nations to lead and coordinate other negotiation processes that are not specifically related to the Framework Agreement.

Specific Claims

Specific Claims deal with historical and past wrongs taken against First Nations. These are claims made by First Nations against the Government of Canada relating to the administration of land, other First Nation assets, and to the fulfillment of treaties and agreements. Specifically, to the breaches in administration of First Nation reserve land and other assets and to the non-fulfilment of historic treaties obligations and other agreements. Specific claims are separate and distinct from comprehensive land claims.

Hog Island Specific Claim

During 2022-2023, expert consultants, Turner Drake, concluded the final Current Unimproved Market Value Study (accepted by the Mi'kmaq and Canada) and presented the first draft of the Loss of Use Valuation Report, with the final draft expected to be presented/accepted in early 2023-2024.

Once accepted, both reports will provide a valuation data to assist the negotiators in settlement discussions. Once a proposed settlement is achieved by the negotiators, and the proposal is recommended to and supported by the First Nation Councils, it would then be presented to the communities to seek support and ratification for implementation.

Morell, Worrell, Scotchfort Specific Claim

In 1842, land near Morell was set aside for certain Mi'kmaq families by colonial landowner, Charles Worrell from his considerable holdings in Lot 40. This land was soon encroached on and sold to settlers by the colonial government. To compensate this loss, the colonial government provided replacement land on the Morell River, but this land was of poor quality and access was restricted.

A later attempt by the provincial government post-confederation resulted in the establishment of the Scotchfort reserve but not all the land promised was supplied or subsequently protected.

To aid in the preparation of this claim, L'nuey engaged external consultants during 2022-2023 to prepare the legal analysis and historical report to strengthen the claim submission. These documents are nearing completion and will be presented to the Assembly in the coming months.

General Specific Claims Research

L'nuey is also currently engaged in research and legal review for several other potential specific claims, which have been accepted by the Assembly for additional submissions over the next three years.

Land set aside in Lots 15 and 55 for the Mi'kmaq were put up for sale in 1852 with the commitment that the proceeds would be for the benefit of the Mi'kmaq, but research is required to determine if all money was used for their benefit.

In her will in 1872, Lady Wood, the daughter of a former Lieutenant Governor, left an estate to be sold with the proceeds divided with half to be used for the benefit of the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk. Research will determine if the Trust Fund was managed appropriately and if the Mi'kmaq received the intended benefit.

External consultants have been engaged to assist with research toward preparation of these future claims.

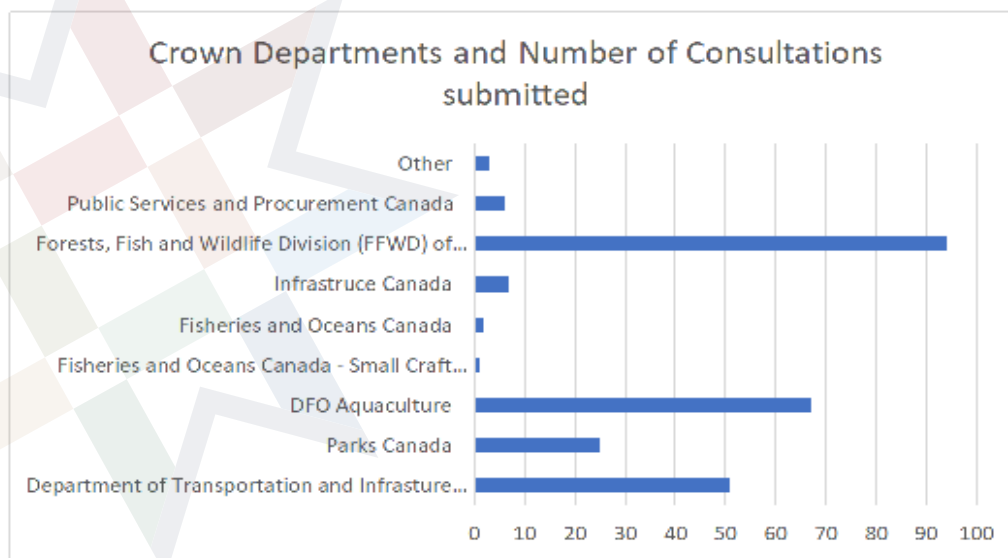
CONSULTATIONS

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples in Canada, including the Mi'kmaq of PEI, have unique rights guaranteed under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Section 35 recognizes and affirms the existing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of Indigenous Peoples. To protect these rights, the doctrine of the duty to consult and where appropriate, accommodate Indigenous groups was developed by the Canadian courts - and particularly the Supreme Court of Canada in the 2004 landmark Haida Decision. The duty obligates both the Federal and Provincial Governments to consult with Indigenous groups when the government is contemplating an action or decision that might adversely impact proven or asserted Aboriginal and/or Treaty Rights. The general purpose of the duty to consult is to foster reconciliation.

The L'nuey Consultation Unit functions to protect Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and to hold government accountable to ensure that Mi'kmaq rights are not infringed or violated.

L'nuey through the L'nuey Consultation Unit is mandated by the Chief and Councils of both the Lennox Island and Abegweit First Nations to act as the agent in the Consultation Process as set out in the Mi'kmaq - Prince Edward Island - Canada Consultation Agreement. Since October 2022, L'nuey has received and provided responses to an estimated 256 Crown consultation notifications of varying complexity. Each consultation notification receives legal, current and historical Mi'kmaq traditional use review and analysis. Depending on the nature of the consultation matter, the review might also include environmental and natural resource assessment. Some of the consultations also require expert analysis and advice.

The chart below provides a further breakdown of each name of the Crown Departments and number of consultations submitted to L'nuey between October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023.



ARCHAEOLOGY



L'nuey's Archaeology Unit has had a productive year with developmental work well underway, the addition of a GIS specialist, and the initiation of a field research program aimed to support our mandate to advance, implement, and protect the constitutionally entrenched rights of the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (Mi'kmaq of PEI).

The Senior Archaeologist and GIS Specialist have designed and built a multi-layered Arc GIS database to support all staff and leadership in research, planning, and decision making particularly as it applies to lands and cultural-natural resources. This digital tool includes various data forms such as archaeological, historical, cultural and natural resources, traditional knowledge, archival maps, Mi'kmaq place names, property information, elevation, and waterways. Data is added as it becomes available and information is digitized and linked to the GIS database on an ongoing basis.

The Archeology Unit's Absolute Dating Project is progressing well. The aim is to establish a Mi'kmaq owned inventory of radiocarbon or other absolute dates associated with Kniskamijin-aqi'k Epekwitkewaqi'k Mi'kmaqi'k (ancestral Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq) archaeological sites and materials in Prince Edward Island. To date we have examined over thirty-two archaeological site collections at the Canadian Museum of History (CMH) and are embarking on the much larger task of reviewing the associated documentation. The next step will be to use this information to finalize a selection of samples to be submitted for dating. This project has significantly increased the archaeological archive of the Epekwitknewaq Mi'kmaq.

In conjunction with the Absolute Dating Project, archaeological staff are conducting field and archival research to identify historic period Mi'kmaq sites which are often underrepresented in archaeological inventories. Under a provincial permit, L'nuey staff conducted fieldwork at nine locations across the province for a total of twenty-nine days in the field by the end of September. Two possible historic Mi'kmaq archaeological sites were identified along with several artifacts. The information and artifacts gathered during this field season will be analyzed during the off season.

L'nuey's archaeology staff were delighted to work with the Pituamkek Conservation Project team over the summer and fall months. Together the two teams conducted archaeological research at North Point, Lennox Island, and the Pituamkek site at Hog Island. Parks Canada Agency representatives were welcomed to Hog Island where the Pituamkek Conservation team shared knowledge about archaeological survey and excavation methods they learned during the project. The L'nuey and Pituamkek teams also joined forces with the Nature Conservancy of Canada for archaeological reconnaissance work at Murray Harbour, where they discovered a Mi'kmaq archaeological site. L'nuey's archaeological activities with the Pituamkek Conservation team were shared with community leadership and partner representatives at an open house in early October.



COMMUNICATIONS

Campaigns

The communications efforts undertaken by L'nuey represent a strategic extension of the original framework formulated by the organization. At the core of our approach lies the understanding that success at the negotiation table is intrinsically linked to widespread public backing. It remains evident that the public's support is not a mere nicety but a substantive necessity. A supportive public is an asset that ensures negotiations are conducted in an environment conducive to positive outcomes. In essence, our general population communications work is not a detached endeavor; rather, it is an integral pillar supporting the overarching goal of successful negotiations. The ripple effect of informed and supportive public sentiment contributes to an environment where negotiated agreements are not only accepted but embraced.

CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR CONTEST WINNER

Nancy Levi
Abegweit

CONNECTED
BY HOME

CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR WINNER

Morgan Varis
Cornwall

THIS IS
EPEKWITK.
THIS IS HOME.

L'NUEY
BUILDING TOMORROW
A BETTER TOMORROW

Pride and Progress

All about creating a sense of pride and ownership among the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq on the work being done amongst the Indigenous community.

Connected by Home

The concept of this campaign is that we are all part of this Island, Epekwitk. This is an island that's been shaped over thousands of years by different people. Some have been here from the beginning. Some arrived only a few days ago. Every single one of these people is different, a unique individual, except for one thing: their connection to this island we call home. This island we call Epekwitk.

Visually, this is represented via beautifully shot black-and-white video portraits of Islanders that show our diversity, while the use of black and white adds a sense of connection and represents the idea that while we might all be different, we are all connected.

Definition of Home

Home can mean something a little bit different for everyone. In this concept, we explored this idea by asking the question: "What defines home for you?" The answers, just like all Islanders, can be very different, except for one thing—no matter what your definition of home is, it is always tied to this place, to Epekwitk. It is the tether between us all, a shared definition.

Visually, we represented this idea by showing people holding sentimental items, like photos, heirlooms, etc., that connect to their personal definition of home, while also underscoring that these people are all Islanders, making Epekwitk a quintessential part of any definition of home.

How We Say Home

This campaign premiered in November online, on CBC and on Hockey Night in Canada. It is a homage to that undeniable Island vibe of being home. Epic sunrises lighting red rocks even redder. Lighting the faces of the people of Epekwitk engaged in those daily doses of island-ness... shared meals, back-road chats, bonfires, and belonging. How We Say Home is about all islanders, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, embracing their Island home as Epekwitk.

SHAPING
THE EPEKWITK
OF TOMORROW
TOGETHER

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation & Treaty Day

Due to the impacts of Hurricane Fiona across the Island, the public events for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30th and the public events for Treaty Day on October 1st were cancelled last year (2022). Unfortunately, this also included the Treaty Day Mawio'mi.

Although we could not gather in person, we encouraged all Epekwitnewaq (Islanders) to wear orange, and to observe a moment of silence at 12 noon on September 30th to reflect on the legacy of residential schools, and the impact on the survivors, their families, and communities.

For Treaty Day, though events were cancelled, we promoted learning about the history of the Peace and Friendship Treaties and Mi'kmaq Rights through video, social media and our website.



Orange Jersey Day Charlottetown Islanders Game



October 16 marked the first-ever Orange Jersey Day Game, hosted by L'nuey and the Charlottetown Islanders. This event brought Epekwitnewaq (Islanders) and the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq together for an afternoon to show support for Residential School Survivors, their families, and communities, as well as provide an opportunity to learn more about the Mi'kmaq people and culture. This important day was a visible step towards Reconciliation.



Government Leaders in Epekwitk Gathered for Smudging Ceremony at Province House

The Mi'kmaq leadership, Parks Canada, and Government of Prince Edward Island joined for a ceremony at Province House in early November, intended to acknowledge the colonial history associated with the building.

This included a smudging ceremony led by Mi'kmaw Elder Methilda Knockwood Snache as a way to cleanse the energy of Province House while being rebuilt, and a brief tour of Province House, which gave attendees a chance to view progress of the conservation initiative led by Parks Canada.

There was also a symbolic offering from the Mi'kmaq that was placed in the walls of Province House for generations to come. A bundle of four sacred medicines (sage, cedar, tobacco, sweetgrass) was prepared in a woven basket hand-made by Keptin Jim Bernard, and was cared for by Elder Methilda until its final placement within Province House.

"It is important that as we write a new shared history moving forward, as we rebuild the foundation of a National Historic Site, we must also rebuild the foundation of our relationships with one another, from Government to Government and Nation to Nation. The intention of the ceremony today is to cleanse the negative energy that is present in Province House and create a new energy that is founded on mutual respect and recognition moving forward."

- Chief Darlene Bernard of Lennox Island First Nation, Co-Chair of the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils.



Juku'e Podcast



L'nuey's podcast, Juku'e, continues to see substantial growth in listenership. From December of 2022 to October 2023, total listens on all episodes increased from 6,193 to 13,592.



Indigenous Awareness Week May 23 - 27, 2023

Mi'kmaq Place Name Signage

Indigenous Awareness Week is a special time to raise awareness of Mi'kmaq heritage and culture in Epekwitk. It offers an opportunity to celebrate the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk (PEI) and acknowledge the Island's shared history. Epekwitk is the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

Since 2020, L'nuey and the Government of PEI have partnered during Indigenous Awareness Week to install heritage signage to highlight locations and contemporary place names that have a Mi'kmaq origin or that hold particular importance to the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk.

In recognition of Indigenous Awareness Week this year, L'nuey and the Government of Prince Edward Island continued to partner to recognize Mi'kmaq place names by erecting road signs across the province, celebrating Epekwitk's Mi'kmaq history.

As some Islanders may know, numerous PEI place names have a Mi'kmaq language origin. However, few people know what they mean and represent.

At six new locations across the Island, heritage signage has been installed 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 Cascumpec Bay (Keskamkek), West Point (Mekwapnkwejk), Lennox Channel (Kikji-sipukwek), Canoe Cove (Kwitney Walney), Vernon River (Mekwa'sik Sipu), and Morell River (Puku'samkek Sipu). This brings the total number of Mi'kmaq place name signs installed across PEI since 2020 to 35.

L'nuey promoted and shared more information about Mi'kmaq language, history, and culture related to these areas on social media and our website, and also recognized those who work to advance reconciliation through various initiatives.



Nationhood Gathering



Maw-Lukuti'kw, The Epekwitk Nationhood Gathering took place on Saturday, November 5th, 2022. Presentations were shared on Negotiations, Fisheries, the Ni'n aq No'kmaq and Genealogy projects, as well as a Visioning Session with all community members in attendance.

This Visioning Session was aimed at articulating our collective vision for our Mi'kmaq Nation here on Epekwitk. This vision will guide us in our future work to protect and implement our constitutionally protected Mi'kmaq Rights and to truly achieve reconciliation with our non-Indigenous friends and neighbours. All Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq were encouraged to attend and provide input into this visioning process and Chief Darlene Bernard and Senator Brian Francis presented speeches to inspire and motivate.

The reception to the event was positive and hopeful. It was an exciting opportunity to share more about the important work that is being done to advance, implement, and protect the constitutionally entrenched rights of the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq.

Reconciliation Recognition Award Ceremony

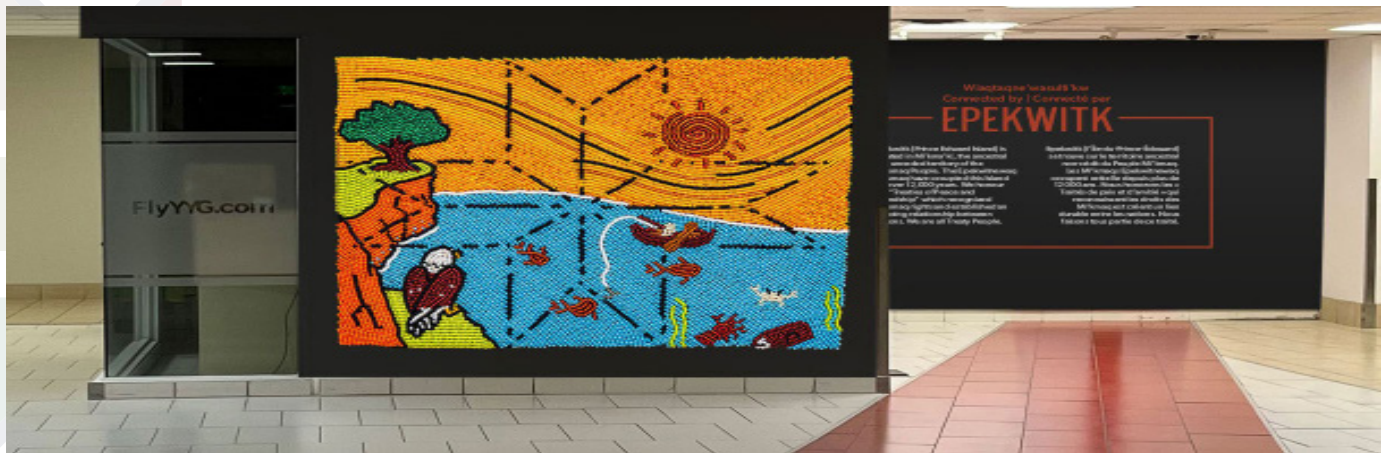
In 2023 the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils, through L'nuey, continued its' Reconciliation Recognition Award initiative as part of Indigenous Awareness Week activities to show its appreciation for the work being done to advance reconciliation by individuals, businesses, governments, and organizations here on PEI.

The "Reconciliation Recognition Award" is granted to recipients based on a series of criteria that serves to recognize, respect, and include the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (Mi'kmaq of PEI), stories, history, or land in such a way that it creates a positive and inclusive Island community with lasting impacts for future generations.

The Epekwitk Assembly of Councils hosted its third annual Reconciliation Recognition Award ceremony this past year. Recipients received their award at a small ceremony held in the Assembly Chamber of the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils building in Charlottetown.

The four award recipients for 2023 were the Summerside Western Capitals, the Charlottetown Islanders, Kings Playhouse, and The River Clyde Pageant. More information on the initiatives of the four recipients is included on our website.

Charlottetown Airport Unveiled New Indigenous Welcome in Terminal Building



In partnership with L'nuey, Charlottetown Airport unveiled a new Indigenous welcome piece in the YYG arrivals area as acknowledgement to the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq people that have occupied this Island for over 12,000 years.

The welcome piece is showcased by a stunning photographic mural of beaded artwork commissioned from PEI Mi'kmaq artist Koady Sock and the Made in Mi'kma'ki team. The project also includes new land acknowledgement signage, the framed original artwork, and a graphic highlighting P.E.I.'s two First Nations to celebrate the rich heritage and culture of the Mi'kmaq people.



Social Media Analytics

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FOLLOWERS

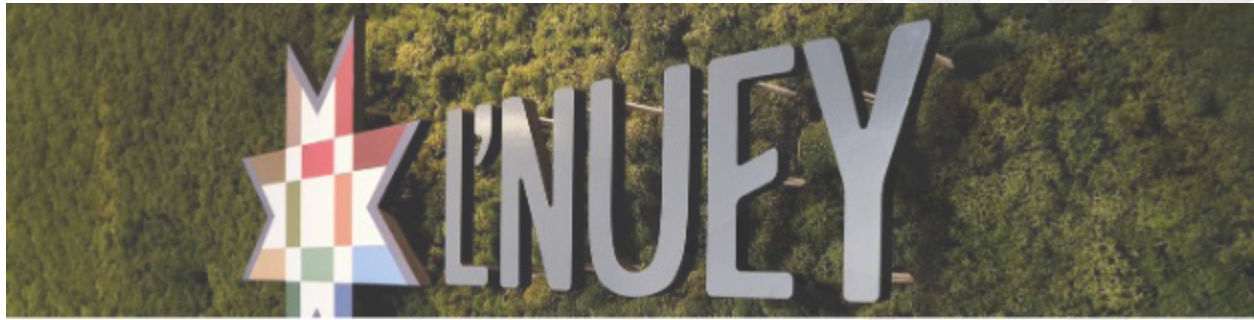


3,023
FOLLOWERS



1,103
FOLLOWERS





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Highlights and Accomplishments



Pituamkek 2023



Reconciliation Recognition
Awards 2023



Nationhood Gathering 2022

Highlights and Accomplishments



Pride and Progress Campaign



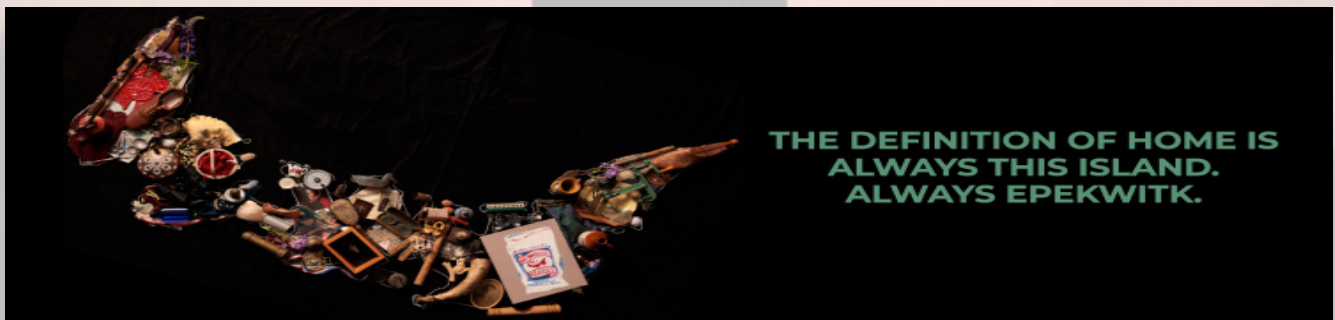
Pride and Progress Campaign



Hillsborough Park Project Signing



Connected By Home Campaign



Definition of Home Campaign

Wela'lioq



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L'nuey Community Photos





