

AINA NEWS

New AINA Postdoctoral Fellow

Matthew Ayre from the UK has joined the institute as a postdoctoral fellow. His doctoral studies, under the Leverhulme Trust-funded ARCdoc project, helped to further our understanding of the Arctic climate through historical documentary maritime observations. Matthew continues this legacy as part of the SSHRC-funded Northern Seas research project, which seeks to understand human and marine interactions within the Arctic over the last millennium. Northern Seas addresses both short- and long-term trends across the entire Canadian Arctic Archipelago. Matthew's research is specifically concerned with extant logbooks of British and American Arctic whalers who plied their trade in Baffin Bay in the east and the Beaufort Sea in the west, along with logbooks of Arctic explorers. These rare documents contain daily observations of natural phenomena from weather and sea ice to flora and fauna, allowing for a detailed view into the Arctic past. Matthew is dedicated to unlocking the meaning of these detailed narrative descriptions and has spent time in Arctic waters making sea ice observations to compare historical definitions of sea ice with terms currently in use.



Matthew Ayre onboard the USCGC Healy making sea ice observations in 2012.

New AINA Fellows

At the October 2016 meeting, the Arctic Institute's Board of Directors approved the nominations of two new Fellows: Dr. John Craighead "Craig" George and Dr. Robert S. Suydam. Both new Fellows are currently senior wildlife biologists with the Department of Wildlife Management, North Slope Borough (NSB), in Barrow, Alaska.

After completing a Bachelor of Science degree in 1976 at Utah State University in Logan, Utah, Craig George began his northern career as an animal technician responsible for taking care of various Arctic mammals and birds at the Animal Research Facility of the Naval Arctic

Research Laboratory in Barrow, Alaska. In 1982, he was hired as a wildlife biologist with the NSB Department of Wildlife Management, where he continues to provide scientific expertise and technical assistance to the NSB, the general public, and the scientific community with regard to abundance estimation surveys and basic biological studies of bowhead whales; surveys of nearshore Arctic fish; impacts from oil and gas exploration, development, and production and other human activities; traditional ecological knowledge; sea ice reduction; and climate change. Dr. George received a PhD in Wildlife Biology in 2009 from the Institute of Arctic Biology, University of Alaska.

Dr. Suydam completed a BA in Environmental Biology from California State University in Fresno in 1986, an MS in Biology from the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 1995, and a PhD in Fishery and Aquatic Sciences from the University of Washington in Seattle in 2009. As a wildlife biologist with the NSB Department of Wildlife Management, Dr. Suydam has worked on a variety of projects involving marine and terrestrial mammals, waterfowl, and fishes. His work has included long-term involvement in a population census of bowhead whales using visual and acoustic techniques, investigating the life history traits of beluga whales, studying the breeding biology of eiders, and monitoring population trends of King and Common Eiders. He is a member of the Marine Mammal Commission's Committee of Scientific Advisors and has served since 1999 on the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). He is currently the Vice-Chair (and expected to take over as Chair in 2018) of the IWC Scientific Committee.



Dr. John Craighead "Craig" George. Photo credit: Noah Ashley.



Dr. Robert S. Suydam. Photo credit: NSB Dept. of Wildlife Management staff.

AINA Partners with Calgary's Telus Spark

In January, AINA contributed to a Telus Spark Adults Only Night, under the theme “Off the Grid,” which drew approximately 800 visitors. For the event we created four interactive exhibits and organized a presentation on food security by Vinay Rajdev, who is an information analyst with AINA’s Arctic Science and Technology Information System. The exhibits included an artifact table, several virtual experiences, an igloo-building station, and a kayak hunting game.

The artifact table presented several tools and artifacts from AINA’s collection, as well as a polar bear pelt and a muskox skull. Visitors were invited to handle the artifacts under the supervision of AINA staff. The virtual experiences exhibit featured virtual Arctic worlds created by Dr. Peter Dawson and his graduate students at the University of Calgary, including Fort Conger, a Thule whalebone house, a semi-subterranean sod house, and the archaeological site of Arvia’juaq. Visitors could interact with the virtual worlds on AINA computers and also have an immersive virtual reality experience of the Arvia’juaq site through Google Cardboard viewers. The igloo-building station taught visitors the principles of constructing an igloo while they helped AINA staff assemble an igloo six feet in diameter from 4 L milk jugs. The shape of the jugs themselves mimics the angled cut of ice blocks necessary for igloo construction and enabled an accurate discussion of the traditional knowledge for building an igloo. The kayak hunting game replicated an old game played by children to hone their hunting skills, as described by Billy Ukutak of the Hunter and Trappers Association of Arviat. Visitors were shown a video of Billy describing the game and then invited to sit on the floor in a kayak outline and throw spears at a target. Most visitors were amazed at how difficult it was to hunt from a seated position.

The success of our participation in the Telus Spark Adult Night has been a stepping stone to additional programs with the Spark. We will be running a game jam with them in

April on the theme of climate change in the Arctic and hope to contribute to education camps in the summer.



The AINA exhibit at the Telus Spark Adults Only Night. Photo credit: Shannon Vossepoel.



A visitor attempts to throw a spear from the kayak outline. Photo credit: Shannon Vossepoel.

ASTIS reaches 83 000 Records

The Arctic Science and Technology Information System (ASTIS) now contains 83 000 records describing 65 100 publications and 17 900 research projects about northern Canada and the circumpolar Arctic. ASTIS covers all subjects, including the earth sciences, the biological and health sciences, engineering and technology, the social sciences, traditional knowledge, history, and literature. The database includes both peer-reviewed and grey literature, and its records contain abstracts, detailed subject and geographic indexing terms, and links to 25 000 online publications. ASTIS also maintains subset databases that provide selected records and background information for specific regions, subjects, or projects. A project of the Arctic Institute of North America since 1978, ASTIS is

available for free from a bilingual website at www.aina.ucalgary.ca/astis.

Interested in supporting this public resource? Please contact Shannon Christoffersen Vossepoel at astis@ucalgary.ca for more information.

ASTIS Subset Databases Expand

The Nunavik Bibliography (www.aina.ucalgary.ca/nunavik) now contains 8000 records on Quebec north of 55° and some adjacent regions. It covers all aspects of Nunavik, including the earth sciences, life sciences, engineering and technology, renewable and non-renewable resources, co-management, land use, people, government, economic and social conditions, archaeology, history, art and literature. ASTIS information analysts recently added many records from the Nunavik Research Centre Library to the database. ASTIS would like to thank Makivik Corporation for providing the funding to support this important work.