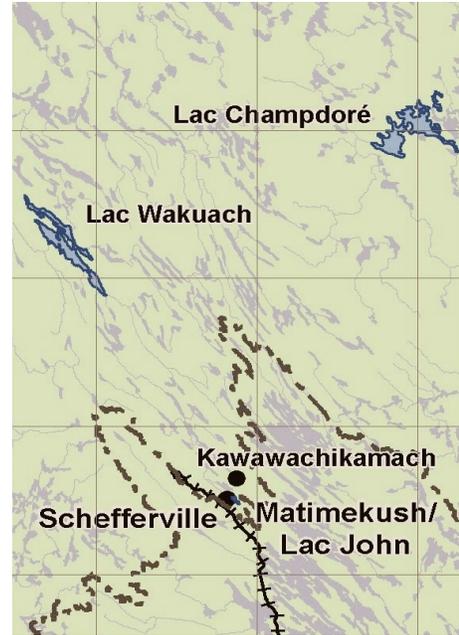


**Three Innu make a momentous visit to their ancestral land**

On June 18, 2013, NML representative Bocar Diagana, geologist, joined three members of Innu Takuaikan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam ("ITUM") and Nation Innu Matimekush-Lac John ("NIMLJ") on a visit to a part of their traditional territory. NML transported them by helicopter to lac Wakuach (Ushkuash) and lac Champdoré. The participants were ITUM Elder Ben McKenzie and NIMLJ members Daniel Gabriel and Maurice Vollant. The first stop was on the shore of lac Wakuach.



Ben McKenzie

Perched on a hill near a hunting camp, Ben McKenzie, aged 81, rested his chin on one hand and gazed nostalgically at the clouds rolling by on the horizon, which seemed to stir up distant memories. He turned and looked at a pile of stones on the other side of the hill. He raised his head and looked down. What could he be thinking?

Ben McKenzie asked Bocar Diagana to come closer and told him this story: "Young man, I came here on foot in winter from Schefferville. It took two weeks of walking across frozen lakes and through the bush. I also travelled up here by canoe from Sept-Îles," he continued. "The trip took about a month and a half. You can see why I'm nostalgic, young man."

The group left lac Wakuach and went on to lac Champdoré for a brief stop before returning to Schefferville.

The Elder and his companions were delighted with the visit, which they considered priceless. They were happy to have had the opportunity to return to these sites of tremendous significance in their lives and in the history of their nations.



Maurice Vollant, Ben McKenzie

**Editor:** Élisabeth Benoît

**Contributors:** Dean Journeaux, Paul F. Wilkinson, based on the visit report by Bocar Diagana



From left to right: Daniel Gabriel, Bocar Diagana, Ben McKenzie, Maurice Vollant

**Contact Info**

[info@NMLIron.com](mailto:info@NMLIron.com)

Sept-Îles: Tel: (418) 961-1401

Montreal: Tel: (514) 935-3204 Fax: (514) 935-9650

Schefferville: Tel: (418) 585-2305 Fax: (418) 585-2304

Labrador City: Tel: (709) 944-5592 Fax: (709) 944-5651

St. John's: Tel: (709) 722-5714 Toll-free: 1-877-353-6665