

WHO'S WHO?

Without names, we lose the story behind a photograph.

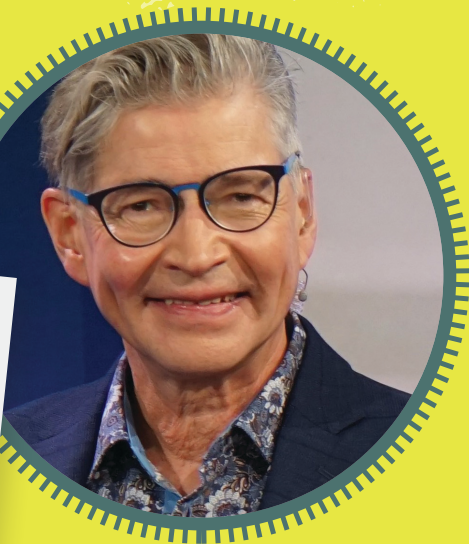


Next time you look at one of your family's photographs (the really old ones that were printed out on special paper) turn it over. Did someone write information on the back — maybe the date it was taken, or where? What about the names of the people it shows? If so, what does it feel like to read it? If not, what does it feel like not to know anything more?



These days, most people have hundreds or thousands of digital photos on their phone or stored in the cloud. It's easy to send pictures to anyone, but we rarely take time to note who or what's in a photo.

indigenous archival Photo Project



In 2015, Paul Seesequasis, shown at left, a Cree photographer living in Saskatoon, started posting photos of Indigenous people on social media. His goal? First, to show how Indigenous people resisted and continued despite the impact of settlement. In his words, the images document “pride, hard work, ceremony, dances, music, humour, familial bonds, relationship to land and waters, animals and an intergeneration bond.” Second, to attach names to the people in those photos, giving them dignity and identity. He posts photos on social media from archives and other sources. People add names and anything else they know about a picture.

Project naming

About 20 years ago, Library and Archives Canada started working with the Nunavut government and Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) to do a better job with photos of Inuit in its collections. (NS provides college courses and Inuit cultural knowledge for young adults.) Most of these photos didn't say who the people were, where they were from, or what was happening. If they did, the information was often wrong or outdated. And it had almost always come from non-Indigenous sources. Since 2002, Project Naming has grown, digitizing more than 10,000 photos. It continues to work on identifying details about images of First Nations, Inuit and Métis from all over.



Young Inuit woman [Margaret Uyauperk Aniksak, Arviat, Nunavut], 1930s

**How can you find out MORE ABOUT what and who is ShOWN in old
PHOTOS? what can you do to ENSURE you'll REMEMBER the same
things ABOUT all those digital images we have now?**