

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SHORT LIFE OF THE ISLAND CACHE



Mike Evans and Lisa Krebs
in collaboration with the
**Prince George
Metis Elders' Society**

The confluence of the Fraser and Nechako Rivers is a complicated place. Prince George, a key centre for Aboriginal European interaction in the BC interior, drew various people to the opportunities on offer. For many Indigenous peoples however, opportunities were hard to realize, and urban poverty persisted.

Located just before the rivers meet is a place called the Island Cache, where a community of settlers took up residence in the 1920s. The area was initially an island separated by a flood channel, and so for the Cache's entire history, flooding was an issue. The Cache was a very different place than the city on its border, but in 1970, it was incorporated, and a period of escalating political turmoil began. Integration was swift and decisive, and accomplished through by-laws, condemnation orders, and bulldozers; the event triggering it was a flood.

This is a brief history of the Island Cache. It is about rivers and the lands around them; it is about floods of water and of power; it is about dykes, and the ground they are built on; and it is about the communities that build dykes and why they fail. The Cache was lost because power, like water, can seep into people's lives, around and under attempts to protect their communities, unseen until it is too late, and both house and home are swept away. Pushed to margins of society, the people of the Cache survived as best they could. They created a vibrant community, but because it was very different than that of those with power, "progress" meant the end of the Cache. But it is better to read this story from its beginning...

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