

The history of Kangeq



by
Keld Jensen

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Kangeq is located on an island on the north side of the mouth of the Godthaabsfiord on to the Davis Strait.

The distance to Greenland's capital Nuuk is about 16 kilometres. The kitchen middings show that the place has been inhabited for at least 4,000 years.

The natural harbour stretches fifty meters into the rock of the island and it is seven meters deep. The harbour is never covered with ice, because there is often strong winds and tide in the area. The island is known to be an area where there is often foggy.

It is told that Kangeq was originally populated by Inuits, who came from the south. Kangeq was known as the place where you could hunt throughout the year and people came from the south during the winter, when it was difficult to get catch in the south.

Later Kangeq was known to be home to a Dutch monastic order, the Herrnhuts. Their church building has a very special story. It had not only a function as a church. Up in the loft the local school

originally was placed. Around 1900 the Dutch monastic order Herrnhutts left Greenland.

Another settlement, which was also home to the Hernhutts, was Umanaq further into the fiord. From here Kangeq got its latest church. Parts of the original church in Umanaq were on a raft transported to Kangeq and rebuild here. A home of a missionary from Umanaq carried through the same journey on a raft.

Kangeq was abandoned in the 1970s, but as recently as the late 1960s 138 residents were registered as inhabitants in the settlement. A major reason for the closure was the decline in cod fishing.

There was attempted up-to-date seafood plant in the settlement, but because of climate change, the population of cod declined, and the fishermen chose to sail their catch to Nuuk.

As prices for fuel exceeded revenues for fish, fishermen chose to move to Nuuk. The result was that the institutions in the settlement were closed one by one,

and the 1th May 1974 Kangeq was abolished as settlement. The rest of the residents were moved to Nuuk.

At the ceremony where the settlement was closed, the local council from Nuuk was presented. A representative of the council said: "We are powerless against the modern requirements. Like anywhere in the world."















The church, August 2012



The church and the staircase to the school, August 2012



Inside the church, August 2012





The church, August 2012















Thumbnails

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