



Provincial Archaeology Office Annual Review

Provincial Archaeology Office
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation
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Cover: Some of the Archaic artifacts looted from a site in English Point.
For more details see the PAO submission in this volume

Stephen Hull
Delphina Mercer
Editors

Opinions expressed in this document are not necessarily those of the
Provincial Archaeology Office nor those of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador



In memory of Dr. Stuart Brown
September 9, 1942 – November 18, 2024
Retired professor of archaeology at
Memorial University of Newfoundland.



**Don Pelley standing on the south edge of Housepit 3,
at the Four Mile Rapids Site DfAv-01 (McLean 2016).**

**Donald Pelley
March 15, 1948 - September 8, 2024**

Don was a father, a Mi'kmaw, a sailor, an outfitter, an expert on Beothuk and Mi'kmaq history, a relentless advocate for environmental protection, an archeological guide, a dedicated leader in his church and community, and a long-time friend to the Provincial Archaeology Office. Over the years he worked closely with archaeologists and historians such as Laurie McLean, Fred Schwarz, Ingeborg Marshall, the PAO, as well as various graduate students. He will be fondly remembered by members of the archeological community as 'The Legendary Don Pelley, a title he accepted with a healthy dose of mirth.



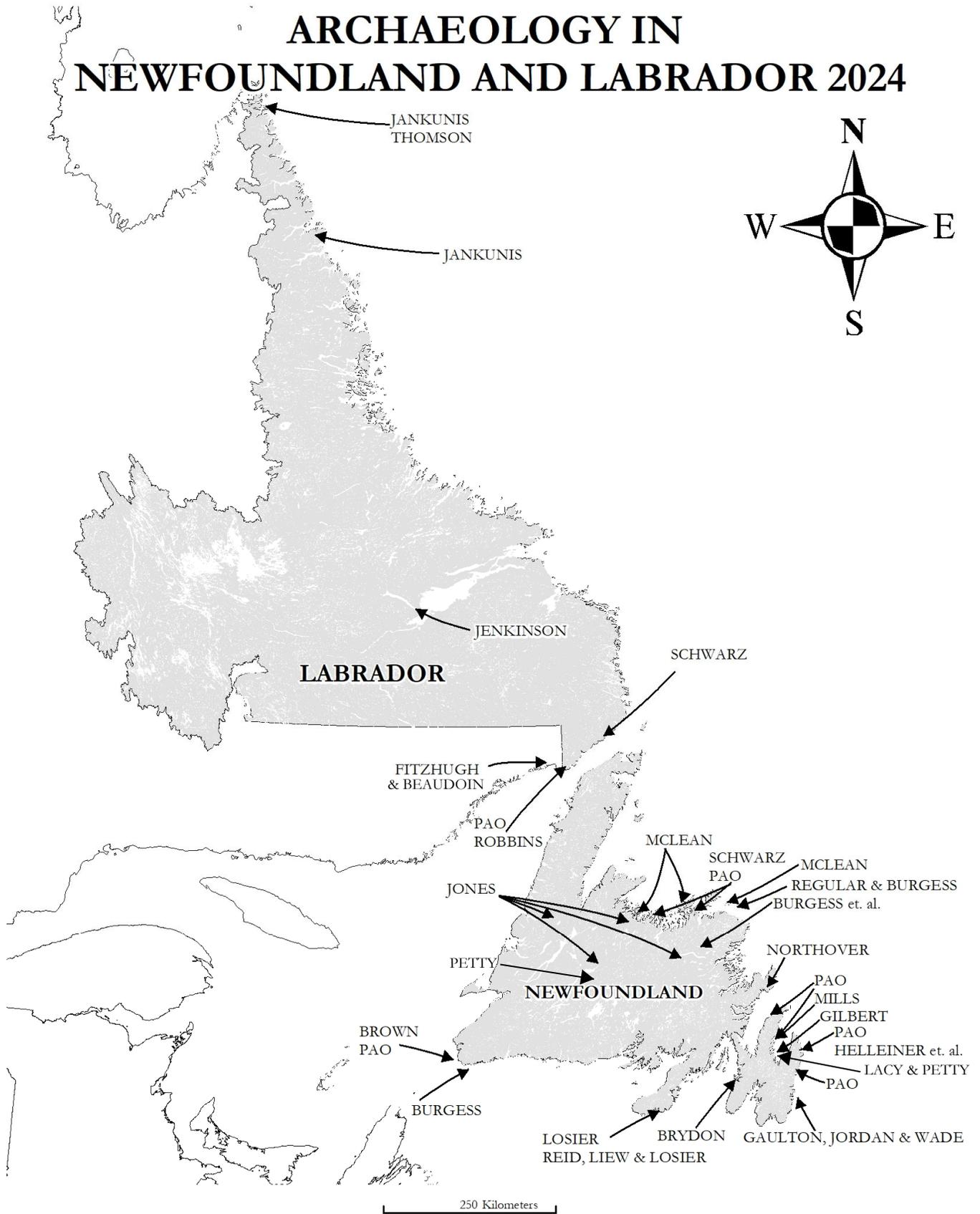
On a lighter note we want to acknowledge Delphina Mercer's 30 years of service to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Provincial Archaeology Office.

She is the glue that holds the PAO together.

Thank you Delph!

The photo shows 'Our Queen of Labrador' in Red Bay in 2010.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR 2024



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Provincial Archaeology Office Fieldwork 2024

Jamie Brake, Blair Temple, Stephen Hull & Delphina Mercer
 Provincial Archaeology Office

Introduction

The PAO has reviewed tens of thousands of various Land Use Referrals over the last 15 years. In 2024 the PAO reviewed 2,336 Land Use Referrals, issued 44 archaeological permits (up over last year) and 10 palaeontological permits. We also awarded five Archaeology Research Grants. Table 1 provides a summary of the referrals received and permits issued.

The remainder of this article provides an overview of archaeological activity undertaken by the PAO during the 2024 field season.

The Provincial Archaeology Office (PAO) undertook fieldwork at Cape Ray, on the southwest coast of Newfoundland, at the War Memorial in St. John's, Bay Bulls and Cape St. Francis, on the Avalon, at Harbour Grace, Conception Bay, in New Chelsea, Trinity Bay, at Boyd's Cove and Spencer's Cove, Notre Dame Bay, and at Forteau, Red Bay, L'anse au Diable, southern Labrador during the 2024 field season. Two of these projects (Cape St. Francis & Boyd's Cove) were planned projects aimed at filling an identified research gap, while the bulk of the office's field activity this year was the result of required assess-

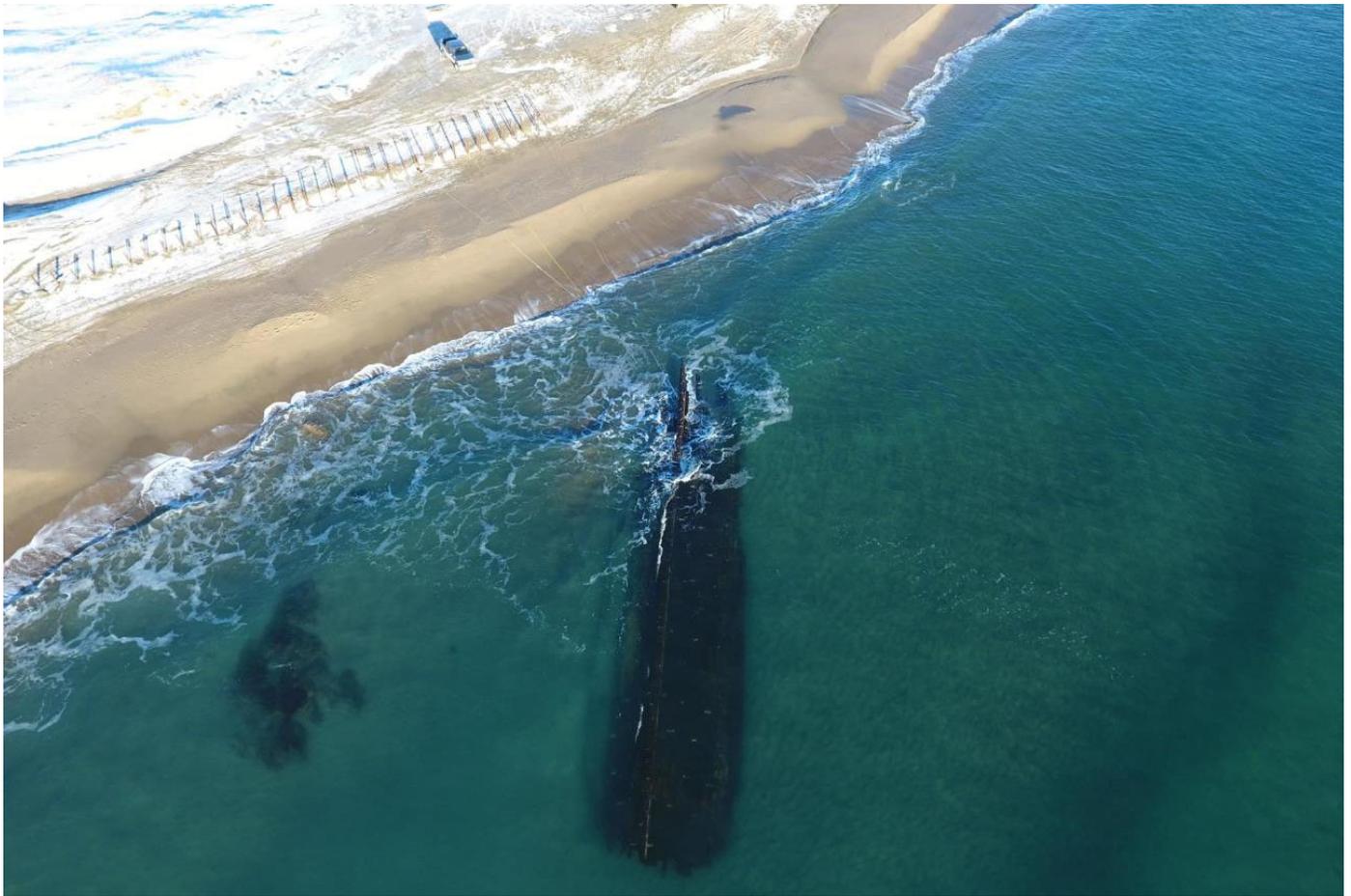
ments that could be completed in under a day in areas we happened to be visiting, or because of an archaeology-related emergency. It was an unusual year in terms of the relatively high number of urgent cases that the PAO was required to respond to. Overviews of each field project are presented below in chronological order, each prepared by the respective permit holder.

J.T. Cheeseman Wreck Permit (24.02)

A portion of a shipwreck washed ashore in late January 2024 near the community of Cape Ray, on the beach in J.T. Cheeseman Provincial Park (24.02 Figure 1). Gordon Blackmore while out bird bunting first noticed the wreck. The Provincial Archaeology Office (PAO) became aware of it shortly thereafter via various online news sites, social media sites, and an email from a member of the Shipwreck Preservation Society. The frenzy and speculation about what this ship could be snowballed from there. Local individuals had already decided that they were going to save the wreck and put it on display as a tourist attraction despite being cautioned that the wreck may not be significant and the difficulty, and cost in preserving and displaying. Within a few days of the dis-

Table 1: Summary of land use referrals reviewed by the PAO over the past 10 years.

Type of Land Use Applications	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Crown Land	1774	1466	2542	1813	1579	1217	1749	1751	1605	1588
Environmental Assessment	54	48	73	48	67	51	68	50	54	57
Mineral Exploration	285	339	355	354	371	380	725	226	177	114
Prospecting (MLD)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	399	273	388
Quarry	455	618	207	150	120	131	53	93	145	106
Aquaculture	8	1	1	23	4	10	8	5	8	2
ILUC	45	71	51	33	30	44	31	33	30	50
TCII Proposals (ACOA, etc)	5	3	1	0	2	1	0	3	2	0
Engineering Consultants	13	9	36	29	16	21	14	11	4	1
Other Projects	10	8	7	2	0	4	0	1	2	7
Protected Road Zoning Regulations	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
NL Hydro	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	5	2	7
Municipal Affairs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
NL Towns	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	13	7	12
Total	2711	2613	3333	2509	2239	1863	2668	2590	2309	2336



24.02 Figure 1: Cape Ray wreck in early February after it was tied on by Shawn Bath and Trevor Croft (Tom Anderson, Facebook, Feb 2024).

covery, members of the Clean Harbours Initiative took it upon themselves, and with the best of intentions, tied ropes to the wreck to secure it from drifting away.

On February 2 Stephen Hull and Jamie Brake of the PAO, and Neil Burgess of the Shipwreck Preservation Society NL arrived on the west coast to investigate the shipwreck. On February 3, we drove from Corner Brook to Cape Ray leaving at 4:30 am to get to the beach at low tide. Media and local individuals interested in the wreck were already on the beach when we arrived. We did a brief assessment of the wreck shortly after arriving and quickly realized the wreck was in much deeper water than we hoped despite it being low tide. Upon reflection, tying lines on one end of the wreck caused that end to rise and fall with each wave. That end of the wreck acted like a giant fan blowing away all the sand that was under it so the end of the wreck nearest the beach ended up in a hole. Unfortunately, Jamie and I had hip waders, which were too short to get out to the wreck; Neil had chest waders,

which allowed him to get out but just to the keel portion nearest the beach. Fortunately, Shawn Bath and Trevor Croft of the Clean Harbours Initiative came to the beach in their dry suits and spent several hours in the water collecting numerous artifacts and samples for us including several fasteners, samples of the keel, planks and metal sheathing. Without their help we would have ended the trip with much less data (24.02 Figure 2).

First Impressions

From the main body of the wreck, we learned that there are several different types of fasteners including treenails, copper rods, yellow metal spikes and various small round and square nails made of iron and alloy metals (24.02 Figures 3 through 8 below). Most of the copper rods seem to be through the keel and likely the keelson although they are visible in other places (24.02 Figure 2 shows the keel with several copper rods protruding from the wreck behind Trevor Croft). There are also portions of a yellow metal strip that ran along the keel and small rectangular tabs



24.02 Figure 2: Shawn Bath and Trevor Croft in dive suits sampling outer deck planking (Neil Burgess).

of the same metal all over the hull (24.02 Figure 9). We suspect these tabs were part of metal sheathing on the original hull and the sheathing was removed later leaving the tabs. Many of the copper rods and other metal fasteners were used in conjunction with metal roves to hold them in place; in some places these appeared to be a similar yellow metal (24.02 Figure 10). Very early on in the project we started to suspect this yellow material was Muntz metal, a brass alloy composed of approximately 60% copper, 40% zinc, and named for George Fredrick Muntz who commercialized the alloy following his patent of 1832. Later Donna Smith at MUN confirmed our suspicions using a portable XRD (x-ray diffraction) machine that identified the components of the metal, particularly the alloys. The results confirmed most of the metal was an alloy in the range of Muntz metal. Months later Burgess was contacted by a local individual who had collected a piece of metal strapping from the wreck that had a patent stamp on it that confirmed this material was indeed Muntz metal (24.02 Figure 11).

We cannot extensively comment on any internal structure that may exist on the inside of the wreck because it was upside down, meaning that just the exterior hull was exposed. We suspect some of the wood pieces in the water are various futtocks (24.02

Figure 12) and there are several knees on the beach. The keel appeared to have a scarf joint on the end that is exposed (24.02 Figure 9). We did note that there are multiple layers of different wood on the hull. Treenails, copper rods and the possible Muntz spikes attached the suspected futtocks to the external planking. A substance that appeared to be tar/pitch covered some of the external planking in places and this material smelled like creosote (24.02 Figure 13). Most of the hull wood is very dark, almost black in colour. It appears that

where a spike or treenail went through a plank the resulting hole caused several pieces of external planking to break. On close inspection, some of the holes appear to have horizontal lines perpendicular to the length of the hole suggesting the holes were pre-drilled using some type of auger (24.02 Figure 14). Over this external planking in an irregular pattern is a

24.02 Figure 3: Treenail (Rooms).



24.02 Figure 4: Copper rod (Rooms).





24.02 Figure 5: Muntz metal spike (Rooms).



24.02 Figure 7: Muntz metal nail (Rooms).



24.02 Figure 6: Square nail (Rooms).

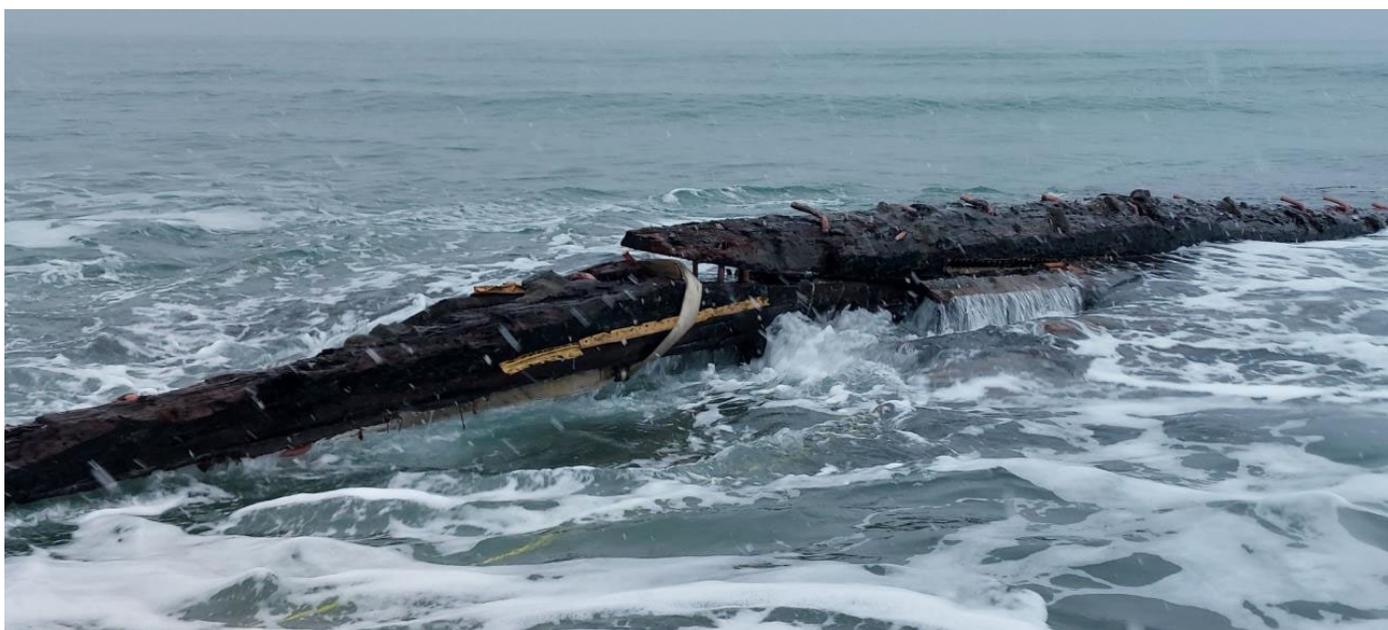


24.02 Figure 8: A Muntz metal spike underwater next to a treenail and two broken off square nails (Sean Bath, Facebook, Feb 2024)

suspected different type of wood that is lighter coloured, almost yellow. It was clearly added over the original hull at a later date (24.02 Figure 15).

Once we finished collecting as much data as possible from that portion of the wreck still in the water we proceeded to measure and sample several pieces of the wreck stranded on the beach, including several knees and miscellaneous planks (24.02 Figure 16). We also took two wood core samples from one of the knees and several other wood samples for dendrochronology purposes, Dr. Carissa Brown at Me-

morial University looked at this material (See Brown, this volume). The internal angle on all the knees on the beach was much greater than 90 degrees. We recorded measurements from three of them, each measured approximately 0.35 m square. The first measured 2 m x 1.7 m., a purposefully cut notch is present on one of the ends (24.02 Figure 17). The second knee measured 2.95 m x 1.35 m; the dendrochronology cores came from this knee. The third knee measured 2.5 m x 1.87 m. We suspected another piece of wood on the beach to be the keelson, it had a scarf joint on



24.02 Figure 9: The Muntz metal strip that ran along the keel is visible in the centre under the strap used to hold the wreck. You can also see the scarf joint just behind the strap in the keel and the copper rods in the keel.

24.02 Figure 10: Muntz metal rove seen around a copper rod (Sean Bath, Face Book, Feb 2024).



one end and the opposite end appeared broken. It measured 0.35 m square by 7.4 m long (24.02 Figure 18).

After several hours of collecting as much data, samples and measurements as possible the town had prepared a meal of coffee, tea, soup and sandwiches for us at the town fire hall. On such a cold day, this was a very welcome surprise and the generosity was appreciated.

Endless Possibilities

Two key issues encountered when attempting to identify the vessel in question are: (1) the incompleteness of the archaeological remains as described above, and (2) the frequency of historic shipwrecks in the larger Cape Ray area (c. Isle aux Mort to Cape Anguille). This point will be discussed below.

The Southwest coast of Newfoundland is among the most dangerous stretches of coastline on the island of Newfoundland. The documentary record contains numerous references to the treacherous waters and accounts of shipwrecks between the Isle aux Mort¹ area and the Cape Anguille area. A pilot book from 1794 – taken from the surveys of James Cook and Michael Lane – notes numerous “iflands and funken rocks” along the shore (Anon. 1794:23-27). The Newfoundland Pilot from the 1870s and 1880s makes several references to sunken rocks between Rose Blanche and Cape Ray, noting that

¹ French or Basque for Deadmans island, or words to that effect.

24.02 Figure 11: Muntz metal patent stamp on a piece of metal strapping from the wreck (Burgess).



24.02 Figure 12: The ends of possible futtocks can be seen underwater under exterior planking. Various treenails and square nails are also visible (Sean Bath, Facebook, Feb 2024).



24.02 Figure 13: A substance that appeared to be tar/pitch covered some of the external planking in places (Rooms).





24.02 Figure 14: A spike or treenail hole went through a plank the resulting hole caused this external planking to break. This hole appears to have horizontal lines perpendicular to the length of the hole suggesting the holes were predrilled (Rooms).

patent desk and cabinet keys, which had been picked up from wrecks. Beautiful old China plates and pieces of a more modern elegant breakfast set of dragon china, which had been washed ashore in the same way, were ranged upon the shelves alongside of the most common ware; and a fine huckabac towel, neatly marked with the initial letters, L. C. D., was banded me on my expressing a desire to wash, my hands. This had been supplied from the wreck of a vessel in which were several ladies. To some hearts those letters, doubtless, Would renew a sad period of anxiety, which preceded the intelligence of the melancholy certainty of a sad bereavement. I could not look at this relic of a toilet, now no

“Bradies Rock is a dangerous breaker, 1 ½ miles N.W. ¼ W from Cape Ray, and 7 cables from the nearest shore” and “Stormy Point (Point Rosee) ... should not be approached within half a mile” (Maxwell 1887:301).

A great source of information for this area is Edward Wix, a missionary who visited in 1835, and noted several instances of older and recent wrecks. During much of this trip Wix seems preoccupied with the constant presence of wrecks, wreckage, people lost “to watery graves” and the accompanying harrowing (sometimes superstitious) stories, to the extent that historian Rainer Baehre notes that to Wix, “the presence of wrecks in these parts was inescapable” (Baehre 1999:214). At Burnt Island for example, just c. 7 km west of Isle aux Mort, Wix noted that:

the play-things of the children were bunches of small

more required, without emotions of deep interest, although I had no clue by which I could attach recollections of brilliant prospects early blighted, or pious faith exemplified in death to these three letters. Indeed, the scenes and circumstances, the very people by whom I was surrounded, roused within me a train of deeply melancholy sensations. My host may have been a humane man; his conduct to me was that of genuine hospitality; but it had been his frequent employment at intervals, from his youth till now, to bury wrecked corpses, in all stages of decomposition. There had been washed on shore here, as many as three hundred, and an hundred and fifty on two occasions, and

24.02: Figure 15 Seen underwater is a lighter coloured yellow wood (newer?) on top of the external planking in an irregular pattern (Sean Bath, Facebook, Feb 2024).





24.02 Figure 16: Jamie Brake and Bert Osmond measuring one of the knees (Neil Burgess).

every breeze. Sometime ago after a strong gale much alteration or modification of the dunes took place. In some places they were wholly cleared away, laying bare the underlying shingle over large spaces, when there was exposed a large ship's boat, bottom up, laying on the shingle. On raising this up three human skeletons were discovered beneath, but on exposure to the air the bones all crumbled to dust. Some charred wood was also visible. No one, not even the oldest English inhabitant, could throw any light upon the matter nor give the slightest clue as to who the nameless dead might have been. Everything pointed to some shipwreck at a very remote period of time. These poor mortals evidently reached the shore probably in winter or late autumn,

numerous in others. This sad employment appeared to have somewhat blunted his feelings (Wix 1836:142-143).

During a leisurely walk (ironically, on a day too rough to go on the water), he walked to Little Codroy River, noting that “the shore, all along, was strewn with wreck-wood, and balk or timber from cast-away vessels, or from vessels which, in time of danger, had been eased of their deck loads” (Wix 1836:153-154).

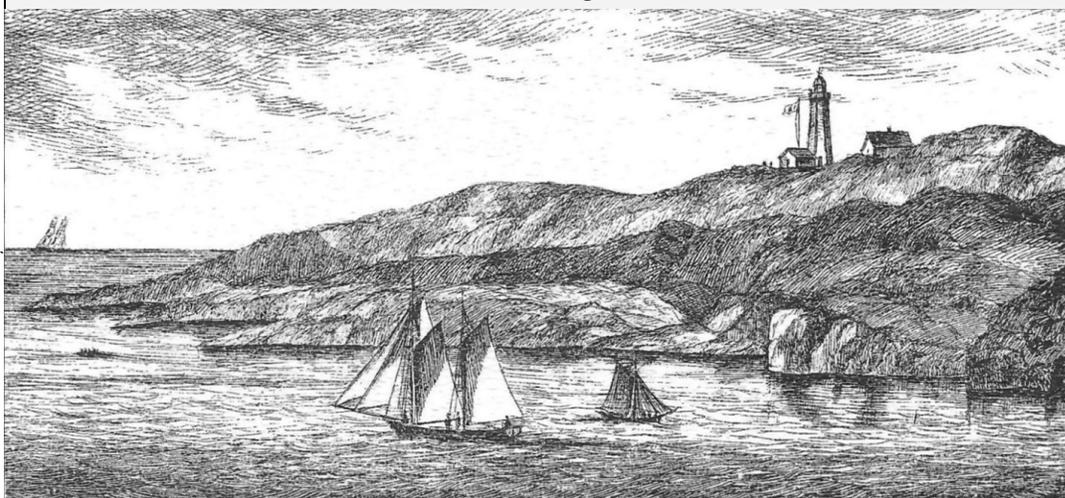
In 1883, James Howley, while surveying the Codroy Valley, was told a fascinating story by a local clergy member about a recent occurrence at Little Codroy:

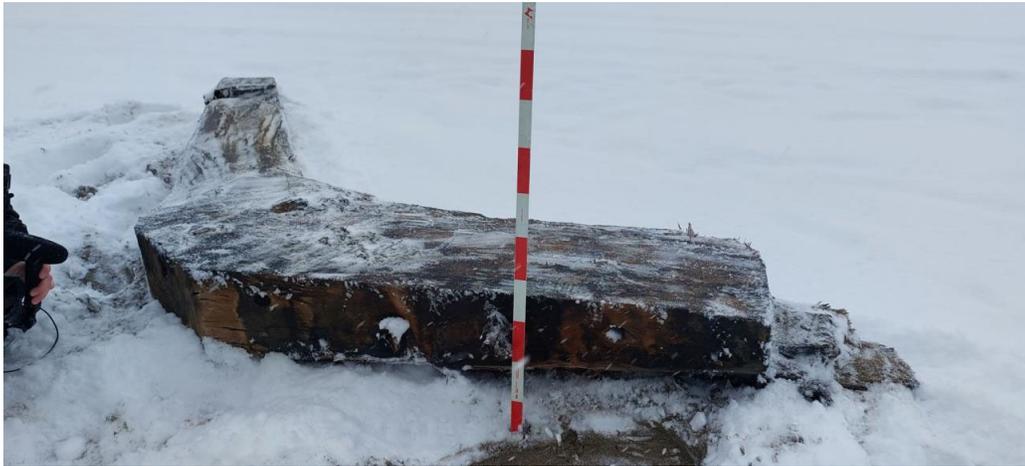
The beach near the Mouth of the River is composed of very light fine sand, which is piled up by the winds into dunes. These are constantly shifting or being altered, as the sand drifts about with

and took shelter under their upturned boat, but must have perished miserably from cold and hunger. The settlers reverently gathered up their poor dust and deposited it in a more secure grave. The mystery attending this catastrophe is never likely to be elucidated now (Kirwin, et al 1997:204).

In the fall of 1839, geologist Joseph Jukes described the waters east of Cape Ray (between it and Port aux Basques), as “indented with creeks and rocky inlets”, and while proceeding past the Cape to

Cape Ray, Canadian Illustrated News 29 May 1880. In Charles deVolpi, Newfoundland: a Pictorial Record, 1497-1887, Longmans Canada Limited Sherbrook. Pl.159.





24.02 Figure 17: Measuring the thickness of one of the knees. Notching for a join is visible on the far end of this knee.

nearby La Poile (c. 22 km west of Rose Blanch), Wix noted that:

[t]his part of the shore is so fatal to European vessels which are outward bound to Quebec in the spring, that it is much, to be regretted, that the legislatures, or Chambers of Commerce of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Canadas, do not unite with the government and merchants of Newfoundland, for the erection of light-houses here and at Port-aux-Basque, and at Cape

Port aux Basques, they got “entangles among sunken rocks” (Cuff and Wilton 1993:81). To add credence to his observations, Jukes noted that while in La Poile later in the fall, he received word that during a storm, “all the vessels lying in Codroy harbour, consisting of a slop and two French schooners, were driven ashore and wrecked, being beaten entirely to pieces in about two hours”. He further describes the wreck of a large brig during the same storm (between Cape Ray and Codroy), with all lives onboard presumably lost, and six bodies washing ashore the following days (Cuff and Wilton 1993:88).

Another potential gauge is the frequency of lighthouses in the area. The c. 80 km stretch of shoreline from Rose Blanche to Cape Anguille, currently contains six lighthouses: Rose Blanche, first constructed in 1871 (possibly the “look-out station, erected by a mercantile firm, stand[ing] on a hill near the harbour, and is conspicuous from seaware”; Maxwell 1887:144); Cain’s Island, first constructed in 1904; Colombier Island, a late structure at c. 1990s; Channel Head, first established at 1874; Cape Ray, first established at 1871; and Cape Anguille, first established in 1908.

The necessity for lighthouses or similar safety and navigational beacons along this coast had been commented on through the 19th century. While at

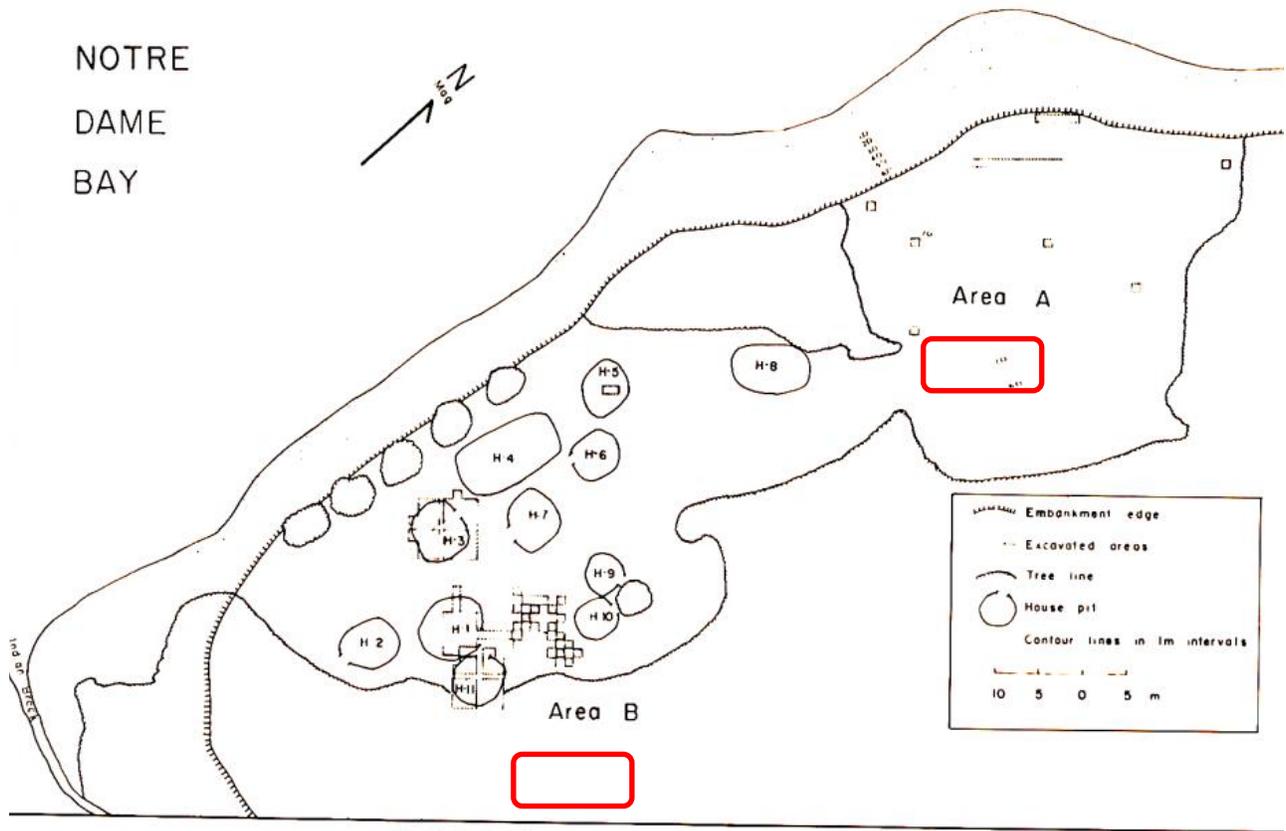
Ray. Many vessels and many lives might, each year, be saved from destruction by such a measure. Mr. Anthonie, indeed, a humane Jersey merchant, resident at La Poile, has erected, upon a rock off La Poile Bay, a small observatory. This is of some service to a few who know its situation; but the shore in this neighbourhood is so very low, and the ledges of rock extend so far out to sea, that a vessel may be in danger before the little beacon is discovered. (Wix 1836:141-142).

Jukes noted the same in 1839, stating:

It seems reasonable that a great commercial nation such as England should not suffer the borders of the great high-road to Canada and her North American possessions to be thus strewn with the property and bodies of her subjects. A lighthouse on Cape Ray, with a large bell or gun to be used in fogs, together with a smaller lighthouse and a pilot or two, either at Port aux Basques, the Dead Islands, or La Poile, as a harbour of refuge, would be the means of great good. There is no want of great harbours along the coast, but their entrances are generally narrow, and only to be found by those thoroughly acquainted with the channels between the rocks and islands (Cuff and Wilson

24.02 Figure 18: Possible keelson showing the scarf joint.





BOYD'S COVE (DiAp-3)
Preliminary Map, 1983

24.07 Figure 1: Dr. Ralph Pastore's preliminary map of the Boyd's Cove archaeological site showing both Area A and Area B.

1993:85).

From the perspective of historic resources, the weather and the roughness coastline in this area has created an abundance of possible shipwrecks, many unidentifiable that may be related to this wreck. So what can we say about this wreck? What was in the water was measured to be about 100 feet long. Some of the knees seemed to suggest a large vessel. There was an abundance of metal fasteners in what remained of the wreck. Since Muntz metal spikes seemed to have been used to attach internal wooden structures to the external planking, the wreck post dates the patent of Muntz metal in 1832. Further, since it is highly unlikely this wreck is among the first vessels to use Muntz metal the vessel likely postdates 1850, it may even be from the 20th century. Thus far there is nothing to suggest this was a historically significant vessel.

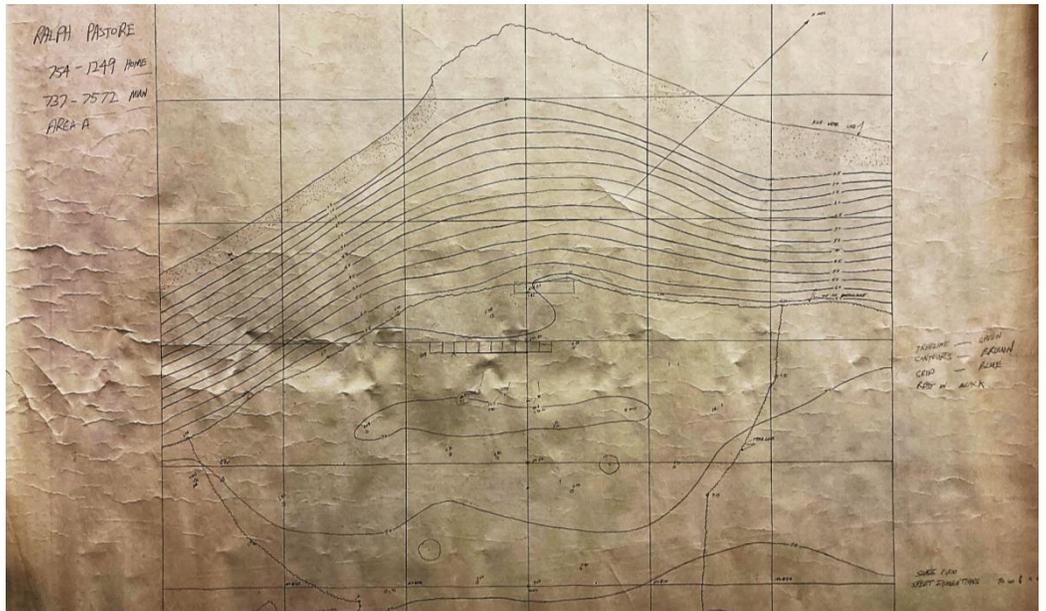
Boyd's Cove (Permit 24.07)

Background

When Ralph Pastore originally found the Boyd's Cove site, the first archaeological material was found at a portion of the site designated 'Area A' (24.07 Figure 1). Artifacts in this area included Little Passage (direct precontact ancestors of the Beothuk), Beaches (direct ancestors of Little Passage), as well as two stone tools believed to be as old as 3000 years and related to Intermediate period cultures known from southern Labrador. When Pastore and his crew discovered Area B at Boyd's Cove, which contained 11 historic Beothuk house pits, Area A was, for good reason, given less attention during subsequent field seasons by the team. By this point it had also been shown that parts of Area A had been disturbed by recent historic gardening.

Renewed interest in Area A developed within the PAO between 2022 and 2024 while reviewing Pas-

tores’ original fieldnotes, maps and reports (24.07 Figure 2). During the same period, the office had been looking at sites that might serve as good candidates for identifying the earliest Beothuk ancestors to arrive in the province. The lack of attention on Area A after the discovery of Beothuk house pits at Boyd’s Cove suggested that there might still be potential for exploring whether or not there is a link between the Beaches complex and an earlier archaeological culture. In 2023 Brake and Erwin visited the site and



24.07 Figure 2: One of Pastore’s original hand drawn plans of Area A at Boyd’s Cove showing his two test trenches.

conducted limited testing to determine if there were any undisturbed portions of Area A and determined that there were (Brake et al. 2024). In 2024 the office arranged to spend several days conducting additional testing at Area A in the hopes of identifying an undisturbed portion of the site that might shed light on the earliest inhabitants and any potential relationship with known Beothuk ancestors.

Field Results

The week of May 6th was selected for fieldwork at Boyd’s Cove, which was undertaken by Brake, Hull

and Temple. Testing began late on the day of arrival and lasted until just before dark. Interesting finds were made that evening, including the discovery of an intact Beothuk component in the forested portion of the site between Area A and Area B, as well as pre-contact components in Area A itself. The newly discovered historic component in the forest contained modified iron in direct association with lithics. This is the same kind of evidence that demonstrated continuity between the precontact Little Passage complex and the Beothuk of the historic period at Boyd’s

24.07 Figure 3: Looking northwest at 3 open test pits at Boyd’s Cove Area A. The diagnostic Beaches complex projectile point was recovered from the test pit on the right-hand side of the image.



Cove and numerous other sites in Newfoundland.

Unfortunately, while at Boyd’s Cove an emergency arose in the Labrador Straits related to unauthorized artifact collecting near a new trail in the community of Forteau that required Brake’s attention. It was necessary that he travel to Labrador to address this issue.

Meanwhile Hull and Temple (see 24.09, below) continued on at Boyd’s Cove for the re-

mainer of the week (24.07 Figure 3). Unfortunately, while their work supported the conclusions of Brake and Erwin in 2023 – that there is considerably less disturbance at Area A than Pastore thought in the 1980s (Brake et al. 2024) - they were not able to find a component that pre-dated the Beaches occupation of the site. In all, fourteen test pits were excavated in 2024 throughout this part of the site. While there is an archaeological record, and considerable research potential relating to the past 2000 years at this location, only the areas directly adjacent to Pastore’s Area A trenches appear at all likely to contain evidence for earlier occupations. As a result, a handful of other sites are now being considered as candidates for answering our research question – the Iceberg site in southern Labrador currently being at the top of the list.

Southern Labrador (May Permit 24.09)

Background

In early May, while PAO staff members were undertaking fieldwork at Boyd’s Cove, a series of communications were received by various officials within the Department of Tourism, Culture Arts and Recreation about unauthorized artifact collecting in the southern Labrador community of Forteau. These communications were forwarded to the PAO. At around the same time the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) became aware of the situation through social media posts and they also alerted the PAO. Artifacts had been accidentally found and subsequently collected by a resident from the Quebec Lower North



24.09 Figure 1: Late Maritime Archaic tools collected from a new roadway in Forteau, Labrador. a-c, Ground slate axes. d, ground slate projectile point. e-f, Rattler’s Bight phase stemmed projectile points (Ramah chert). h, Soapstone plummet fragment. g, i-k, Ground slate bayonets.

Shore. Because of this it was necessary for Brake to leave Boyd’s Cove to travel to southern Labrador as soon as this information came to light to try to recover the artifacts and to record the obviously important site that they had come from.

Photos of the artifacts in question showed diagnostic Maritime Archaic ground stone bayonets, axes, and a point, as well as some chipped stone tools made of Ramah chert (24.09 Figure 1). Many of the objects were covered in red ochre, and the tool styles are associated with the latter end of the archaic period. While the exact location of the finds was not yet known, there was a registered site in the general area, so the first question was whether the artifacts had

come from there or from some other undocumented site.

A second trip to Southern Labrador was made in July of 2024 to attend the opening of a waterfront building at Red Bay in honour of Dr. James Tuck, Newfoundland and Labrador’s first resident professional archaeologist, and the founder of MUN’s Department of Archaeology. This event provided an opportunity to revisit archaeological sites between Forteau and Red Bay, including the one discussed in the previous paragraphs. The results of both the May and July (Permit 24.31) visits are presented below.

May 2024 Field Results

The initial trip to southern Labrador was undertaken by Brake from May 7th – 9th. The first order of business was to try to recover the assemblage, which was ultimately achieved through discussions with the collector with the support of the RCMP and the Forteau

Town Council. The individual who had the material was cooperative and returned the artifacts to the PAO through the town council. He also provided valuable information in the form of notes on where he had made his finds, photos of some of the objects as he had found them, as well as some interpretations of various parts of the site.

Fieldwork at the find locations was undertaken on May 8th and disturbed cultural material was noted in several areas along a dirt road at English Point in Forteau that had been revamped a year or so earlier (24.09 Figure 2). It had originally been a surface snowmobile/ATV trail and had been considerably widened and turned into a road with ditches and culverts in wet areas. It now sees regular pedestrian and ATV traffic. It had been necessary to raise the elevation of the road in boggy areas, and to achieve this sand was taken from a series of borrow-pits along the edges of the trail. Unfortunately, the excavation of

these pits using heavy equipment had negatively impacted archaeological deposits in several areas. A few white chert flakes were visible next to a borrow pit near the beginning of the road not far from where a previously registered archaeological site exists. A few flakes of this material were also observed along the edges of the next 100 metres or so of the road. Another borrow pit on the east side of the road on the edge of an ancient terrace, approximately 11 metres above sea level, was flagged by the collector as being particularly important. He had found ground stone artifacts and what he described as a ‘layer’ of red ochre in this area. From here the road dips into a bog and fill was used for the next 50 metres or so, at which point it bends slightly to the east at the base of another terrace that is higher still, at approximately 16 metres above sea level. Another borrow-pit, this one being the largest at about 7 metres x 8 metres horizontally, was located on the extreme edge of this higher terrace, adjacent to the road. This exposure contained quartzite debitage and a NCC guardian had picked up a triangular quartzite point here with a

24.09 Figure 2: Air photo looking southeast over a recently developed road in the community of Forteau.





24.09 Figure 3: Early Maritime Archaic material culture collected from a new roadway in Forteau, Labrador. a, hammerstone. b-f, biface fragments (quartzite). g, Diagnostic early Maritime Archaic projectile point. h, quartzite cobble core. i-n, quartzite debitage.

weak nipple-base, diagnostic of an early Maritime Archaic occupation dating to between approximately 7000 and 8000 years BP (24.09 Figure 3).

Most of the artifacts found by the Quebec collector were picked up in the low, boggy part of the road between the two ancient terraces where sand had been dumped as fill, with the main concentration on one side of a culvert. In many cases there was a good deal of ochre still on the artifacts as well as in the sand surrounding them, which made them all the more conspicuous. The work undertaken during our visit in July (see below) strongly suggests that these artifacts were scooped up in an excavator bucket from the borrow-pit at the edge of the late Archaic terrace and subsequently dumped next to the culvert. They were then driven over and walked over until someone happened upon

one or more protruding through the surface of the dirt road.

A meeting was held with the council on the evening of the 8th which provided an opportunity to discuss the age and significance of various parts of the site, the return of the collection, and the importance of referring applications for proposed development to the PAO in advance of ground disturbance.

War Memorial Adjacent Property (Permit 24.20)

In June 2024, personnel with the PAO monitored the backfilling of an abandoned property lying adjacent to the National War Memorial on Water Street and Duckworth Street. The backfilling was part of a temporary beautification project for the National War Memorial Centennial on

24.20 Figure 1: View of the infilled portion of the property, with Water Street, Harbourside Park, and the harbour in the background. The National War Memorial is visible at upper left.





24.25 Figure 1: Looking east over the Cape St. Francis archaeological site in July of 2024.

the 1st of July 2024 (24.20 Figure 1). The property lay within a block of structures bound by Water Street, Holloway Street, Duckworth Street, and the National War Memorial (prior to c. 1923, Gambier Street and Kings Beach), and had been partially destroyed by fire in 2010. Some of the block had standing and dilapidated structures (fronting Holloway Street), while others stood largely vacant. Backfilling occurred within the block's vacant NE corner, containing traces of the former structure, including a partial concrete floor.

Despite the damage caused by the 2010 fire, several structural features dating to the post-1892 period remained. Monitoring determined that little impact occurred on these foundations. More importantly, there were no excavations so any potential older, buried features or deposits remain untouched.

Cape St. Francis (Permit 24.25)

Background

The St. George's Day holiday, which fell on April 22nd, provided an opportunity for a spring motorcycle ride and some hiking at Cape St. Francis. While walking along a shoreline trail in Biscayan Bay that day, Brake happened upon some recent tell-tale signs of metal-detecting: open shovel holes, disturbed soil, and discarded iron nails and straps lying on top of rocks next to the holes. Luckily, whoever had been responsible for this illicit activity did not recognize evidence of pre-contact land use in two of the holes where numerous flakes and chunks of fairly fine-grained white chert were observed. The location was noted,

and a few photographs were taken at the time, and initial plans to return to the site to undertake some legitimate archaeology were formulated.

The area is of some significance as it has produced some of the only solid evidence currently available for pre-contact Indigenous activity on the eastern Avalon Peninsula. A pre-contact site was recorded at Cape St. Francis by Jim Tuck of Memorial University during a field school that visited the area

in 1978, however, no record was created until 6 years later. The precise location of the site was not noted at the time, unfortunately, and there is almost no information available on it besides a small collection of flakes that are known to have been picked up at the cape. It was originally assumed that the site encountered in April of 2024 must be the same one that Tuck encountered.

Other indications of precontact activity in this part of Newfoundland include artifact spot finds in St. John's (a Maritime Archaic spearpoint found in the 19th century near the mouth of the Waterford River), and at Soldier's Pond near the Trans-Canada Highway (likely representing a brief Cow Head complex hunting foray (Howley 1915; Penney 2014). A Beothuk component at Ferryland might be added to this list, however, at this stage it is not known for certain if there was any pre-contact activity at that site or if the evidence for Indigenous activity there is all related to the protohistoric period (Gaulton 2001).

Field results

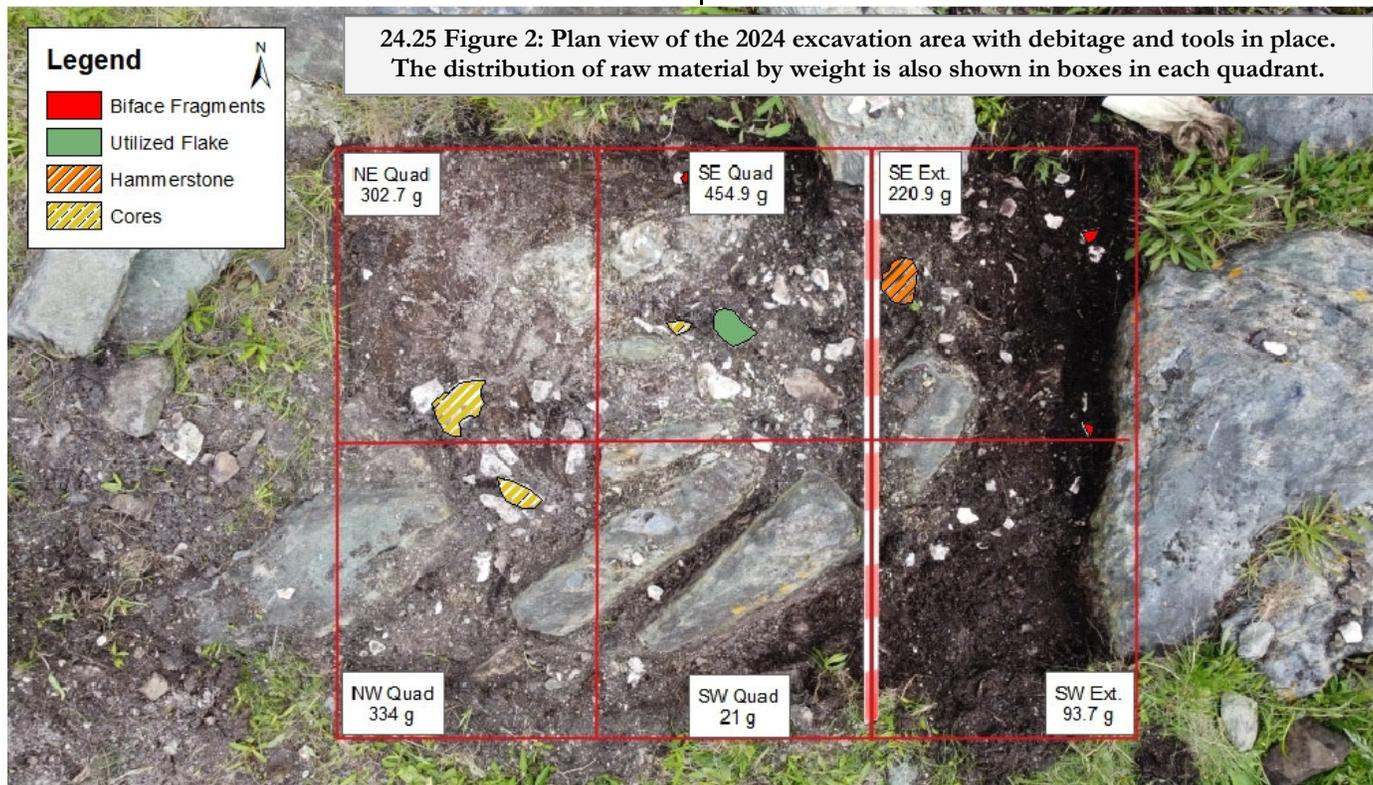
Brake and Hull re-visited Cape St. Francis on July 4th, the goals being to try to determine if the site recorded in 2024 was the same site that Tuck found in 1978, and to try to determine its age and cultural affiliation. Methods employed at the site included additional visual inspection and survey, test pitting and limited excavation in the vicinity of the area that had been partially disturbed by metal-detecting.

The walk-over and inspection of the general area, including eroding banks, did not result in the

discovery of additional precontact archaeological deposits, though shovel testing was only conducted on the point of land where the site is situated. This testing allowed us to find the basic horizontal extent of the site (or locus) in question, which is limited in size to approximately 5m x 10m. A concentration of lithics was noted in the vicinity of a low outcrop of non-knappable bedrock on the northern end of the vegetated portion of the promontory where several of the previously mentioned open holes were located. A 1m x 1m excavation unit was opened in the area contain-

were found in the southeast part of the excavation, quite close to the outcrop. Most of the artifacts were found in the southeastern area as well, just in front of the low outcrop, which is perfect for sitting on. The hammerstone was also found in that area, about 40 cm from the natural stone bench (24.25 Figure 2 & Figure 3).

Based on the scattered debitage and tools we could imagine a knapper starting primary reduction of a recently acquired chert nodule standing about a metre from the outcrop. After reducing the nodule



ing this concentration which subsequently expanded an additional 40 – 50 cm south and up to the face of the low outcrop (24.25 Figure 1).

Excavation revealed a dense scatter of white chert flakes, as well as a few broken tools (cores and biface preform fragments), a few expedient tools (utilized flakes) as well as a cobble hammerstone. The debitage, as observed in the field, appeared to have been the result of a single knapping episode involving all stages of stone tool production, including initial reduction. The largest flakes were found spread diagonally from northwest to southeast across the main excavation unit, while most of the smallest complete flakes representing the final stage of tool making,

and producing a batch of large primary flakes the individual moved towards the southern part of the excavated area, perhaps sitting on the outcrop with their back to Biscayan Bay where they produced a few cores, biface preforms and expedient tools. The cobble hammerstone might have been dropped from this seated position and some soft hammering and pressure flaking was subsequently undertaken which produced finishing flakes, some of which were recovered this past summer.

Collection analysis

The total weight of the lithics collected from this 1m x less than 1.5 m unit, is approximately 1.6 kg. The high proportion of primary flakes (24.25 Figure 4),



24.25 Figure 3: Selected artifacts recovered from Cape St. Francis during excavation. a – c, Biface preform fragments; c may actually be the base of a stemmed biface. d, Utilized flake. e, Core fragment. f and g, Retouched flakes. h, Hammerstone. i, Core.

the cobble hammer-stone, the biface preform fragments and available geological mapping suggest that this activity area can be interpreted as a workshop and that a quarry source may well be located somewhere nearby (Lavers 2010:55-57). This is potentially of considerable importance since the material recovered from the site appears to be what archaeologists have traditionally referred to as ‘Trinity Bay chert’, because of its presence in archaeological collections from that area, however, the source location of this material has not yet been found. Cortex that is present on one of the primary

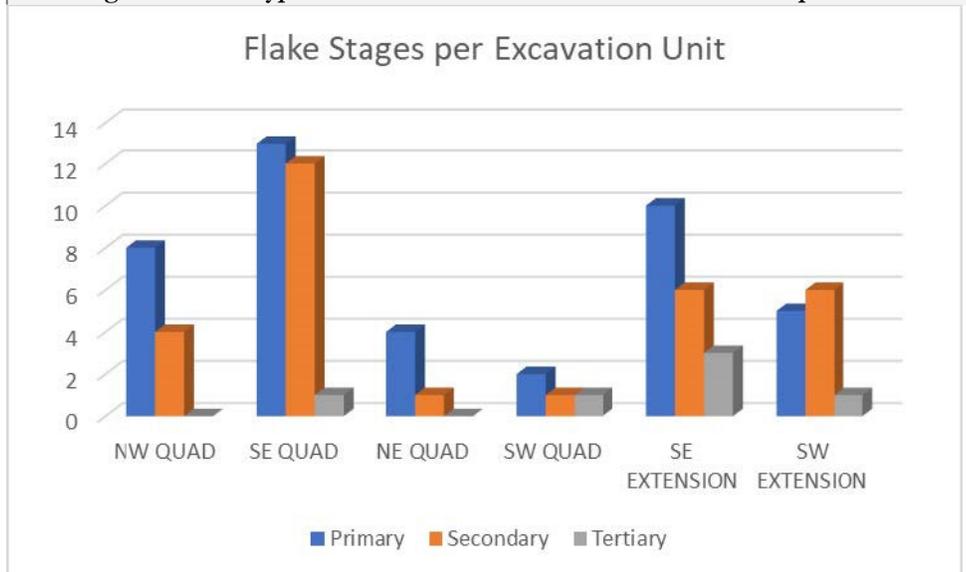
flakes suggests that the initial piece of raw material was collected from an out-crop rather than as a beach cobble.

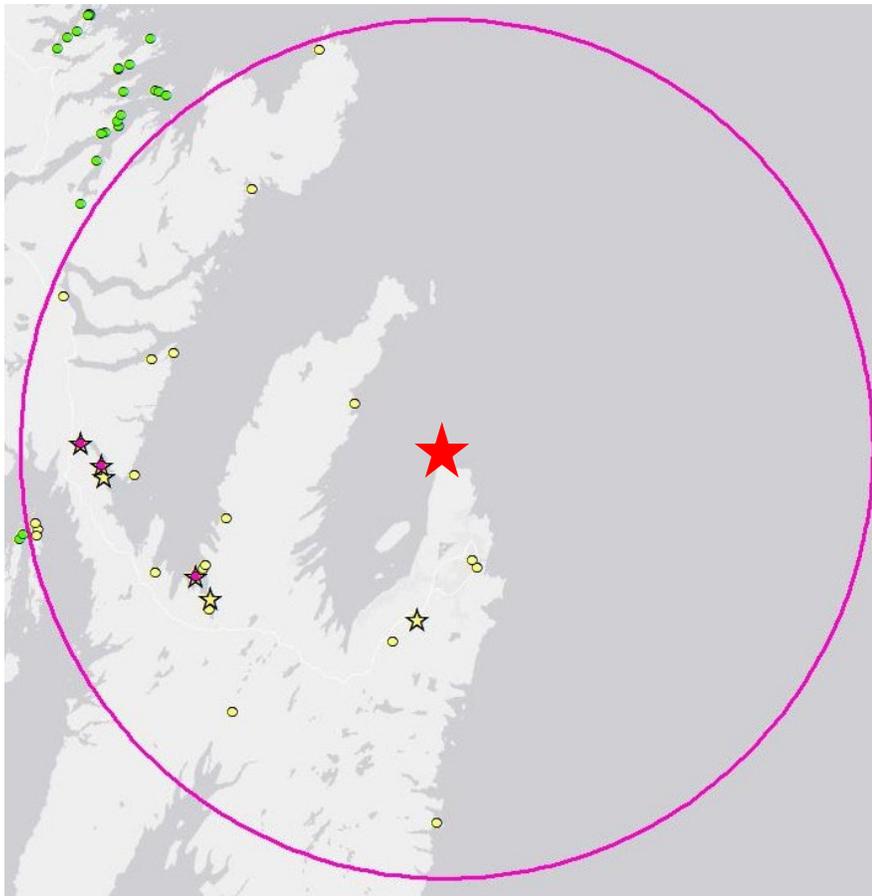
The presence of debitage representing all three stages of tool production suggests that a habitation site might be located nearby (Andrefsky 1998:127). Further support for this possibility comes from Tuck’s 1978 collection, which includes other lithics that were not found at the Cape in 2024. For this reason, we believe that the 2024 area is a different site or locus from the one identified in 1978, and testing throughout the habitable land around Biscayan Bay is well warranted.

Although diagnostic tools were not recovered, the biface preforms and the debitage do allow us to make cautious suggestions about cultural affiliation.

The large size of flakes, the biface thinning

24.25 Figure 4: Flake type distribution within the excavated area at Cape St. Francis.





24.25 Figure 5: Map showing known precontact sites within 100 km of Cape St. Francis. The red star shows Cape St. Francis, the pink dots show Beaches complex sites, the yellow circles are other precontact sites, and the yellow stars are Cow Head complex sites.

flakes in particular (Hartery 2007:39-40), and the size and shape of the broken tools themselves resemble stone work more typical of First Nations as opposed to that associated with Pre-Inuit groups known from the archaeological record in NL. The shallow depth of the cultural level hints at a post-archaic occupation, and the round bases of two of the preforms look quite similar to the ovate bifaces in Cow Head complex assemblages (Hartery 2007:15).

Finally, a look at Cow Head complex site distributions shows a cluster of 5 Cow Head complex components in the bottom of Trinity Bay (one site is “Cow Head complex?”), as well as the Soldier’s Pond spot find on the eastern Avalon, all within 100 kilometres of Cape St. Francis (24.25 Figure 5). There are only 3 Beaches complex components within the same area. There are a higher number of Little Passage complex components within the same distance from the cape, however, neither the size nor form of the

flakes or of the biface preforms resembles those from Little Passage contexts. This information also hints at a Cow Head complex affiliation but does not completely rule out other possibilities.

To summarize, we suspect that the Cape St. Francis site was a briefly used workshop, perhaps the result of a single episode. It was likely occupied during the first millennium AD and we would cautiously suggest that it may represent Cow Head complex activity. There is probably a utilized chert outcrop nearby, and we suspect that there is also probably some kind of habitation or camp site in the area as well. We intend to revisit the cape during the 2025 field season to conduct additional excavations in the hopes of finding diagnostic material, to test other areas in the vicinity of the site that are suitable for camping, and to examine chert bearing geological formations in the vicinity of the Cape St. Francis archaeological site.

Bay Bulls (Permit 24.28 & 24.28.01)

In July 2024, personnel with the PAO visited the site of the ongoing Jacob Puddister Memorial Garden site in Bay Bulls (ChAe-15). The property had been the site of recent archaeological investigations (BTA 2021, 2022, 2023; GPA 2019), most related to a late 17th/early 18th century deposit recorded along the shoreline at the eastern end of the property, as well as an organic deposit comprised of fish flake and fisheries-related debris (branches, boughs and wood chips) and organic artifacts, immediately southward on the same shoreline. These two deposits are within close proximity to one another and are believed to be contemporary.

Final excavations for the memorial park occurred in September 2024 and included grubbing in the vicinity of the late 17th/early 18th century deposit’s inner bounds, and excavation of a nearby ornamental pond. These were monitored by PAO personnel.

Grubbing activities reached a maximum depth of c.20-25 cm and encountered predominantly mixed material related to a recent dumping of excavated soils from a nearby drainage ditch that spring.



This lay upon more mixed soils and late 19th century redeposits. As such, no impact on the early deposit occurred.

Mechanical excavations for the ornamental pond occurred within a part of the property that had been excessively wet until mechanical excavation of the drainage ditch in the spring of 2024. Excavation exposed deep 19th century deposits like those identified throughout much of the property. However, lying on sterile was a brown, muddy stratum containing a thin layer of boughs and branches (suggesting a buried layer of fish flake debris) (24.28 Figure 1), not unlike the

24.28 Figure 1: A 1.7 m wide section of the ornamental pond excavation’s north profile. The lower organic stratum is indicated (under the red dashed line), lying on sterile.

24.30 Figure 1: Close-up view of the possible footers and headstones, looking approximately west. The stone in the bottom corner is c. 6 m from the ATV trail. More possible stone markers lie further up the hill, behind the trees.



organic-based strata identified nearby. Artifacts were fragmented and few, but those recovered – including Westerwald – were late 17th/early 18th century and support the notion that this organic debris and the nearby primary early deposit are contemporaneous.

New Chelsea Graveyard (Permit 24.30)

In July 2024, PAO personnel visited the site of a 1790-1915 Wesleyan/Methodist cemetery in New Chelsea, Trinity Bay. The cemetery was near a planned access road, and there were concerns that the burial ground might be impacted. A small number of headstones (some from the 1830s) still exist within the marked cemetery. However, given the cemetery’s age, unmarked burials outside its known bounds are possible.

Surface inspection on the northeastern side of the cemetery’s known boundary identified the remains of at least nine possible headstones or footers protruding slightly from the ground (24.30 Figure 3). Further uphill into the trees, at least three more similar stones were identified. This may indicate earlier usage of the larger area for burials, or persons buried outside the consecrated grounds.

Local history reports that a Wesleyan/Methodist church once stood near the cemetery. A cursory examination of the surrounding area did not identify any clear sign of structural foundations. However, a roughly rectangular earthen platform-like feature was identified a short distance southwest of the cemetery and may be associated with the former church structure.

Labrador & Josiah Spencer Cove (Permit 24.31)

In May, while we were in Boyd’s Cove, we started receiving reports about a possible looter operating in

multiple times with a shovel and rake, sifting through the soft sand in search of more artifacts. This collector determined that most of the artifacts were buried under approximately one metre of overburden. The Provincial Archaeologist was alerted to his activities when a backhoe operator contacted us about a man trying to hire a backhoe to remove the overburden for up to a month to facilitate his artifact collection.

When the Provincial Archaeologist arrived in Forteau, he quickly identified the collector and, with the assistance of the RCMP, put an end to his activi-



24.31 Figure 1: Rattlers Bight artifacts were found by the collector in the large red circle. Test pits in the upper terrace are indicated by the smaller numbered red circles. Early Archaic material was found by the collector in the disturbed area to the left of test pit 1. The area to the north and west of the test pits was randomly tested and surveyed via a walk over.

southern Labrador. The Provincial Archaeologist (PA) had to leave Boyd’s Cove the following morning and drive to southern Labrador to address the situation. Unbeknownst to us, the town of Forteau had created a road using a tractor, which resulted in the disturbance and destruction of several late Rattlers Bight Archaic features and an early Labrador Archaic occupation site.

A person from Quebec discovered Archaic artifacts in the roadway and returned to the area mul-

ties. He also met with town officials to explain what had occurred before returning to Boyd’s Cove the next day.

The collector possessed more than 25 Archaic artifacts, which were returned to the Town of Forteau and subsequently transferred to the Provincial Archaeologist. The majority of the collection consisted of various Rattlers Bight phase ground slate artifacts, including axes, adzes, bayonets, points, and the haft end of a soapstone plummet. Several of these artifacts



24.31 Figure 2: Recovering a ground slate tool (on the right) that was protruding from the roadway.

showed signs of red ochre application. Additionally, there were several small stemmed projectile points made of Ramah quartzite, characteristic of the Rattlers Bight phase. One notable artifact that collected by an NCC employee in May (later returned to PAO) was a small nipple-based point that indicated material was collected from the early Archaic upper terrace, likely dating back 7,000 to 8,000 years. (See 24.09 Figure 1 & Figure 3)

July 19

We left St. John's on July 18th and spent the evening in Deer Lake. On the 19th, we crossed the Straits and arrived in Labrador.

Upon arrival, we visited Steve Mills during his assessment at Buckle's Point. Afterward, we checked into our accommodations in L'Anse au Loup, then went to English Point to examine the main objective of our trip. We assessed the areas disturbed by the tractor and subsequently looted, including the Rattlers Bight area on the lower terrace (Figure 1) and the upper terrace where an early Labrador Archaic occupation was exposed (24.31 Figure 1).

While searching the lower terrace, we discovered a piece of ground slate protruding from the roadway (24.31 Figure 2). The recovered artifact turned out to be about one-third of the bit end of a very thick and heavy ground green slate axe. We cannot determine if the tool was broken in the archaeological past or damaged by recent road construction. Regardless, flakes have broken off the tool due to being run over by vehicles. The remaining piece is



approximately 10 cm long and shows signs of having been coated in ochre in the past.

After recovering the bit end of the axe, we explored the early Archaic area on the upper terrace. This region had large areas of exposed bedrock and blowouts to the north and east (see the red circle below). We observed numerous quartzite flakes near the road but found no cultural material within the designated circle. There appeared to be recent disturbances, indicated by the impressions of someone's fingers dragged along the soft sand wall of the previously disturbed area closest to the road.

Subsequently, we briefly searched around the Graveyard site (EiBf-06) but found no new cultural material.

After dinner, we took a drive and ended up revisiting the interpretation panels for the W.H. site in L'Anse au Loup (EjBe-66).

July 20

We spent most this day in Red Bay for the opening of the Dr. James Tuck Memorial Waterfront building.

In the morning, we explored Saddle Island



24.31 Figure 3: PAO staff (Left to right, Stephen Hull, Jamie Brake & Delphina Mercer) exploring Saddle Island with Laura Tuck, Barry Gaulton & Steve Mills. Mercer & Mills were original crew members who worked with Dr. Tuck in Red Bay.



24.31 Figure 4: Laura Tuck wearing her dad’s floater jacket at the opening of the building dedicated to Dr. Tuck.

with Dr. Barry Gaulton, as well as two of Jim’s original crew members and his daughter, Laura (24.31 Figure 3).

In the afternoon, we returned to the community, where Laura and members of the PAO participated in the opening ceremony for the building dedicated to Jim, honouring his work on the sites in Red Bay (24.31 Figure 4).

Later in the afternoon, we carried out various PAO tasks, including testing for Newfoundland Labrador Hydro poles in Red Bay. We had concerns about two poles located on the east side of Red Bay Harbour. We dug two test pits, each 30 to 40 centimetres deep. Each pit contained the typical peat overburden with pink quartzite sand underneath. No cultural material was recovered, though we did find a single chert flake on the trail near the southern test pit. Archaeological approval for the poles was granted (24.31 Figure 5).

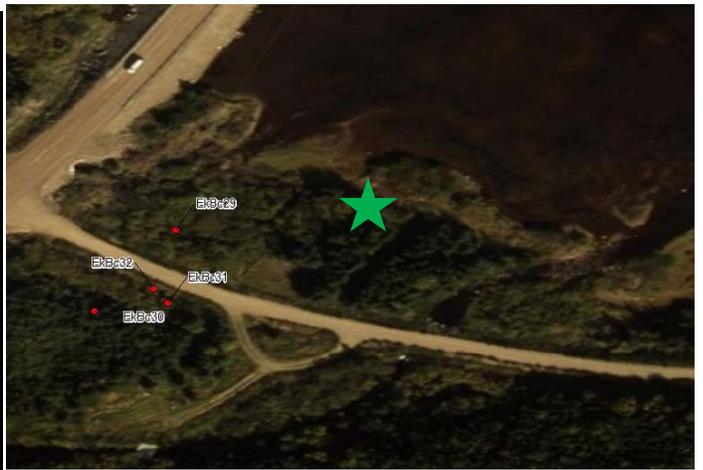
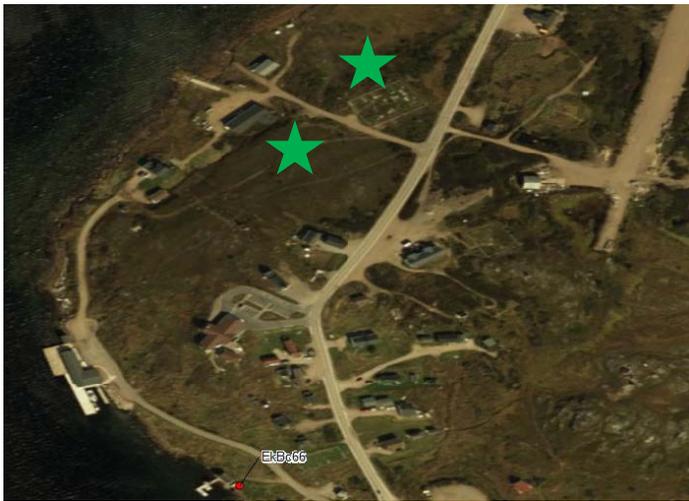
We also assessed another property for a proposed boat tour operation in Red Bay. The area showed little archaeological potential except for some disturbed artifacts on the surface. The construction plan involves filling in a depression in a small cove that was historically occupied by the proponents’ relative’s sheds. Archaeological approval for the construction was granted (24.31 Figure 6).

In the evening, after supper, we tested one

more Newfoundland Hydro pole located at the junction of Tracy Road and the main road through Red Bay. Again, the testing yielded no cultural material, and archaeological approval for the pole was granted (24.31 Figure 5).

July 21

After reviewing Elmer Harp’s field notes from 1949 (see below), we identified potential for an archaeolog-



**24.31 Figure 5: Test locations in Red Bay Harbour for NL Hydro (Green stars).
Test pits in the afternoon on the left, testing in the evening above. Known sites are red dots.**

ical site along the brook between the first and second ponds, north of Forteau.

Tony Susen tells me (28 June) that one of the boys at English Point says there is an Indian campsite along the brook between First and Second lakes. In blowouts there, he has picked up arrow points (this is Buckles Brook, Forteau Bay) (Harp 1949)

We began our morning by exploring various exposures and ATV trails along the southern side of First Pond. We then proceeded to the Forteau River where it meets First Pond and briefly examined the shoreline.

While travelling along the ATV track toward the river, we noticed several broken pieces of quartzite that appeared to be cultural in nature. We excavated several test pits, each 20-30 cm deep, either along the ATV track or parallel to it. Although we did not find any in situ cultural materials, we did recover a small quartzite cobble from the surface that we suspect was culturally modified (24.31 Figure 7).

After leaving the southern area of First Pond, we walked along the western side of the pond where Forteau Brook empties into it. Unfortunately, no cultural materials were

found in this area, and we were unable to walk up the brook between the ponds.

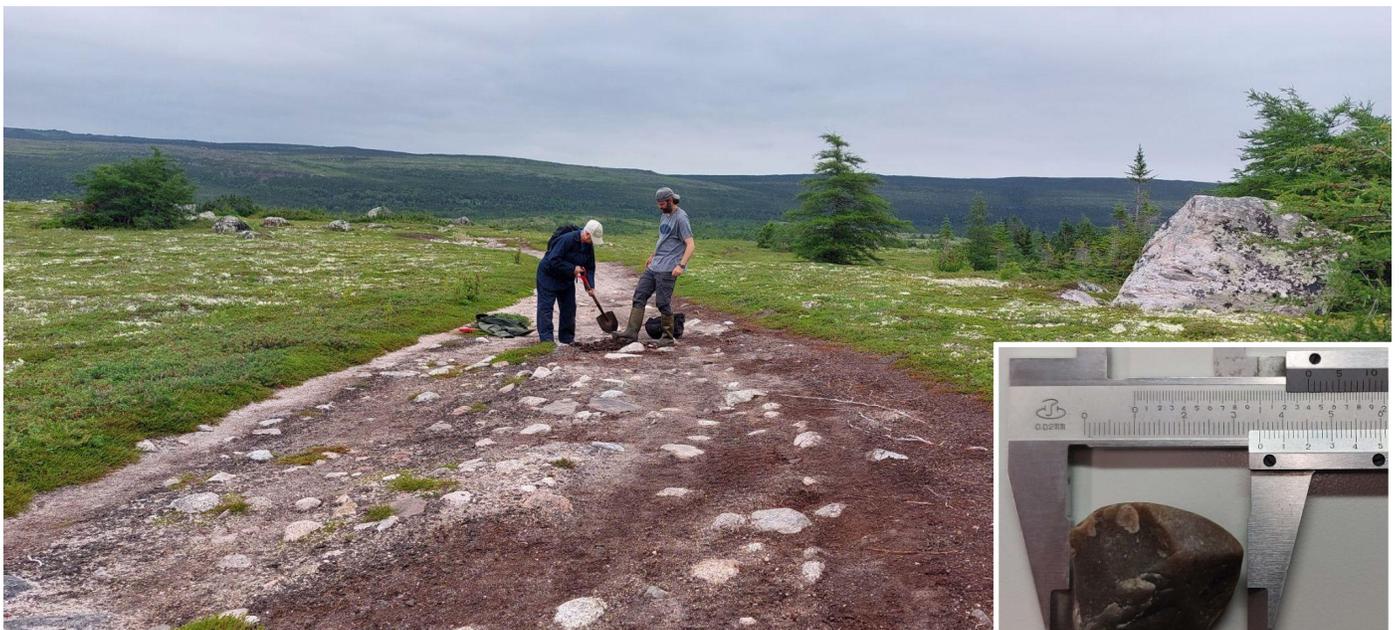
On the afternoon of our survey, we walked along the beach at the north end of English Point, exploring the vicinity of the site known as Red Rock Point (EiBf-01), which Harp documented in 1949. Again, no cultural materials were discovered. Our track log from this exploration is represented by the pink line in the accompanying photo (24.31 Figure 8).

July 22

On the morning of July 22nd, we returned to English Point and the newly exposed Archaic site. Our goal was to ensure that no further artifacts were exposed and to investigate whether there were any intact features or occupation layers at both the upper and lower terraces.

**24.31 Figure 6: Approximate location of the property assessed for a proposed boat tour operation in Red Bay.
From the fence post on the left to just below the red truck on the right.**





24.31 Figure 7: Testing the ATV track near where quartzite flakes were found. The modified cobble we collected is on the right.

24.31 Figure 8: Track log for our brief survey of First Pond is the red line, green stars are test pits. The pink line is our track log of our survey near Red Rock Point.





24.31 Figure 9: Clearing away the disturbed soil. The ground slate bayonet found in the disturbed soil is at right.

24.31 Figure 10: Fragmented axe or adze bit with intentional scratch marks on the blade end?



Based on the information provided by the collector, we understood that there was nearly a metre of overburden on top of any potential cultural layers at the lower terrace. Therefore, our first task was to clear away the disturbed soil and tree roots that had accumulated from the tractor creating the road.

During the removal of the overburden, we discovered two Archaic artifacts within the disturbed soil. The first artifact is the medial portion of a stemmed ground slate bayonet, which resembles a flattened four-sided diamond in cross-section. The small portion of the stem that remains appears to contract somewhat. The material shows small naturally occurring pits, and at some point in the past, the artifact had red ochre applied to it. This piece refits with at least two portions of bayonets found by the looter. Similar more complete specimens were recovered by the Quebec looter (24.31 Figure 9 and see 24.09 Figure 1 for the rejoined artifact).

The second artifact we recovered consists of multiple fragments of an axe or adze blade. This object is broken into several flakes and appears to be made of a very pale green slate-like material. Red ochre is visible on one of the flakes, and there are scratch marks on the blade end

that seem regular, possibly intentional. Several other ground slate tools made of similar looking light green material were recovered by the looter. These tools also showed signs of flaking and had been smeared with ochre in the past (24.31 Figure 10).

As we continued clearing the overburden, we began straightening the sides of the pit when we noticed a very thin, dark brown, ochre-like stain on the back wall of the pit. This stain was located 60 cm below the 15 to 20 cm thick peat overburden. We suspected that this might be another deposit of ochre-stained tools, but we were uncertain since it appeared browner than red. We stopped clearing away the loose overburden and started removing sand from above the potential ochre deposit (24.31 Figure 11).

At this point, space was becoming limited in the pit, so we divided the team: two members continued excavating the sand off the potential ochre deposit while the third member went up the hill to inspect the early Archaic area and start testing for intact deposits.

Progress continued in the lower terrace area where our excavations came down upon the suspected ochre deposit we saw in the back wall. The ochre feature was oblong with two peaks at one end resembling a tail. At its longest point, it measured 77 cm in length, with a width varying between 51 cm and 59 cm, and the depth—from the bottom of the peat—ranged from just under 50 cm to up to 60 cm deep. Three stone tools were discovered in the southwest corner of the main ochre concentration with a thick layer of ochre covering each one.

There was no indication of anything else within the ochre, such as a faint line or shape suggest-

ing the presence of a bag or wrapping holding the tools or any other organic material, unlike the situation at L'Anse Amour where the excavators could make out a dark organic stain in the sand that was thought to be a bark or skin wrapping (Tuck n.d.). The layer of ochre covering these tools was so thick that initially, we couldn't identify them beyond a vague outline of a ground stone tool. However, after removing the first tool, we could see that it was an axe. We were unable to identify the second tool beyond

confirming it was also a ground stone tool. The third tool is considerably smaller, and we speculate that it might be a grinding stone or abradar used in the preparation of the ochre or even the ground stone tools (24.31 Figure 12).

We paused and considered how to proceed. Throughout the excavation process, several individuals from Forteau and English Point had visited the site and observed the tools. Given that the site had already been looted and there were reports of recent activity in the area, there was no possibility of leaving the tools *in situ*.

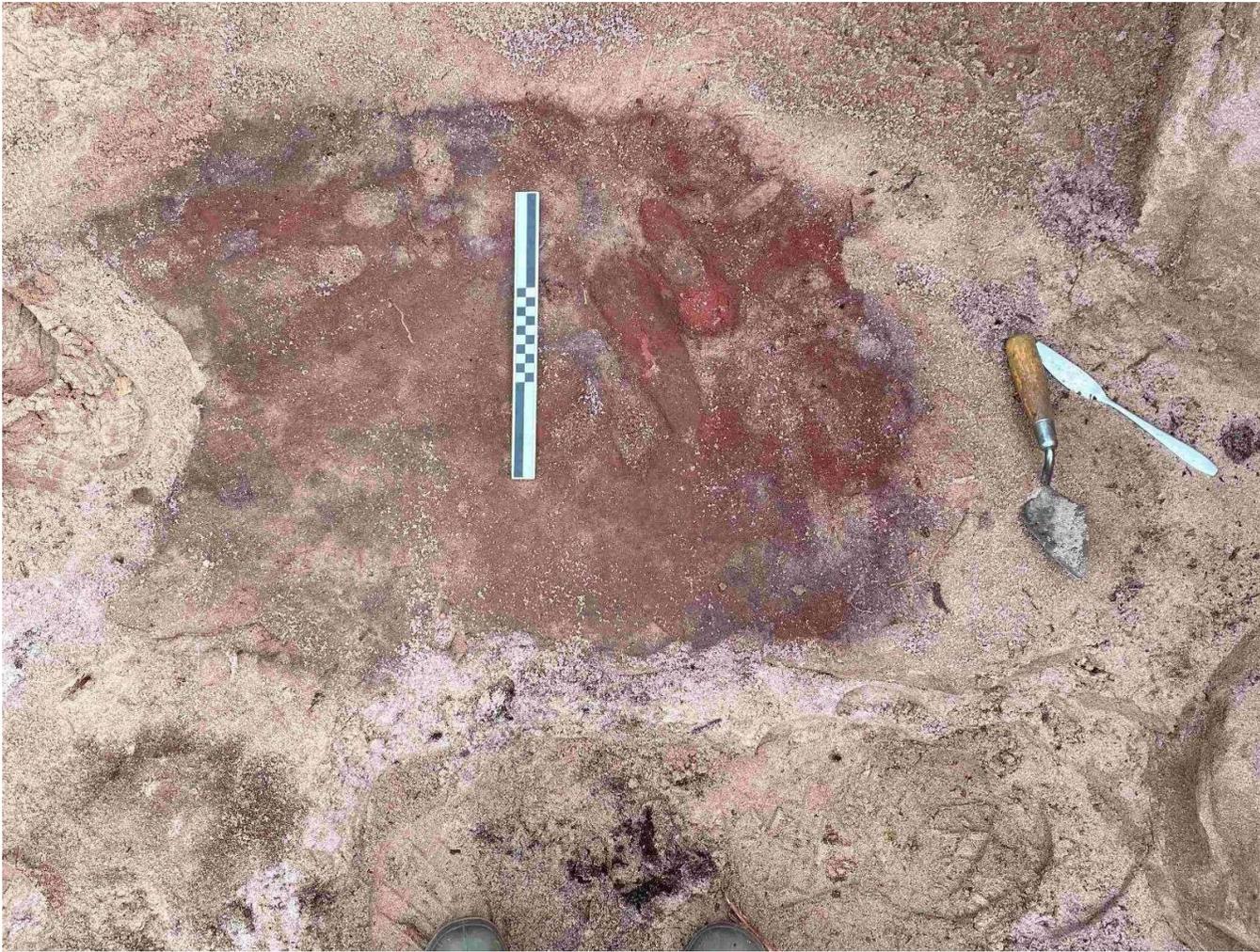
At this point, we began the process of removing the stone tools (24.31 Figure 13). After

removing and packing them for storage, we bisected the ochre deposit lengthwise (24.31 Figure 14). The deposit was only a few centimetres thick, the main ochre deposit was situated in a slight bowl-shaped depression that had been created in the dense sand layer at the bottom of the unit. Some of the ochre had leached beneath the main deposit.

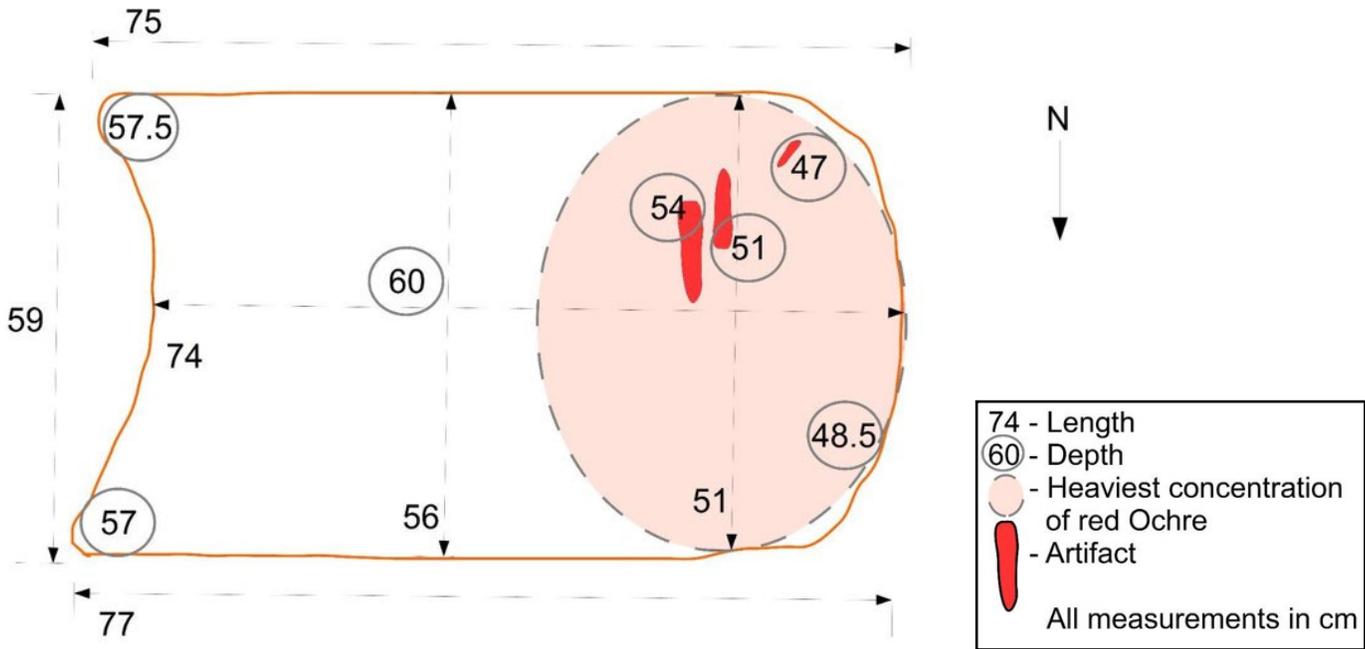
Similar ochre-filled deposits containing chipped and ground stone tools were found beneath peat in the sand at Forteau Point (EiBf-02) by



24.31 Figure 11: The horizontal ochre-like stain we noticed in the back wall of the pit at the 30cm mark from the bottom of the ruler.



24.31 Figure 12: Ochre feature exposed from, the outline of several ochre-covered tools are visible in the upper right corner of the feature. Below is a drawing of the feature with measurements.





24.31 Figure 13: Removing the first ground tool which, as can be seen from the bit end, is an axe. You can also see that the ochre on top of the tool was ~2cm thick.

McGhee and Tuck in 1974, with further investigations by Tuck in 1984 (24.31 Figure 15). Elmer Harp, who first excavated at the site in 1949, referred to it as Forteau Bay 1. This site is located just 2 kilometres southwest of our English Point location, across Forteau Bay. Most of the previous work at Forteau Point consisted of extensive surface collections. In two small areas of undisturbed deposits, McGhee and Tuck were able to establish the stratigraphic layers from which the exposed materials originated. They discovered a vegetation layer on top, under which was sand, followed by a very thin and compressed peat zone containing cultural materials. They observed that the materials appeared to be concentrated in several areas, each a few metres in diameter, arranged in a linear pattern along the flat surface of the point.

McGhee and Tuck proposed that the distinctiveness of this pattern, along with the high proportion of ground stone tools and the scarcity of flakes, suggested that this site may not have been

used for occupation but might have served a ceremonial purpose. A similar pattern of ground stone tools and no flakes was noted in our Rattlers Bight area.

In a later unpublished manuscript, Tuck speculated about the nature of these ceremonial deposits.

I have attempted elsewhere (Tuck 1978) to relate the mound burials of human beings and the occasional burial of artifacts and red ochre not accompanied by a human skeleton, such as the gouges, bifaces,

and red ochre found at the Arrowhead Mine site, to a single persistent tradition among Maritime Archaic peoples. Mound burials appear to occur only sporadically and clearly do not represent a regular practice for disposal of the dead. Ritual burial of small caches of objects, not to be confused with inhumations, was probably more common than we realize for they are unmarked on the surface, hence difficult to find. Both of these types of burials may be interpreted as the results of rituals performed to appease the supernatural and somehow gain a measure of control over those events which are beyond human understanding. Unusual weather conditions and other natural phenomena, as well as social conditions such as the sudden appear-

24.31 Figure 14: Bisected feature after the tools were removed from the right side. You can make out a slight bowl where the tools were located and that the ochre was a few centimetres thick for the whole feature.





24.31 Figure 15: Similar ochre-filled deposits containing chipped and ground stone tools found beneath peat in the sand at Forteau Point (Or Buckles Point, EiBf-02) (Tuck 1993).

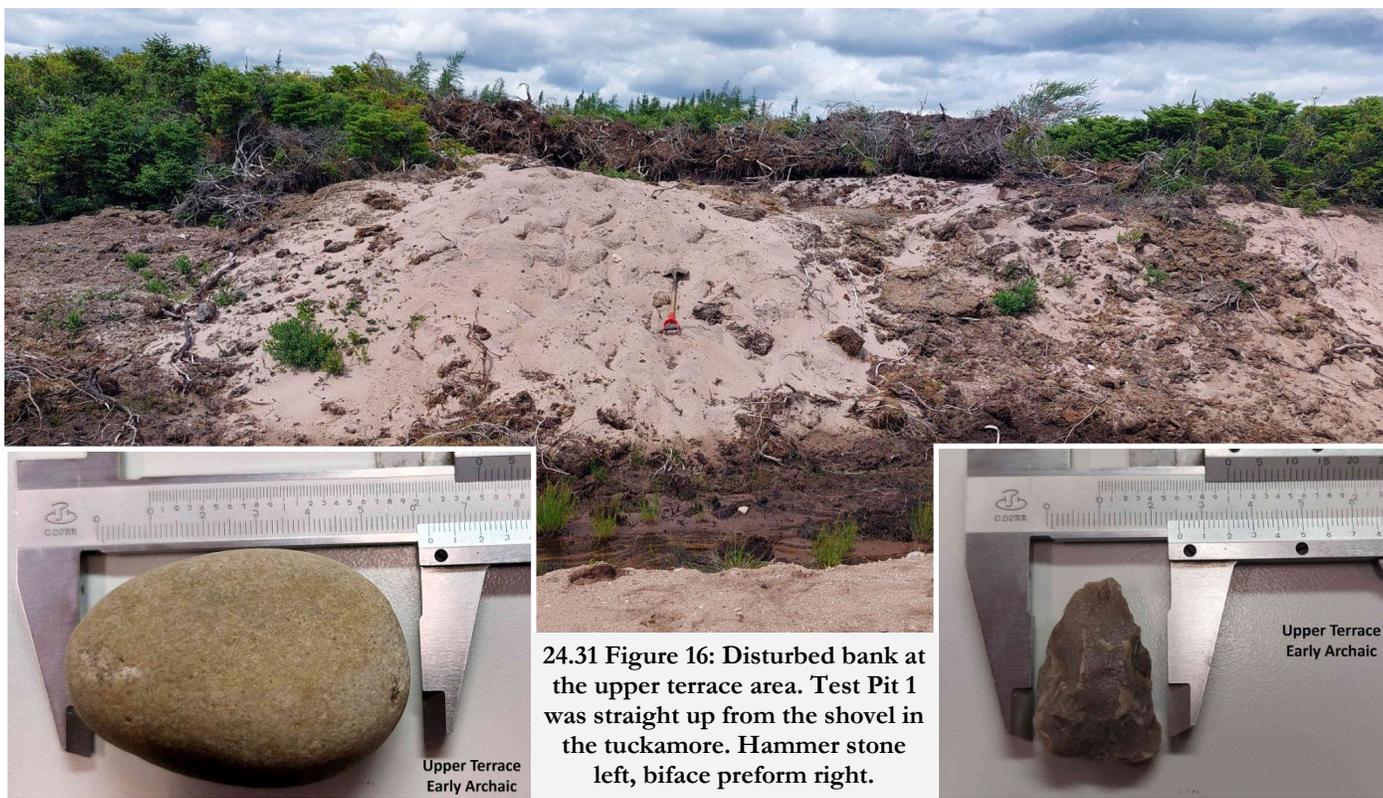
ance of new and unfamiliar groups of people may have stimulated at least a part of this ritual behaviour. More will be said of the latter possibility in a discussion of the more recent manifestations of Maritime Archaic culture. At any rate this explanation of the sporadic burial episodes in the Strait of Belle Isle seems as good as any. Whether the occasional inclusion of human remains indicates that the death of an individual was itself responsible for at least some ritual burials, or whether a death only accidentally coincided with the ritual, or if, in fact, some more sinister set of events surrounded, for instance, the burial of the child at L'Anse Amour we shall probably never know.

Two radiocarbon dates of 5035 ± 65 (SI-2311) and 5399 ± 58 (P-691) were obtained from the site. The 5035 date came from McGhee and Tuck in 1974 and was associated with a cache, red ochre, and ground stone tools; Tuck accepted this date. In contrast, Harp's 5399 date was derived from the top of a blown-out turf area near the upper dunes, which raises concerns about its reliability. Both dates are slightly earlier than the Rattlers Bight phase but still within the realm of possibility.

In the early Archaic upper terrace area, our first task was to survey the entire region for any artifacts. We discovered a small light purple quartzite biface preform and a small egg-sized hammerstone, which displayed clear indications of pecking on one end. We also noted but did not collect, other quartzite flaking debris in various colours, including red, gray, and white. Additionally, we observed some fragments of softer rock, possibly sandstone, which might have been fire-cracked. We suspected that the material culture was sourced from just beneath the peat (24.31 Figure 16).

Our objective for the upper terrace was to determine if any of this early material was still in situ and if we could identify an occupation layer. In total, we dug five test pits in this area. Please refer to the English Point map above for the precise locations of each test pit (See 24.31 Figure 1).

Test pit 1 was positioned above the shovel in the 24.31 Figure 16 and 2.4 metres back from the tractor disturbance. The top was covered with a tan-



24.31 Figure 16: Disturbed bank at the upper terrace area. Test Pit 1 was straight up from the shovel in the tuckamore. Hammer stone left, biface preform right.

gle of tuckamore, followed by about 30 cm of peat, and then a typical fine-grained quartzite sand. At a depth of 65 cm, the sand became slightly coarser and drier. The test pit was terminated at a depth of 70 cm, where we found a single piece of flaked quartz (possibly crystal) just below the peat in the sand.

Test pit 2 was located behind test pit 1, 4.4 metres back from the tractor disturbance. Here, we again encountered a tangle of tuckamore, followed by approximately 30 cm of peat, transitioning into fine sand. The test pit was also terminated at a depth of 70 cm, with no cultural material found.

At this point, it was becoming late in the day and starting to rain, so we quickly packed up our tools and artifacts.

July 23

We began our day in the Rattlers Bight area, where we removed the remaining ochre deposit that contained tools and confirmed that there was nothing beneath this feature.

Additionally, we dug a deep test pit in the centre of the road to investigate for other ochre deposits. The pit measured approximately 90 cm deep, 80 cm long, and about half that width. No cultural artifacts were found, nor were there any buried turf horizons or indications of an occupation layer. It be-

came evident that the tractor used to construct the road had scraped away the modern peat horizon, exposing only the sand in most areas (24.31 Figure 17).

During our excavation of the ochre feature, we speculated about where the looter might have found his artifacts, how they ended up on the road, and their origins. Based on photographs provided by the looter, our conversations with him, and our work, we believe that during road construction, the tractor dug into a mound beside the road that contained the Rattlers Bight tools and ochre deposits. This soil was then used to fill in holes and dips along the road. Most of the tools and ochre collected by the looter were found near the area of a wooden bridge, approximately 20–30 metres from our excavation site. The photographs he provided clearly show that he had been digging through the loose soil in search of artifacts.

We suspect that a similar disturbance occurred on the opposite side of the bridge, where the early Archaic area may have been affected. The tractor likely took soil from next to the road and redeposited it to fill in other holes and dips. During our work at the site, we noted that the soil in front of the bridge exhibited a slightly different shade than the typical red/pink of the surrounding area, which may



24.31 Figure 17: The nearly one metre deep test unit in the middle of the road near the Rattlers Bight area.

24.31 Figure 18: Bridge near and looking towards the Rattlers Bight area.
Note the difference in the colour of the sand after the bridge and after the metre stick.



further support our theory that the soil near the bridge originated from another location (24.31 Figure 18).

In the morning, we completed three additional test pits in the early Archaic area. Test pit 3 measured approximately 50 cm x 50 cm and was 52 cm deep. Like the first two test pits, the stratigraphy revealed about 30 cm of peat, followed by fine quartzite sand for another 52 cm. The sand was leached grey on the top and turned brown as we dug deeper. We recovered two small quartzite flakes.

For test pit 4, we decided to dig along an ATV trail where we had previously observed quartzite flakes during our assessment of the early Archaic area. From this test pit, we collected eight small quartzite flakes in various colours—pink, grey, and white—with the largest being just 2.5 cm long. The repeated driving of ATVs over the trail had compressed the typical thick layer of peat, revealing sand and quartzite shatter or flakes at the surface. Consequently, the test pit only had a few centimetres of dried-out peat on top. We excavated another 8 to 10 cm down, recovering three pieces of small (about the size of a large egg) quartzite cobbles that still had water-worn cortex.

Test pit 5 was dug a few metres west of the trail. It had a very thin layer of peat under caribou moss. We excavated the typical pink quartzite sand for 12 cm but found no cultural material.

Although we did not identify any features or a clear occupation layer in the upper terrace area, the presence of artifacts in situ beneath the peat layer indicates the potential for future work in this area.

After completing our tasks at English Point, we headed to the Iceberg site (EjBe-19) for the afternoon (24.31 Figure 19). Our goal at this site was to relocate all of Marcie Madden's excavation areas and conduct some minor testing to search for hearths that might contain charcoal. Unfortunately, we were unable to accomplish the latter, but we were optimistic about the possibility of finding undisturbed areas at this site.

Members of the PAO and other archaeologists had visited this site several times in the past, making it easy for us to relocate it. In several locations, remnants of Madden's excavation units could still be seen, allowing us to identify each excavation area easily. Elmer Harp first visited the site in 1949, and McGhee and Tuck returned in 1973 and 1974 for more extensive work, including additional excavations. Marcie Madden returned for a month in 1975

24.31 Figure 19: Iceberg site is located in the red oval on the left. Marcie Madden's excavation areas are the red dots and our test pits are the green dots in the right image.



as part of her MA project at MUN, excavating five areas. The site was also briefly revisited by Reg Auger and later by Roy Skanes for recording and observation.

Madden opened five large excavation areas. Areas 1 and 2 were closest to the highway, while areas 3 through 5 were situated between 15 and 50 metres to the south. We dug seven test pits near areas 1 and 2. We chose to dig in this area because Madden had received her latest radiocarbon dates nearby. Unfortunately, we found no in situ features or artifacts, alt-

placing it on our list for further testing the next time we visit (24.31 Figures 19 & 20).

Upon returning from Iceberg, one of the PAO staff members took a brief walk along the waterfront in L'Anse au Loup. Directly across the main road from Earle's Grocery Store, she noticed a recently constructed house and observed that the backfill from the excavation of the basement was still present on the property. After a brief inspection of the backfill, several fine-grained quartzite cobbles were discovered, several which were cracked. While finding



24.31 Figure 20: Showing Marcie Madden's excavation areas (the red numbers) and the small cluster of evergreen trees to the east of Area 5 that we believe has archaeological potential.

though we did see several surface-exposed flakes and flakes buried in the former excavation areas. Each test pit was between 30 and 50 cm deep, with the surface lightly covered in vegetation or caribou moss, along with some buried sod layers. These buried sod layers were likely the result of wind-blown sand occasionally covering the sod. The test pits primarily contained grey sand, which darkened in colour and became damper as we dug deeper. While in the area, we noticed a small cluster of evergreen trees to the east of Area 5 and believe it has archaeological potential,

one or two cracked cobbles in this area would not have been surprising given the recent heavy equipment activity, five cracked cobbles were recovered. These cobbles are made from the same type of material found at early Archaic sites such as Cowpath and the upper terrace at English Point.

In 2012, a quartzite cobble fragment was recovered from the backfill of a newly installed electrical pole at Hall Road 1 (EjBf-16). At that time, the archaeologists were uncertain whether this single cobble was cultural in origin, but the recovery of five additional cracked cobbles just 50 metres south makes it

very likely that all this material originates from an early Archaic site (Penney 2012). Furthermore, 200 metres to the north are the Barney (EjBe-18) and Alfred Barney (EjBf-08) sites, both of which contain collections of fine quartzite artifacts. The Barney site is radiocarbon dated to approximately 7,500 years ago. All these sites, including our discovery, appear to be located on the same beach terrace.

The conclusion of our workday at Iceberg and L'Anse au Loup marked the end of our archaeological efforts in Southern Labrador for 2024. The following day, we returned to the island portion of the province and drove to Grand Falls, where we planned to conduct an assessment the next day.

July 25

In November 2023, the PAO received land use referral for a grant concerning an existing cabin located along the western side of Southeast Arm at Josiah Spencer's Cove, just north of Cottrell's Cove. Our desktop assessment indicated that the coastline along Southeast Arm is generally favourable for settlement, evidenced by numerous small European settlements in the area, particularly at nearby locations such as Cottrell's Cove and Moore's Cove. The subject property in Josiah Spencer Cove is situated in a small, nar-

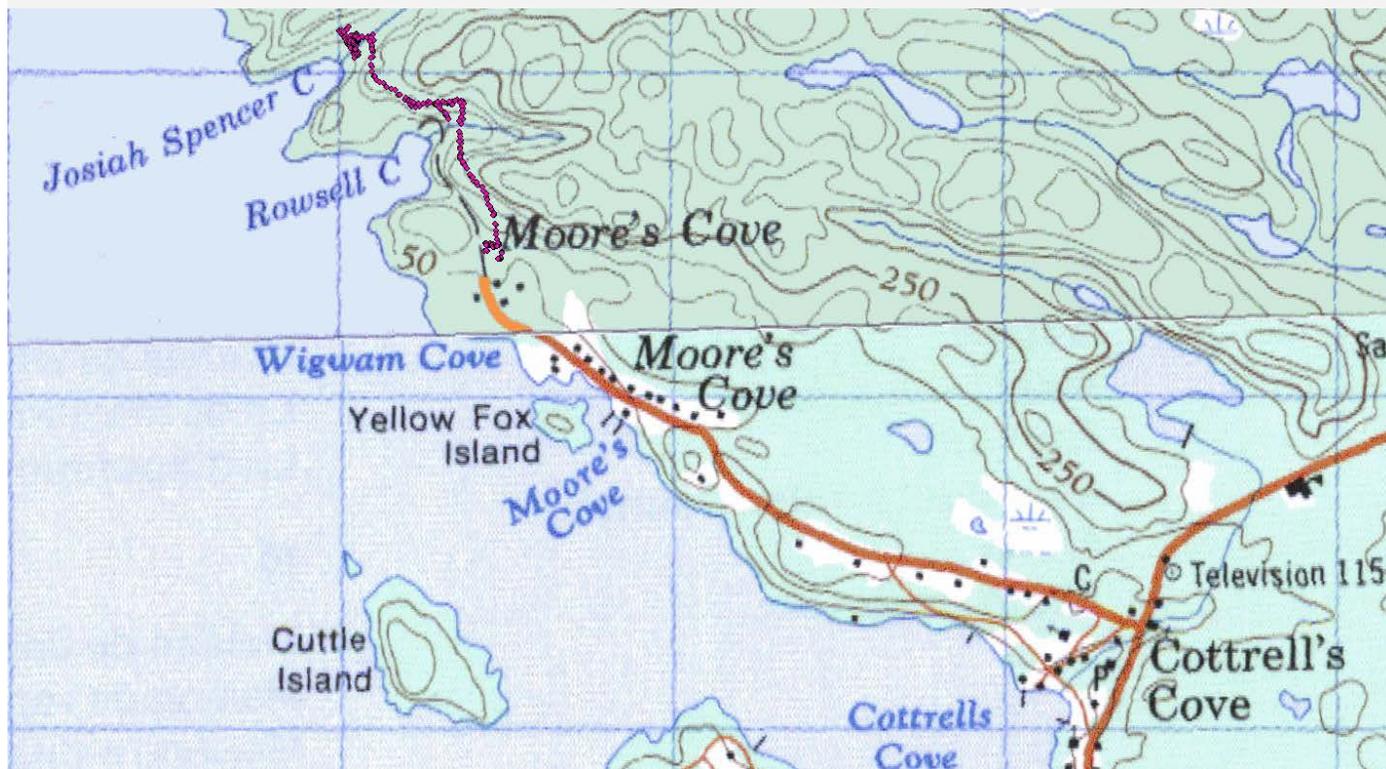
row cove and also contains a small stream, making it conducive for settlement.

On the morning of July 25th, we travelled north from Grand Falls to Moore's Cove, located just north of Cottrell's Cove. From Moore's Cove, we walked along an old cart track leading to Josiah Spencer Cove. Along much of the trail, we observed traces of stacked stones on the waterside, which formed a retaining wall in places, reaching heights of 5 to 6 stones. The stone wall and cart track correspond with our pink track log in 24.31 Figure 21 & 22.

At the head of Rowsell Cove, located between Josiah Spencer and Moore's Cove, the top of Josiah Spencer Cove opens onto a small, gently sloping cove that broadens into New Bay. Upon our arrival, we quickly assessed the area and noticed that the lower portion of the cove, nearest the water, was nearly flat. This is where we concentrated our testing efforts.

We dug six test pits in the cove: four along the flat terrace nearest the water and two heading uphill toward the cabin. Cultural material was recovered from all test pits except for Test Pit 4. In the other five test pits, we found late 19th to early 20th-century ceramics, window glass, nails, and bone, often mixed with an assortment of biface-thinning chert flakes.

24.31 Figure 21: Location of Josiah Spencer Cove. The stone wall and cart track that led to the cove is shown as a pink track log on the map below.





24.31 Figure 22: Part of the cart track at the top of Rowsell Cove.

24.31 Figure 23: Josiah Spencer Cove with the very small cabin at the top of the cove and the location of our test pits.





24.31 Figure 24: The 19th to early 20th century cemetery in Moores Cove.

The European material was consistently located within the first 10–15 centimetres of soil, occasionally just beneath the sod. The lithic material typically began to appear at depths of 15 to 20 centimetres. Unfortunately, no lithic diagnostic material was recovered; however, given the size of some flakes and the absence of scrapers and microblades, which are commonly found on Pre-Inuit sites, we suspect that these flakes are indicative of a First Nation occupation.

Once we confirmed the presence of the site, we backfilled the holes, packed up our gear, and began our walk back over the cart track to the car, intending to return to St. John's that afternoon. We made a brief stop in Rowsell Cove and noted the remains of a cast iron stove on the beach, suspecting that this cove also contains evidence of late 19th to early 20th-century occupation. Just before returning to Moore's Cove, we recorded the presence of a historic cemetery dating from the 19th to early 20th century (24.31 Figure 24).

Harbour Grace (Permit 24.42)

Background

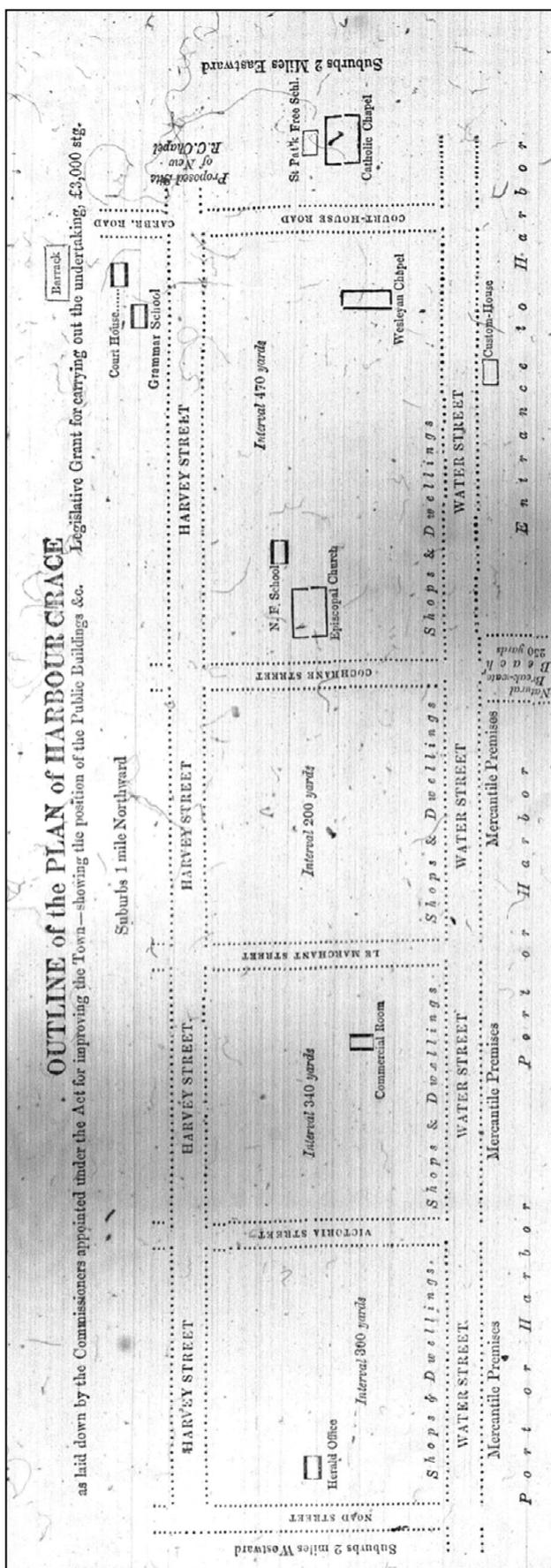
On the afternoon of November 21st, Brake received a call from the current owner of the old Roman Catholic Cathedral in Harbour Grace who was engaged in renovating the property and converting the structure itself into a brewery. Plans include the construction of a hotel adjacent to and just east of the cathedral. The owner had two drainage ditches excavated next to the historic building, one running along its eastern length, and another running southeast from the front of the structure. These trenches were meant to address seri-

ous flooding within the building after a prolonged period of rainy, wet weather in the fall of 2024. The operator of the excavator that was being used for this work stopped right away when he noticed that a human skull had been inadvertently uncovered. The RCMP were contacted, and they felt that this was not forensically significant and then instructed the owner to contact the PAO. The property owner subsequently did this, confirmed that work in the area had stopped and provided photographs of the scene. Plans were made to visit the site the following morning.

Field Results

The site was visited on the morning of November 22nd by Brake and physical anthropologist Dr. Janna Andronowski, who is with the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and Memorial University's Department of Biomedical Sciences. Andronowski is an expert in human osteology and is able to identify even small fragments of human bone in the field. Her presence was highly valuable considering the nature of the situation. The two were met by construction crew members who showed them the remains that had been brought into the church to protect them from the heavy rain which continued along with low temperatures throughout the visit. The two were also given a tour of the excavated areas underneath the church where the archaeological remains of an earlier structure had been encountered during the renovation.

The trench leading out of the front of the church was examined following the church tour and



24.42 Figure 1: “Outline and the Plan of Harbour Grace”, related to a survey for the planned construction of Harvey Street, with the “Catholic Chapel” and “Proposed site of New R.C. Chapel” at top (Weekly Herald and Conception Bay General Advertiser 9 July 1851).

the remainder of the morning was spent collecting human remains and artifacts from the back dirt next to the trench, as well as recording stratigraphy and archaeological features in the walls of the trench with photography and fieldnotes. At least a dozen grave shafts were identified in the trench profiles, several of which contained human remains. Some coffin hardware, thick green bottle glass and a few ceramic sherds were collected from the back dirt, the latter dating to the 18th century. Preliminary interpretation of stratigraphic evidence also indicated that the burials predated the construction of the original chapel, which was built in 1809 (See Mills this volume). This fact, along with the appearance of the remains and the depth below the construction level all suggested that the remains may well have been interred prior to the start of the 19th century.

Based on the number of graves in the trench and the high number of human bones and bone fragments that were recovered that morning, it was decided that the most appropriate way to proceed would be for the proponent to hire a consultant to fully record the exposed burials, to sift the back dirt to recover as many of the disturbed bones as possible, and to monitor any additional excavations at the site. The site has very high archaeological potential and additional burials are almost certainly present. The property owner was informed of these requirements during a brief onsite meeting in the early afternoon. The presence of additional burials was confirmed the following week during the excavation of another trench (Mills this volume). The human remains and artifacts that were recovered were brought back to St. John’s later that day and were secured within the Department of Biomedical Sciences where they are undergoing analysis to determine minimum number of individuals, whether any pathologies can be observed, and to develop biological profiles (Andronowski, forthcoming).

Archival Research

The age and denomination of the burial ground was uncertain, and its surprise discovery suggested that most were unaware of its presence. Its placement within the cathedral property suggested that it was Roman Catholic, but the presence of a c. 1802-c. 1850s cemetery at Bennetts Lane (the earliest known in the town), determined that if the burials were Roman Catholic, they should predate the Bennetts Lane cemetery. A brief land use and structural history of the



24.42 Figure 2: Undated view of the cathedral, prior to its destruction in 1889. The priest's house is at left, with the convent at right. Note the possible headstones at right, in front of the cathedral (Harvey 1894:1).

property was needed to put the human remains into context.

During the mid-18th century, Harbour Grace had one of the largest over-wintering populations on the island. In 1754 for example, Harbour Grace had a winter population of 1375 people (larger than St. John's), and significantly, approximately half of them were Irish and Roman Catholic (Mannion 2022:190-191). However, the open practice of Roman Catholicism was illegal prior to 1784, with several people in Harbour Grace and the immediate area fined in the 1750s for such offences. After 1784, mass was held in the priest's house as no chapel or church existed.

In 1806, a new priest, Father Thomas Ewer arrived and set about constructing a chapel for the town's Roman Catholic population. This new structure was completed by the fall of 1810. The location of this original Roman Catholic chapel is unknown except for a couple sources. An admiralty chart from 1820 illustrates the structure as proximate to the project area (it also illustrates an adjacent priest's house and an additional building). An illustration by William Gosse in 1841 (drawn from the hill behind the town) places the structure at the eastern end of town, again in the approximate area of the existing cathedral. A plan from 1851 of the proposed Harvey Street is most telling, illustrating the "Catholic Chapel" and the "Proposed Site of New R.C. Chapel", confirming

that a pre-cathedral chapel structure stood at the study area (24.42 Figure 1).

A new church was planned from at least the summer of 1851. The cornerstone for this new stone cathedral was laid in June 1852 and construction began in 1856. To facilitate this construction, the St. Patrick's school was shifted southward (likely across the street), and the wooden chapel's 100-foot bell tower removed. There is evidence suggesting that a second chapel was constructed circa early 1850s and that its stone foundation was incorporated into the new cathedral (*Weekly Herald and Conception-Bay General Advertiser* 30 November 1853; Connolly 1986). Mapping from 1857 suggests that the pre-1850s (original?) priest's house remained up to that date and was later moved back onto the property. It also suggests that the first vestige of the cathedral contains only the nave and aisles, with the frontal towers, transept, and rear features added later.

Construction progress was slow however, and the structure was not finished until 1884 (24.42 Figure 2). Unfortunately, its life was short-lived, as it was destroyed by fire in 1889. Work on this new, second cathedral began almost immediately, and was consecrated in 1892 (24.42 Figure 3).

Based on the archival data, it is probable that the interments unearthed in November 2024 represent a Roman Catholic burial ground predating the



24.42 Figure 3: Undated image of the post-1892 cathedral.

Note the difference in the structure at left (priest's house), compared to that in Figure 2 (Dicks and Co. n.d.: 15).

c.1809 church and/or the c. 1802 Bennetts Lane cemetery. The nature of human interment in Harbour Grace for Roman Catholics prior to 1784 is unknown. The fact that the first church appears to have

been constructed on the site, could suggest that the property had an existing connection to the Roman Catholic population in the form of a burial ground.

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Identifying and Dating Wood Samples from the Cape Ray Shipwreck

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Memorial University

Wood samples from different components of the Cape Ray shipwreck were brought to the Northern EDGE Lab in the Department of Geography at Memorial University for identification and dating by Dr. Carissa Brown. The objectives of these analyses were to i) investigate the origin of the ship by identifying the species of trees harvested to construct the ship, and ii) age the tree samples through dendrochronological analyses.

Cross-sections of the wood samples were air dried and sanded with increasingly fine grit sandpaper to create a smooth surface for examination. For each ship component, the cell type, structure, and arrangement were examined and compared to wood identification guides. The ring width patterns of the shipwreck wood samples were measured on Velmex stage

system with 0.001mm accuracy ring widths using J2X dendrochronology software.

We have preliminarily identified four unique taxa of trees from the wood samples obtained from the Cape Ray shipwreck. The samples can only be identified to genus, not species, which makes it more challenging to assess whether the ship was of North American or European origin as all four genera are common in both regions. They are:

Ship beams: *Betula* (birch; Figure 1a)

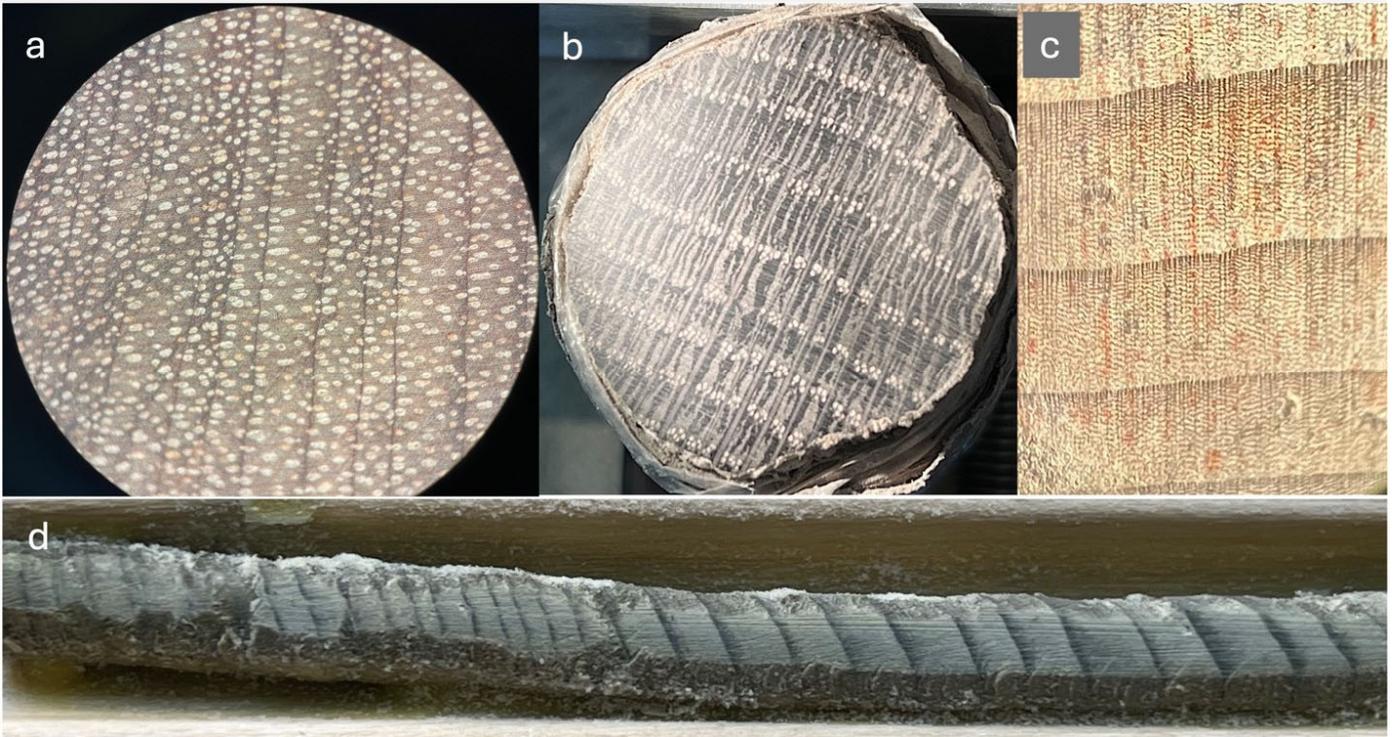
Tree nails: *Quercus* (oak; Figure 1b)

Outer hull: *Abies* (fir; Figure 1c)

Ship knees: *Larix* (larch / tamarack; Figure 1d)

While each of the genera identified from the samples have similar species occurring in both North America and Europe with very similar wood structure (i.e., difficult to tell apart; e.g., *Larix laricina* and *Larix decidua*), their use in the various components of the

Figure 1: Dried and sanded samples of the four different tree species collected from the shipwreck. Samples were a) birch (*Betula*) from a large beam; b) oak (*Quercus*) from a tree nail / peg; c) fir (*Abies*) from the outer hull; and d) larch/tamarack (*Larix*) from a ship knee.



ship lead us to suspect that they are North American in origin as they were all commonly used in north-eastern North American shipbuilding (e.g., yellow birch was used for shipbuilding in the Maritimes of Canada) and were easily accessible (e.g., larch is common in forests of Atlantic Canada but European larches likely would have been harvested from more mountainous regions).

The period that the trees grew has been more difficult to estimate. To explain the process, each year a tree puts on a ring of wood growth around its trunk. The width of that ring is dependent on many factors such as local and regional interannual variability in climate conditions, nutrient availability, and disturbance factors. The variation in interannual growth results in a sequential pattern of varying ring widths. Favourable years may result in wide rings while more challenging conditions may mean only a narrow ring of wood growth occurred. A pattern of growth in one tree is likely to occur in other trees of the same species in the same landscape and sometimes broader region. For example, four warm summers with sufficient moisture followed by three very cool and overcast summers would likely result in four wide rings followed by three narrow rings. If those conditions occurred across the Maritime region of Canada, then many individuals would exhibit that pattern, and we could use it as a marker to match and align samples. That process is called “crossdating”.

As of now, we have tree ring width chronologies for our wood samples and have attempted to crossdate them to samples of known ages previously collected by other researchers in Atlantic Canada. If we can align those distinctive patterns of narrow and wide rings of our unknown age sample with a known age sample, we can then estimate what years the tree grew. It follows that the ship was built sometime after the final year of tree growth, once the tree was harvested.

While there are long records of annual tree growth chronologies from North America and Europe, we have not yet found sufficient records to match with our samples. Our best lead was a centuries-long larch chronology reconstructed from wood samples from the Bay of Fundy by Dr. Colin Laroque and colleagues. Unfortunately, larch is known to respond more to very local conditions rather than broader regional patterns, and we were not able to

crossdate our unknown sample with the Bay of Fundy record. We continue to pursue other sources of tree ring chronologies and are still hopeful that we will be able to estimate the ship’s age.



The 2024 Season at the Vieux Fort (ChAl-04), Placentia

Calum Brydon
Memorial University



Figure 1: Map of Placentia showing the location of the Vieux Fort. Avalon Peninsula, Newfoundland, inset.

Background:
Plaisance and The Vieux Fort
The colony of Plaisance (1662-1713, modern-day Placentia) was the epicentre of the French cod fishery in Newfoundland during the 17th century (Landry 2001:20, 2008:20). The colony was valuable for a variety of reasons, but its access to cod-rich waters and wide cobble beaches ideal for drying fish were chief among these (Humphreys 1970:4–5). To preside over Plaisance’s security, a fort was established upon the founding of the colony in 1662, known today as the “Vieux Fort” (Proulx 1979:16). The fort was not located within the boundaries of the town but was instead built on Mount Pleasant, a hill overlooking Placentia and separated from it by the Orcan River (Figure 1). An early iteration of the fort already existed on the same site upon the arrival of 1662’s settlers, likely built during a failed

colonisation attempt in 1660, or at an earlier date by fishers (Crompton 2012:126; Proulx 1979:16–17).

The fort was inhabited and maintained by the community until 1690, when English forces from Ferryland, Newfoundland took Plaisance in an overnight raid, imprisoning its residents in the church and looting the town over a six-week period. It seems that the Vieux Fort was also destroyed at this time (Crompton 2012:156; Proulx 1979:24). After this raid, the Vieux Fort was replaced by several other fortifications throughout

the Placentia area, and the landscape on which it sits was never reoccupied. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, activity at the site was mainly limited to wood gathering, and possibly occasional gardening and animal grazing. A cabin was later built on the site during the 20th century, but was abandoned by the 1980s (Crompton 2012:177, 180; Gaulton and Carter 1997:9). Archaeological investigations of the Vieux Fort have taken place over five field seasons prior to this project. The site was first identified in 1996, and four seasons of intensive excavations at the fort’s barracks building (Structure A) were led by Dr. Amanda Crompton from 2001 to 2004; this forms the basis of her doctoral dissertation (Crompton 2012). Much of the site’s wider landscape was left untouched during this research (Crompton 2002, 2006; Crompton and Temple 2004, 2005; Gaulton and Carter 1997). As such, this project’s primary goals were to identify and characterise any additional structures at the Vieux

Fort, informing on the wider spatiality of the fort with reference to historical sources and previous archaeological work.

Relatively little is known about the structures that lay within the Vieux Fort throughout its life. The barracks was a large building (25.5m x 7.5m) that would have housed approximately 30 soldiers and officers, though they likely did not live at the fort on a full-time basis; soldiers seem to have often been housed by fishers in the town, for whom they worked to supplement their incomes (Crompton 2012:192, 2015:163). Besides the barracks, only one other partial structure (Structure B) has been identified. Structure B lies beneath the barracks, and likely represents an early iteration of the fort, possibly in place prior to Plaisance's official founding (Crompton 2012:126). Apart from these structures, there are references to the presence of a storehouse at the fort early in its lifetime, as it was captured by mutinying soldiers in 1663 and seemingly remained in use until at least the early 1670s (Crompton 2012:137). Some of the best descriptions of the fort's other buildings include "Quelques meschantes cabanes faites de pieux et d'escorce d'arbres" (De Bonne 1676: fol.50v, in Crompton 2012:213-214) and simply "les cabannes du fort" (Gillebert et al. 1690: fol. 301, in Crompton 2012:214).

Three cartographic depictions of the fort also exist. Two of these show far too little detail to be of substantial use (Crompton 2012:130), while the third has greatly exaggerated the size and defensive capabilities of the fort, with large stone bastions that were simply never present (Figure 2). This depiction must



Figure 2: Detail of a stylised depiction of the Vieux Fort (Anon [1662-1690]).

be considered cautiously, as it depicts the fort as being over ten times larger than its actual size (Crompton 2012:145), but a cross drawn outside one of the three buildings at the fort suggests that there may have been a structure capable of serving as a chapel at the site. In fact, there are letters showing that the absence of a chaplain at the fort was viewed poorly by the colony's governor in 1689 (Taylor-Hood 1999:78-79).



Figure 3: Research Assistant Gillian Wheaton recording metal detector hits with the RTK.

A stone well is located downhill from the barracks, though it is unclear whether it is associated with the fort or with later occasional use of the hillside (Crompton 2012:136; Gaulton and Carter 1997:8). Other small structures, such as a privy, would have been necessary, as would a cannon platform. In terms of actual defensive structures, archaeological evidence (or lack thereof) suggests that the fort was defended at most by a wooden palisade, which is also supported by the documentary record (Crompton 2012:142). It must also be noted that there do exist two plans of Plaisance produced between 1694 and 1697 in which a small gun battery is drawn on the site of the Vieux Fort. It is likely that this battery was constructed, but no archaeological trace of it has been identified (Crompton 2012:159, 162–163). The lack of clarity towards the number and whereabouts of the various structures within the Vieux Fort has made it difficult to fully understand the range of activities in which the soldiers at the fort would have been engaged. Therefore, we sought to address this problem by identifying and qualifying any structures around the fort to provide greater insight into their positions and functions.

Fieldwork and methods

Fieldwork was carried out at the Vieux Fort (ChAl-04) from May 6 to May 23, 2024. Our crew consisted primarily of undergraduate research assistant Gillian Wheaton and me; Dr. Barry Gaulton also accompanied us on our first visit to aid in locating the site and carrying out an initial pedestrian survey of the area.

The primary methodology of this project was a metal detector survey of a wide area (approximately 5400m²) around the site, as well as targeted test pitting in areas deemed to have high archaeological potential. Complementing these methods, drone-based mapping was also carried out, allowing for high-resolution aerial imagery that allowed accurate mapping of the site and the metal detector “hits” using Real Time Kinematic (RTK) equipment. Pedestrian survey was also conducted over as much of the site as possible and was able to reach many areas not conducive to metal detector survey. In total, approximately 12,000m² were covered during our pedestrian survey.

Drone data was collected using a DJI Mini 2 loaned by Memorial University’s Dr. Catherine Losier. Unfortunately, there are some inconsistencies in the orthomosaic imagery as the presence of tree cover throughout much of the site impeded the smooth stitching-together of photographs at times. Shadows are also visible in the imagery, as well as some “washing-out”, as the cloud cover broke during the mapping session. As the weather was uncooperative, we were unable to gather imagery that did not have these issues. However, the surveyed areas, and those that are not covered entirely by the forest, are clearly visible on the aerial map produced using the drone imagery.

Metal detector survey was carried out from May 7 to May 16 and included nearly all of the surveyable area surrounding the Vieux Fort. As the survey progressed, a pin flag was placed at each metal detector hit, which were subsequently recorded using the RTK by Wheaton. This RTK data collection allowed for the creation of a detailed map that shows the location of each individual hit.

Following our metal detector survey, 17 test pits (50cm x 50cm) were opened between May 16 and May 23. Their locations were informed by the metal detector survey, the surface-visible features scattered

around the site, and the locations of previously excavated test pits (Gaulton and Carter 1997; Crompton 2002). While not all areas surveyed showed exceptional potential, some are capable of providing substantial insight into the organisation and overall structure of the Vieux Fort.

Results

During the pedestrian survey, 14 surface-visible features (not including the barracks building) were identified and mapped using the RTK equipment (Figure 4). The majority were rubble piles, but a stone well feature, two pits, and a set of garden beds associated with the 20th-century cabin were also present. Additionally, the remains of the cabin were also located.

During the metal detector survey, 3714 metal detector hits were recorded. It should be noted that not all metal detector hits necessarily represent historic metal associated with the Vieux Fort (or subsequent use of the site); it is common for ground minerals to cause interference at times (Connor and Scott 1998:80). While many of the hits were associated with the previously investigated barracks and the 20th-century cabin, some interesting concentrations were also present elsewhere throughout the site (Figure 5). In particular, these were to the west of the barracks (C#1), west of the cabin (C#2), west of Feature 8 (C#3) and between Features 9, 10, and 11 (C#4). These areas, among others, were chosen as ideal for follow-up test pitting (Figure 6).

Two test pits (TPs #1 and #2) were opened north of Feature #1, the stone well. Besides a few wrought iron nails and recent glass sherds, neither yielded any artifacts. TP#1 was halted due to large stones running into its walls which impeded excavation. It is unclear whether this may represent a partial or collapsed feature. During the initial survey of the site in 1996, a post mould was discovered 5 metres to the west of the well (Gaulton and Carter 1997:8–9); it is plausible that another similar feature may have also been present to the well's north.

Four test pits (TPs #3, #4, #16, and #17) were opened to the south and west of the barracks, in order to investigate whether any small outbuildings directly servicing the barracks may have been present. TP#4, located within C#1, had some promise with several large nails, as well as a small fragment of window glass. This is rather notable, as window glass had never previously been identified at the Vieux Fort.

TPs #16 and #17, further to the southeast, contained only scattered earthenware sherds and a few nails, while TP#3, northeast of TP#4, was erroneously opened in a previously excavated unit and was back-filled once the plastic sheeting that had been placed below the topsoil was reached.

Five units were placed amidst a grassy clearing to the south of the barracks in which the 20th-century cabin is located. Previous research had characterised this as the likeliest place for a cannon platform (Crompton 2002:8–9). TP#5 and TP#12 were both placed within C#2 and were similar, with significant quantities of 20th-century material culture in the upper layers followed by some coarse earthenware and brick fragments below, alongside occasional wrought iron nails. A burning event (likely a fire pit) was present in TP#12 but was clearly associated with the cabin. TPs #13–15 were located to the south of the cabin. TP#13 produced only one artifact, a large wrought iron nail, while TP#15 yielded a pipe stem, some nails and a small Saintonge sherd. TP#14 contained only 20th-century bottle glass, refined earthenware, and one wrought iron nail.

TPs #6–8 were located in a small clearing 35 metres southeast of the barracks. These three test pits lay within C#4, and were surrounded by Features 9, 10, and 11, all rubble piles. TPs #6 and #8 were similar, with many nails and large flat rocks, as well as occasional small brick fragments. TP#7, however, was far more interesting. Alongside many wrought iron nails and spikes, a near complete red brick and a lead button with a bronze shank (Figure 7) were recovered. This was the largest assemblage of 17th-century structural material that we would encounter during the survey, as well as the most compelling individual artifact.

TPs #9–11 were located within C#3 and near Feature #8, another rubble pile. TP#9 and TP#11 contained some of the richer 17th-century artifact deposits on the site, with several nails and many sherds of tin-glazed earthenware and Saintonge earthenware. Two decorated pipe stem fragments and a sherd of wine bottle glass were also recovered from TP#11, while TP#9 contained approximately 30% of a yellow brick. Smaller yellow and red brick fragments were present in both units. Unfortunately, TP#10 was less promising, with only a few wrought iron nails recovered.

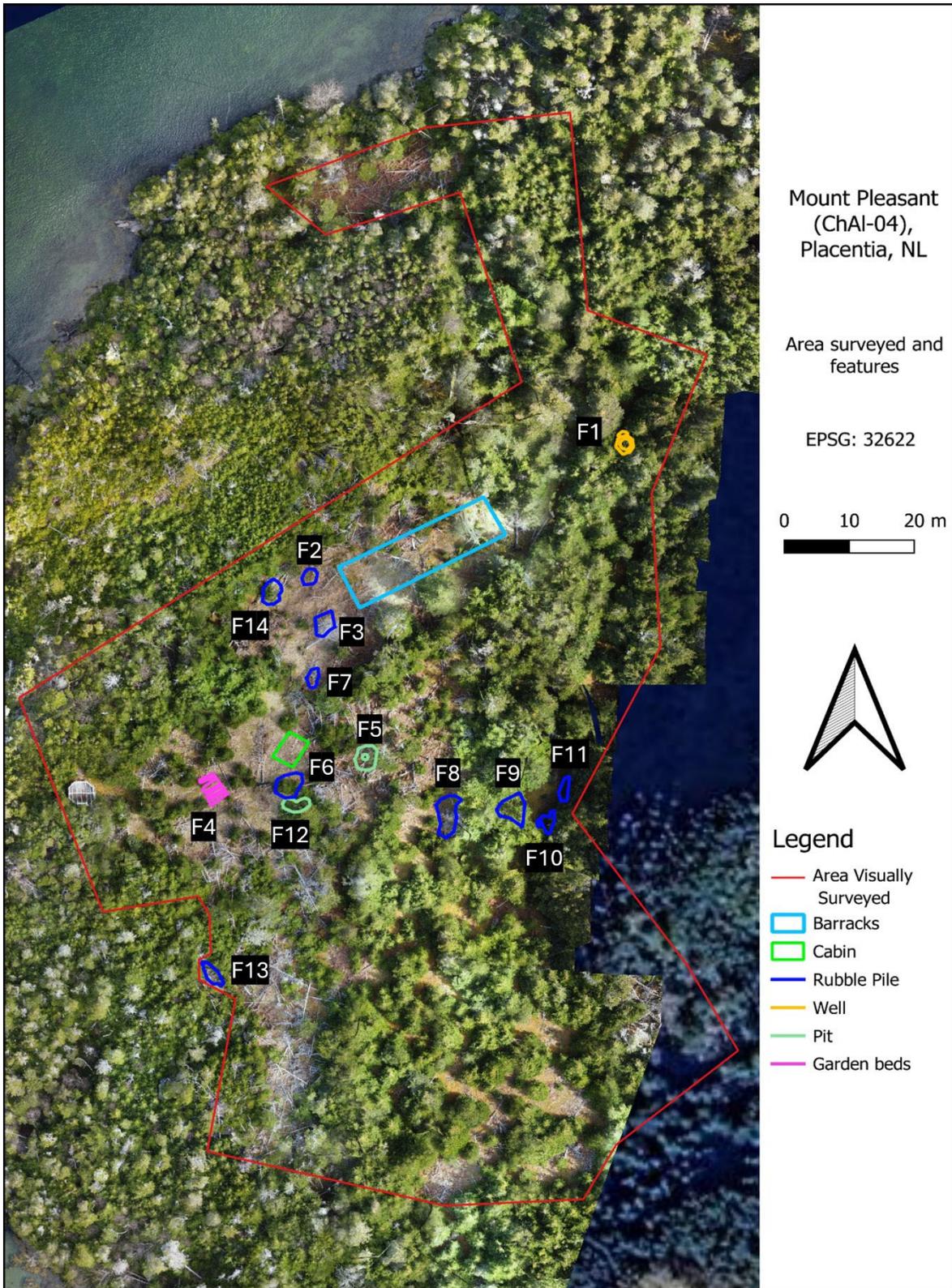


Figure 4: Drone imagery showing locations of surface-visible features on Mount Pleasant, and area visually surveyed in May 2024.

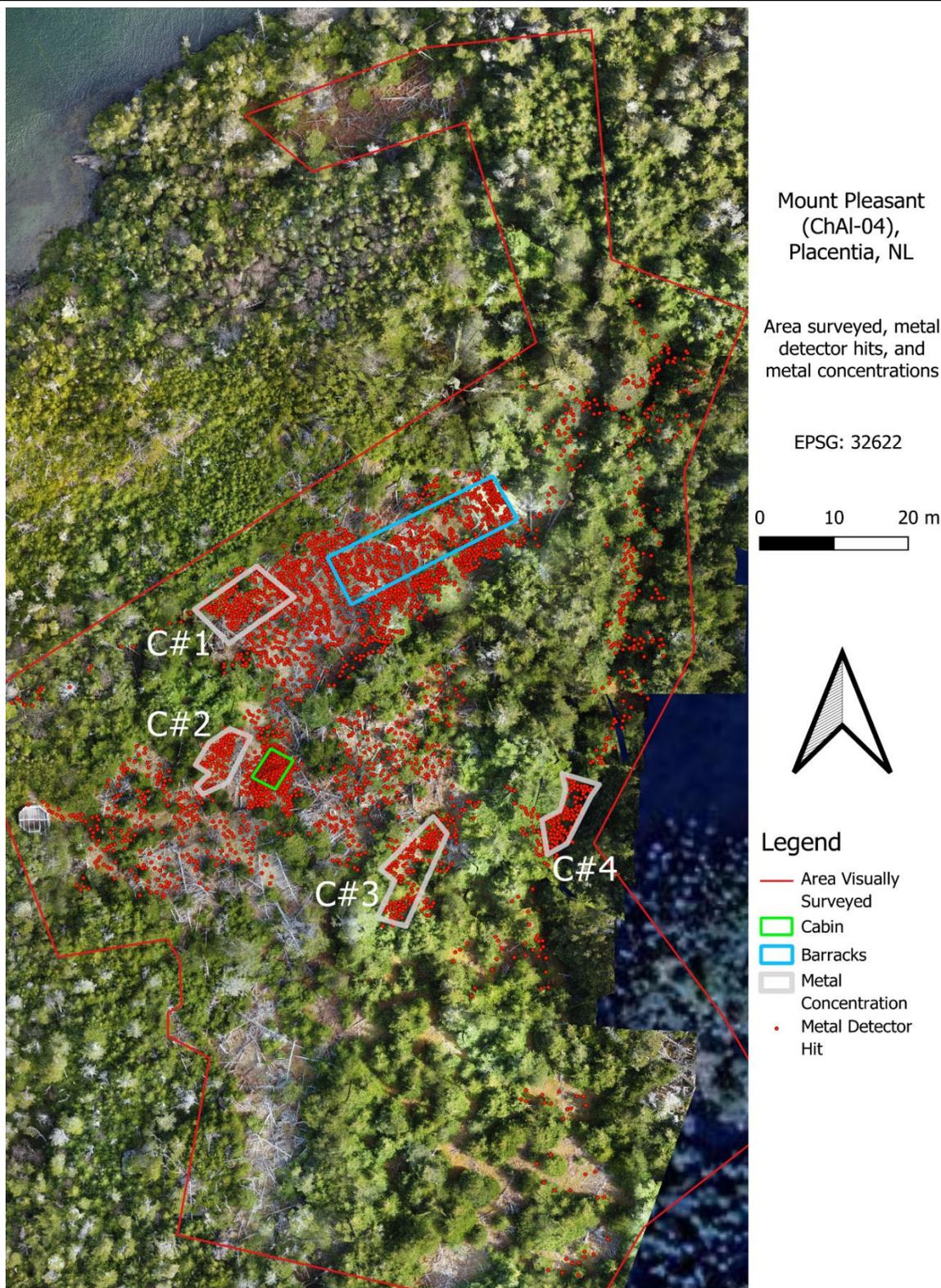


Figure 5: Drone imagery showing metal detector hits and metal concentrations on Mount Pleasant, May 2024.

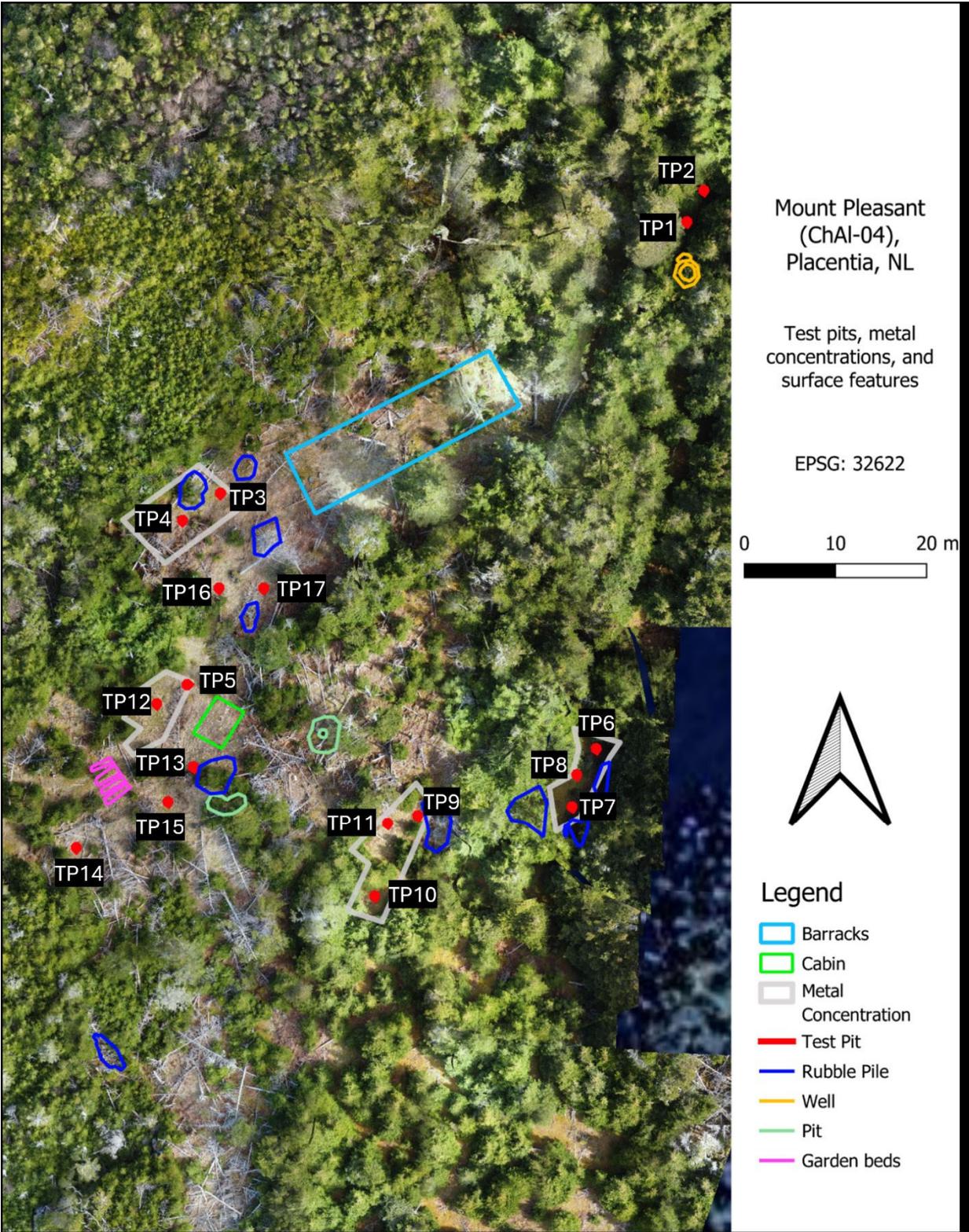


Figure 6: Drone imagery showing test pits, surface features, and metal concentrations at Mount Pleasant, May 2024.

Overall, these results were something of a mixed bag. While relatively significant accumulations of material culture were present in some test pits, many others saw only scattered artifacts and 20th-century material. While some interesting artifacts were recovered, no extant features were discovered through the test-pitting process. However, the test pits did still serve well to contextualise the results of the metal detector survey and outline some of the extent to which 20th-century use of Mount Pleasant has impacted on the archaeological contexts. Additionally, some of the test pits do hold implications that suggest the presence of previously unidentified structures at the Vieux Fort.

tial structural remains. The area around the well does still hold potential. Although this survey failed to locate any structural remains, the post mould discovered there in 1996 indicates that some structure must have been present there at some point (Gaulton and Carter 1997:8–9). This is perhaps more likely to be a trace of a gate or palisade than a building. Nearer the barracks, the large nails recovered from TP#4 suggest another small structure, but this test pit’s proximity to the barracks may suggest that the material culture recovered there was simply a product of the barracks’ collapse. The window glass recovered there does somewhat refute this, as none was found in contexts related to the barracks; however, this was a small frag-

Figure 7: Lead button with a bronze shank, recovered from TP #7, May 2024.



Interpretation: Structure Positions

Based on the results of our test pitting and surveys, a few conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, it seems evident that one or two previously unidentified structures are present in the vicinity of Features #8-11. These were the areas in which TPs #6-11, and Concentrations #3 and #4, were located. The highest concentrations of 17th-century material culture, and structural material in particular, were encountered in these areas. Whether this assemblage represents one large structure, or two smaller ones, is unclear; the wooded area between Concentrations #3 and #4 was not investigated, as the forest impeded consistent metal detector and RTK survey. It therefore remains to be seen whether these concentrations are in fact separate or contiguous, but further investigation in this area could serve to clarify this issue. Elsewhere, there is far less evidence for the presence of substan-

ment that may have simply blown towards the barracks from elsewhere on the site.

Previous research has indicated that the grassy meadow to the south of the barracks was likely the most advantageous location for a cannon platform, and we had hoped that the metal detector survey may lead us toward any iron nails that would have been used in the construction of a wooden platform, or to any loose cannon balls. Unfortunately, the influence of the 20th-century cabin seems more far-reaching than initially anticipated, blurring the results of the metal detector survey in this area. It is clear that many of our metal detector hits in this area (i.e. C#2) can be attributed to the cabin. Over the course of three field seasons including this one, test pitting has been undertaken across much of this grassy meadow, with none successfully locating the cannon platform (Crompton 2002:8–9; Gaulton and Carter

1997:9). One possibility yet to be explored is that the cabin may directly overlie the platform. There are also many wooded areas throughout the site that were not conducive to metal detector survey, which may house the remains of either a cannon platform or additional outbuildings associated with the fort.

Interpretation: Structure Functions

Some of our more compelling finds were the bricks in TPs #7 and #9. Brick was not commonly used in the construction of the fort's barracks and was only present *in situ* in one yellow brick fireback. The only feature composed of red brick is the Structure B hearth, located beneath and predating the barracks, although red bricks were occasionally used for repairs elsewhere (Crompton 2012:126, 207). Further investigations to determine whether hearths are present near these test pits could clarify whether or not these structures are storehouses, and inform on whether any additional structures not identified during this survey are also present. As mentioned in a previous section, the only building besides the barracks that is explicitly mentioned in the archival record is a storehouse; if this were not that storehouse, it would suggest that at least one additional building is also present at the site.

Elsewhere, if the assemblage recovered from TP#4 does indeed represent a small structure it seems reasonable that a small outbuilding, such as a privy or small storage space, would be well-placed near the primary domestic centre of the site. Of course, there would be no reason for a small utilitarian structure to have glass windows, which were expensive during the 17th century and are only known to have been present in two other instances in Plaisance – one in an 18th-century governor's residence, and the other in a midden deposit associated with both Fort Louis (the Vieux Fort's successor in Plaisance) and the residences of some of Plaisance's governors (Crompton 2012:213; Simmonds 2011:160). As mentioned above, it is far more likely that the window glass originated elsewhere on the site and was blown over to TP#4. Regardless, nobody living at or near the Vieux Fort should have had a social status comparable to that of a governor, so the window glass is not particularly likely to simply be a luxury item associated with a wealthy inhabitant. The reason for the presence of window glass at the fort therefore remains unclear, but someone associated with the fort's administration must have felt that at

least one building was worth some amount of investment.

Conclusions

Overall, this project has shown strong evidence for at least one additional structure, or group of structures, near TPs #6-11, with potential remaining for others across the site. Less convincing evidence elsewhere shows potential for at least one small structure near the barracks, possibly a privy or small storehouse, and another near the stone well. Follow-up excavations should be able to better quantify the extent of the remains of these structures. Unfortunately, we were unable to detect evidence of the fort's cannon platform in the grassy clearing to the south of the barracks; the platform may instead be located in an area with heavy tree cover, or beneath the 20th-century cabin. Despite this, we were able to better quantify the impacts of the cabin on the site, and there are still substantial portions of the fort that remain to be explored; employing LiDAR survey in future research may provide useful context in forested areas. Overall, this project has guided new information on the form of the Vieux Fort, while also ending a 20-year hiatus in archaeological research at the site.

Acknowledgements

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Preliminary Monitoring of Two Shipwrecks along the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland after Post-Tropical Storm Fiona

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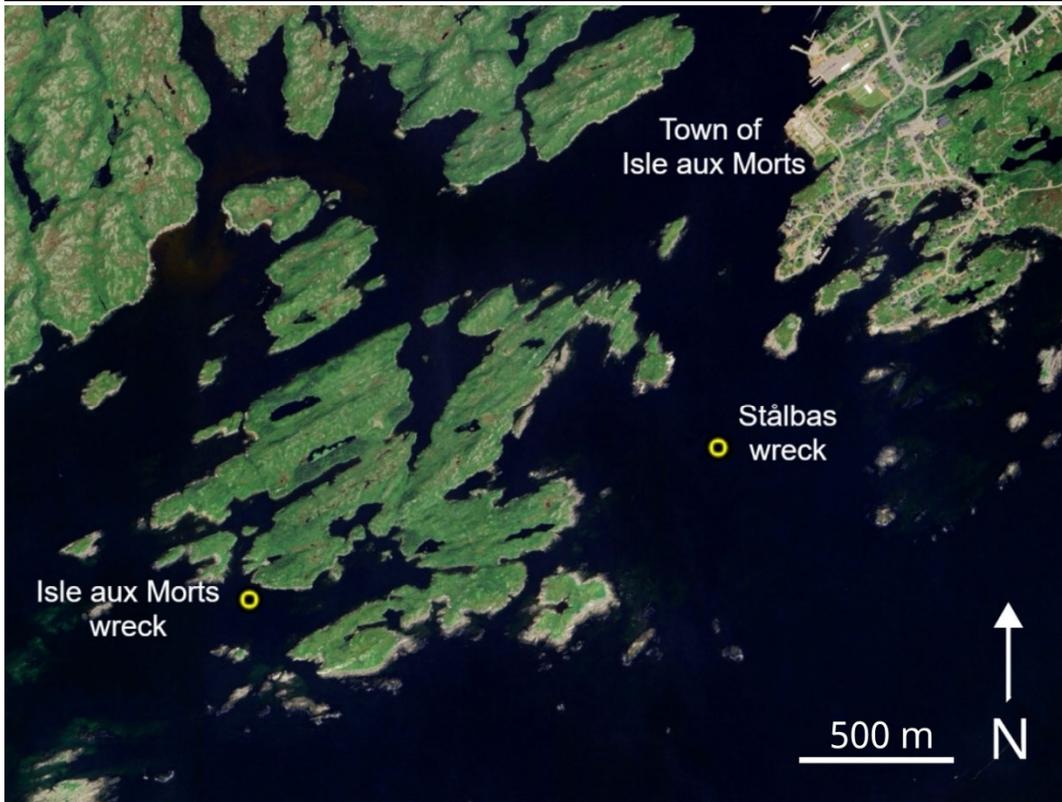


Figure 1: Map of the location of the Isle aux Morts shipwreck and the MFV *Stålbas* wreck near the town of Isle aux Morts on the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland.

Introduction

Many ships from Europe and North America have met their fate along the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland on their way in and out of the Gulf of St. Lawrence or crossing the Cabot Strait. Two examples are the 17th-century Isle aux Morts shipwreck (CjBs-01) and the 20th-century *Stålbas* shipwreck (ship's official no. 5100611), both located near the town of Isle aux Morts, Newfoundland & Labrador (Figure 1). Previous diver surveys of both shipwrecks produced site maps or photographic records of their condition. In August 2024, SPSNL divers carried out monitoring dives on both wrecks to assess their current condition and any changes over time to

the wreck sites. We were interested in monitoring changes in the condition of the shipwrecks that might be the result of climate change.

On September 24, 2022, post-tropical storm Fiona (commonly referred to as Hurricane Fiona in Newfoundland & Labrador) struck the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland. Fiona was the most powerful storm ever recorded in Atlantic Canada (based on barometric pressure). Maximum wind speeds at nearby Port aux Basques reached 134 km/h (ECCC MSC 2025) and offshore ocean wave heights averaged 17 m (DFO 2025).

Since both of the shipwrecks mentioned above are located on a south-facing shoreline, both wrecks may have been affected by the extremely rough seas and storm surge associated with Fiona. Assessing the possible impacts of Fiona was part of the motivation for these monitoring dives.

Background

The Isle aux Morts shipwreck was first discovered on November 26, 1981 by three recreational scuba divers from Port aux Basques, led by Wayne Mushrow (Mushrow 2021). The divers recovered several intact ceramic vessels, pewter tableware, some pieces of ship's rigging, several copper coins and a marine as-

trolabe made of brass (Smith 1984). The French coins were dated 1638 and the astro-labe was inscribed 1628. An initial archaeo-logical survey in 1982 by the Newfoundland Marine Archaeology Society (NMAS) con-firmed the wreck site was a wooden sailing ship (the hull mostly buried in sand) with four iron cannons and four anchors exposed on the seabed (NMAS 1983). The NMAS returned in 1983 and conducted a more de-tailed mapping survey of the wreck site and excavated a small test trench (4 m²) near the bow of the ship (Smith 1984). They recov-ered and recorded 170 artifacts, mostly made of wood, leather, ceramic, metal or fiber.

Wayne Mushrow recovered a second marine astro-labe (dated 1617) from the wreck site in late summer 1983 (Mushrow 2021). Based on analysis of the lim-ited collection of artifacts collected in 1981 and 1983, Dieulefet (2018) suggested that the sailing ship was probably Basque in origin with a crew of possibly 40-50 sailors.

The MFV *Stålbas* was originally built as the steel-hulled whaling steamship *Gos 1* in Tønsberg, Norway in 1927 (skipshistorie.net 2025). In 1941, it served in the Norwegian Royal Navy as the patrol ship KNM *Moss* and was used for training sailors at Camp Norway in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. In 1945, it reverted back to its role as a Norwegian whaler named *Gos 1*. In 1955, it was sold, refitted with diesel engines and converted to a Norwegian purse seiner, renamed MFV *Eldjarn* (Figure 2). In 1970, *Eldjarn* was sold again, lengthened to 46 m and fitted with a new wheelhouse. In 1974, the Norwegian trawler was sold once again and re-named MFV *Stålbas* (Skipshistorie.net 2025). On July 3, 1974, *Stålbas* struck a rock and sank at the entrance to Isle aux Morts harbour, Newfound-land (Lloyd's 1975).

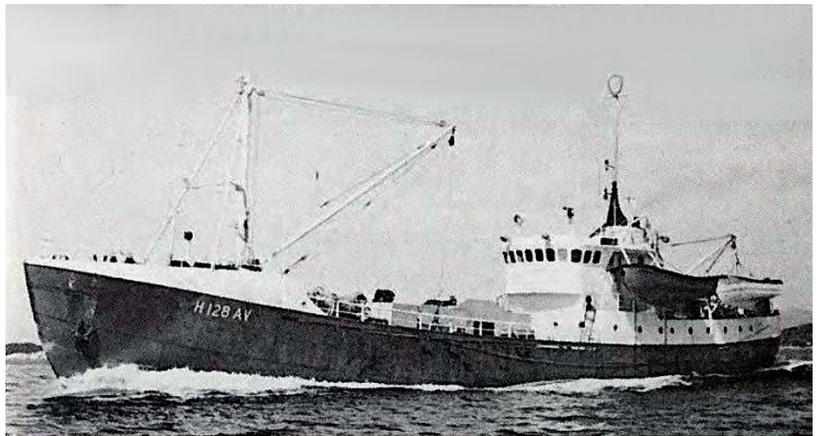
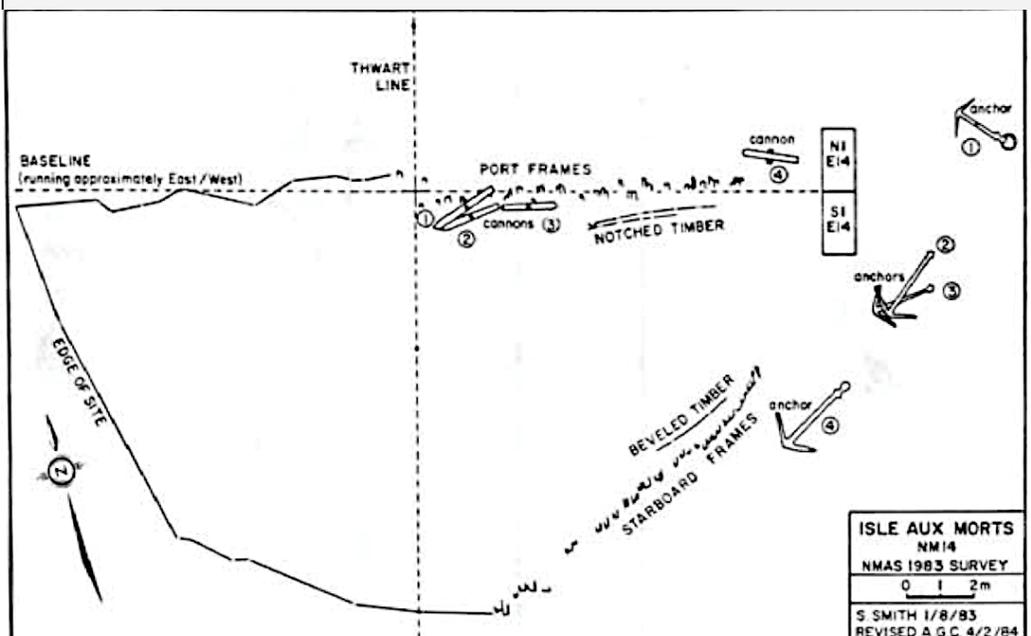


Figure 2: Photo of MFV *Eldjarn* which was later renamed MFV *Stålbas* (photo: Wrecksite.eu 2025).

Isle aux Morts Shipwreck Site (CjBs-01) in 1983

The NMAS site map of the Isle aux Morts shipwreck shows the location of four iron cannons, four anchors and the excavated test trench (Figure 3) (NMAS 1984). The depth of the wreck underwater was 11 m. The test trench was filled with sandbags (containing gravel) once the excavation was complet-ed in 1983. The site map also shows the locations of ship's timbers exposed on the seabed. NMAS divers probed the site with metal rods to determine the spa-tial extent of the buried shipwreck. Probing revealed that the sand and gravel burying the hull varied in depth from 0 – 1.5 m and that the buried shipwreck

Figure 3: Site map of the Isle aux Morts shipwreck (CjBs-01) produced by the Newfound-land Marine Archaeology Society (NMAS) based on their 1983 diver surveys (Smith 1984).



was approximately 26.5 m in length and up to 13 m wide (NMAAS 1984).

MFV *Stålbas*

Shipwreck Site in 2013

Recreational divers (including the author) explored and photographed the wreck of the MFV *Stålbas* on October 1, 2013, as part of a Newfoundland scuba expedition hosted by dive operator Ocean Quest Adventures. The wreck was 15 m deep on a sand and gravel seabed. The hull, deck and forward mast of the steel shipwreck were intact but the wheelhouse of the ship appeared



Figure 4: The bow of the MFV *Stålbas* shipwreck in 2013, showing the list of the wreck approximately 45° to its port side (photo: Jack Papes).

to be missing. The wreck was rolled approximately 45° on its port side (Figure 4) with the cargo boom laying off the port side of the ship (Figure 5). Much of the shipwreck was draped in large fishing nets, presumably carried on the deck of the ship when it sank in 1974.

Diver Surveys of the Shipwrecks in 2024

SPSNL divers did two dives on the Isle aux Morts shipwreck site on August 31, 2024. We located the

four cannons, and three of the four anchors mapped by the NMAAS in 1983 (Figure 6). The fourth anchor may have been obscured by extensive seaweed growth on the wreck site. Ship’s timbers were visible beneath the cluster of three cannons (Figure 7).

SPSNL divers did one monitoring dive on the MFV *Stålbas* shipwreck site on August 31, 2024. It was immediately apparent that the entire shipwreck was now rolled approximately 45° on its starboard side (Figure 8). There was significant damage to the forecastle of the ship. However, many features of the shipwreck, such as the hatch covers, deck machinery and cargo boom, were still present. The cargo boom was now laying off the starboard side of the ship (Figure 8). Large fishing nets were still draped over parts of the shipwreck.

Limitations

Diving operations were limited to a single day due to logistical constraints. We were able to collect photo-

Figure 5: The bow of the MFV *Stålbas* shipwreck in 2013, showing the cargo boom (the horizontal spar just below the diver on the right) laying off the port side of the ship (photo: Jack Papes).



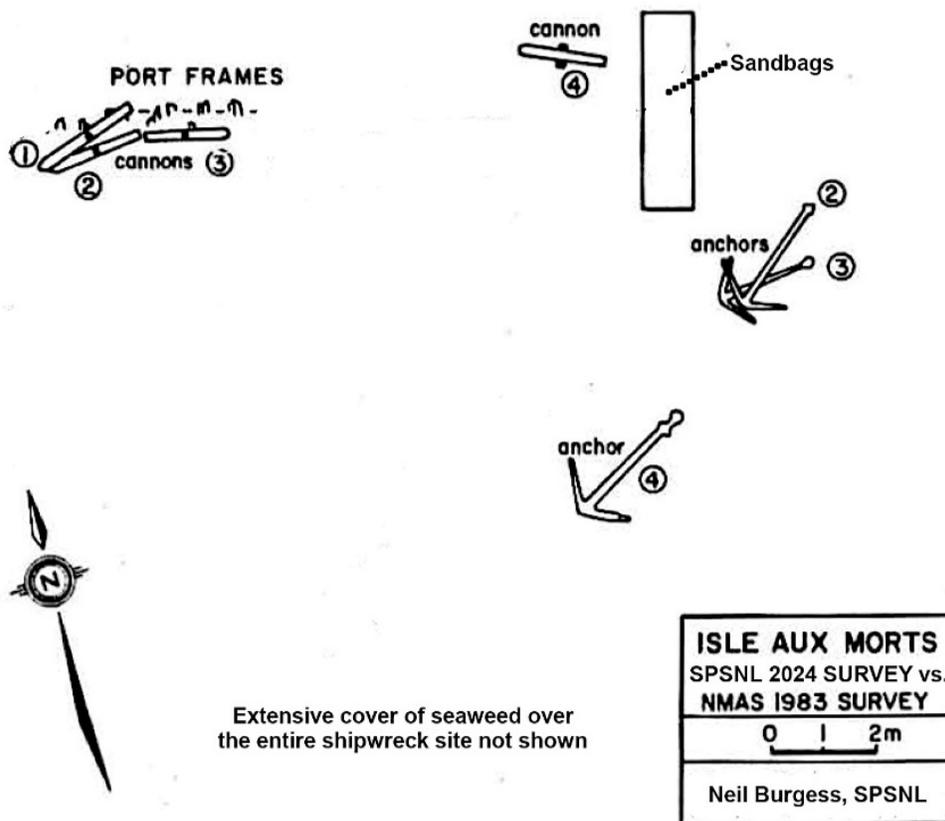


Figure 6: Map of obvious features on the Isle aux Morts shipwreck site based on a visual survey by SPSNL divers in 2024 (map: Neil Burgess SPSNL).

graphs and conduct rapid visual surveys of the two shipwreck sites. However, more intensive mapping or photogrammetry surveys were not possible in the time available. We acknowledge that our monitoring surveys were conducted 23 months after post-tropical storm Fiona. Surveys done sooner after Fiona would have established the impacts of the storm with greater certainty.

Interpretation and Discussion

Climate change can have several potential impacts on underwater shipwrecks (Perez-Alvaro 2016). Warmer ocean temperatures will accelerate chemical and biological decomposition of wood and metal shipwrecks. Warmer ocean temperatures around Newfoundland & Labrador may also increase the abundance and distribution of wood-boring invertebrates like the shipworm (*Teredo navalis*), which has an optimal seawater temperature range of 15 - 25°C (Ho 2013). Higher concentrations of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) will drive higher CO₂ concentrations in seawater, which will result in ocean acidification. Acidification will speed up the corrosion of metal components of

shipwrecks (Perez-Alvaro 2016). Increasing coastal erosion, due to climate change, will also lead to the exposure of buried shipwrecks, particularly along sandy shorelines. Lastly, the increase in severe storm events and reductions in sea-ice cover will amplify the impacts of wave action on submerged and littoral shipwrecks. We will focus on the potential impacts of severe storm events in the discussion below.

As previously described, post-tropical storm Fiona resulted in extremely large ocean swells striking the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland from

the south. The energy in these huge waves not only pummeled the shoreline but would have also affected submerged shipwrecks along the coastline.

A review of some basic physics associated with ocean waves will help us understand the potential impacts of extreme storms on shipwrecks. Using deep-water wave data from the offshore Banquereau Bank meteorological buoy on September 24, 2022 during post-tropical storm Fiona, the average wave height was 17 m with an average wave period (T) greater than 10 s (DFO 2025). From this, an average wavelength (L) of 156 m can be calculated ($L = 1.56 * T^2$) (Pinet 2021). Wave energy from these 17 m high waves would be expected to reach down through the water column to a depth of 78 m ($1/2 * L$). As the seabed became shallower than 78 m closer to shore, the wave heights, periods and wavelengths would have all decreased as the waves slowed down. During Fiona, the huge waves close to shore still carried tremendous wave energy reaching all the way down to the seabed.



Figure 7: Ship's timbers visible beneath a cluster of three cannons on the Isle aux Morts shipwreck site in 2024 (photo: Neil Burgess SPSNL).

First consider the MFV *Stålbas* shipwreck located in Isle aux Morts harbour at a depth of 15 m. This wreck is very exposed to ocean swells from the south and southeast, as can be seen in Figure 1. The islands on either side of the entrance to Isle aux Morts harbour would have provided only limited protection from the huge waves produced by Fiona. We propose that these huge storm waves were the force that rolled the *Stålbas* wreck (which weighs hundreds of tons) from the list of 45° to port observed in 2013 to the list of 45° to starboard observed in 2024. We also suggest that Fiona

was responsible for swinging the large cargo boom from the port to the starboard side of the wreck.

Hurricanes have caused significant damage to shipwrecks around the world. In a review of hurricane damage to 37 shipwrecks in the USA, Gearhart et al. (2011) found that hurricanes had caused structural damage to 65% of the wrecks, lateral displacement of 24% and rolling of 19% of the wrecks. They also found that hurricanes could scour sediment away to expose shipwrecks, or in other cases, bury

shipwrecks under newly deposited sediment. In one case, the USS *Spiegel Grove* was a 155-m-long steel

Figure 8: Photo looking forward on the MFV *Stålbas* shipwreck in 2024, showing the list of the wreck to starboard approximately 45°. The cargo boom (the horizontal spar behind the diver) is laying off the starboard side of the ship (photo: Neil Burgess SPSNL).



warship that was sunk at a depth of 40 m off the Florida Keys. Hurricane Dennis in 2005 rolled the warship almost 90° from resting on its starboard side to upright on the seabed (Gearhart et al. 2011). *Spiegel Grove* was a much larger, heavier shipwreck at a much greater depth than *Stålbas*. In modeling the currents produced at the seabed by huge waves caused by hurricanes, Gearhart et al. (2011) likened the back-and-forth lateral currents produced to those in a washing machine. The change in speed of the back-and-forth currents on the seabed as each wave passed overhead could be as much as 16 km/h (i.e., 12 km/h forward current followed by 4 km/h backward current) every 8 or 10 s, which would exert huge forces on a shipwreck like the *Stålbas* that protruded 5 m or more off the seabed.

Let us now consider the Isle aux Morts shipwreck. Except for the exposed cannons and anchors, it was almost completely buried in the sand and gravel seabed. The wreck site lies in the bottom of a narrow gulch (running east and west) with steep bedrock walls on either side (Smith 1984). As can be seen in Figure 1, a cluster of a dozen rocky islets and shoals protect the wreck site from rough seas from the south and Isle aux Morts blocks waves coming from the southeast. Our monitoring dives in 2024 found the features of the shipwreck almost exactly as they were mapped in 1983 by the NMAS (Figs. 3 & 6). The extent of burial of the shipwreck and the exposure of the cannons and anchors were the same. Based on these observations, we suggest that the protection provided by the seaward islets to the south and the rocky walls of the gulch was sufficient to prevent the huge waves caused by Fiona to reach the wreck site. We also acknowledge that it is possible that Fiona may have scoured or deposited some sediment on the wreck, and that the site has returned to its pre-Fiona state through normal sediment dynamics. However, the unchanging location and exposure of the cannons and anchors would argue against significant scouring of sediment from the site during Fiona.

Gearhart et al. (2011) highlighted two factors that have a large influence on the severity of hurricane impacts on shipwrecks: i) the local bathymetry (seabed topography) around a shipwreck, and ii) the orientation and exposure of the shipwreck vs. the direction of travel of the storm swells/waves. Our find-

ings support the importance of local bathymetry protecting the Isle aux Morts wreck, while also exposing the *Stålbas* wreck to the effects of Fiona. We also found that the *Stålbas* wreck, which sat 5 m or more above the seabed, was probably more impacted by Fiona than the buried Isle aux Morts shipwreck.

It is worth noting that post-tropical storm Fiona may have also played a role in the discovery of an unnamed wooden hull of a large 19th-century sailing ship near Cape Ray, Newfoundland in January 2024 (see Brake et al. in this Review). Examination of the hull timbers revealed very little damage caused by shipworm (*Teredo*), which suggested that the hull had been buried in the seabed until recently. If the hull was buried in the seabed somewhere along the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland, it is conceivable that Fiona may have scoured the sediment burying the hull in 2022 and subsequent storms eventually deposited the hull on the beach beside Cape Ray in early 2024.

There is at least one other shipwreck on the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland that was probably impacted by Fiona. The wreck of the 142-m-long Cunard ocean liner RMS *Ascania* lies in only 10 m of water off Petites, Newfoundland. This wreck site is even more exposed to southerly swells than the *Stålbas* wreck. The features of this broken-up shipwreck (observed in 2013) included two large Scotch boilers, two propeller shafts, a steam engine, two large steering quadrants and a densely-packed debris field. We suspect Fiona may have scattered and damaged many of these features in 2022. SPSNL is planning to return to this wreck site in 2025 to conduct a monitoring survey.

Severe storms associated with climate change pose a significant threat to underwater cultural heritage around the world. Maritime archaeologists can play a crucial role in documenting and investigating shipwreck sites before they may be damaged or destroyed by severe storm events. This report is a small step forward in that effort in Newfoundland & Labrador.

Project Outcomes

Through this project, SPSNL has met its goals of locating, documenting and promoting public awareness of historically significant shipwrecks near Isle aux Morts. Outcomes include:

1. conducting historical research on both shipwrecks,
2. assembling a diving and support team to successfully survey and photograph the wrecks in August 2024,
3. liaising with community experts to incorporate local knowledge into our surveys,
4. assessing the probable impacts of post-tropical storm Fiona on these two shipwreck sites, and
5. producing this report of our findings.

Next Steps

There are several activities which SPSNL is planning for the future:

1. fundraising and planning to carry out better surveys of these shipwrecks,
2. further monitoring of climate change impacts on these and other shipwreck sites in Newfoundland & Labrador,
3. sharing our findings at the 2025 conference of the Canadian Archaeological Association,
4. continuing our public education activities on our website and social media channels, and
5. continuing our partnership with local community experts to encourage the stewardship of these archaeological sites.

Acknowledgements

SPSNL thanks our volunteer members who donated their time and energy to historical research, shipwreck documentation, community liaison and running the organization. We especially thank Jamie Keeping and Max Lefrense for sharing their local knowledge of these wreck sites and for providing invaluable support to our diving operations. We gratefully acknowledge the past study of the Isle aux Morts shipwreck by the NMAS. Our diver surveys were carried out under an archaeological investigation permit from the Provincial Archaeology Office.

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Recovery and Conservation of an Artifact from the RCAF Liberator Bomber Wreck (DfAp-04) in Gander Lake

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Introduction
 In June 2022, Kirk Regular from the Marine Institute and the Shipwreck Preservation Society of Newfoundland & Labrador (SPSNL) located the wreck of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Liberator bomber 589 “D” (Borden no. DfAp-04) on the bottom of Gander Lake using a multibeam echosounder (Burgess et al. 2023). The search area for the multibeam survey was developed from years of historical research done on the Liberator crash by SPSNL member Tony Merkle. The bomber crashed into the lake shortly after take-off just after midnight on September 4, 1943. All four

RCAF aircrew on board were killed in the crash, including Wing Commander John Maitland Young (the commanding officer of No. 10 Bomber Reconnaissance (BR) Squadron), Squadron Leader John Grant MacKenzie, Flying Officer Victor Edward Bill and Leading Aircraftman Gordon Ward (RCAF 1943). Only the body of Squadron Leader MacKenzie was recovered from the bomber wreck by Royal Canadian Navy divers in 1943.

In 2024, members of the SPSNL set out to recover an artifact from the bomber wreck for eventual display in the North Atlantic Aviation Museum (NAAM) in Gander.

Figure 1: Site map of RCAF Liberator bomber wreck site in Gander Lake (DfAp-04) from 2022 diver surveys (from Burgess et al. 2023). The wreck site extends beyond the area shown and has yet to be fully recorded. Locations of the outlying objects are approximate. Portions of this drawing are adapted from Liberator GR Mk. V (Canada) plans contained in Vincent (1975). The bombardier’s bomb release interval control box is located at the nose of the bomber wreck (label #5).

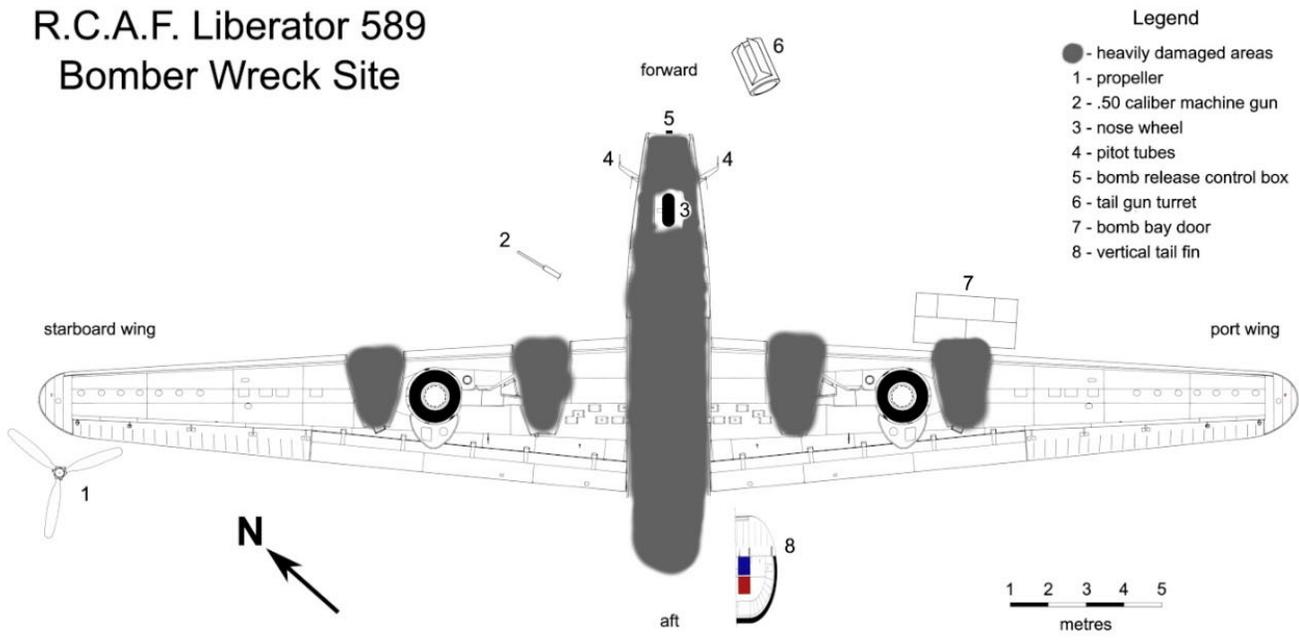




Figure 2: Bomb release interval control box in the open nose of the bomber wreck. Frame from video: 2022 Maxwell Hohn.

Defence (DND) to inform them of our survey of the RCAF bomber wreck and to seek approval for the recovery of an artifact. A DND representative replied that their approval was not required and that we should obtain a permit for archaeological activities on the bomber wreck from the Provincial Archaeology Office (Lockyer 2023).

Media Interest

While SPSNL was planning the diving activities for 2024, we were contacted by the TV production company Attraction and they expressed interest in filming our dives on the bomber wreck in Gander Lake for season 3 of their popular TV show “East Harbour Heroes”. They also suggested that we add two commercial divers (Mike Taylor and Alex MacLaggan) to our dive team. These commercial divers would dive with helmets that provide a full-time video feed and two-way voice communications with the support boats on the surface, which would increase the safety of our diving operations. The TV crew from Attraction shot video of the entire diving operation on the surface of Gander Lake and conducted interviews with several members of the dive and support teams. Underwater video and photographs taken by the SPSNL and commercial divers were shared with the TV crew.

Background

Background information on RCAF Liberator bomber 589 “D”, its crew, the crash and initial recovery efforts in 1943, and the SPSNL wreck surveys in 2022 are provided by RCAF (1943) and Burgess et al. (2023). The 2022 diver surveys resulted in an initial site map of the bomber wreck (Figure 1). During these survey dives, it was apparent that the plane wreck was upside-down on the lake bottom with the wings intact, the landing gear partially extended and the fuselage heavily damaged. Nonetheless, we identified and recorded the location of the bombardier’s bomb release interval control box (or intervalometer) (Consolidated Aircraft 1942) at the nose of the plane wreck (Figure 2).

After the 2022 surveys were completed, members of SPSNL realized that the bomb release control box could be recovered from the bomber wreck and might be an ideal artifact to exhibit in the NAAM, to help tell the wartime story of No. 10 (BR) Squadron and this bomber crash at Gander. Discussions with representatives from NAAM and the Conservation Laboratory at the Department of Archaeology at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) resulted in support and a team to move this project forward. SPSNL also contacted the Department of National

expressed interest in filming our dives on the bomber wreck in Gander Lake for season 3 of their popular TV show “East Harbour Heroes”. They also suggested that we add two commercial divers (Mike Taylor and Alex MacLaggan) to our dive team. These commercial divers would dive with helmets that provide a full-time video feed and two-way voice communications with the support boats on the surface, which would increase the safety of our diving operations. The TV crew from Attraction shot video of the entire diving operation on the surface of Gander Lake and conducted interviews with several members of the dive and support teams. Underwater video and photographs taken by the SPSNL and commercial divers were shared with the TV crew.

2024 Diving Activities

Two decompression dives on the Liberator bomber wreck were carried out on September 28 and 29, 2024. On the first dive, we hoped to locate the bomber’s serial number painted on the port-side fuselage near the nose of the aircraft and the bomb release control box at the nose of the plane. Unfortunately, the port-side fuselage near the nose was extensively damaged and the area with the serial number was missing. Subsequent search for the bomb release control box was unsuccessful in the time remaining



Figure 3: SPSNL diver Neil Burgess stopping to decompress on his way to the surface with the bomb release interval control box from the Liberator bomber in Gander Lake. Photo: 2024 Chris Power.

on the first dive. On the second dive the following day, the bomb release control box was located at a depth of 41 m, the electrical wires attaching it to the nose of the aircraft were cut and the control box was successfully brought to the surface (Figure 3). The box was immediately wrapped in wet cloth and immersed in a plastic container filled with lakewater.

Fieldwork Limitations

Diving operations faced the combined challenges of limited visibility on the bomber wreck (approx. 3 m), nitrogen narcosis at depth and limited dive times (see Burgess et al. (2023) for a more complete discussion of diving conditions). We chose to limit the length of our decompression dives to 20 minutes of bottom time, which required a further 20 minutes of decompression time on the ascent. The limited visibility and nitrogen narcosis made route-finding around the wreck site and artifact re-

covery more time consuming than normal. There was no time available on either dive to conduct further surveys of the bomber wreck site.

Control Box Description and Conservation Treatment

The bomb release interval control box (artifact DfAp-04-01; US Army Air Force type AN-B3) was delivered to the Conservation Laboratory at the Department of Archaeology at MUN on October 1, 2024. The control box measured 23 cm in length, 12 cm in width and 9 cm in height. The front face of the box had two rotary dials, one toggle switch and an orange indicator light (Figure 4). The top face of the box had a small metal manufacturer’s plate. The bottom face of the box had a screw-on white metal electrical connector with four electrical wires. The front faceplate of the box was 99.5 % copper and 0.5% iron, as determined by portable X-ray fluorescence (pXRF; Tracer 5i, Bruker Corp., Billerica, MA, USA), and was painted black. The other five sides of the box appeared to be made of black Bakelite (or similar plastic resin) and were held together with 12 steel bolts. The steel and white metal components of the control box showed heavy corrosion from 81 years of immersion in the acidic waters of Gander Lake.

The conservation treatment of the control box focused on multiple water changes, mechanical removal of metal corrosion, chemical reduction of the copper alloy corrosion and iron staining, and con-

Figure 4: Bomb release interval control box (artifact DfAp-04-01) from Liberator bomber 589 “D” before conservation treatment. Photo: 2024 Neil Burgess.





Figure 5: Bomb release interval control box (artifact DfAp-04-01) from Liberator bomber 589 “D” after conservation treatment. Photo: 2025 Donna Teasdale.

could easily be removed without further disturbing the bomber wreck site, which we considered a war grave.

The successful recovery of the bomb release interval control box from the Liberator bomber wreck required the use of decompression diving techniques because of the depth of the wreck in Gander Lake. The wreck’s depth puts it right at the lower depth limit (40 m) for recreational scuba divers. The wreck’s depth and very limited water visibility significantly reduce the risk of looting of the wreck site by recreational divers (see Burgess et al. (2023) for

trolled air drying. While still wet, the iron concretion was removed from the rotary steel dials and bolt heads using a scalpel and dental picks. The thick lead carbonate corrosion was also mechanically removed from the white-metal electrical connector, which was then coated in microcrystalline wax. A mixture of sodium dithionite, water and ethanol was used as a reducing agent to inhibit further copper and iron oxidation and to remove iron staining from the control box. The control box was then control dried. Once dry, friable areas of black paint were stabilized with Beva D-8 Dispersion™ (Conservator’s Products Co., Flanders, NJ, USA). To improve the appearance of the faceplate, a matte medium mixed with carbon black pigment was applied to areas of paint loss. Figure 5 shows the bomb release interval control box after conservation treatment was completed in January 2025. More details on the conservation treatment of the control box can be found in Teasdale (2025).

Interpretation and Discussion

We chose the bomb release interval control box for recovery, since we realized after our previous dives on the bomber wreck in 2022 that the control box

further discussion of risks to the archaeological site).

Immersion of the control box in the acidic freshwater of Gander Lake resulted in significant corrosion of its metal components. It also probably caused the loss of the thin metal plate with markings that was originally part of the larger rotary dial on the faceplate (Figure 6). We did not attempt to open the control box to examine its electrical components. The steel bolts holding the box together were too corroded to unscrew.

SPSNL has plans for additional non-disturbance sonar and dive surveys of this bomber wreck site. If the needed funding can be raised, we would like to use sidescan sonar to obtain higher resolution imagery of the plane wreck and outlying parts. This combined with future diving surveys would enable us to accurately map the entire wreck site and identify additional parts of the aircraft. SPSNL would also like to collect additional video of the bomber wreck that is suitable for interpreting the site to the public. Finally, we would like to confirm that this plane wreck is RCAF Liberator 589 “D” by locating

unique serial numbers or identification markings on the remains of the bomber.

The recovery of the bomb release interval control box from this RCAF bomber wreck provides a unique opportunity to raise public awareness of the important role played by Canadian airmen in protecting Allied shipping and attacking German U-boats in the Battle of the Atlantic. It brings home the dangers faced by operational aircrews flying out of Newfoundland & Labrador in the Second World War. We look forward to working with the NAAM to achieve this outcome.

Project Outcomes

Through this project, SPSNL has met its goals of locating, documenting and promoting public awareness of a historically significant plane wreck in Gander Lake. Outcomes include:

1. conducting years of historical research on this RCAF bomber, its crew and the crash in 1943,
2. assembling a technical diving team to successfully recover the artifact from this plane wreck in September 2024,
3. collaborating with Attraction to record this artifact recovery for future TV broadcast on “East Harbour Heroes”,
4. completing the conservation treatment of the artifact at MUN,
5. sharing photos of this project on social media and radio to increase public awareness of this wartime plane wreck and appreciation of its importance to provincial heritage,
6. participating in interviews for the news media and documentary filmmakers to further raise public awareness,
7. strengthening our existing partnerships with the North Atlantic Aviation Museum and the Dept. of Archaeology at MUN, and
8. producing this report of our findings.

Next Steps

There are several activities which SPSNL is planning for the future:

1. further historical research on this bomber wreck and its crew,
2. fundraising to carry out future sidescan sonar surveys of this plane wreck,
3. further non-disturbance diving surveys to explore, record and map the entire plane wreck site (and hopefully conclusively identify the wreck as Liberator 589),
4. continue our public education activities on our website and social media channels, and
5. continue our partnership with the North Atlantic Aviation Museum to create a suitable museum exhibit to tell the story of this artifact.

Acknowledgements

SPSNL thanks our volunteer members who donated their time and energy to the historical research, wreck photography, community liaison and running the organization. We thank Attraction for their valuable support and interest in this project and for helping us share the story of this Liberator bomber and its crew. We also thank commercial divers Mike Taylor and Alex MacLaggan for their enthusiasm and participation in the diving operations. We thank New Found

Figure 6: Photo of a similar bomb release interval control box (US Army Air Force type AN-B3), showing the thin metal plate with markings associated with the rotary dial on the left. This plate was missing (due to corrosion) from the control box recovered from the Liberator bomber wreck in Gander Lake.



Gold Corp. for their generous support. Dana Young and the Board of the North Atlantic Aviation Museum have been great partners in this project and generously funded the conservation treatment reported here. This artifact recovery was carried out under an archaeological investigation permit from the Provincial Archaeology Office. We acknowledge the service

and sacrifice of the RCAF aircrew aboard Liberator 589 “D”.

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Documenting and Reconstructing René Lévesque's Early Archaic Brador Mounds

William W. Fitzhugh & Treena Beaudoin
Smithsonian Institute & Local individual



Figure 1: Brador Mound 2 in 2024, abandoned without refilling by Lévesque in 1971. (photo: W. Fitzhugh).

In 1970 and 1971 René Lévesque and a group of students and local volunteers excavated two stone mounds near Blanc Sablon, Quebec. The sites (EiBg-59, 60) are on a raised terrace a few hundred meters from shore, a kilometer southeast of the Brador River mouth. During these years, Lévesque was surveying archaeological sites in the Brador-Blanc Sablon area. Most of his work involved collecting artifacts from surface exposures of ancient shoreside habitation sites. However, two stone-capped mounds known to Brador residents Clifford and Florence Hart became full-scale excavations. After completing the excavation and back-filling Tumulus I, the group excavated Tumulus II, a similar mound on the same terrace. When Tumulus II work was completed, Lévesque left without filling the excavation or replacing its cap-rocks, and the site remained in a state of disarray for the next 53 years (Figure 1).

that the mounds were created during the Early Archaic period 7-8,000 years ago (Figures 2, 3).

When the Arctic Studies Center began surveys on the Quebec Lower North shore in 2001, Lévesque introduced Fitzhugh to Clifford Hart, a Brador fisherman who had been on Lévesque's field crew. Hart soon developed a 'green thumb' for archaeology and worked with Lévesque for several years around 1970. Clifford and his wife, Florence, soon became local sponsors for the Smithsonian's Gateways project. For many years they encouraged our work on a 17th century Inuit winter village site at their chalet near the Brador River. Clifford, who had found a Maritime Archaic tool cache when he was digging the basement of his house in Brador, also introduced me to the Brador mounds. I was shocked to see the sites existed as gaping holes, having been abandoned without re-filling at the conclusion of Lévesque's work. Over the years as we passed through Brador, often excavating at the Hart chalet Inuit site, I

Both mounds (hereafter, Mounds 1 and 2) produced similar tools—triangular and nipple-base points, full-channel gouges, and other implements resembling finds from the L'Anse Amour Mound in Forteau Bay, which is radiocarbon-dated 7,600 B.P. Although the Brador mounds produced younger radiocarbon dates on samples Lévesque sent to Fitzhugh in the mid-1970s (Mound 1, SI-1325, 1745±130 BP; Mound 2, SI-1326, 3230±80 BP, and SI-1327, 3450±115 BP), the artifacts left little doubt



Figure 2: One of several full-channel gouges from Mound 2. (photo: R. Lévesque).

was constantly reminded that the open scar on the hill behind the Hart residence needed attention.

Opportunity came when, as a tribute to Clifford Hart and his work with Lévesque, Florence Hart successfully lobbied the Lower North Shore MRC (Regional County Municipality) to return the open mound to its original appearance as part of a tourism and historical trails development plan. Recognizing that the reconstruction of the L'Anse Amour Amerindian burial on the north side of Forteau Bay

Figure 4: Mound 2 cross-section. (graphic: R. Lévesque).

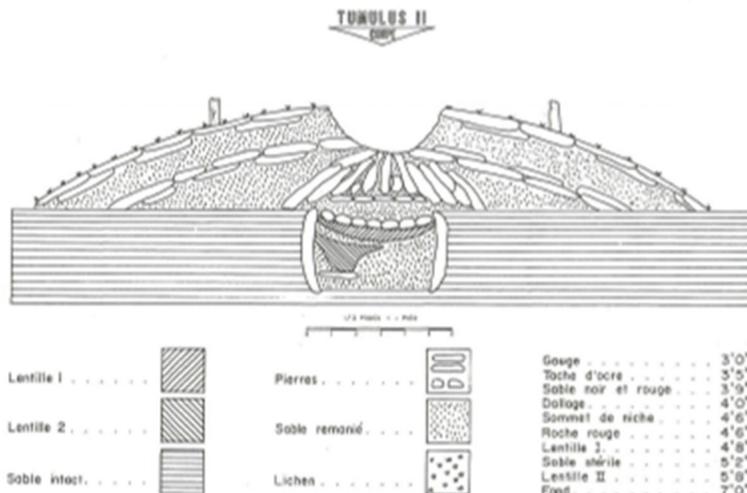


Figure 3: One of several nipple-base points from Mound 2. (photo: R. Lévesque).

was a popular tourist destination, the Town of Blanc Sablon believed that with appropriate signage and publicity, the Brador mounds could make a similar historical and economic contribution. Doing so would also recognize the community's role in their original excavation and Florence Hart's efforts over many years to see Indigenous heritage officially recognized by having the site properly documented and reconstructed.

The Lévesque Excavations

Lévesque left a detailed account of the excavations of Mounds 1 and 2 (Figure 4). He described the mounds, their geographical location, the excavation process, internal mound stratigraphy, find locations, and the artifacts and materials encountered. The maps and plans he prepared are schematic, but they present a clear picture of the internal structure and the locations of artifacts. Unlike L'Anse Amour, no skeletal remains were preserved. Photos of the excavations taken by Jocelyne Cormier, a Blanc Sablon woman who was a member of Lévesque's team, provide context and help document the excavation (Figures 5, 6; see Appendices 1, 2).

The present location of the artifact collection is unknown. In the early 1970s Lévesque sent the collection to the National Museum of Canada in Ottawa, where it was inspected by James Wright, an expert in boreal forest Archaic cultures. Wright, and Robert



Figure 5: Brador Mound I during excavation. (photo: J. Cormier). From left to right: Unidentified; Roselyne Allen-Lévesque; Alain Fugère; Dennis Dagenais; Luc Bergeron; René Lévesque (in charge of the group)

Figure 6: Brador Mound 2 excavation in 1971. (photo: J. Cormier). From left to right: Jocelyne Cormier; Unidentified; Dennis Dagenais; René Lévesque; Luc Bergeron; Unidentified





Figure 7: Mound 2 burial chamber in 1971. (photo: J. Cormier).

ing the east side of the burial chamber guided the location of our test pit (Figure 7). The soil in the upper part of the pit was sand returned to the burial pit when Lévesque partially filled in the excavation. Ninety-five cms below the top of the vertical slabs and 1.5m below the original ground surface we reached undisturbed water-laid sand below the burial chamber. No tools, red ochre stains, or other cultural evidence were found except a few curious dark lumps saved for c14 dating. These turned out to have no organic content.

McGhee and James A. Tuck (who excavated the L’Anse Amour mound in 1974), confirmed that the site’s nipple base points and full-channel gouges were among the earliest artifacts known from the region.

Mound 2 Reconstruction

In July 2024, we were engaged by the Town of Blanc Sablon to reconstruct Mound 2. Supported by a grant from the Quebec Lower North Shore MRC facilitated by Vicky Driscoll (an MRC board member), Perry Colbourne, local archaeological enthusiast Treena Beaudoin, and I spent several days at the mound. The project began with a meeting between Mayor Colin Shattler, Karine Benoit, and Fitzhugh on 15 July. We began archaeological work that afternoon and re-excavated the central portion of Mound 2 to make sure Lévesque recovered all the burial remains. Standing rock slabs border-

On 16 July a truckload of sand was dumped into the open pit, creating a low mound (Figure 8). On 17 July the town provided an excavator machine which Perry Colbourne used to gather up and replace the cap-rocks Lévesque removed. We considered trying to return Lévesque’s partially refilled Mound I

Figure 8: Perry Colbourne and Treena Beaudoin re-filling the Mound 2 pit. (photo: W. Fitzhugh).





Figure 9: Florence Hart (center) with Jocelyne Cormier. (Photo: J. Cormier).

excavation pit to its original state but there were not enough rocks available to make a new cover pavement.

Before leaving Brador, we brought Florence Hart back to show her the result of her multi-year

lobbying effort (Figures 9, 10). Finally, the eye-sore that discredited Lévesque’s and Clifford’s work to actualize local prehistory and Indigenous heritage had been set right. Next year we will return to produce maps, diagrams, artifact illustrations for signage documenting one of the oldest Amerindian mortuary monuments in Northeastern North America.

Credits

We thank René Lévesque (excavator/recorder); Clifford and Florence Hart (excavation; heritage preservation); Perry Colbourne and Treena Beaudoin (site reconstruction and information); MRC (for financial support), Jocelyne Cormier for 1971 for photos and identifications; Vicky Driscoll, Serena Etheridge, and J.Y. Pinal (images and documentation), and the Municipality of Blanc Sablon (coordination and logistic support).

Appendix 1. Lévesque excavation notes

Appendix 2. Cormier photos.

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 Robert J. McGhee. 1976. *The Burial at l'Anse-Amour*. 24 pp. National Museum of Man. Ottawa.

Figure 10: Mound 2 reconstructed with caprocks. (photo: K. Beaudoin).



Appendix I.

Brador Mound Excavation Descriptions from René Lévesque's Unpublished Brador Manuscript

translated by T. Beaudoin, edited by W. Fitzhugh

Mound 1 (EiBg-59)
Mound 1 is a dome-shaped structure. The contour of its base is not always obvious as it gradually follows the surrounding environment. But along an axis, it



Figure 1: Beginning the excavation of Brador Mound 1. (photo : R.L.).

measures 9.1 meters in length north-south, and 8.2 meters in length east-west. As for the top of the mound, it rises 1.2 meters above the surrounding ground. The surface of the dome is perfect, made up of blocks laid flat and covered sporadically with spots of lichen. There was only one damaged section attributable to disturbance [probably] by a local resident.

On the surface, flat rocks were found side by side, constituting the domed mound surface, which was sporadically covered with lichen or aeolian sand. We began by clearing all the stones from these superficial deposits, making a precise sketch of the surface rocks, faithfully recording all shapes and sizes, accompanied by photos. Each of the stones was numbered. (See Appendix II) We noted some burnt marks under

the lichen and found a fragment of a pink quartzite tool.

Approaching the mound, what method of excavation should be used? For fear of missing any structural arrangement, we chose to open a trench 60 cm. wide, from the northern base of the mound in a southern direction towards the center. After having removed the surface stones, we removed 12 to 17 cm. of sterile sand below the rocks, finding no archaeological remains. Continuing the excavation, we found a second stone dome with a diameter of 8.0 m., smaller than the first, looking like two superimposed igloos. This required making a second grid. Below that, as we approached the center, we found disturbed soil layers of black and oily sand, with some organic matter that we presumed to be food offerings (seal flesh?). The deeper we went, the sand appeared in different colors, like interspersed gray or pink spots leading in the same direction, which suggests that these are loads of fill transported by the makers of the mound. Near the south wall, we once again found *in situ* undisturbed stratified sand. Very close to the center where the layers were increasingly thick and consistent, we found stone slabs set in place. Seeing that most of the stones were located in the center, we then decided to open a 3.0 square meter unit (a) to the west and excavated its western half, proceeding from south to north. As it is the center that matters, we decided to open another square (b), measuring 2.1 meters by 3.0 meters, adjacent to the trench, but on the west side of the mound.

In this new quadrant, a first level of stones was removed with the same precautions. Some of the stones rested directly on others. There followed a layer of sand identical to the one below the surface rocks in the square we had just excavated. This layer was also disturbed, but contained fragments of shattered slate, probably from an ax or a gouge, made of

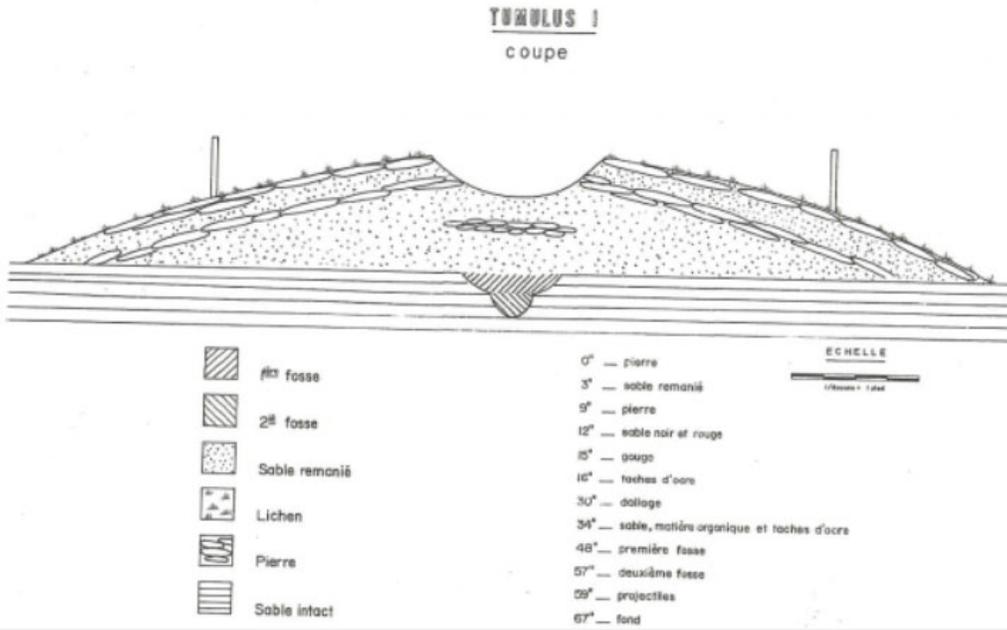


Figure 2: Schematic profile of Mound 1. (credit: RL).

a material that seemed intrusive to our location. Then came the second level of stones complementing the neighboring square. Below this level, the sand takes on an increasingly dark color, with lenses/layers of sand cemented into a black, hardened material of organic origin. Here we found more fragments of slate and also pink quartzite, some of which are blackened and may have been burned by a ceremonial fire or by a layer of material used in the construction of the inner dome. Under one of these lenses/layers, the sand had a reddish tint, suggesting the presence of a red ocher burial. A return to the initial trench showed the same stratigraphy, especially towards the center of the mound. Inspection of this new layer revealed a paving of flat stones. An interesting detail was a stain of brown-red color ocher at a depth of 40 cm. To understand this set of rocks, we extended our second unit (b) 60 centimeters toward the North.

Under this second level, near the center of the mound, there emerged a lump of very bright red ocher and some ocher-stained stones and a layer of flat stones. These stones formed a group suggested by the previous excavation (unit a) that had a roughly circular appearance in the center of the mound, 75 cm. below the surface rocks. Under these flat stones we found a second row of rocks, smaller than the first. At 85 cm. there was a 7.5 cm. layer of sand. When we widened the trench above the paving, burnt spots, oily matter, and ocher increased. So far, howev-

er, the only cultural material in this unit was a small flake of vitreous quartz.

In the center of the mound under the paving, at a depth of 1.0 m., we observed a 96 cm. diameter pit intruding into the natural strata of coarse sterile sand. The walls of this pit descended at a steep slope toward another smaller pit with a diameter of 40 cm. and a depth of 28.5 cm., filled with bright red ocher. Within this ocher were layers of ash, wood charcoal, and bone fragments. At a depth of 5 cm. in the

ocher layer, 1.49 m. from the top of the mound, were two quartz crystal points with their tips pointing toward each other like the hands of a clock. They are oriented respectively 10° NE/SW., and 20° SW. Below this we found sterile ground at a depth of 1.7 m.

Based on this information, we may attempt a reconstruction of events. A central question: is this a cremation? Some evidence militates against it. A cremation usually contains some preserved burned bone elements. However, the burial revealed only a small quantity of very fragmentary bones which we cannot confirm as human.

The facts could be interpreted in the following way. The creators of the mound first cleared the chosen location of scattered rocks and excavated a

Figure 3: Mound 1 burial pit rocks. (photo : RL).



burial pit. In its center, at a depth of 1.7 m. in sterile sand, they dug a 96 cm. pit, and then a second smaller pit at the bottom of the latter. They performed some ritual ceremony near these pits and refilled them with ashes and ocher. They then added ocher-covered tools and covered them with a layer of sand, and above that placed two layers of rock slabs laid flat, covering the outline of the funerary niche. Above this, they built a mound of sand protected by a layer of flat rocks. This mound was then covered with sand that was then protected by a second layer of surface rocks.

Type of deposit: funerary mound; Cultural tradition: Maritime Archaic

Mound 2 (EiBg-60)

Location: N51°28'21", W57° 13'59" Brador; Height Above Sea Level: 22.5 meters.

This mound is 112 m northeast of Mound 1 and is a perfect circle 9.1 m. in diameter and 1.29 m. high. The same local people who dug into Mound 1 must have been the ones who dug a pit 60 cm. deep and 1.37 m. wide in the center of Mound 2, leaving the rocks uncovered and scattered about. Near the mound we found a small concentration of pink and blue quartzite flakes someone had collected recently and left there.

Our experience digging Mound 1 was useful for the Mound 2 excavation. To fully understand its structure, we proceeded with a direct vertical approach, laying out a 4.5 m. square in the center of the mound. As at Mound 1, we removed the lichen and sand from the surface rocks. The vegetation was thicker on the mound's east side, reaching 10 to 15 cm. We then removed the surface stones that had been placed together side-by-side. These blocks were larger than those covering Mound 1, on average 90 cm. long and 15 to 30 cm thick.

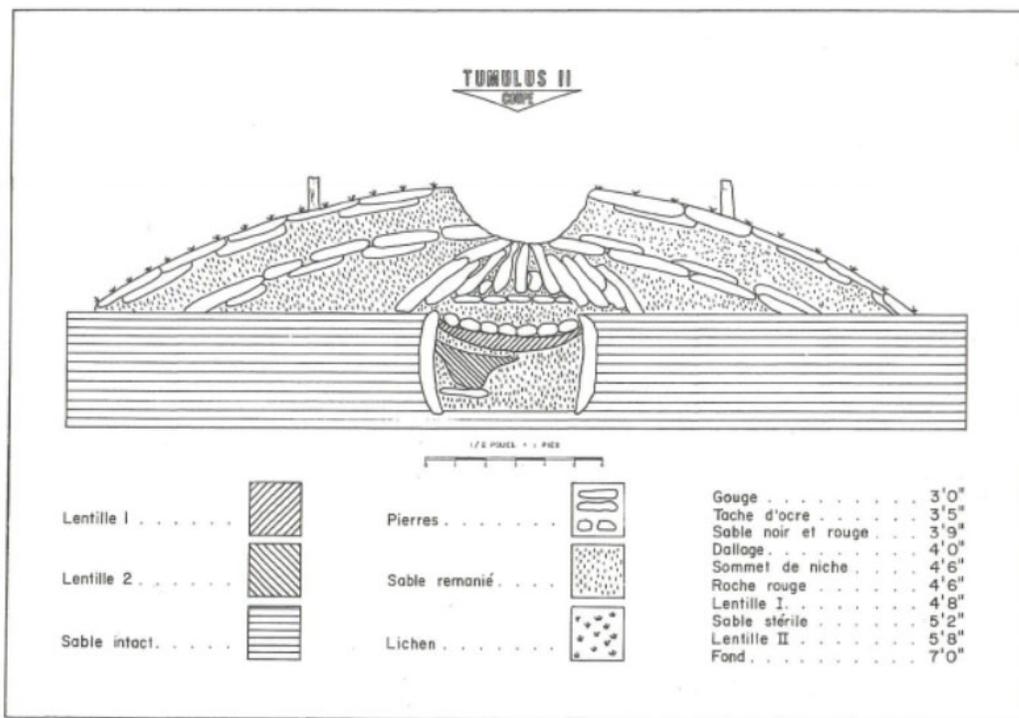


Figure 4: Schematic profile of Mound 2. (credit : RL) .

To avoid damage to the internal structure, we excavated a 60 cm. wide E-W trench across the south side of the mound. The first few centimeters revealed stratigraphy similar to Mound 1: a superposition of two stone dome caps separated by a layer of sand. We sieved the sand but found few archaeological remains other than a weathered gouge 1 meter below the surface. As we dig deeper, particularly towards the center, we detected more and more of the oily, hardened sand found in Mound 1. The burial itself was announced by a bright red ocher stain at 1.02 m. depth.

As excavation progressed, a completely different structure than found in Mound 1 appeared. Widening the trench towards the north revealed several large slabs placed vertically, while others were horizontal. We exposed this feature by excavating a trench behind it following the contour of the vertical slabs, which revealed a rough circular arrangement. Since the slabs certainly delineated the central burial feature, we began excavating at its center and removed three large slabs deeply embedded in underlying sand that were part of niche border wall. We then came across a disordered set of slabs, the majority of which were vertical, some of which were covered by horizontal slabs. These slabs were removed as well as the underlying sand. At 1.1 m we came upon a feature

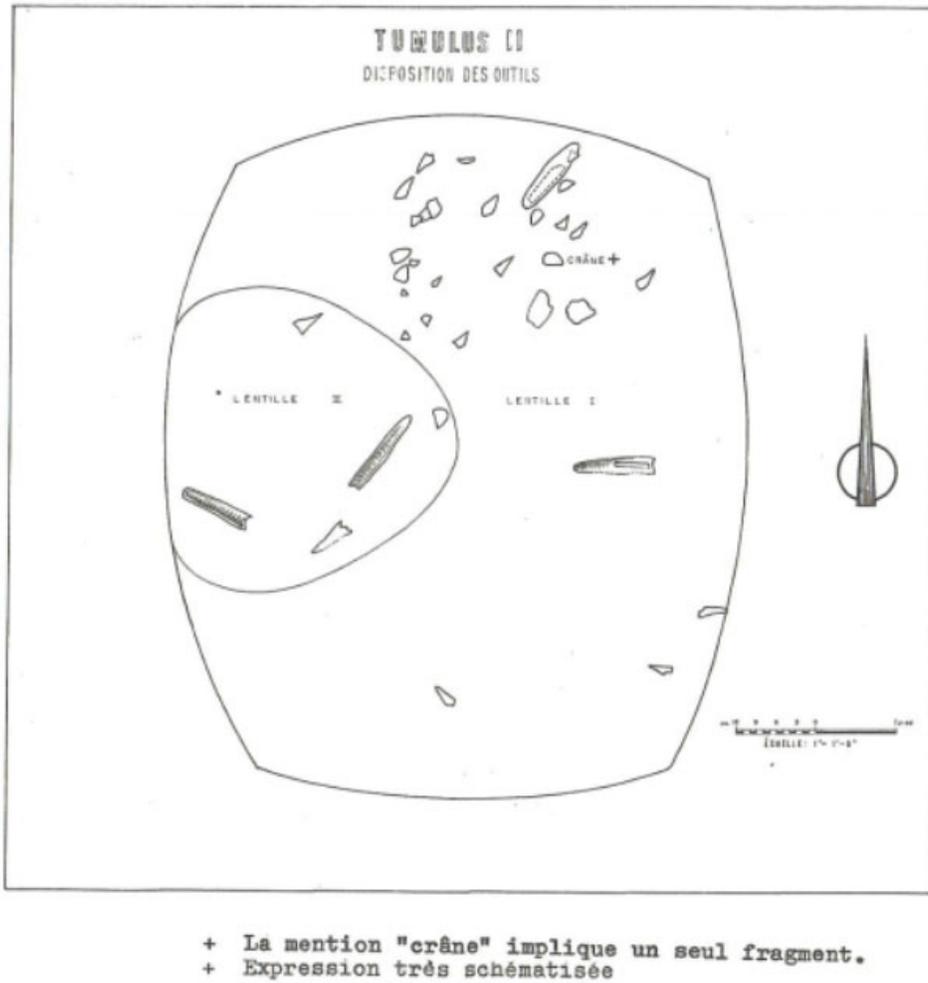


Figure 5: Artifact distribution in Mound 2. (credit : RL).

of special interest: a layer of flat stones covering the bottom of the niche. Testing beneath one of the stones revealed a layer of sand 12.5 to 17.5 cm thick, increasingly stained with ocher with depth, which was 1.35 m below the surface. At this depth there was a 1.75 cm diameter circular concentration of 15-20 cm thick round stones on the south side of the niche. Below this was a layer of ocher following the concave base of a pit 1.4 m below the surface.

In the sand covering the ocher layer was a fragment of animal bone. The upper part of the ocher layer was almost pure pigment while that below was a mixture of ocher and ash. At the bottom of the ocher pocket was a concentrated layer of ash and charcoal that retained its original cylindrical shape. Beneath, the ocher sand gave way to reddish stained sand 5 to 10 cm thick. From these lay-

ers of ocher, ash, and charcoal we collected 39 artifacts. After the last layer of reddish sand had been removed, we discovered another layer of ocher 1.58 m below ground with a diameter of 1 m and a thickness of 20 cm. In this feature we found five artifacts. A flat rock lay at the bottom of the feature.

As with Mound 1, we attempt reconstruction. The builders first dug a pit measuring approximately 1.52 m by 3.04 m, with a smaller and deeper one in the northwest sector of the upper pit. Against the wall of the upper pit, they erected a series of vertical slabs whose tops were level with the surrounding ground and placed a flat stone at the bottom of the deeper pit. An initial ceremony deposited ocher and five artifacts in this pit. A second phase of the ceremony involved more fire, ocher, and many artifacts. This new layer was covered with a crown of rounded rocks placed at the bot-

tom of the standing slabs. Everything was then covered with sand, and several large horizontal slabs were

Figure 6: Burial chamber wall rocks and pit, Mound 2. (photo: RL).



placed over the standing slabs. This was covered with a layer of sand, a lower layer of mound capstones, another layer of sand, and the final layer of capstones to finish and stabilize the mound.

We collected a total of 43 worked objects, 39 from the upper ocher layer, and 5 in the lower layer. In the upper ocher layer, objects were found at various depths between layers of ash and oche but were concentrated in the northeast part of the burial pit. This level also contained what may have been a possible cranium fragment. These artifacts included several nipple base bifaces and two full groove gouges. Most of the points and one of the gouges in the upper layer were oriented northeast, and some tools were

‘soaked’ in ocher. The tools in the lower pit included two nipple base points and two full groove gouges; all of these were found at the same depth, but without any obvious orientation.

Type of feature: funeral dome; Cultural tradition: Maritime Archaic.

Editor’s note

The present location of the Brador artifact collection is unknown. After inspection at the Canadian National Museum in the early 1970s they were returned to RL.

Appendix 2: Jocelyne Cormier 1971 Brador Mound Photo Album



Figure 7: J. Cormier and team preparing Mound 1 for excavation.



Figure 8: Excavation reveals the Mound 2 burial pit retaining slabs.

Figure 9: A cache of Middle Dorset tools that reportedly was found in the upper part of Mound 2.





Figure 10: Full groove gouges from Mound 2 burial pit cache. Above and left.



Figure 11: A set of full groove gouges from Mound 2 burial cache.



Figure 12:
Nipple-base points from the
Mound 2 burial cache (with a R.L.
note to the resemblance to the
Concorde aircraft).

Voilà où les Britanniques et les
Français ont puisé leur
inspiration pour l'avion
Concorde....

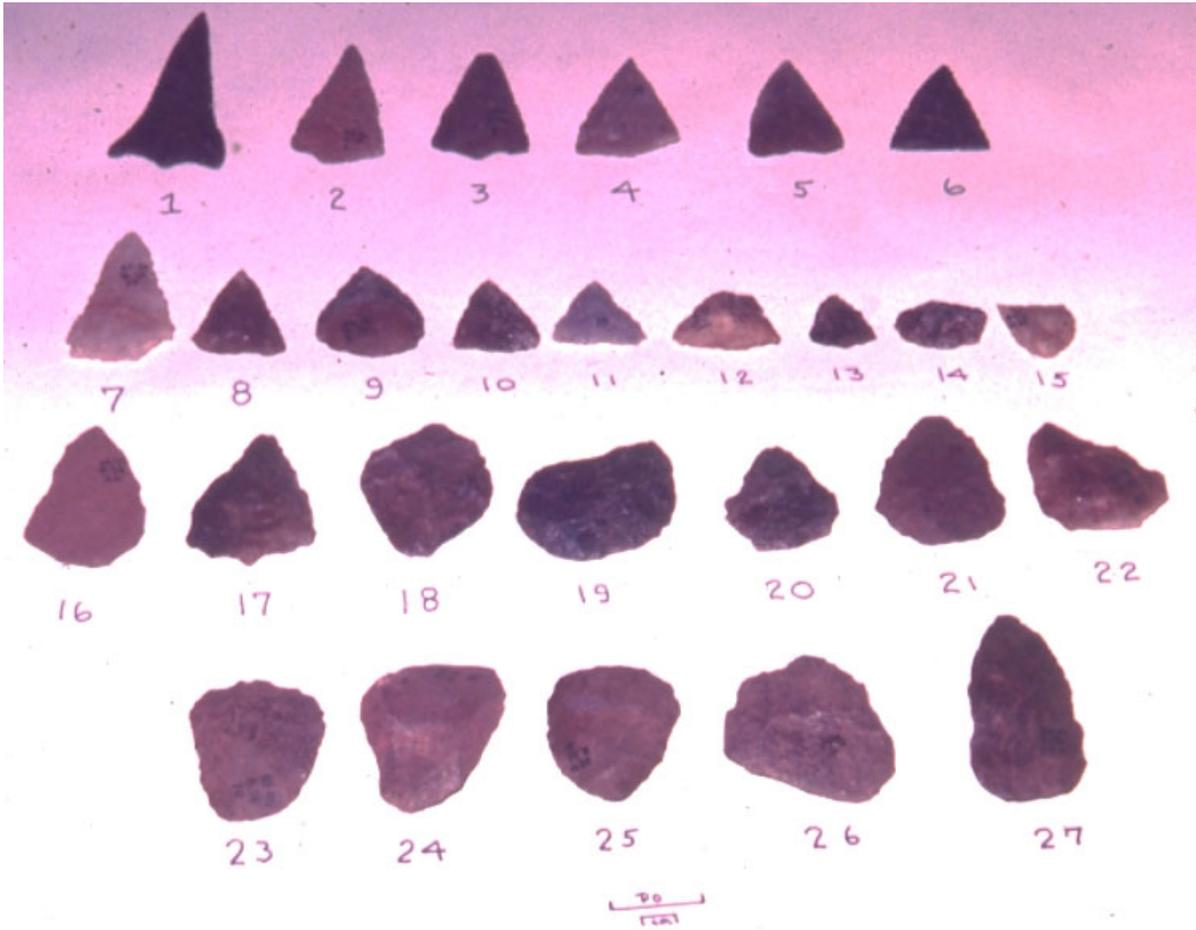


Figure 13:
Nipple-base and
triangular
points, biface
blanks, and
scrapers(?) from
Mound 2 burial
cache.



Archaeology at Ferryland 2024

Barry Gaulton, Neil Jordan & Hannah Wade
Memorial University

Drains, drones and GPR are among the structural and technological highlights of the 2024 field season at Ferryland. Targeted excavation along parts of the eroding inner harbour and further south inside the ca. 1620s kitchen/buttery structure were also initiated: the former to record intact deposits and features in the face of climatic uncertainty; the latter to better understand the sequence of construction and occupa-

urgency of mitigation efforts along the unexcavated and previously excavated areas (with partially exposed 17th-century structural remains) directly south of Ferryland's inner harbour or Pool. The increased frequency and intensity of storms and tidal action combined with rising sea levels are such that this area deserves immediate attention. To that end, the archaeology team focused on two separate but adjacent areas along the inner harbour in 2024, previously designat-



Figure 1: Aerial view of the Ferryland waterfront showing locations of the 2024 excavations outlined by two white borders. Area C is the square to the southeast and Area G is the rectangle to the north. Top of photograph points north. Photo credit: Calum Brydon.

tions of the outbuilding which served the colony's principal residence or Mansion House. These two investigations — as well as the nascent work on 17th-century sanitation at Ferryland — will inform our research trajectory for years to come.

Previous reports (Gaulton 2024) and presentations (Gaulton 2019a-b; 2023) have stressed the

ed as Area C and Area G (Figure 1) (Tuck 1996; Tuck and Gaulton 2001). The work at Area C was an expansion of the previous year's excavation (Gaulton 2024) whereas investigations at Area G have been inactive since the early 2000s.

A 1x2 metre exploratory unit excavated below a late 17th-century cobblestone pavement at the



Figure 2: (top) Area C excavation at the end of the field season, looking south. Feature 224 is centred in the photograph.

southwest end of Area C in 2023 was expanded by way of an additional 1x4 metre unit immediately south. In conjunction with this operation, the remnants of a partially exposed L-shaped 17th-century stone wall (Feature 224) bordering the 1x4 metre unit was to be fully excavated, mapped and its function and age determined in relation to the surrounding late 17th-century cobblestone pavement (Figure 2). As it turns out, the small number of 17th-century artifacts found in 2023 — including North Italian marbled slipware, Saintonge-type polychrome earthenware, and a gold gilded glass bead — hinted at a much more substantial domestic midden recorded in 2024.

beads. A large tubular bead, relief-moulded Dutch ‘Baroque’ pipe stems, a lead gaming piece (marked with an X on one side) and a pipestem modified with a drilled hole (possibly for use as a crude whistle) round out the assemblage from the midden or from nearby contemporaneous deposits (Figure 3).

Also of note are several pieces of red clay tobacco pipe with incised decoration in the form of a quadruped (Figure 4). Referred to as the “Running Deer” motif, these pieces are believed to have been made by Algonquian peoples in Virginia or Maryland (Luckenbach and Kiser 2006, 2019). Over the last three decades, archaeologists in Newfoundland and

Figure 3: (left) Ceramic, glass and clay pipes from midden deposit; (centre) lead gaming piece; (right) blue and white tube bead.





Figure 4: ‘Running Deer’ red clay pipe fragments from midden deposit in Area C.

Labrador have recovered small numbers of 17th-century red, orange or beige clay pipes once produced in, or within the sphere of influence of, southern colonies in what is today the United States. The assumption is that these Chesapeake-made clay pipes arrived in limited quantities alongside shipments of tobacco and other commodities/provisions as part of the larger Atlantic trade for Newfoundland salt fish. The “Running Deer” pipe is unique among the other Chesapeake pipes found in Ferryland, and to the best of our knowledge no other examples have been found in Canadian contexts. However, one should be

be noted that while the midden passes below the wall, it is not noticeably present inside the L-shaped wall.

The excavation and mapping of Feature 224 was completed in the 2024 field season. At 0.91m (3ft) wide, and upwards of 4 courses deep, its north side measures 3.35m (11ft) and 2.13m (7ft) on the east side before ending abruptly — truncated by the insertion of a septic tank during the mid-20th century, since removed. No evidence for heat-altered stones or hearth-related deposits were revealed during the excavation of Feature 224. This structural feature is thus interpreted as a wall segment whose full extent

cautious not to hastily attribute such a find to the ethnicity of its owner/smoker.

Several complete pipe bowls date the midden roughly within the 1640–80 period. Yet, this partially excavated midden is not necessarily a representative sample and therefore cannot be used to definitively date the range of occupation associated with the source of the domestic refuse. It is plausible that the remains of a dwelling lay underneath the expansive late 17th-century cobblestone pavement that encompasses the southwest end of Area C. The significant number of brick fragments recorded in earlier deposits (in 2023) below the cobble pavement may suggest that a hearth or other structural feature is nearby. What is clear is that this midden continues under Feature 224 and was therefore deposited prior to the wall feature. The excavation explored both “inside” and “outside” the wall feature and it should

and purpose may remain unknown

Two more points regarding the excavations at Area C. First, a substantial deposit of slag and scale was recorded directly below the above-mentioned midden deposit and extended down nearly a metre to the sandy beach of the historic waterfront. Similar layers were noted by Dr. James Tuck during previous excavations of Area C back in the 1990s (Tuck 1997). This deposit, both now and in the past, is interpreted as forge refuse that was collected and dumped along the waterfront area as part of a larger infilling episode during the 1620s to reclaim land upon which to build a quayside and waterfront buildings. The archaeological signature of this larger infilling episode can typically be found throughout Areas C and G in the form of a thick, compact yellowish fill, upwards of 1m thick at its northernmost extent (Tuck 1996:32; Tuck and Gaulton 2001:96). The slag, scale and iron artifact fragments — in addition to occasional pieces of ceramic, case bottle glass, tobacco pipe fragments and a curious amount of red-colored flint nodules — recorded in 2024 were sometimes mixed with the yellow fill or underlay the same. At the eastern extent of the excavation units, a thick layer of charcoal was also revealed and was intermixed with the forge refuse and fill just above the beach, although there is no clear indication of the presence of a hearth.

The second point is that even though excavations were conducted at the far southwestern end of the site, our work was still vulnerable to climate-related events which normally impact the waterfront areas only during the fall and winter months. In this



Figure 5: 1x4 metre excavation in Area G, looking south.

case, Hurricane Ernesto completely inundated Area C with seawater on Aug 19th flooding our 1x4 metre unit, resulting in the partial collapse of the recently exposed Feature 224 and the side walls of the open excavation. Even after the initial weather event, sea water continued to flood into the units, rising

through the sand floor during high tides making it quite difficult to continue excavations. Ernesto also completely flooded the excavation trench in Area G, discussed below. Welcome to the archaeology of climate change!

The Area G excavation, also initiated at the beginning of the field season (Figure 5), was prompted not just by our fears of continued erosion but by the plethora of arti-

Figure 6: (left) Reuben Sidney mark on pipe stem; (right) back of copper lock plate from small chest/box.



facts that now wash out from this part of the site on an annual basis, resulting in a loss of important contextual and cultural information. With this in mind, we opened a 1x4 metre trench starting north along the exposed/eroding embankment toward the inner harbour and ending just shy of our storage shed (affectionately known as the Moose Shack) to the south. No structural features were identified during the excavation of the trench; however, intact deposits from the 17th and 18th centuries were present — the latter containing an exceptionally rich collection of objects associated with life in Ferryland during the 1700s.

English refined earthenware (creamware and pearlware), Staffordshire slipware, German stoneware, Chinese export porcelain, wine bottle glass and glass stemware, numerous flint flakes, and the ubiquitous clay tobacco pipes were among the most frequent finds. Makers' marks on the clay pipes included examples made by the Tippett and Hoar families of pipe makers from Bristol, England, and a particularly well molded and decorated mark produced by Southampton pipe maker Reuben Sydney. A small brass lock plate from a box or chest (with spring and levers intact) rounds out the 18th-century assemblage from Area G (Figure 6). The quantity and variety of material culture from the 18th-century deposits suggests an intensive domestic occupation in this part of the Pool.

Compare this with the underlying, thinner, 17th-century deposit which contains a less dense and varied assortment of coarse earthenware pipkins and storage vessels, bottle glass and clay tobacco pipes. Given its location, it could be argued that these artifacts represent the activities of fishers who processed cod catches along this part of the inner harbour during the 17th century, and who took time to cook/consume meals in ceramic pipkins and enjoy the occasional beverage or pipe of tobacco.

Excavations did not proceed into the com-



Figure 7: Ground Penetrating Radar survey along Pool Road, July 2024.

plete, yellowish fill layer (Event 8) noted above as encompassing much of Area's G and C. Previous excavations below this deep fill layer have revealed pre-colonial European migratory fishery deposits as well as evidence for seasonal occupation by the Beothuk. It is not our intention to delve into these earlier occupations. Once the 1x4 metre excavation was completed (as far as we wished to proceed), the sides of the trench were walled up with sandbags in anticipation that work would continue in 2025.

As part of the ongoing research and excavation at Ferryland, the project team planned a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey along the Pool Road in summer 2024. This was led by Memorial University's Geophysical Technician Maria Lear, who spent two days plotting and surveying a 95m long by 4/5m wide section of asphalt road, the results of which will be analyzed and interpreted in spring 2025 (Figure 7). The goal of this survey was to detect subsurface features under the Pool Road, some of which may correlate with relict walls, drains and cobblestone pavements previously excavated and recorded on either side of the road. This exercise is also a practical step toward managing any such intact features in the event of future municipal or provincial plans for the site.

In conjunction with the GPR survey, and on a go forward basis, we started recording the site using drone photogrammetry as an annual record of any changes along the waterfront resulting from frequent high tides and storm events. This step is part of the larger research initiative "The future of coastal communities: experiences, adaptations and heritage per-



Figure 8: (left) Stone-lined drain feature (ca. 1620s) continuing under the cobblestone street, looking north; (right) drain feature with capstones and sediment removed, looking north.

spectives” funded through the Canada First Research Excellence Fund and will allow us to quantify changes over time and to identify areas under highest risk of damage due to erosion. The fantastic visuals are an added bonus.

The third area investigated in 2024 involved a limited re-excavation of an early 17th-century stone-lined drain associated with the brewhouse/bakery and stable built during the 1620s. Planned work on the subterranean drainage systems at Ferryland will continue in the coming years as part of the SSHRCC funded “Engineering Avalon” project, co-investigated with Dr. Joseph Daraio in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Sciences (MUNL). Our goal this summer was to re-expose a small section of the above-mentioned drain which runs under the colony’s early cobblestone street, remove the capstones, take soil samples from the floor of the drain, record details on its construction and last, attempt to determine the direction/orientation as it continues underground in an effort to locate its terminus.

The first tasks were easy enough. A previously backfilled 1.5m section was re-excavated down to the surface of the capstones and the northern edge of the excavation unit was cut vertically against the southern edge of the colony’s cobblestone street to

show the stratigraphic relationship and sequence of construction for both the drain and overlying cobblestone street. Once completed, the exposed capstones and vertical profile were recorded, the capstones removed, and samples of accumulated sediment taken from above the floor of the drain. Remaining sediment was excavated and wet sifted through a 1mm mesh, the slate floor and sides of the drain were exposed for photography and to record details on the width/depth of the drain as well as other aspects of its construction (Figure 8).

Determining the direction of the drain proved challenging as it was almost completely silted up with sediment and we could only see in a few feet with a flashlight — not enough to ascertain its route beneath the cobblestone street, then under the current Pool Road to some unknown location where we assumed liquid waste would have eventually outflowed. Taping together 2.44m (8ft) sections of thin fiberglass rod with a small flashlight at the business end and feeding it through the shallow opening we could peer further into the drain, but not enough to establish whether it was continuing on its current orientation northeast toward the colony’s defensive ditch (a dry moat feature dug in the 1620s) or whether it began to veer north toward the waterfront area to outflow into the

inner harbour or Pool. However, the fibreglass rod and flashlight contraption were useful for something: by successfully pushing it forward for 9.14m (30 feet), we understood that at least this much of the drain remained unobstructed.

Solving this puzzle required some professional help. The City of St. John's generously organized a fall visit by sanitation engineering staff armed with two sewer inspection cameras, each containing a transmitter and receiver to pinpoint the position of the 17th-century drain underneath the Pool Road. Its exact location would then allow us to extrapolate whether it continued toward the defense ditch or turned in the direction of the inner harbour. On a cold November morning, months after the dig had ended for the summer, City staff arrived at the site and began the attempt using flexible drain cameras (with a live video feed). Unfortunately, the diameter of the camera heads was too large to probe beyond 4.27m (14ft) into the drain. In a last-ditch effort, City crew recommended we use non-toxic dye and pump water into the drain to see if the

colored dye would emerge further down the system beyond the Pool Road and into the previously excavated waterfront area or defensive ditch. Five minutes and many gallons of water later, the keen eyes of Donna Teasdale spotted a concentration of dye in the waterfront area some 20 metres away (Figure 9), directly south of the colony's ca. 1620s storehouse and west of the cowhouse built sometime after 1673 (Gaulton 1997). This valuable information will be used in the 2025/26 field seasons to locate and ex-

pose another portion of the drain and hopefully determine the exact place where it once outflowed into the inner harbour.

The final area of focus for the 2024 field season was inside the two-room outbuilding (buttery/kitchen) associated with the Mansion House built for George Calvert in the 1620s but later occupied by David Kirke and family members from 1638–1696. Excavation of the buttery/kitchen ended in 2012 after much of the building was recorded; however, there was a small area between the buttery and kitchen rooms, believed to be a builder's trench — containing a segment of mortared stone wall and refuse deposit — which remained unexcavated (Figure 10). In anticipation of Jordan Hollahan's upcoming doctoral research on the Mansion House, we reopened this area and removed a 1x3 metre portion of what we believed to be the original northern partition wall of the kitchen room (Figure 11) so we could determine if the adjacent stone wall segment (oriented in a N-S direction) was contemporaneous with the kitchen room's partition wall. In

the very least the excavation would shed light on the sequence of construction for and occupation of the kitchen.

To reach the bottom of the mortared wall segment and associated deposit, the field crew had to dig through a metre of stones and mortar. The effort was worth it: the archaeology clearly shows that the N-S running wall segment continues further south under the E-W running partition wall. Excavation of the associated refuse deposit also revealed two dis-



Figure 9: Approximate location of drain feature, 20 metres from excavation area using non-toxic red dye and water, Area C.



Figure 10: Aerial view of the two-room buttery and kitchen outbuilding. The 2024 excavation area is delineated by the white border. Photo credit: Calum Brydon.



Figure 11: 1x3 metre excavation under the kitchen's north partition wall, looking east.

tinct occupations (Figure 12). The lowest was associated with the initial construction and occupation of the kitchen back in the 1620s. The overlying layer contained objects discarded between the second and third quarters of the seventeenth century, based on datable pipe bowls. Two important pieces of information can be deduced from this new discovery: one, parts of the kitchen must have been renovated and infilled later in the 17th century; two, the kitchen partition wall was not constructed until sometime after this date.

The uppermost occupation layer also contained an interesting collection of artifacts, including significant quantities of fish, mammal and bird bone preserved due to the mortar from the nearby walls. The remains of several rat mandibles, teeth and verte-

brae were particularly fascinating for students and visitors alike. These finds were balanced with other informative pieces such as a small copper bell, a silver sequin, a copper aglet, pins and needle fragments, and large ceramic milkpan fragments manufactured in England and Portugal (Figure 13). As with other parts of the site highlighted in this report, the kitchen area is worthy of further investigation.

To conclude, the 2024 field season reinvigorated plans for continued archaeological work at Ferryland. There is clearly more we can do to better understand this 17th-century village and to protect these exceptionally well-preserved remains for future generations.

Acknowledgements

It comes as no surprise for those following the history of archaeology at Ferryland that the excavation areas discussed in this report are directly connected with the seminal work of Dr. James A. Tuck, who initiated this community archaeology project back in 1992 and who also continued to work here well beyond his retirement from Memorial University in 2005. Jim: although you are no longer with us, your guidance and insights continue to inspire those who follow in your footsteps.

We would like to recognize the essential roles of Mercedes Johnson, our longtime laboratory manager, and Donna Teasdale, archaeological conservator, for personally overseeing all activities pertaining to the cleaning, cataloguing, conservation and storage of the objects found at Ferryland each summer. Without you there is no archaeology project. Thank you as well to Maria Lear, Memorial's geophysical technician and archaeological curator for conducting the two-day GPR survey of the Pool Road. A special note of appreciation to Charlotte Newton, retired conservator at the Canadian Conservation Institute, who dedicates her time and expertise each summer in the archaeology lab at Ferryland.

As always, a huge thanks to the management, staff and board members with the Colony of Avalon (COA) Foundation who have partnered with the archaeology team at Memorial for three decades. COA staff Michelle Butterworth and Ethan Walsh, who maintain the gardens and landscaping around the site, deserve much gratitude for keeping everything clean and tidy throughout the field season, and for always being willing to lend a helping hand. Our team of



**Figure 12: Completed excavation units looking south.
Note C. Brydon atop mortared wall segment continuing
south underneath and perpendicular to the kitchen's N-S running partition wall.**

lous excavation and record keeping, willingness to engage with visitors, and careful numbering of artifacts.

Beyond Ferryland, we would like to thank the Deputy Mayor of St. John's, Sheilagh O'Leary, for helping connect us with Deputy City Manager Jason Sinyard (Planning, Engineering and Regulatory Services, City of St. John's), who in turn arranged to have City engineering staff Sean and Jamie travel to Ferryland on a cold November morning to help solve an archaeological mystery.

summer students in the field and lab, Calum Brydon, Tayler Janes and Sarah Fuller is another essential element in our continued success: thanks for the meticu-

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Figure 13: Artifacts from upper occupation layer including (top) faunal remains; (bottom left) brass bell; (bottom right) Portuguese redware milkpan fragment.

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Excavations at the Cupids Cove Plantation Provincial Historic Site (CjAh-13), 2024

William Gilbert
Provincial Historic Sites

In 2024 the Cupids Cove Plantation PHS opened to visitors on 18 May and closed to the public on 11 October. For the first month and a half, the weather was not conducive to digging and our crew was busy with other work: it seems as if it rained every day from 1 April until the end of June. As a result, excavations for the season did not begin until 27 June.

Ditch around the Spracklin House

In 2024, the carpenters with Provincial Historic Sites were making plans to repair and paint the exterior of the Spracklin House and, in preparation for this, requested we dig a ditch, extending 6 in. below the skirting boards and 2 ft. out from the footing of the building and fill it with crushed stone. We knew from previous testing in 2012, and our excavations along the western edge of Structure 9 in 2013, that there was roughly half a metre of fill below and around the Spracklin House that had been deposited before the house was built in circa 1847. Given that the trench would only extend down about 6 in. (15 cm), it seemed clear we would be digging exclusively in the 19th-century fill and that proved to be the case. We began digging the ditch on 27 June using trowels and shovels (Figure 1). All the soil was screened and, as expected, we found only 19th-century fill. The fill

produced just a few fragments of refined earthenware and window glass. The only 17th century artifact uncovered was a single pipe stem with a 7/64 bore diameter found on the eastern side of the building that almost certainly had been deposited when the fill was

laid down. The ditch was dug and had been filled with crushed stone by 5 July. The repair work and painting of the house took place between 4 and 11 September.

The Sawpit

Structure 9 was an early 17th century building, possibly a storehouse for salt cod, the footing for which is located a few metres east of the northeast corner of the Spracklin House. The southeast corner of Structure 9 was built over part of a rubble-filled pit that extends east from it into the edge of the terrace beyond. As was the case in 2023, our main efforts in 2024 focused on this pit and the area around it. In 2023 we opened three new units here: Operation 162, a 2 m x 4 m unit running north to south, established to uncover the easternmost section of the pit; Operation 163, a 2 m x 3 m unit

running east to west, established to uncover the southern end of the pit; and Operation 164, a 1 m x 2 m unit running north to south, established to uncover part of the southwest corner of the pit (Figure 2). By the end of the 2023 season, we had taken Operation

Figure 1: Looking south along the section of ditch dug on the east side of the Spracklin House.



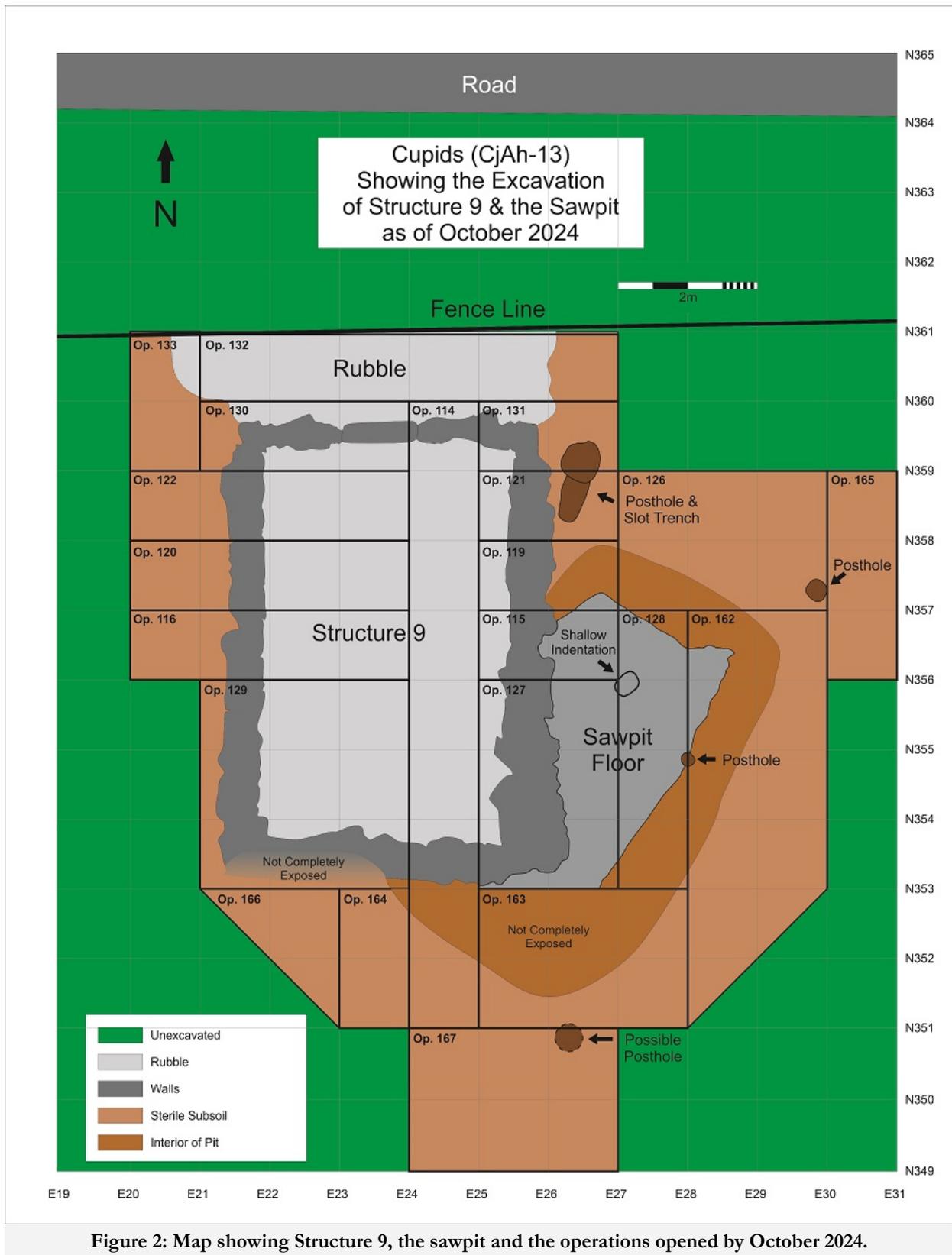


Figure 2: Map showing Structure 9, the sawpit and the operations opened by October 2024.



Figure 3: Silt and beach gravel deposit above the rubble in the northeast corner of the sawpit.

162 down through roughly 50 cm of silt and buried sod at the edge of the terrace and exposed the northeast corner and much of the eastern edge of the pit. Excavations in Operation 163 uncovered the rest of the pit’s eastern edge and its southeast corner. Digging in Operation 164 uncovered a small section of the pit’s southwest corner.

This work revealed that the pit was four-sided and at the surface measured roughly 12 ft. (3.66 m) wide by 21 ft. (6.4 m) long. As mentioned in a previous report (Gilbert 2024, 35), a roughly 30 cm thick deposit of fine silt had accumulated in the bottom of the pit indicating that it had remained open for some time after it was no longer in use. Then, at some point in the first half of the 17th century, the pit was filled with rubble and Structure 9 was erected. The artifacts recovered from the rubble in the pit, especially the clay pipe fragments, indicate that the rubble was deposited sometime between circa 1620 and 1640. The pit’s shape and dimensions, and the fact that it had been dug into the edge of the bank early in the 17th century, leaves little doubt that it was the first sawpit dug by John Guy’s men when they arrived in Cupids in August 1610 (Gilbert 2024, 34).

In 2024 our excavations in and around the sawpit began on 11 July and continued until 3 October. Our goal this season was to complete the excavation of that part of the interior

of the pit not covered by Structure 9 and expand the excavation beyond the pit in an effort to find evidence of the “timber house ... covered in pine boards” which John Guy says was erected over it (Cell 1982, 61). As mentioned above, our work in 2023 had exposed the eastern edge of the pit and its northeast and southeast corners. We knew from our previous excavations that the deposits contained within the pit were stratified and all dated to the first half of the 17th century. The uppermost of these deposits consisted of a silt and beach gravel matrix, about 10 cm thick, that overlaid the rubble and appeared to have been laid down to level the area

and make it easier to move around on (Figure 3). It produced a range of 17th century artifacts, mostly small pieces of ceramic, glass, and clay pipes, that likely had been shattered during deposition and/or by foot traffic in the area after Structure 9 was erected (Figure 4). The rubble beneath the silt and beach gravel matrix consisted mostly of stones of various sizes and occasional fragments of brick but also pro-

Figure 4: Some of the artifacts recovered from the silt and beach gravel deposit. left: ceramics and glass; right: copper fragments and clay pipe fragments with 8/64 and 9/64 bore diameters.





Figure 5: Rubble beneath the silt and beach gravel deposit in the northeast corner of the sawpit.

duced hundreds of 17th-century artifacts including clay pipe fragments and a wide variety of ceramics. At its deepest, in the centre of the pit, this rubble deposit was about 1.2 m thick. By the end of the 2023 season, we had removed the rubble from the part of the pit contained within Operation 163 and exposed the underlying silt deposit.

However, in 2023 we only had time to expose the edge of the pit in Operation 162 and remove part of the silt and beach gravel deposit. This year we completed the excavation of the section of the pit contained within Operation 162 all the way down to the floor. Also, to prevent an unexcavated section of the site precariously positioned above the pit from collapsing into it, we extended Operation 162 south along its western edge for 2 m and southwest from its eastern edge to the same point creating a 2 m long triangular extension at the south end of that unit. As elsewhere in the pit, the rubble beneath the silt and beach gravel layer in Operation 162 consisted mostly of stones of various sizes and occasional fragments of brick (Figure 5). Fewer artifacts were recovered from

this part of the pit, and this was probably because most objects tossed into it would have rolled down the slope of the bank and farther west towards the bottom. However, we did find several interesting pieces including a base fragment from a storage jar (Figure 6). Although many of the rubble stones were quite large, we managed to lift most of them out by hand. However, there were two large boulders that had to be removed using a backhoe. Not only had these boulders blocked our way in Operation 162 but they had projected west into an otherwise previously excavated section of the pit in Operation 128 making it impossible to dig further down in that area as well.

Once all the rubble had been removed, we continued down through the underlying silt deposit and exposed the floor beneath. The silt here produced little in the way of artifacts, just a few corroded nails and iron fragments were recovered. The floor itself is well defined consisting of a grey, hard-packed sand and gravel matrix, almost the consistency of cement, and very similar to the floor of the cellar inside the 1610 storehouse (Figure 7). As mentioned above,



Figure 6: Base fragment from a storage jar found in the rubble.

west from this posthole for 2 ft. (61 cm) was a 1 ft. (30.5 cm) wide slot trench. The posthole produced just one artifact: a clay pipe stem fragment with a 9/64 bore diameter suggesting it had been dug early in the 17th century. In 2014 excavations in the southeast corner of Operation 126, just north of the pit, uncovered a dark deposit extending down into the sterile subsoil and east into an

at the surface, the sawpit measures roughly 12 ft. (3.66 m) wide by 21 ft. (6.4 m) long. However, it narrows as it extends down and the actual working floor at the bottom of the pit measures roughly 8½ ft. (2.6 m) wide and 14 ½ (4.4 m) long.

Whilst uncovering the floor, we found a posthole dug into its eastern edge, about 4½ ft. (1.37 m) south of the floor's northeast corner (Figure 8). We also uncovered a shallow indentation sunk into the floor of the pit about 3 ft. (92 cm) south of its northern edge and roughly halfway between its eastern and western edges. The posthole clearly had been dug to support a post that once was part of the sawpit house, and it seems likely the indentation either had been fashioned to hold a post or had been formed by the weight of a post, and whatever it supported, pressing down into the floor.

The Sawpit House

In September 2018, we uncovered a 20 in. (50 cm) wide posthole, extending south from Operation 121 into Operation 131, just east of the northeast corner of Structure 9 and 4 ½ ft. (1.4 m) north of the northwest corner of the sawpit. Extending south-

unexcavated part of the site. It seemed likely this dark deposit was part of another posthole. To determine if this was the case, and get a look at more of the area farther east, in 2024 we established a 1 m x 3 m unit (Operation 165) immediately east of Operation 126 and the northernmost metre of Operation 162. Digging here revealed that the deposit was indeed a posthole, located roughly 3 ft. (91 cm) northeast of the northeast corner of the sawpit. The distance between these two postholes (centre to centre) is 14 ft. (4.27 m). If we were to stretch a line between them, it would run almost parallel to the north end of the

Figure 7: Uncovering the floor of the sawpit. The green tarp covers sandbags placed there to prevent the east side of Structure 9 from collapsing.





Figure 8: Posthole dug into the east side of the sawpit.

end of the season, we uncovered a dark deposit extending down into the sterile subsoil in the northeast corner of Operation 167 roughly 24 ft. (7.3 m) southwest of the posthole at the northeast corner of the pit. Unfortunately, while it looks promising, we will have to wait until next season to determine if it is in fact a posthole. No evidence of a posthole was found in Operation 166, however, depending on the length of the building, it may lie either farther to the southwest or farther to the

sawpit, about 2 ft. (61 cm) north of it. Given the location, orientation, and apparent age of these features, it seems likely they were dug to supported part of Guy’s timber house and may have held the corner posts for the north wall of that building.

Assuming this to be the case, and that the building would have been more-or-less symmetrical, we set up our theodolite over each of these two postholes, turned 90° angles southwest from the line they formed, and established two more units to the south of the pit in an attempt to locate the holes dug to hold the corner posts of the south wall. Operation 166, a triangular unit established immediately west of Operation 164 and extending west from it along its northern edge for 2 m, was opened to see if we could find the southwest corner, and Operation 167, a 2 m x 3 m unit running east to west immediately south of Operations 114 and 163, was opened to see if we could find the southeast corner. Near the

northeast beneath Structure 9.

Conclusions

In places where a slope made it possible, it was common practice to reduce the amount of work required to create a sawpit by digging it directly into the side of that slope. For example, in her report on the Farnham Park sawpit, Louise Maskill states that “at Birch Spring in Writtle Forest, Essex there are a number of degraded woodland sawpits dug into sloping

Figure 9: Posthole and slot trench north of the northwest corner of the sawpit.



land” (Maskill 2011, 12). This is clearly what Guy’s men did upon arriving in Cupids in August 1610. Faced with the need to clear a heavily wooded terrace and saw the logs into boards to build their plantation, the sawyers who accompanied Guy knew they first needed to dig a sawpit into the side of that terrace. Maskill (p. 5) also states that pits dug for one pair of sawyers (one up and one down) measured on average “between 4 and 6 feet wide” and “14 to 15 feet long” and usually were “5 to 6 feet deep”. As mentioned above, the working floor at the bottom of our pit measures roughly 8½ ft. (2.6 m) wide by 14 ½ (4.4 m) long. While somewhat wider than average, this is likely because, as Guy tells us, there were “two pair of sawyers” working in it. Along the edge of the bank into which it was dug, our pit is roughly 6 ½ ft. (2 m) deep.

When Guy refers to the building erected over his first sawpit as a ‘house’ he is using the word in its early-modern sense. Unlike today, in the 16th and 17th centuries the word house did not necessarily mean a dwelling. Instead, it could apply to any type of shelter the function of which was often indicated by the descriptor that accompanied the word: workhouse, storehouse, ale house, dwelling house, and so on. The house Guy’s men built over the sawpit would have been a sawpit house. While permanent sawpit houses could be substantial, many, especially those set up to process logs for immediate use, were basic structures sometimes consisting of little more than a roof supported by posts set in the ground, and this seems to have been the case with Guy’s first sawpit house. Based on the evidence uncovered to date, it seems

likely the structure the colonists erected over the sawpit was 14 ft. wide and perhaps 24 ft. long.

Plans for the 2025 Season

During the 2025 season we plan to return to John Guy’s first sawpit and complete the excavation within and around it. We still have to remove the silt deposit from a small area at the south end of the pit (Operation 163) and expose that section of the floor so it can be mapped and photographed. We will also continue our search for traces of the sawpit house erected over the pit. Hopefully, we will uncover enough architectural detail to give us a good idea of how the house was built and what it looked like. Once the section of the pit not covered by Structure 9 has been completely exposed, the area will be landscaped. The sides of the pit and the excavated areas around it will be enclosed in sod and, once stabilized, the pit will be left open for visitors to view. Given its location near the entrance to the site, and its significance as one of the first tasks the colonists undertook upon arriving in Cupids, the sawpit and sawpit house will be an ideal place to begin tours of the site. If we can get a clear understanding of how the sawpit house was built, we may, at some point in the future, erect a partial reconstruction, similar to the ghost structure over the dwelling house and storehouse, but, of course, on a smaller scale. Interpretation would be further enhanced by the addition of one or more history boards.

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The Simm's House Cooperage

Zoë Helleiner, Pier-Ann Milliard, Tyler Stapleton & Elsa Simms

In the summer of 2024, a limited excavation was undertaken in the backyard of the Simms House Registered Heritage Structure located on Pleasant Street (formerly Lazy Bank Road), where a cooperage once stood. Formerly one of St. John's top industries, coopering, or barrel-making, has fallen by the wayside, and all that is left of the cooperages dotted around the city lie under the ground or have been destroyed or repurposed. In the backyard of the Simms House, the foundation of one such cooperage lay partially exposed, which inspired the current owner of the house, Tyler Stapleton, to rebuild the structure as close as he could to its original form, if not for its original purpose. Regardless, the echoes of a long-gone trade would be returned to St. John's.

Historical Background: The Coopering Industry in St. John's and the Simms Family

The Simms House was built in 1882 and is a municipally and provincially designated Heritage Structure, partly for its historical and cultural connections to the barrel-making industry. The property featured a stable building constructed sometime before 1899, and in 1902, Master Cooper, Henry V. Simms, bought the property on Pleasant Street and repurposed the existing outbuilding into a cooperage.

Coopering played a significant role in Newfoundland's economy as barrels were crucial for exporting goods such as salt cod and other fisheries-derived products. Not only did the fishing industry require barrels for trans-Atlantic exportation, nearly every industry needed barrels to transport materials from the mason's lime mortar to the baker's flour and the blacksmith's nails, all creating a massive demand for barrels well into the 20th century. Small and medium-scale operations such as Simms' would thrive. In contrast, the merchant's larger operations struggled and foundered against the cost of mechanization and the strength of the Coopers Union, of which Henry V. Simms was the founding Vice President. The cultural importance of such an industry is highlighted through this struggle as coopering became one of the last craft industries in St. John's (Joy 1977).

The fisheries and coopering industries went from the most important employer of trade in the

1870s to one of the smallest (Joy 1977), likely due to the decreased volume of packaged fish products. The Simms House on Pleasant Street would nevertheless play an essential part in coopering at the start of the 20th century, and its presence as an independent cooperage remained successful despite numerous challenges facing the industry at that time. In 1947, Henry's son William inherited the house and continued to run operations even though coopering as an industry had become marginal in the trade industry in St. John's.

The extensive and prolonged use of the Simms cooperage into the mid-20th century may have been what allowed evidence of its existence, its concrete foundation walls, to survive into the present day. While every street in downtown St. John's was said to have a cooperage at one point in time (Fitzhenry 1946:25), the remains of the foundation of the Simms cooperage may be some of the last visible remnants of that once thriving and essential industry. This historic significance inspired the present owner of Simms House to restore the designated dwelling house to its historical state and recreate the lost cooperage by using information from various sources, including archaeological evidence, pictures, and oral histories from the Simms family and broader community.

Archaeological Intervention

The current landowner, Tyler Stapleton, is rebuilding the demolished cooperage structure in its former location as accurately as possible, given the modern building code and municipal development regulations. For nearly a decade, Stapleton has conducted extended archival research on the house, which shed light on the usage of the partially exposed foundation of the cooperage in his backyard. Using this historical information as precedent, Stapleton was able to acquire a building permit from the City of St. John's in the Summer of 2024 for an accessory building with a footprint of 31.2m² and a height of two stories, which otherwise would not have been permitted given current building regulations. The new construction now incorporates part of the existing concrete cooperage floor and sits partially within the location of the former cooperage. Given the significant grade, eight

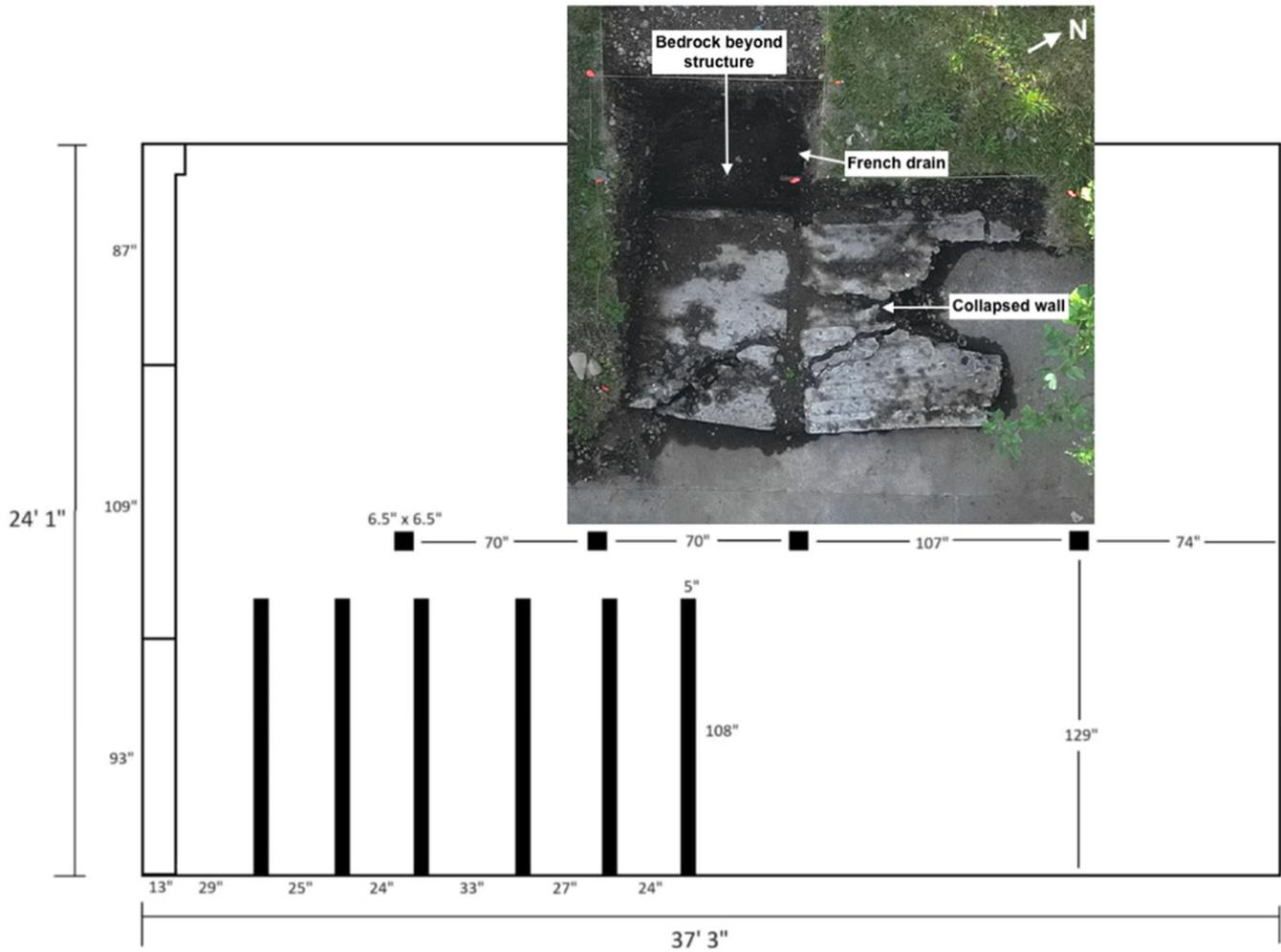


Photo 1: Total dimensions of the cooperage, overlain by drone photo of the area excavated (Courtesy of Tyler Stapleton and Eric Aylward).

feet deep of sloped land overlaying the historic foundation needed to be removed to level the area before its construction. This excavation and leveling of the site provided a unique opportunity to salvage archaeological material and information pertaining to the cooperage, as many artifacts such as ceramics, combs, shoes and other domestic artifacts have already been found in the process of earlier house restoration and landscaping projects.

A trench was first dug to obtain a stratigraphic profile. As expected, fill was sitting on the foundation. Many artifacts were recovered, and we were able to identify two distinct fill events (see photo 3), collapsed retaining walls, and a French drain beyond the structure wall (see photo 4). Since no archaeological layers were found to be in situ due to numerous disturbances from past activity in the backyard, and it was discovered that the structure had been built di-

rectly into the bedrock which limited our intervention to assess whether or not we would come across archaeological material dating prior the usage of the cooperage, we proceeded with monitoring the mechanical excavation to ensure all significant information would be salvaged before the construction of the new project. The layout of the cooperage foundation was exposed and photographed (see photos 1 and 2). A test pit was dug in the area between the cooperage floor and the house to get a sense of the stratigraphy before the construction of the house. No undisturbed archaeological layers were discovered before reaching the bedrock.

Project’s Outcomes

One aim of the project was to excavate part of the unexposed foundation to see what lay underneath before the construction project began to see if archaeological evidence could add to this story of herit-



Photo 2: Area of the archaeological intervention, before and after.

One unusual aspect of this project is that one of the team’s archaeologists, Elsa Simms, was directly related to the original owner and Master Cooper, Henry V. Simms. From the inception of the project, this relation meant that, at the very least, this would involve descendants, given that knowledge had passed through many generations about the fate of the building and its original state and use. However, the project also resulted in a news story that publicized the goings-on and brought many others forward with stories of their ancestors’ involvement with cooperating in the city. Many community members got in contact with stories, pictures, and other historical documents, helping us reconstruct the story of the house and the neighbourhood more broadly (See photo 5).

As a result of the excavation, over 600 artifacts were collected as a sample of the material culture found at the site. They were cleaned and photographed and are in the process of being catalogued.

age and adaptive reuse. Although the backyard has seen many disturbances following the destruction of the cooperage, which limited archaeological interpretation, what followed was wider community involvement that brought many different groups of people together.

Elsa Simms is hoping to continue collecting personal stories about her great-grandfather’s house and family as a way to learn more about her heritage and, most importantly, as a way to connect with contemporary community members.

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Photo 3: Profile view, showing the distinct fill events, disturbance, bedrock, and collapsed wall, with the remaining retainer wall still standing in the background.

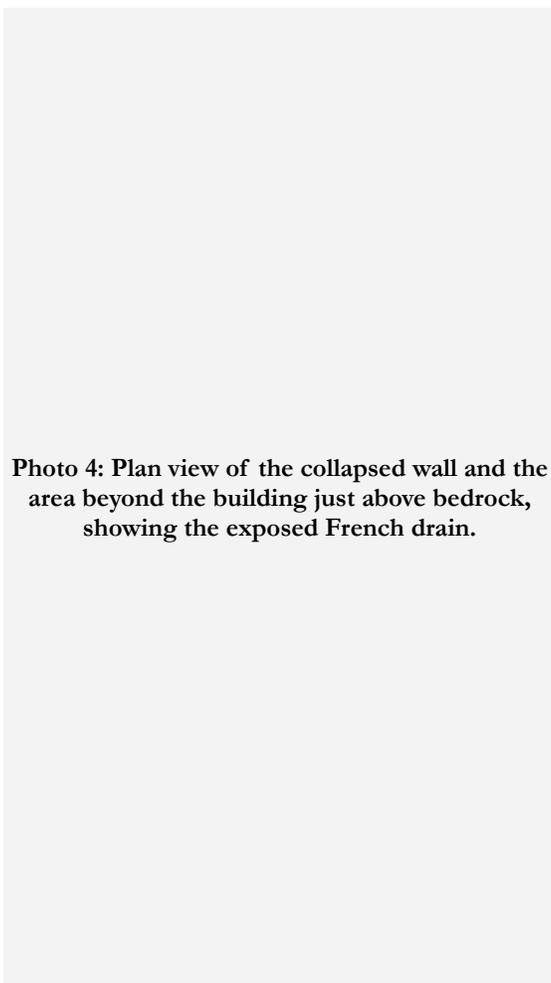


Photo 4: Plan view of the collapsed wall and the area beyond the building just above bedrock, showing the exposed French drain.





Photo 5: Picture of the Coopers Union from 1937 contributed by a member of the public upon reading the news story published about the excavation.



Photo 6: Ceramic sherd found amongst many artifacts.



Preliminary Insights: 2024 Fieldwork on Indigenous Representation in Newfoundland and Labrador Museums

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Memorial University

Introduction
During the summer of 2024, I completed fieldwork for my PhD project titled *Just Representation? Investigating the Visibility of Indigenous Cultures at Museums in Newfoundland and Labrador*. This project explores Indigenous representation in community, provincial, and federal non-Indigenous-led museums in Newfoundland and Labrador. As part of my 2024 fieldwork, I had the opportunity to visit sixteen non-Indigenous-led museums and two Indigenous-led museums across the province—where Indigenous-led museums are heritage institutions run by an Indigenous community or government. The non-Indigenous-led museums were selected based on two criteria: they either told the history of a specific region in the traditional Indigenous territory in Newfoundland and Labrador or spoke about Indigenous Peoples in their exhibits. During these visits, I conducted Exhibit Analysis, exploring the museum’s exhibits to see how they represented Indigenous Peoples—or if they represented Indigenous Peoples at all. I also conducted several semi-structured interviews with museum professionals across the province on how their exhibits represent Indigenous Peoples. Together we discussed potential challenges to representing Indigenous cultures ‘in a good way’—where ‘working in a good way’ refers to conducting research or engagement with, for, and by Indigenous communities, based on respect, reciprocity, accountability, and ethical responsibility, all while honouring Indigenous knowledge, voices, and autonomy (Ferland et al., 2021; Supernant, 2020). These activities align with the broader objectives of my research: analyzing physical and digital representations of Indigenous cultures, understanding the factors shaping these portrayals, and providing recommendations to improve Indigenous representation using insights from critical museum studies, Indigenous-led practices, and guidelines from national and interna-

tional organizations. Ultimately, this research seeks to identify recommendations for enhancing Indigenous representation in Newfoundland and Labrador’s heritage institutions.

In the next stage of this project, I will compare how non-Indigenous-led and Indigenous-led museums portray Indigenous cultures. These Indigenous-led museums include the two Indigenous-led museums visited during the 2024 field season, Ktaqmkuk Mi’kmaw Historical Museum in St. George’s, Newfoundland, and Cartwright Museum in Cartwright, Labrador, and two museums in various stages of development, Innu Nation Cultural Centre in Sheshatshiu, Labrador, and Mary’s Harbour Cultural Centre in Mary’s Harbour, Labrador. Through this work, I was able to develop connections with museum professionals in Western, Central, and Southern Labrador, as well as in Western, Central, and Eastern Newfoundland. In this report, I briefly discuss my positionality in Indigenous-themed research, a brief background on Indigenous representation in museums and education spheres in Newfoundland and Labrador, some preliminary results from the 2024 field season, and provide an overview of remaining work for my ongoing PhD project.

Positionality

I am a first-generation graduate student from Mount Pearl, Newfoundland, working on my PhD in the Department of Archaeology at Memorial University under the supervision of Dr. Barry Gaulton and Dr. Scott Neilsen. My interest and passion in Indigenous Studies grew from the lack of education on Indigenous histories in my K-12 schooling—learning only that the Indigenous Peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador went extinct long ago, including the Beothuk and the Maritime Archaic. As a settler who did not know much about Indigenous Peoples and their histories, my research and teaching are rooted in educating other settlers on colonial misconceptions of

history and the many overlooked histories of this place—whether forgotten, ignored, hidden, untold, or erased. My goal is not to speak on behalf of Indigenous Peoples but to support truth and reconciliation through education—where education is the first step in truth-telling by educating fellow settlers about the histories, perspectives, and ongoing realities of Indigenous communities.

There are critiques for positionality statements in academic discourse, attributing these statements to creating biases in research, reducing the quality of findings with untestable reflections rather than empirical data, and introducing identity politics into academia that cloud the objectivity and impartiality of scientific research (Savolainen, 2023). This may be true for disciplines that heavily look to the scientific method for inquiry (i.e., observation, research question, hypothesis, experimentation, data collection, analysis, conclusions, and replication), such as chemistry, physics, and psychology. However, this way of thinking about positionality statements as harmful to research has no place in archaeology and anthropology, especially when work has been and continues to be based on marginalized communities, such as Indigenous Peoples and people of colour. There are two reasons positionality statements should be included in archaeology and anthropology: 1) in a post-processual age, archaeology and anthropology are moving away from viewing themselves as scientific disciplines with more focus on decolonial research; and 2) positionality statements ensure ethical engagement with marginalized communities, promotes transparency and accountability in research, aligns research methodology with decolonial practices, and ultimately enhances reflection and cultural sensitivity in research. Thus, positionality statements, at least in archaeology and anthropology, aid in repairing the exploitative relationship anthropologists and archaeologists have historically had with marginalized communities (Homan, 2023; Jadallah, 2024; Smith, 2021).

Background

Museums are a critical way to pass along history and heritage in a specific region. When museums do not include everyone, such as creating accessible exhibits and spaces, bilingual inclusion, and incorporating decolonial practices, they risk alienating communities, perpetuating harmful stereotypes, and omitting inclu-

sive histories. The inclusion of Indigenous histories is especially pressing in Newfoundland and Labrador, as Godlewska et al. (2016), found that the provincial curriculum consisted of knowledge gaps, lack of context, problematic framing of Indigenous history, and dominance of settler perspectives. Godlewska et al. (2016) argue that this shows a weak attempt at meaningful change towards education for reconciliation. Godlewska et al. (2017) also found a similar lack of Indigenous representation when surveying first-year university students at Memorial University on their awareness of Indigenous histories and issues. As such, museums are vital for presenting Indigenous histories in Newfoundland and Labrador, as the public K-12 curriculum and university education may not be sufficient, resulting in some people only learning about Indigenous Peoples at museums.

Museums across Canada are at various stages of decolonizing their spaces, including the Royal British Columbia Museum in British Columbia, the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Nova Scotia, and The Rooms in Newfoundland and Labrador, to name a few (Barry, 2020; Birnie, 2021; Butler, 2019; CBC News, 2021a; CBC News, 2021b; Government of Nova Scotia, 2021; Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, n.d.; Titian, 2024). This research aims to support various national and international calls for moving toward reconciliation between First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and settlers in Canada through education and heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador. In Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (TRC C2A) (2015) and the Canadian Museums Association (CMA)'s Moved to Action Standards (Danyluk & MacKenzie, 2022) provide calls and standards to move Indigenous representation forward in the spheres of public education and heritage institutions. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (2007) provides numerous articles outlining the fundamental rights of Indigenous Peoples worldwide, including in heritage and cultural preservation. My research supports the TRC C2A 62 & 79, CMA Standards #22 & #27, and UNDRIP Articles 13, 15, & 31 (Table 1). While some of these calls, standards, and/or articles may not directly call on museums for change, they can be applied to museums in the Newfoundland and Labrador context, where museums play a key role in educating non-Indigenous peoples on Indigenous



Figure 1: Selected Indigenous (Triangles) & Non-Indigenous (Circles) Museums in Newfoundland. (Map by Molly Ingenmey).

histories and colonial injustices that are not taught in K-12 or post-secondary education in the province. Further, museums in Newfoundland and Labrador provide space for Indigenous communities to tell their histories when they are unable to or while they are working on developing heritage initiatives of their own.

In 2022, I completed digital fieldwork on L'Anse aux Meadows and Red Bay National Historic Sites of Canada & UNESCO World Heritage Sites, exploring their representation of Indigenous Peoples in their digital heritage, mainly through their websites and associated web documents (Hogan, 2022). I found that L'Anse aux Meadows and Red Bay engaged in tokenism by either using the significant multicultural Indigenous occupation of the site as a reason for UNESCO World Heritage status or by mentioning Indigenous Peoples in outdated, blatantly racist ways. In particular, the advisory evaluation for the inscription of L'Anse aux Meadows as a World Heritage Site states that the archaeological site 'is of great importance to the history of the settlement of America,' continuing to list the multiple Indigenous archaeological cultures that lived at the site, including Past Arctic and First Nations Archaeological Cultures (International Council on Monuments and Sites, 1978, p. 2). Further, the digital heritage of both Red Bay and L'Anse aux Meadows mentions Indigenous

Peoples as 'ancient Indian bands,' 'eskimos,' and 'native archaic populations,' despite almost ten years since the TRC C2A calling for inclusion and respectful terminology in support of self-determination. While these terms were once acceptable to use in archaeological contexts, it is evident with the inclusion of Indigenous communities in archaeological and heritage work that they are no longer adequate. The use of highly outdated and blatantly racist terminology gives the public the impression that such language is acceptable for everyday use—despite Indigenous Peoples across Canada and Turtle Island saying it is not appropriate. My ongoing PhD research builds on this by looking at physical museum spaces, additional digital heritage sites, and interviews with museum professionals to better understand the Indigenous representation across the province.

Methods

My 2024 fieldwork was conducted in six trips spanning from July to September, including three trips within Eastern Newfoundland, one to Central and Western Newfoundland, and two to Labrador. The first trip, at the beginning of July, involved visiting The Rooms in St. John's, followed by a trip to Conception Bay North to visit Cupid's Cove Plantation and Cupids Legacy Centre, and finally up the shore to Ferryland to see the Colony of Avalon. Next, I travelled to Central and Western Newfoundland in mid-July, visiting several non-Indigenous-led museums, including: the Beothuk Interpretation Centre in Boyd's Cove, Demasduit Regional Museum in Grand Falls-Windsor, Dorset Museum in Fleur-de-Lys, Port au Choix National Historic Site in Port au Choix, L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site just outside St. Anthony, 50 Centuries Interpretation Centre in Bird Cove, the French Shore Interpretation Centre in Conche, the Corner Brook Museum and Archive in Corner Brook, and the Ktaqmuk Mi'kmaw Historical Museum in St. George's (Figure 1). At the end of July-early August, I made my first trip to Labrador to visit the Labrador Straits Museum in L'Anse-au-Loup, the Red Bay National Historic Site in Red Bay, the Cartwright Museum in Cartwright, the Labrador Heritage Museum in North West River, Labrador Interpretation Centre in North West River, and the Labrador Gateway Museum in Labrador City (Figure 2). My final fieldwork trip was a return trip to Labrador, specifically Southern and Central Labrador, to

Table 1: List of Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action, Canadian Museums Association Moved to Action Standards, & UNDRIP Articles Engaged in this Research (Danyluk & MacKenzie, 2022; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015; UNDRIP, 2007).

TRC Call 62	<p>‘We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples’ historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students. ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms. iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.’
TRC Call 79	<p>‘We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its Secretariat. ii. Revising the policies, criteria, and practices of the National Program of Historical Commemoration to integrate Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada’s national heritage and history. iii. Developing and implementing a national heritage plan and strategy for commemorating residential school sites, the history and legacy of residential schools, and the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada’s history.’
CMA Standard #22	<p>‘Ensure the proper use of terminology including names for Nations, communities, clans, families, and place names, throughout museum spaces, as well as archives and collections, as discussed in the Repatriation and Collections section. Use appropriate orthography or syllabics.’</p>
CMA Standard #27	<p>‘Museum executives and board members must take a leadership role in self-educating on Indigenous matters while recognizing the limits of their contribution.’</p>
UNDRIP Article 13	<p>‘Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.</p> <p>States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.’</p>

Table 1 continues on the next page

UNDRIP Article 15 ‘Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.

States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.’

UNDRIP Article 31 ‘Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.’

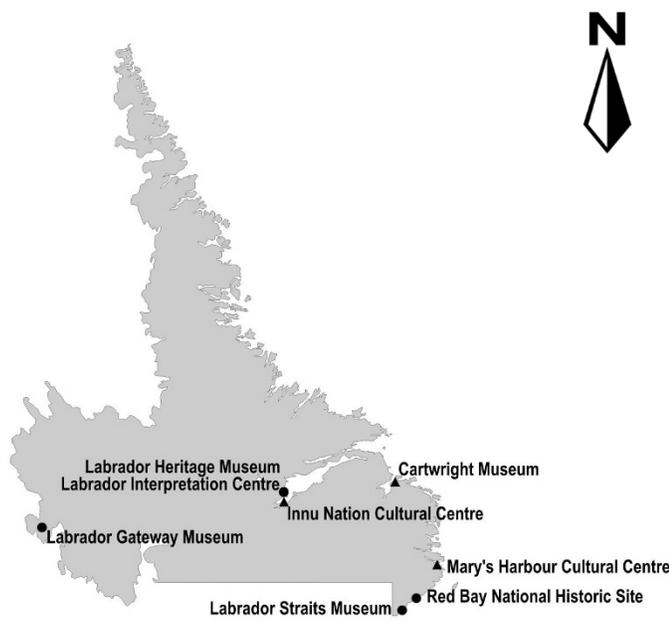


Figure 2: Selected Indigenous (Triangles) & Non-Indigenous (Circles) Museums in Labrador. (Map by Molly Ingenmey).

meet with Indigenous community members and conduct interviews with museum professionals.

In this project, I use three methods for collecting data on Indigenous representation, including Digital

Media Analysis, Exhibit Analysis, and Semi-Structured Interviews. All data has been collected in MAXQDA, a mixed methods software package that saves all file formats in one shareable file. This shareable file makes coding and analyzing the collected data straightforward.

Digital Media Analysis

Digital Media Analysis involves analyzing various digital media associated with a heritage institution, including their websites, social media, and accessible digital documents—essentially anything accessible or likely to be viewed by the public when interacting with the museum or site online. I used this same method for capturing data in my Master’s research in 2022. As digital media constantly changes, MAXQDA has proven beneficial in capturing websites just in case they are removed or modified during my research project. This software allows access to a website even if the page is removed or unstable. Since Digital Media Analysis is conducted online in the digital sphere, it was carried out before, during, and after the 2024 field season.

Exhibit Analysis

Exhibit Analysis involves the analysis of physical exhibits within the heritage facility, including display panels, outdoor boardwalks, and any other physical

material that the public could interact with to learn more about the site. To date, I have visited 18 museums across the province and have reviewed their physical exhibits and related areas for Indigenous representation. I captured exhibits that mentioned Indigenous Peoples in some way using photography (where allowed by the institution). For example, panels discussing Beothuk and belongings of Past Arctic Peoples' ('Paleo-Eskimo') that were displayed at the site were photographed. These media files were then saved to MAXQDA upon return to my computer. Photographs and detailed field notes recorded using an iPad and Google Docs were helpful for post-fieldwork analysis. Exhibit Analysis for all 18 museums was conducted in the 2024 field season.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Approval was sought and granted by Memorial University's Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) to conduct Semi-Structured Interviews with museum professionals across the province. In line with ICEHR, participants were recruited using an approved recruitment script sent to the general email of museums and specific individuals who held positions noted on their institution's websites. Interviews were conducted in-person or over the phone, with the vast majority completed via phone call. These Semi-Structured Interviews were planned to be performed with museum staff members and management during the 2024 field season. However, upon feedback from the selected museums with privacy and confidentiality concerns, the semi-structured interviews were opened to anyone currently working or has worked as a museum professional in Newfoundland and Labrador. With the help of the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANL), I could broadcast my project to all members of MANL through their weekly Museum Announcements email newsletter. I was also invited to give a brief report on my project at MANL's 2024 Annual Meeting and Conference, where I met and networked with potential participants within the museum community. In these interviews, participants were free to skip any questions and to elaborate at their discretion; however, participants were asked eight questions, ranging from describing where and how they learned about Indigenous Peoples to explaining any protocols their institution follows for engaging with Indigenous communities to providing

any other information participants felt necessary to include in the interview.

Preliminary Results

Several preliminary findings have emerged from the initial data collection as part of the ongoing investigation into the visibility of Indigenous cultures in Newfoundland and Labrador community, provincial, and federal museums. Digital Media Analysis shows similar results between L'Anse aux Meadows, Red Bay, and the additional sites investigated this field season. While ongoing, it is clear that Indigenous representation across various non-Indigenous-led museums is outdated and in need of updating. Similar outdated language can be seen in the Exhibit Analysis from the selected museums—however, a couple of museums showed varying stages of updating Indigenous representation in their exhibits. Such updates range from first steps to decolonize museum spaces—not necessarily by returning the land they occupy, but by dismantling colonial systems that have historically centered white, cisgender, straight men. These efforts include temporary changes to museum spaces (e.g., covering sensitive images of Indigenous human remains and offensive terminology) to more permanent changes (e.g., museum panels created alongside local Indigenous communities).

Despite seeing various museums working towards updating Indigenous exhibits, much work is needed, especially in the language used to describe Indigenous Peoples. Based on my Exhibit Analysis and work teaching in the field of Indigenous Archaeological History / First Peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador, some proposed changes exist to how archaeologists and museum professionals discuss Indigenous Peoples. In Table 2, I provide the outdated, traditional archaeological term, the potential replacement(s), and a brief description of why the replacement is necessary. Such terms were developed by archaeologists and anthropologists in the 20th century to describe what they thought were past cultural groups based on recovered material culture, as opposed to names used by Indigenous Peoples in the past and present. As such, work needs to be done to include Indigenous Peoples in the naming of past and present Indigenous communities in the archaeological history. It is crucial to note that these terms must be discussed in collaboration with Indigenous communities and that these proposed replacements are to

Table 2: Proposed Replacements for Archaeological Terminology Referencing Indigenous Peoples.

Outdated Term	Potential Replacement	Brief Rationale
‘Native’ or ‘Aboriginal’	‘Indigenous Peoples’	‘Indigenous Peoples’ is globally recognized—aligning with the United Nations & Indigenous Rights Movements. ‘Native’ is sometimes used in a derogatory way, so it is best to use ‘Indigenous’ instead.
‘Indian’ or ‘Amerindian’	‘First Nations’ or ‘Native American’	‘Indian’ is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way. ‘Amerindian’ includes ‘Indian’ so it is best to use First Nations or Native American—depending on who you are referring to.
‘Beothuk Indians’	‘Beothuk’	‘Indian’ is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way.
‘Intermediate Indians’	‘Intermediate Period Peoples’ or ‘Early Boreal Woodland Period Peoples’	‘Indian’ is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way. Archaeology in Newfoundland and Labrador is traditionally separated from the rest of the Northeast—especially in naming practices. As such, Betts & Hrynich (2022) suggest renaming the ‘Intermediate Period’ to the ‘Early Boreal Woodland Period’ to better reflect a connection between NL and the Woodland Period of the Maritimes.
‘Recent Indians’	‘Recent Period Peoples’ or ‘Late Boreal Woodland Period Peoples’	‘Indian’ is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way. Archaeology in Newfoundland and Labrador is traditionally separated from the rest of the Northeast—especially in naming practices. As such, Betts & Hrynich (2022) suggest renaming the ‘Recent Period’ to the ‘Late Boreal Woodland Period’ to better reflect a connection between NL and the Woodland Period of the Maritimes.
‘Eskimo’	‘Inuit’	‘Eskimo’ is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way. ‘Inuit’ is the preferred term of the Inuit Circumpolar Council to replace ‘Eskimo’—especially as ‘Eskimo’ is not an Inuit term but one given by others (see Inuit Circumpolar Council, 2010 for more information)
‘Paleo-Eskimo’	‘Past Arctic Peoples’ or ‘Arctic Adapted Peoples’ or ‘Pre-Inuit’ or ‘Paleo-Inuit’	‘Paleo,’ which literally means ‘old,’ separates past Indigenous Peoples from contemporary Indigenous Peoples by placing them in the deep past, essentially dehumanizing them (see Pitblado, 2022, & Steeves, 2021 for more information). ‘Eskimo’ is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way.

Table 2 continues on the next page

'Early Paleo-Eskimo'	'Early Past Arctic Peoples' or 'Early Arctic Adapted Peoples' or 'Early Pre-Inuit'	'Early Paleo-Eskimo' refers to various archaeological cultures across the Arctic, including 'Denbigh Flint Complex,' 'Independence I & II,' 'Pre-Dorset,' 'Groswater,' 'Saqqaq,' and 'Dorset I' (Desrosiers & Sørensen, 2012). 'Pre-Dorset' and 'Groswater' are found in Newfoundland and Labrador. Using these specific groups may be the best way moving forward.
'Late Paleo-Eskimo'	'Late Past Arctic Peoples' or 'Late Arctic Adapted Peoples' or 'Late Pre-Inuit'	'Late Paleo-Eskimo' refers to various archaeological cultures across the Arctic, including 'Early Dorset,' 'Middle Dorset,' 'Late Dorset,' and 'Classic Dorset' (Desrosiers & Sørensen, 2012).
'Groswater Paleo-Eskimo'	'Groswater'	'Eskimo' is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way.'
'Dorset Paleo-Eskimo'	'Dorset'	'Eskimo' is often seen as offensive and traditionally used in a derogatory way.
'Thule'	'Ancestral Inuit' or 'Early Inuit'	'Thule' is associated with Nazi Germany; 'Thule' refers to the mythical Aryan homeland (see Walley, 2020; Whitridge, 2016 for more information).

serve in the meantime.

Additionally, interviews with museum professionals are underway, providing valuable qualitative insights into how Indigenous Peoples are represented and involved in museum spaces. Interviews with museum professionals help to contextualize contributing factors to the outdated terminology and poor representation in exhibits, including access to limited funding and insufficient access to accessible knowledge on Indigenous Studies. These challenges appear consistent across this province's community, provincial, and federal museums. Despite these limitations, there is a strong interest among museum professionals in enhancing their representation of Indigenous cultures in their museums.

Through ongoing Digital Media Analysis and Interviews, this project aims to offer practical, culturally sensitive recommendations for non-Indigenous-led museums to better represent the histories, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador. However, this project shall not replace the recommendation for non-Indigenous-led museums to work with Indigenous Governments and community members in authoritative and com-

pensated positions to decolonize museum practices in Newfoundland and Labrador. These preliminary findings lay the groundwork for further analysis to foster a more inclusive and respectful representation of Indigenous Peoples in museum spaces.

Ongoing Work

Digital Media Analysis is ongoing, with a few museums left to review. To date, [interviews are still open for anyone working in or who has worked in a Newfoundland and Labrador museum](#). I will continue working on my dissertation once Digital Media Analysis and Interviews are closed. An essential part of my project is the creation of community outreach materials and recommendations for non-Indigenous-led museums on how to better represent Indigenous Peoples and their histories. These materials will likely be in the form of pamphlets and training workshops. It is important to note that my work does not call for any museum or heritage initiative currently presenting Indigenous histories to remove everything about Indigenous Peoples or to try to find a descendant group to share Indigenous histories. My work calls for non-Indigenous-led museums to work with Indigenous Peoples on how to represent their histories—which

may involve removing exhibits. Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous folks requires settlers to acknowledge colonial wrongdoings and actively work to educate other settlers—which is how I envision the role of non-Indigenous-led museums, as Indigenous Peoples cannot be responsible for educating non-Indigenous people on everything Indigenous-related.

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Nunatsiavut to Nunavut SOI Expedition 2024

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Introduction

Departing from Nain on July 25th, 2024, the Students on Ice Nunatsiavut to Nunavut Expedition travelled north along the Labrador coast before crossing into Nunavut on August 2nd, 2024. The educational cruise offered experiential learning to 18 youth participants (ages 14-18), offering programming designed by elder and scientist educators. Ship-based activities and land-based excursions took place daily as the expedition sailed north.

As the resident archaeologist on the expedition, it was my responsibility to teach the students about the archaeological resources of the Labrador Peninsula and to ensure that those archaeological resources were respected and preserved during shore landings. Due to the nature of expedition travel, changes to the landings were regular and often. I often found myself requesting specific site information as itineraries changed due to weather, tides, or other factors. The quick responses of Stephen Hull (Provincial Archaeology Office) were very much appreciated and invaluable to the program.

Most of the expedition took place within Torngats National Park. Visits to both Dog Island and Hebron were planned for the start of the expedition but only the visit to Hebron materialized. In total, thirteen known archaeological sites were revisited and one new archaeological site, JaDc-08, was identified (Table 1). At each site a brief survey was completed, fieldnotes were recorded, and photo-

graphs were taken. In some cases, aerial photographs were taken at my request by the SOI media team with their drone. While the students were ashore, I stayed on site to provide archaeological interpretation and to ensure no artifacts or features were disturbed. I did not collect any artifacts observed during the expedition.

Expedition Results

Hebron (July 27, 2024)

Hebron was the first landing of the expedition (Figure 1). With the Polar Prince anchored in the bay of the former settlement, Zodiacs ferried passengers to the rocky shore in front of the collapsed Hudson Bay Company (HBC) building. The Parks Canada ambassador of Hebron, Noah Nochasak welcomed us at the rocky shore where countless nails and other iron pieces were seen in every crack and crevice. Noah then led the group to the main Moravian Mission building. While he guided the main group around the mission grounds, I walked southeast with bear guard Maria Merkuratsuk and evictee of Hebron Sophie Keelan to relocate the semisubterranean sod houses of Hebron 1 that pre-date the Mission settlement.

Houses 2, 3, and 4 described in Kaplan’s dissertation (1983) were relocated in a swale south of the main settlement terrace, facing Dog Islands, just above a narrow sand beach (Figure 2). The dimensions and locations of the houses given by Kaplan matched well with what was observed on the ground. A fourth large semisubterranean sod house was locat-

Table 1: Expedition landings and sites visited.

Landing	Date (2024)	Site(s) Visited	Condition Notes
Hebron	July 27th	IbCp-17, IbCp-41	Sod houses in good condition
North Arm	July 28th	IdCu-02	
Base Camp / Rose Island	July 29th	IdCr-44	
Ramah Bay	July 30th	IfCt-03	Some internal erosion of House 7
Nachvak Fiord	July 31st	IgCv-01	Coastal erosion threatens two southern stone rings
Ryans Bay	August 1st	N/A	
Hutton Peninsula / Ikkudliayuk Fiord	August 2nd	JaDc-01, JaDc-02, JaDc-03, JaDc-04, JaDc-05, JaDc-06, JaDc-07, JaDc-08	Coastal erosion encroaching on sod houses at JaDc-04. Coastal erosion impacting lowest stone ring at JaDc-08

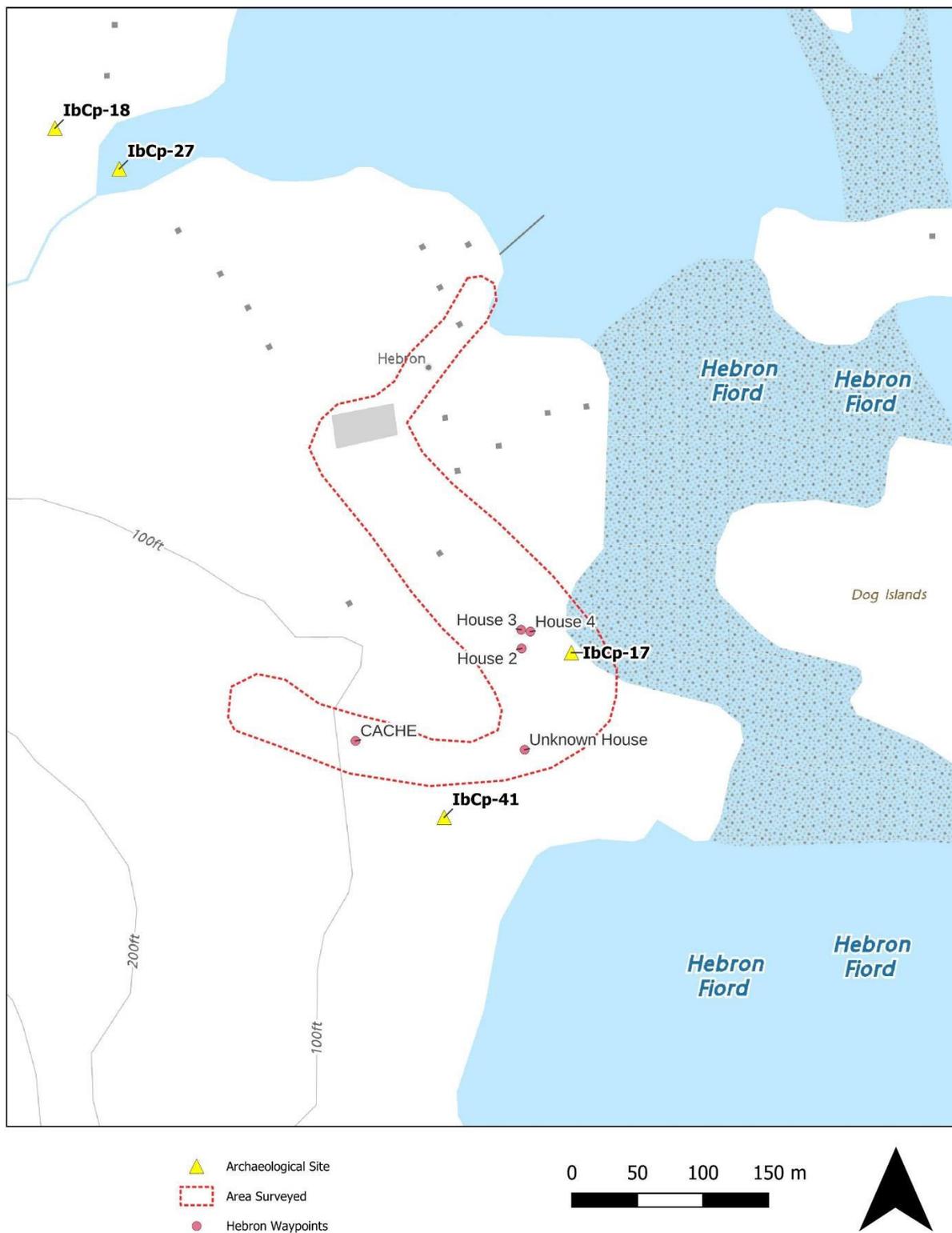


Figure 1: Hebron landing survey map.



Figure 2: View northwest from Unknown House showing Houses 2, 3, 4 in swale below mission building.

access to the large house. No artifacts were observed at any of the four houses. The only cultural material observed was a large piece of whalebone sticking out of the sod near the entrance tunnel of the unknown house.

The visit concluded with a hike up the ridge behind Hebron moving northwest from the unknown house. Roughly halfway up the ridge a small stone feature was observed. The rocks of the feature were spread over a 2 x 2 m area with the central rocks forming a square interior cavity roughly 50 x 50 x 30 cm (Figure 6 and Figure 7). A piece of rusted metal band located near

ed 75 m south of Houses 2, 3, and 4 on the south-facing shore overlooking waters south of Dog Islands (Figure 3 and Figure 4). The house is likely the House 1 described by Susan Kaplan, but she does not give the distance between House 1 and houses 2, 3, and 4 making that difficult to confirm. The unknown house is located on higher ground in a saddle between a small hill and the lower slopes of the hills that back the Hebron settlement. The entrance passage is curved to make use of a natural fault in the bedrock that extends to the southeast all the way to the water (Figure 5). The narrow opening of the shoreline fault was likely used as

the stone feature suggests it is a cache, possibly the

Figure 3: View south-southwest of Houses 2, 3, 4 in foreground and Unknown House in background (indicated by arrow).



small cache recorded at IbCp-41 (Hebron 9) associated with a grave. No grave was observed but the immediate area was not searched in detail.

**North Arm
(July 28, 2024)**

The Polar Prince entered Torngats National Park on the evening of July 27th, 2024, anchored in view of Base Camp. On the morning of July 28th Parks Canada staff were brought aboard along with members of the Nain Brass Band. Once aboard, the Polar Prince departed for North Arm. While underway, the expedition received instructions from Parks Canada staff about

the special conditions to be followed within the National Park followed by a performance by the Nain Brass Band accompanied by the hum of engines.

The Polar Prince anchored about 600 m from



Figure 4: View south of Unknown House.

the north end of North Arm. Parks staff ensured the area was safe and that the SOI students and staff remained on the beach until everyone was ashore. Hiking to a small lake via a waterfall or staying on the beach were the only two shore activity options given

the sensitivity of the archaeological features at North Arm 1 (IdCu-02). Those that chose to go on the hike to visit the lake were guided single file along an approved route through the site (Figure 8). Everyone who remained stayed on the beach where they enjoyed freshly cooked char.

**Rose Island
(July 29, 2024)**

Following a morning tour of Base Camp, the Polar Prince sailed west to the westward side of Rose Island. SOI staff and stu-

Figure 5: View southeast of shoreline fault beside Unknown House with piece of whalebone (indicated by arrow).





Figure 6: View northwest of cache on ridge.

Figure 7: View southeast of cache on ridge (indicated by arrow).





Figure 8: View south of SOI media team and SOI/Parks Canada bear guards at North Arm.

dents were brought ashore in two separate groups to ensure impacts were low and the group could be easily managed. Each group was led by Parks Canada staff along the south shore of the island to the mass grave. There they heard the story of repatriation and why the mass grave was created. A soapstone pot lying just south of the mass grave was pointed out. From the mass grave SOI students and staff were led north across the flat top of the south end of the island to look across a small bay at the sod houses of IdCr-01. Ramah Chert debitage was observed on the surface as we walked north and south across the flat portion of the island between the mass grave and IdCr-01 (Figure 9). The locations of artifacts were recorded by Parks Canada staff and then were left in place.

Ramah Bay (July 30, 2024)

On July 30th, a landing was made at Ramah Bay (Figure 11). A stubborn polar bear with her cub northwest of the settlement kept most activity restricted to the southeast part of the site. Students were kept together and took part in group activities covering various topics. An outdoor concert was also performed on the shore near the waterfall at the east end of the site.

Between activities I was able to visit the sod houses of IfCt-03 accompanied by a bear guard. Each of the sod houses depicted on Kaplan's (1983) map was relocated and found to be in generally good condition. There is no immediate risk of impacts from coastal erosion as the gravel beach is still 8-10 m from the house entrances (Figure 10). However, some undercutting of the interior house walls is oc-



Figure 9: Ramah Chert artifact among gravel south of IdCr-01.

Figure 10: View west from landing spot on beach towards sod houses at Ramah Bay (IfCt-03).





Figure 11: Ramah Bay landing survey map.



Figure 12: View north into interior of House 7 at IfCt-03 with undercut on north wall (indicated by arrow).

many students were kept busy fishing on the shore south of the brook. Some students wandered the shoreline south of Nachvak Brook, as I did, to determine if there were archaeological features nearby. At least four stone rings were observed on or near beach level, in two separate groups (Figure 14).

Two stone rings observed at the base of the hill on the southwest shore of the arm were given the field identification of Ring 3 and Ring 4 (Figure 15 and Figure 16). Both rings were on the edge of the beach gravels and have been likely impacted by sea water at the highest tides

curring in House 7 (Figure 12). Rodent holes were observed and may have contributed to the undercutting of the walls, but it seems more likely that the tall, yet narrow midden deposits of House 7 are inherently susceptible to such erosion. A fragment of thick earthenware with brown glaze was observed in the exposed soils (Figure 13).

**Nackvak Fiord
(July 31, 2024)**

The next landing occurred at the western end of Nachvak Fiord, at the mouth of Nachvak Brook. Wildlife was the main attraction during the landing with the sighting of a caribou upon arrival. Excellent conditions for Arctic char meant

of the year. No artifacts were observed in stone Ring

Figure 13: View north of undercut section of House 7 north wall with earthenware in-situ (indicated by arrow).



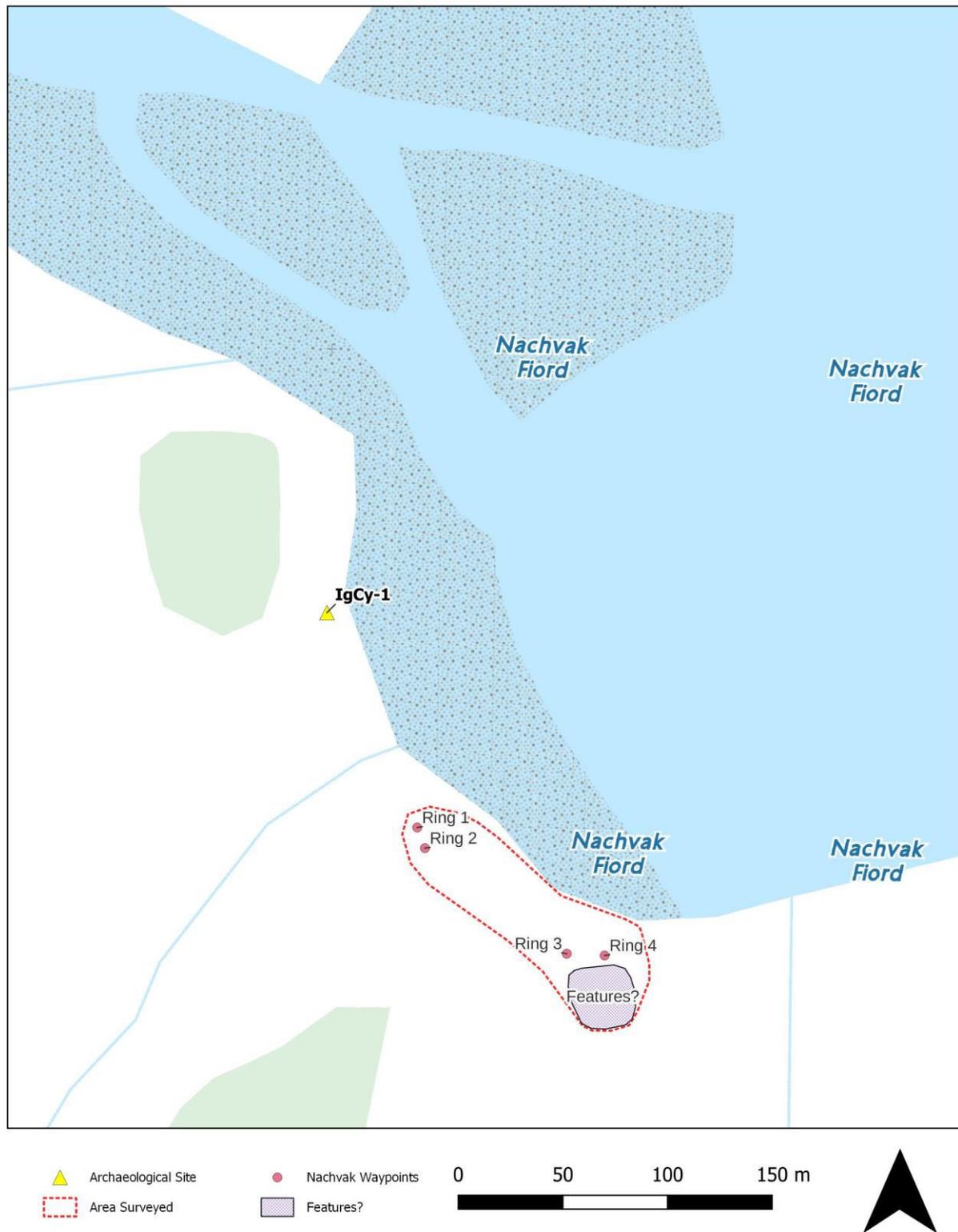


Figure 14: Nachvak Fiord landing survey map.

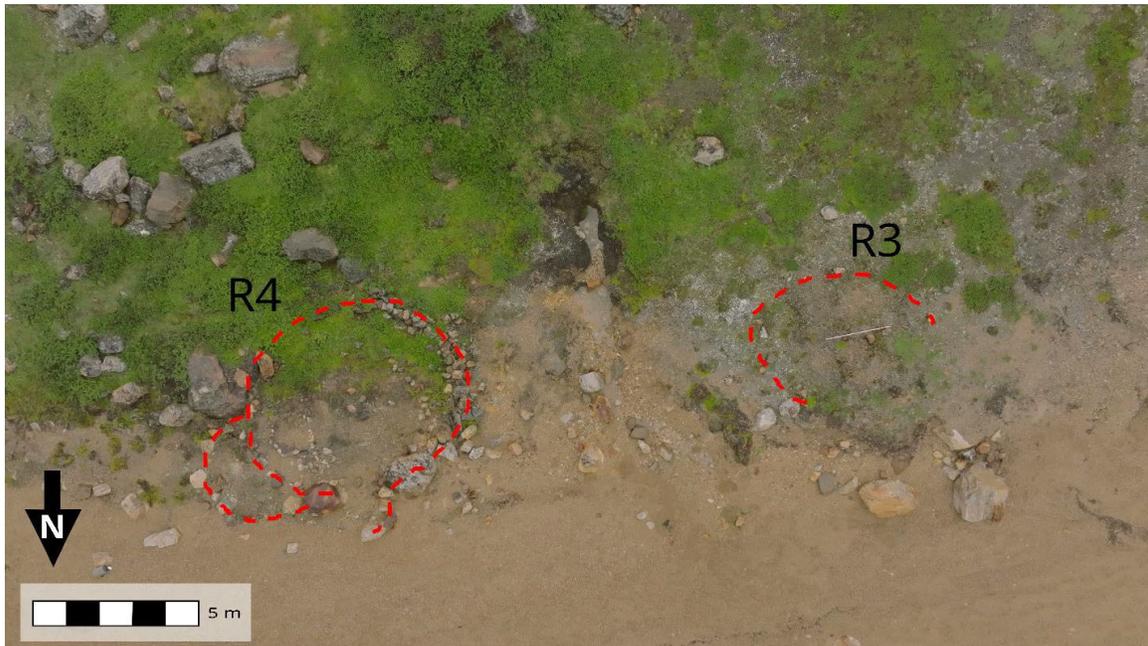


Figure 15: Aerial photograph of Rings 3 and 4 observed during Nachvak Fiord landing.

Figure 16: View northwest of Rings 3 and 4 at Nachvak landing, Ring 4 in foreground.





Figure 17: View west-northwest of possible stone features south of Rings 3 and 4.

Figure 18: View north of Rings 1 and 2 at Nachvak landing.





Figure 19: View northwest of Ryans Bay landing.

3. Stone Ring 4 had discernible internal features and a probable external cache along the southwest wall. A piece of porcelain and numerous metal fragments were observed in and around Ring 4, as well as a caribou antler in the entrance to the stone ring. Above Rings 3 and 4 are large stones scattered across the lower slopes of the hill, which may also be the remnants of cultural features (Figure 17). Time restraints did not allow for the area to be surveyed. It is recommended that future survey be undertaken to determine if they are cultural.

Approximately 100 m northwest of Rings 3 and 4 two more stone rings were observed below a low terrace (Figure 18). Ring 1 was a small sunken ring approximately 2.5 x 2 m. Ring two was larger with spaced out stones and a crescent-shaped feature at the base of the terrace. No artifacts were observed in or around Rings 1 and 2.

Ryans Bay and Eclipse Channel (August 1, 2024)

No archaeological sites were visited on August 1st. The day began with a landing on the west shore of Ryans Bay (Figure 19 and Figure 20). Students took

part in shore-based learning while I surveyed for any undocumented archaeological features given that no site was recorded at the location. Activities were mostly concentrated on the shore apart from a short hike I took up the valley with some willing students.

After the morning landing, the ship sailed approximately 50 km north to Eclipse Channel. There we were treated to a zodiac cruise up the Eclipse River to a waterfall. No landing was made in Eclipse Channel.

Hutton Peninsula and Ikkudliayuk Fiord, (August 2, 2024)

August 2nd was the final day that the SOI expedition was in Labrador before it sailed north to Nunavut. It was also the day with the most landings, three in total, as the SOI expedition explored Hutton Peninsula, the Attinaukjoke isthmus that connects Hutton Peninsula to the mainland, and Ikkudliayuk Fiord to the west. Archaeological sites were visited during all three landings (Figure 21).

The first landing was on the southeast corner of the Hutton Peninsula where four archaeological sites have been recorded (Figure 22). Students



Figure 20: Ryans Bay landing survey map.



Figure 21: Sites of the Hutton Peninsula and surrounding area.



Figure 22: Hutton Peninsula landing survey map of JaDc-04, JaDc-05, JaDc-06, and JaDc-07.



Figure 23: View south of stone ring on ridge of Hutton Peninsula, north of JaDc-06 and JaDc-07.

posed bedrock (Figure 23). From these stone rings there is a clear view of the water to the east and south suggesting that they were used as hunting blinds. Cultural affiliation or age was not possible as no artifacts were observed in or around the three small rings.

Approximately 75 m south of the stone rings on the ridge, however, a larger stone ring consistent with a tent ring was identified on the edge of the cliff (Ring 4 in Figure 22). It is made of a sparse collection of stones giving the impression that it was a ring lightly used for brief periods of time (Figure 24). JaDc-06 is classified as a

and staff landed on the beach just east of JaDc-04.

Dorset site but no artifacts or structural features were

The students kept to the beach where they took part in a polar dip either from the shore or one of the Zodiac boats. While they were occupied with that, I wandered to the northeast with the bear guards and a few other staff to investigate JaDc-05, JaDc-06, and JaDc-07.

Features believed to be associated with JaDc-07 were observed in two areas. The first area was a ridge above JaDc-06 and JaDc-07 where three small stone rings were observed (Rings 1 through 3 in Figure 22). Built with stacked/piled rocks they are oriented in a line at approximately 15 m spacing, all on ex-

Figure 24: View southwest of Ring 4 on Hutton Peninsula, south of JaDc-06 and JaDc-07.



observed in or around the habitation stone ring to indicate cultural affiliation.

At JaDc-05 a Dorset stone ring was observed when returning to the landing site (Ring 5 in Figure 22). Made up of numerous stones, most of which were partially buried in the sod, the ring appears much older than Ring 4 observed at JaDc-06 (Figure 25). Internal features include either two adjacent sleeping platforms, one on the rear wall, the other on a side wall, or one platform along the rear wall and several large paving stones. A few pieces of Ramah Chert debitage were observed on the surface in the ring and

on the edge of the nearby cliff, which is consistent with the classification of the site as Dorset. A stone cache was found 30 m west of Ring 5, as well as nu-



Figure 25: View southeast of Ring 5 on Hutton Peninsula, JaDc-5.

merous possible stone features to the south on the small section of land that juts out into the sea. Unfortunately, time didn't allow these areas of JaDc-05 to be thoroughly investigated.

Figure 26: View southwest of Rings 6 and 7 on Hutton Peninsula, JaDc-4.



West of the landing area, JaDc-04 was revisited. Two large tent rings were observed on the edge of the rocky shore (Rings 6 and 7 in Figure 22). Currently still intact, both rings are 1 m away from encroaching shoreline erosion (Figure 26). Within the rings metal artifacts believed to be from the WWII German weather station that was removed were observed on the surface (writing on the manufactured metal was German). Also observed on the surface in the vicinity of the tent rings were a few pieces of Ramah Chert



Figure 27: Attinaukjuka landing survey map of JaDc-01, JaDc-02, and JaDc-03.

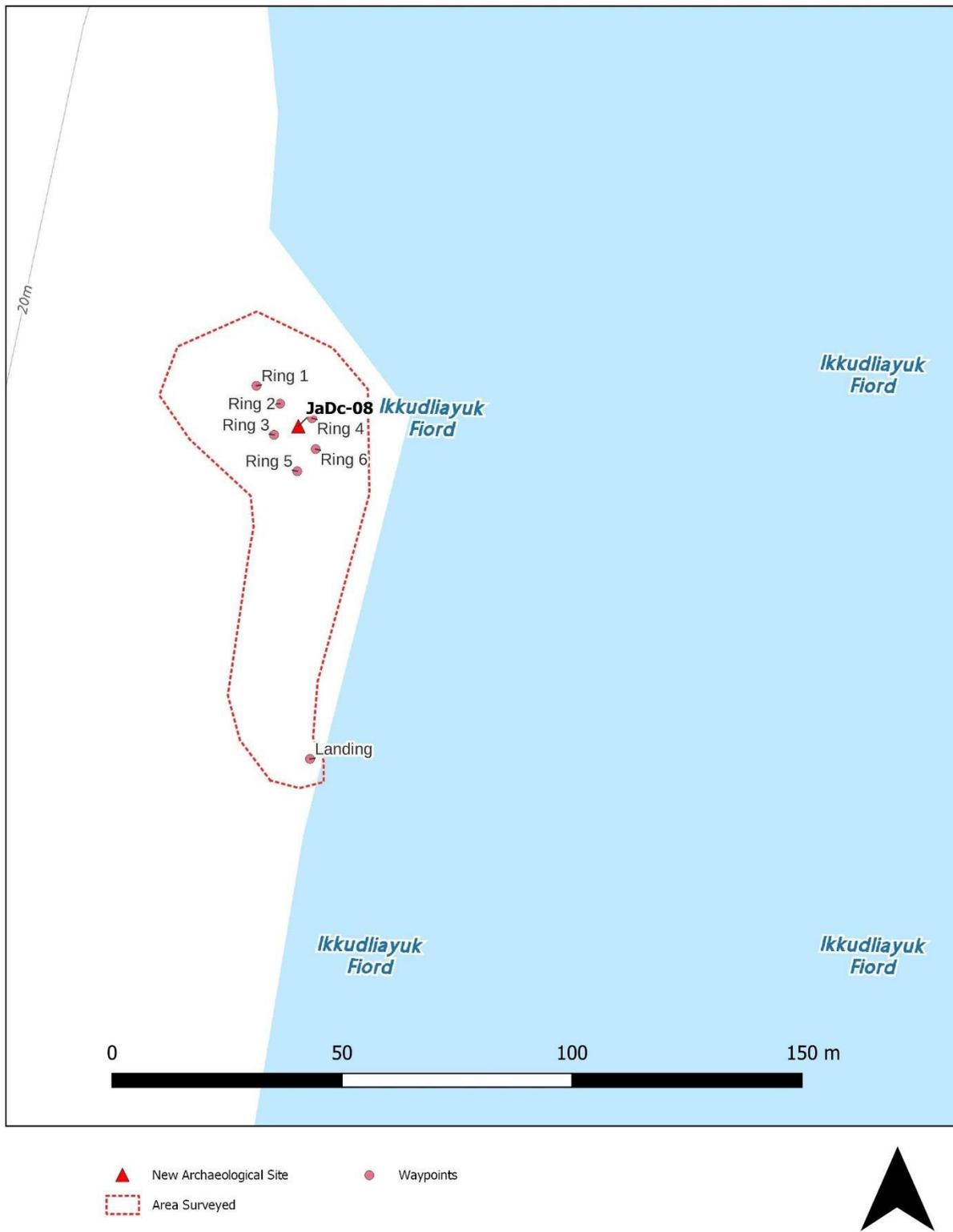


Figure 28: Ikkudliayuk Fiord landing survey map of JaDc-08.



Figure 29: View northwest of stone rings on the west edge of Attinaukjuka.

The third and final landing of August 2nd occurred in the afternoon on the west side of the Ikkudliayuk Fiord (Figure 28). There, on a point of land across from Attinaukjuka isthmus a new site was identified. Like the first landing of the day, the focus of the third landing were activities other than archaeological interpretation. Students had the option to kayak along the shore or take a hike to the top of an 80 m high hill to where a caribou was spotted from the Polar Prince.

The landing was made at a narrow beach on the southeast corner of the point. Before the

debitage.

The second landing occurred while returning to the Polar Prince. Only myself, the leader of the expedition, the bear guards, and two Zodiac drivers stopped at the narrow isthmus Attinaukjuka where JaDc-01, JaDc-02, and JaDc-03 are located (Figure 27). There for 10 minutes or less, survey was minimal. The 19th-century sod houses of JaDc-01 were not observed, but the numerous tent rings (10+) on the flat rocky top of the isthmus were found to be in good condition given that they are presently 3-4 m above sea level (Figure 29). A Ramah Chert stone tool was found on the edge of a tent ring on the west edge of the isthmus (Figure 30).

students arrived, I surveyed the area for archaeological features with the help of the SOI bear guards and staff who spotted stone features. On the north-

Figure 30: Ramah Chert tool found among stone rings on Attinaukjuka.



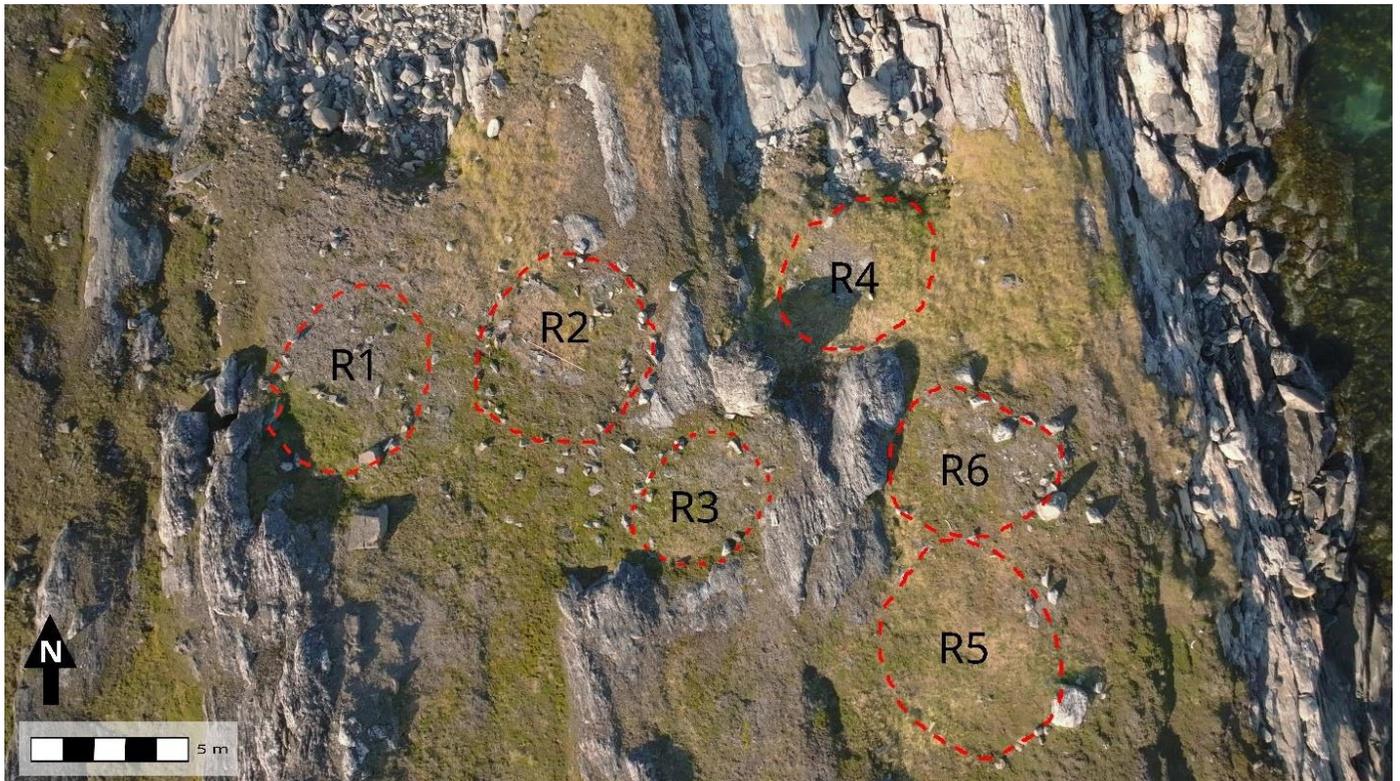


Figure 31: Aerial photograph of JaDc-08.

east corner of a terrace, near the base of the hill, at least six tent rings were found (Figure 28, Figure 31, and Figure 32). Three of the rings (Ring 1, Ring 2, Ring 3) are clustered together and are the most discernible stone rings at the site. Stone paving is present in Ring 2, making it likely a Dorset mid-passage house/tent ring (Figure 33). Stone Rings 5 and 6 are located on the east edge of the terrace, directly to the east of Ring 1, Ring 2, and Ring 3. A bedrock outcrop separates the two groupings of stone rings but they are roughly at the same elevation. Ring 4 is located just north of the other stone rings, on a slightly lower portion of the terrace (Figure 34). Defined by a small number of large stones, Ring 4 has been partially impacted by coastal erosion that has reached the north wall. Numerous pieces of

Ramah Chert debitage were observed in slumped sod and soil north of Ring 4. A Ramah Chert biface was also found 1 m back from the active erosion with its tip sticking out of hummocky sod (Figure 35). Cultural affiliation of the biface cannot be confirmed but it resembles middle and late Dorset tools. Animal bones were scattered on the surface among

Figure 32: View south of JaDc-08 showing area of erosion along Ring 4 (indicated by arrow).

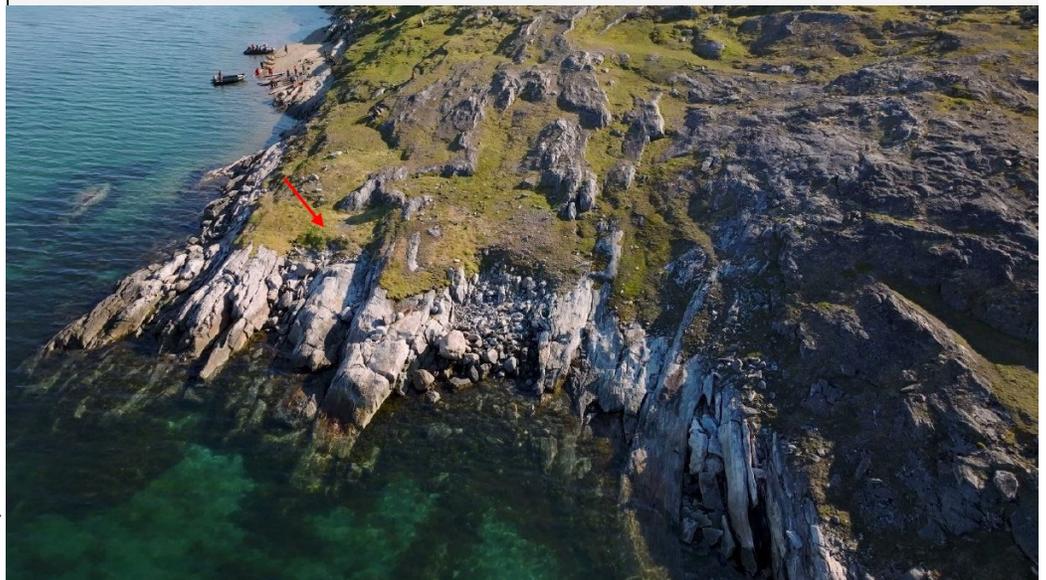




Figure 33: View north of Rings 2 and 3 at JaDc-08.

and around the stone rings. Some were identified as bearded seal. A concentration of mica and quartz was observed in Ring 6 but is believed to be natural based on the presence of these materials in the bedrock of the terrace. To the east, across Ikkudliayuk Fiord, the narrow isthmus where JaDc-01, JaDc-02, and JaDc-03 are located can be seen less than 2 km away.

The newly identified site was reported to the Nunatsiavut Government, the Provincial Archaeolo-

gy Office of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Parks Canada and given the Borden number JaDc-08 (Parks Canada site number and code 593A) and site name Ikkudliayuk 5.

References

Kaplan, Susan A.

1983 Economic and Social Change in Labrador Neo-Eskimo Culture. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania.



Figure 34: View southwest of Ring 4 and coastal erosion at JaDc-08.

Figure 35: Ramah Chert biface found at JaDc-08.



“At the Great Outflow” Archaeology in Sheshatshit/North West River 2024

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The toponym Sheshatshit (“At the Great Outflow”) has recently been applied in a way which makes it synonymous with today’s Innu community at the western end of Lake Melville. However, for as long as earliest memory and documents attest, it’s much more ancient application has been to the gathering place on both sides of the narrows where Innu families, who during the rest of the year had been dispersed in camps throughout the Quebec Labrador Interior, came to spend part of the summer. Later, with the establishment of trading posts, smaller groups would also travel out to Sheshatshit to obtain supplies in mid-winter.

Papanatshish (Ancient Channel 1), FjCa-81

The 2024 field season began with investigations at FjCa-81, an exceptional site just to the north of Sunday Hill discovered by the PAO’s Jamie Brake in 2022 (Brake et.al. 2023). In his 1972 monograph on the archaeology of Hamilton Inlet William Fitzhugh

identified a former saltwater channel that would have closed approximately 3100 BP because of isostatic rebound (Fitzhugh 1972:32; Figure 5). Brake and Colleen Soulliere (Director of Arts and Heritage) undertook brief survey work along portions of the ancient channel on October 17th and 18th. In his telling Brake was moving from one area of interest to another when he noticed rocks protruding through the caribou moss along a trail in a location not far from the North West River town gravel pit. A test pit here produced Ramah chert and grey chert flakes, fire cracked rock, heated sand, small chunks of charcoal and a significant amount of red ochre. Based on the high elevation and the presence of Ramah this appeared to be an older occupation. But with a plane to catch, a better look would have to wait until later. “Later” came the following year when I found myself skipping the usual spring sojourn at Kamestastin. Unexpectedly I thus had the time to further investigate the FjCa-81 site, now named Papanatshish.

Figure 1: Drone shot of Papanatshish (FjCa-81) a site north of North West River distinguished by a remarkable assemblage of apparently intentionally broken bifaces and groundstone tools.



The sacrificial event involving intentional breakage of bifaces

After only modest results had rewarded the opening up (but not complete excavation) of a few units around the spot hurriedly opened the previous year by Brake, a one metre square unit slightly to the east, fortuitously came down on a remarkable deposit of broken bifaces. The latter bore the hallmarks of an event where finely made points of a variety of different tool stones had been deliberately destroyed. The radial fracture pattern, repeated, suggested that the bifaces



Figure 2: Concentration of smashed bifaces at the Papanatshish Site (FjCa-81).

had been struck mid-blade upon an anvil stone. At this site we were therefore witnessing the ritual sacrifice, and not the accidental breakage, of an inventory of projectile points or knives or both. Although initially we questioned whether some or all these points may have been manufactured to serve in the ritual of breakage, the very modest amount of lithic manufacturing debitage subsequently discovered on site, argues, for the moment at least, against this possibility. Excavation of Papanatshish is very much incomplete and it remains possible that discovery of further elements with more generous flaking debris may alter the picture in this respect.

A second, separate but perhaps associated, ritual event at Papanatshish which did not involve intentional breakage of points?

Although almost all the bifaces encountered at Papanatshish had been subjected to intentional breakage, there were two exceptions. The latter bifaces, one of Ramah and the other of a dark opaque mottled chert of uncertain provenance, had been the protagonists in a different but perhaps related ritual event

which occurred close to and in a space between two boulders sitting on the southern slope of a large, excavated pit.

The two points, which were markedly smaller, less lanceolate and less delicate than most of the ritually destroyed bifaces, were found positioned close together on a patch of ochre stained ground. Both were intact and complete. One was found stabbed into the ground with the base and part of the medial section protruding above the surface. The other was lying mainly on the occupation surface, though angled slightly downwards and towards the pit. Only the distal end was buried in ochre stained sand. It is possible that erosional and/or cryoturbational processes resulted in the attitude in which this second point was found and that originally it too had been stabbed into the ground in the same manner as its nearby companion. Though this cannot be firmly demonstrated, it may have subsequently toppled over with downwash of material from the top of the pit slope where it was discovered. The neighbouring point was found in a near vertical position stabbed into the ground and

was located slightly above the other in a more stable section with less slope. It was situated beside and closer to one of the two boulders. Now it is hypothesized that both two companion points, found together only centimetres apart adjacent to the two boulders which guard the southern slope of the pit, were part of a single ritual event in which originally both may have been stabbed into the ground together.

The Papanatshish pit

Approaching the Papanatshish site in the state of excavation it was left in at close of the 2024 season, the eye of the visitor will be drawn to a large central pit with a layer of blackened material at its base and surrounded by large to medium sized boulders and cobbles. In amongst these rocks one or more of the occupants had strewn red ochre; whilst present on all sides of the pit and in some places extending some distance from it, it is heaviest on the northern approach to the central pit. Occurring in particularly intense amounts in certain sectors, ochre is neverthe-

less nearly ubiquitous at the Papanatshish excavation.

One notable exception is at the location of the main biface destruction event which, due to its ritual character, might be expected to deserve anointing with ochre. In fact, it was devoid of it. At the base of the pit, a sectioned portion of the dark mixed organic contents showed that the latter was underlain with ochre stained sand.

Ground stone industry at Papanatshish

Although no complete ground stone tools were excavated at the Papanatshish Site several ground stone tool fragments were recovered there in 2024. In association were fragments of grinding and edge maintenance tools composed of large grained sandstone. None of the ground stone tool pieces exhibited channels of the kind to be expected on gouges but their fragmentary nature means that one cannot completely rule out the possibility that both gouges and celts are represented in the assemblage. The shape of one of the objects which likely served as a grinder or cutting-

Figure 3: The only two points at the Papanatshish Site recovered intact were these which appeared to have been stabbed into ochre stained ground near the central fire pit.



edge maintenance tool, is suggestive of the sort of tool which would be required to both create and maintain a curved channel and cutting edge on a gouge. This is not conclusive proof of the presence of gouges but does provide some circumstantial support for a contention that they were in the toolkit of those who left behind the remains at the Papanatshish Site. The maintenance or grinding tool was also broken. It bore two separate breaks on the wider end of the piece which was recovered in 2024.

Finally, the question arises whether or not the fragmentary character of the ground stone tools there indicates that they were included in the objects to be sacrificed at

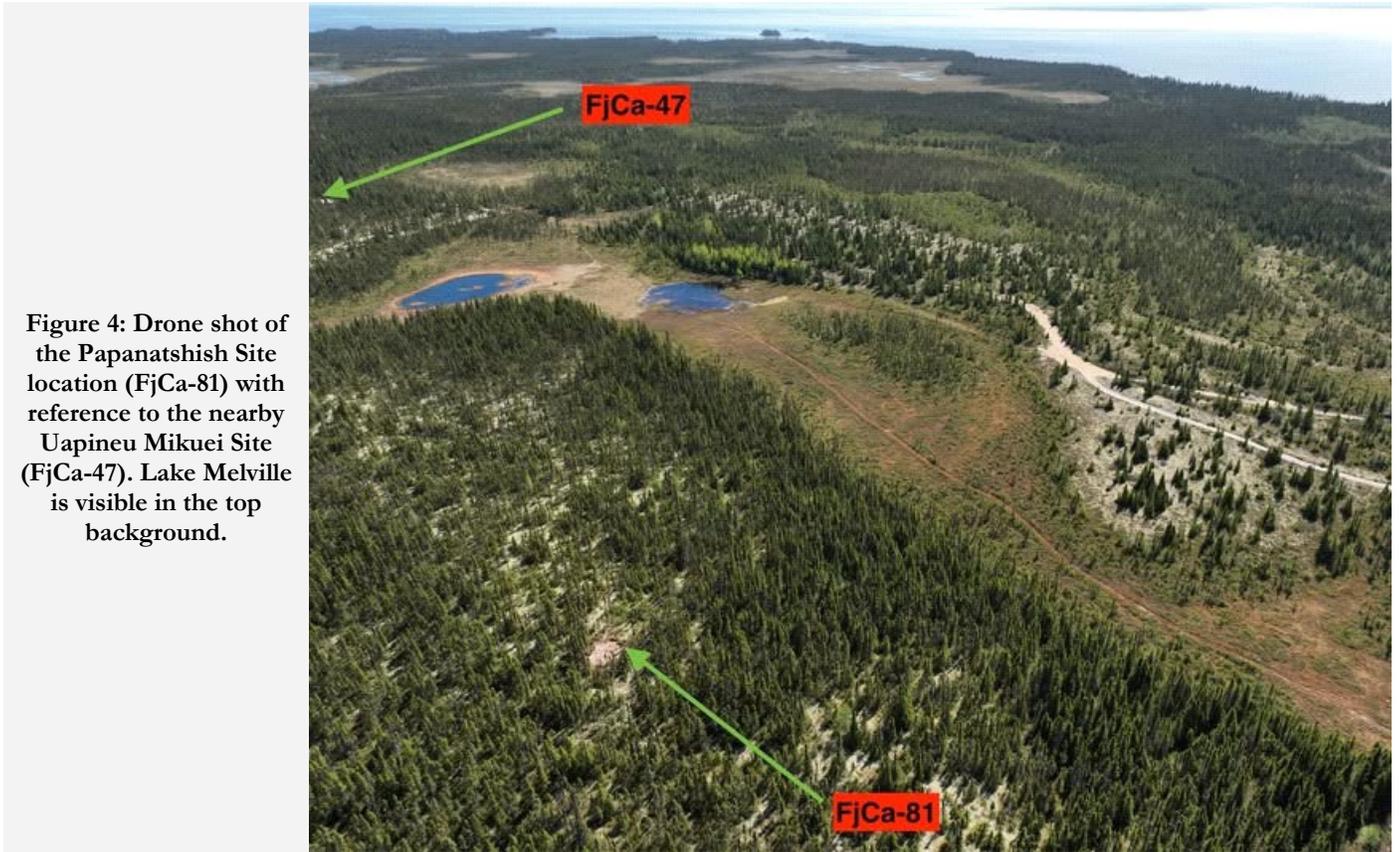


Figure 4: Drone shot of the Papanatshish Site location (FjCa-81) with reference to the nearby Uapineu Mikuei Site (FjCa-47). Lake Melville is visible in the top background.



Figure 5: Fragments of an apparently 'sacrificed' groundstone tool from the Papanatshish Site (FjCa-81). Several others lay nearby, all of them intentionally broken. The circular object in this image serves only to support the broken tool for the photo and is not part of it.



Figure 6: Four endscrapers from the Papanatshish Site (FjCa-81).

stylistically identical to contemporary mitshikuans, though the blade of today's versions, if not made of bone, is made of metal. It is possible that the different look of the Papanatshish end scrapers speaks to a differ-

Papanatshish. No large pieces of ground stone tools were recovered and the way in which breakage occurred does not appear to have resulted from impact force emanating from blows absorbed by the tool bits. A more comprehensive answer must await a thorough analysis of the ground stone fragments found at the site. Being made of a quite different category of tool stone, ground stone tools may, when intentionally destroyed, exhibit breakage patterns unlike those of ritually destroyed tools manufactured from material with better conchoidal fracturing properties. All that said the ground stone tool fragments from at least three separate tools, found close together and concentrated mainly to the west of the central pit, were comprehensively shattered perhaps from several separate blows to the body of the objects. They do not appear to exhibit breakage of the type to be expected from accidental breakage during use and have better affinity with objects intentionally broken in other known instances of ground stone tool sacrifice. We are reasonably confident that sacrificial breakage of ground stone tools constituted another element of the ritual activities evidenced at the Papanatshish site.

End Scrapers at Papanatshish

Of the four end scrapers in the 2024 assemblage from that site three were made from glossy black chert and the largest one of the four from grey chert. Other than as scrapers, black chert was present at Papanatshish only in scant amounts, so there was a clear preference for this material in the production of end scrapers. Apart from the grey chert example, the style represented there lacks the flared look of some of what are believed to be the considerably later mitshikuans at FjCa-51. The latter stone versions are

ent purpose than that of hide preparation. Today's flared mitshikuans are specialist tools for the removal of membranes and meat adhering to the inside of skins. Without removal of these membranes the brain mixture used for tanning cannot penetrate the skins and achieve its purpose. In fact, patches of hard skin on tanned hides almost always speak to imperfect and incomplete membrane removal. The narrow bladed Papanatshish scrapers made of black chert suggest a different function, perhaps for the working of bone or wood. It is unclear whether these scrapers were also subject to intentional breakage as some or all of them may be missing the proximal hafting portions, if indeed the scrapers once possessed them.

Sheshatshit Areas 10 and 11

In advance of the implementation of plans to expand housing construction into the last major forested area of Sheshatshit, we were asked to begin archaeological survey and testing of the land in question, a sector referred to by the engineers as Areas SSS 10 and 11. Areas 10 and 11 contain a very important part of the marine cut terrace system in Sheshatshit on which Innu ancestors established seasonal encampments over five millennia. These terraces were created by the combination of post glacial rebound interacting with wave generated erosional forces and as the land rose and the water receded human occupation moved to the new waterfront locations as they became exposed. Radiocarbon dates from anthropogenic features discovered on these terraces to date, confirm the sequence expected with the oldest sites on the high terraces and the youngest on the lowest.

We are thus faced with the difficult task of reconciling the need for housing space with responsible management of Innu ancestral heritage. As the

planned housing development on a kilometre long terraced slope would, in the process of landscaping, involve complete destruction of the terraces hosting these occupations, that task includes both the identification of archaeological sites and their excavation.

Although the scale and scope of the work was clearly beyond our capacity to complete in a single field season, we did our best. Our crew usually numbered about 7 individuals, occasionally augmented by people seconded from the Innu Nation guardian program and included several “alumni” of previous Tshikapisk/ Arctic Studies Center projects and of other archaeology work at Voisey's Bay and on the Quebec North Shore. All our crew were local.

Planning on how to approach the work was helped by the availability of LIDAR images produced from data collected recently in Sheshatshit. Effectively it allowed us to see through the tree cover, thereby revealing in detail the terrace system beneath the vegetation. Guided partly by the locations of known archaeological sites on the landforms revealed by the LIDAR and adjacent to, or inside the target areas, we then tried to prioritize testing zones.

The portion of the Sheshatshit community firebreak which provides the almost one-kilometre-long western border of Areas SSS 10 and 11, consists of a quite badly disturbed 30-metre-wide strip of land exposing a section through the terrace system from the highest 35 metres asl terrace to one at circa 16 metres asl. Disturbed though it is, it provides in very rough form a sort of enormous test pit where, at least in places, it is possible to see archaeological materials attesting to human occupancy on the landforms where they were noted. One can then add this information to that from other sources and, if thought warranted, infer a heightened likelihood of ancestral Innu occupations on the associated terraces inside Areas SSS 10 and 11. As the firebreak clearance cuts obliquely across a number of terrace edges which continue in a westerly direction and because at least two sites and five findspots were identified close to the western edge of the firebreak, there is a strong likelihood that other historic resources may exist beyond its western edge.

During the archaeological test pitting and other prospecting activities in the summer of 2024 we located five archaeological sites, one of which was closely adjacent to previously identified features on

the top “Shukapesh” terrace and four of which were “new.” The limited excavations inside Areas SSS 10 and 11 allowed us to identify occupations with formal features and lithic remains and therefore obtain a lot more information than just a record of the contents of the odd positive test pit. Nevertheless, none of the five identified new elements have yet been comprehensively excavated in a way which would suggest that archaeological clearance for housing lot development could be provided with confidence that it would not entail the loss of important Innu ancestral heritage.

Shukapesh 2 and 3 (FjCa-79)

We began work in the SSS10 and 11 areas by extending to the firebreak clearance the test pit lines begun in 2016 and which lie atop the southward facing slope of the 35 metre asl terrace. It was during the 2016 work that early occupations were discovered on this highest terrace in the Sheshatshit series. Dated to c 5000 calendric years BP the occupations were associated with a quartzite dominated industry of notched points, and distinctive small cutting/scraping tools made on cortical flakes which regularly retained a cortical ridge on the dorsal side. The latter lay beside hearths and pits containing calcined seal bone and wood charcoal. The first hearth exposed during the 2016 work produced a large ground stone celt at one end of the feature and an ovoid quartz biface at the other. All the test pits which we dug in 2024 on the Sheshatshit top terrace were negative but a decision to investigate an area adjacent and parallel to the FjCa-79 Shukapesh 2 combustion features was rewarded with profuse quartzite debitage and several bifacial tools, amongst which were two complete notched points. During the expansion of the Shukapesh 2 excavations we also completely excavated a small combustion feature on the same alignment as the large linear hearth which architecturally dominates the FjCa-79 sector of the top terrace. Though at first glance unassuming and diminutive compared to its much larger neighbour, the small hearth produced a modest faunal assemblage of calcined bone, several pieces of which, though fragile, retained enough of their original shape to likely allow identification to species.

The 2 Sheshatshit Community Firebreak Sites located in 2024:

Maskapesh Locus 1 and Maskapesh Locus 2

As alluded to above, the approximately 1 km section

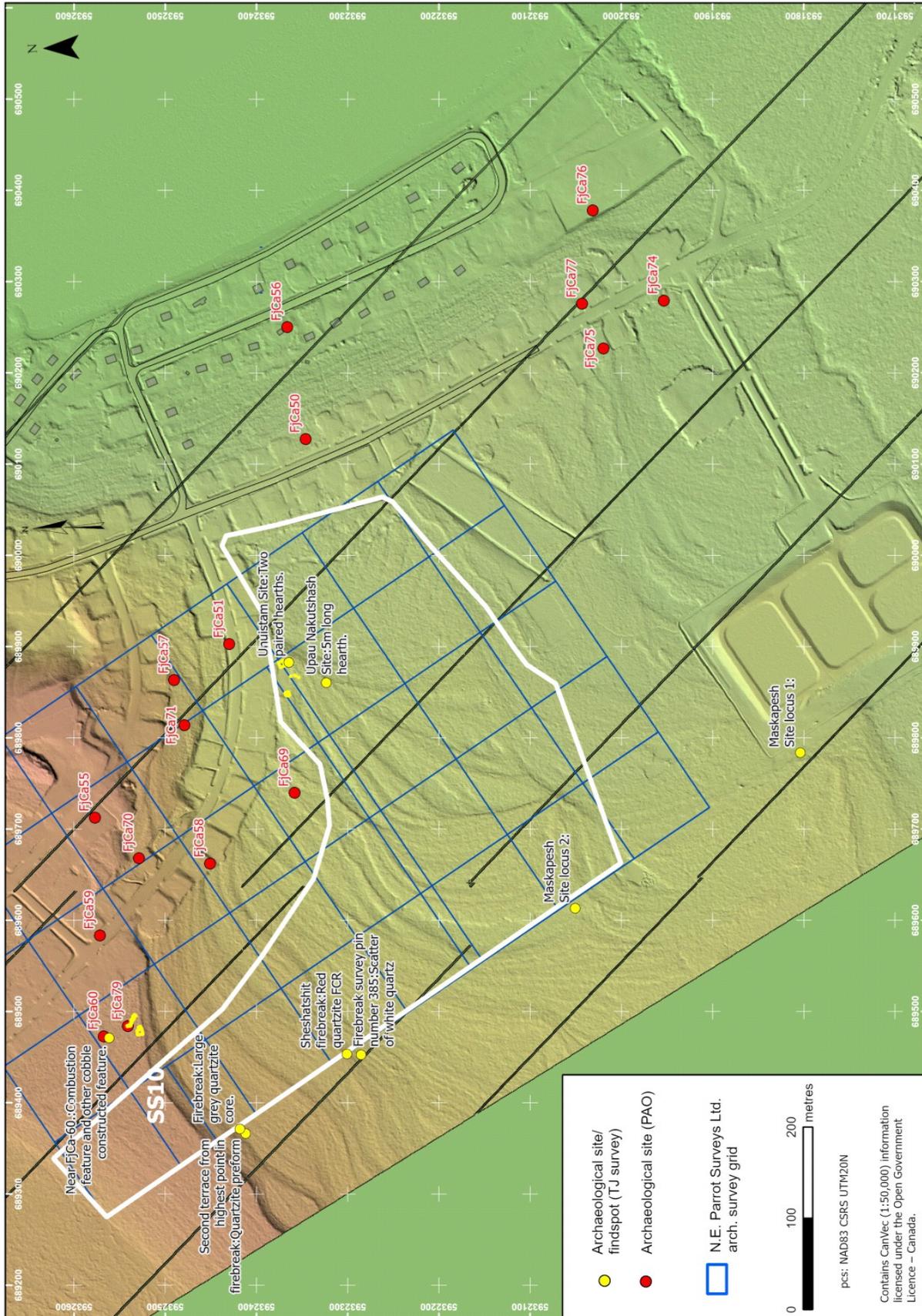


Figure 7: Lidar image of Area 10 - described by the white line - and Area 11 - just to its right - in Sheshatshit. The yellow dots indicate locations of new archaeological sites and findsites of humanly modified stone objects discovered in the course of 2024 work. LIDAR data processing and image by Bryn Tapper.



Figure 8: Two bifaces lying in situ inside new units excavated in 2024 at Shukapesh 2 (FjCa-79) on the 35 meter terrace in Sheshatshit Area 11.

of the firebreak which forms the western boundary of SSS Area 10 was subjected to close examination along its length. The lower section of the firebreak is backed by a high fence surrounding the Water Treatment Lagoons. The firebreak is roughly thirty metres in width, is divided in two and consisted of two 15-metre-wide strips, of which the western swath retains woody debris and disturbed overburden, and the eastern one is largely, though not totally grubbed, to sterile. In a lower elevation part of the community firebreak, there is an approximately 300 metre portion where there is considerable accumulation of decaying sphagnum attesting to the earlier presence of a shallow lake; its extent can be clearly seen in the LIDAR images. Much of the sphagnum layer remains even in the otherwise grubbed western portion of the firebreak.

We recognized two sites lying within the “footprint” of the firebreak corridor one of which, subsequently named “Maskapesh Locus 1”, lies close to the forest margin near but outside the northwest corner of the Sheshatshit Water Treat-

ment Lagoons' perimeter fence. The other site also lies within the side of the firebreak from which most of the vegetation overburden, (barring remnants of the thick sphagnum layer,) has been removed. We called this apparent occupation “Maskapesh Locus 2”, and it was first noticed because of the anomalous presence of a number of cobbles sitting on a surface with evidence of burning, charcoal fragments, ash, and charcoal-stained sand.

Also noted at Maskapesh Locus 2 was a flat-topped doughnut shaped rock of dense igneous rock with a battered upper surface. It was recognized by three of the older Innu crew members as an “atan”, an anvil stone used in the production of niueikan powdered meat and fish. Locus 2 appears to have been established beside a reasonably sized shallow pond, one end of which the LIDAR image suggests once existed at this location. A narrow portion at the northern end of this same pond approached quite closely to the part of FjCa-51 where in 2024 we discovered two “new” occupations. We called these Upau Nakutshash and Unuistam and they will be discussed below. Apart from the “atan” macrolith, the limited amount of the Makapesh Locus 2 occupation which we exposed was entirely devoid of lithics and sections of it were clearly badly disturbed by heavy equipment employed in clearing the firebreak.

Maskapesh Locus 1 was first identified because of a scatter of red quartzite flakes at the margins of the strip closest to the western forest edge.

Figure 9: Calcined bone recovered from a small combustion feature excavated in 2024 at the Shukapesh 2 component of FjCa-79.





Figure 10: Napes Ashini GPS'ing the feature in the firebreak to which we gave the name Maskapesh Locus 2. It consisted of fire cracked rock, ash and charcoal in a disturbed context. Apart from an atan anvil stone (visible in this photo just in front of Napes) there were no lithics.

mus filled pit with attendant quartzite debitage. The top level of this humus fill is level with the surrounding occupation floor. Close to the pit and just beyond its northern limits is a loose collection of fire cracked rock, wood charcoal and ash and beside it two large flat-topped cobbles or small boulders, one of which we positively identify as another “atan” stone and the second which may be yet another. However, this second tentatively identified “atan” lacks some of the optimal attributes considered desirable for use as an anvil stone in the processing of dried meat and fish to make nieuikan powder. The pounding surface of the object has been reduced probably from spalling off pieces of the rock as the pounding surface edges were rendered friable by being repeatedly struck in the process of use.

Maskapesh Locus 1 sits at an elevation (17 to 18 metres asl) which is approximately the same as that of the section of FjCa-51 closest to the bank where the pre-2024 FjCa-51 excavations end-

Here some of the overburden had survived grubbing operations and fortuitously the area protected by remnant overburden included most of the Maskapesh Locus 1 occupation. Once a grid had been established over the estimated extent of the site a partial excavation was conducted which demonstrated that at least one modest occupation seemed to have survived relatively intact. The extant assemblage from Maskapesh Locus 1 is exclusively of quartzite. Red quartzite predominates to the exclusion of all other lithics barring very scant quantities of the honey-coloured variety. Two bifacially worked objects were the only formal tools recovered: one was a large and unusual knife of red quartzite with a curved handle featuring a prominent stack on one side surrounded by step fractures. The latter was presumably the result of unsuccessful efforts to remove it. In fact, one of the step fractures seems to have produced a catastrophic breakage in the course of which the blade detached from the rest of the tool. The other bifacial piece was a small rough preform (also of red quartzite) clearly discarded early in the reduction process.

So far two anthropogenic features are apparent at what presently remains at the incomplete excavation of Maskapesh Locus 1. The first is a large hu-



Figure 11: Large bifacial knife of quartzite from the Maskapesh Locus 1 site in the Sheshatshit Community Firebreak.



Figure 12: Maskapesh Locus One site. The image shows a large pit in the foreground and an atan anvil stone and small combustion feature just to the north of it. The site is a stone's throw from the Water Treatment Lagoon perimeter fence.

ed. That bank marks its southern limit and drops away from the lowest elevation areas of the “Intermediate” occupations excavated at FjCa-51 prior to 2024.

Sheshatshit Community Firebreak Stray Findsites

In addition to the two proper sites within the firebreak, a few stray finds without an obvious site context were noted within the closely inspected section of the Sheshatshit firebreak which borders Area SSS 10 and the Water Treatment Lagoons' perimeter fence. These were from highest elevation to lowest: a large flake of grey quartzite; a heavily water rolled bifacial preform of quartzite found on a slope beneath one of the marine cut terraces; a large piece of red quartzite shatter (probably Fire Cracked Rock); a scatter of 6 pieces of white quartz, one of these is a very small unmodified cobble which was collected because it was in close association with the remaining five quartz pieces all of which bore cortex and all of which had been modified; a large piece of light grey quartzite with cortex at one end showing that it had been struck off a broken cobble and from which at least three flakes had been detached bifacially.

All these objects came from disturbed contexts in the western more heavily grubbed strip of the firebreak, but they did suggest that the terraces and banks where they were found continued

to host human occupations at least as far as the western boundary of the firebreak.

Test Pitting in Area SSS11 south of Massek Road and the discovery of the Upau Nakutshash and Unuistam components of FjCa-51

The impetus for the work which brought to light the densely populated and important archaeology which now exists under the Borden number of FjCa-51 was (indirectly) the need to develop a new community housing area for Sheshatshit. The direct and proximate trigger was what happened when work began on the access road for this housing development. Hundreds of flakes from stone tool making, as well as the tools themselves, quickly appeared strewn in amongst the disturbed soil visible in the track of the bulldozer which sought to open the path into what was until then a forested part of Sheshatshit. A stop work order was issued by the Provincial Archaeology Office on the

Figure 13: Maskapesh Locus One site prior to excavation and in the background is a View of the firebreak rising to the top (35meter asl) terrace. Red quartzite debitage is visible in the foreground of this image.





Figure 14: Drone photo of Upau Nakutshash site in forested area behind Massek Street. The dotted yellow line indicates the extent of a 'saddled' linear hearth in and around which were copious amounts of mainly quartzite debitage.

beyond those excavated by Scott Neilsen's team south of Massek Street in Neilsen's Area 13 and Area 14 was partly answered when a householder in one of the new units built following completion of archaeology in Area 14, used heavy equipment to make a large clearing behind his house. In the process several previously unrecorded components were disturbed. The grubbed area thus exposed showed debitage and tools on the surface amongst the mixed material left by the excavator. Two of these components were close enough to

access road was then issued which in turn led to a year of intensive archaeological prospection. This was followed by several years of excavation during which the numerous occupations which the test pitting had signaled were investigated and recorded. During those efforts one of the most significant and important concentrations of archaeological remains in this region was slowly revealed.

As the project of identifying archaeology in the future footprint of the housing development was essentially one of clearance to allow trenching for water and sewerage services, access for power lines and access roads, and then the creation of housing platforms, the work was at that time restricted to the actual zone of immediate disturbance to be caused by the housing development. Accordingly, once that had been done and signed off for residential development, the archaeology was considered complete within the development footprint. That did not mean however that the landforms upon which the occupations had been established and investigated and recorded prior to 2024, had been fully prospected. One of the enduring questions that completion of the earlier housing development archaeology left unanswered was how much further did occupations roughly coeval with those in the rest of FjCa-51 continue? The question as to whether further elements existed

the forest margin to have been afforded some protection and were subsequently excavated in 2023 by Anthony Jenkinson as CPB East and CPB West, new components of FjCa-51. Another much smaller and more badly disturbed component approximately midway between CPB West and CPB East, was named CPB South.

Test pitting behind FjCa-51 Area 14

In 2024 we initially began test pitting in the woods behind the row of houses on the south side of Massek Street. We started from a point adjacent to and west of the excavated small hearth at CPB West. Two rows of 50 cm by 50 cm test pits, approximately parallel to Massek Street and spaced 5 metres apart, were all negative. We then began a series of test pit rows running north to south, from behind the cleared area where earth moving had exposed the three "new" components of FjCa-51. These terminated atop the bank where the ground drops away from the southern edge of FjCa-51. About 10 metres to the north of the drop we struck heavy deposits of quartzite debitage with occasional pieces of banded rhyolite and chert. Four further subsidiary test pits set off 2.5 metres from the original positive all produced cultural material and at this point a decision was made to open an area encompassing all the positive test pits.

The Upau Nakutshash Site

Pursuant to the discovery of cultural material in the course of our north to south series of test pits south of the CPB grubbed area, we decided to grid out an area for excavation. A substantial cobble hearth was quickly exposed which contained fire cracked rock, charcoal, ash, and profuse quantities of mostly quartzite debitage. We ended by exposing a large linear hearth of about 5 metres in length composed of cobble mounds at the northeast and southwest ends with a lower bridge or saddle linking them. At the time we closed things up at Upau Nakutshash we had exposed an area of slightly greater than five metres by six metres. Two projectile points were recovered from units east of and closely adjacent to the hearth. One was of purple quartzite and closely resembles examples from the Papanatshish site north of Sunday Hill. Between the two points was a small but concentrated deposit of orange ochre. The other biface, also of quartzite, is of rougher workmanship and is stemmed rather than notched. It may have been discarded prior to completion. No calcined bone has been recovered from the Upau Nakutshash site, but the hearth remains to be excavated and, hoping for datable bone, we may wait for hearth excavation to be completed before sending out charcoal or, if we are lucky, calcined bone, for radiocarbon dating. Interestingly, considering the documented event of ritual destruction of bifaces at the Papanatshish Site (FjCa-81), three fragments of a quartzite biface collected at Upau Nakutshash show tell-tale radial fracturing and seem to witness the biface's deliberate destruction by being facially struck on an anvil.

The Unuistam Site

The last test pitting conducted in 2024 saw two rows of test pits which ran from a point south of CPB South in an easterly direc-

tion. These rows ran to where the lines of test pits intersected with the top of the bank which in Areas 13 and part of 14 mark the southern limit of FjCa-51. Here the more northerly of our west to east test pits ran directly behind the excavator created berm which ringed the grubbed area south of Cortland Pukue's house. As we approached the top of the bank, two test pits produced lithic debitage of quartzite and red chert, the latter very small resharpening flakes. Opening a few one square metre units (and in so doing moving a section of the mechanically created berm) we noted two roughly circular cobble hearths with a low saddle linking them and a strip of red ochre-stained sand running in an easterly direction from the hearth feature. It was at this point that winter finally caught up with us, sealing the ground and locking it to any further excavation until the following year.

Conclusion and final notes

Despite the lack of a Kamestastin element, the 2024 field season was an extremely busy and important one. Not only was work conducted over a wide range of different archaeological sites but one of them, the Papanatshish Site (FjCa-81) just north of the North

Figure 15: Sheshatshit Council Housing Archaeology crew at the moment when cultural material started appearing in test pits at the Upau Nakutshash location. Left to right: Curtis Grégoire, Sarah Nuna, Uatshatshish Pukue, Jason Nuna, Frank Pukue.





Figure 16: The Unuistam Site, a component of FjCa-51, had been partly buried beneath a berm of overburden pushed over it by the heavy equipment which made the clearing visible in the background of this image. The fully excavated CPB East 2023 site can be seen beneath the upright poles on the right.

West River gravel quarry, proved to be an exceptional and rare place where evidence exists of the sacrificial ritual destruction of bifaces and ground stone tools. What the meaning of the rituals at Papanatshish is, it is hard to say with certainty though burials in the QLP and elsewhere are sometimes accompanied with grave furniture consisting partly of intentionally broken tools. It should also be pointed out that the destruction of personal property (usually clothing and usually by burning) continues to be a feature of Innu funerary practice up to the present. Though

fire feature at Rattler's Bight. It may also be of interest to note that the use of heated sandstone slabs as cooking surfaces is not a practice confined to Innu ancestral groups alone. There is evidence of this culinary practice featuring in the cooking traditions of the Innu at least until the 1960s and perhaps beyond.

The question as to whether sandstone slabs occurred at the "Intermediate" occupations at FjCa-51 (discovered and excavated prior to 2024) is difficult to answer beyond saying that large pieces such as these have been noted at older occupations on the

Papanatshish does not seem to be a burial it is possible that what took place there involved rituals around the memorializing of a deceased individual or individuals. There are however other explanations not related to funerary rites that can be imagined and probably many others that we are not well placed to understand or speculate about.

More evidence of the phenomenon of cooking on sandstone slabs also came to light. The second site in Sheshatshit which seems to belong to the archaic period, and which was discovered in 2016 on the top terrace in the Sheshatshit series was found with a burnt sandstone slab propped up against the hearth at FjCa-60 Locus 2. (The first archaic site in Sheshatshit was FjCa-71 which gave a calibrated date on calcined bone of 3830 to 3635 BP) This past field season brought to light sandstone slabs by two other combustion features investigated in the course of 2024 work in Sheshatshit. Fragments of a sandstone slab were found during the opening of new units near the large linear hearth and fire pit at Shukapesh 2 (FjCa-79), and during excavation of a combustion feature in the lot assigned to the planned new office building in an area adjacent to the Sheshatshit Northern Store. These slabs all apparently brought to the sites by human agency are tentatively interpreted as cooking surfaces. I am grateful to Stephen Loring for bringing to my attention another example from beside a



Figure 17:
The Mitunishan Site in a lot adjacent to Sheshatshit Northern Store. Note fire cracked rock concentration in centerfield, charcoal stained soil around it and large sandstone slab closer to the foreground.

Figure 18: Napes Ashini at the Shukapesh 1 hearth atop the 35 meter asl terrace. Recorded as locus 2 of FjCa-60 it produced a fragment of calcined bone identified as seal rib, a large groundstone celt, a single ovoid biface of white quartz and three pieces of burnt sandstone slab.





ponents opens the possibility that further elements beyond those excavated at components Shukapesh 1, 2 and 3 may exist on the Shukapesh terrace. FjCa-60 Locus 1 was reported by Schwarz as a positive test pit with a convincingly cultural quartzite flake. Seven test pits were dug by the Sheshatshit crew around the reported cultural material at FjCa-60 Locus 1 with all test pits negative for lithics, but charcoal and cobble aggregations were noted. This led to the opening of a small area in the quest for unambiguous cultural features and

Figure 19: Mitunishan Site under excavation.
Left to right: Jason Nuna, Makatan Pinette, Lainey Benuen, Curtis Grégoire.
Sheshatshit Northern Store and Gas Station in the background.

higher terraces were not noted or perhaps not noticed by the excavators of FjCa-51. Nor were smaller fragments but perhaps they were less likely to attract attention particularly in a research environment where their significance had not yet been recognized.

The other key research focus was the archaeological potential of Areas 10 and 11. This was of more than academic interest as those areas are being eyed for housing development and such development will almost certainly destroy any extant historic resources. The question as to whether historic resources continue into the forested and mostly unsurveyed part of the same landform must be answered in the affirmative. The answer proceeds from the results of testing and excavations conducted on both sides of the Area 10 and 11 forest and within it. Apart from areas clearly related to known FjCa-51 occupations, 2024 work on new FjCa-60 and 79 com-

though no flakes or shatter were recovered a number of cobble aggregations and a pit looked anthropogenic.

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Figure 20: Combustion feature at Rattler's Bight with fire cracked rock, charcoal and sandstone slabs. Photo credit: William Fitzhugh, Smithsonian Institution.





Figure 21: Investigation at reported occurrence of anthropogenically modified quartzite at FjCa-60 on Shukapesh Top Terrace produced no lithics though possible archaeological features were noted. Left to right: Curtis Grégoire, Kelly Rich.

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Figure 22: One example of an intentionally destroyed groundstone object far right of second row and selected bifacial points subjected to deliberate breakage (later refitted in the lab) at the Papanatshish Site (FjCa-81).

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Searching for Mi'kmaw Sites in Central Newfoundland

Natasha Jones
Memorial University

*We need to know who we are and where it is we come from,
if we are to envision where we want to go*
~ Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall ~



Figure 1: Little Lewis Lake, August 2024.

Opening
I want to open this article by introducing myself. My name is Natasha Jones. I grew up in Buchans Junction, a rural town near Beothuk Lake in central Newfoundland. My mother is Tammy Paul of Badger, whose paternal ancestors are Mi'kmaq, and whose maternal ancestors are settlers (English). My father is Brian Jones of Buchans Junction, whose maternal and paternal ancestors are settlers (English and Scottish).

I'm a member of both the Mi'kmaw community and the settler community in Newfoundland. I have always been involved with both communities and have a deep interest in doing research connected to them. Any researcher who works with and for their own community or communities can face criticism about their research focus. Yet, community research

can be extremely rewarding for these researchers. During the past fieldwork season, I was honoured to work on a community-informed archaeology research project for the Mi'kmaw community.

Introduction

Colonially, Mi'kmaw connection to Newfoundland has best been understood through historical documentation, limited ethnographic records, and several published books. William Cormack's journey across the island in 1822 marks one of the first written accounts of Mi'kmaw guides and their knowledge of the country. Later, Edward Wix, James P. Howley, Alexander Murray, and John G. Millais also availed of Mi'kmaw guides and recorded information about the Mi'kmaq and their way of life.

Anthropologist Frank G. Speck completed limited ethnographic inquiries on the Mi'kmaq in

1914, but many years passed before Leslie Upton and Ralph Pastore undertook archival work in the 1970s. In the 1980s and early 1990s, Gerry Penney, in collaboration with Miawpukek First Nation, undertook archaeological research focusing on the Mi'kmaq. Penney's work represents the most robust Mi'kmaq archaeological research completed to date; however, as noted by Kristensen and Davis (2015), the Mi'kmaq people "have unfortunately had a very limited role in archaeological research on the majority of the island" (p. 517, note 5).

For all that has been historically documented about the Mi'kmaq, their connection to the island of Newfoundland, and their contributions to this province, the erasure and invisibility of Mi'kmaq culture and history continues alongside the persistence of myths and negative stereotypes. Increasing awareness and appreciation of Mi'kmaq history and culture is one way to challenge these issues, and archaeology can play a crucial role in this process. Yet, the lack of archaeological research conducted with, by, or for Mi'kmaq people in Newfoundland has created a void of knowledge and impacted the academic understanding of Mi'kmaq history as seen through an archaeological lens.

Fieldwork Overview

During the 2024 fieldwork season, the island's central region was subject to archaeological investigations as part of my Masters research project at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. This project sought to meaningfully engage Mi'kmaq community members in archaeology, locate and document Mi'kmaq sites in the central region, and intertwine Mi'kmaq culture with archaeology fieldwork. Areas investigated in the central region can be broken into four broad research areas – Point Leamington, the Exploits River, Halls Bay, and Gander Lake.

While I was the principal researcher, this work was not completed alone – I was supported by my co-supervisors, Dr. Barry Gaulton and Dr. Scott Neilsen, my partner Stephen Paul, and a fantastic group of family and fellow community members throughout the fieldwork season. Collectively, we documented nine new sites over two fieldwork periods in August and September.

In October, I was joined by a few community members as I conducted site revisits and completed follow-up work at three previously identified loca-

tions. Fieldwork methodology included pedestrian surveying, surface and subsurface inspection of the site location, photo and drone documentation, and metal detector surveying and/or test pitting, if necessary.

August Fieldwork

In August 2024, we visited two lakes in the Point Leamington area and two locations on the Exploits River to locate Mi'kmaq sites identified during community interviews during the previous fieldwork season. In the Point Leamington area, Little Lewis Lake and Coin Lake, which are currently unnamed on Newfoundland and Labrador topographic maps, were the target locations. In addition to the community-identified sites, we also visited Wigwam Cove on the south shore of Halls Bay – a location identified through archival research.

Young Property, DeBc-04

The Young family settled on this site after they left their previous home at 'the landing' (more commonly known as Buchans Landing), a location on the north shore of Beothuk Lake. It was reported that Henry Young Sr., his wife, and their children moved to the site sometime in the 1940s.

The approximate location of the site on the Exploits River was identified during a community interview with Vanda Martin, Howard Young's daughter. While she was uncertain of the exact location where her father and his family had lived, she provided valuable information about her family and their time spent living at both Beothuk Lake and on the Exploits River. The exact location of the Young Property, on the north shore of the Exploits River, was determined by combining oral history passed on within the Young family with other data sources (e.g., published sources, community information, and Crown Land grant data).

Work completed at the site included a pedestrian survey, surface inspection, and photo and drone documentation. The site consisted of a retaining wall, a well, scattered surface artifacts, and two decaying structures – which members of the Young family refer to as First Camp and Second Camp. First and Second Camp were reported to have been used by Henry's two sons – Howard and William (Bill).

At some point in the past, Howard operated a guiding camp from the property. Howard was also known to trap an area of the country on the south



Figure 2: First Camp, Young Property.

Frozen Ocean, Gull Lake, Twin Lake, Sandy, Noel Paul, and Halls Bay (Douglas Paul, n.d; Coish, 2000).

During community interviews, it was revealed that Andrew’s sons and some of his oldest grandchildren would also walk from the community of Point Leamington to reach the campsite for hunting purposes. The travel route to the camp was provided by informant Andy Paul, Andrew’s grandson, who had been to the camp with his uncle and two older brothers as a youth.

side of the Exploits River towards Noel Paul’s Brook and Steady (Coish, 2000). Eventually, many years after the family’s relocation to the Exploits River area, Bill Young acquired a Crown Land grant for the property. In addition to the Young Property site, debris scattered throughout the forest around the site may be associated with an ‘old ferry crossing’ (i.e., a scow) on the Exploits River at this location. It will take further investigation to better understand the dual history of this site location.

Little Lewis Lake, DhAv-01

The site was used as a base camp by Andrew Paul for hunting and trapping purposes. Andrew was born in Halls Bay around 1895 and was the oldest son of John Paul, an informant of Anthropologist Frank Speck, during his 1914 research trip to Newfoundland (See Speck, 1922). Andrew was reported to walk, snowshoe, and use dog sleds to travel the country around Point Leamington when hunting and trapping.

He maintained several base camps (i.e., trapper’s log camp/tilt) within the area that he trapped as well as temporary-type structures (i.e., lean to, dug-out camp), and he used many of the same trapping and hunting areas as his father John – Seal Bay, Badger Bay, Hodge’s Hills, Forever Marsh, Seal Bay Bog,

Figure 3: Vanda Martin and Natasha Jones as they prepare to smudge before work is started at the site.





Figure 4: Remnants of the camp at Little Lewis Lake. Flags mark the four corners of the camp's walls and the doorway, which faces south. Note the foremost right flag, which marks the linear mound that extends beyond the doorway and south wall. It was theorized to be a collapsed wall.

My partner Stephen Paul, Andrew's great-grandson, guided us to Little Lewis Lake via a series of overgrown and unnamed resource roads and assisted with fieldwork. Work completed at the site included a pedestrian survey, surface and subsurface investigation, and photo and drone documentation. The site consisted of a midden pile, a steel drum, an unidentified circular feature, scattered surface artifacts, and moss-covered raised linear mounds in an approximately square shape (the likely camp). One of the raised linear mounds extended beyond the southern wall and an identified doorway, and we theorized that one of the camp's walls may have collapsed outward.

Without oral history or firsthand information, it may have proven difficult to determine whether the structure was a log trapper's camp or a square wigwam (tmoqta'wi'kn). This hybrid structure is between a log house and a traditional wigwam. A tmoqta'wi'kn has a square log base, usually built three to five horizontal logs high. The rafters are made of log poles

that extend from the ground, rest atop the log walls, and meet at an apex like the poles of a traditional wigwam. The structure is covered in birch bark, and spaces between the log walls and the rafters are filled with mosses and boughs. Some square wigwams have a traditional central firepit with smoke escaping through the opening at the top of the structure, while others were adapted to allow the use of a small stove and stovepipe.

During follow-up conversations with Andy Paul after completing our fieldwork, I asked further questions about his memories of the camp's construction and layout. He confirmed the structure was a log trapper's camp with a peaked roof covered in birch bark, not a square wigwam. He also provided additional information that clarified our findings at the site. He described the camp as having two distinct areas – a small entryway, where traps and supplies were kept, and the living area, which had a stove and was used for eating and sleeping. The long linear mound that extended beyond the doorway was not a collapsed wall but rather just a wall of the camp. The



Figure 5: Coin Lake crew sharing stories during a well-deserved break in the summer heat. L-R: Dr. Scott Neilsen, Stephen Paul, Denise Jewer-Spencer, Kent Paul, Wendy Jewer, and Lloyd Strickland.

south-facing linear mound with the door depression indicated the wall that had separated the entryway from the living area of the camp.

Coin Lake, DiAv-10

Coin Lake was identified as another area used by Andrew Paul for hunting and trapping. In contrast to the Little Lewis Lake site, the precise location of the base camp was uncertain; however, informant Ivan Paul, Andrew’s grandson, was aware of the camp’s approximate location – somewhere in the forest on the southern side of Coin Lake. Ivan, who still maintains a trapline within one of the Paul family’s traditional trapping areas, knew of the camp from his father, Andrew (Ted) Paul Jr., who likewise maintained a trapline within the family’s traditional trapping areas during his lifetime.

During our stay in Point Leamington, we received generous assistance from members of the Paul family. They provided a secure parking location for our side by side and trailer, opened their homes to us, shared family stories, provided additional infor-

mation on the sites, and a small group of the family helped with the pedestrian survey of Coin Lake – Stephen Paul, Kent Paul, Denise Jewer-Spencer, Wendy Jewer, and Lloyd Strickland. Denise’s father, Cecil Jewer, and Kent’s father, Andy Paul, participated in the community interviews during the previous fieldwork season.

The fieldwork completed at Coin Lake in August 2024 would have been more challenging without the participation of the Paul family. It was predicted that Dr. Neilsen, Stephen, and I would require a minimum of two days to complete the pedestrian survey; however, with seven people, we completed the survey in a single day. While we were unsuccessful in locating the site, Lloyd Strickland flagged a glass jar that led to site revisits in October.

The jar was made by the Consumer Glass Company, and the manufacture timeframe was from 1917 to 1962. While the jar may or may not be associated with Andrew Paul’s camp, it was the only surface artifact located during the pedestrian survey that dated within the known usage timeframe of the camp.

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Figure 6: Glass jar flagged by Lloyd Strickland during the pedestrian survey of Coin Lake.



All other surface artifacts documented dated to the 1980s or later.

Walter Paul Site, DfBa-18

Walter Paul of Badger used this site for hunting. Walter was Francis Paul's son and John Paul's grandson, an informant of Frank Speck. The site was identified during community interviews by Tyrone Paul, who was taken to the site as a youth by our grandfather Jerome Paul, Walter's younger brother.

The site is located on the Exploits River, approximately five kilometers from the community of Badger, and it is situated close to a bog that was used for hunting. Access to this site requires travel by boat, which was provided by Tyrone Paul, who also guided us to the exact site location.



Figure 7: Walter Paul site showing its proximity to the Exploits River. Fieldwork personnel can be seen in the small clearing at the site. Photo taken with DJI Mini 2 drone.

Work completed at the site included a pedestrian survey, surface and subsurface investigation, and photo and drone documentation. The site consisted of the remains of a small camp and a trail.

The trail leads to another bog with a small steady that was also used by members of the Paul family of Badger for hunting and trapping. Unlike other sites investigated during the 2024 fieldwork season, a midden pile was not readily identifiable, nor was a camp stove located at the site. When the absence of the stove was discussed while documenting the camp, it was revealed that it had been removed "many years ago by Walter's brother Jerome," likely for use in one of his trapper's camps.

Wigwam Cove, DiBa-15

Wigwam Cove is a coastal site in Halls Bay that the Mi'kmaq settled in the 1870s (Boyles, n.d.). It is associated with Levi Joe, a

Figure 8: Clearing at the Walter Paul site with four flags marking the corners of the camp. Dr. Neilsen and Tyrone Paul hold back branches so the camp can be photographed. The camp's door faced the Exploits River, seen just through the trees.





Figure 9: Wigwam Cove. Photo taken with DJI Mini 2 drone.

Mi'kmaw man known as a Chief and Priest in the Halls Bay area (Springdale Heritage Society, n.d.). This site was identified through archival sources, and in contrast to the other site locations, no descendant family members were involved with the site. Levi Joe and his wife Prora, the last Mi'kmaq reliably known to have lived at Wigwam Cove, had no children.

The site is located within a Crown Land grant (Volume: 105; Folio: 131; Original Title Holder: Levi Joe; Year Issued: 1923) and is approximately 156,013.2 sq meters (38.5 acres). Approximately 20 meters west of Wigwam Cove at Wigwam Point (now known as White's Point), another potential Mi'kmaw habitation/usage area exists. The Wigwam Point/White's Point area also falls within the boundary of a Crown Land grant (Volume: 62, Folio: 242, Original Title Owner: John Paul; Year Issued: 1905). In addition, the western boundary line of the John Paul property was measured and indicated using Widow Jeddore's property; however, no other information has yet been uncovered about her or this property on the point.

Mi'kmaw surnames associated with Halls Bay include Joe, Paul, Jeddore, and Stephenson (Stevenson, Stevesons, Stevens, Stephens). The earliest identified Mi'kmaw family known to have lived in Halls Bay were the Joes, and the last Mi'kmaw person reliably known to have lived there was Steve Stevenson (also recorded as Stephen Stephenson), who left

in the 1950s and moved to Deer Lake (Green Bay Economic Development Association, 1994).

Based on archival research, past archaeological assessments, local publications, and crown land grants, it is evident that the Halls Bay area had a strong Mi'kmaw presence in the past (A Ployglotic Family, 1883; Boyles, n.d.; Harvey, 1879; Howley, 2009; Jackson, 1993; McLean, 2009, 2010; Penney, 2017). Many Mi'kmaq were known to have lived in the bay and owned property on the north side in areas such as Dock Point, Beachy Cove, and Andrew Joe's Point (McLean, 2009; 2010). There is also a recorded Mi'kmaq archaeology site at Dock Point – a cemetery.

During the 2024 fieldwork season, most identified sites were not subject to test pitting because surface artifacts and site features were usually readily identifiable. However, Wigwam Cove was the exception due to the lack of surface artifacts present at the site. A pedestrian survey, metal detector survey, and test pitting were conducted as part of the investigation into the Mi'kmaq occupation of Wigwam Cove.

During the pedestrian survey, a well and two raised mounds were flagged. The raised mounds form a right angle, and vegetation on the mounds also forms the same angle. Given these features, we theorized that the mounds may indicate some type of structure. During drone documentation of the site, I stood where the mounds formed a right angle to indi-



Figure 10: Red lines indicate the raised mounds (most probably a structure) flagged during the pedestrian survey of Wigwam Cove. Note that the vegetation on the mounds is dark green and grows in a right-angle pattern.

cate the location. The investigation of the linear mounds was impacted by a large spruce tree, which covered much of the area.

Given the lack of surface artifacts and features flagged during the pedestrian survey and the lack of detailed information about the site, a metal detector survey was also completed. Five areas flagged during the pedestrian and metal detector surveys were selected for test pitting.

Test Pit #1 contained pieces of thin metal, fragments of a head or bottom chime, an intact rolling hoop (also called a rolling ring or swedge), a ceramic sherd, and two pieces of glass (likely from a bottle). The thin metal pieces, chime fragments,

and rolling hoop found in Test Pit #1 indicate a probable steel drum or similar container.

Test Pit #2 contained a saw blade – the exposed section of the blade, the handle end of the saw, was documented in situ and reburied.

Test Pit #3 was dug on the inside corner of the raised mounds identified during the pedestrian survey as a possible structure. It contained a thin metal object that had a formed edge with a curved shape, numerous nail holes in it, and one nail still in place. The object’s features and location may indicate a stove flange. Other arti-

facts found included a piece of window glass, pieces of bottle or jar glass, tar paper, and numerous nails of

Figure 11: Test Pit #1 showing the intact rolling hoop or swedge, which was left in situ and reburied.





Figure 12: Test Pit #2 showing the saw blade that was documented in situ and reburied.

varying lengths. The objects documented in Test Pit #3 were primarily architectural – nails, windowpane glass, and roofing material – which supported the theory that the raised mounds are a structure.

Test Pit #4 contained a rolling hoop or chime from a steel drum or similar container, thin metal (likely from the body of the drum or container), a broken glass jar, a piece of brown glass, a piece of clear glass, the rims of tin cans, an unknown green fragment (not organic), nails, and a rim-fired .22 calibre Dominion bullet casing (brass case with a ‘D’ stamped on the base).

Test Pit #5 contained burned and calcined bone, numerous ceramic sherds, square-topped nails, charcoal, fire-cracked rock, partial iron spikes that were heavily corroded, a partial pipe bowl, and two partial pipe stems – the manufacturer of one pipe stem was identified as Duncan McDougall, a Scottish pipe maker; however, no other information was obtained from the pipe pieces (e.g., date, motifs,

phrases).

Successful test pitting combined with archival records and published literature have confirmed that Wigwam Cove was an area of habitation in Halls Bay. While Wigwam Cove is noted as a Mi’kmaq settlement in select archival records, local publications, and documents available at the Springdale Heritage Centre, it is a much lesser-known area of Mi’kmaq occupation compared to Dock Point, Beachy Cove, and Wolf Cove. Nonetheless, research indicates that the Mi’kmaq were present in Wigwam Cove dating back to the mid-1800s and likely ending in the mid-1900s (Boyles, n.d; Green Bay Economic Development Association, 1994; Springdale Heritage Society, n.d.).

September Fieldwork

In September 2024, we visited the Gander Lake area to investigate a potential site on the north shore of Gander Lake and sites located in Charlie’s Place – an area between Northwest Gander River and Southwest Gander River, both of which flow into Gander Lake. All of the sites identified and visited in the Gander Lake area during September were identified through community interviews in the fall of 2023 and spring of 2024. Dr. Barry Gaulton and I were guided to the exact site locations by Qalipu Land Guardians Barry Francis and Justin Hodge (grandson of Grant Francis).

During our stay in Charlie’s Place, Dr. Gaulton and I received generous assistance from members of the Francis, Gillingham, and Hodge families. They provided a secure parking location for our vehicles in Appleton, opened their homes and cabins to us, assisted with fieldwork logistics, and provided support during and after site visits. Service provided by Dean and Diane Gillingham at the ‘front desk’ of Base Camp was second to none. Justin Hodge, his father, Dean Gillingham, and his uncle, Garry Gillingham, also participated in the community interviews during the previous fieldwork season.

Northwest Gander River, DfAs-01

This site was identified through community interviews. It was used by Grant Francis, a descendant of Charlie Francis of Gander Bay, for hunting and trapping purposes. The site consists of a clearing, scattered artifacts, and a midden pile on a bank overlooking the Northwest Gander River. Work completed at the site includes a pedestrian survey, surface and sub-



**Figure 13: Gander Lake area fieldwork crew enjoying a well-earned lunch break.
L-R: Justin Hodge, Natasha Jones, Barry Gaulton, and Barry Francis.**



**Figure 14: Photo documentation
sometimes requires getting into awkward positions.**

surface investigation, and photo documentation. Adverse weather conditions at the time of the site visit prevented drone documentation.

Although we could not define the edges of the camp structure, the probable camp location was an area of alder growth. Additionally, nearby exposed and semi-exposed features associated with a camp (e.g., steel drum modified into a camp stove, a midden pile, etc.) were present adjacent to the area of alder growth. Some surface vegetation (e.g., leaves, moss) was carefully removed from semi-exposed artifacts to obtain a better understanding of them. Once these artifacts were documented and photographed, they were covered using the same vegetation.

Joe's Feeder, DfAr-04

This site is located on a high bank overlooking Joe's Feeder, a small brook running through Charlie's Place. It was used by members of the Francis family for hunting and trapping purposes prior to the location being used for a 'logging cookhouse.' The cookhouse location was reportedly chosen based on information given to the logging company by the Francis family, some of whom went on to work in the cookhouse. Informant information indicated that the site consisted of a trap-



Figure 15: Top: The midden pile at Joe's Feeder, which extends along the bank and underneath a fallen tree. Bottom: The corner of the log structure. Most of the structure is moss-covered, overgrown with trees, or covered by tree falls.

ping camp, like the one on the Northwest Gander River. However, it was abandoned as a trapping camp location due to logging operations.

Work completed at the site consisted of a pedestrian survey, surface and subsurface investigation of features, and drone and photo documentation. The site consisted of a deteriorating log structure, a large steel drum modified into a stove, a large midden pile, and scattered surface artifacts.

There was considerable debris scattered throughout the woods surrounding the site – much of which appeared to be associated with the cookhouse and logging (i.e., large wire cable, cut angle iron, large square iron spikes) rather than Mi'kmaw

occupation of the site. Given that Mi'kmaw usage of the site predates the logging cookhouse, it was not surprising that items and features associated with the cookhouse and logging activity (i.e., the large midden pile of tin cans and bottles, cast iron stove, wire cable, remains of a dam structure on Joe's Feeder) are more visible at the site.

However, a small steel drum, which was modified into a camp stove, was located just north of the log structure, and a wire snare was located grown into a tree just south of the site. The size of the small, modified steel drum is consistent with the other previously documented steel drum camp stoves found at other Mi'kmaw trapping sites during the 2024 field-

Figure 16: Modified steel drums from three fieldwork sites.

A) large drum at Joe's Feeder, B) small drum at Joe's Feeder, C) Little Lewis Lake, and D) Northwest Gander River.



A



B



C



D

work period. The drum was severely damaged, preventing me from accurately measuring its exact features. The presence of two differently sized steel drums modified into stoves appears to support the oral history that the Joe’s Feeder site has a dual history. I believe it will take further time and research to better understand this site.

Francis Residence, Joe’s Feeder Cove, DfAr-03

The site on Gander Lake near the outlet of Joe’s

Feeder was a family home occupied by Grant Francis, his wife, and their three oldest children. According to informant Garry Gillingham, son of Grant Francis, who lived in the home as a small child, the house was approximately 6 x 9 metres. Garry also reported that the family kept horses and that his father, Grant, worked in the logging camps between Northwest Gander River and Southwest Gander River. Grant



Figure 17: Fieldwork challenges while working at the site of the Francis family home at Joe’s Feeder Cove. The site was nestled amongst thick forest vegetation and tree falls.

Francis was also known to maintain hunting and trapping base camps within this area.

Work completed at the site consisted of a pedestrian survey, surface and subsurface investigation of features, and photo documentation. The house structure was difficult to locate due to tree falls and thick forest growth – only one linear feature was discernable at the site. Notable features located near the

linear feature included a piece of windowpane glass, a stove flange with tar paper and nail holes, and a midden pile. Any semi-exposed artifacts uncovered during the site investigation were documented in situ before being reburied.

The midden consisted of various fragmented glass wares (i.e., plates, cups), a blue glass medicine bottle, green glass drink bottles, pieces of clear jar or bottle glass, pieces of brown glass, fragmented windowpane glass, a bottle cap, and burlap. Horse-drawn sleigh parts were found approximately 5 metres southwest of the linear feature.

Figure 18: Horse-drawn sleigh parts at Joe’s Feeder Cove – sled runner with rotted wood between the steel. Just behind the sled runner is a bridge iron.



Square Wigwam, DfAr-05

This site, located on the north shore of Gander Lake near an unnamed brook, consisted of a small clearing and the remnants of a square wigwam – a hybrid structure between a log house and a traditional wigwam. The structure was built in the 1960s by Garry Gillingham and used for hunting and trapping. At the time of the square wigwam’s construction, the area was only accessible by boat via Gander Lake; however, it can now be accessed via a couple of unnamed resource roads.

Gerry Penney recorded the remnants of a square wigwam at the Burnt Knaps I site (DbAV-01) in the early 1980s (See Penney, 1983; Penney & Nicol, 1984). Penney revealed that the Mi’kmaq of Conne River built two types of square wigwams – hunting and family. While the size of the family structure was unknown, the typical size of the hunting-type square wigwam was 8 x 8 feet or 10 x 10 feet. The base of the square wigwam at the Burnt Knaps I site measured 10 x 10 feet (Penney, 1983). The base of the square wigwam at Gander Lake also measured 3 x 3 metres (10 x 10 feet), which indicated that it was the hunting type. Unlike the Burnt Knaps I structure, the square wigwam at Gander Lake is not known to

have had a central hearth. Instead, it had a small rectangular camp stove placed in one corner of the structure.

Fieldwork completed at the site included a pedestrian survey, surface inspection, and photo documentation. While the foundation of the square wigwam was still discernable, the site had been subject to human disturbance. The decaying structure of the wigwam was burned in the early 1990s by descendant family members, and the site has since been used for bonfires and burning alders. Even though the site was disturbed, the base was easily measured. Its structure and layout were documented based on family knowledge – the base walls were four to five logs high, it had a dirt floor, raised dirt mounds with logs running the length of the mounds to create beds, and rafter poles that met in an apex and were then covered with tar paper instead of birch bark.

October Site Revisits

Little Lewis Lake, DhAv-01

The site was revisited after analysis of the photos from August 2024 revealed that the steel drum at the site was likely modified and that some of the previously documented surface finds required additional photo documentation. During the revisit, I was accompanied by my partner

Stephen and his brother Scott Paul, who provided transportation and assistance. While at the site, I confirmed that the small steel drum was modified for use as a camp stove. Based on the drum’s features, it dates to approximately the 1910s-1920s (personal communication, Andrew Higgs, September 2024) – the period when the camp was reportedly established.

Additionally, new information from an informant revealed that the site location was once an active logging area and that the site was protected due to descendant family

Figure 19: Justin Hodge, nephew of Garry Gillingham, standing in the remnants of the square wigwam at Gander Lake.





Figure 20: Scott Paul and Stephen Paul, great-grandsons of Andrew Paul, at the Little Lewis Lake site in October.



Figure 21: Success!

A crushed frying pan found at the Coin Lake site in October. A copper kettle, which was also crushed, was located nearby.

knowledge – Andrew’s grandson, Roy (Spud) Paul, who was aware of the site location, was responsible for marking the cutting boundary during the logging operation. During the site revisit, I identified the cutting boundary, which I mapped using a GPS.

Coin Lake, DiAv-10

During the August 2024 pedestrian survey, a glass jar was found near the suspected camp location. It was later determined that the jar fit within the known timeline for the camp. During the site revisit, areas near the jar’s location were more thoroughly inspected, and the camp location was determined after finding associated camp

items (copper kettle, frying pan, tar paper).

Scattered surface finds were photographically documented, a metal detector survey was completed, and drone photographs of the site were taken. The site, located on the north side of Southern Lake access road, is heavily disturbed due to road construction and past logging activity – no evidence of the camp’s structure was discernable, and both the frying pan and the copper kettle were crushed.

Young Property, DeBc-04

The site was revisited to reexamine a steel drum located next to the remains of First Camp. It was determined that the steel drum was not modified for use as a stove, but some modification had been done to the drum as it was cut in half lengthwise.

During the revisit, it was also determined that the site boundary was larger than initially documented. Additional surface artifacts located east of First Camp included cast iron stove parts, a small steel drum, another midden pile (cans, glass jars), a bed spring, and a white enamel pot. Due to the location of the small steel drum underneath tree falls, it is uncertain whether this drum was modified or not. Additionally, the

midden pile could not be safely documented due to its location on the edge of an eroding bank.

Artifact Assemblages

While Wigwam Cove was the only fieldwork site that resulted in obtaining a collection of cultural materials for study, architectural features, and cultural materials were photographically documented at every site visited.

Artifacts found at the investigated sites include but are not limited to an assortment of tools (e.g., saw blade, shovel head), ceramics, glassware, medicine products, tin cans, hardware (e.g., nails, wire), architectural materials (e.g., tar paper, window-pane glass), ammunition, steel bands from wooden barrels, steel drums (usually modified), formed sheet metal (e.g., stove flange), pipe stems, bone fragments, fire-cracked rock, and charcoal.

In addition to photo documentation, any steel drums found at the sites were documented using a 'Drum Documentation Form,' kindly supplied by Archaeologist Andrew Higgs, whose work has revealed the interpretive value of metal drum containers.

Non-Fieldwork Sites

Aside from the sites identified during the 2024 fieldwork season, three additional sites were identified based on archival sources or oral history, and additional information pertaining to DdBe-02 and DdBe-03 on Victoria River was provided to the Provincial Archaeology Office.

Frankie's Bog, DdBa-01

This site was used by Francis (Frank) Paul of Badger for hunting and trapping from the early 1920s to the late 1950s. Frank was the second oldest son of John Paul, an informant of Frank Speck. Francis also participated in Speck's research – he posed for two photographs with his cousin Tom Joe and modelled how to carry a traditional Mi'kmaw bundle using a tump-line.

According to oral knowledge and published community sources, the site consists of a small trapper's camp made of logs with a birch bark roof, and a bucksaw on the door (Coish, 2000). The camp is reportedly located near a small bog pond on Frankie's Bog, which is currently unnamed on Newfoundland topographic maps. While the camp's exact location is

Figure 22: L-R: Tom Joe and Francis Paul, Badger Brook, 1914. Source: Speck, 1922.



uncertain, there is a strong potential that future field-work will result in precisely locating the site.

Noel Matthews' Wigwam, DdBb-01

This site was used by Noel Matthews of Conne River. Noel was hired as a guide by James P. Howley during his geographical surveys of the island. During Howley's 1888 survey, he travelled to Noel Paul's Steady via Sugar Brook, Overflow Pond, and an unnamed brook (now known as Captain Storm's Brook) that empties into the steady. Upon reaching Noel Paul's Steady, Howley reported camping near Noel Matthews' wigwam. Based on information provided in Howley's journal, Noel Matthews' wigwam site is likely located on the south side of Noel Paul's Steady.

Exploits River Wigwam Site, DfBb-01

This site was identified through a combination of archival information and oral history. During James P. Howley's 1888 geological survey, he visited the site area and described a structure present at the site as 'an old Micmac wigwam,' indicating that the site predates 1888. Howley revealed, "about two miles below Noel Paul's, we stopped at a pond to look at the remains of several Red Indian wigwams... a little further on we stopped to take in some things left by Noel and Joe on their way up at an old Micmac Wigwam. We then pushed on... When we reached Red Indian fall about three miles below, we had to make a portage" (Howley, 2009, pp. 974-975).

Mr. Dan Sacrey, who had a cabin on the Exploits River, provided supporting information about Mi'kmaw habitation in this area of the river. Mr. Sacrey was very knowledgeable about the history of the river, and he was also very experienced with travelling the river by boat. In 2018, he identified an area on the south side of the Exploits River "as a place with Mi'kmaw sites." The area he identified is the same approximate area of the river as the 'old Mi'kmaw wigwam' site noted by Howley in 1888. While the site is known to have been used by the Mi'kmaq, it is unattributed to a specific person or family.

Adie's Pond II, DiBh-03

This site was used by Joe Brazil of Conne River for salmon spearing. Joe was also hired as a guide by James P. Howley. The site was documented by Howley in 1879 during a survey trip. While the site's precise location is unknown, it is likely located on Adie's Pond near the outlet of White's River. Howley notes

that the "main inflowing brook on the north side is still a considerable stream, but too rough for canoes. It continues northward well up into the Northern Peninsula and is then spread out in numerous branches... Salmon were in abundance at the mouth of this brook and old Joe Brazil who was camped here has speared several" (Howley, 2009, p. 467).

While Howley does provide information on harvesting activities, he does not describe the camp (e.g., wigwam, tilt, canvas tent, etc.) nor whether the area was occupied temporarily (e.g., a single season) or as a long-term camping area for salmon harvesting purposes.

Victoria River, DdBe-02 and DdBe-03

These sites were identified by the Provincial Archaeology Office from James P. Howley's 1875 map of Red Indian Lake. While Howley's map indicates the approximate site locations of numerous wigwams found along Victoria River, he does not identify the culture associated with these sites. Given his interest in Beothuk culture, it would be easy to assume that Howley was mapping Beothuk wigwam sites. However, Howley's journal, which documents his time surveying Victoria River, reveals the existence of at least one Mi'kmaw wigwam on Victoria River.

Based on his journal, the Mi'kmaw wigwam is likely located somewhere along No. 5 Steady. When the information from Howley's journal is compared to the wigwam locations he mapped on Victoria River, two sites on No. 5 Steady (DdBe-02 and DdBe-03) have potential. One of these sites may be the Mi'kmaw wigwam site that Howley mentioned in his journal, but it will take further research to make such a determination.

Discussion

As noted by Stephen Loring (2023), a challenge for archaeologists is to "never lose sight of the intangible knowledge, language and stories that link people, other-than-human beings, land and animals" (p. 87). Without the intangible knowledge and stories shared by community members during this project, it would look vastly different, as would most of the site interpretations.

Based on the cultural materials and the architectural features found at each site, it would be easy to classify these sites as European or Euro-Newfoundlander. However, based on Mi'kmaw oral history – whether it was recorded in community pub-

lications, passed on through family stories, documented in archival sources, or shared during the community interviews the previous fieldwork season – the sites visited during the 2024 fieldwork season were known ancestral places for Mi'kmaq in the central region.

While it can be easy to downplay Mi'kmaw connection to the island when their history and stories remain lesser-known outside of their communities, archaeology can increase awareness and appreciation of Mi'kmaw history and culture on the island. Archaeology also provides the Mi'kmaq with another way of understanding their past, sharing their stories, and connecting with their ancestors. Mi'kmaq-focused archaeology and the identification of Mi'kmaw sites on the island is vitally important. I believe there is great potential for future research done with, by, and for Mi'kmaq.

While it is important to highlight the successful accomplishments of this past fieldwork season, it is equally important to discuss fieldwork challenges. Fieldwork can involve a variety of challenging scenarios – difficult site access, adverse weather conditions, equipment failure, lost equipment, injuries, failure to confirm a site's location, finding sites looted and/or destroyed, or working in unkind or hostile environments. These are just some of the challenges that researchers can encounter throughout their work. While it can be difficult to juggle the many pieces of the fieldwork puzzle to ensure success, this project was a successful and enjoyable experience overall. Even when faced with unexpected challenges or unkind environments, this project and the people involved with it persevered.

Conclusion

The investigative site visits completed during the



Figure 23: During fieldwork in the Gander Lake area, this sign, which was erected by a local group along one of the resource roads used to access the Francis Residence at Joe's Feeder Cove, was photographed.

2024 fieldwork season are part of a larger community-led research project that involved community engagement sessions, interviews, and intensive archival research. Key to the success of this project was the involvement of community members, without whom, this project would be vastly different. This project sought to meaningfully involve Mi'kmaw community members in archaeology and include Mi'kmaw cultural practices in fieldwork, and I believe this project has succeeded on both fronts. It successfully engaged and involved community members since its beginning, and Mi'kmaw cultural practices were intertwined with archaeology practices during fieldwork.

Prior to the start of the project, I hosted community engagement sessions throughout the central region, which provided community members with the opportunity to ask questions and guide the project – What did they want to see from this project? What was important to them? How could I help them? These sessions also allowed me to share my knowledge of archaeology and the Historic Resources Act with community members. I was able to highlight



Figure 24: Working at the Little Lewis Lake site during the October revisit.

Note the red cloth with traditional medicines, water, and an eagle feather located nearby.

During fieldwork, researchers and participants partook in smudging and offering traditional medicines to the sites.

the importance of archaeology and discuss how it can help to protect cultural resources.

During the 2023 fieldwork season, the project involved community interviews – conversational-style interviews that focused on sharing stories, preserving family and community knowledge, and identifying Mi'kmaw ancestral places. The stories and information shared during these interviews informed much of the fieldwork completed in 2024. Most site locations selected for investigation during the 2024 fieldwork period were community-informed selections. These sites were identified due to the preservation of knowledge and oral history within Mi'kmaw families and communities and not documented elsewhere (e.g., archival records, historical publications). The exception was Wigwam Cove in Halls Bay, which

was identified through historical publications and archival sources.

During the 2024 season, our fieldwork practices included smudging, prayer, gifting medicines, storytelling, and, in some cases, having photos of those who used the sites with us as we conducted our investigations. This article was also subject to community involvement – it was shared with community members for feedback before being sent to the Provincial Archaeology Office.

Over the course of this project, it became increasingly clear that the identification and investigation of Mi'kmaw archaeology sites holds great importance and meaning for descendant family members, the wider Mi'kmaw community, and their allies. These identified sites, these Mi'kmaw ancestral places, carry Mi'kmaw stories and connect Mi'kmaq to their

ancestors and other relations. Visiting with Mi'kmaw ancestral places and sharing ancestral stories during fieldwork helped community members maintain their connections to their ancestors and preserve their history for future generations.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank the Institute for Social and Economic Research, the J. R. Smallwood Foundation, and the Provincial Archaeology Office for Newfoundland and Labrador for their financial help, and my supervisors, Dr. Barry Gaulton and Dr. Scott Neilsen, for their support of this project. I want to thank my partner, Stephen, for his support during my graduate studies and all the assistance he

provided during the hectic fieldwork season. I also want to thank my mother and father, Tammy and Brian, for all their contributions to this project and the past fieldwork season.

This project would not have happened if it wasn't for community organizations, non-profit groups, and individual community members. I want to thank the Exploits Native Women's Association, Chief Mi'sel Joe, Knowledge Keeper Sheila O'Neill, Elder Marie Eastman, Charlene Combdon, and Frank Skeard for their contributions. I also want to thank those who helped during the fieldwork season – Ty-



Figure 25: Until the next fieldwork season, nmu'ltes!

I was always eager to learn from him – he had such a wealth of experience with archaeology. Don was very much a part of my journey in archaeology, and his many friends, including me, will greatly miss him. Nmu'ltes nitap (I'll see you my friend)

rone Paul, Justin Hodge, Barry Francis, Dean and Diane Gillingham, Wendy Jewer, Lloyd Strickland, Denise Jewer-Spencer, Kent Paul, Vanda Martin, and Scott Paul. Many thanks to all the amazing community members who made this project a reality!

I would also like to acknowledge that this fieldwork season was not without loss. Before I began my journey as a graduate student, I met Don Pelley, a man who had long been involved with archaeology in the central region, and I was gifted with a great friendship. We had many chats about archaeology and enjoyed sharing stories of times spent out on the country. Don was always happy to hear about my studies, and

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Fieldwork Report 2024 Season – Black Cat Cemetery Preservation

Robyn Lacy & Ian Petty
Co-Directors, Black Cat Cemetery Preservation

The 2024 season was a bit slower for our work in historic cemeteries, but it was no less exciting than previous years. We were in the field from mid-June until early October, with a community talk in late November. The field season was shorter than previous years due to the weather, as many of the cleaning products and stone epoxies we use adequately function below 10 degrees Celsius, which makes it difficult for the Newfoundland summer. Unfortunately, at this time more suitable products in line with conservation standards have not been identified, so we are at the mercy of the weather.

This season, Black Cat Cemetery Preservation (BCCP) completed nine (9) projects across multiple communities on the island of Newfoundland, including in Brigus, Pouch Cove, Greenspond, St. John's, Bay Roberts, Harbour Grace, and Carbonear. Between all projects, we conserved, repaired, and cleaned 38 gravestones in total. BCCP also gave three public talks on gravestone conservation, provided one community consultation for the Chinese Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, and hosted one public event with Talk Death.

Our largest project continues to be in Greenspond, working with the Greenspond Historical Society (GHS) for the continued preservation of the historic burial grounds on the island. We began consultation work with the GHS in 2022 when we visited the island to conduct a survey of work required. This included the conservation of approximately 235 gravestones, with many more likely to be identified below the surface as the work progresses. In 2024, we worked on 18 gravestones at the Old United Church / Methodist Cemetery, over two trips to the site in July and September (example, figure 2). We'd like to thank the hospitality of the community, as always, who hosted us and brought us hot tea and coffee when the weather was particularly biting. In September, we were joined on site for a guided tour for the public of our ongoing work (figure 1), which was followed by a community memory mapping session

run by Joy Barfoot of the Greenspond Historical Society.

There were some issues working with the gravestones in Greenspond this season, that we were beginning to understand at the end of the 2023 season. Firstly, due to the cold weather on the island, which is much harsher than we find in the St. John's area, it is difficult to get the stone epoxy to set correctly in some cases. We had several gravestones where epoxy repairs failed and required a second round of treatment. We would find that temperature was not the sole culprit in these failures. Upon examining the epoxy on the failed repairs, it was noted that the epoxy was hard, but pieces of sugared marble were embedded in the surface. This meant that for several of the failed repairs, the stone was degraded too far to be safely adhered again as the surface was unstable. This caused us to reassess several stones at the Old United Church Cemetery that were going to be repaired, and it was decided that a few stones would have to remain on the ground.

The second issue is with the depth of burials. There is very little naturally occurring topsoil on Greenspond, and community members have told us stories of bringing soil from across the tickle in boats to build up areas for burial only a couple decades ago. As a result, burials at the more historic cemeteries are extremely shallow. On several occasions, digging to create a level gravel area to lay a gravestone on the ground was met with coffin and fabric fragments only a few centimetres below surface and excavation was stopped. It was decided that gravestones that could not be repaired to standing at the Old United Church Cemetery would have to remain laying on the grass after cleaning, as to not risk disturbing the burials below. Work remains ongoing at Greenspond for the 2025 season, subject to fundraising by the GHS. To date, BCCP has worked on 48 gravestones for this project.

Another exciting project that was started in November 2023 and finished in July 2024 was the Chapel Lane Cemetery or the Old Roman Catholic



Figure 1: Ian Petty speaking to a group of visitors during a site tour at the Old Methodist / United Church Cemetery, Greenspond, September 2024 (Lacy 2024).

Figure 2: Before (left) and after (right) of the John and Mary Macdonald gravestone, Old Methodist Cemetery, Greenspond. The verse at the end of the epitaph was written in Scottish Gaelic (Lacy 2024).



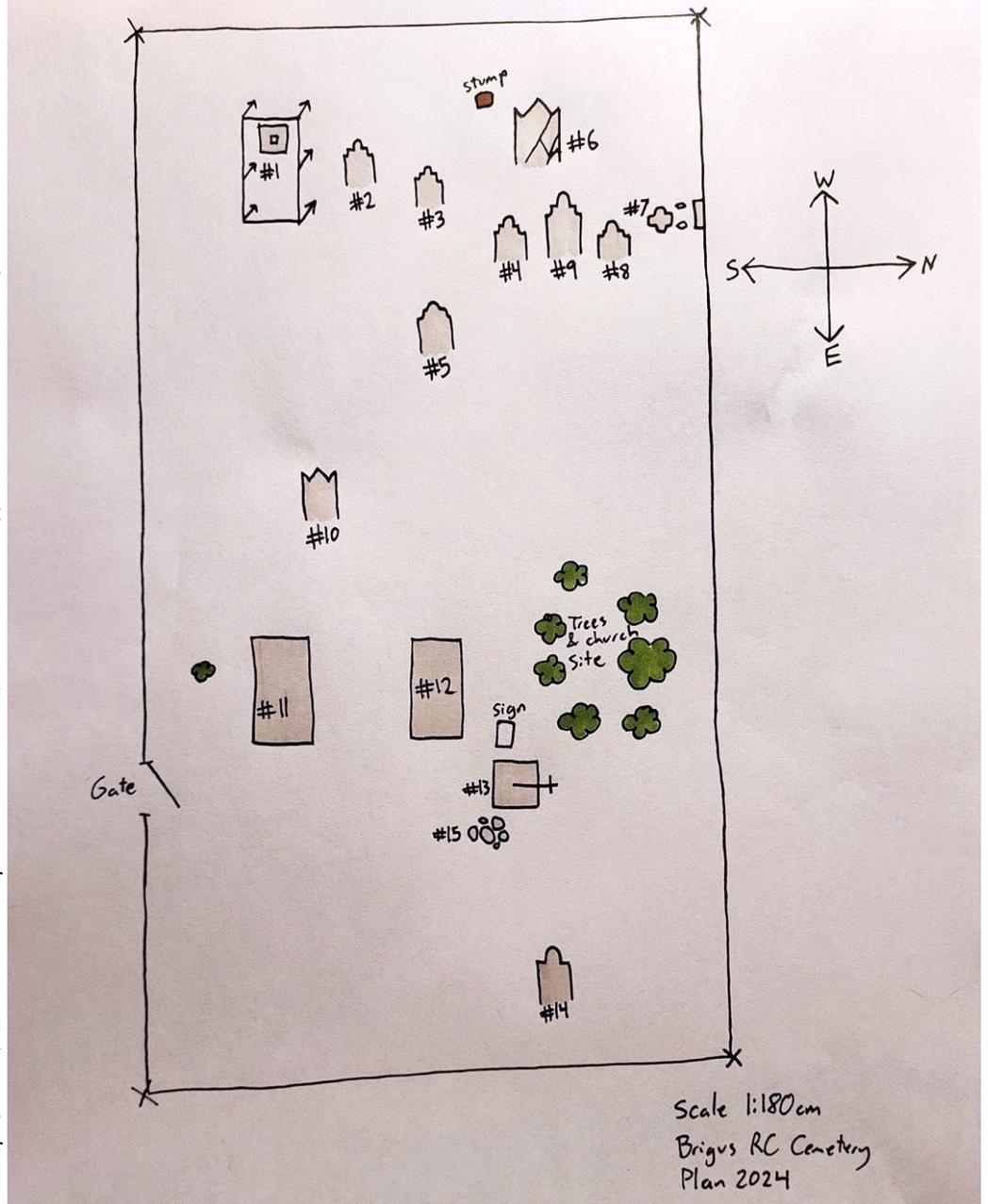
Cemetery in Brigus. This project was undertaken by the ‘St. Patrick’s Parish 200th Anniversary Committee’ for the anniversary of their parish (2024). Along with interpretive signs and other projects around Brigus, BCCP was brought in to work on the 15 gravestones at this small cemetery. It was the original location of the first Roman Catholic church in Brigus, and burials were organized mainly to the east and west of the original building location, where a stand of trees is now. Many of the stones at this site were either sandstone that was likely imported from Nova Scotia, or limestone from Ireland. Two of the gravestones were signed by a ‘Kennedy’ from ‘Waterford’, a community and county in Ireland. Ongoing research on this carver and his connection to Newfoundland is currently underway. The oldest stone on this site dated to 1819 and was made from a poor-quality limestone which required stabilization with a series of paraloid b72 resin injections (figure 3, stone #8).

One gravestone (figure 3, stone #6) proved to be the most difficult challenge we had undertaken to date. Broken into five (5) pieces with one missing, the cracks of this massive limestone marker were all diagonal, so gravity could not be used to make sure the pieces set together easily (figure 4). Additionally, this stone measured 221 cm tall at full height out of the ground, 107 cm wide, and 13.5 cm thick. It was logistically difficult to ensure that the pieces would adhere together evenly while laying on the ground, which was achieved by placing the stone pieces of

a series of 4x4 beams and securing them together with 4-foot bar clamps while the epoxy set. This method only worked for two of the pieces, and the others were raised into place using a tripod and 1-ton chain hoist. The only gravestone we did not work on was stone #11 (figure 3), a limestone chest tomb in excellent condition. The Committee has now transitioned into the newly formed ‘St. Patrick’s Parish Heritage Committee’ which will continue work within the community.

Among our larger projects, we did several projects for individuals, who contacted us to work on

Figure 3: Updated sketch map of the Old Roman Catholic Cemetery, Brigus (Lacy 2024).



family plots or individual stones. A particularly interesting one was the Soper plot in Carbonear at the Old Methodist Cemetery. The two gravestones, dedicated to John Soper and his wife Julia, were surrounded by a low iron fence with one stone broken and leaning against the base, and the other face down in the grass, its base missing and the bottom of the stone broken and sugaring. For Julia's stone, the base was levelled, and the top portion was reset using stone epoxy. John's stone proved more difficult, with the condi-

tion of the surface and was retained for research purposes. The stone was attached to the concrete base using lime mortar, for drainage and reversibility, and was not set into wet concrete.

While much of our work is through contract consulting with clients around the province, we also try to do as much public outreach and education as we can. Throughout the season, we gave several talks for the public through heritage societies, and for university classes. In April, we spoke at the Wessex Soci-



Figure 4: Before (left) and after (right) of Stone #6.

tion of the bottom of the stone being quite poor. It was decided through conversation with the client that a new concrete base would be made, and the inscription recorded before it was set into the new base, which would partially obscure the inscription. Because the broken section was badly sugaring, it was not a candidate for repair, and the bottom was laid in front of the new base once the stone was reset. It was saved due to having the carver's name included on

ety's public lecture series on our work in gravestone preservation in the province over zoom. It was great to be able to answer questions from the community, and we are interested in doing more local talks on volunteer gravestone preservation work that people can undertake on their own in the future. We travelled to Trinity in August, after Robyn's PhD defense, to speak as part of the Trinity Heritage Society's 60th anniversary speakers' series, where we discussed our

work at St. Paul's Anglican Churchyard in Trinity and our ongoing partnership with the Greenspond Historical Society (figure 5). The talk had a great turnout, with about 40 people gathered at Rocky's Place, with a lot of interesting questions from the audience.

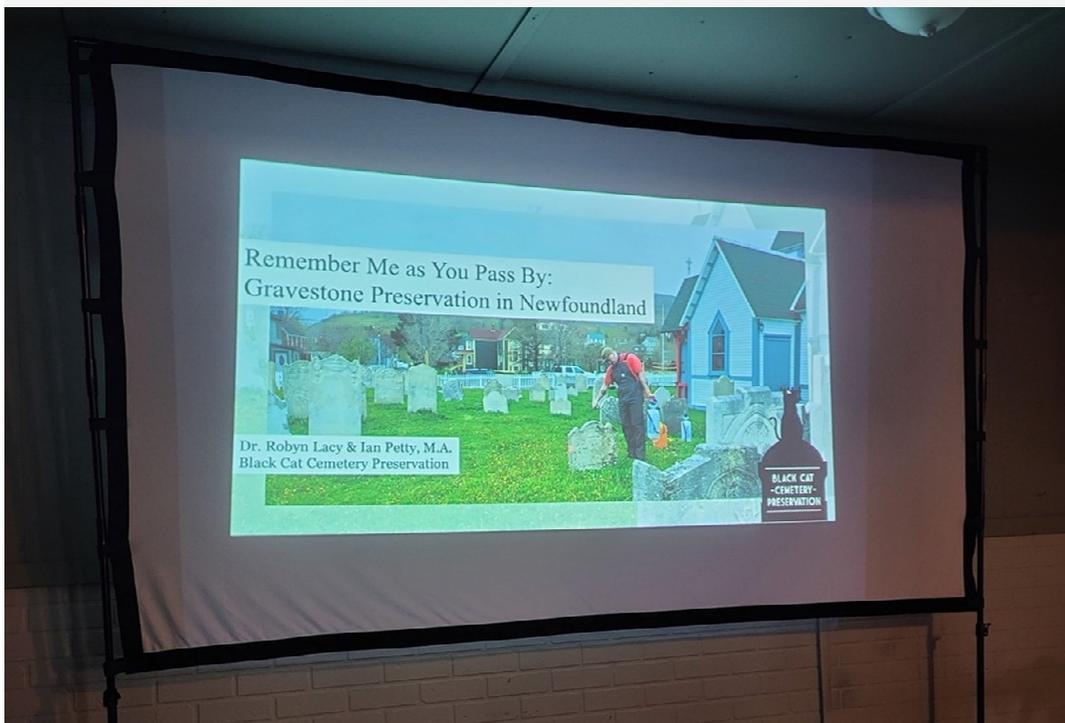
In November, Robyn gave a lecture on BCCP work for a course titled 'Cities of the Dead' with Dr. Michelle Hamilton at Western University which was attended by undergraduate students and faculty members. We also delivered a public talk for the Carbonar Heritage Society on gravestone preservation for community members and volunteers in late November, which was well attended, with excellent discussion about the ongoing preservation work going on in the area.

Finally, BCCP partnered with TalkDeath, an organization based in Ontario which encourages generative conversations around death and dying, to host a cemetery scavenger hunt the weekend before Halloween. We were pleased to host this event with the support of the board at the Forest Road Anglican Cemetery, and we wish to thank everyone who attended for their support and for their respectful behaviour while participating in this event in an active and historic cemetery. We had over 20 attendees, and distributed merchandise sent to us by TalkDeath for the event. Participants had access to clues on the

TalkDeath website at the same time around the world, and they went off around the Anglican Cemetery with their phones in hand to look for gravestones or elements of the site. No one in our group won the grand prizes, but it was a great way to connect with a load of people and talk about the importance of historic cemeteries. It was a wonderful experience!

Overall, the 2024 season was quieter than the previous year, but allowed us to do more talks and events and return to sites that we have been working on for more than one season. We are looking forward to exploring more of the province during the 2025 season, and continuing to work with community groups, towns, and families, to preserve their history.

Figure 5: Title slide of public presentation in Trinity, August 2024 (Lacy 2024).



Turpin’s Island, Little St. Lawrence, CfAu-05 Survey and Identification of Features - Memorial University Field School 2024

Catherine Losier
Memorial University



Figure 1: Extract of *Profils de la côte sud de Terre-Neuve* by Blaise Vion (1697) showing the Chapeau Rouge (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b5970321s?rk=21459;2>)

The *Chapeau Rouge* mountain, located at the entrance of St. Lawrence Harbour, has been known to Europeans since at least the first half of the 16th century (Figure 1). On a clear day, the *Chapeau Rouge* is observable from Saint-Pierre (Saint-Pierre et Miquelon) as well as from Cape St. Mary’s (east coast of Placentia Bay) making it the most important landmark of the west side of Placentia Bay (Figure 2). The toponym Saint Lorens first appears in *Cosmographie universelle, selon les navigateurs tant anciens que modernes* written and illustrated by the cartographer Guillaume Le Testu, published in 1555 (Losier et al. 2024: 95-96). According to the information we gathered so far, it seems that the region of St. Lawrence and Little St. Lawrence has been occupied by Basque fishing crews in the 16th century, followed in the 17th century by French fisherfolks until the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, then English fishing companies settled in the area in the late 18th century, and the occupation transitioned to Newfoundlander families in the 19th century (Losier et al. 2024).

During the archaeological survey carried out in the summer of 2024, evidence of all these distinct

occupations were identified on Turpin’s Island (CfAu-05). The site therefore has enormous research potential, covering five centuries of occupation. The aim going forward is to produce a biography of the site from the first human occupation to the 20th century, and to link the occupations of Turpin’s Island, their continuity and change, to the geopolitics of the Atlantic world, particularly in relation to European expansion from the 15th century onwards. Of course, this ambitious goal cannot be achieved in a single field season, especially as the field work undertaken since 2023 demonstrated that the site is not only vast (at least 40 000 m²), but it is very complex featuring occupations spanning 500 years of the European presence in the area.

It was decided that the objectives for the 2024 season would focus on enhancing the documentation and comprehension of the site’s extent and its various components. To this end, a test pitting campaign was initiated. The primary objective of this campaign was to undertake a more comprehensive assessment of the site’s stratigraphy and the diversity of its occupations. The secondary objective entailed the use of the DEM map created by Pete Whitridge in 2023 to date

Figure 2: View of St. Lawrence harbor to the south with the Chapeau Rouge on the right (photo: C. Losier).



the various features identified on the site (Losier et al. 2024: 103). This is necessary to refine our understanding of the chronology and occupation of the site and will help plan subsequent field seasons.

In addition to the purely archaeological objectives, this field work was devoted to the training of students. Ten undergrad students and three teaching assistants (two MA and one PhD student) took part in the project. This fine crew was able to excavate and meticulously document 42 test pits over the course of the four weeks we spent on the site (Figure 3). The archaeological objectives were fulfilled in their totality. They included the assessment of the

The Survey

As previously stated, a total of 42 test pits were excavated with the objective of enhancing the documentation of the stratigraphy, the historical use of the site, and the identification of features that are observable in the landscape, and as evidenced by historic aerial photographs and drone imagery (Figure 4). The dimensions of test pits are typically 0.50 metres in length and width; however, in certain instances, their dimensions were modified to align with the specific characteristics of the features to be documented. All the test pits but two (Test Pit 35 and 36) were dug until the B horizon which is the natural layer at the



Figure 3: The 2024 Memorial Archaeology field school crew (from Left to right): Kaitlyn O’Leary, Sarah Morgan, Skyler Yetta, Dr. Catherine Losier, Mars Lamkin, Charlotte Cameron, Leah Constantine, Joey Reid, Keelan Wells, Alyson Tulk, Adedamola (Dami) Olaniran, and teaching assistants: Valentin de Filippo, Kassandra Drake, Kayla Low.

stratigraphy and the documentation of features. In addition, the team participated in a number of community engagement activities. One of which was to write blog posts regarding our project and to share our progress, findings and data with the St. Lawrence and Little St. Lawrence community while we were still on site (<https://www.thecodroad.com/blog>). This, along with a community night presentation, was very well received, as the people of the *Chapeau Rouge* region and the Burin Peninsula in general are excited about the Turpin’s Island archaeological dig, and we are beyond grateful for their welcome.

site. For the 2024 field season, we decided to position the test pits close to the shoreline. The interior of the site will be targeted in a subsequent season. With the exception of two test pits (Test Pit 18 and 42), all were positives, meaning that artefacts were discovered during the excavation. While a detailed description of each test pit is not pertinent to present in this review, a commentary on the stratigraphy is essential.

The stratigraphy is not overly complex, exhibiting a high degree of similarity across the site. The stratigraphy is in general composed of three distinct layers, though this configuration varies in proximity to features. Beneath the sod is a brown silty layer that

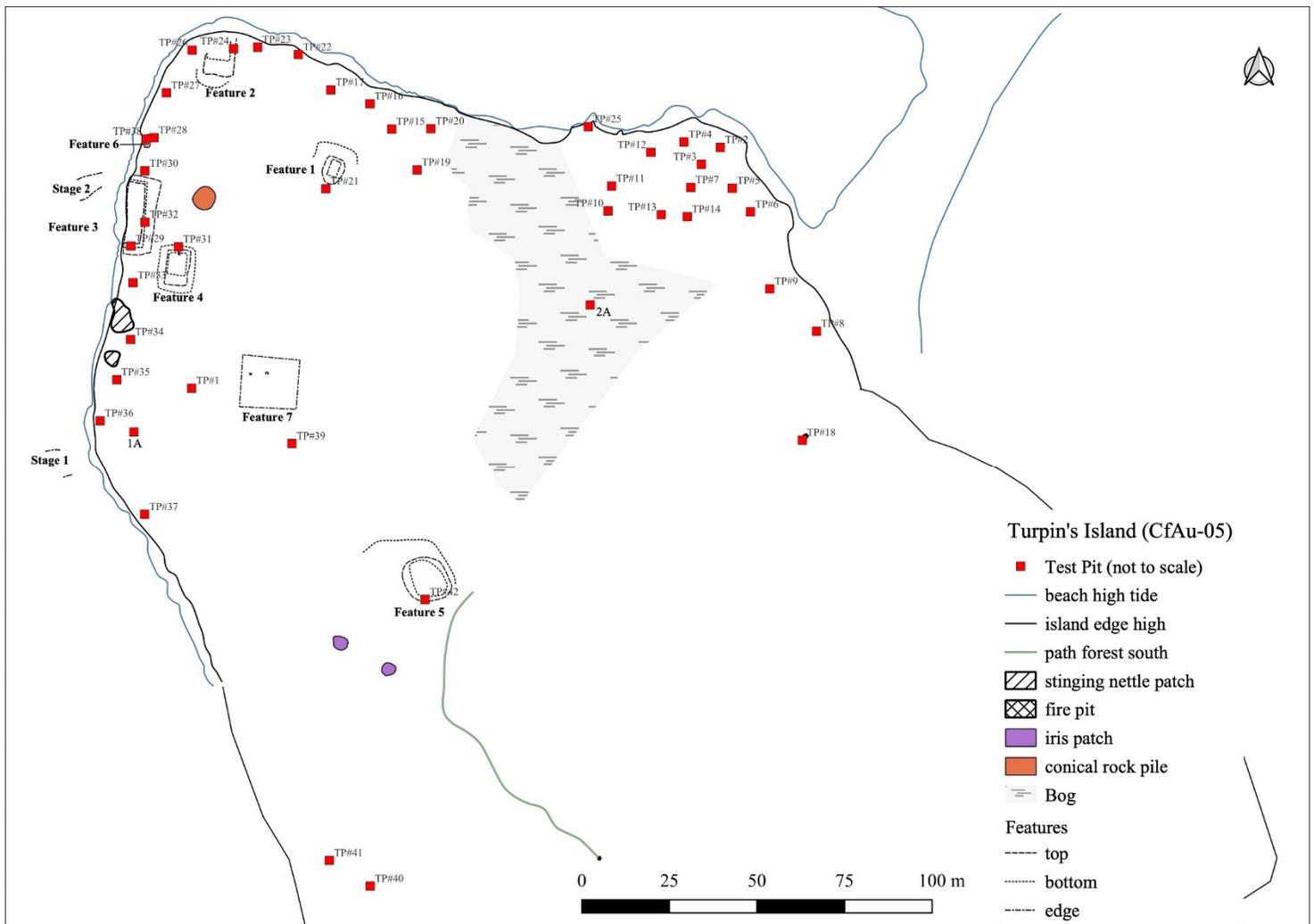


Figure 4: Map of Turpin's Island showing test pits, features, stages and landscape characteristics (map: V. de Filippo and C. Losier).

appears to be associated with the site's abandonment. This layer is widespread across the site and is identified as layer 1, even recovering buried features. A second layer (layer 2) is characterized by the presence of a dark brown layer with a greater abundance of rocks, suggesting a potential association with the period of occupation. The third layer (layer 3) corresponds to the natural B horizon, orange in color and sometimes presenting an indurated surface that is almost black in some test pits.

The constancy of the stratigraphy throughout the site is particularly noteworthy when considering the flooding caused by the 1929 tsunami. As reported in the *Evening Telegram*, the tidal waves flooded Turpin's Island. "Mrs. Turpin at the approach of the first tidal wave became alarmed at its unusual velocity, and seeing her stage and store go with the element thought discretion the better part of valour, and im-

mediately gathered her children together, and wading knee-deep in the water made her way for the beach, the only exit from the island" (Alex Turpin, Dec. 27, 1929, in the *Evening Telegram* cited in Ruffman 1996: 63). If very thin layers of coarse sand, resulting from the tsunami, were identified in some test pits, the assessment of the site is showing that the tidal waves probably did not affect features predating the 20th century occupation of the site. During the field season, Dr. Catherine Losier and Valentin de Filippo went on a snorkeling mission to better understand the underwater construction of the stages and noticed that the bottom of the harbour is made of coarse sand. This is the sand that was deposited on the shore by tidal waves; however, as previously mentioned, it is imperceptible in the majority of the test pits.

During the field season, seven features were recorded and documented, and the remains of at least

two stages are visible in the intertidal zone (Losier et al. 2024). The features and stages are evidence of the occupation of the site since, at least, the 16th century. As for the test pits, the features will be discussed further in the interpretation of the data. However, we can alleviate any suspense by stating that Feature 6 dates from the French occupation of the site. Features 3 and 4 are most probably associated with the Newman & Co. fishing premise in the 18th and 19th centuries. It has been established that Features 1, 2, 5, and 7 are associated with the 19th and 20th-century occupation by the Thornes and the Turpin families.

The map also illustrates the diverse characteristics of the landscape on Turpin's Island. A notable change in vegetation was observed. Between Stages 1 and 2, the presence of stinging needles was observed, exhibiting a more or less rectangular shape in proximity to the shoreline. This observation suggests the potential for variation in the underlying terrain. Of particular interest are the two circular iris patches observed in the southwestern region of Feature 5. The occurrence of irises in this location is peculiar, given their typical habitat in marshy and wet areas. Their presence on a hill, in an otherwise dry area, is particularly noteworthy. The area in which irises have been observed is characterized by a high degree of moisture, suggesting the potential presence of a freshwater source. The presence of a substantial marsh, with a drainage toward the north of the site, suggests the potential for additional source of freshwater. Locals told us that in "the old days" they use to keep a couple of trout in the little marshy pond to keep it clean. The last feature of note is the conical pile of stone located north of Feature 4; it was not investigated in 2024. It did not look like a feature at first; maybe it is a stone deposit from where the land was cleared to grow hay, but it is not impossible that it could be a root cellar. A thorough investigation will be necessary to ascertain the nature of this feature.

Turpin's Island Through Time: Insights from Archaeological Data

This section offers a quick interpretation of the data recorded during the 2024 field season, situating it within the broader historical context of Turpin's Island occupation. The objective is to deepen our comprehension of the diverse occupations present at the site over the past five centuries. The interpretations are organized in chronological order.

Basque Presence in San Lorenz Chumea

As stated in the opening of this paper, the first documented reference to the St. Lawrence area in a European archive appears on the map of Le Testu from 1555, and San Lorenz evokes an Iberian name. The pilot book of Martin the Hoyarsabal, first published in 1579, provides routes to and from St. Lawrence (Losier et al. 2024: 95). It is plausible that Basque crews fished around Little St. Lawrence during the 15th and 16th centuries, although no Basque occupation has been found yet. However, sherds of Basque roof tiles have been identified in many test pits (at least 10, the analysis of artefacts is ongoing), but these sherds are not in context. In Test Pit 36, however, a large sherd was found beneath a layer of cod bone that could date back to the French occupation of the site. Further investigation is necessary to determine the nature of any potential Basque presence in this sector as the contexts were so deep in Test Pit 35 and 36 that it was impossible to reach the natural layers.

French Fishermen au Petit Saint-Laurent

Prowse (1895:48) cites an archive indicating that the "French fishery of 1640 superseded an earlier Basque presence at both San Lorenz Audia and San Lorenz Chumea, Great and Little St. Lawrence" (Prowse 1895). The veracity of this date is uncertain; however, an archive from Saint-Malo states that the harbor was suitable for a crew of 60 men suggesting that French crews fished at Little St. Lawrence in 1662 (Harvut 1893:23-26). We know for sure that French crews were fishing at Little St. Lawrence in 1672 as the merchant Henry Brunet "goes to Petit S. Laurence to visit a man named Fontanelle from Grandville in Normandy" (Crompton 2017: 121-122).

Already in 2023, a French context was identified in unit 1A, which is in close proximity to Stage 1 (Losier et al. 2024: 13-14). In 2024, three additional test pits (34, 35, and 36) were excavated in the area (Figure 5). In Test Pit 34, we identified twelve sherds of Normandy stoneware and observed a classic stratigraphy consistent with the site's characteristics. However, the stratigraphy exhibited by Test Pits 35 and 36 was found to be highly unusual. In Test Pit 36, six layers were identified. The upper layers are likely associated with the action of sea ice pushing against the shore, creating a bulge (an accumulation of pebbles) that covers archaeological contexts (a phenomenon also observed in Test Pit 36). This as-

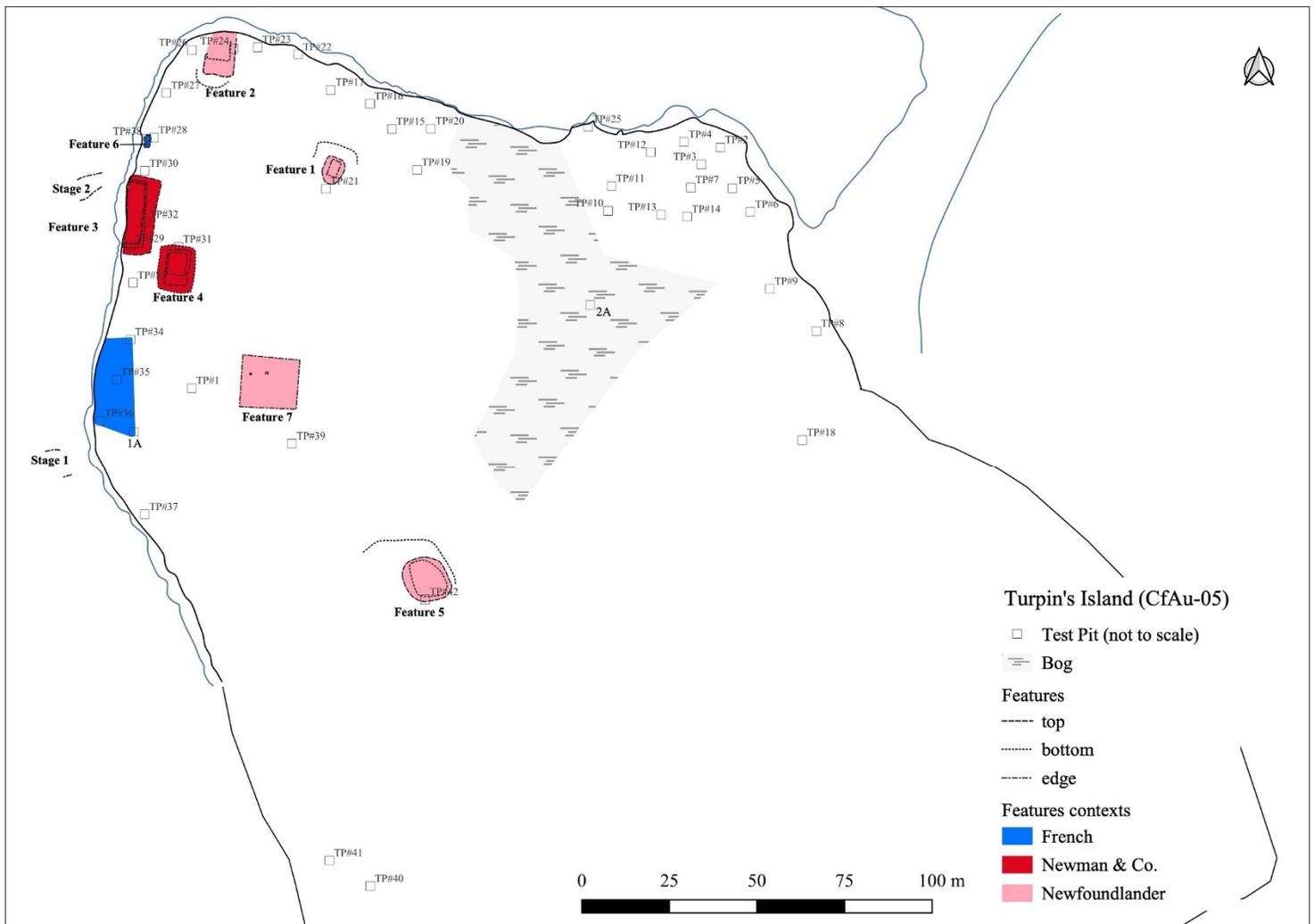


Figure 5: Map of Turpin's Island showing the occupation feature and sectors of the site according to French, Newman & Co, and Newfoundland context's (map: V. de Filippo and C. Losier).

section is substantiated by the presence of artifacts, both recent and old, in the uppermost layers of the test pit.

The intact archaeological accumulation started at a depth of 0.50 metres below the surface. The presence of Portuguese tin-glazed pottery, unfortunately out of context, was noted in the test pit, along with the unusual presence of slate (slate was found only in this test pit). The excavation was concluded prior to reaching the natural layer due to the discovery of a substantial flat stone at a depth of 0.75 metres below the surface (Figure 6). At the base of the test pit, on the side that was not covered by the stone (west half of the test pit), the anthropic accumulation was continuing deeper. Further investigation is necessary to determine the nature of this stone and the extent of the anthropic accumulation. The scarcity of artifacts in the intact archaeological layer, coupled with the

intriguing nature of this stone, underscores the need for further examination.

The stratigraphy of Test Pit 36 was like 35, with ten layers being excavated. Once again, the upper layers are probably associated with the action of sea ice pushing against the shore. The intact archaeological layers began at around 0.80 metres below the surface. Layer 8 is very interesting, as it is composed almost entirely of cod bones (Figure 7). In Layer 8, Normandy stoneware and fragments of an onion wine bottle were found, along with fragments of Basque tile. In Layer 9, a large fragment of a Basque tile was found, along with Normandy stoneware and a pipe bowl. The excavation was concluded before reaching the natural layer as the accumulation of anthropic matrix was continuing past 1.04 metres below surface and it was not possible to excavate deeper in this test pit.



Figure 6: End of excavation in Test Pit 35 showing the stratigraphy and the flat stone at the base of the test pit (photo: C. Losier).

This area of the site, associated with Stage 1, is of particular interest and is likely associated with the French occupation. It is noteworthy that the sector does not appear to have been heavily occupied during the tenure of the island by the Newman & Co. fishing company. This is evidenced by the scarcity of artifacts dating from this era, sherds of hand-painted pearlware for example, which are found in abundance elsewhere on the site.

Feature 6 is also associated with the French occupation of the site. Excavation of Test Pit 38 has provided documentation of this feature. The feature is a trench measuring 3.40 metres (north-south) by 1.30 metres (east-west) and is located immediately north of Stage 2, near the shoreline. Test pit 38 was excavated on the western edge of Feature 6. The west edge of the test pit is higher, and it is sloping toward the east. The difference in height between the west and east sides is approximately 0.30 metres. In the

trench, almost exclusively Normandy stoneware was found, along with a piece of wood at the base of the trench (directly on top of B, the natural layer) (Figure 8). At this stage, it appears that the trench may be linked to the French occupation of the site.

The material culture from unit 1A (excavated in 2023) and from the four test pits associated with the French occupation of the site (Test Pits 34, 35, 36 and 38) suggests that the French occupation of the site dates from the 17th century to the early 18th century. There is currently no evidence to suggest that the occupation continued after the signature of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, as suggested by the survey

Figure 7: Top: Layer 8 in Test Pit 36 half excavated. North side is showing Layer 8 (cod bones) in place and south side is surface of Layer 9. Bottom: Sample of cod bones from layer 8.



of William Taverner (1718): “There ffishes one planter, who hath not taken the Oath, he caught the last year about 280 Quintls of ffish p boat, there are Two ffish^s Roomes. for Ships, which is all fflakes”. It is important to reiterate that Taverner’s account mentions the presence of two fishing rooms at Little St. Lawrence, which are likely associated with the remains of Stages 1 and 2, that can be observed at low tide. The two areas where French contexts have been



Figure 8: Normandy stoneware found in the layer 2 of Test Pit 38 (Feature 6).

identified are in close proximity to the stages.

The Newman & Co. Fishing Premise

The state of Little St. Lawrence occupation between 1713 and 1767 is unknown. In 1767, Captain James Cook charted Great and Little St. Lawrence, noting the presence of “...severall inhabitants employ’d in the Fishery and likewise severall Stages and Fishing Rooms and convenient places for severall more” at Great St. Lawrence, but no inhabitants at Little St. Lawrence but his chart shows that he identified Little

St. Lawrence as an interesting place to set up fishing stations (Cook 1767 cited in Penney 2009: 15; Losier et al. 2024: 97). In 1784, Little St. Lawrence was established as a base for the Newman & Co. cod fishing enterprise (Matthews 2003). This development was soon followed by the opening of additional branches in Burin and Little Bay in Fortune Bay (Matthews 2003). However, when Newman & Co. relocated its headquarters from St. John’s to Harbour Breton in 1812 (Maritime Archives), records suggest uncertainty

Figure 9: Organization of Feature 3 associated with the Newman & Co. occupation.

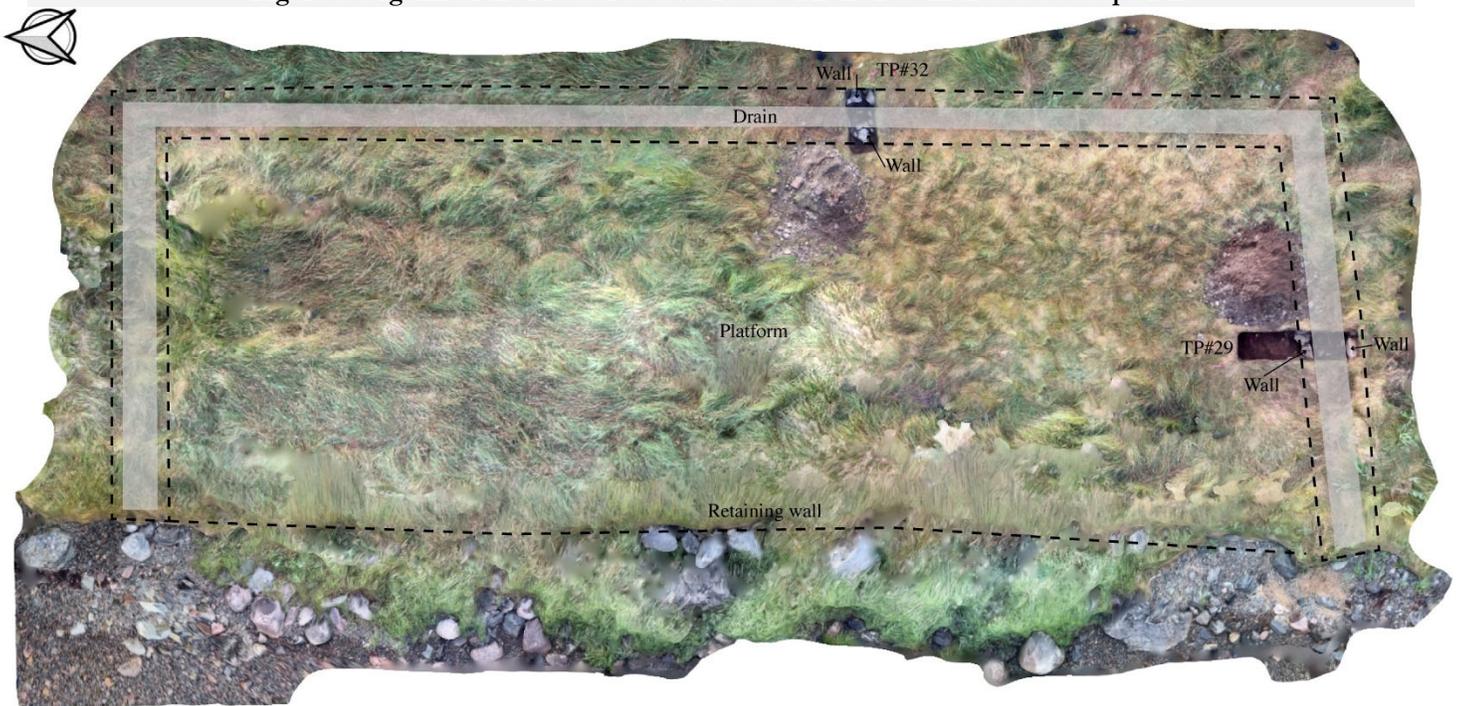




Figure 10: The two walls in Test Pit 29 bordering the drain in which various artefacts have been identified.

Figure 11: Little St. Lawrence Harbour (Meres, HMS Pegasus, July 14th 1786) (Canada Archives).



regarding the continued operation of the Little St. Lawrence premises.

Two features visible in the landscape of the site appear to be associated with the Newman & Co. occupation of the site (Figure 5). Feature 3 is rectangular measuring 20.10 metres (north-south) by 7.90 metres (east-west) (Figure 9). This feature is the most intriguing of the site. It consists of a light-built wall surrounding the northern, eastern, and southern sides of the feature. This wall is bordered by a drain of a width of 0.50 metre and the exterior of the drain materialized by another line of stones that has been identified in Test Pit 29 (Figure 10). Excavations in Test Pit 29 revealed the absence of a “floor” or a built base at the center of the feature. However, the excavation was conducted within the limits of the feature, and further excavation is required to adequately understand the central portion of the structure. The western side of the feature, situated along the shoreline, appears to be a retaining wall composed of at least three rows of substantial stones. The interpretation of this feature is currently challenging due to the limited extent of the excavation. Its proximity to Stage 2, however, prompts us to suggest that they could have been part of a single structure. Feature 3 corresponds to



Figure 12: Interior of the chimney in Test Pit 31 (Feature 4).

the on-land portion of the stage as we can see on the Meres drawing from 1786 (Figure 11).

The other building associated with the Newman & Co. occupation is Feature 4. It is a large depression measuring 12.40 m (north-south) by 9.50 m (east-west) surrounded on four sides by a berm. Test pit 31 (3 m (north-south) X 0.50 m (east-west)) excavated on the north side of the feature revealed the exterior wall of a building and the presence of a brick hearth in fantastic condition inside the building (Figure 12). There may be a trench or drain running parallel to the exterior of the northern wall of the feature. This drain is aligned with the southern drain of Feature 3. The building is constructed of mortar-bonded stones and a hearth of mortar-bonded bricks. The current hypothesis is that this feature is associated with the Newman & Co. occupation of the site. However, the presence of a limited number of diagnostic artifacts (i.e., sherds of dark green glass wine bottle, a few sherds of banded pearlware, nails and metal objects) in Test Pit 31 does not allow a definitive conclusion regarding this interpretation.

Another argument that supports the connection between Feature 4 and the Newman & Co. fishing premise is the identification of window glass dur-

ing the excavation. According to the Meres drawing, there is at least one building with the same orientation as our Feature 4 that has windows. While the building and the stage appears to be too far from one another on Meres drawing (on which the perspective is not always accurate), they seem to be aligned, like what we see on the field. However, this building must be further documented to definitively associate it with the Newman & Co. occupation.

Another significant discovery must be addressed: a substantial quantity of small pearlware sherds was recovered from the majority of excavated test pits. The production dates of pearlware align with the period during which Newman & Co. occupied the site. Pearlware, invented in the 1770s, became widespread around 1790, coinciding within few years with the establishment of the Newman & Co. fishing premises in Little St. Lawrence in 1784. Notably, a large concentration of pearlware was discovered in what is believed to be a drain defining the periphery of Feature 3. Pearlware sherds exhibit a variety of decorative styles: many feature the characteristic blue painted patterns typical of pearlware, while others display polychrome floral motifs, commonly dated between 1795 and 1815. Additionally, some sherds exhibit banded, variegated, and mocha decorations, which were popular during the early 19th century. Ongoing research into pearlware further supports these findings, as the dates of the decorative styles align with the end of Newman & Co.'s occupation in 1812. Together, the archaeological evidence and historical context provide a compelling link between the

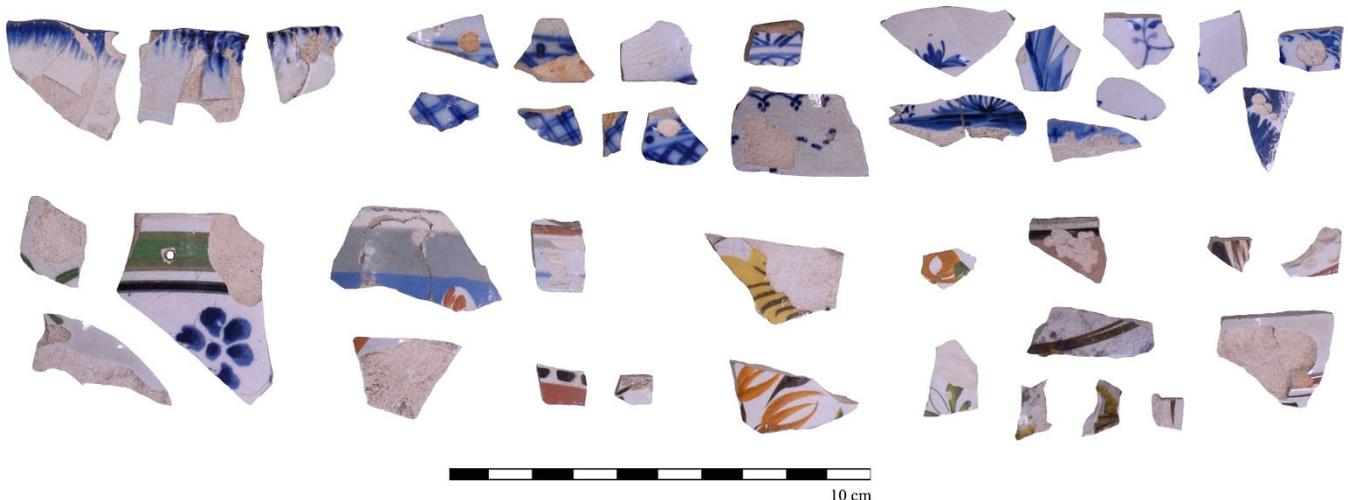
pearlware artifacts and the site's occupation by Newman & Co (Figure 13).

The Thorne and Turpin's Tenure of the Island

Between October 12th and 16th, 1839, Joseph Jukes “was hospitably entertained by Mr. J. T[horne]—and his lady, who reside at Little St. Lawrence together with two younger brothers. Their house is very prettily situated on a small peninsula jutting into the inlet and connected with the main by a pebble beach” (Jukes 1842:203). With this description, there is no doubt that the small peninsula referred to is Turpin's Island. Another archive dating from June 23rd 1840, also place John Thorne and his family at Little St. Lawrence. We can read that he “has a fishing est at little st. Lawrence he the main one. He buys fish fm other places too. Fm greatest Lawrence”.

A map of Burin Harbour from 1860-1861 shows two buildings and two stages on Turpin's Island at the time. The georeferencing of this map was challenging; however, a hypothesis can be put forward. It appears that the northernmost structure depicted on the map corresponds to Feature 1 (Figure 14). Today, this feature presents itself as a large rectangular depression with a depth of 1.50 metres excavated in a small hill. The base of the feature is filled with large, rounded, or sub-rounded stones. It seems to be a structure that collapsed inward. Stone walls appear to be present on the four sides of the feature. The presence of abundant mortar or cement in the soil suggests that the stones and bricks within the structure were once affixed together. The purpose of this building remains uncertain; however, it probably

Figure 13: Example of pearlware found in several test pits excavated in Turpin's Island.



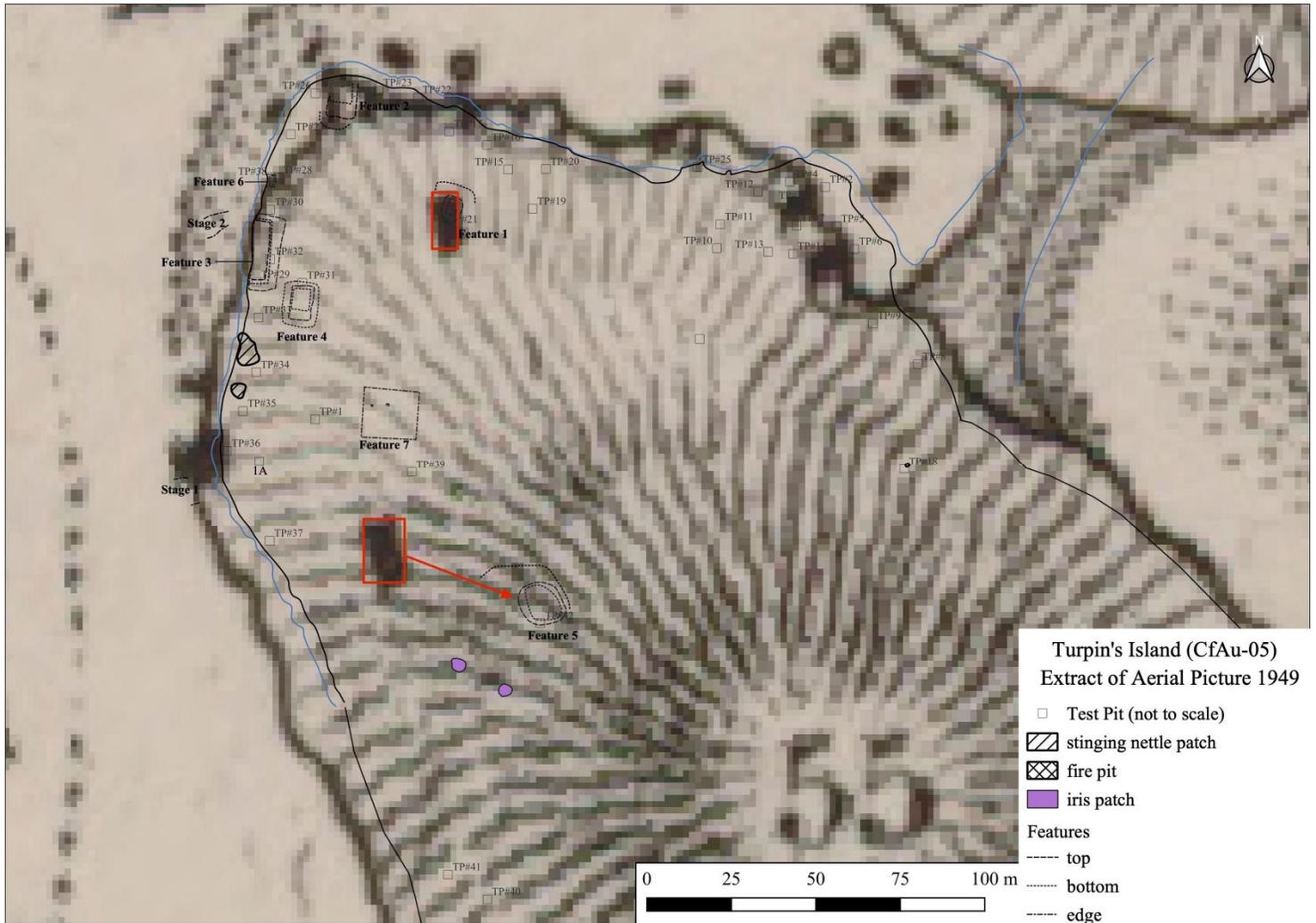


Figure 14: Georeferenced map of 1860-1861 showing two buildings and hypothesis that they could be associated with the Thorne family occupation of the site (map: V. de Filippo and C. Losier).

relates to the families who lived on the Island, the 'Thornes' in the mid-19th century and it could also have been used by the Turpins in the early - mid 20th century (although Leo Mulloy, a local informant, does not recall this feature). With no formal test pit has been dug in this feature, but the material culture found when the north wall of the feature was cleaned seems recent (not associated with the 16th century to the early 19th century occupation of the site, no presence of pearlware).

The georeferencing of the 1860-1861 map allows us to propose an additional hypothesis. This relates to Feature 5, which was documented by Test Pit 42 but in which no artifact was found (Figure 14). The positioning of the southern structure on the map, south of the stages and on the slope of the hill, could potentially correspond with Feature 5. However, further excavation will be necessary to demon-

strate this hypothesis. If this is confirmed, it is possible that this large feature could have been the Thorne's house.

Between 1900 and 1920, Edward Turpin and Lucy (born Pike) constructed a residence on Turpin's Island. It is known that Lucy Turpin was at home when the tidal waves from the tsunami hit Little St. Lawrence on November 18, 1929. After the community night we held at Little St. Lawrence, Leo Mulloy from St. Lawrence who saw the house of the Turpins when he was a boy (in the mid 20th century) visited the site and shared his souvenirs and insights. He confirmed that the two concrete blocks that can be observed slightly inland from the western shore were part of the Turpin's house. The function of these blocks remains to be determined; however, Leo suggested they could have been associated with the chimney of the house. He also informed us that the

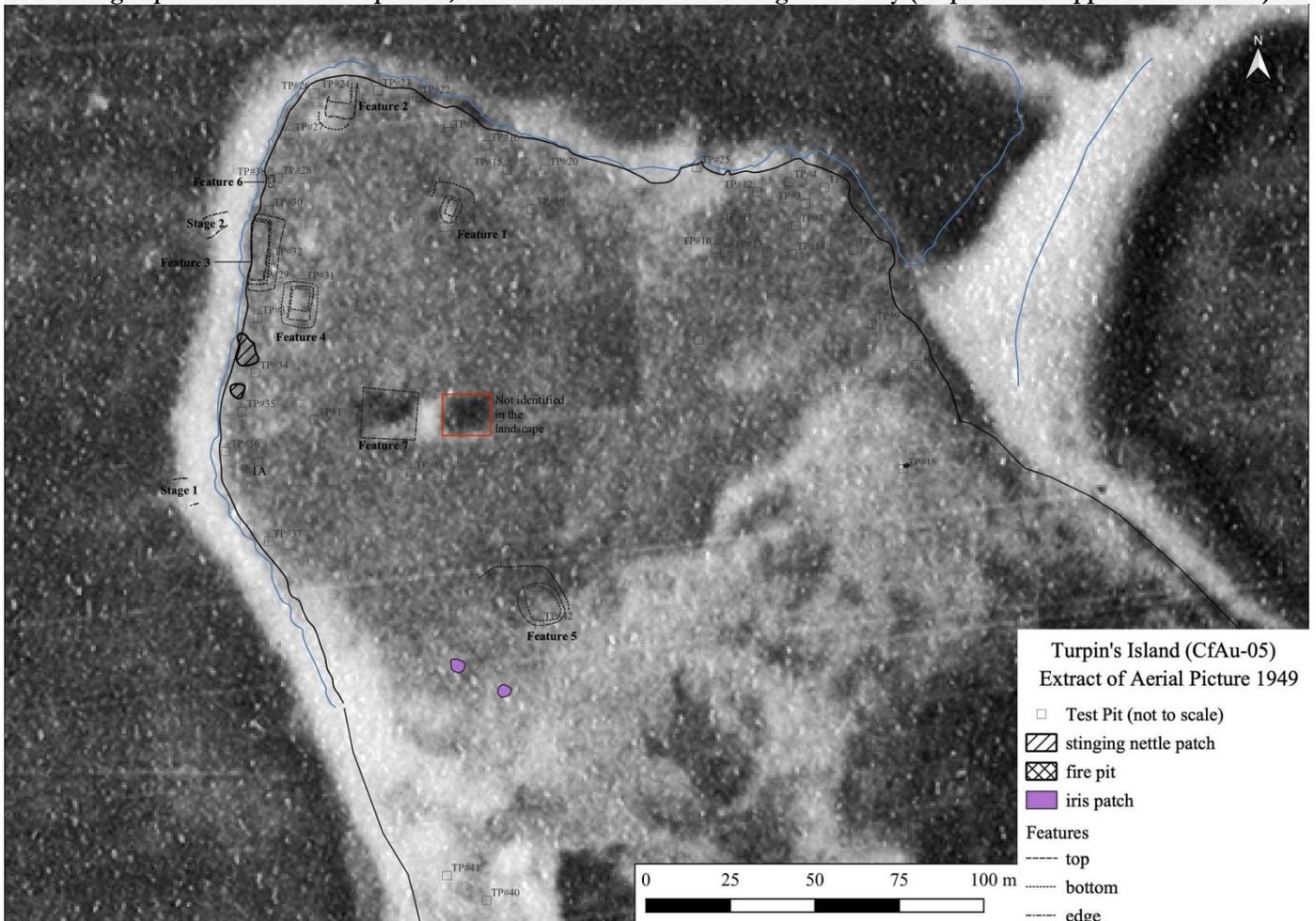
main door was oriented towards the water (on the west of the building) and that the house featured a significant number of windows, in addition to a back door.

According to Leo Mulloy, the stage, and flakes (the latter was attached to the front of the stage) on Turpin's Island was only for the subsistence of the family. The Turpin's fishery business was based in St. Lawrence. The Turpin family kept sheep, cattle, and chickens on the island, also for their own consumption. A barn was used to house the animals. The 1949 aerial photograph (that was georeferenced) reveals the presence of two structures on the island, one of which is directly associated with the Turpin's house, as indicated by a ridge in the landscape that corresponds to the northern wall of the house and the placement of the two concrete blocks. The other

building, positioned directly east of the aforementioned structure, displays comparable dimensions. At this time, the function of the second building remains unclear, and its negative has not been identified in the landscape. It is important to note that Leo Mulloy did not mention the presence of two buildings one beside the other on the island during the mid-20th century (Figure 15).

Feature 2 could also be associated with the occupation of the site during the 20th century. The feature in question is a rectangular stone foundation, the interior of which has been unearthed. On the south side, there is a large accumulation of rounded stones ranging from 15 to 35 centimetres. In Test Pit 24, the foundation of the feature, which is composed of large stones (30 centimetres in diameter), has been identified at a depth of 0.60 metres below the surface

Figure 15: Georeferenced aerial picture of 1949 showing concordance with Feature 7 (Turpin's house), Feature 2 (possible store) and the remains of Feature 1. On the east of Feature 7, another building is present on the aerial picture, but it was not identified during the survey (map: V. de Filippo and C. Losier).



(Figure 16). This feature is located in close proximity to the shoreline and could potentially be associated with a stage or a store. The presence of fresh large mammal bones suggests a more recent occupation, probably in the 20th century. Local community members have indicated the presence of a fishing stage north of Feature 2, which could then be a store. On the aerial picture of 1949, we see landscape disturbance where Feature 2 was identified (Figure 15).

Conclusion

The 2024 season was successful as all the objectives were achieved. We enhanced the documentation of the site’s extent and its components through the implementation of a test pitting campaign. This work provided a more comprehensive assessment of the site’s stratigraphy and the diversity of its occupations. Moreover, we have been able to associate

the different features and area of the site with specific occupation contexts; these insights will inform the planning of future field seasons. Once again, it was demonstrated that the site holds immense research potential and will in the future allow to connect the occupations of Turpin’s Island, by exploring their continuity and transformation, to the broader geopolitics of the Atlantic world since the 15th century.

Equally significant, the fieldwork offered valuable training opportunities for Memorial University students. Ten undergraduates, along with three teaching assistants, gained hands-on experience in field archaeology, providing them with technical skills. The team also engaged with the local community, making sure that we keep the public informed of our progress



Figure 16: Foundation of Feature 2 in Test Pit 24.

and findings. The enthusiastic support from the people of the *Chapeau Rouge* region has been deeply appreciated and one of the highlights of this project.

Acknowledgement

The 2024 field school was one for the books! THANK YOU to the whole field crew for being SO wonderful. Your good attitude and dedication made the sojourn productive and fun, and we made a ton of good memories. Thanks a million, to the team at the Provincial Archaeology Office for their support, trust, and time. We are also very grateful for the Provincial Archaeology Office funding that supports the fieldwork, to SSHRC and to Memorial’s Faculty of Humanities and Social Science. One more HUGE thank you to the communities of Little St. Lawrence

and St. Lawrence for being so welcoming and excited about our work, we truly did it for you and could not have done it without your support. Finally, many thanks to Karen Lundrigan of the Little St. Lawrence Service District and the St. Lawrence Historical Advisory Committee. We are also beyond grateful to the town of St. Lawrence and Amanda Reeves for the lab space provided.

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Summary of Archaeological Research Undertaken by Laurie Mclean, Archaeological Consultant, in 2024

Laurie Mclean
Consulting Archaeologist

Permit 24.04: Archaeological Assessment of North Penguin Island and the coastline around Musgrave Harbour.

The author was contacted late in 2023 by a former resident of Musgrave Harbour whose family has a deed to North Penguin Island which is a small, low elevation landmass lying nine kilometers north-east from the town. An archaeological crew consisting of the author, proponent Brad Mercer and Brad's niece and archaeology undergraduate student, Abi Moulard, spent July 13, 2024, conducting tests at the island. The remains of a lighthouse, which operated from 1890 until the 1950s and was razed by the coast guard in the 1980s were recorded as the North Penguin Island Lighthouse (DiAk-04) (lighthousefriends.com). The former facility's steel tower and the attached concrete foundation of the associated residence are extant. A small number of structural pieces are scattered over the surrounding surface and two large rectangular depressions located 44 and 32 meters away from the tower possibly represent outbuildings or domestic animal enclosures. These features were not tested, but two similar larger depressions lying 235 meters west of the lighthouse

were recorded as North Penguin Island-North (DiAk-05).

North Penguin Island-North (DiAk-05) is a new site encompassing three features with raised earthen perimeters that are visible on Google Earth. Feature 1 is an ovate 6.2 x 6.4 meter depression lying 3.4 meters north of Feature 2 which has a rectangular 16.9 x 14.8 x 16.7 x 14.1 shape (Plate 1). The latter's earthen wall is 35 centimeters high along the inside edge. Feature 2's west wall comprises Feature 3's east wall. Feature 3 has a rectangular 16 x 12.8 x 17.1 x 12.5 meter shape. Test pits dug inside the three depressions were sterile, but a metal detector search led to the discovery of a rosehead nail in a test pit dug in Feature 1's mounded perimeter. Five cut nails were found in five test pits dug in the walls of Feature 2 while two cut nails came from two pits placed in Feature 3's wall. A wire nail was also recovered from a third pit in the latter area. The large size of the two rectangular enclosures and the absence of cultural material inside all three of them suggest they do not represent former residences or other buildings. The assortment of nails in their walls may have come from the lighthouse operators piling driftwood

around pens used to contain domestic animals. This use of driftwood for fencing is ongoing along the nearby Newfoundland coastline. The archaeological crew observed driftwood containing nails and iron washers randomly distributed over North Penguin Island's surface, showing that this source of building material is still available.

Plate 1: Metal detector check of Feature 2, North Penguin Island-North (DiAk-05).





Plate 2: Portions of machinery for launching and landing a lifeboat at North Penguin Island-West (DiAk-06).

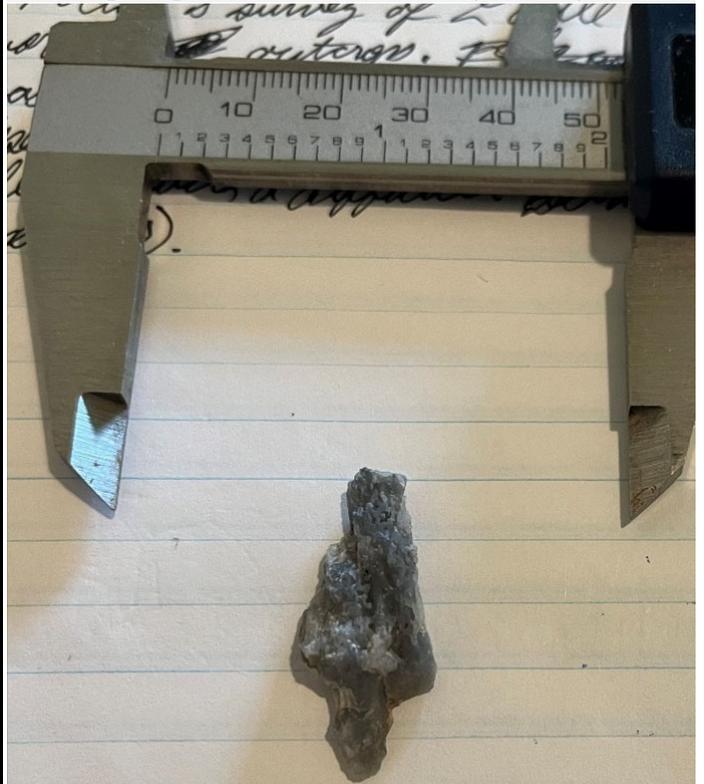
North Penguin Island-West (DiAk-06) is a new lighthouse-related site on the island’s northwest corner, 450 meters from the former light. The deteriorated remains of a wooden boat are present on the grass-covered surface next to a substantial grass-covered mound. The latter’s partly exposed profile shows a thick layer of sand over a boulder basement, but no cultural material, beneath the grass surface. Corroded sections of an iron boiler and part of a large winch lying on top of the nearby sandy beach were used by the lighthouse operators to land and launch a rescue boat, conceivably the observed rotting vessel (Plate 2). A 45 meter-long eroding bank at the juncture of the beach and meadow contains a 20 meter-long shell layer, but no artifacts were visible in the profile. The crew had insufficient time to comprehensively test this part of the island, so a return visit is justified.

The crew briefly re-visited the location of a Beothuk burial at Upper Saltwater Pond (DiAl-01) which is locally known as Kerrie’s Pond (Brad Mercer: personal comment). Beothuk skeletal remains and artifacts were found here by local residents in the 1950s (Site Record Form). There is a private collection of bone pendants from the site, but stone projectile points said to have been retrieved from an associated eroding bank have disappeared. Local history also recalls that early nineteenth-century European-Newfoundland settlers in this area saw Beothuk wigwams in the vicinity of the burial. Cultural material was not visible during the 2024 re-visit other than a

wrought iron nail found on the beach surface a few meters from the burial location. The nail was not collected. An extensive eroding bank that attains two meters in height for much of its length, at the back of the beach, was examined and cultural material was not seen.

The author checked Ladle Point where the body of a Beothuk female was found in a bark-lined pit in 1834 (Howley 2000:334). Cultural material was not visible on the surface in the vicinity of the burial’s given coordinates in 2024. A cluster of nine bones, along with a tenth outlier, lying inside a 15 x 3 meter pit 500 meters away from the burial coordinates were photographed, but were not collected. A new Rattler’s Bight complex occupation was recorded at Ladle Point-2 (DiAm-03), 235 meters west of the historically reported burial. Three discrete clusters of quartz fragments associated with quartz veins running through the bedrock were checked and found to contain artifacts. The artifact aggregations are contained within a 325 meter long section that extends up to 75 meters inland from the

Plate 3: Rattler’s Bight projectile point preform from Ladle Point (DiAm-03).



bedrock shoreline. Many of the quartz fragments possess striking platforms and retouch, but do not exhibit good conchoidal fracture due to the material's tendency to break along planes of natural cleavage (Keddy 2015:24, 79). Nonetheless, the presence of three bifaces, a biface fragment, a Rattlers Bight projectile point preform, and 64 other stone artifacts are attributable to people procuring quartz from the nearby veins and chipping the raw material at their source areas (Plate 3). The majority, $n = 40/58 \%$, of the collected artifacts retain cortex as might be expected at a quarry. The projectile point preform is also very similar to late-Beothuk asymmetric stone points (Schwarz 1984), but the associated presence of a stemmed biface and the raw material corroborate the Rattler's Bight affiliation. This conclusion endorses the identified importance of Hamilton Sound to Archaic period logistics and links Ladle Point to the

substantial Rattlers Bight Archaic occupation in Back Harbour, Twillingate, 58 kilometers away (Lacroix 2015:79).

The 24.04 crew also re-visited Rocky Point (DiAm-02) where an image of a European ship, flying two flags displaying saltires, or St. Andrew's cross, along with mooring lines and an anchor, amongst other details, are etched into a flat slab of bedrock (Plate 4). Saint Andrew's cross is featured on many flags, including the Union Jack since 1606. The diagonal cross is displayed on the flag of Scotland, the sixteenth century flag of Clascony, Saint Patrick's flag since 1783 and the Nova Scotian flag since 1858. The saltire is often used to unofficially represent Northern Ireland and is a prominent part of the American Confederate flag, in addition to being part of other national and private emblems (Wikipedia). A palimpsest of letters, suggesting initials, and various straight lines

Plate 4: Etched image in bedrock at Rocky Point (DiAm-02): arrows point to the two flags and one end of the ship.



are also carved into the rock, but do not show a date or other helpful information. Test pits were not dug in the vicinity of this feature and the surrounding surface is devoid of cultural material.

Permit 24.05

Archaeological Assessment of Proposed Hiking Trails on the Twillingate Islands

The author, in 2023, performed a desk top assessment of North and South Twillingate Islands' archaeological potential in preparation for the town's installation of a 52 kilometer-long hiking trail circumventing both landmasses. The desktop study listed 38 areas of interest which, along with other locations, were examined by the author under Permit 24.05 (PAO 2019; McLean 2024A:12). Much of the planned trail, which includes sections of already established paths, was evaluated through surface analysis and judgemental test pitting. A total of 37 new sites, including 28 European-Newfoundland components, along with 12 Pre-contact, one Pre-Inuit and one Beothuk were identified. The Beothuk find is a hearth, or hearth debris, containing fire-cracked rocks, fragments of burned fat and a piece of bifacially chipped bottle glass on top of the earthen wall of a housepit-like feature at Back Cove-2 (DjAq

-37). Wrought iron nail fragments found in the hearth deposit are attributable to a late Beothuk or post-Beothuk presence. Beothuk frequently contributed fire-cracked rocks and associated hearth materials to the earthen walls of their housepits. They built hearths on top of Housepit 1's wall and in the doorway of Housepit 3 after these structures were abandoned at Boyd's Cove (DiAp-03) (Pastore 1984:98, 105; 1985:323). Fire-cracked rocks that lay on top of a housepit berm at Indian Point (DeBd-01) present a similar context or hearth debris from the house floor (Devereux 1970:20). Beothuk hearths have also been identified within and underneath housepit walls at the Beaches (DeAk-01) (Deal and McLean 1995:5, 7) and

a Beaches complex hearth was found under Housepit 11's wall at Boyd's Cove (Pastore 1985:323). Randomly scattered fire-cracked rocks regularly occur within Beothuk housepits' earthen walls, often resulting from cleaning the structures' floors or the disturbance of existing fireplace remains by Beothuk housebuilders (Pastore 1984:105; McLean 1990A:10; 1991: Figure 10; 1994:11; 2006:3; 2014:33; 2018:27, 28; Schwarz and Hutchings 2018:42).

The identification of burned fat in a Beothuk hearth is consistent with this culture's heavy reliance on seals at coastal sites (Devereux 1969:np; Cumbaa 1984:11; Deal and McLean 1995:26; McLean 1991:12; 1994:18; Cridland 1998:270). Glass artifacts, excluding 1765 trade beads from five sites, have been recovered from four coastal occupations and five interior

ones (Pastore 1987:56; 2015:259; McLean 1990B; 1994:11, 48). There are eight Beothuk-modified glass fragments from Boyd's Cove (DiAp-03) and one from Inspector Island (DiAq-01). Five of the Boyd's Cove items and the Inspector Island specimen have knapped edges, which, in addition to a glass flake from Boyd's Cove, represent the Beothuk application of manufacturing/maintenance techniques from their lithic industry. One of the

knapped Boyd's Cove artifacts that also has a bifacially drilled hole is interpreted as a pendant preform (Plate 5). Another glass fragment with parallel striations suggests a second pendant preform. A case bottle fragment from Boyd's Cove has a retouched/utilized edge attributable to use as an expedient scraper.

The Beothuk activity of clearing an exhausted hearth from a house interior and dumping it on top of the structure's earthen walls could account for the absence of a central fireplace inside the Back Cove feature. Excavation of four test pits inside the latter's interior produced three wrought iron nail fragments, a tiny sherd of refined earthenware, two small,

Plate 5: Beothuk pendant preform, made from a glass bottle, from a Housepit at Boyd's Cove (DiAp-03).



burned fat portions and three quartz artifacts. The latter consist of a retouched/utilized near-crystalline flake, a cortical quartz crystal flake and an exhausted core of the same material. The author's review of Back Harbour assemblages at the Rooms revealed 59 quartz crystal artifacts from four sites and eight quartz cores from two of these four. Given this indicated popularity of quartz and crystal, it is not surprising to find evidence of its use at other Twillingate sites.

While the Back Cove feature's interior assemblage is a mixed deposit of indigenous and European-Newfoundland materials, the feature possesses Beothuk as well as Archaic structural attributes. Its 9 x 4 meters size is within the range of Beothuk structures as well as Archaic specimens from Nulliak Cove, Labrador. The Back Cove feature's incorporation of a bedrock outcrop within one of its raised walls, along with the use of natural elevation as another wall, are attributes that were noted among the Nulliak Cove structural remains (Hutchings 2011:43, 49, 60, 62, 68, 82). Several Beothuk housepits also incorporate undulating topography in their design and construction (LeBlanc 1973:102; Pastore 1984:104; McLean 1994:8; 2014:33, 42). The Nulliak Cove structural remains are very resilient, exhibiting use, re-use and sometimes extensive disturbance throughout eight chronological periods representing early Archaic, late Archaic and Pre-Dorset populations (Hutchings 2006:4, 33, 55, 73). The Back Cove feature's combined Archaic, Beothuk and possibly Newfoundland-settler characteristics manifests similar long-term durability. Back Cove's suggested Archaic attributes are interesting given that the large Archaic burial/settlement complex at Back Harbour, North Twillingate Island is only five kilometers away. Likewise, major Beothuk occupations have been documented at Boyd's Cove and Inspector Island, 19 and 21.25 kilometers from Back Cove.

A similar feature to the Back Cove example was identified at Little Harbour Bight (DjAq-59), three kilometers away on the opposite side of South Twillingate Island. The Little Harbour Bight specimen has an 11 meter-long rock wall which runs parallel to a stream. This berm articulates with a 3.5 meter-long wall, forming a corner. The short wall incorporates a bedrock outcrop into its otherwise mounded cobble constitution. This feature was built into a low

bank as was the Back Cove structure. Test pits dug inside the enclosure produced a cluster of rosehead nails and an unidentifiable iron object from the bottom of one unit and a single rosehead nail from the bottom of another pit. A mid-to late nineteenth century bottle fragment was found at higher elevation in Pit #1 and a similar complete bottle, along with a piece of corroded sheet iron protruding through the sod were, presumably, deposited after the iron artifacts lying at the bottom of the culture layer. It is tempting to speculate that the cluster of nails at the bottom of Pit # 1 was cached by Beothuk to be retrieved and modified later although more research is needed to determine this. Rosehead nails were the preferred source of iron for recycling among Beothuk in Notre Dame Bay and many unmodified examples have been found at Boyd's Cove (DiAp-03) and Inspector Island (DiAq-01), the large Beothuk sites that are located nearby (McLean 1989:128, 129). Modified and unmodified nails have been recorded at other Beothuk sites as well (McLean 1990B; 1994:13, 48; 2002:8, 15, 38; 2006:3).

Permit 24.18

Season Three of the Tracing Shanawdithit Archaeological Project

Shanawdithit was a Beothuk woman who lived in European-Newfoundland society from April 1823 until June 1829. She provided much information pertaining to the Beothuk while she stayed at William Cormack's house in St. John's for at least six weeks late in 1828 (Marshall 1996:185, 222). One of ten images she drew at that time was a map showing her 54 kilometer-long journey through the Badger Bay watershed to Badger Bay where she and her step-sister met European-Newfoundland furriers in April, 1823 (Ibid:209, 210). Shanawdithit's stepmother encountered furriers in the same part of Badger Bay two weeks earlier. Her map shows the locations of two inland camps which contained a total of seven wigwams and gives good indication where she met the furriers in eastern Badger Bay. The author directed archaeological surveys, in 2022 and 2023, of portions of Shanawdithit's depicted route and adjacent areas. This research recorded seven new sites, in addition to re-visiting 11 previously identified locations. The new sites include four Beothuk examples, none of which can be directly linked to Shanawdithit (McLean 2022; 2024B).



Plate 6: Biface fragment from the Lane site.

The 2024 season planned to continue this examination of Shanawdithit's trek by surveying part of Crooked Lake's northern bank which appears to be the location of three Beothuk wigwams inhabited by 19 people in the winter and spring of 1823. Shanawdithit, along with her stepmother, stepsister and possibly one male, departed from this camp in April 1823. Her uncle and cousin had left there six weeks earlier (Marshall 1996:208, 209). Preliminary visits by the 2024 archaeological team to Crooked Lake revealed that the proposed study area is covered with cottages, landscaped lots and a gravel road. A few confined pockets of forest between some of the properties may be undisturbed, but the area's archaeological potential is greatly reduced, and the survey plan was abandoned.

Two new sites, representing a re-settled community in Wellman's Cove (DjAw-28) and an associated cemetery (DjAw-29) were identified on the northern end of Sunday Cove Island in 2024. The Lane site (DiAw-25) is a new Pre-Inuit occupation that was recorded at a small cove on Pilley's Island's southwest corner where a residence is under construction. Workers found a biface, made on a jasper-like material, on the side of a private road in-

stalled from Route 381 to the construction area. The Tracing Shanawdithit crew was given permission to examine the site which has been mostly cleared of vegetation and topsoil. Ten sterile test pits were excavated, but 22 stone artifacts, including a biface fragment and the basally concave proximal section of a knife were recovered (Plate 6).

The crew re-visited the Price site (DjAx-09), on the southern end of Sunday Cove Island, where the owner/occupants of a property had found an apparent cache of large bifaces and flakes during landscaping some time ago (Plate 7). The artifacts, except for a knife made on quartz, are made on a distinctive stone, tentatively identified as a brecciated jasper that possibly originated from some 20 kilometers away in Harry's Harbour (Inside Newfoundland and Labrador Archaeology). The author measured the three complete bifaces and three fragments in 2024. The crew was also given permission to test the property. Artifacts were not found in the vicinity of the original find, but stone items occurred on the surface of a mechanically cleared path 50 meters to the west. A dense aggregation of flakes, made of the same stone used for most of the bifaces, was revealed through excavation of a 1 x 1 meter section 50 meters west of the cache location (Plate 8). The author's examination of Back Cove artifacts, from North Twillingate Island, at the Rooms revealed that one of the Anstey site's Rattler's Bight projectile points, DjAq-2: 1210, is also made from this material. Excavation of a 1 x 2 meter

Plate 7: Price site (DjAx-09) bifaces, A, B, D and a near-complete biface, C.

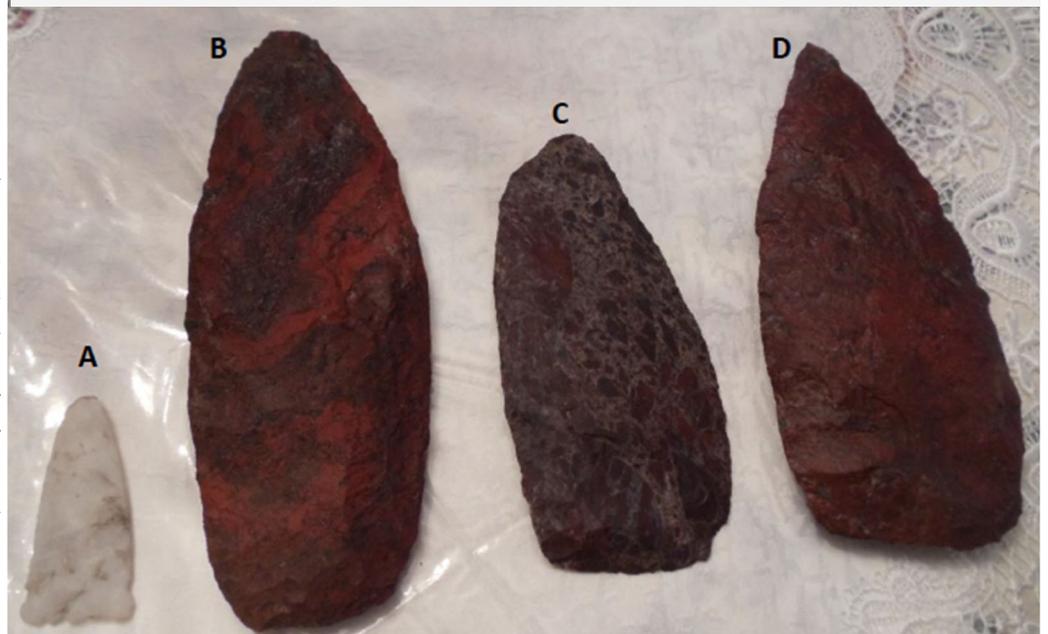




Plate 8: Overhead view of the Price site (DjAx-09).

A) Location of biface cache.

B) Location of 1 x 2 meter section dug in 2024.

C) Location of 1 x 1 meter unit dug in 2024.

section 20 meters south of the 1 x 1 unit shows a Pre-Inuit component, identified by a microblade fragment, over an Archaic level represented by a celt among other objects. The jasper material is not prominent in this trench, marking a significant variation between the two areas at the site.

The 24.18 crew also re-visited Brighton Tickle Island (DjAv-04), an Archaic/Pre-Inuit/Recent First Nation/European-Newfoundland site that was identified in 1987 (Penney 1988). This year’s assessment recorded a rock feature along with two stone artifacts found on the surface and 46 lithic items recovered from test pits. A brief re-visit to Badger Bay Bottom-

1 (DiAw-18) found seven flakes on the surface of the eroding bank beneath the former hearth. Badger Bay Bottom-2 (DiAw-19) was further examined in the hopes of finding a wigwam that is recorded on an 1820 map (Waller 1820). A Beothuk-modified rose-head nail was previously found at this site, but surface examination and test pitting in 2024 did not produce any evidence of this feature (McLean 2022:21, 22).

Finally, two small sets of privately collected stone artifacts were donated to the author this year with the understanding that they would be catalogued and delivered to the province. This process is ongoing.

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Historic Resources Inventory Report of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral Cemetery (CkAh-51), Water Street, Harbour Grace, NL

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Introduction

A long-forgotten cemetery was uncovered on the property of the former Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Harbour Grace. The discovery was made during a backhoe excavation for a service trench in front of the former cathedral. This magnificent structure is situated on the north side of the Harbour Grace shoreline, on the corner of Water Street and Carbonear Road. The cathedral, with its twin 160-foot-high spires, has towered over the shores of Harbour Grace since its construction in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In 2017, the former cathedral was sold to private developers who plan to convert the building into a pub, restaurant and associated facilities. The building required many updates, including its water and sewer capabilities. In November 2024, during the excavation of a trench in front of the building to accommodate the new sewer outfall, human remains were discovered at a depth of between 1.0m and 1.5m below the surface. That discovery was not realized until as many as ten interments were impacted to various degrees. At least two, possibly three of these interments contained two bodies. When these discoveries were realized, excavation was halted, and authorities (RCMP and Provincial Archaeology Office) were notified. There had been no indication from the Ro-



Figure 1: The former cathedral, looking north. The cemetery was discovered to the east (right) of the front doors.

man Catholic Archdiocese that there were graves in the area.

Brief Historical Overview

The former cathedral property is thought to have been used as a place of Catholic worship for a long time. Local lore holds that there were masses said in a building at this location since the late eighteenth century. There were four churches on this swath of land, the first one being a wooden chapel with a 30m (100 foot) high tower, built in 1809. This chapel, and its substantial tower, appears in several sketches and plans of Harbour Grace from 1815 to the 1840s. In the 1840s, the chapel was demolished to make way for a new stone church, the excavations for which began in 1844.

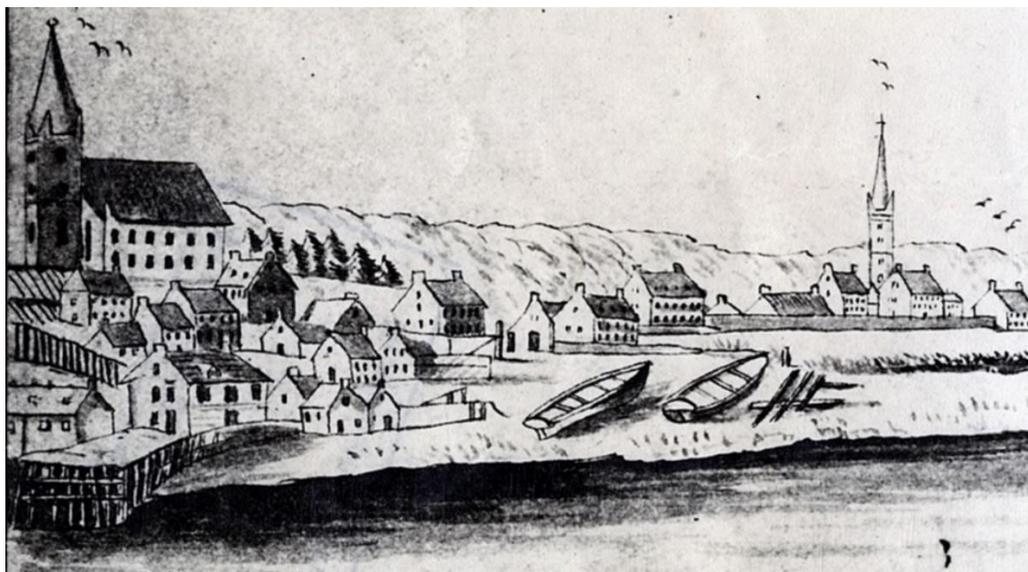


Figure 2: Detail from an 1815 sketch of the north side of Harbour Grace, east of the dockyard. Note the church tower on the right appears to be on the Roman Catholic property and could be the wooden chapel built circa 1809. Courtesy of Gerry Pocius. Source: The Rooms Archives C1-179.

tation on this property is there a mention of a cemetery of this size on site. Even the Catholic authorities were unaware of the cemetery when it sold the property to private developers. The same authorities knew there were two nuns buried at the south end of the property, near Water Street. Those two burials were removed prior to the sale of the property. This lack of awareness suggests this cemetery was in disuse, and possibly forgotten by the nineteenth century, perhaps even as early as 1809, when the

In 1853, the second church opened its doors. (Weekly Herald 1853) It was further noted in the Weekly Herald that this church was "...somewhat plain and unpretending in its external appearance...". This "plain" and "unpretending" church was later incorporated into a second masonry church, completed in 1884. Little is known about the construction of either of these churches, and there is no provenance for the reference of the 1853 church being incorporated into the later church. (Smallwood 1984: 815) The second masonry church was truly a magnificent structure, particularly for rural Newfoundland. However, its glory was short-lived for in early September 1889, a fire gutted the building. Reconstruction quickly began and by 1899, the current cathedral was opened (Archives Canada n.d.).

Nowhere in the available historic documen-

wooden chapel was constructed.

The first Catholic priest known to have served in Harbour Grace was Father Patrick Phalen (also known as Whelan) who arrived there in 1794. Father Phalen drowned in 1799 and was buried in the Catholic Graveyard on Bennett's Lane, some 600m

Figure 3: Undated drawing of the cathedral prior to the fire of 1889 published in Decks Awash. Courtesy of Blair Temple. Source: Memorial University DAI collection. <https://collections.mun.ca/digital/collection/decksphotos/id/3666/rec/11>



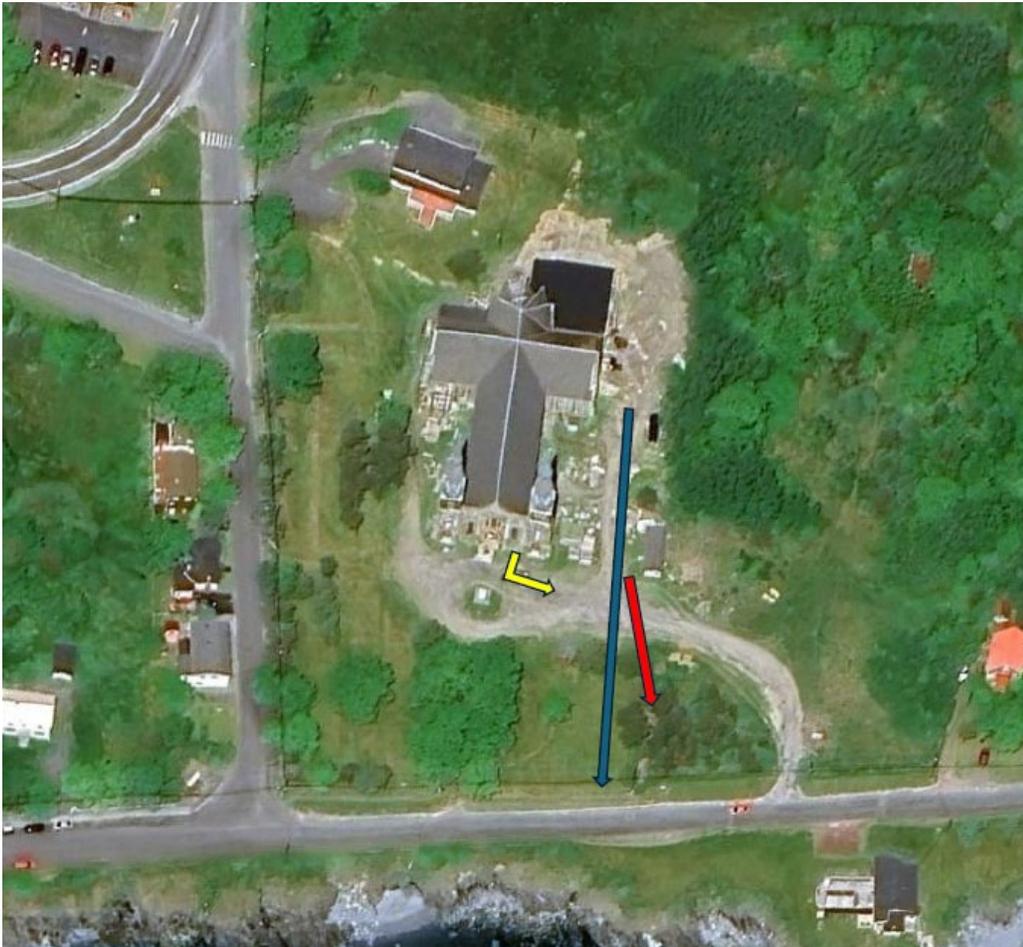


Figure 4: Aerial photograph of the former cathedral showing the general locations of Trench 1 (yellow), Trench 2 (red) & Trench 3 (blue).

west of the cathedral location. Why he was not buried in the cemetery on the cathedral property is unknown, but perhaps it had been “decommissioned” by 1799, or at least was not in use at that time.

The Discoveries

The archaeological mitigation project investigated three trenches on the property. The first trench, (Trench 1), an “L”-shaped excavation dug in front of the former church before the mitigation project began, was about 15m long by 2m wide by 2m deep. It was in this trench that the first burials were discovered. Eleven Feature numbers were assigned to the various groupings of human bones and/or partially intact burials in Trench 1. Two more trenches were dug along the east side of the property. Trench 2 was abandoned soon after it was realized that it was out of alignment to accept the sewer pipe. Trench 3 was a 30-m extension to an earlier trench dug parallel to, and 15m east of, the former cathedral. Three more

features were recorded in Trench 3: two additional graves, one of which was a double burial, and a 1m-long section of a masonry foundation, uncovered in the north section of this trench.

The human remains were collected in two ways. Where they were *in situ* in the trench walls, as many bones as possible were removed. Each grouping of bones was photographed *in situ*, assigned a unique Feature designation, and the location then plotted on scaled profile drawings. If removal of the bones would compromise the integrity of the trench wall, or if they were too embedded in the soil matrix, they were left *in situ*. Some bones were found at the bottom of the trench, likely displaced

during the backhoe excavation. These, too, were recovered; however, it was not possible to determine their provenience within the trench. The remainder of the bones were recovered from the screened soils from Trenches 1 and 3.

Where articulated human remains were visible in the trench walls, it was presumed they were individual interments. At least four features appear to be multiple burials. Features 1 and 2 were two adult crania found within 30cm of one another. They are believed to represent a single double burial. Feature 13, from Trench 3, was another collection of two crania; and likely also Feature 10, where an adult cerebral column was found lying just above a sub-adult cranium in Trench 1, suggesting perhaps this was the double burial of an adult and child.

In total, nearly 900 fragments of human bone were retrieved, representing up to 20 individuals (Pers.Com. Dr. Janna Andronowski). The burials

themselves and the overlying organic soil deposits in Trenches 1 and 3, were capped by the masonry and lime mortar deposits (Event 2) believed to have been associated with the cathedral construction in the mid-nineteenth century.

Three other features, unrelated to the burials, were recorded during this project. Prior to the archaeological monitoring, excavations in the basement of the former cathedral exposed two wooden beams (Features 12 and 16), buried in the soils. Feature 12 was about 4m long and 10” x 12” in thickness. It had been set into the footing of the structure . A wrought iron brace was bolted to one end of this feature. Feature 16 may once have been a similar size to Feature 12, however, due to its deteriorated condition, it was difficult to confirm. The function of these beams, one of which was still *in situ* when the archaeological monitoring began, is unknown. It is possible they may have been associated with one of the earlier churches built on the property.

Feature 15 was a 50 cm high masonry foundation uncovered in the west wall of Trench 3, some 14m east of the former cathedral, roughly in alignment with the door leading to the church basement . This foundation was 5 courses in height and bonded together with lime mortar. Its function is currently unknown. Domestic ceramics, including English



Figure 5: Feature 12
wooden beam in the former cathedral basement.

White Salt Glazed stoneware, creamware and pearlware plate sherds found in a buried organic deposit, at the same depth and within a couple of metres of this feature, suggest it could be from the late eighteenth century.

Dating the graves

As there was no information available on this cemetery, other methods were used to estimate its age. Historic documents and local lore indicated that the property was used by the Harbour Grace Catholics for religious purposes since the 1790s at least, and certainly by 1809 when the first chapel was built on the property. Stratigraphic data provided a relative age for the graves, that being before construc-



Figure 6: Masonry
Feature 15 in Trench 3.



Figure 7: Creamware plate sherds found in association with Feature 15.

ments, resulting in the reasonable preservation of the human bones. Event 2 covered Event 3, a 25-75cm-thick deposit of organic soils mixed with stones of various sizes. This stratum has been interpreted as the ground surface prior to the 1840s. Most of the cultural material is believed to have originated from this deposit and, importantly, this was also the ground level into which the graves were dug. The recognizable grave

tion of the former cathedral. Finally, artifact dating was used to provide as precise a date range as possible for the graves.

Regarding the stratigraphic evidence, we know that excavations for the foundation of the first masonry church began in the 1840s. Evidently, the stone masons working on the church produced a considerable amount of masonry debris as the raw blocks of stone were formed into building material. This activity produced a 25 to 40cm-thick stratum of shattered stone and deteriorated lime mortar near the building, that can effectively be dated to the 1840s. That stratum, labelled Event 2, was evident in all three trenches observed during this project.

As useful as Event 2 was in providing a relative date of the graves, i.e. prior to the 1840s, its soil matrix served another, very important purpose on site. The lime mortar in this deposit likely helped neutralize the acids in the underlying soil matrices within the human inter-

shafts were first detected within this deposit.

The most reliable dating tool for this project was the ceramics recovered from Event 3, and from the screened soils from Trenches 1 and 3. Although most of the artifacts were found in the screens, and not found *in situ*, they are believed to have originated from Event 3, the buried cultural deposit beneath the construction debris stratum (Event 2). No domestic-

Figure 8: Detail of the Trench 1, north wall profile. Event 2 is the white-grey construction-related deposit, bracketed by red bars and clearly visible beneath the driveway gravel deposit.





Figure 9: Representative sample of late-18th-century and early-19th-century English ceramics.
 Top row: transfer decorated pearlware;
 center row: English White Salt Glazed stoneware; bottom row: creamware.



Figure 10: Selection of 18th-century ceramics.
 Top row: Normandy stoneware, English White Salt-glazed stoneware, Portuguese tin-glazed earthenware, coarse earthenware. Bottom row: Westerwald stoneware, Buckleyware.

or leisure-related artifacts were noted in Event 2. The diagnostic ceramic from Trenches 1 and 3 are all wares that were available in Newfoundland in the mid to late-eighteenth century, namely creamware, pearlware, tin-glazed earthenware, English White Salt Glazed stoneware, Buckleyware, English Brown, Normandy and even Westerwald stoneware. What is missing from the trenches are the refined earthenwares and ironstone ceramics that became popular after the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Glass artifacts were limited to a single wine glass stem (from Event 5), sherds of dark green alcohol bottle glass, a rimsherd from a clear glass container and several pieces of windowpane. Several tobacco pipe fragments were also found, as were at least two animal bones, one of which appears to be a pig tibia.

There were a few artifacts that appear to be directly associated with the coffins and the people

buried in them. A collection of coffin hardware was recovered, namely wrought nails, ranging in length from 2" to 5", a screw and two ferrous coffin handles. Further evidence that at least some of the bodies were interred in coffins was the recording of 1-2cm thick organic fibrous lenses found above some of the skeletons. These lenses are believed to be the remains of wooden coffin lids.

Several personal items were found: a pewter button, two bone buttons and a partial heel tap. As these artifacts were found in the screens, it is difficult to say with any certainty whether they were associated with the burials, although it is entirely likely they were attached to the clothing and footwear of the deceased.

Most of the artifacts collected from the trenches were related to domestic and leisure activities, such as eating, drinking alcohol and smoking

Figure 11: Coffin handle. (Photograph by Donna Teasdale).



Figure 12: Heel tap. (Photograph by Donna Teasdale).



suggesting that, prior to the religious function of this property, domestic structures were located on site during the eighteenth century.

Discussion

Taken together, the historic record, archaeological stratigraphy and the ceramic evidence all suggest these graves date before construction of the first chapel on site in 1809. It is possible that some of them pre-date the 1790s, when the first Catholic priest, Father Patrick Phelan, arrived in Harbour Grace (Heritage NF), or possibly even earlier. Several of the ceramic types, notably the English White Salt Glazed and Westerwald stonewares, tin glazed earthenware and the Buckleyware are most often found on sites in Newfoundland dating to the second and third quarters of the eighteenth century or earlier.

If these graves are indeed that old, it is easier to understand why they are not referenced in historical documents related to the Catholic presence on the property. It could also explain why this cemetery is not identified in the depictions of the various

churches onsite, beginning in 1815. That the interments from Trench 1, and possibly also Trench 3, were covered by the construction-related deposits from the masonry churches, beginning in the 1840s, also suggests their location had been long forgotten by that time. Again, it is important to note that there was no record of this cemetery to be found in the records of the Roman Catholic Archdioceses.

The inadvertent discovery of a cemetery on the property of the former Cathedral of Immaculate Conception in Harbour Grace came as a surprise to all involved with the building transformation project. Local tradition holds that there was a Catholic place of worship on this property since the early nineteenth century, and possibly even earlier. That this cemetery is located on the Roman Catholic property suggests those interred within were Roman Catholics; however, the dating evidence from the deposits covering the

graves suggest the graves could pre-date the Catholic presence in Harbour Grace.

There is another Catholic cemetery in Harbour Grace, on Bennetts Lane, about 600m west of the former cathedral. This cemetery, reported to be in use by at least 1802, if not earlier, was thought to be the oldest Catholic cemetery in town. When Father Patrick Phelan (sometimes spelled Whelan) drowned in 1799, his body was interred in the Bennett's Lane cemetery (Smallwood 1984: 815). Surely, the first Catholic priest to serve in Harbour Grace would have been buried in the cemetery on the former cathedral property, if it was active at that time.

Prior to the establishment of religious orders in Newfoundland, residents buried their dead in communal cemeteries, usually located within their communities. Often, these cemeteries were located on elevated ground, overlooking the sea and the commu-

nity (Pocius 1986). Although possible, it is unlikely there would be two Catholic cemeteries in use at the same time, within 600m of another, in Harbour Grace.

Therefore, it is believed the cemetery on the former cathedral property may have been out of use by 1799. The artifacts support this interpretation.

Whether this cemetery was replaced by the Bennett's Lane cemetery, or was contemporaneous to it, is not in question here, but certainly by the 1840s, when excavations began on the property for the first masonry church, this cemetery was no longer in use and possibly forgotten. The ground, in which the graves were dug, was covered by masonry debris and lime mortar, byproducts from shaping and laying the building stones for the churches.

One thing that is for certain, the graves uncovered in Trench 1 were closely packed together. As many as 17 individuals were buried within an area measuring about 7m (~23 feet) long, east to west, by 3-4m (9-13 feet) north to south with another three individuals buried about 15m to the east. From the position of the skeletal remains it appears that most,



Figure 13: Buttons from Trench 1.
Left: pewter; center and right: bone buttons.

if not all, of the bodies were laid to rest with their feet pointing east, a common Christian practice. None of the graves were deeper than 1m (~3 feet) below the mid-nineteenth-century surface and some were as shallow as 50cm (~20 inches) below the historic surface. Furthermore, the discovery of two additional interments (containing three individuals) about 15m (~50 feet) to the east of the others could mean three things: the cemetery extends that far to

possible to determine the south-to-north dimensions of the cemetery. The top of many of the burials is less than 1m below the surface, putting them in harm's way from even shallow ground disturbances.

All the human remains were cleaned and photographed before being brought to the Memorial University Archaeology Department, as per instruction from the Provincial Archaeology Office. They

Figure 14: View of the cathedral, dated sometime between 1871-1889. In front of the church, at right, (inside red box) are several features that appear to be headstones. Courtesy of Blair Temple. Source: The Rooms Archives, VA69-12.1.



the east; those three individuals were buried outside the cemetery boundaries; or there's a second cemetery located on the property. Only further research can answer that question.

Importantly, and somewhat tragically, the memory of this cemetery was obviously lost over time as the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Harbour Grace did not know the cemetery was in front of (south of) the entrance of the cathedral. The graves are located just a few metres southeast of the former cathedral's front door. The distance between the most easterly graves in Trench 1 and those recorded in Trench 3 is about 20m (just over 65 feet) in length; however, without additional investigations, it is not

were later transferred to the Medical Examiner's Office in the Health Sciences Centre in St. John's NL where they will undergo analysis by a team led by Dr. Janna Andronowski, Forensic Anthropologist. The artifacts were photographed and catalogued and will be curated in the archaeological collection at the Rooms, also in St. John's, NL.

Finally, there is one enigmatic photograph of the first cathedral, taken before it burned in 1889, that appears to show headstones in roughly the position of where two graves were uncovered in Trench 3. This photograph is the only document uncovered during this project that may show grave markers on the property. What is most curious about this image is that, if the grave markers were still standing in the

1880s, why was the memory of them lost in time? Furthermore, why do those tombstones from the photograph, not show up on any other plans or photographs of the site? Whether those are tombstones, or possibly gate posts or some other landscape feature, only further historical research can help solve this puzzle.

Acknowledgements

Several people helped with this project. Thanks to Dr. Jamie Brake and the staff of the Provincial Archaeology Office, in particular, Blair Temple for kindly sharing historic images and information on the former cathedral property. Thanks also to Dr. Janna Andronowski, of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, for taking the collection of human remains for analysis. The staff of the Center for Newfoundland Studies and the Rooms Provincial Archives were very helpful in providing archival assistance. Donna Teasdale provided conservation assistance and photographed several of the artifacts. Dr. Gerry Pocius shared his knowledge of Newfoundland cemeteries. I am always grateful to Edwina Mills for her editing skills. Finally, a huge shout out to the field crew of Elsa Simms, Zoe Helleiner, Zhe Min (Chermaine) Liew and Euan Wallace for withstanding several days

of screening backdirt in particularly nasty weather! Elsa also processed the artifacts and collection of human remains. Thank you all!

Postscript

This investigation of the forgotten cemetery in Harbour Grace provides an important lesson. In the past few years, numerous churches have been deconsecrated and sold, or are for sale, in Newfoundland and elsewhere in Canada. This project should serve as a notice that if any of those former church properties are scheduled for redevelopment, care should be taken beforehand, to ensure there are no cemeteries, or even individual graves on the properties that could be impacted by development. Historical research into those properties is advised and invasive or non-invasive archaeological surveys should precede any ground disturbances. This will ensure the protection of any human graves on the former religious properties.

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Archaeology Excavations at Fox Island 1 (DcAh-01)

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Excavating at Area D; Looking northeast towards Champney's West and English Harbour.

Introuction and Background

The location of this fieldwork is Fox Island (DcAh-01) in Champney's West, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. This location is part of a historically rich area known as Trinity Bight that also includes the town of Trinity. Fox Island is not an actual island but is attached to the mainland by a narrow tombolo from which it is accessed by a steep, rocky path. The remaining perimeter of the island consists of nearly vertical cliffs facing the sea. Fox Island, at its lowest, is approximately 30 metres above sea level. Preliminary archival and archaeological evidence suggests that civilian fortifications may have existed on Fox Island during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Fieldwork on Fox Island

was conducted as part of my MA research for the Department of Archaeology at MUN. The 2021 excavation focused on: 1) determining the nature and extent of civilian defences during the period of Queen Anne's War (1702 - 1713); and 2) determining the duration and nature of occupation, as archival records suggest that Fox Island continued to be occupied for domestic purposes into the 18th century.

Primary documentation suggests that a civilian fortification was built on Fox Island. On March 29, 1705, inhabitants of Carbonear sent a letter to John Moody, Commander in Chief of Her Majesty's Independent Company of Foot, that the French met in Heart's Content and sent 40 men to take Fox Island on the north side of Trinity Bay (Pynn & Davis

1705). In 1711 Captain Crowe, Commander in Chief of Her Majesty's Ships, Forts and Garrisons in Newfoundland, drafted a document (referred to as "Captain Crowe's Law") stating that by October 1st of each year, the inhabitants of Trinity Bay should move to either Dildo Island or Foxes Island for security for themselves and their effects against the enemy.

Other reports that provide relevant information for this site are:

1. Final Report – Champney's West Desktop Assessment prepared by Roy Skanes, dated May 10, 2018
2. Bush Clearing Project "The Porch" Fox Island 1 (DcAh-01) prepared by Roy Skanes dated June 6, 2018
3. The Trinity Bight Archaeology Project Interim Report prepared by Roy Skanes and Ken Reynolds dated May 1996.

Artifacts uncovered during previous fieldwork (including clay tobacco pipes, ceramics, and glass) were dated to the early to mid-eighteenth century (Skanes 2018:47). RTK satellite technology, used to map Fox Island in 2018, provided outlines of twenty-six potential features which have been preliminarily interpreted as a ditch and parapet wall, gun emplacements or lookouts and dwellings (Skanes 2019:240). This RTK imaging was used to identify areas where test pits were to be located during the 2021 fieldwork. A copy of this imaging is found on page 240 of the Provincial Archaeology Office 2018 Archeology review.

Research Plans and Methodology

This fieldwork was carried out on Fox Island in August 2021. Thirty-two (32) 50cm x 50cm test pits were excavated and soil sifted through a ¼ inch mesh screen. One test trench, running perpendicular to the presumed ditch and parapet feature was also excavated and mapped. A small field crew, consisting of me, Robynn Hoskins, Georgia Bouloukavis and Steven Bradbury were on site for two weeks. The Institute of Social and Economic Research and the Provincial Archaeology Office provided funding.

Findings

A variety of artifacts were uncovered during the survey including clay tobacco pipes, flint, lead ammunition,



Figure 1: Pipe bowl with heel spur; DcAh-01:51.

tion, ceramics, glass, and leather. All are briefly described below.

Pipe fragments

Many pipe stem fragments were found, with bore diameters ranging from 5 to 8mm. Some pipe bowl fragments were also found. Two of the pipe bowl fragments can be tentatively dated to the early to mid eighteenth century owing to the size, shape and angle of the bowl or the shape of the heel/spur (Oswald 1975).

Flint

Pieces of flint were found at various locations on the site. These pieces of flint showed no evidence of knapping. Although flint was commonly used as ballast in the ships that came to Newfoundland, its discovery on Fox Island likely indicates a decision to bring it up there from the beach, likely for the local manufacture of gunflints and/or tinderflints.

Shot and musket balls

Assorted sizes of lead ammunition were found. Seventeen pieces of shot ranged from 4.1 mm to 7.5 mm in diameter; eight musket balls ranged from 8.1 mm to 15.8 mm in diameter.

Ceramic

Many sherds of ceramic (both earthenware and stoneware) were found at various locations on site. The variety of ceramic indicates both a significant period of occupation and a variety of uses related to storage as well as food and beverage consumption. For example, there were pieces of earthenware storage vessels as well as a Westerwald mug fragment and Staffordshire slipware. The Staffordshire slipware shard is quite small but appears to have been glazed on both



Figure 2: Neck and shoulder of wine bottle excavated in Area L; DcAh-01:162.

sides, thus suggesting that it was a cup or similar holloware vessel used for food or beverage service.

Glass

Three (3) small pieces of what appears to be window glass were found. The neck and shoulder of a dark green glass wine bottle, dated to the eighteenth century was uncovered. This was found in the same test pit as the leather sole discussed below.

Leather

A leather shoe sole was uncovered in what Roy Skanes (2019) indicated may be the location of a cellar. The leather sole is quite small and appears to be from a lady's shoe. The sole is in two parts due to breakage on extraction. The shape of this sole, with its rounded toe, waist location and apparent manufacture for a right foot suggests that this shoe is from the 18th century (Goubitz. 2007, p.73 – 82).

Other

A pig's tooth, excavated from test pit #18 in Area B, provides limited evidence for the diet of the occupants of Fox Island during the 18th century, possibly in the form of salted pork or fresh meat.

Features

In addition to the artifacts, there was much information to be gleaned from various features discovered in test pits. For example, Area S was likely a vegetable garden due to the depth and richness of the soil. We anticipated that only shallow test pits would be required on Fox Island as it was assumed that cultural deposits would be thin and thus bedrock or sterile soils found not far below the surface. However, a test pit in Area S was excavated to a depth of 80 cm and the soil was of good quality with few rock inclu-

Figure 3: Leather shoe sole excavated in Area L; DcAh-01:159.





Figure 4: Flat rocks in Area E test pit - potential collapsed wall or step/platform.

sions. Likewise, what appeared to be a post hole, or staining of some sort, was found in a test pit in Area X. A large flat rock was found under the potential post hole. A test pit in Area E contained flat rocks, either the remains of a collapsed wall or step/platform. This was just inside what has been previously identified as a parapet.

As mentioned earlier, a trench was excavated perpendicular to the feature that has been suggested to be a parapet. We excavated the parapet just to the left of the top of the path used to access the island. This one metre trench was excavated

in two sections (north and south) so a profile of the mid section of the parapet could be examined. The final size of the trench was 1 metre by 2.5 metres, with a depth ranging from 15 centimetres to 60 centimetres. Profiles show a three-layer stratigraphy (excluding the sod layer). There were few rocks so it appears that most of the parapet would have been constructed from soil over bedrock. Several artifacts were associated with this feature, including a beer bottle from the 1980's, a piece of lead shot, a burnt pipe stem, iron nails, flint, and the folded edge of a can fragment. The excavation of this trench in the parapet also hoped to identify if a wooden palisade existed on top of the wall. However, neither post molds nor post holes were found, suggesting the raised earthen parapet wall was the primary defensive feature around parts of the island.

Two features, in addition to the parapet, were of interest. Area B was tentatively identified by Skanes (2019) as a guard house, likely because of its small size and its location near the top of the path used to access the island. However, the number and nature of the artifacts uncovered at this location suggests a significant midden deposit which may or may not be associated with the "guard house". It contained the highest concentration of artifacts (64 items) including: pipe stem and bowl fragments, a copper button (with insufficient detail for dating),

Figure 5: Stratigraphy of East Wall of Trench 1 - Parapet.



musket balls, lead shot, wrought iron nails and coarse earthenware. These artifacts are consistent with those found at other features throughout the site.

Areas G and F were potentially identified by Skanes (2019) as being defense related. The site of the test pit in Area G was based on the location of a surface rock that could potentially belong to a wall. Many rocks were found in this test pit. I thought it may be due to erosion from the nearby hill. However, the test pit located in Area F which was approximately the same distance from the hill had no large rocks. No artifacts were found in either of these test pits.

Along with what was found, it is interesting as to what was not found. We were excited to excavate Area Y in the northwest of the site as the furrows in the ground suggested that cannons (or some other structure) would have once existed there. Roy Skanes (2019) suggested that the feature was “likely a defense-related structure, possible gun emplacement and/ or lookout”. No artifacts were found.

Conclusions and Recommendations for future work

The artifacts uncovered during this excavation are consistent with those found in earlier limited excavations and support a date of the early to mid eighteenth century.

The presence of ceramics for food storage as well as food and beverage consumption hint at a significant occupation, and a significant logistical investment (in time and effort) on the part of those residing there to transport these goods to Fox Island. If this were merely a short-lived civilian battery, such a diversity of ceramics would not necessarily be expected. The variety of lead shot of assorted sizes suggest that those on Fox Island were also hunting small game/ sea birds. On a related note, the presence of flint flakes and nodules demonstrate that occupants

brought flint to Fox Island to manufacture items such as gunflints and tinderflints, although the limited testing has not yet revealed evidence for these artifact types.

Based on the preliminary results of the 2021 survey, our findings support the occupation of this site after the civilian fortification. As noted above, the existence of a variety of ceramic, as well as window glass and the sole of a lady’s shoe suggest a longer-term domestic occupation. The lack of development of this site during the twentieth century could provide an interesting lens into the life of early non-merchant inhabitants of the Trinity Bight Area, as juxtaposed against the merchant class emphasized in the story of Trinity. It is an interesting question, however, as to why this location with its very difficult access would have been used for domestic occupation when other locations in the area would have been much better suited.

Unfortunately, the excavation uncovered nothing to confirm a civilian fortification on this site. Along with the test pits, we excavated one trench along the presumed parapet, but further excavations should be carried out on that feature. The excavation of the parapet does demonstrate that this was a man-made feature constructed of mounded earth and placed along the outer edge of parts of Fox Island. I would also suggest further excavations or test pitting above “The Porch.” This area is even less accessible than “The Porch” and may have been key to the defense of the area. As well, it would have been less habitable and any feature or artifact discovered here, unless clearly associated with domestic use, would likely have been used for defense purposes.

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PAO Report 2024

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This past field season saw my undertaking of two rounds of doctoral fieldwork in central Newfoundland within the former Millertown Logging District of the AND Co, roughly 50km south of Millertown via the still active logging road system. This portion of my fieldwork sought to relocate historic logging camps operated by the Anglo Newfoundland Development Company during the 1930s.

Two separate trips to central Newfoundland from St. John's were made, the first in May and the following in late June. The first was organized in conjunction with members of the College of the North Atlantic's (CNA) Office of Applied Research & Innovation. The CNA team provided access to two field crew members, affordable drone use, and the capture of hand-held LiDAR data on two of the camp locations. This first field foray was exploratory as I prepared for archaeological and ecological surveys in dense boreal terrain utilizing aerial photos, historic

maps, and archival materials without having traveled to the project area ahead of time. Using a blueprint of 'Insured Woods Properties' produced for the AND Co. from 1939, I was able to stretch and overlay the relevant locations to fit the present landscape and angle of the satellite imagery. Existent waterways and historic aerial photos were used to adjust any inconsistencies. The resulting map provided an opportunity ahead of time to plan my crew's movements through an active and tumultuous landscape.

During this first trip, three days were spent bushwhacking through portions of the Millertown District. Two historic logging camps were relocated and comprise the Tally Brook Depot and a smaller logging camp, both circa 1930-1939. The Tally Brook Depot is the furthest site location from Millertown and access required testing the limits of a rental truck and then several kilometers of bushwhacking along historic logging roads that are well past their prime. The logging camp infrastructure within the division

functioned as a sort of hub and spoke system with Depot camps acting as territorial hubs in the deep woods. These depot camps were larger than the standard camps occupied seasonally by loggers and would function as a supply headquarters for the surrounding camps. Luckily, navigating the current terrain comes easier with the use of the extant logging roads that remain scattered about the project area.

Both the Tally Brook Depot and the smaller logging camp contained surface scatters of diagnostic artifacts including, bedframes, cooking utensils, food packaging,

Half-buried boot from the Tally Brook Depot Camp site.





Architectural remains of a logging cabin from the West Fork site, retrofitted post-logging use a private hunting cabin.

logging-related tools, and architecture, etc. These artifacts, the patterns of landscape clearance evident on site at each location, and the use of the historic 1939 map, confirmed these two locations as historic logging camp sites and each was recorded as an archaeological site. Each site was also scanned with the aforementioned hand-held LiDAR device, creating an interactive, 3-D point-cloud of each site location. Additional locations from across the district were checked during this first trip though traces of historic logging activity have been obscured by more contemporary logging activity in the following decades.

A second fieldwork trip was undertaken with Euan Wallace and Natasha Jones serving as premium field assistants with their excellent knowledge of local flora, good times, and exquisite cuisine once the field days were complete. This second trip located two additional historic logging camps while confirming the

additional obliteration of historic logging sites by more modern timber extraction efforts. In total, two fieldwork trips to the Millertown Logging Division afforded the opportunity to relocate and record four historic logging camps that operated roughly between 1930 and 1940. These sites showcase diagnostic artifacts, both material and landscape-based of Newfoundland's historic logging industry on a landscape still very much amid active resource extraction and provide a snapshot of the priorities engaged by the industry of the time. The landscape I observed while immersed in this contemporary / historic industrial landscape has been altered by the Anglo Newfoundland Development Co. and subsequent operators to impart levers of efficiency. These levers are evident in the form of the extensive logging road network, riverine alterations and dams, and tramway grade; all of which remain visible within the project area.



Pair of 1930s-40s bucksaw blades from the historic AND Co. Tally Brook Depot Camp site. AND Co. Millertown Division.

In-situ stack of enamelled plates from West Fork site, a 1930s - 1940s logging camp in the AND Co.'s Millertown Division.



Multibeam Sonar Survey of the SS *Empire Activity* Shipwreck off Newfoundland's Northeast Coast

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Introduction

In 2024, members of the Shipwreck Preservation Society of Newfoundland & Labrador (SPSNL) conducted multibeam sonar surveys of three sunken shipwrecks during transit of a survey research vessel from Holyrood to Hudson Bay. This report will summarize the findings of a multibeam sonar survey of the wreck of SS *Empire Activity* (Fig. 1), a British cargo steamship which sank on 3 October 1943 approximately 9 km northeast of Musgrave Harbour, NL.

Background on Ship and Its Loss

SS *Empire Activity* (official no. 1140659) was built as SS *Belgian* in 1919 in Wallsend, England by Swan, Hunter and Wigham Richardson Ltd. (Lloyd's Register 1943a). It was a coal-fired steamship 122 m in length of 5329 gross registered tons. In 1934, the ship was bought by a company based in Naples, Italy and renamed SS *Amelia Lauro*. In June 1940, the Italian ship was seized as an enemy vessel by the British government in an English port. The British Ministry of

War Transport renamed the ship SS *Empire Activity* (Wrecksite 2025). On 12 September 1943, *Empire Activity* left Milford Haven, Wales and joined westbound convoy ONS.18, arriving in Botwood, NL on 27 September 1943 (Convoy Web 2025). On 3 October 1943, the steamship departed Botwood bound for Britain with a cargo of zinc concentrate. Later that day, *Empire Activity* ran aground on Peckford Reef (south of Peckford Island lighthouse), was holed, filled with seawater, slid off the reef, and sank close by (Lloyd's Register 1943b, Mitchell and Sawyer 1990) before it could join an eastbound convoy.

Multibeam Survey of SS *Empire Activity* at Peckford Reef northeast of Musgrave Harbour.

In late July 2024, staff from the Marine Institute were part a scientific cruise onboard the MV *Lady Pudluk* to conduct seabed mapping and fisheries research in Hudson Bay. Kirk Regular of the Marine Institute was to carry out seabed mapping during the transit from Holyrood. During the cruise, MV *Lady Pudluk* had to make an unexpected stop at Seldom, Fogo Island, which put the vessel

on course to survey the reported location of the SS *Empire Activity*. *Lady Pudluk* conducted a multibeam survey over the remains of a shipwreck found near the wreck symbol plotted on CHS nautical chart 4530, about two kilometres south of the Peckford Island lighthouse (Fig. 2). The vessel turned back to survey six more lines over the shipwreck to acquire more

Figure 1: Historic photograph of the SS *Empire Activity*.

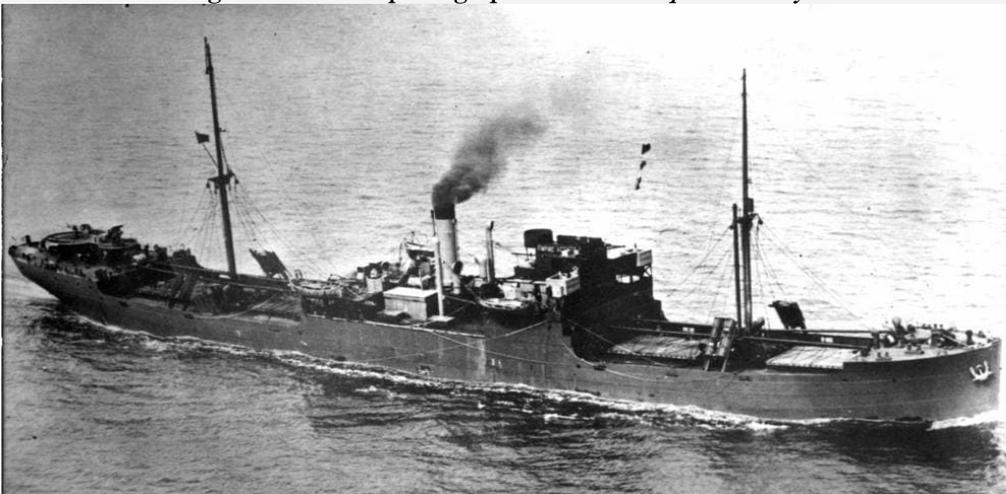




Figure 2: Map showing location of shipwreck *SS Empire Activity* surveyed with multibeam sonar on voyage to Seldom, Fogo Island.

has been visited by divers in the past, but this may be mitigated by the remote access requiring a support vessel.

Project Outcomes

Through this project, SPSNL has met its goals of locating, documenting, and promoting public awareness of a historically significant shipwrecks in the province. Outcomes include:

1. conducting historical research on the sinking of *SS Empire Activity* in 1943,
2. searching, locating, and collecting multibeam sonar images of the *SS Empire Activity* by the Marine Institute,

3. submitting an archeological site record and this report to the NL Provincial Archaeology Office.

Next Steps

There are several activities which SPSNL is planning:

1. further historical research on this shipwreck and others,
2. possible diver, ROV, or sidescan sonar surveys of this shipwreck in the future,
3. partnering with the Marine Institute to conduct further exploration and surveys of historical shipwrecks, and
4. continuing our public education activities on our website and social media channels,

Acknowledgements

SPSNL thanks the Centre for Applied Ocean Technology at the Fisheries and Marine Institute, Memorial University of Newfoundland for their continued support in documenting our province's nautical heritage. We also acknowledge the support of Qikiqtaaluk Corporation and the crew of MV *Ludy Pudluk* for their assistance with this work. This shipwreck survey was carried out under an archaeological investigation permit from the NL Provincial Archaeology Office.

soundings of the site, creating a higher resolution sonar image of the wreck (Fig. 3). The current wreckage is approximately 131 m in length, shallowest at 14.5 m, deepest at 23 m, and stands at most 5.5 m off the seafloor.

Interpretation and Discussion

The length of the shipwreck (131 m) corresponds roughly to the actual length of *SS Empire Activity* (122 m) (Lloyd's Register 1943a). The longer length of the shipwreck may be the result of the collapse of the bow and/or stern onto the seabed.

The multibeam image of the *SS Empire Activity* (Fig. 3) provides a general indication of the condition and shape of the vessel as it currently sits on the seabed, indicating how much it has deteriorated over the past 81 years. The vessel appears to be lying with the bow to the south and stern to the north. The vessel may have broken down on its starboard side. The bridge superstructure and stern gun are visible in the multibeam image. The shipwreck lies at a depth that likely exposes it to wave action during storm events.

Potential Risks to the Site

The depth of the shipwreck puts it within reach of recreational scuba divers, so looting of the wreck may be a risk. With the location of this wreck plotted quite accurately on a CHS nautical chart, it is likely that it

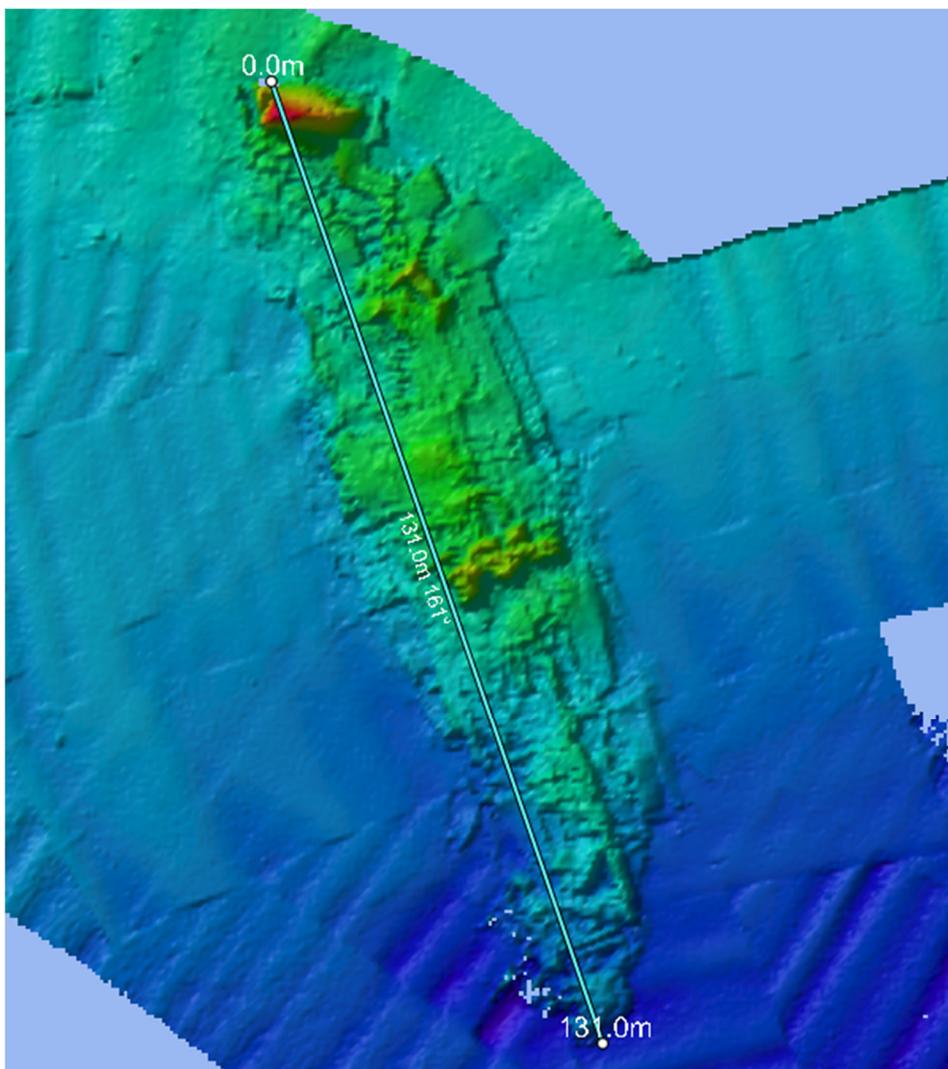


Figure 3: Multibeam echosounder image of the shipwreck SS *Empire Activity* (from research vessel *Ludy Pudluk*) near Peckford Reef. (Image: Kirk Regular, Marine Institute).

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Surveying the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station (CfAu-04), 2024

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Figure 1: Aerial photograph of the remains of the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station.

In October 2024, we travelled to the Burin Peninsula to conduct a pedestrian survey of the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station site (CfAu-04) (Figure 1). This whaling station was significant during the early modern shore-station whaling industry as it was the prototype facility for many patents and processes that would become standards in the whaling industry. Today, there is little physical evidence remaining of the whaling station on the western shore of Little St. Lawrence harbour. The goal of our project is to create a visual reconstruction of the site through mapping (with real-time kinematic

(RTK) and drone photogrammetry) and comparison with historical data (Figures 3 and 4). The whaling station represents a significant chapter in the history of Little St. Lawrence and the development of the modern shore-station whaling industry. Mapping the site offers valuable insights into the organization of the factory's buildings and docks, while contributing to the preservation of archaeological features and enrichment of local historical knowledge.

The Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station

What is known as the “modern” shore-station whaling industry in Newfoundland occurred between



Location of the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station (CfAu-04) in Little St. Lawrence Harbour

0 250 500 m

Figure 2: Location of the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station (CfAu-04) in Little St. Lawrence Harbour.

on the east side of the Burin Peninsula, was home to a small yet significant whaling station from 1903 to 1907. Its significance was due to the efforts of Dr. Ludwig Rissmüller, a German-American chemist, who patented a process for manufacturing previously unused parts from whale carcasses into fertilizer. Prior to Dr. Rissmüller's processes, the majority of the harvested whale carcasses were drifted back out to sea, creating pollution and boat traffic problems, notably for local fishermen. Though there were attempts from other whaling companies to reduce waste or create by-products from unused whale parts, it was Dr. Rissmüller's patents that proved the most effective.

The Harvey family, owners of the marine entrepreneurial organization, Harvey and Co. Ltd., brought Dr. Rissmüller to Newfoundland in 1900 where he helped to establish many fertilizer plants at whaling stations around the island. His patents and processes quickly gained recognition in Canada and the United States, eventually becoming mandatory practices for all licensed facilities (Goddard

1898 and 1972. Through innovations that enhanced whaling practices but further depleted whale stocks, this industry managed to survive despite facing challenges from fluctuating prices of whale oil and declining whale populations. Little St. Lawrence, located

1993:155). His process for manufacturing fertilizer involved mixing the discarded meat and bone with soda and then neutralizing it with sulphuric acid, followed by skimming the released oil and macerating and drying the residue into fertilizer (Dickinson and

Sanger 2018:24). This process was employed by the use of large rotary drums that were equipped with crushing tools and screens to break down the materials and to better dry the processed product (Goddard 1993:145). Dr. Rissmüller also created patents for manufacturing and then bleaching the undesirable colour of whale and seal oil, as well as patents for acid-proof processing tanks and a better process for drying and screening meal, which he used in his rotary drum design (Dickinson and Sanger 1993:142-145; Dickinson and Sanger 2018:24).

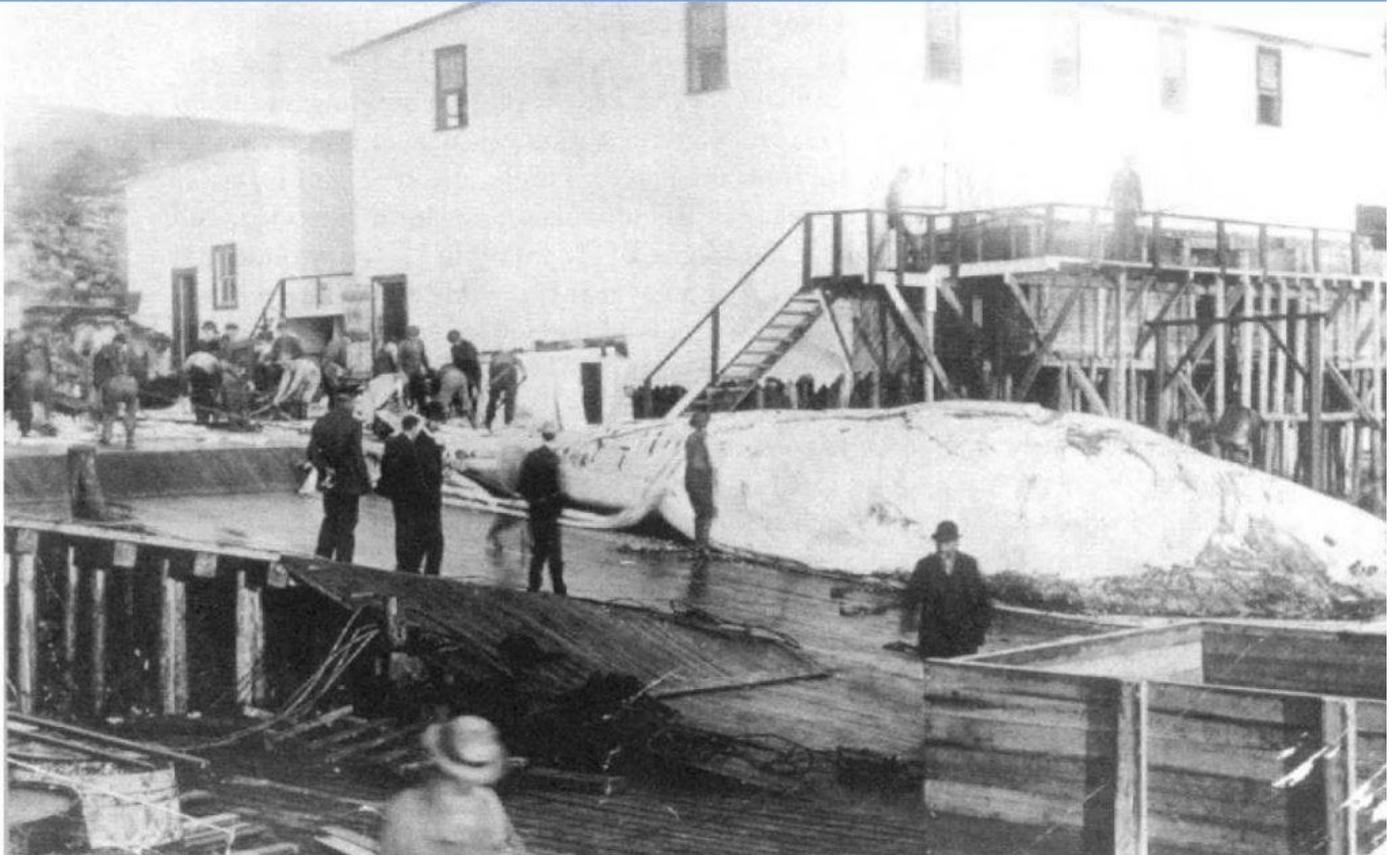
In 1903, Dr. Rissmüller built his own facility in Little St. Lawrence. He intended the “St. Lawrence Whaling Company” to act as a prototype station for his fertilizer processing and expansion efforts (Figure 3). It was at this station that personnel were trained to take over Dr. Rissmüller’s other factories, and the station soon gained a reputation for training experienced personnel who were in demand in the industry that was now dependent on the doctor’s processes. The station was in favour of the locals because of the potential employment opportunities that the facility promised. The company employed the use of two

steamships to hunt whales, the *St. Lawrence*, as well as the *Mic Mac*, renamed *Sebastian* in 1907 (Dickinson and Sanger 2005:113, 2018:97).

The company was given their license to operate in 1903, however, they did not begin hunting until November, which is very late in the season. They managed to catch seven whales in this year which offered plenty of work for the employees and set expectations high for future work and profit. At this time the impact of the shore-based whaling industry on the whale population was evident. By 1902 the Newfoundland Inspector of Fisheries noticed the reduction in whale stock and advised in his report that no further licenses should be granted for a time. This suggestion was disregarded, and in 1904, nineteen licenses were issued from forty-nine applications, and 1275 whales were killed between nineteen stations. This was a significant increase from the 858 whales caught in 1903, but profits were less than anticipated because of the declining price of oil (Goddard 1993:139).

The St. Lawrence Whaling Company contributed 112 whales to this number, their peak year. It

Figure 3: Flensing a whale at Little St. Lawrence, c. 1906
(taken on the wharf close to the water facing northwest). (R. Street in Dickinson and Sanger 2005:58).



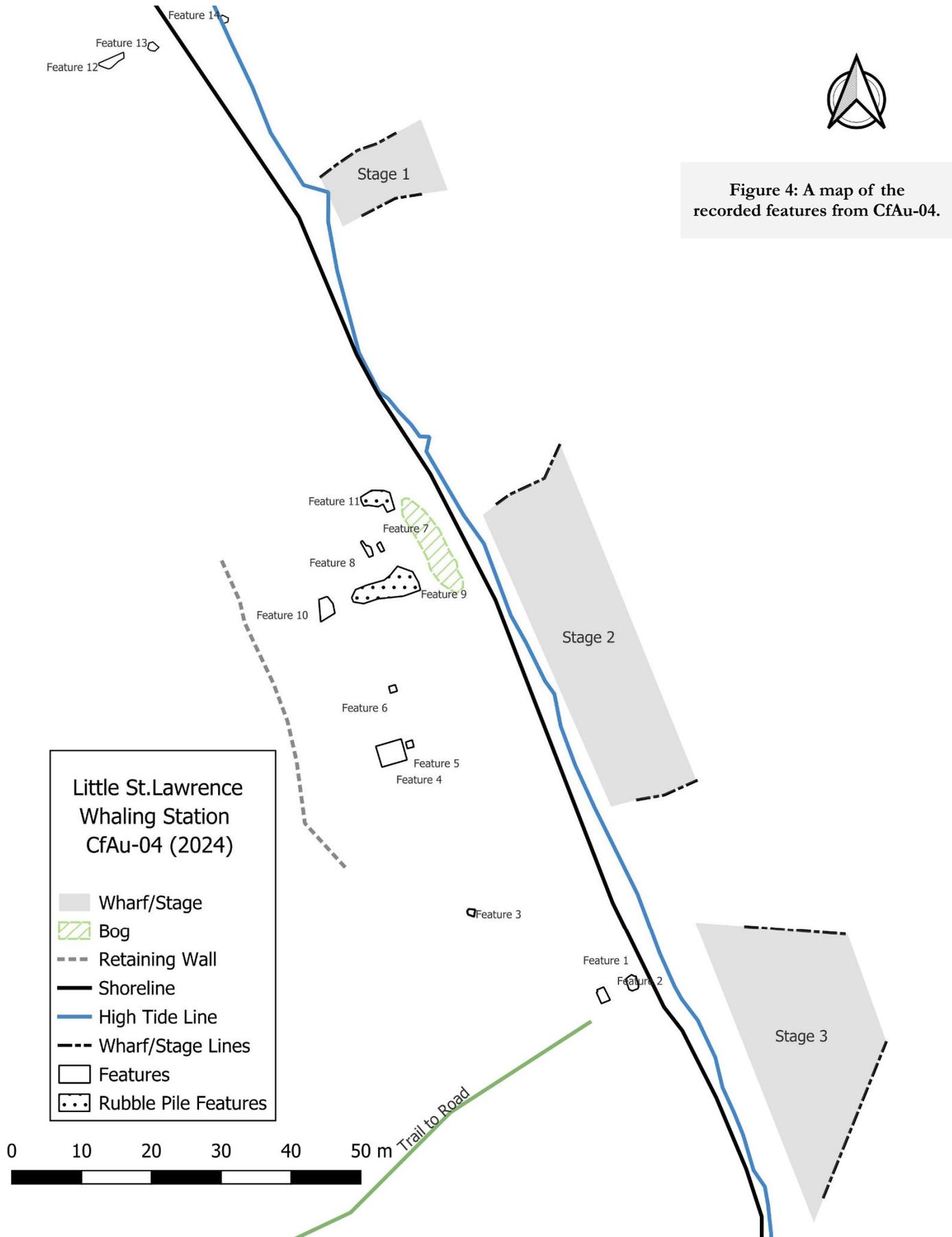


Figure 4: A map of the recorded features from CfAu-04.

was the peak year for the entire 74-year modern shore-station whaling industry, and numbers began to decline severely within the next couple of years, with 892 whales processed in 1905 and 439 processed in 1906 (Dickinson and Sanger 2005:151). Dr. Rissmüller's entry into this industry was very important at this time as he was creating alternative profits from whale by-products. Besides oil and fertilizer, he also ventured into processing glue, canned meat and sausages, which were talked of favourably by the factory workers (Dickinson and Sanger 2005:70-73).

A British naturalist, John Millais, visited the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station in 1904 and wrote a very entertaining account of his time with the crew aboard the *St. Lawrence*. During his visit, he ventured out with the whaling crew, and they caught a blue whale, an uncommon find even back then. Although Millais provided few details about the whale processing methods used at the station, he spoke highly of the modern, "perfect" factory and praised Dr. Rissmüller, stating that the chemist had "done more for whaling and the use of whale products than any other living man" (Millais 1907:184).

Given that Dr. Rissmüller's processes and patents were essential for operating whaling stations, he held shares in most of the stations in Newfoundland. In addition, his trained personnel were best equipped to run these facilities, therefore he occupied an exceptionally powerful position in the modern shore-station whaling industry. However, as the industry in Newfoundland was declining due to depleted whale stock, Dr. Rissmüller made the move to the Pacific Whaling Company in British Columbia in 1905. Over the next few years, he brought his experienced personnel from Newfoundland to Vancouver Island to operate and train people in the newly built whaling stations there. He also

brought his steamer, *St. Lawrence*, to British Columbia (Goddard 2005:179,183). Dr. Rissmüller liquidated the St. Lawrence Whaling Company in 1907 and severed ties with the Newfoundland whaling industry.

Archaeological Surveys of the Whaling Station

In 2006 the Provincial Archaeology Office (PAO) hired Stuart Barnable to conduct a heritage survey on the Burin Peninsula. He recorded this site as a potential whaling station and local reports suggested that it was French or Basque. Members of the PAO followed up on this survey in 2007 and recorded 6-7 badly deteriorated concrete block features that were not related to French or Basque occupation. They referred to Dickinson and Sanger's book, *Twentieth-Century Shore Station Whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador* (2005), reporting that Dr. Ludwig Rissmüller constructed his whaling station in 1903 in Little St. Lawrence and that it was in operation until 1907. The site was given the Borden number ChAu-04 in 2006.

During our pedestrian survey of the site in October 2024, thirteen features were identified (Figure 4). Of these features, eight were concrete blocks. Of these, five were badly deteriorated with pieces of rebar protruding from them, and three were in good condition with either metal loops or bolts



embedded in them (Figure 5). We also recorded one rock with a metal loop embedded in it like some found on the concrete features. The badly deteriorated blocks are likely related to the whaling station building foundations while the blocks in good condition are possibly related to other components of the station's operation.

In the northern section of the site, there are 2 flat rubble piles that may be associated with the whaling station docks or the buildings (Figure 4). On the shore directly to the east of this area, there is a buildup of rocks that



Figure 6: The shoreline and possible location of the docks from the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station site.

extend the shoreline further into the water (Figure 6). This feature, as well as the finding of old timber and nails in the water at low tide, indicate that the docks likely extended out into the water. Figure 3 shows a large dock and slipway in front of the station that

corroborates this hypothesis, and that this slipway was the area where whales were flensed.

One interesting feature we found was a large overgrown concrete block with a forged metal fixture connected on the side facing the shore (Feature 7).

Figure 7: A possible anchoring or mooring fixture made from 7 metal rods held together inside a buried pipe.



This fixture appeared to be made of 7 steel rods melded together with 2 rods forged at right angles on the sides. These rods seem to be held in place by a metal pipe that is buried in the ground. This fixture lines up with the slipway where the whales were flensed. A winch system was likely used to tow the whale carcasses up the slipway, so it is possible that this fixture acted as an anchor for a winch system.

Along the west boundary of the site in a very overgrown alder thicket, there appeared to be a rock wall made from

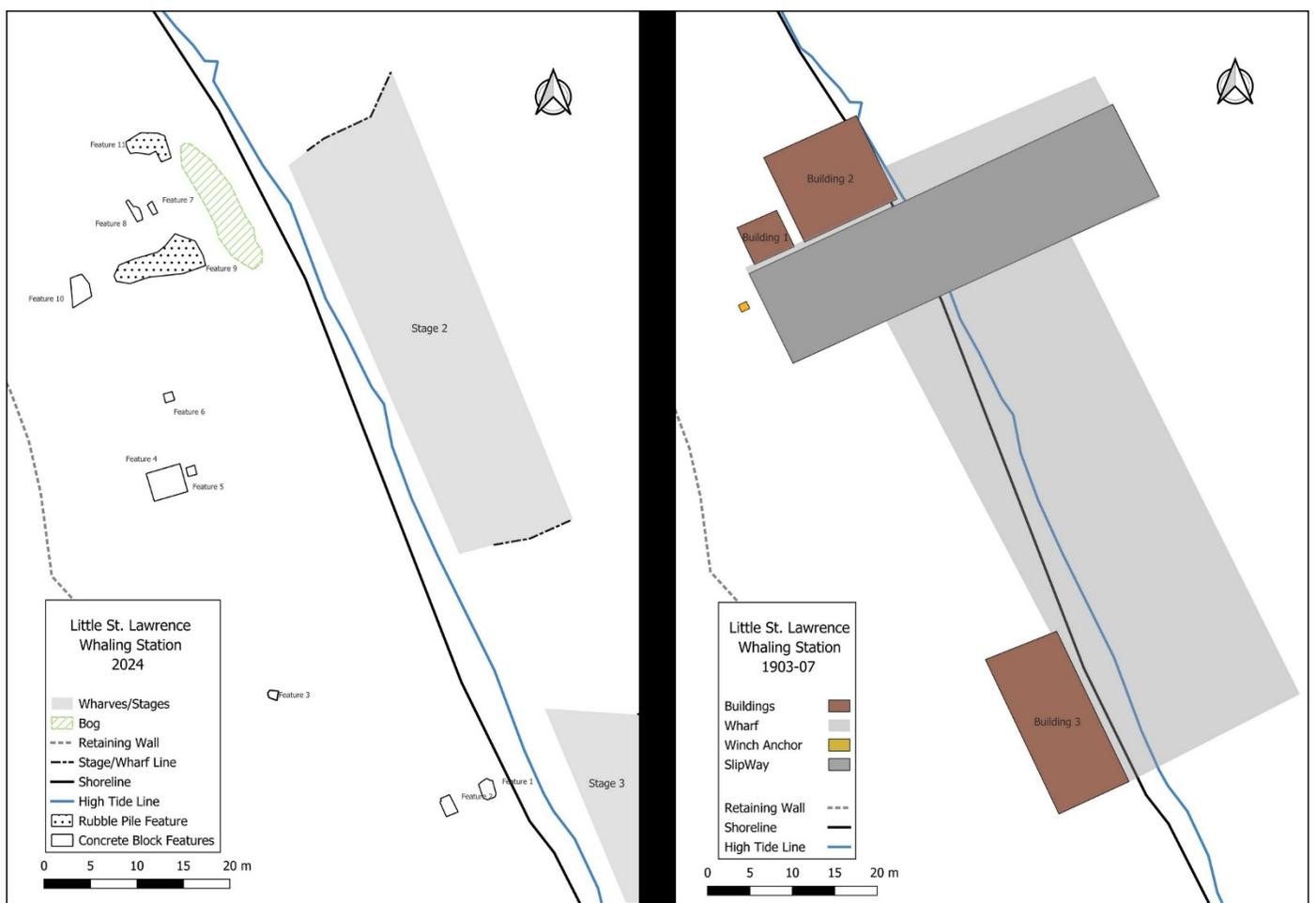


Figure 8: Comparison between CfAu-04 in 2024 and 1903-07.

small boulders. Since this wall was at the base of a very gentle slope and seemed to run parallel to most of the station site, it is likely that this feature was a retaining wall. On the northernmost part of the site, there is a line of rocks with holes bored into them heading towards the direction of the shore (Features 12, 13 and 14 in Figure 4). These may be associated with a more recent context.

Because the company was liquidated in 1907, it is likely that much of the buildings and industrial equipment were sold or brought with Dr. Rissmüller to British Columbia where he relocated in 1905. Since one of the major purposes of the station was to lessen waste, it was not expected that there would be any whale bones at the site. A local source informed us that an artist spent some time decades ago collecting most of the whale bones that were left on the site for sculpture media, and we did not find any during our survey.

Interpretation

Based on our survey and a comparison of the whaling station in photographs, we were able to identify part of the station's layout. Figure 8 shows the present-day layout of the site features next to our interpretation of the site layout during the station's operation. This interpretation is based on the historic photographs and the survey data collected in October 2024 (Figures 3 and 9). There were two buildings immediately to the north of the slipway where the whales were flensed and another building on the southwestern end of the wharf. The company's steamships were likely moored against the eastern portion of the wharf, and any whales they brought in were likely floated and hauled onto the slipway with a winch.

In the field, we identified three possible staging areas. However, we speculated that stages 2 and 3 were possibly one large wharf. From the photographs (Figures 3 and 9) we could see that this hypothesis was possible and that the wharf area was very large,



Figure 9: A comparison of the Little St. Lawrence landscape between 1904 and 2024 (Facing south towards Middle Head).

may indicate the location of some of this industrial equipment, such as the rotary drums that Dr. Rissmüller patented to process whale parts into fertilizer.

The pedestrian survey of the Little St. Lawrence Whaling Station site has provided a deeper understanding of an important historical location that played an important role in the development of the modern shore-station whaling industry. By comparing RTK mapping data with historical data, we have been able to identify the remnants of the station's buildings and docks, as well as suggest a hypothesis on the organization of the site between 1903 and 1907. Although much of the physical evidence of the whaling station has been lost over time, this project ensures that the legacy of the whaling station and its influence on industrial practices remain documented and accessible for Little St. Lawrence community members. Future work on this project may lead us to focus on the fertilizer manufacturing process and the features associated with this process

stretching at least 80 metres southeast to northwest along the shoreline.

The photographs of the station depicted the buildings and the wharf close to the water, but they do not show the industrial equipment that was used in the fertilizer manufacturing process. The concrete foundation features on the western side of the site

at the station site.

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Summary of Three HRIA Studies at Buckle's Point, Labrador

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Proposed Development

In the fall of 2024, an area of Crown land on Buckle's Point was rezoned for residential development. Three residential lots were apportioned, and applications for development made to the Crown Lands division of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture. As there is a recognized archaeological site at Buckle's Point, and other sites in the vicinity, the Provincial Archaeology Office called for an Historic Resources Impact Assessment for each land allotment.

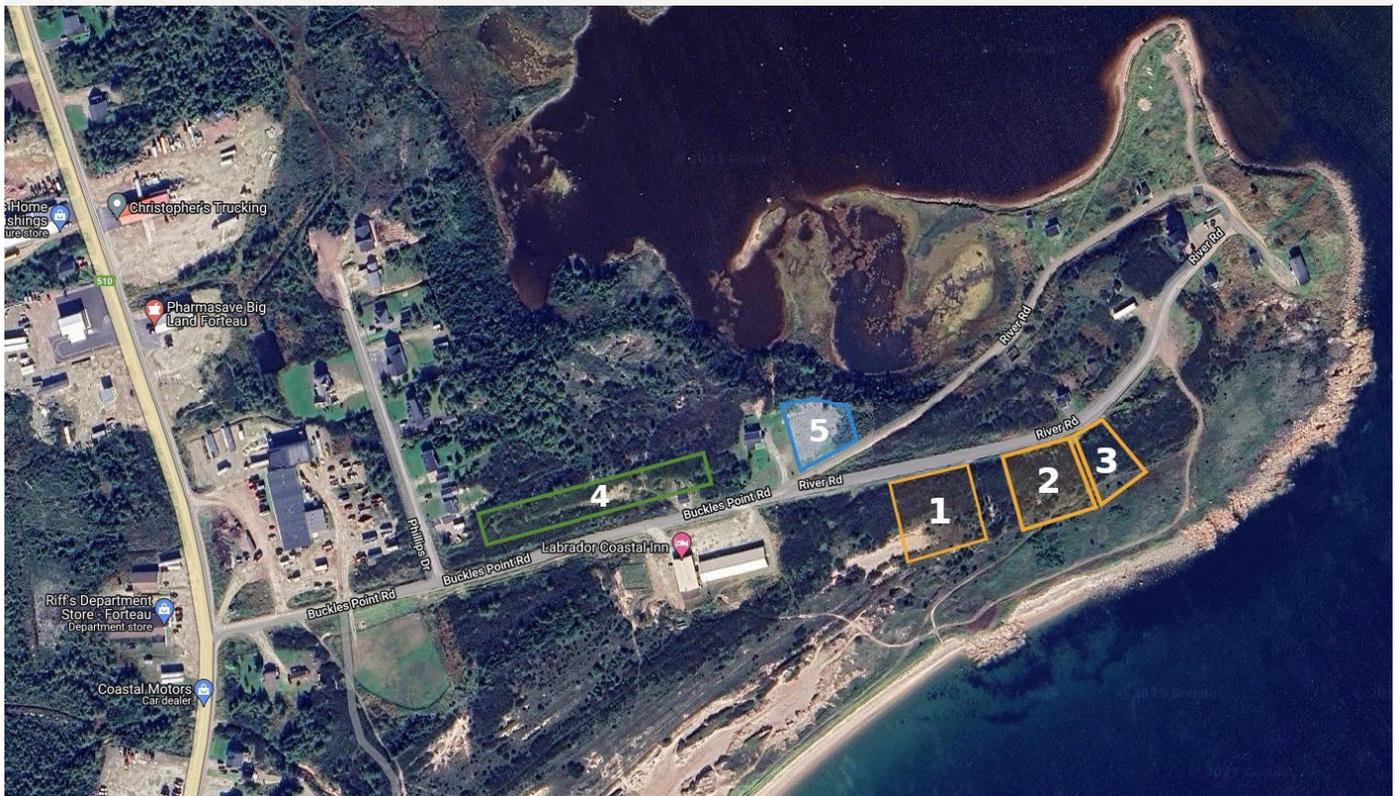
All the allotments adjoin Buckle's Point Road, which runs along the point on the highest ground. During development the land (or a portion thereof) will be cleared of overburden and prepared for a house foundation, primarily by filling to the level of the road.

The Study Area

The study area encompassing the three allotments is about 0.9 hectare. Each plot extends from the road toward the shoreline and terminates at the protected buffer zone of the immediate coast. From an elevation of about 8-9 m above sea level near the road, the land descends gradually to about 6 m asl where it meets the coastal zone (Figure 1).

The ground vegetation transitions from a dense thicket of alder near the road to a tundra environment approaching the shore. Growing with the alder are raspberry, dogberry, fireweed and occasional stands of spruce and tamarack. The tundra is comprised primarily of crowberry, with lingonberry, bunch berry, Labrador tea and caribou moss inter-mixed. An extensive sand deposit underlies the tundra and is exposed in a large blowout at the western

Figure 1: Area Map. (1-3) Crown land allotments comprising the study area; (4) Approximate location of EiBf-2 site; (5) Prior HRIA by Temple.



side of the study area. Along shore, a sand beach extends west for about two kilometres to the town of Forteau. To the east, towards the outermost point of land, the sand beach gives way to a bedrock shoreline.

The area is in a more-or-less natural state today. There is no visual evidence of structures or modification of the landscape by human activity – except for ATV trails. The main ATV trail runs parallel to the shoreline, within the coastal zone and outside the Crown land allotments. Other sections of trail branch from and merge with the main route; most of these are little used today. Along the trails the tundra ground cover is often eroded to the underlying sand. Trail development work has been done in recent years, and much of the main trail now consists of a built gravel pathway laid on top of the sand.

There is no source of fresh water in the immediate area, though there is a brook about 500 m along the sand shoreline to the west. The area is exposed to wind from the south and west, and to ocean swells rolling in from the outer reaches of Forteau Bay. There is also significant wind exposure to the north and east, a fact that became more apparent after areas of the alder zone were cleared.

Buckle's Point forms the estuary of Forteau Brook. The Brook is a licensed Atlantic salmon river today and was commercially harvested in the historic period. For Indigenous people it was likely an important resource location for salmon, other fish species and a variety of seabirds and their eggs. The southern shore of Buckle's Point, with its extensive sand beach, may have been attractive for other resources, e.g., caplin during their annual 'run', and sedentary sea mammals basking on shore.

Historic Resource Potential

Indigenous People

EiBf-2 is an archaeological site on Buckle's Point, first recorded by Elmer Harp, Jr. (1951:207). This site is attributed to the Archaic period (McGhee & Tuck: 1975) and has radiocarbon dates in the timeframe 5000-5400 BP. The site also has a more recent component dated to the period 3000-4000 BP. Other Archaic-period sites in the vicinity are the Graveyard site (EiBf-6) and the English Point site (EiBf-7), both located about 1.5 km (as the crow flies) from the study area.

Sea level on the southern Labrador coast has changed over millennia, a result of continuous post-

glacial rebound of the land. These three Archaic sites are situated at about 10 m asl. The current study area is 6-8 m asl. This difference perhaps decreases the likelihood of finding Archaic-period evidence in the study area.

In post-Archaic times the southern Labrador coast was inhabited by other Indigenous peoples, identified by archaeologist as Saunders (3500-2100 BP), North West River-Cow Head (~2500-1000 BP), and Daniel's Rattle- Point Revenge (1700 BP – European contact). The region may also have been visited by Pre-Inuit Groswater (2800-1900 BP) and Dorset (2400-800 BP) people.

European Historical Period

Forteau Bay was likely known to 16th century Basque fishermen & whalers, though there are no known archaeological sites of that period in the bay. French ship-based fishing operations in southern Labrador waters (and the adjacent Quebec Lower North Shore) increased during the first half of the 18th century and continued until the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The late 18th century saw the development of English and Jersey ship fisheries that persisted for a century and led to the year-round settlement pattern of today (Thornton: 155-66).

In Forteau Bay, favoured locations for mercantile establishments were along the western shore of the Bay and at English Point on the eastern shore. There is no record of mercantile premises on Buckle's Point (Thornton:162), although it was settled by resident fisher-families. William Buckle is recorded as a planter at Buckle's Point in 1808 (Whalen:42). Mr. Joseph Buckle was a resident of 'River Point' in 1872, where he engaged in fishing salmon at the river (Whalen:47).

In recent history there was a wharf on the northeastern shore of Buckle's Point, and the same location was likely used earlier, during the 19th century. In contrast, the southern shore of the point – with its sand beach and exposure to southerly winds & swells – is unsuitable for wharves and small boat operations that were core aspects of the commercial in-shore fishery.

Prior HRIA Work

In 2021 Blair Temple Associates conducted an HRIA on Buckle's Point near the current study area. No significant historic resources were found (Temple 2022) (Figure 1).



Figure 2: Profile of test pit #1 showing the dark humus layer.

provides some help with determining the location. Mr. Harold Roberts, a present-day resident of Buckle's Point, remembers where archaeologists worked in the '70s, and was able to re-locate the place. There, scattered flakes of patinated white chert and quartz are visible on the surface. Based on the various bits of information available, an approximate extent of the site was added to the Google map.

Surface Inspection

Surface inspection was possible within a large sand blowout at the western side of the

Methodology and Results

As the land had not been surveyed and there were no on-the-ground markers, a priority was to establish boundaries for the three plots. A process for doing this was developed for the first plot and later expanded to include the others. Using information from Crown Lands mapping, the plot was drawn on a custom Google map and GPS coordinates for four corner points extracted. On-site, these four points were located using an iPhone (with GPS receiver) and staked. Features visible on satellite photography (e.g., bedrock outcrop, sand blowout, ATV trail) served as cross-references to confirm correct placement. These boundary marks were considered accurate to ± 6 m.

Another initial job was to re-establish the location of the EiBf-2 archaeological site on Buckle's Point, as its precise location was unclear in the records. First found by Harp in 1949, this site was worked more extensively in the early-1970s by Robert McGhee and James A. Tuck. In recent decades the area has been altered by road and residential development, and undeveloped places are now overgrown with dense alder thicket. A photo from the '70s showing archaeologists surface-collecting at the site

study area, and along the eroded ATV trails that run just south of the area. Nothing was found in the blowout. An intensive, hands- and-knees inspection of ATV trails disclosed one small flake of translucent material, possibly Ramah chert, located just outside the study area boundary. On a disused section of trail to the east of the study area a honey- coloured gunflint was found; nothing else was visible at that location. Both the flake and the gunflint were disturbed and perhaps moved along the trail by the wheels of ATVs.

Test pitting

The 2-3-metre-tall alder thicket covering much of the study area presented a significant barrier for assessment work. To resolve this, several pathways were cut through the alders using chainsaw and brush cutter by the project proponents. Test pitting was later done along each of these paths. Two proponents did the clearing work by hand (and did an excellent job), while the third hired a tracked vehicle equipped with a brush cutting attachment referred to as a 'mulcher'. This, unfortunately, left behind a splintered, tangled mess that was difficult to navigate. Perhaps the blades needed sharpening.

While the brush clearing work was underway, test pitting was done in the open and accessible tundra zone. The first pit, measuring 65x65 cm, was designed to obtain a subsurface profile. Additional pits were dug throughout the zone and explored the hummocks and hollows that are visible on the surface. It was concluded that these are the result of natural erosion of the underlying sand.

A total of 90 test pits were dug across the three allotments of the study area. Eighty-nine pits disclosed no evidence of any kind related to human activity. One pit contained a substantial charcoal deposit along with a short length of much-corroded stranded, steel cable, located immediately below the tundra ground cover. The cable, about 1/4" in diameter, is like the type of cable used with a small winch today. This feature likely dates to the latter half of the 20th century.

Stratigraphy

Notable in the natural stratigraphy is the presence of a substantial dark humus layer, about 5-15 cm in thickness, buried below 20-40 cm of sand. This humus is, of course, decomposed vegetation. The formation of humus in this quantity suggests that there once existed significantly greater vegetation, and that it persisted for a prolonged period. Climate and other aspects of the natural environment at that time may have differed significantly from the preceding and succeeding periods (Figure 2).

McGhee and Tuck (1975:110) reported a similar "dark compressed humus" layer at sites they worked, saying, "its ubiquitous presence and uniform appearance suggests it was laid down contemporaneously over the entire coast." Regarding the age of the layer, they wrote:

Radiocarbon dates on cross-section samples of this humus layer

Figure 3: View looking west across the southern portion of the study area.



were obtained from the Fowler site (670 +/- 50 years ago; SI-1797) and the L'Anse Amour site (1115 +/- 70 years ago; SI-1798). At the BS-1 and BS-4 sites near Blanc Sablon, Harp reports three radiocarbon dates cited in an earlier chapter ranging between 1100 and 1826 years ago, on charcoal associated with cultural material incorporated within the buried humus zone.

It seems reasonable to assume that the beginning of the time defined by the humus layer predates the oldest radiocarbon date of 1826 BP. Changing environment conditions that led to the formation of the humus layer may have begun some centuries, or a millennium, earlier. McGhee and Tuck reported that all Archaic assemblages were found beneath the buried humus layer, and thus predate its formation. It's tempting to correlate this period of environmental difference (as inferred from the humus layer) with cultural change in the region during late- and post-Archaic times, but that is speculation.

Conclusion

Thorough surface inspection and subsurface testing at each of the three allotments led to the same conclusion: no significant historic resources existed within the allotment boundaries. For each allotment a recommendation was made to the PAO office that the Crown land application be permitted to proceed.

The charcoal/cable feature was deemed not significant because of its recent age. The gunflint,

while certainly of historical significance, was found some 60 m from the study area, on land that is not affected by the proposed development. The flake also is historically significant, yet it was clearly not in situ. Test pits in the vicinity of this surface find produced no result; the flake may have been transported along the trail repeatedly by muddy tires of ATVs (Figure 3).

While the study objective was achieved, the lack of findings was disappointing from the perspective of archaeology. Disappointing, but not inexplicable. The study area is exposed to wind from several directions and is a half kilometre from a source of fresh water. It would be a poor choice today for a campsite. It is certainly a pleasant place on a fair-weather day but can quickly become a "damn wind-smitten spot." (Harp, 1949:73). Better shelter, and water, are available further along the shore, towards Forteau, in the vicinity of the brook. Flakes were reportedly found in that locale in recent years (Stopp: 2004, EiBf-34) and somewhere near there is the location of Harp's 'Forteau Bay Barrens' site (Harp 1949:9-A).

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1949: Expedition to Labrador

The *Blue Dolphin* and Elmer Harp Jr.

Douglas Robbins
Consulting Archaeologist

Introduction
In the summer of 2024, an accidental discovery just a few hundred metres from my home rekindled my interest in archaeology. In the fall, with the support and encouragement of the Provincial Archaeology Office, I undertook an archaeological assessment of crown land at Buckle's Point, in Forteau Bay. A part of that work entailed a review of previous archaeological research in the area, which begins in 1949 with Elmer Harp Jr.

The *Blue Dolphin* crossing the Gulf of Maine under canvas, en route to Labrador. Tony Morse, Harp's archaeological assistant, stands on the bowsprit. (Harp 2003, p. 4).



Elmer Harp is a familiar name for students of Indigenous archaeology in Newfoundland and Labrador. In his fieldwork and publications Harp laid a foundation of research that was built upon by future generations of archaeologists. His fieldwork brought attention to the diverse and rich archaeological resources of northern Newfoundland and southern Labrador. His publications, such as *The cultural affinities of the Newfoundland Dorset Eskimo* (1964), were seminal works for future researchers. At Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, his teaching inspired young undergraduates.

During my work at Buckle's Point in 2024 I often thought about Elmer Harp and his first visit here, 75 years ago. A few casual google searches led to a more concerted research effort, and there emerged a remarkable story of the *Blue Dolphin* expedition of 1949, and Elmer Harp's first archaeological reconnaissance along the southern Labrador coast. Part I of this paper is an account of the people and events that led to the *Blue Dolphin* expedition. Part II relates to Harp's daily activities, experiences and discoveries in Labrador, as recorded in his 1949 journal.¹

PART I ORIGINS OF AN EXPEDITION

Blue Dolphin

'Bluenose fever' swept Nova Scotia when the fast-fishing schooner raced to victory and reclaimed the International Fisherman's Trophy from the Americans in 1921. Designed by Halifax naval architect William J. Roué, the *Bluenose* used its speed and large cargo capacity to gain an important economic advantage over competing schooners in the commercial cod fishery.

In 1925, prominent Kansas City businessman Stephen Henry Velie Jr. was regional manager of the John Deere Plow Company and was John Deere's grandson. Now in his mid-60s, Velie was planning for retirement. He wanted to embark on adventure voy-

1. Harp's 1949 journal is referenced as "Journal" throughout this paper.

ages in the North Atlantic, evidently inspired by *Bluenose* fever.

Velie retained *Bluenose* architect Roué to design a ship for him. The new vessel, *Blue Dolphin*, would share the overall style of the *Bluenose* but, at 100 feet in overall length, would be smaller. Designed with a reinforced hull for northern waters and equipped with an engine for auxiliary power, *Blue Dolphin* was intended for use as a private yacht rather than a commercial fishing vessel. Below decks, luxurious cabins were available for the cruising party. *Blue Dolphin* was built at Shelbourne, Nova Scotia and launched in 1926.²

Velie reportedly took long trips on his new vessel but died unexpectedly in 1933 of pneumonia after a brief illness.³ After his death the *Blue Dolphin* was sold to Boston businessman Amory Coolidge and chartered by Ralph Chandler. Then, Coolidge, Chandler & family members embarked on a five-month voyage to the Galapagos Islands. Nina Chandler, age 13 at the time, later published a book about their adventure.⁴

Little is known about *Blue Dolphin* for almost a decade after the 1933 Galapagos trip. Indeed, the story of *Blue Dolphin* nearly ended in 1938, when the vessel lost its masts in a gale off the Florida coast. "With a jury rig and auxiliary power", Captain Norman Ross, "typical Captain Courageous and all that the name implies", brought the vessel safely to harbour.⁵

In March 1942, after the US entered WWII, Coolidge gifted *Blue Dolphin* to the US Navy. The ship served as station vessel at Casco Bay, Maine through the war.⁶ At war's end the vessel was 'struck from the navy list' and in September 1945 was 'sent for disposal' (meaning, disposal as a Navy asset). The *Blue Dolphin* was idle and available.

David C. Nutt

On August 5, 1940, famed polar explorer Captain Robert A. Bartlett in his schooner *Effie M. Morrissey* set a furthest-north record, reaching to within 578 nautical miles (1,070 km) of the North Pole. After a decade of Arctic voyages, Bartlett and the *Morrissey*

were internationally famous and household names in Newfoundland.

Aboard the *Morrissey* on that 1940 expedition was 21-year-old Dartmouth College undergraduate David Nutt, a student of botany. Nutt carried out field research during his time on the *Morrissey* – collecting, organizing and packaging botanical samples for later study by the New England science community.

Despite his relatively young age, Nutt wasn't an Arctic rookie. He'd voyaged with Bartlett every year for the past five years, beginning at age 16. He was an experienced sailor and a seasoned northern explorer. On the 1940 trip he studied ship navigation in addition to his botanical research. John P. Pitcairn, an American crew member on the *Morrissey*, kept a brief journal of that 1940 expedition and makes occasional mention of Nutt:

June 22, 1940

... *David Nutt started navigation classes tonight.*

July 3, 1940

... *We are on our way to Turnavik, Labrador. We expect to arrive in three or four days. Davy (Commander Nutt, as he is called by Arthur Manice,) has again taken up his navigation classes. We sighted Labrador late today.*

July 19, 1940

Another warm day. No wind came our way as we travel up Melville Bay. ...I wish I could find out where we are going. Nobody (including the mate and commander Nutt) seems to know

July 22, 1940

After going about ten miles further north we stopped at Conical Rock. Commander Nutt went out in a whaleboat on a flower finding expedition .⁷

Regular seamen Pitcairn and Manice obviously enjoyed 'taking the piss' of the young university man by dubbing him 'commander Nutt', engaged in 'flower finding' expeditions.

After the 1940 Bartlett expedition, Nutt returned to his studies at Dartmouth College. Now in his final year, he was called to active duty with the US Navy and attended the Local Defence School at the Boston

2. [Blue Dolphin 1926 by Jond](#) [modelshipworld.com]; [William Roue BLUE DOLPHIN](#) [classicsailboats.org].

3. [Stephen Henry Velie Jr.](#) [findagrave.com].

4. [The Cruise of the Blue Dolphin: A Family's Adventure at Sea.](#) [goodreads.com]. Lyons Press, 2002.

5. [Capt. Norman Ross.](#) [downtosea.com]. *Out of Gloucester* website. Captain Ross was a familiar name in Newfoundland. His obituary appeared on the front page of the *Western Star*, Feb 15, 1939: [Captain Norman A. Ross Sails Long Last Voyage](#) [collections.mun.ca].

6. A 'station vessel' remains at a fixed location, engaged in communications duties, weather reporting and such.

7. [Log of John P. Pitcairn](#) [archive.ernestina.org].

Navy Yard. He was permitted to sit his final exams at Dartmouth during this time, and graduated in 1941 with an AB degree in botany. Nutt first served with the USS *Bowdoin* in West Greenland waters. Later, he was transferred to the Pacific theatre and rose in rank, becoming Commander of the survey ship USS *Sumner* in 1944 (just four years after the gentle mockery aboard the *Morrissey*). Nutt was released from active duty in 1946, yet retained the rank of Commander, US Naval Reserve.

Dartmouth College – Hanover, New Hampshire

Established in 1769, Dartmouth College is a private, undergraduate college located at Hanover, New Hampshire. Beginning about 1944, the College became active in Arctic research through a partnership with the fledgling Arctic Institute of North America.

The origin of AINA is described by historian Robert MacDonald:

In 1942, a group of Canadians held private discussions about how Canada could increase her administrative, scientific, and technical competence in the Arctic to match that of other Arctic nations, such as the Soviet Union. These discussions about Arctic competence and Canadian sovereignty took place against a backdrop of disinterest and ignorance shared by the Canadian government and the public. [...] American military people and scientists became aware of these discussions: the military was preoccupied with the strategic importance of the Arctic, while the scientists were interested in preserving and making accessible "a remarkable collection of hitherto unassembled information," bequeathing it to an institution at war's end (Parkin, 1966:8). By March 1944, Canadian initiatives had led to the realization that some objectives could best be achieved by an international organization. Accordingly, in May 1944, nine Americans and eleven Canadians met in New York: though they were there as individuals, they included senior bureaucrats and university people on the Canadian side and scientists and government Arctic specialists on the American side.⁸

AINA was officially incorporated as a non-profit research and education organization through an Act of Parliament in November 1945.

In 1947 Dartmouth College launched a new Arctic Studies Program with a set of three objectives:

1. to create an awareness of the Arctic and its role in the world today, (2) to promote an understanding of the Arctic as a new frontier of study and development, and (3) to furnish

practical experience in training and instruction in living techniques and use of polar equipment.⁹

The College made several new additions to its faculty that year.

Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson was engaged as 'Arctic Consultant'. Born William Stephenson in Manitoba in 1879 (his parents had emigrated from Iceland), Stefansson changed his name during his undergraduate years in North Dakota and Iowa. He did graduate studies in anthropology at Harvard University. For over a decade, Stefansson led expeditions to the central Arctic and Alaska. In 1947, at age 68, he was a renowned polar explorer and ethnologist.

Often known as the "Prophet of the North," Stefansson had spent a dozen years in the Arctic, traveled an estimated 20,000 miles by dog sled, mapped some of the world's last uncharted landmasses, "discovered" the Copper Eskimo, and fundamentally influenced the way the non-Arctic world viewed and understood the Arctic.¹⁰

Another hire was scientist and naval commander David Nutt, now age 28, in the position of 'Arctic Specialist'. Nutt was associated with the Department of Geography at Dartmouth as well as the College Museum. Drawing on his extensive experiences north with Bartlett and employing his Navy skills, training and connections, his plan was to organize and lead scientific research expeditions to Labrador and Greenland waters. For that he needed a ship, and for a ship he went to the postwar Navy inventory. His first choice was the *Bowdoin*, the ship he'd served with in 1942, but that vessel wasn't available. His next choice was the *Blue Dolphin*, and Nutt became owner of the *Blue Dolphin* in 1948.

Anthropologist Elmer Harp Jr. was also hired by Dartmouth College that year, 1947, as 'Curator of Anthropology' at the College Museum.

Elmer Harp Jr.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1913, Harp enrolled at Harvard University in the early 1930s. His undergraduate studies were interrupted for a year or two by the Great Depression, and he returned to Cleveland and took courses in engineering at the Case School of Applied Science. Returning to Harvard, Harp completed his studies and graduated in 1938 with a BS degree in anthropology. In the summer of 1938, he joined a geological research expedition to Montana

8. Challenges and Accomplishments: A Celebration of the Arctic Institute of North America. Robert MacDonald. *Arctic*, Vol. 58 No. 4, Dec. 2005. pp. 440-451.

9. [Plans Arctic Voyage](#). Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, January 1949.

10. [The Indian History of an American Institution](#). Colin G. Calloway. Dartmouth College Press, 2010, p. 153.

and experienced his “first taste of northern field-work”.¹¹

After that summer he went to work for the Lincoln Electric Company in Cleveland. Founded in 1895 by brothers John C. and James F. Lincoln, the company developed a “unique, direct current electric motor for industrial applications”¹² Harp oversaw the company’s storeroom of hand tools. Harp performed his job “with such distinction, he told me with mock flourish, that he received high commendation.”¹³

In early 1942, with the US at war, Harp entered the US Navy. He served in PT boat squadrons in the Mediterranean and later in the southwest Pacific. He returned to Harvard in late 1945 as a graduate student and completed his MA degree in early 1947. Soon after, he was appointed Curator of Anthropology at Dartmouth College Museum, situated at Wilson Hall in Hanover.

A graceful, three-story, redbrick building,¹⁴ Wilson Hall was built in 1884 with a \$50,000 bequest from the estate of George Francis Wilson, to satisfy a pressing need for a new college library. The bequest was initially “received with much surprise in Hanover. Apparently, no one in the College had ever heard of Mr. Wilson.”¹⁵ By 1928 the ever-expanding library had outgrown Wilson Hall and was moved to larger quarters, and the Hall was renovated to house the College Museum.

The College Museum was primarily a teaching museum. It included three floors of “instructive, well-planned exhibits ranging over the major fields of biology, anthropology and geology”. In addition to these exhibits the Museum housed more than 119,000 specimens in 1948, all catalogued and accessible for study. Dartmouth classes and those of other, nearby, schools regularly made use of the Museum’s collections.¹⁶

In the summer of 1947 Harp worked as field assistant at excavations in southeastern Massachusetts, led by Frederick Johnson of the Peabody Museum. This was his first archaeological fieldwork experi-

ence. In 1948 the College Museum sponsored archaeological surveys and excavations in the upper Connecticut River valley, where the College is located. This work was supervised by Harp in his capacity as curator. The objectives were twofold: to provide opportunities for undergraduates to participate in archaeology, and to explore the early Indigenous history of New England.

W. Wedgwood Bowen, director of the College Museum, said that in the past most archaeological research had been done by graduate students and little or no opportunity has been given college undergraduates to participate in this work.

...

“Archaeologists believe that the American Indian crossed the Bering strait from what is now Siberia about 25,000 years ago,” Mr. Harp explained when the Museum’s plans were announced. “Some think he may have worked his way into New England from Canada about 10,000 years ago. There is no concrete evidence, however, to support a belief that Indians had reached the upper Connecticut River valley before 100 A.D.”¹⁷

Harp was engaged in this work during the spring of 1948. In the summer he joined the Andover-Harvard Yukon Expedition, a multi-year project for archaeological and botanical research led by Frederick Johnson, archaeologist with the Peabody Museum, and Harvard botanist Hugh Raup. In 1948, Harp served as Johnson’s assistant. The expedition would explore “one of the potential early Indian and Eskimo migration routes into the Canadian arctic and lower 48 [states]”¹⁸

Harp kept a journal during his time in the Yukon. At camp on July 19, 1948, he wrote:

In the eve chewed the rag with Fred on the Newfoundland question. He thinks it’s a good thing, altho it might take 5 yrs. to work it all out. First whole summer ought to be intensive reconnaissance, later ones could be shorter sessions of excavating. Read up Hawley, Speck, Wintenburg, Jenness especially. Visit the Nat’l Museum in Ottawa & see their collections (Jenness now retired). Discussed the Arctic Inst. Fellowships worth \$2500. & decided that amount ought to cover a summer rea-

11. Elmer Harp Jr. (1913-2009), William W. Fitzhugh, *Arctic* vol. 63, no. 2, June 2010, pp. 252-254.

12. [Lincoln Electric](http://lincolnelectric.com). [lincolnelectric.com].

13. Fitzhugh, 2010. (On reflection, the job of organizing a working collection of modern hand tools might be apt training for a future archaeologist).

14. [Wikipedia photo](#) of Wilson Hall.

15. As it transpired, the donation had been made at the discretion of Wilson’s lawyer, a Dartmouth graduate.

16. [The College Museum](#), Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, April 1948.

17. [Museum Excavations](#), Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, January 1948.

18. Fitzhugh 2010, p. 252.

sonably: basic figure he uses is \$10./day, & then adds travel, equipment, etc. etc. Suggested that after I go over the literature that I write a paper on the relationship of Newfld. With NE archeology as a whole: the problem of Eskimo, Laurentian, Beothuk, Micmac, Naskapi, & Montagnais. This ought to make a good thesis & perhaps one summer's field work would be sufficient for that purpose. As it stands now I have until the first of the year to decide if I want to tackle this beginning in 1949. Why not do that & hold the Connecticut Valley stuff for the school year?¹⁹

The misspellings of Howley and Wintemberg suggest that Harp was, at that time, unfamiliar with those names; he needed to “read up” on the literature. The passage is, in part, Harp’s notes on what Johnson had said to him, and suggests that the idea for his future research in Newfoundland & Labrador grew from discussions with Frederick Johnson.

Harp returned to Dartmouth in the fall of 1948 and decided to pursue the Newfoundland & Labrador research. In December, the College Museum made an announcement regarding Harp and his colleague, David Nutt:

David C. Nutt '41, Arctic Specialist for the Dartmouth College Museum, announced last month that he is planning to fit out and take the 100-foot schooner Blue Dolphin on a three-month expedition this summer to northern waters.

The primary purpose of the trip will be to carry out a program of research in various fields of science. Details of the expedition will be announced later, but the Dartmouth Museum Specialist disclosed that Elmer Harp Jr., Curator of Anthropology at the College Museum, is planning to take part.²⁰

Harp did not plan to stay with the *Blue Dolphin* for the entirety of the 1949 expedition. Instead, he would travel with the expedition from New England to the Strait of Belle Isle and, after some time there, leave the vessel for the duration of the summer. The *Blue Dolphin* would proceed north to Hamilton Inlet and Nain. Harp would continue his work in southern Labrador and northern Newfoundland and rejoin the *Blue Dolphin* at Corner Brook for the return trip to New England.

Harp had a limited budget from the Arctic Institute, and the *Blue Dolphin* presented a very economical way for him to travel to Labrador. It also resolved a challenging logistical issue, as northern Newfoundland and southern Labrador lacked a contiguous road system at that time. His 1949 trip on the *Blue Dolphin* provided his first experience in the region, and likely contributed significantly to the planning of his return visit in 1950.

Blue Dolphin Refit, 1948/49

In late 1948 / early 1949 the *Blue Dolphin* was refitted for its new role of Arctic research vessel. The fuel capacity was increased to allow a cruising range of 4,000 miles and the electrical plant was upgraded. Below decks, renovations were done to provide “berthing and messing facilities for a total party of eighteen to twenty” as well as an “oceanographic and biological laboratory”. A variety of new scientific and navigational equipment was installed, “with the cooperation of the US. Office of Naval Research, the US Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Smithsonian Institution, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and Dartmouth College.”²¹

The bowsprit and main boom were shortened, and the forward rigging reduced to make the vessel more manoeuvrable in northern waters with sea ice conditions. A new 4-cylinder, 140 HP Wolverine diesel engine gave the *Blue Dolphin* a cruising speed of 7 knots and a top speed of 8 knots.²² The Wolverine was an “honestly built engine” and would provide “extra long life with steady lugging ability, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week”.²³

The hull of the *Blue Dolphin* was painted black, the traditional colour for a schooner (it had been changed to white by the US Navy during the war). The deck was gray, and the gunwales and bulwarks trimmed neatly in white. The varnished, natural wood finish of the vessel’s masts and spars, along with its wheel and binnacle, stood in contrast to the painted hull.

19. [Harp 1948 Yukon Field Notes](#). Occasional Papers in Archaeology No. 14, Government of Yukon, 2005, p. 48.

20. [Plans Arctic Voyage](#). Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, January 1949.

21. [The Blue Dolphin Labrador Expeditions, 1949 and 1950](#), David C. Nutt, *Arctic*, vol. 4 no. 1 (1951), p. 3.

22. In comparison, the vessel could do 10 knots or more when under sail in favourable winds.

23. According to an advertisement in *Atlantic Fisherman*, May 1947, p. 33. Available at archive.org.

1949 Expedition Members

The *Blue Dolphin* had berths for 20 people, and all were filled when the vessel departed Wood's Hole, Massachusetts on June 17, 1949. In addition to Nutt and Harp, there were five scientists, five student assistants, seven professional crew members and a surgeon, who did double-duty as radio operator.²⁴

One of the five scientists was Richard ('Dick') Backus, a PhD graduate student at Cornell University at the time. Backus later built a distinguished career as biological oceanographer at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.²⁵ Three others were geographers from the Canadian Geographical Bureau, and lastly there was "Henry P. McKean, Jr., Dartmouth College Oceanographer". McKean wasn't exactly an oceanographer; he was a 19-year-old undergraduate student in mathematics. He later earned a PhD in mathematics and, like Backus, built a distinguished, international career in his field.²⁶

18-year-old Stearns Anthony ("Tony") Morse of Hanover had matriculated at Dartmouth and was due to start his studies in the fall of 1949. His father, Stearns Morse, was a respected professor of English at Dartmouth. Young Tony, neatly dressed, wearing a fedora and with a knapsack casually slung over his shoulder, is pictured in Harp's *Lives and Landscapes* (p. 4) on the bowsprit of the *Blue Dolphin*, en route to Labrador. His job on the expedition was archaeologi-



'Tad' Stahl (left) and Reggie Wilcox at the wheel of the *Blue Dolphin*, approaching landfall at Forteau Bay. (Harp 2003, p. 6).

cal assistant to Harp, and the two men would work and live together for the duration of the summer.²⁷

Another student assistant on the *Blue Dolphin* was 16-year-old Nicholas B. Dean, newly graduated from St Paul's, a New Hampshire high school. Dean would attend Dartmouth College and later became a freelance artist, photographer and teacher. In 1949 Dean loaned a camera to Elmer Harp when Harp's became inoperable. "Nick saved the day for us all."²⁸ Dean returned for a second trip on the *Blue Dolphin* in 1950 and took a series of photos in Labrador that are available online.²⁹

Unlike the crew of Captain Bartlett's *Morrissey* who couldn't carry a tune, at least one student on the *Blue Dolphin* could: Frederick Arthur ("Tad") Stahl was a member of Dartmouth's Glee Club, and later sang with the Apollo Club, America's oldest, continuous male chorus. In 1949 Stahl was studying architecture

24. The *Blue Dolphin* Labrador Expeditions 1949 and 1950, p. 11.

25. [Richard "Dick" Backus](#), Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

26. [Henry Pratt McKean Obituary](#). (The obituary makes no reference to the 1949 expedition, however it does mention McKean's "lifelong friend, Tony Morse". In 1952 McKean married Morse's sister, Sylvia.)

27. Another photo (p. 36), taken later in the summer, shows Tony looking very much like a 'field anthropologist'.

28. Harp, 2003, *Lives and Landscapes*, p. xi.

29. [Nicholas Dean's 1950 Blue Dolphin Expedition Photo Album](#), Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum. Several excellent photos depict Innu people in the vicinity of North West River.

at Dartmouth. He later earned a graduate degree from the MIT School of Architecture and became a respected and successful Boston architect.³⁰ Young Tad, age 19, is pictured in Harp's *Lives and Landscapes* (p. 6) as the *Blue Dolphin* approaches Forteau Bay for its first Labrador landfall.³¹

The other man in that photo is Reggie Wilcox, 'Special Assistant' on the expedition and leader of the professional crew. Wilcox was born in Brigus, Newfoundland, the hometown of the famed Captain Bartlett, and had spent 10 years voyaging north with the Captain. From 1935-40 he and David Nutt had been together on Bartlett expeditions. Now age 40, Wilcox was a veteran seaman and a fount of knowledge about Newfoundland. He taught Harp how to pronounce 'Newfoundland' and other place names, loaned him books,³² and provided advice and assistance in organizing local logistics for Harp's on-shore work. Harp's assessment of Wilcox, recorded in his journal, was brief and favourable: "He is an A-1 fellow and smart, and interested in his own country to the extent of knowing its history thoroughly."³³

Other members of the professional crew included American chief engineer Charles D. Spohr, boatswain Otto Halvorsen of Norway, three seamen (two American and once Icelandic) and a cook from New Bedford, Massachusetts. The Norwegian Halvorsen created a lasting impression for Harp one night early in the voyage:

*Last night, when I took my first trick at the wheel about 2000 we were just rounding cape Breton with a chill breeze and the air temp about 50°, and I was nuzzled down into my jacket wishing I had more clothes on. Suddenly up came Otto, the Norwegian boatswain, stripped down to the raw, who proceeded to take a leisurely 10 minutes bath up on the bow! Carefully he soaped himself up then hauled up a bucket of seawater (about 45°) and poured it over himself for a rinse. Afterwards a brisk toweling and then below. Everyone else topside was half frozen just watching him. What a man!*³⁴

Forteau Bay, 1949

There were no automobiles at Forteau in 1949; there were no roads.³⁵ Well-worn footpaths and narrow lanes linked a scattering of wooden, tar-paper-roofed houses and work buildings at each of the four small settlements in the Bay. Along the shore were wharves and stages of the fishermen. At noon on Saturday in late June there was likely some activity as fishing crews prepared for the season. One building in Forteau was distinctive for its size and architecture, the newly built³⁶ Grenfell Mission nursing station, a large two-story structure surrounded by neat fences, gardens and agricultural cold frames. Near the Grenfell station were the commercial premises of Mick Organ, the fish buyer and merchant. There was a substantial wharf on the shore with 'rooms' for the Forteau fishing crews.

There were 304 people in Forteau Bay for the 1945 census, an increase from 216 in 1921.³⁷ All families worked in the fishery, except for a few people employed with the nursing station and the Point Amour lighthouse. Their homes were heated by wood or coal. Water came from shallow wells, or was carried from brooks, and the toilet was an outhouse. There was no electricity service, and no electrical appliances save for battery-powered radios that were used sparingly. Some places, such as the post office and the lighthouse, had telegraph service and radio communications. Once or twice a week in ice-free seasons, mail and supplies were delivered by coastal boats.

At Forteau Bay, Harp writes:

[...] we walked back down the bay to English Point and there Robert Trimm asked us into his house for tea. Had his wife (a Buckle) get us hot water to wash in; then she put out on the table hot strong tea in glass cups and saucers, a dish of stewed prunes, and white homemade raisin bread. While we sat in the kitchen (1 of 2 downstairs rooms) eating, a dozen people filed in, sat down along the wall, and silently watched our every motion. These people are very poor and have few material possessions, but their little low-ceilinged houses, although somewhat

30. [Frederick Arthur "Tad" Stahl](#), Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, Nov-Dec 2013. Also, [Frederick Arthur "Tad" Stahl Remembered](#) [beaconhilltimes.com]. *Beacon Hill Times*, August 7, 2013.

31. The accompanying caption misidentifies Tad as 'Ted Stahl', perhaps a transcription error.

32. Including *Newfoundland: As It Was and As It Is in 1877* by Philip Tocque, 1878. [MUN digital archives](#).

33. Journal, p. 3.

34. Journal, p. 5.

35. Point Amour lighthouse keeper Jeff Wyatt had the first car (exact date uncertain) and used it between the lighthouse and L'Anse Amour, where fuel and supplies for the lighthouse were landed by ship. Local history says he drove across the bay on the sea ice to give rides to the nurses at the Forteau Grenfell station.

36. The Louie A. Hall Nursing Station was built in 1946 and replaced the aging Dennison Cottage, the first Grenfell nursing station at Forteau.

37. Historical census figures from *Community Inventory of Labrador*, A. Prince Dyke, Department of Labrador Affairs, 1969, p. 6.

ramshackle in exterior appearance, are as clean as can be inside. Usually linoleum on the floors, now and again some painted flower designs on the wood doors, possibly some newspapers stuffing cracks, one or more wood straight-backed chairs, a deal table, and that's about all. They are extremely hospitable, friendly, and polite, and doubtless overjoyed to see some strange faces once in a while. They look upon the new incorporation with Canada as a boom, and hope to gain some benefits from it. They say "things can't possibly change for the worse".³⁸

PART II

LABRADOR RECONNAISSANCE

Since his discussions with Frederick Johnson on "the Newfoundland question", Harp had decided on three specific topics of research. One pertained to the Beothuck people of Newfoundland and came from reading *The Beothucks or Red Indians* by James Howley. Howley wrote that some Beothucks escaped Newfoundland by crossing to Labrador, suggesting the possibility of an ancient relationship across the Strait. Harp would look for the origins of Beothuck people in Labrador.

Prior to 1925 it was thought that Thule people – the ancestors of modern-day Inuit – were the original people of the Arctic. That year, Diamond Jenness identified another people, the "Cape Dorset Eskimo", which predated Thule.³⁹ In 1939, William Wintemberg reported on several 'Cape Dorset Eskimo' sites in Newfoundland.⁴⁰ Now, in 1949, Harp wanted to build on the work of Jenness and Wintemberg, to "clarify the manifestations of Cape Dorset Eskimo culture... in Newfoundland."⁴¹

The third research topic was Harp's idea that Beothuck and Dorset people may have had contact through time. He hoped to "check on the possibilities of contact between the Beothuck and Dorset Eskimo with a view to tracking the diffusion of certain traits which, it is believed, occurred during the Archaic period."⁴²

DAY 1 - Sat, June 25 - Forteau Bay

Harp and Morse were put ashore at Forteau about noon by the *Blue Dolphin's* boat. There, they met resi-

dents and in conversation asked about 'Indian' artifacts. They were referred to Alfred Buckle of Buckle's Point, who reportedly had knowledge of artifacts and places where they were found. Harp and Morse set off along the trail that followed the sandy shoreline to Buckle's Point, about two kilometres distant. On the way they found a site that Harp named "Forteau Bay Barrens" with patinated white flakes, two fragments of chipped stone knives, two arrowheads of different styles and three chipped stone adzes. All were found in sand blowouts, and Harp wrote that, "the area has been so highly worked and reworked by wind action that it will probably be difficult to establish the occupation layer in an undisturbed profile."⁴³

At Buckle's Point, Alfred wasn't at home. They met Victor Buckle, Alfred's son and neighbour, and other residents of Buckle's Point, and in conversations heard about "the Eskimo (?) Site on Long Point", and, "arrow points being found out in L'Anse Amour... somewhere around brooks and settlement."⁴⁴ Harp made plans with Victor for boat transport the next day to Long Point, then he and Morse retraced the route back to Forteau and the *Blue Dolphin* for the night.

DAY 2 - Sun, June 26 - Forteau Bay

For the second day, Harp enlisted two more of the student assistants, Tad Stahl and Nick Dean. The party of four hiked to Buckle's Point, spending some time inspecting the Forteau Bay Barrens site on the way, and met Victor Buckle for their boat ride. They landed "just west of Long Point", at the location described by geologist T.G.B. Lloyd in 1875. Harp was familiar with Lloyd's published work and wished to investigate the "stone buildings" Lloyd had reported.⁴⁵

Harp and crew spent four hours at Long Point, examining and measuring each of the stone structures; in his journal, Harp created a diagram of the area, drew profiles and wrote a description of each structure. He designated the site Forteau Bay-2. He noted that just beyond this linear cluster of struc-

38. Journal, p. 15. After Confederation, exorbitant tariffs on essential consumer goods were replaced by a much lower sales tax, and a monthly 'baby bonus' payment was made to parents. But these changes would take time, and Confederation was just three months old.

39. A new Eskimo culture in Hudson Bay, Diamond Jenness. *Geographical Review* 15:428-437, 1925.

40. Eskimo Sites of the Dorset Culture in Newfoundland Part I, W.J. Wintemberg, *American Antiquity*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1939. (Part II followed in 1940).

41. Archaeological Reconnaissance in Southern Labrador and Northern Newfoundland, Elmer Harp Jr. *Arctic*, Vol. 3 No. 1 (1950), p.203.

42. Ibid.

43. Journal, p. 9-a.

44. Journal, p. 10.

45. Notes on Indian Remains Found on the Coast of Labrador, T.G.B. Lloyd, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 4 (1875), pp. 39-40.

tures there was a “sealing shack” (presumably built and used by residents at that time). Near the sealing shack, Nick Dean found another stone house foundation and, “on grubbing around in the center found fragments of iron, spikes, possibly knife blades, - recent stuff.”⁴⁶

Leaving Long Point at 3:30 PM, the team walked back along shore to English Point and were invited into the home of Robert Trimm and his wife, as related previously. About 6 PM Victor Buckle arrived to bring them back to Buckle’s Point, and from there they started out by foot to Forteau and the *Blue Dolphin*. Along the way they noticed flakes in “the blown out path about 1/4 mi south of the schoolhouse”. They “trowelled down surface and located more chips and one leaf-shaped arrow point in situ.”⁴⁷ Harp would later designate this site Forteau Bay-1. They spent about an hour there before continuing on to the village of Forteau. Just as they reached the wharf, the *Blue Dolphin* “upped hook and set off across the bay to safer anchorage in L’anse Amour.” A strong easterly wind and sea ice had made the western anchorage at Forteau unsafe.

The four stranded archaeologists made their way to the Grenfell station where they found two more of their shipmates – ship’s doctor Tony Susen and Canadian geographer Gifford Beaton – at supper with the nurse in charge, Iris Mitchener, and social worker Ann Thompson. As Harp relates:

Most charming and hospitable, the two girls; gave us supper (the best they could with limited supplies) and we sat around the comfortable living room by the fire talking, etc. Later rolled back the rug and danced first to some ancient records on a Victrola, and then to some better stuff on the radio.

...

Sacked in by 1:15 AM, on the floor of the living room with the various odd blankets, sleeping bags, a hide-a-bed sofa, etc. Thus, far better off than spending the night under someone’s fish flakes.

...

*Our bedding down here for the night will thus give the town much new and refreshing gossip for weeks and months to come.*⁴⁸

DAYS 3-4 - June 27-28 - L’anse Amour

The next morning, Nurse Mitchener had the six men up and at the breakfast table by 8 AM. The *Blue Dolphin* returned to Forteau at 10 AM and Harp arranged with the ship to be picked up at L’anse Amour that evening.

At 11:30 AM, Harp, Morse, Stahl and Dean set off from Forteau to investigate the reported “arrow points” at L’anse Amour. Their travel route traced that of previous days: walk to Buckle’s Point, boat ride across to English Point, another hike out the shore of the bay, past the Long Point structures and the sealing shack, and on to L’anse Amour. They stopped for sandwiches along the way and, at 2 PM, arrived at the first of two brooks. For the rest of the day, and again the next morning (the *Blue Dolphin* stayed overnight at L’anse Amour), they explored a rich site in the vicinity of the two brooks in the cove:

Site is a very rich one. Stretches north up east side of second brook from sea for a distance of 1/4 mile. In depth it reaches back from the brook meanders for 100 – 200 yards. Many surface finds of chips and artifacts (arrow points and knife blades of chipped flint, quartz, polished slate, gouges; etc. etc.) lie all over an area in the blowouts. Site also occurs on west side of second brook, and must cover an entire area of 75 acres.

...

*While the chips and artifacts here at FB – 3 lie mostly in the hollows of the blowouts, in many cases a train of them can be followed right back up the bank. This led to our finding the hearth zone with burnt rock (no plan to it). Many fragments of charcoal and numerous white patinated chips all in situ.*⁴⁹

Harp would conclude that the “entire cove front between the 2 streams was once a great camp.” He noted the distinctive topography of the area, and drew attention to the vertical position of the site in the landscape:

Climbed to top of ridge east of FB-3 and took some 10 photos of the valley and site. Noted clearly a series of raised beaches stretching back up the valley to north. There is a third major bench north of site about 200 yards then a series of a dozen or more minor gravelly strands.

Site itself appears to be concentrated on the second bench at 40 feet above sea level. We did find a few chips down on the first

46. Journal, pp. 10-12.

47. Journal, p. 13.

48. Journal, p. 14. Two days later, while the ship was at L’anse au Loup, Harp says that Gifford Beaton, “grabbed the first boat for Forteau Bay. (Gifford, my boy, as you read this, I hope your pants have cooled off now!).” In December 1949, ship’s doctor Tony Susen and nurse Iris Mitchener were married - see [Funding Grenfell](#) (research by Cindy Gibbons).

49. Journal, p. 17.

bench at 23 feet elevation, but not more 3 or 4, hardly significant.⁵⁰

Harp and Morse produced a series of hand drawn maps, diagrams and profile drawings for the site, which Harp designated “Forteau Bay-3”. In total some 93 artifacts were collected and curated.

On Tuesday afternoon (June 28) Harp and crew left L’Anse Amour and returned by foot to English Point, arriving at 2:30 PM. From there they got a boat ride across to Buckle’s Point and spent some time at the Forteau Bay-1 site on Buckle’s Point. Harp produced a profile drawing and had Morse and Dean “level up from the beach to the upper dunes” to determine the site elevation, for comparison to the site at L’Anse Amour.

By 6 PM the crew of four was back at Forteau in time for supper aboard the *Blue Dolphin*. Harp returned briefly to shore in the company of Bill Black (another of the Canadian geographers) and climbed the ridge for “high-up” photos. Early the next morning the *Blue Dolphin* departed for its next base of operation, L’Anse au Loup.

DAY 5 - Wed, June 29 - L’Anse au Loup

The *Blue Dolphin* anchored at 11 AM at L’Anse au Loup. Some local fishermen came aboard, and from them Harp learned that “Indian points have been picked up in line of blowouts directly behind houses, but nobody seems to know much about it.” After lunch, Harp and Morse went ashore to investigate.

Checked around Main Brook and then back into the first line of blowouts directly behind the houses. *Named this spot Loup - 1. The sand is blowing out at a terrific rate and pickings here were lean. Only a few chips, a chert core good enough for a specimen and one great quartzite knife which I traded from Mr. Ralph Earle for two packs of Camels.*

...

Questioned some of the boys, telling them about chips and showing them some, and one smart little lad said he knew a place up the hill where there were some.

So we went and hit culture immediately we got towards the top of the second bench. Named the site on the second bench Loup - 2.⁵¹

Assisted by Morse, Harp produced a hand drawn map and elevation plan that recorded the position of each site, and a soil profile for Loup-2, where artifacts were found *in situ*. Harp writes about that site:

This is a most extraordinary spot. A major bench, which we estimate to be about 60 feet above sea level runs west up the valley, and it is duned all along the top. One mound of dunes is blown out in a circle about 50 feet in diameter, with a few areas of sod left in center. This spot is a workshop site – the largest I’ve ever seen, and the surface is covered with literally thousands of chips.⁵²

Harp and Morse boarded the *Blue Dolphin* for the evening, and at 5:30 AM the next day the vessel left L’Anse au Loup for its next workstation, Red Bay.

DAY 6 - Thu, June 30 - Red Bay

Blue Dolphin was anchored at Red Bay by 1 PM and Harp went ashore after lunch to make inquiries:

There is no info available here: no one in town, so far as I can ascertain, has ever picked up or ever heard of Indian materials. The topography though apparently ideal from the shelter standpoint, shows nothing but rock outcrops and very thin soil cover. There are no sand plains or duned areas anywhere, nor any blowouts ... This spot appears to be a dry run.⁵³

At the post office Harp shipped his failed camera away for repair (it took 52 stamps). He arranged with Max Pike for boat transport the next day to Carrol Cove and Black Bay, and later he visited with residents:

Stopped in a couple of homes on the west side of the neck – the people are continually kind and courteous. Offered us a glass of fresh milk and I bought a couple of their hand-hooked mats. They make these mats and sell for about \$3.50 apiece to the mission which turns around and sells them to tourists etc. For 15 – 20.00.⁵⁴ Also bought a locally-made mink trimmed parka at Organs store.⁵⁵

DAY 7 - Fri, July 1 - Carrol Cove, Black Bay

Harp and Morse were ashore by 8 AM for their boat transport to Carrol Cove. They spent the morning at

50. Journal, p. 18.

51. Journal, p. 22.

52. Journal, p. 22-a.

53. Journal, p. 25.

54. Harp’s expense accounting in his journal shows that he paid more than the going rate for the two mats. Later, at St Anthony, he’d have long conversations with Dr. Curtis and learn more about the mission’s operations, finances and challenges.

55. Journal, p. 26.

Carroll Cove, and in the afternoon went to Black Bay. Neither place appeared promising for Harp:

Arrived at Carroll Cove around 1100 and saw once that it was a false alarm. It is a very small place, surrounded by low rocky hills, and has two tiny brooks feeding down into it. Not a tree and not a natural exposure in sight. Tramped up one brook, around the hill, and down the other just to make sure, but no dice.

...

[At Black Bay...] Archaeology is out here. No exposures or blowouts. Everything heavily bushed in. However, there is a terrace running up west bank of the Valley (about 40' above sea-level) which might have recent camp remains on it. But I couldn't get over to that side because I didn't have my waders.⁵⁶

They returned to the *Blue Dolphin* about 9 PM. Susen, the doctor/radio operator, made shortwave contact with Boston and Harp was able to relay a phone message to his wife, Elaine, and receive a reply. "Quite a thrill!" says Harp. That evening there was a "tremendous bull session in the salon lasting until after midnight. Many laughs."

DAYS 8-10 - July 2-4 - Red Bay (fog bound)

For three days the vessel remained fog-bound at Red Bay. Harp stayed aboard the *Blue Dolphin*, catching up on the artifact cataloguing and his journal, and playing monopoly with the crew. Finally, on the morning of July 5, the fog cleared, and *Blue Dolphin* left Red Bay bound for St Anthony, Newfoundland.

DAY 11-12 - July 5-6 - St Anthony

The *Blue Dolphin* arrived at St Anthony at 6:15 PM. Harp and others from the ship spent the evening ashore in the company of Dr Curtis and Dr Thomas of the Grenfell Mission. Harp returned to the ship at 10:30 PM for his last night aboard the *Blue Dolphin*. The next day, July 6, he and Morse rented accommodation at the St Anthony Inn and had all their gear brought ashore. The *Blue Dolphin* sailed the following morning, heading north to the Hamilton Inlet region of Labrador.

Harp wasn't done with his Labrador survey. He wanted to include the eastern part of the Labrador Straits coast in his work, but that wasn't possible from the *Blue Dolphin*. Instead, he planned to board the coasting vessel *Northern Ranger* that would, in two days, bring him to West St Modeste. The next depar-

ture of the *Northern Ranger* was scheduled for July 14, which meant Harp and Morse had a week to fill.

DAYS 13-19 - July 7-13 -

Ireland Bight, Locke Cove

Harp and Morse spent the morning inquiring about boat transport to Ireland Bight, a settlement in Hare Bay, south of St Anthony. Arrangements were made and they arrived there at 5 PM.

At Ireland Bight Harp and Morse would camp for the first time. Until now they'd bunked on the *Blue Dolphin* (save for one night's misadventure at Forteau) and were served breakfast and supper aboard ship, with a sandwich lunch on shore.

They made camp on high ground behind the settlement. There were two tents, one for cooking/storage, the other for sleeping, and a lean-to. Residents provided firewood and material for tent poles. For food, they had a variety of tinned rations:

...most of the items in the ration tin are not labeled, so we are learning by trial and error which is which. Also there aren't suitable directions on some things, such as the breakfast cereal, so that didn't stew up too well. However, there is plenty of good stuff, including jams, and a pound of fresh butter, which is excellent.⁵⁷

They spent two nights camped at Ireland Bight, then moved on to Locke's Cove for another four nights. Fresh salmon and codfish gifted by residents often replaced the tinned rations. At Ireland Bight they met Levi Dawe, who showed them an artifact he'd found, which Harp describes as "a 2/3 basal fragment of a pressure-flaked knife blade, made out of a peculiar red stone which I don't know." At Locke's Cove, Lot Elliott told them of a place at nearby How Harbour. Harp spent parts of two days at How Harbour investigating the remains of a structure, and concluded, "it has all the appearance of an early white dwelling foundation, although there is the possibility of a late Indian camp on the same spot." They left Locke's Cove in the early morning of July 13 and were back at St Anthony with "time to shave before dinner at 6:30".

DAYS 20-21 - July 14-15 - Northern Ranger

With all their gear, Harp and Morse boarded the *Northern Ranger* on the evening of July 14th. "This isn't a bad little ship...", Harp wrote. "Have a spot of tea, checked the engine room (she was built in Paisley,

56. Journal, p. 29.

57. Journal, p. 36.

58. Journal, p. 42.

Scotland around 1926), and hit the sack at 1230.” The ship sailed at 4 AM, stopping at several villages before making course for Battle Harbour, its northern terminus on the Labrador coast. From Battle Harbour the vessel worked its way south, arriving at West St. Modeste on the evening of July 16.

DAY 22 - Sat July 16 - West St Modeste

West St Modeste, like many other coastal villages, lacked a docking facility for the *Northern Ranger*. The ship anchored near shore, and passengers and cargo were ferried by small boat between ship and shore. “One of the boats that came out to meet us was that of Father Tessier, the French priest...” Tessier arranged for all their gear to be brought ashore and stored “under lock and key in the shed of a Mr. Pike.” Tessier led Harp and Morse to “a pretty fair campsite on the rocky bench back up from the houses. It is a barren spot, there aren't any trees around for miles, but will be okay unless it blows too hard.”⁵⁹

They established camp with help from local people who provided firewood, tent poles and water. Harp says they were “all set up, water buckets filled, some kindling ready etc., by 10 PM, with a crowd of marveling men and boys around looking over the equipment.”⁶⁰

DAY 23 - Sun, July 17 - West St Modeste, Capstan Island

The day started with sunshine but soon became overcast with fog and SW wind. Harp and Morse spent the morning drying out their camp, which had been packed away wet on the *Ranger*, and watching as boatloads of people passed by on their way to the morning church service with Father Tessier.

*Later as we were getting a bite to eat, I noted by actual count that there were 19 men and boys clustered and ringed about us watching. This camp has been Mecca today, what with its being Sunday and no fishing done. It has been somewhat like living in a goddamn goldfish bowl, and more than once they got in our hair, although we couldn't say anything of course.*⁶¹

After lunch one of the visitors described an “odd-looking stone like earthenware” found in the gardens, so Harp and Morse “hot-footed it down” to the place to investigate. Harp later writes:

*... someone recalled that there used to be some old French buildings hereabouts, and then I remembered that Father Tessier had said this was once a French seigneurie. The answer: imported clay roof tiles!*⁶²

About 2 PM Harp was guided by John O'Dell to “a spot on the point (which separates the spot from L'Anse au Diable) where he had once found an arrowhead and chipped stone knife.” Harp found nothing there and concluded that the place wasn't well-suited for a site. He and Morse carried on along the beaten footpath for another mile, to the settlement at Capstan Island.

*The small settlement of six or eight houses clusters on the point opposite the island, and by and large, it is a much more pre-possessing set up than West St. Modeste, which is quite grubby in appearance and poor-looking. There were even three big handsome Guernsey cows grazing there.*⁶³

They visited the home of Victor Fowler and “spent a very pleasant two hours or so talking. Fowler is a fine person: he wanted to know all about the war, and he listened agape at some of our tales of technology in the outside world.” Victor knew nothing about artifact finds in the area, but Harp decided to return the next day to check – especially around the brook at L'Anse au Diable (which he'd learned was pronounced *Lancy Jobble*). “Left the Fowler's around 6 and got back to camp before 7. Flies bad on the trail.”

DAY 24 - Mon, July 18 - L'Anse au Diable

10 AM the next morning they set out for L'Anse au Diable. In about an hour they “struck first culture signs about 1/2 mile east of the Diable settlement as we came into the cove proper. This will be named Diable-2, although it is undoubtedly a part of the single manifestation which fills the cove.”

There is here, as with the other nearby places, one major turf horizon 4" - 6" thick which appears now and again at the present surface and then again is buried deeply by dunes. This is a culture zone.

...
The general site characteristics are identical with the aforementioned at Forteau and L'anse a Loup. No material could be located in situ here, but at several points trains of chips could

59. Journal, p. 55.

60. Ibid.

61. Journal, p. 56.

62. Journal, p. 57.

63. Journal, p. 58.

be traced back up to the peaty turf zone, so that it is quite apparent that this is the culture horizon.

...
*Got a fair representation of specimens today including a number of different types of points, knife blades, some retouched flake - scrapers, etc.*⁶⁴

They worked at L'Anse au Diable until 4:30 PM, and then wrapped up by "running a leveling traverse of the dunes." Back at camp they had a quiet supper, as the local men and boys were still out fishing. "It was a beautiful evening, finally coming off perfectly clear; there was a pink sunset over the Strait, and we saw two large freighters and one big passenger liner heading down north from the Gulf of St. Lawrence." It had been a very good day.

DAY 25 - Tue, July 19 - Pinware Bay

Harp had arranged with Mike Pike of West St Modeste for boat transport to Pinware Bay. They left the wharf at 10 AM and motored along shore, passing by Ship Head and the settlement of Pinware, then along the long sandbar and into the lagoon of the Pinware River.

At the mouth of the lagoon, they "came ashore in 'the Easter settlement' as it is called. Just three houses here and one of them abandoned, and they are literally built on the shifting sands of the dunes." Harp observed a "fine series of recessional beaches and parallel dunes which trend E-W in line with the present shore." Local people there knew nothing of artifact finds. Scouting around, Harp found "a few small scattered chips of quartzite and one crude core (or even chopper) of brown quartzite... on approximately the same level as the present houses, about 20 feet above sea level." He designated the site Pinware East-1. Morse, working some distance away, found another site, "a solid half mile east of the houses and about 1/4 mile north of the beach". Harp named it Pinware East-2 and wrote:

*For an area 10' in diameter there is a mound of granite stones the size of watermelons and scattered over this mound are the disarticulated bones of a dozen or so dogs or wolves. A few scattered chips of quartzite and one fine chipped and ground adze which lay directly at the base of the mesa.*⁶⁵

As they were without any lunch supplies, Harp and Morse left the site at 2 PM, returned by boat to West

St Modeste and were back at camp by 3 PM. After tea and a lunch, they tackled a pressing job: "the big laundry".

DAY 26 - Wed, July 20 - Pinware

Most of the morning was spent drying clothes, "doing odd jobs, and bagging up yesterday's specimens, etc." At 11 AM they set out along the trail to Pinware to meet Father Tessier, who would provide introductions in the village. Along the way they found a site that Harp named West St Modeste-1. "Barely a half mile on the way we came upon the tremendous workshop site... This is the first find of triangular arrow points... cached two bags of chips to be picked up on the return trip."⁶⁶

Carrying on along the trail, they arrived at Pinware at 2 PM. There they met the schoolteacher, Mrs Hawco, who was a "most bright and sprightly person – very interested in all my dealings". Father Tessier arrived and introduced Harp to local men who knew of artifacts found near the church. One man showed "a small scraper" that he'd found. Harp visited the locale and designated it Pinware West-1.

Regarding Father Tessier Harp writes:

*Spent most pleasant remainder of the afternoon chatting with Father Tessier, who has been here only two years, and, my mistake, is a veteran of WWII. We swapped war stories, as he was in the Italy a little later than I was. Then we talked about his work here. He is a brother of the Oblate order, and he knows Toulette who has the Kluane mission in Y. T. He comes from Lake St. John, P. Q., Where his father was Indian agent for many years, and he knew Frank Speck from his many trips up there. Also he thinks he met Fred Johnson up there with Speck.*⁶⁷

Harp, Morse and Father Tessier stayed for supper at Pinware with the schoolteacher, Mrs. Hawco. They were served a "fine supper of baked salmon, fresh bread, coffee, pickles and sausages... Father Tessier broke out a gallon of maple syrup which had been sent him from home, and we soaked our bread in that."⁶⁸

After supper, in a soft rain and with blackflies that were "out savagely in the muggy atmosphere", they made their way back to camp at West St Modeste for the night.

64. Journal, pp. 59-61.

65. Journal, p. 61-62.

66. Journal, p. 69.

67. Journal, p. 68. 'Fred Johnson' is Frederick Johnson, Peabody Museum, with whom Harp had worked the previous summer in the Yukon.

68. Journal, p. 69.

DAY 27 - Thu, July 21 - Pinware

The day began with a dark sky and intermittent showers. Harp and Morse stayed in camp, catching up on "...cataloguing and wrapping specimens to date... the count is up over 250 now." They have a constant stream of visitors to their camp, men and boys usually engaged in the commercial fishery, but the fishing season was slow to start. "It's like being a cage bear at a zoo, or a godforsaken goldfish in a bowl."

At 2 PM Mike Pike brought them by boat to the Pinware settlement at Ship's Head. Harp and Morse climbed the hill behind the village to investigate a series of blowouts and raised beach ridges or 'benches'. On a major bench at an estimated 60 feet above sea level, they found "several large workshop sites (called Pinware West-3), typified by an abundance of quartz's scrap and very little of any other material." Artifacts found here were "exactly the same sort of thing as at West St. Modeste-1."

At higher elevation, estimated to be at least 200' above sea level, they found another site that Harp named Pinware West-2. He notes that here, "the material is different, the technique is crude, and the tools are unlike anything I have found heretofore." With some trowel-work, they found "a hearth on the surface of the gravel right beside the greatest concentration of chips..." Harp reiterates that this discovery is "on top of the gravel beach and under the complete overburden."⁶⁹

After these findings Harp and Morse returned to Pinware to plan with Father Tessier for the next day. They planned to travel with Tessier on his schooner to Blanc Sablon and then to Flower's Cove, Newfoundland. At 6 PM, Mike Pike (who'd waited for them in Pinware) took them by boat back to their West St Modeste camp where, in strong NE wind, they turned in early.

But no sooner had I gotten squared around when up came another visitor – this one a workman from O'Ryan's fish house, and he came right into the tent until 11 PM! I'll be damned glad to leave this place – the archaeology has been good, but too much wind and too many people!

DAY 28 - Fri, July 22 - West St Modeste

Harp's frustration continued the next day. The wind increased and they quickly broke camp. With gear packed they waited all day for Father Tessier, but he didn't arrive. "Set up the tent again before supper and wrote to Elaine. Cold night. Wind down. Bag at 11 PM."

DAY 29 - Sat, July 23 - Capstan Island

In the morning, they got word that Father Tessier had been delayed by his duties and wouldn't be ready to go for another couple of days. Regarding the delay, Harp says: "Actually another couple of days here won't make much difference, although I am anxious now to get to work over in Newfoundland, and also to leave this damn wind-smitten spot... we put up the cook shelter again and started to do business once more on the ledge."⁷⁰

That afternoon, Harp and Morse headed out on the trail to Capstan Island. Along the way they spotted flakes in the path and identified a new site, West St Modeste-2. "Trowelling exposed a hearth zone of charcoal-blackened sand and several specimens in situ, including a rough stone knife, a basal fragment of chipped knife blade, and a retouched blade-scraper."⁷¹

They carried on along the trail towards Capstan Island, looking for the location of "cairns reported on the beach about half mile east of Capstan Island"⁷². They found the place, with just a single cairn remaining, and that one in poor shape. Harp described it as:

Rectangular with interior dimensions of 24" X 60" and the wall stood about 18" high, although the soils had very evidently been disturbed before we got there. The size indicates that it might have been a burial cairn, but there is not a shred of evidence that had fallen into the center, and I trowelled down through the finer crushed stone to a depth of 2" before striking solid granite.

Picked up several peculiar-looking chips in these spots, very large, heavily weathered, and very chalky. Two of these fragments fit together and form a strange gouge-like groove, possibly like a section of stone lamp or pot, but I can't tell now what the material is.⁷³

69. Journal, pp. 71-71-a.

70. Journal, p. 73.

71. Journal, p. 74.

72. Reported by T.G.B. Lloyd in 1875, as noted by Harp in his journal.

73. Journal, p. 75.

Back at camp by 7 PM, they “cooked supper in howling northeast wind and returned to the tent as soon as possible.” Inevitably, a visitor arrived, “one of the men from the village with a couple of pieces of crockery for me to see.” These had been salvaged from the wreck of the *City of Toronto* about 90 years previous. “One of the pieces is a luster-ware pitcher and the other a handsome Irish cordial jug,” says Harp. “I expressed an interest in these pieces, and he said I could have them. So I’ll give him a couple packs of cigarettes tomorrow.”⁷⁴

DAY 30 - Sun, July 24 - West St Modeste, Pinware

Harp and Morse woke early to rain and strong NE wind. By noon the wind had decreased, and they returned to West St Modeste-2 to do the noted “leveling traverse” for site elevation. With that done they carried on toward Pinware, revisiting sites at West St Modeste-1, Pinware West-2 and Pinware West-3 to do elevation work at each site. Harp also added another site designation, Pinware West-4:

*This is the spot where Pinware settlement used to be and where one old man on Ships Head told me a number of Indian artifacts were dug up in the gardens. I could see traces of the gardens but no culture signs as everything is now heavily grassed over. Also examine the cut bank of the south brook but found nothing.*⁷⁵

Back at Pinware settlement by 3:30 PM, Harp and Morse had lunch by the brook and then went to meet Mrs. Luke O’Dell, who had several things to show them. One was a carved ivory figurine, about which Harp says: “To me this looks like a white man garbed in 16th-century court dress, say of the period of John Cabot, and it may very possibly indicate a spot where some of the early white discoverers touched in and perhaps traded with the natives.”⁷⁶

That evening, Harp and Morse had supper with Father Tessier at Pinware and confirmed plans for departure the next morning at 8 AM. After supper they set off for camp at West St Modeste, accompanied by local resident Jerry Pike. Reaching the brook near Pinware, they found the tide was in and the brook impassable. They walked upstream in search of a crossing place and in doing so found a new site, “on

the first bench up on the south side of the northerly brook”, which Harp designated Pinware West-5. Beyond the two brooks, Jerry Pike led them along the “winter trail”, a different route than they’d walked before. They found “another blowout in the path which was littered with quartz chips” and named it West St Modeste-3.⁷⁷

They finally made it back to camp at 10 PM, just as it was getting dark. The next morning Harp and Morse boarded Father Tessier’s schooner, bound first for Blanc Sablon and then onto Flower’s Cove and the Newfoundland portion of Harp’s 1949 research.

Harp’s Labrador Survey

In 1949 Elmer Harp held two academic degrees, BA and MA, in anthropology from Harvard University. In his studies and his work as Curator of Anthropology, he explored a diverse range of world culture. His undergraduate courses included *Chinese History*, *History of Argentina* and *Asiatic Cultures*. Other courses introduced archaeology: *Prehistoric Cultures of Europe* and *Reconnaissance Surveying*. Later, Harp developed an interest in Russia and engaged with the Russian anthropologists. For Harp, archaeology was intertwined with the broader study of anthropology.

Reflecting, perhaps, his anthropological background, Harp viewed the current-day residents of the Labrador coast as an important knowledge resource regarding ancient culture. In Labrador, Harp spent a great deal of his time interacting with local people, engaging them in conversation and probing their knowledge of “Indian” artifacts and places. This was his research starting point everywhere he visited. Most of his field reconnaissance work was premised on the reports of local informants; indeed, he made designations in his site-naming scheme based solely on local reports, despite finding nothing himself (e.g., Pinware West-4).

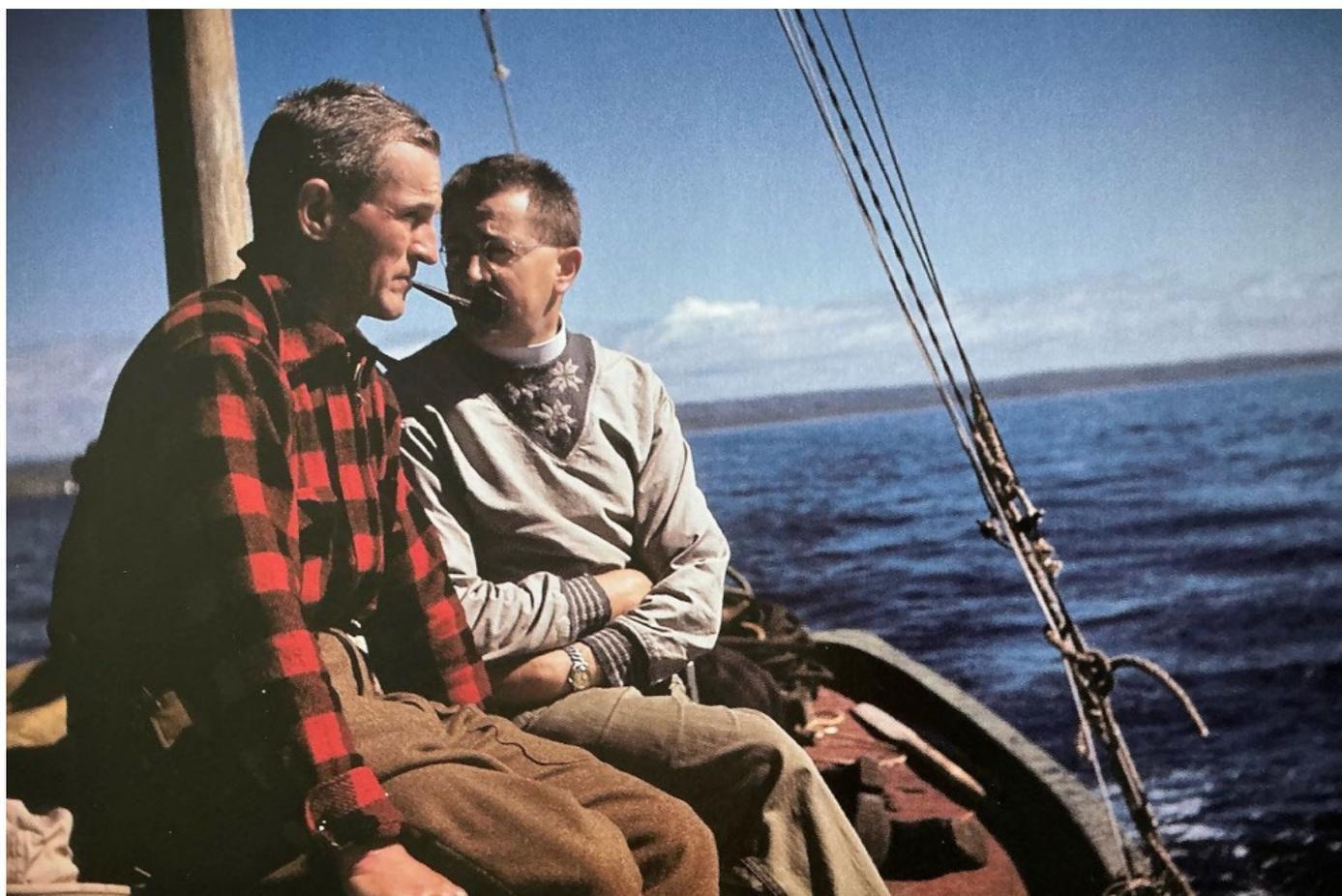
Harp’s 1949 survey was also premised on the assumption that evidence of ancient culture could be found on the current-day ground surface, at places where the ground had been eroded – Harp called them “exposures”. Sand dunes with blowouts and

74. Journal, p. 76. Harp carried a supply of Camel cigarettes which he used in barter and as gifts.

75. Journal, p. 77.

76. Journal p. 77-a.

77. Journal, p. 79.



Elmer Harp and Father Tessier aboard Tessier's schooner

Our Lady of Labrador, on the way to Flower's Cove, Newfoundland for the next stage of Harp's work. (Harp 2002, p. 34).

eroding stream banks were prime locations.⁷⁸ This approach proved successful at Forteau and L'Anse au Loup, but at Red Bay he found "no sand plains or duned areas anywhere, nor any blowouts." At Carrol Cove there was "not a natural exposure in sight". For Harp, such places offered no potential. It may appear remarkable from the perspective of a modern archaeologist, but it seems that Harp rarely put a shovel in the ground during his Labrador survey.

This is not a criticism of Harp's work, but rather it's a reflection of the evolving methodology of archaeology at that time. Today's multi-disciplinary, science-based approach to archaeology did not exist in 1949, but it was beginning, and Harp embraced aspects of it.⁷⁹ He clearly recognized the importance of *context* for archaeological finds. Where surface

finds were made, he took careful note of the natural stratigraphy and sought to locate cultural material *in situ*. He also recognized the principal of geological uplift and its implication for archaeological sites. He noted the pattern of raised beaches on the coastal landscape and took time to measure the height above sea level of each site that he identified.⁸⁰

For a modern archaeologist, Harp's 1949 journal entries may seem remarkable for what they do not contain. There is little mention of the *age* of finds, nor of their possible cultural affiliation. Harp's sole mention of 'age' comes on his first day ashore, at the Forteau Bay Barrens site, where he notes that, "the extreme patination of some of the chips and artifacts would suggest age."⁸¹

In his journal, Harp simply doesn't speculate

78. Archaeologists today might call this methodology 'surface inspection'.

79. In 1947 and 1948 Harp worked with Frederick Johnson, a strong advocate of interdisciplinary approaches to archaeology.

80. The geographers aboard the Blue Dolphin likely contributed significantly to Harp knowledge in this regard. During his first evening at Flower's Cove, Harp fell into conversation with Swedish botanists and entomologists, who maintained that that region is geologically quite old despite its relative low elevation. From this Harp concludes that geological uplift was very different in northern Newfoundland compared to Labrador. (Journal, p. 81).

81. There was no method of determining the absolute age of an archaeological site at that time. The March 1949 issue of *Science* (vol 109, issue 2827) introduced the new technique of radiocarbon dating.

regarding age or cultural identity. He devotes his time and efforts in Labrador to collecting and recording data from the informants he met and the sites he visited, in descriptive notes, maps and drawings. His broader thinking and conclusions would come later, after further study and reflection, in his publications. Of course, Harp had a very limited frame of reference for his survey work in Labrador in 1949. There was no prior, systematic work for him to consult; he was breaking new ground (figuratively, if not literally) in a new environment, employing rigorous methodology in keeping with the new archaeology that was emerging.

In 1963 Harp presented a summary interpretation of his Labrador fieldwork. In total he'd discovered 23 sites in Labrador, each of which he classified as either an occupation site, a workshop site or a campsite. Based upon stratigraphic evidence, he identified three general phases of occupation that together formed "a long continuum". The oldest occupation was situated on a pebble and sand beach, below deposits of aeolian sand and layers of buried turf. Subsequent occupations left cultural materials in or below the buried turf layers. Other cultural evidence, located high in the stratigraphic profile, indicated occupations of "relative lateness." Harp sought supporting evi-

Harp's 1949 Labrador Sites.

This table compiled with the assistance of Stephen Hull, PAO, Government NL.

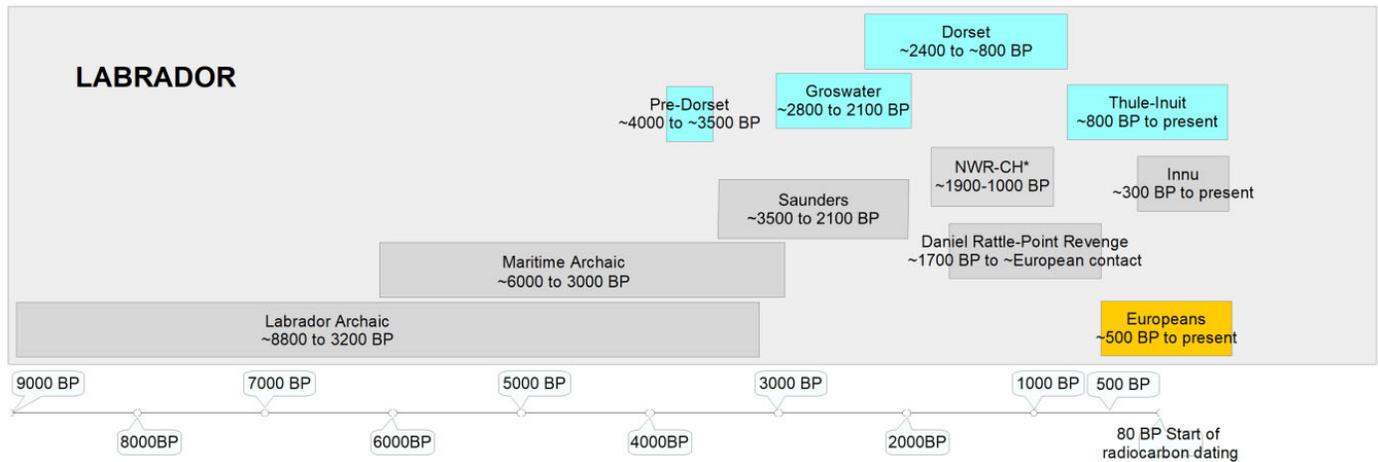
Harp's Site Name	Current Name	Borden ID	Cultural Identity
Forteau Bay Barrens	Forteau Cemeteries?	EiBf-41 ⁸²	Maritime Archaic; Precontact
Forteau Bay-1	Buckle's Point	EiBf-02	Labrador Archaic; Maritime Archaic; Intermediate North West River phase
Forteau Bay-2 (Long Point)	Crow Head	EiBf-03	Inuit?
Forteau Bay-3	L'Anse Amour	EiBf-04	Labrador Archaic; Maritime Archaic; Intermediate Saunders & NWR phases; Recent First Nation; Precontact
L'Anse au Loup-1	L'Anse au Loup-1	EjBe-01	Maritime Archaic?
L'Anse au Loup-2	L'Anse au Loup-2	EjBe-02	Maritime Archaic
Diable-1	Diable-1	EjBe-03	Maritime Archaic; Recent First Nation?
Diable-2	Iceberg	EjBe-19	Maritime Archaic; Intermediate Saunders phase; Precontact. <i>This is a significant site; late Saunders dates; may show relation of Late M.A. to</i>
West St Modeste-1	Cowpath	EjBe-07	Labrador Archaic; Maritime Archaic. <i>This is M.A.P. Renouf's graduate research site; second oldest site after Pimware Hill.</i>
West St Modeste-2	West St Modeste-2	EjBe-06	Labrador Archaic?; Maritime Archaic?
West St Modeste-3			
Pinware East-1	Easter Settlement	EjBe-32	Maritime Archaic
Pinware West-1	Pinware West-1	EjBe-08	Maritime Archaic
Pinware West-2	Pinware West-2	EjBe-09	Maritime Archaic
Pinware West-3	Pinware Hill	EjBe-10	Labrador Archaic; Maritime Archaic (early). <i>Oldest known site in province.</i>
Pinware West-4	Pinware West-4	EjBe-11	Maritime Archaic?
Pinware West-5	Pinware W-5	EjBe-12	Maritime Archaic?; Intermediate Saunders; Precontact; European

82. The location of the 'Forteau Bay Barrens' site was uncertain at the time of writing. With a re-reading of Harp's 1949 journal entries, a location near the present-day cemeteries is suggested. This correlates with EiBf-41, the 'Forteau Cemeteries' site. This site is Elmer Harp's first archaeological discovery in NL.

83. Diable-1 is not assigned in Harp's 1949 journal; he starts with Diable-2.

84. Harp describes this location as "about 250 yards in land from West St. Modeste-1, and on the very same level." This locale is probably included in the EjBe-7 site designation (the Cowpath site).

85. Harp's two locales at Pinware East are now integrated in one site designation.



Cultural Identification Scheme for Labrador Today.

Source: *Archaeological Evidence for Land Use and Occupancy in Newfoundland and Labrador*. Provincial Archaeology Office, Government NL, 2025.

dence for this temporal scheme in the typology of artifacts from the sites. While there wasn't a clear distinction between artifact assemblages, there were notable trends. The earliest occupations, he wrote, “do not have the complex tool and weapon inventories that are characteristic of the middle-range sites, and they also lack ground and polished tools.” The middle phase was characterized by “a proliferation of projectile point types and a well-developed series of ground and polished implements.” Harp adopted the designation *Boreal Archaic* (Byers, 1959) to identify this occupation continuum in southern Labrador, and drew attention to its relationship to the ‘old stone culture’ discovered by Strong (1930) in the Nain-Hopedale region.

Archaeological excavations at Port au Choix in the late 1960s led by MUN archaeologist James A. Tuck led to the recognition of *Maritime Archaic*, a distinctive Archaic-period coastal adaptation focused upon the resources of the sea. In 1973 and ’74 field research in southern Labrador by Tuck and Robert McGhee showed that Maritime Archaic people were present in the region some 7,500 years ago, and had, perhaps, developed from the earliest ‘Palaeo-Indian’ occupation of the southern Labrador coast nearly 9,000 years ago. Today, this earliest period of occupation, together with the initial appearance of Archaic culture in Labrador, is referred to as *Labrador Archaic*.

EPILOGUE

David Nutt took the *Blue Dolphin* north to Labrador and Greenland waters for three consecutive years after the first expedition in 1949 and returned again in the mid-1950s. On these expeditions he was joined by

numerous scientists, including Norwegian physiologist Per F. Scholander. One day aboard the *Blue Dolphin*, Scholander asked Nutt why the glacial ice was fizzing where it met the ocean water. Nutt explained it was the release of air, trapped in the ice when it was initially formed. Scholander studied this for years after and laid the foundation for modern climate change research in the Arctic. Nutt also saw the practical application of the phenomenon: “Put it in your Scotch,” he said, “and you’ll have instant iced Scotch and soda.” Beginning in the late 1950s Nutt served two five-year terms as governor with the Arctic Institute and was chairman of the Institute in 1961-62. He was widely recognized and respected for his contributions to Arctic research.

On his return to Hanover in the fall of 1949 **Tony Morse** began his undergraduate studies in geology at Dartmouth College. He rejoined Nutt and the *Blue Dolphin* for three additional expeditions in the summers of 1950-52 and returned to Labrador again in the late 1950s for geological research. In 1958 he suffered an unfortunate accident that left him with a broken leg. He was airlifted to the Grenfell nursing station at North West River where he met nursing volunteer Dorothy Forbes, a student at Vassar College. They were married two years later. Morse earned a PhD in geology from McGill in 1962, and in 1971 joined the faculty of Umass Amherst, where he remained for the duration of his academic career. For 10 years, beginning in 1971, Morse and his graduate students researched the Nain Anorthosite Complex using the *R/V Pitsiulak* as a mobile research base.

Elmer Harp Jr. would return to Newfound-

land again the following year, 1950, though in a quite different fashion. Accompanied by his wife Elaine and young son Jack, he'd travel by road to Newfoundland and then along the island's northern peninsula – not a simple task in 1950.

Harp completed his PhD degree at Harvard in 1953 based upon his Newfoundland & Labrador research. He developed a circumpolar research perspective, engaging with the National Museum of Denmark and Soviet anthropologists. At Dartmouth College, in 1963, he and northern ethnologist Robert McKennan co-founded the Department of Anthropology. “For two decades, Harp was the driving force behind anthropology at Dartmouth, and during these years he produced many students who went on to professions in anthropology and Arctic archaeology, a unique achievement for an undergraduate college.”⁸⁶

In 2012 Dartmouth College held a 50th anniversary reunion for the Class of 1962 and published a collection of “Unique Hanover Memories” contributed by those students. One reads: “Prof. Elmer Harp, chewing thoughtfully on his pipe, embodying the joys of field anthropology.”

Time and ship-building technology eventually caught up with the *Blue Dolphin*, as steel-hulled vessels replaced wooden schooners for northern expeditions. Sometime in the late '50s or early '60s the *Blue Dolphin* was sold and moved to Sarnia, Ontario, on the Great Lakes. Plans for restoration never transpired and the *Blue Dolphin* deteriorated, sinking twice while at dock. A renewed effort to restore the vessel in the late '70s and early '80s involved singer/songwriter Stan Rogers,⁸⁷ but again, the project failed. To avoid local creditors, the owner had the schooner towed across the border to the US, and the *Blue Dolphin's* days ended at a marina in the Detroit River. But the schooner isn't gone, at least not yet. The sunken remains of the *Blue Dolphin* – luxury yacht, WWII station ship and Arctic research vessel – are still visible on [Google Maps](#).

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Archaeological Investigations on Dog Bay Brook, First and Second Ponds, October 19-23, 2024. PAO Permit# 24.36

Fred Schwarz
Black Spruce Heritage Services

Introduction

In August 2024, the Provincial Archaeology Office (PAO) requested an archaeological survey of the shorelines adjacent to Dog River (better known as Dog Bay Brook), First and Second Ponds (Figure 1). Black Spruce Heritage Services was retained to complete the survey.

Background Research

Background research indicated the presence of one previously registered archaeological site within the Dog Bay Brook, First and Second Ponds Study Area, this being DiAp-01, an enigmatic array of low earthworks recorded by Helen Devereux in Stoneville in 1965 (Devereux 1966) and subsequently reported destroyed by road construction. In addition, DiAp-03, the large and important precontact and contact-period Beothuk site at Boyd's Cove (Pastore 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986), is situated in Notre Dame Bay, only 2 km northwest of the Study Area. Review of aerial imagery indicated that the Study Area had the potential to serve as a precontact travel route between the Boyd's Cove area in Notre Dame Bay to the west, and Dog Bay to the east. Moreover, Dog Bay Brook has the potential to have served as a travel route from either bay, south towards Gander River and Gander Lake. Review of



Figure 1: The 2024 Dog Bay Brook, First and Second Ponds Study Area.

historic literature indicated that Dog Bay Brook was also the likely location of George Skeffington's early 18th-century salmon fishery in Dog Bay (Rollmann 1994; Taylor 1985). The Study Area therefore had potential for archaeological resources pertaining to both the precontact Indigenous occupation of the region, and significant historic European sites as well.

Field Survey
Archaeological survey was undertaken on Dog Bay



Photo 1: Eel Fence at the Mouth of Dog Bay Brook.

Brook, First and Second Ponds on October 19-23, 2024, under PAO Permit # 24.36. Pedestrian survey indicated that in general, the Study Area consisted of slate bedrock ridges alternating with wetlands, swamp forest, and alderbeds and offered few locations suitable for past settlement or amenable to subsurface testing where dry, level sediments were encountered, they were in many cases associated with cottage developments and had been artificially landscaped. Nevertheless, 24 assessment locations were identified for close assessment, either close visual inspection or test-pitting, or both.

No evidence was found of artifacts or features pertaining to George Skeffington's early 18th-century salmon fishery in Dog Bay. The most likely location for a salmon-fishing weir is at the mouth of Dog Bay Brook, approximately 1 km upstream from Stoneville at the entrance to the Dog Bay Brook estuary. There was (in October 2024) a fence for the eel fishery at this location, and an ample supply of cob-

bles and boulders for building a stone fish weir to block the stream (Photo 1). However, there was no discernable alignment of cobbles and boulders today, nor associated historic artifacts that might indicate the presence of an historic weir. That said, the actual harvesting location for an early 18th-century salmon fishery might yield little if any evidence for activity other than the weir itself. The most likely residential area and collection point for such fishers would be at the entrance to the estuary, where larger boats might be moored and loaded. This would be near Graveyard Point in present-day Stoneville. However, surface-inspection of the beaches here yielded no artifacts of potentially early 18th-century date.

Survey on First Pond identified the remains of two 20th-century sawmill sites near the Dog Bay Brook outflow (DiAp-5 and DiAp-06), both of which were likely in use between the 1950s and the 1980s or later. No sites were identified on Second Pond. However, survey did identify a surviving segment of the

earthworks reported at DiAp-01, and one precontact archaeological site on First Pond (DiAp-04).

Stoneville (DiAp-01)

During assessment in the Stoneville area, a conspicuous earth ridge or mound was noted, extending for approximately 12m from the foundation and deck of a house east of the United Church cemetery to a rock and gravel parking pad for a recreational trailer (Photo 2). This segment is consistent with Devereux’s description of the “Mound A” portion of the earthworks at the site, being 1m high, and composed of earth with some boulders, and the observed ridge appears to be a short surviving segment of the DiAp-01 “Mound A” earthwork (the remainder of Mound A indeed seemingly destroyed to construct the present-day shore road in Stoneville).

Devereux’s original description of Mound A indicated that it tracked the high-water mark, and that it was relatively broad, possibly consistent with a natural storm beach feature. However, the surviving segment appears to be too steep-sided and too well-defined to be a natural storm beach and does appear to be artificial.

The nature and age of this feature remains indeterminate, but it appears unlikely to be a fortifica-

tion. The 2024 revisit adds little in terms of dating. Devereux’s informant collected both a collection of historic European artifacts, and three precontact stone gouges from the eroding edge of the mound and the adjacent beach. The collection at the Canadian Museum of History consists of various pieces of ceramic, iron (axe head), kaolin pipe fragments, bones and lead shot, along with a large green gouge. Temple’s recollection (Blair Temple pers. comm.) was that the ceramic material consisted of white earthenwares of 19th century date.

Inspection of the beach in 2024 yielded artifacts dating, at the earliest, to the last half of the 19th century. Despite the complicating presence of the gouges, which may or may not be associated with the earthworks, the artifacts collected and observed at the site suggest a date no earlier than the second half of the 19th century or the early 20th century. As to function, both the form and the dating of the mounds recorded by Devereux makes fortification unlikely. Most likely, these mounds are the result of clearing and demarcating fields for cultivation or livestock.

Dog Bay Brook First Pond 1 (DiAp-04)

On Dog Bay Brook First Pond, one precontact ar-

Photo 2: Surviving Segment of “Mound A” Earthwork at DiAp-01, Stoneville.





Photo 3: The Point of Land at DiAp-04.

archaeological site (DiAp-04) was discovered during test-pitting on a prominent point of land opposite the Dog Bay Brook outflow, perhaps the highest-potential landform on the lake (Photo 3). The point here is traversed by an ATV/snowmobile trail leading north to south that cuts across the inside of the point. East of the trail, terrain rises steeply to the bedrock outcrop at the end of the point. East of the trail, the ground rises somewhat more gradually, but as can be seen in tree throws, it exhibits very thin sediments directly overlying bedrock. The trough along which the trail runs offers a strip of potentially habitable level ground approximately 10m wide and 30 m long. No cultural material was noted during inspection of the eroding bank at the southern end of this trail.

Eight test pits were excavated at 5m intervals along this level strip (Photo 4). A small collection of lithic debitage (Photo 5), mostly tiny resharpening

flakes of white chert and one of quartz, was recovered from two adjacent test pits (out of eight test pits in total, the remainder of which were negative). The collection is neither large, nor diagnostic, and the potentially habitable area appears to be small as well, but the testing results are sufficient to indicate a pre-contact site on this point, and one which appears to be entirely undisturbed. The precise cultural affiliation and site function are indeterminate; the resharpening flakes are potentially consistent with a short-term stop for lithic tool repair. However, the location, although it offers somewhat limited habitation space, is attractive, and may represent a small habitation site.



Photo 4: Test pit 1 at DiAp-04.

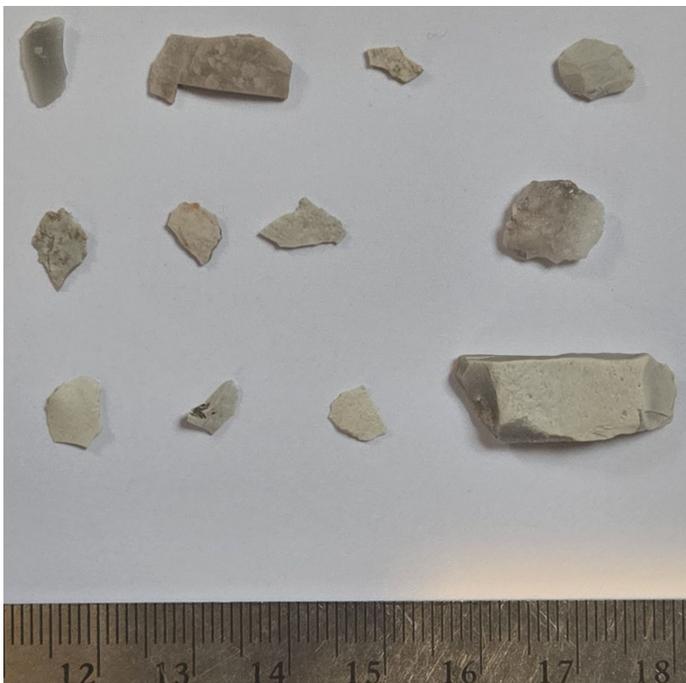


Photo 5: Lithic Debitage
Recovered from Test pit 1 at DiAp-04.

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Saddle Island West (EkBc-16): A summary

Fred Schwarz

Black Spruce Heritage Services

Introduction

The Saddle Island West site (EkBc-16) in Red Bay, Labrador (Figure 1), was discovered in the 1980s during excavation of the 16th-century Basque whaling establishments on Saddle Island. The site was excavated between 1986 and 1991 and was immediately recognized to be of high archaeological significance for the extensive late precontact (and potentially, contact-period) Indigenous occupation of the site (Tuck 1987; 1988; 1989). At the time, the site's reported 170 hearth features comprised the largest late precontact Indigenous site in the province. The lithic assemblage from this site, situated in the Strait of Belle Isle at the nexus of the north-central Labrador coast, the Côte-Nord, and the Island of Newfoundland, held the promise of revealing significant new information on late precontact interrelationships between these regions, including insights into the degree of cultural isolation of the Beothuk of the Island in the centuries prior to their extinction (Robbins 1989a; 1989b). More than this, the site also exhibited potential evidence for interactions between the contact-period Indigenous inhabitants and the Basques, as well as a relatively large collection of Indigenous ceramics; at the time, this ceramic assemblage was almost unique in the province.

Unfortunately, although the site was obviously significant, further research and a clearer understanding of the site was hampered by a number of factors. Originally, EkBc-16 was expected to be the subject of post-graduate research, but this research was never pursued to completion. In addition, significant portions of the collection, including material from the earlier (1986 and 1987) excavations, and also including much of the important collection of Indigenous ceramics, went missing in the 1990s. Some of this material has since been relocated and returned to the Province. Not only artifacts, but also substantial site records (site plans, profiles, fieldnotes etc.) were also missing. As a result, despite the widely recognized importance of the site, there had been no comprehensive site report, and little further research or conclusions beyond the first impressions obtained in the 1980s.

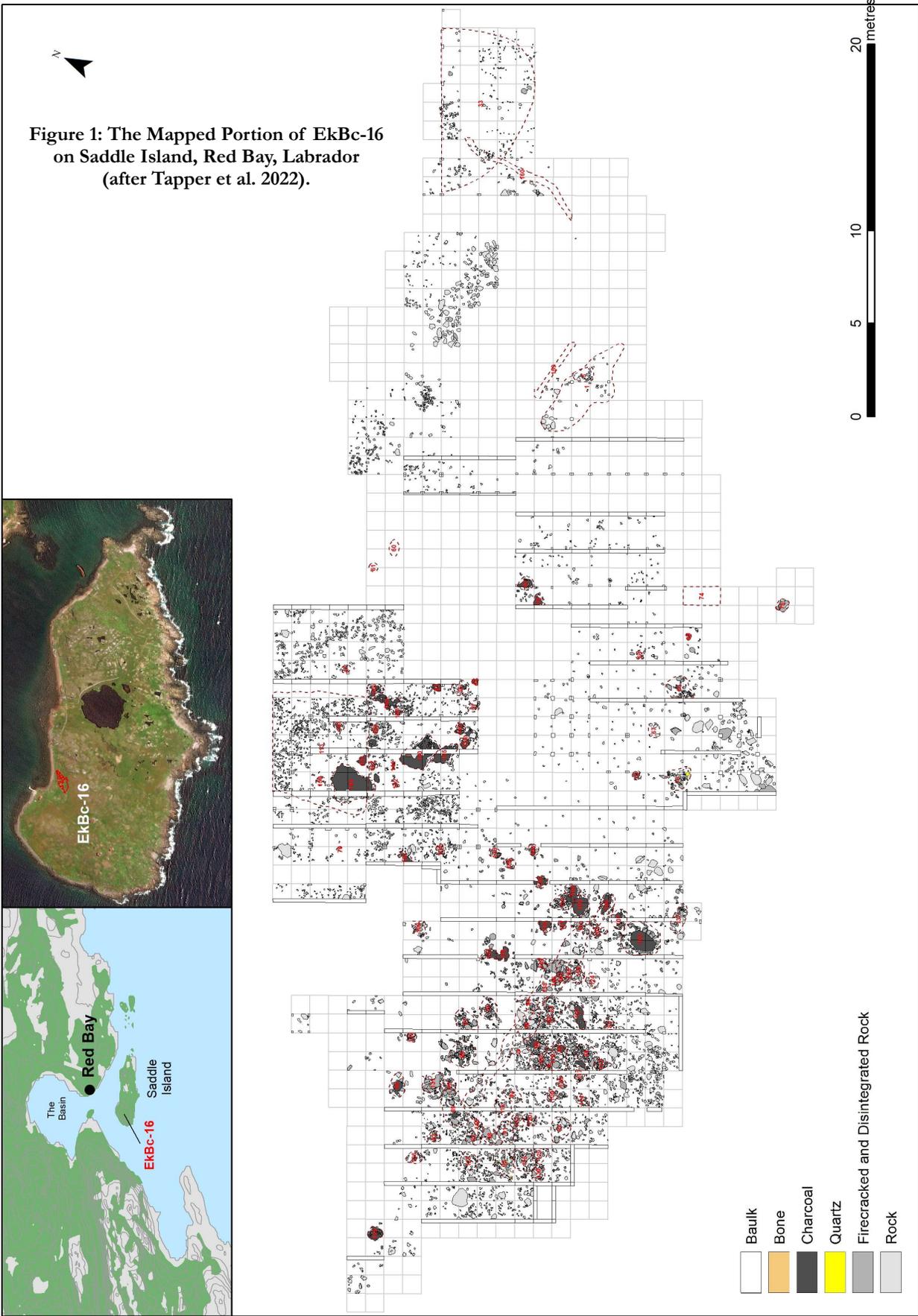
Site Records and Collection Review

Consequently, in 2020 PAO requested proposals for a review and inventory of the records and collection to assess the quality of the extant data and collection pertaining to the precontact Indigenous occupations at the site, to identify the research potential of the materials, and to order these materials to make the data less intimidating and more attractive for further graduate research. This was to include a review of documents and site records, and also of the collection itself. Black Spruce Heritage Services was awarded this work

Review of the site records indicated that the artifact catalogue was largely complete. Site profiles were almost entirely missing, but the site stratigraphy appears to have been relatively simple and seemed fairly easy to reconstruct in outline. For the western and central portions of the site (excavated 1988-1989 and 1991), site plans were available (along with fieldnotes from 1988). Moreover, these plans have now been digitized and entered into a GIS (Tapper *et al.* 2022). For the eastern portion of the site (excavated 1986 and 1987), site plans are largely missing, or do not identify Indigenous hearth features (Figure 2).

Not all features were hearths. Although not all of the 170 numbered features were documented in mapping or other records, approximately 100 (58%) did appear to pertain to precontact Indigenous hearths. Many of these features are recorded in surviving maps, while some are referenced (and thus provenienced) only in the artifact catalogue, and others are undocumented. It should be noted that in addition to the precontact features, EkBc-16 also contained substantial historic features, including a 16th-century Basque tryworks, an Inuit sod house, and a disturbed garden area, as well as a "raised beach" in the southwestern corner of the site.

The results of collection review indicated that although some pieces are missing, 76% of catalogued finished precontact artifacts are present at The Rooms, including 89% of points (e.g. Photo 1), 70% of bifaces (e.g. Photo 2), and at least 95% of indigenous ceramic sherds (Photo 3). Gaps in the collection are complementary with gaps in the records, in that



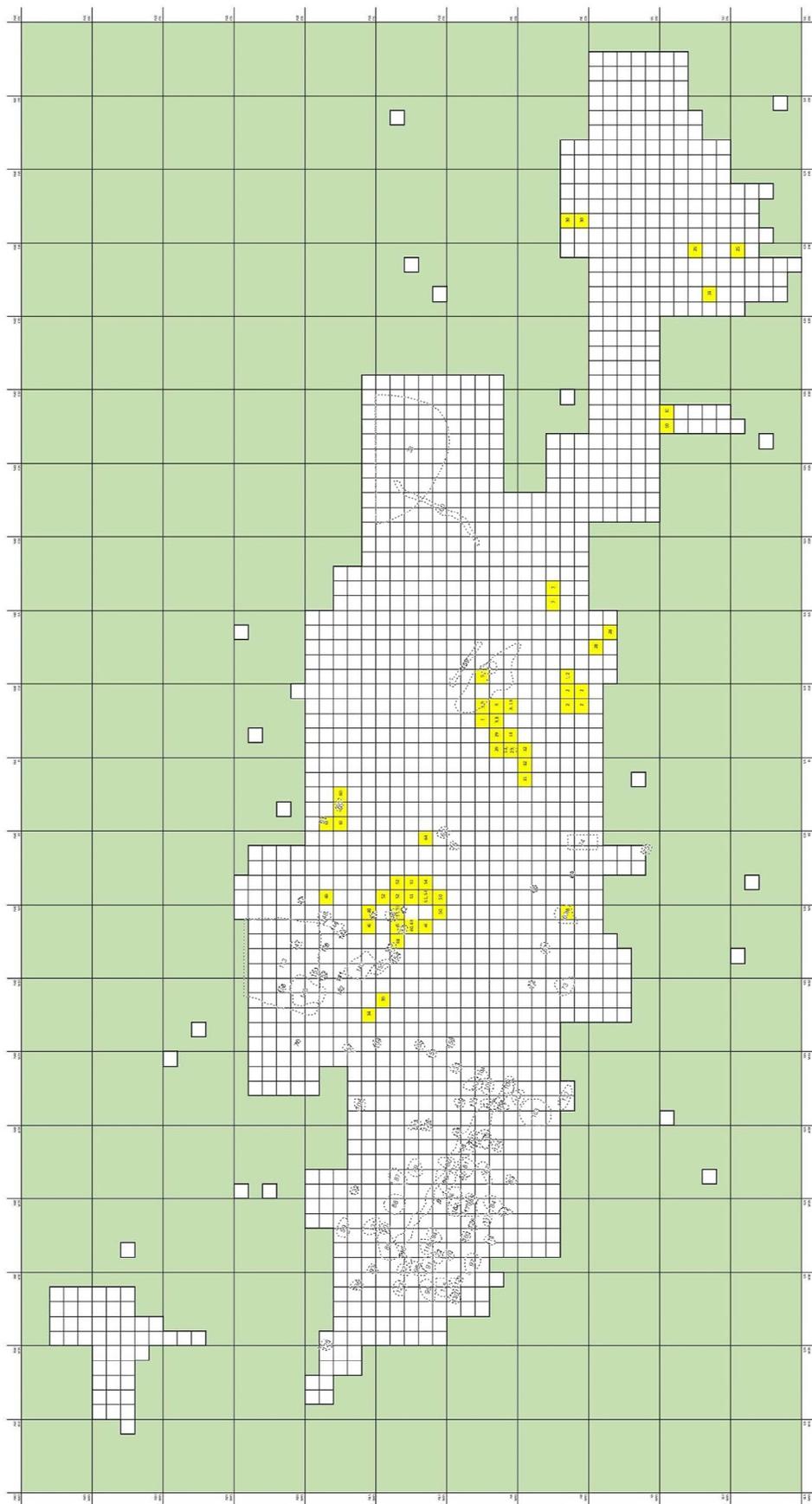


Figure 2: The Distribution of Mapped (Black) and Unmapped (Yellow) Numbered Features at EkBc-16.

much of the central and western portion of the site, excavated in 1988 and 1989, is both well-documented and well-represented in the artifact collection at The Rooms.

Following the review, it was argued that a comprehensive site report, reconstructed based on surviving records and artifacts, describing the hearth features and feature-based artifact associations, along with the sitewide distribution of features and artifacts, was a desirable precondition for any further research into the site. In 2023, PAO commissioned the completion of such a “forensic” site report. This article briefly summarizes the results of this report (Schwarz 2024), which is now available, along with supporting documentation, at the PAO.

Reconstructed site report

The Saddle Island West site report completed in 2024 represented an attempt to reconstruct the site from extant records and compile a site report on the precontact occupation(s) of the site. The approach taken in this report, following a review of site stratigraphy, was to begin by describing each of the 170 numbered features individually and developing feature-artifact associations that could serve to compare features. Where possible, each feature was assigned a grid-based analytical unit which, allowing for local stratigraphy, determined the artifact assemblage deemed to be associated with that feature. It was hoped thereby to develop feature-artifact associations that could serve to compare features in terms of period(s) of occupation, artifact frequencies, lithic raw material patterns, and the presence or absence of Indigenous pottery. The development of grid-based analytical units would also permit the analysis of features not mapped on extant site plans, for which grid references in the artifact catalogue constituted the only available provenience information.

Extant site mapping, along with the distribution of units that yielded artifacts, were used to reconstruct the approximate extent of the 1986-1991 excavations, which encompassed approximately 1,630m² (Figure 2). Review of the numbered features indicated that many of these features were wholly undocumented, pertained to historic European occupations, or were characterized by discrepancies in the excavation records that made them unsuitable for analysis. Of the remainder, many did not appear to be discrete hearth features, but rather were outliers or

components of larger “blended” hearth features. In addition, even clearly-defined hearth features of likely precontact date generally contained few or no diagnostic artifacts. The description of the 170 numbered features at the site was a useful exercise as a reference document, to assist future researchers in interpreting the site and its assemblages, but with a few exceptions, at the level of the individual feature, the correlation of features and grid-based artifact assemblages to create analytical units produced disappointing results

The next level of analysis involved moving beyond the features originally identified and numbered during excavation, and building larger analytical units, above the level of the individual feature. This was achieved by focusing on the sitewide distribution of lithic artifacts, principally debitage (Figure 3), to identify lithic concentrations, augmented by plotting the distribution of calcined bone concentrations, which in some cases led to the identification of likely hearth features not otherwise documented in the excavation records. Thirty lithic concentrations were identified and analyzed. Eight of these were interpreted to represent outdoor lithic workshop areas, and nineteen (Figure 4) were inferred, on the basis of lithic debris scatters and hearth distributions, to represent the interiors of precontact dwelling structures.

The Sequence of Precontact Occupations at EkBc-16

Early Pre-Inuit (Groswater)

The precontact occupation history of EkBc-16 appears to have begun with an Early Pre-Inuit (Groswater) occupation of the site between 2800 and 2100 BP. This occupation appears to have been focused at the western end of the site, particularly in the Southwestern Subarea, on a slightly elevated beach terrace at least partly consolidated by peat vegetation (Figure 5). There are indications of a single possible Groswater dwelling structure here (Structure 1), subsequently deeply buried in sand. It seems likely that this early occupation also extended to the Northwestern Subarea of the site (Figure 5); although archaeological excavations there were more limited, they did produce Groswater diagnostics, and in this latter subarea there may be additional evidence of this occupation that remains unexcavated.

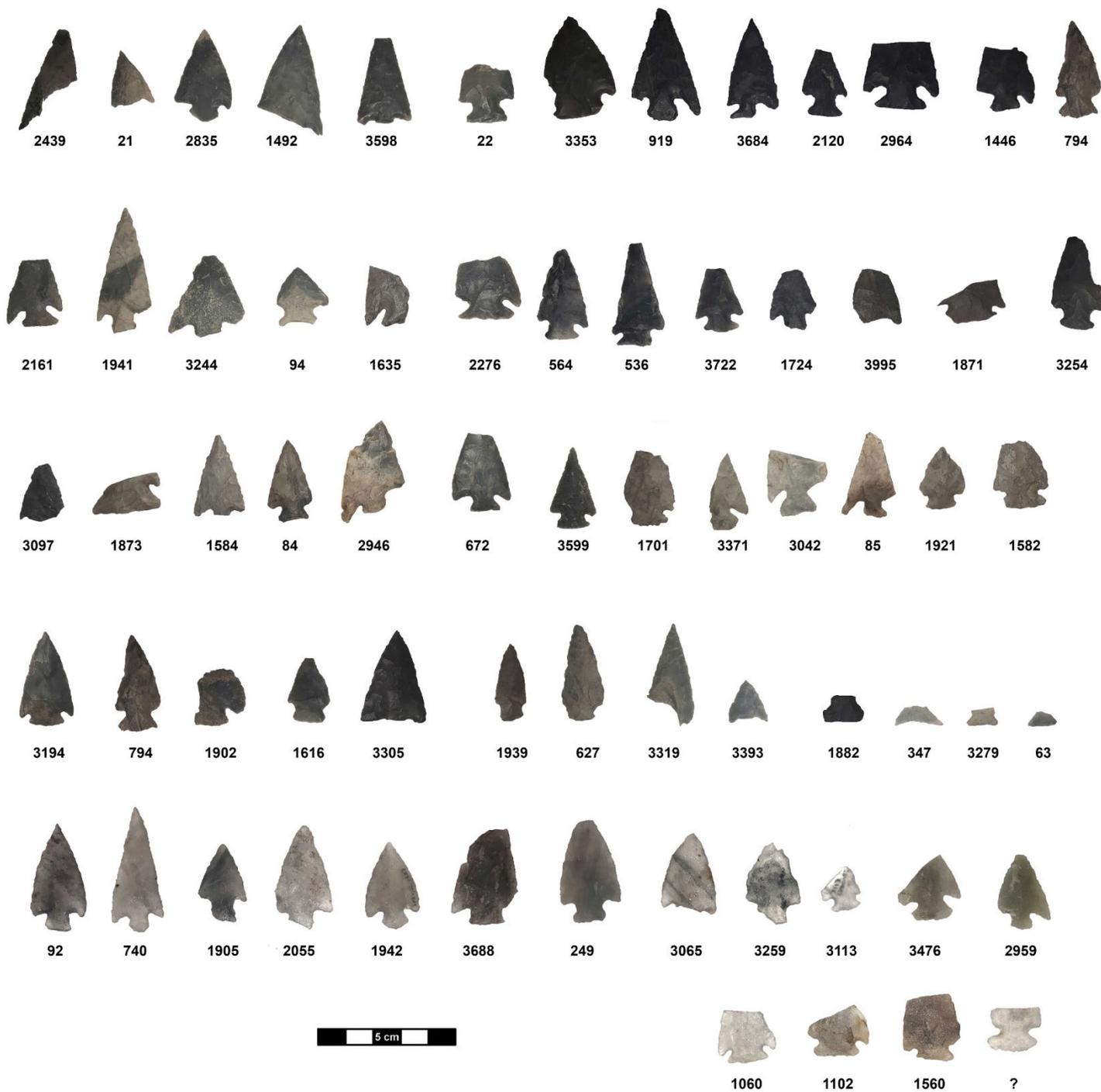


Photo 1: Small Corner-notched Projectile Points in the EkBc-16 Collection.

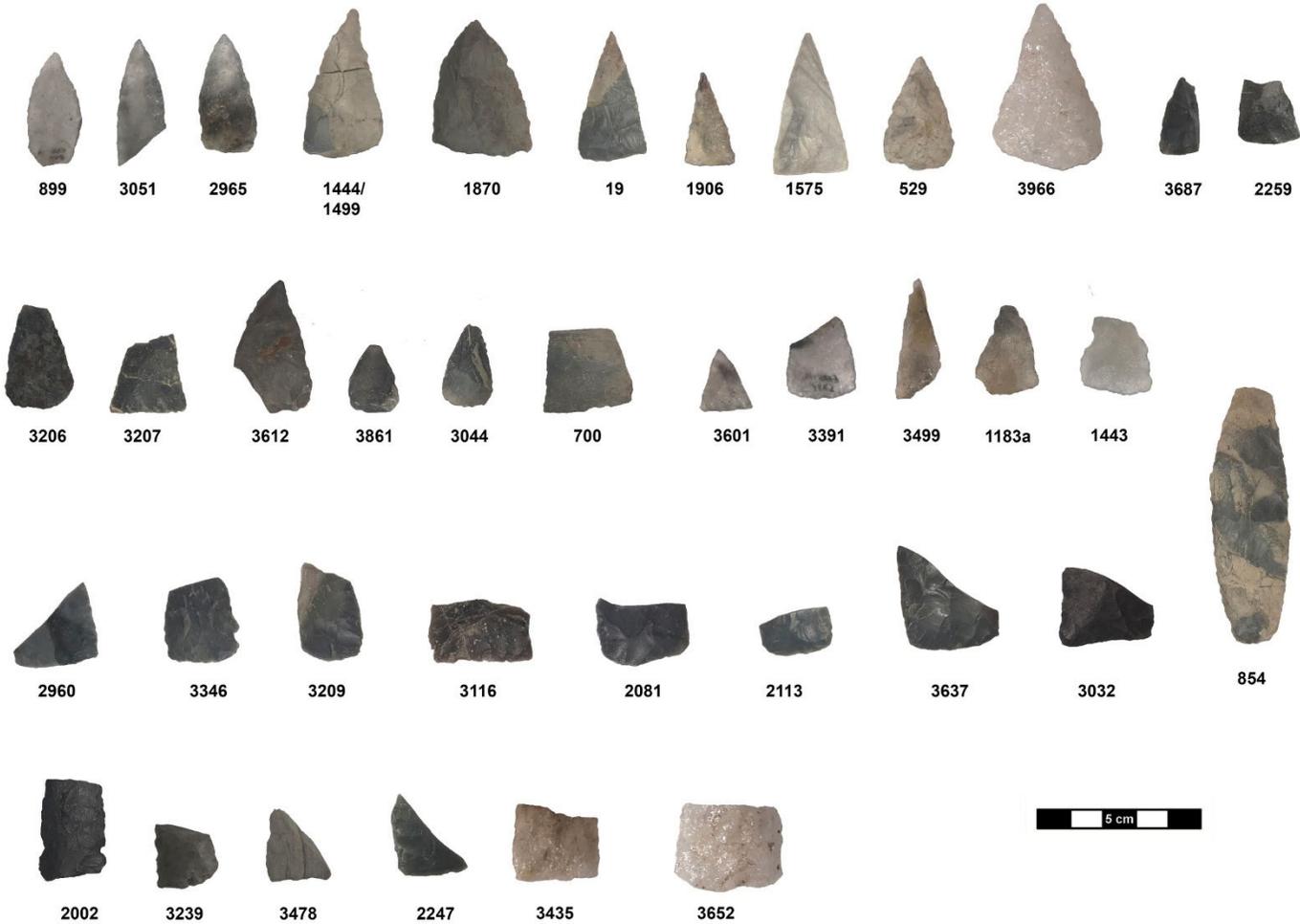


Photo 2: Triangular and Lanceolate Bifaces in the EkBc-16 Collection.

Photo 3: Decorated Indigenous Pottery Sherds in the EkBc-16 Collection. Note that the sherd numbered 1806/1986 was assigned to the EkBc-16 collection in error and was in fact recovered elsewhere on Saddle Island.



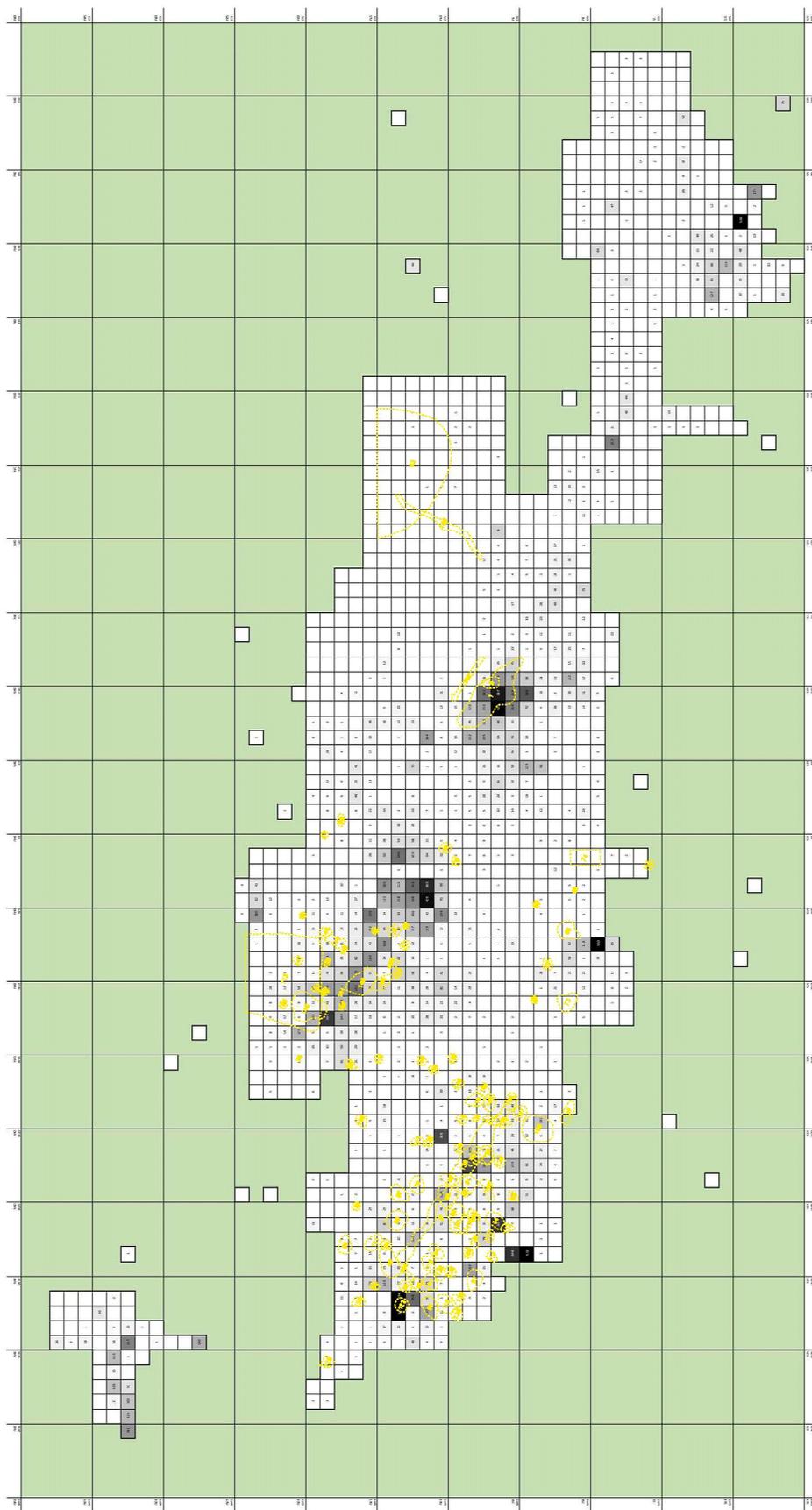


Figure 3: The Site-wide Distribution of Lithics at EkBc-16. Shading indicates the relative frequency of lithics in each unit. Mapped features are indicated in yellow for reference purposes.

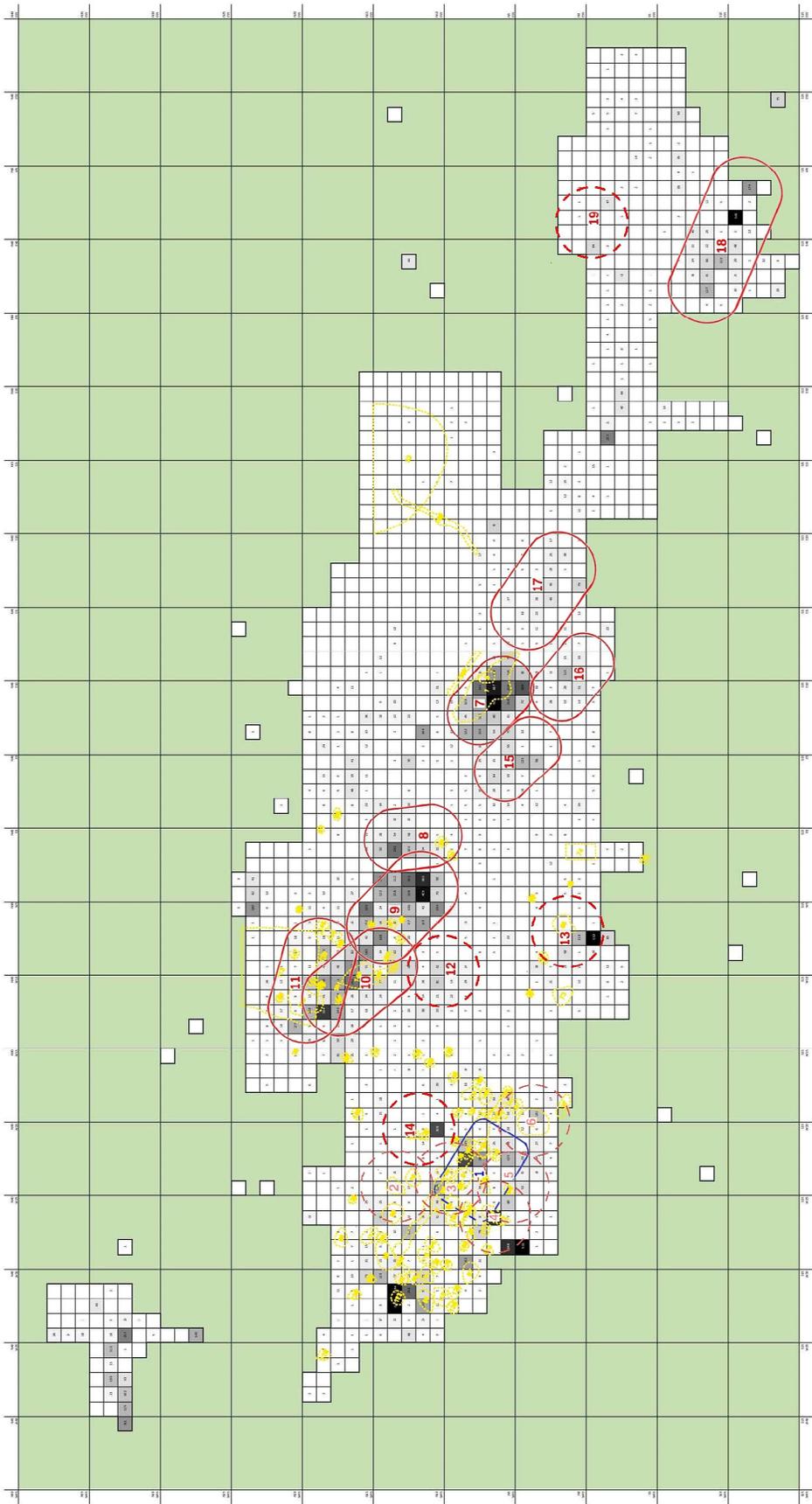


Figure 4: Inferred Precontact Dwelling Structures Identified at EkBc-16. Dotted lines indicate indistinct structure perimeters. Blue indicates Pre-Inuit structure; pink indicates structures of indeterminate cultural affiliation, possibly Flèche Littorale; red indicates Late Precontact (Anse Morel) structures.

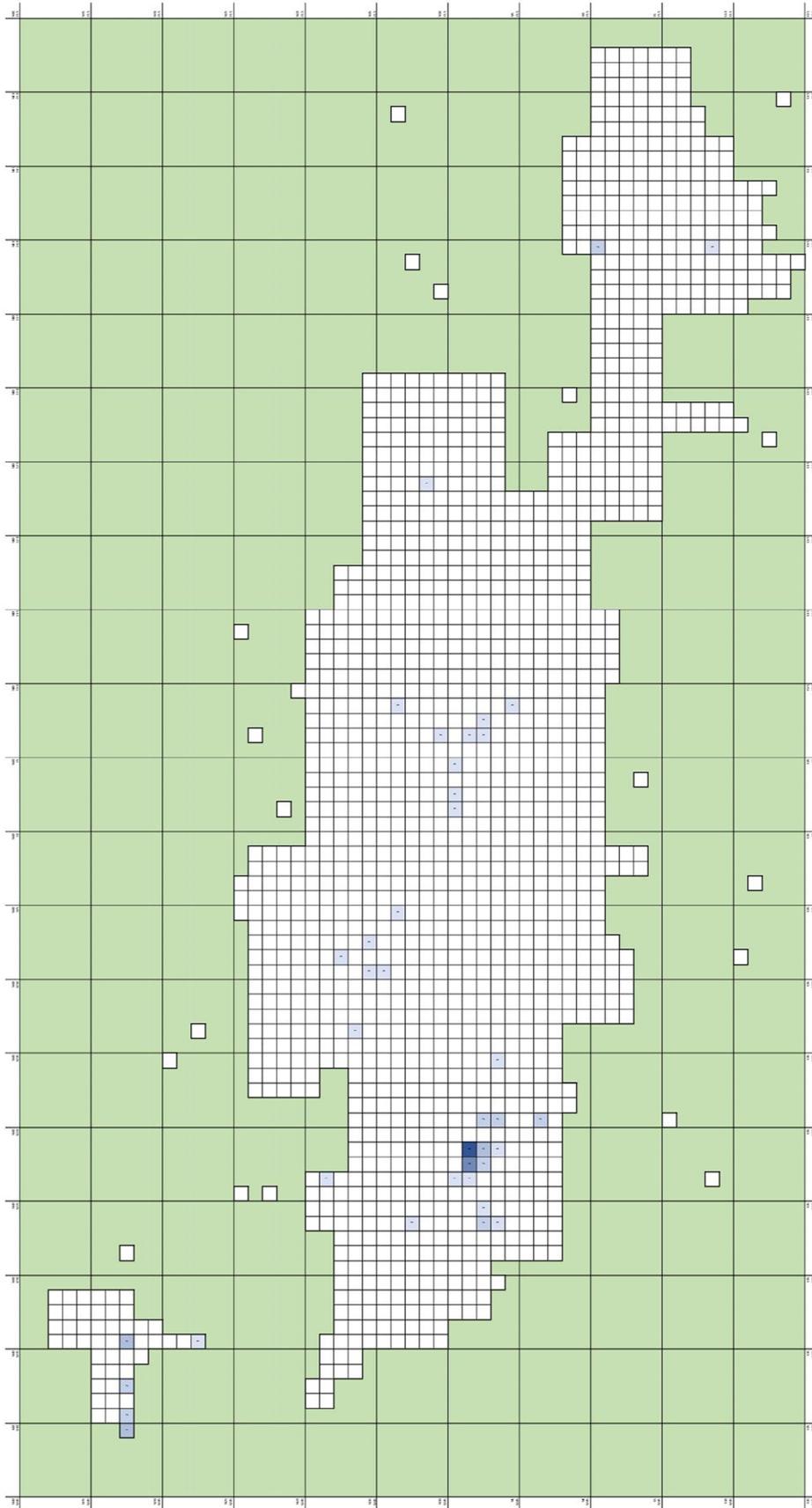


Figure 5: The Distribution of Pre-Inuit Artifacts at EkBc-16. Shading indicates the relative frequency of pieces in each unit.

Intermediate Period Indigenous

At some point toward the end of the Groswater occupation, or shortly thereafter, it appears that one or more storm surge events swept across the site, creating a sandy berm that was deposited on top of the original peat along the edge of the Southwestern Subarea, backed by a swale, and deeply burying the Groswater occupation level. Subsequently, the sandy deposits were reworked by wind, creating a backshore dune environment, partly consolidated by peat and partly blown out by wind.

It was on this surface that the next occupation occurred, in the Flèche Littorale period in the Strait of Belle Isle (Pintal 1998), sometime between 2500 and 1500 BP. This is evidenced by stemmed bifaces, often of quartzite, along with quartzite debitage, that are widely scattered across the site but appear to be at least slightly more concentrated in the Southwestern subarea. The most conspicuous lithic concentration in this subarea, a broad, dense scatter of quartz debitage, cores, and preforms, also contains quartzite debitage, and may also pertain to the Flèche Littorale occupation of the site. This quartz-knapping episode, which may have represented a single, intensive, workshop event, seems to have led to quartz debitage being widely distributed across the entire Southwestern Subarea. Evidence for dwelling structures in this period is ambiguous. There were several well-defined hearth features, some resting on peat, some on sand, and some on lenses of both peat and sand, along with associated lithic scatters, that yielded Flèche Littorale diagnostic artifacts (Structures 2-6), but Flèche Littorale diagnostics are sparse, and intermixed with small numbers of artifacts from earlier (Groswater) and later (Daniel Rattle, Dorset, Late Precontact Indigenous, and even possibly Thule) periods. None of these possible Flèche Littorale hearths in the Southwestern Subarea yielded calcined bone concentrations, and the few diagnostics suggest that the Flèche Littorale occupation was probably relatively ephemeral. It should be noted that one sherd of dentate-decorated Middle Woodland Indigenous pottery (Photo 3: 3494), although it was recovered from a Late Precontact Anse Morel context, presumably also pertains to the Flèche Littorale occupation of the site.

Late Precontact Indigenous

The principal, and best-documented, occupation of the site occurred in the Late Precontact Indigenous Anse Morel period (Pintal 1998), ca. 1100-400 BP. Lithic concentrations and site plans (Figure 4) indicate a number of relatively well-defined, somewhat elongate (i.e. likely multi-family) dwellings arranged more-or-less in a NW-SE-oriented line, parallel to the shore, to the northeast of the Southwestern Subarea (consisting of Structures 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, and 18). These contrast with the inferred structures to the southwest in that they were constructed on lower terrain, closer to the shore, on sand or at least on very thin vegetation cover. Unlike the structures to the southwest, their hearths are defined more by charcoal staining than by firecracked rock concentrations, and most contain concentrations of calcined bone. They also contain relatively rich artifact assemblages clearly diagnostic of the Anse Morel complex (Photos 1-2), and some include Late Woodland Indigenous pottery (Photo 3). These are interpreted as multi-family gathering sites. There are four additional features and artifact concentrations (Structures 12, 13, 14, and 19) that are interpreted as single-family dwellings. They too are tentatively assigned to the Anse Morel Complex, and they share some of the attributes of the larger dwellings, but diagnostic artifacts are scarcer.

There is some variation within this group of Anse Morel Complex structures (Figure 6). Structures 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 to the northwest contained lithic assemblages overwhelmingly dominated by chert, and three of these (Structures 7, 9, and 10) also yielded Indigenous pottery. On the other hand, Structures 15, 16, 17, and 18 to the southeast contained higher-than-average frequencies of Ramah and no pottery; it should be noted that these latter structures still predominantly yielded lithic artifacts of chert, just that the frequencies of Ramah were noticeably higher than the sitewide average.

There are two possible explanations for this pattern. The two classes of structures may be contemporary: the structures to the southeast may represent families arriving at the gathering site from points further north, with greater access to Ramah (and less access to pottery) than their cousins camped to the northwest. Alternatively, the difference may be chronological. If, as Pintal (1998) suggests, the Anse Morel

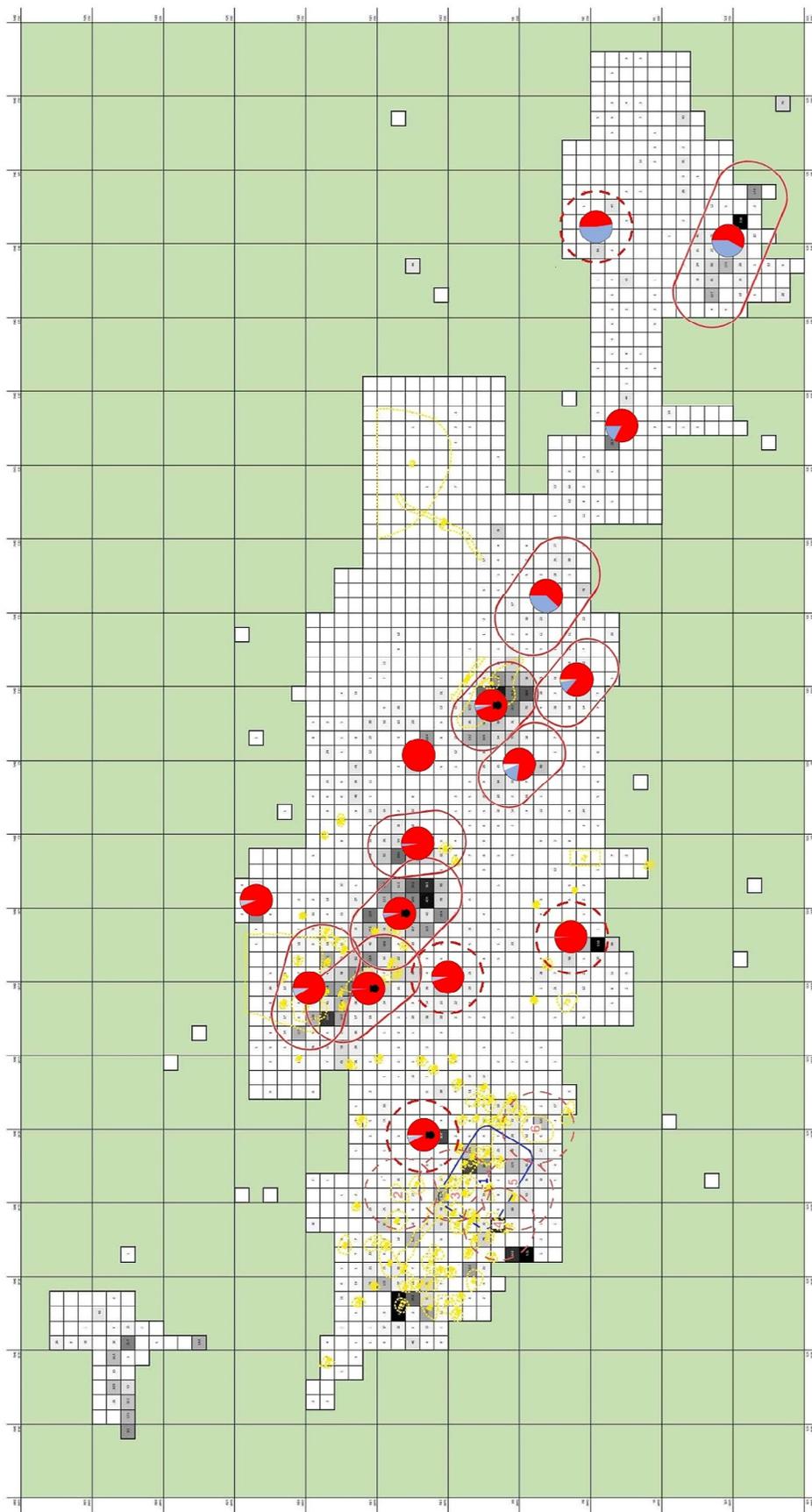


Figure 6: Late Precontact Structures, Pottery, and Lithic Raw Material Use at EkBc-16. Pie charts indicate the relative frequencies of chert (red), Ramah (blue), quartz (pale grey), and quartzite (yellow). The black collared-pot icons indicate the presence of Indigenous pottery.

Complex sees a progressively increasing reliance on Newfoundland cherts at the expense of Ramah, then the structures to the southeast, showing greater utilization of Ramah, may be slightly earlier than the structures to the northwest.

Implications

As noted previously, the precontact occupations at the Saddle Island West site (EkBc-16) were immediately recognized to be of high archaeological significance. The lithic assemblage from this site, situated in the Strait of Belle Isle at the nexus of the north-central Labrador coast, the Côte-Nord, and the Island of Newfoundland, and showing evidence of extensive use of both Ramah and Newfoundland cherts, held the promise of revealing significant new information on late precontact interrelationships between these regions, including insights into the degree of cultural isolation of the Beothuk of the Island in the centuries prior to their extinction. In addition, the site also exhibited potential evidence for interactions between the contact-period Indigenous inhabitants and the Basque, as well as a large collection of Indigenous ceramics; at the time, this ceramic assemblage was almost unique in the province. It remains to summarize the implications of this site report for exploring these three themes.

The Lithic Assemblage and Regional Relationships

In the 1980s, it was hoped that analysis of the data from EkBc-16, situated in a nodal location on the Strait of Belle Isle, might clarify the interrelationships between the north-central Labrador coast, the Côte-Nord of the St. Lawrence and the Island of Newfoundland. Of particular interest at the time was the question of how isolated or "islanded" the Beothuk were from the other regions, and whether this relative isolation may have contributed significantly to their extinction. It now appears that this initial promise may be realized, although perhaps not in the way initially imagined.

As a result of his work in the Blanc-Sablon area, Jean-Yves Pintal (1988) has presented us with a model of the Late Precontact period in the Strait of Belle Isle that sees a progressive decline in access to (or at least, the use of) Ramah, and an increase in the use of Newfoundland cherts. If Pintal's model is correct, then the Beothuk on the Island may actually

have become less and less "islanded" toward the end of the precontact period.

Saddle Island West presents us with evidence for patterning in the relative importance of Ramah in Late Precontact assemblages at the site. At Saddle Island West, it is difficult to confirm whether this pattern is chronological, as per Pintal's model, or if it reflects contemporary but variable regional interrelationships among the families that gathered there. Nevertheless, the pattern exists and is suggestive. It does appear that there are patterns to be teased out, and distinctions to be drawn, in the degree to which Indigenous people in the Strait of Belle Isle were connected to other Indigenous peoples to the north, east, and southwest.

Evidence for Contact between Indigenous People and the Basques

The possibility that EkBc-16 might shed light on the nature of contact-period interactions between Indigenous peoples and the Basques initially attracted considerable interest. The early interpretation focused on the presence of European hardwoods among the charcoal samples, and the placement and stratigraphic relationships between these hearths and nearby Basque structures. The contexts suggested that the Indigenous features were broadly contemporary with the Basque structures. Examination of the faunal assemblages from these hearths suggested that Indigenous inhabitants and the Basques were present at the site at different times of year, and led to a model of general contemporaneity, but not necessarily direct contact, between the Indigenous inhabitants and the Basques (Tuck 1989, Delmas 2018).

This question hinges largely on excavation records that are no longer extant, and analysis for this report unfortunately sheds little light on the question. A single trade bead was recovered from the site, but the context is ambiguous. The initially observed concentration of Indigenous hearths behind the tryworks initially led to the suggestion that the hearths were deliberately emplaced in the shelter of the tryworks, but the cluster of hearths in this area now appears to be part of a broader sitewide distribution of Late Precontact material that is unrelated to the tryworks itself.

As to other potential approaches, faunal analysis underlay the early theory that Indigenous inhabitants and the Basques were present at the site in the

same general timeframe but at different times of year, but no faunal report is extant; it may be possible to revisit this question by analyzing the calcined bone collections that are present in the collection (and such analysis might be fruitful for other reasons as well). More detailed analysis of Indigenous ceramic sherds with fabric impressions may further establish whether the fabrics employed were of European origin. Otherwise, much depends on the precise dating of the Late Precontact occupation(s) at the site. Stylistically, the diagnostic lithics are clearly late precontact, but it is not clear whether they extend to the contact period. Similarly, the Late Woodland pottery at the site appears to date to Ceramic Periods 6-7, which could equally mean very late Precontact, or early in the contact period. There are limited other means to refine the dating. Absolute dating of ceramic sherds (e.g. by OSL dating) is one option; it should also be noted that a tiny charcoal sample, perhaps the only one still extant, was recovered from Feature 3 (in Structure 7), just behind the Basque tryworks, and this could be assayed. Beyond this, there appears to be little scope to pursue this question much further with the EkBc-16 material at hand.

The Indigenous Pottery Assemblage

The presence of Indigenous ceramics at EkBc-16 was, at the time of excavation, highly unusual. Despite occasional isolated finds of ceramic sherds on archaeological sites (for an overview see Stapelfeldt 2013), ceramics were not considered at the time to be part of the normal toolkit in any period of the province's precontact history. This has changed, however, with more recent excavations in both Newfoundland and Labrador (Teal 2001; Stapelfeldt 2013; Hutchings and Schwarz 2022); it is now apparent that there was a significant occupation of the Province by ceramic-using Indigenous peoples in at the least the Middle Woodland period (ca. 2000-1500 BP). This occupation was particularly manifested in central Labrador but also extended to the north-central coast of Labrador and to the Island of Newfoundland (Hutchings and Schwarz 2022).

At first blush, the substantial Indigenous ceramic assemblage at EkBc-16 now appears rather less unique than it once did, but in fact, this assemblage may still be almost as unique as it ever was. It still seems strange to refer to "typical" Indigenous ceramic styles in Newfoundland and Labrador, but most of the Indigenous ceramics recovered from across the province so far exhibit attributes (e.g. dentate-stamped decoration, vessel wall thickness and smoothing) attributable to Ceramic Periods 2 - 3/4 (Petersen and Sanger 1991) of the Middle Woodland period. These ceramic periods span the centuries from 2,150-1,350 to 950 BP, although in Newfoundland and Labrador, the associated ceramic-bearing contexts and radiocarbon dates presently fall within a slightly narrower span of approximately 2,000-1,500 BP. At present, it almost seems as though ceramic technology appears in Labrador and in Newfoundland at the very beginning of the Late Precontact period, and then gradually falls into disuse (for an exploration of the implications of this, see Holly 2013: 72-77).

The Indigenous ceramic assemblage from EkBc-16, however, represents a very different phenomenon. The cord-wrapped paddle and incised decoration, collars, and castellated rims (Photo 3) of most decorated sherds, indicate a much later date in the very late Late Woodland or even contact periods. Only a single sherd, exhibiting an everted rim and dentate decoration, may possibly date to the earlier Middle Woodland period. The Indigenous pottery from EkBc-16 is therefore still unique and significant. It remains to be seen whether the Saddle Island West Late Woodland ceramic assemblage collection is an isolated case, whether Late Woodland pottery in the Province will be found to descend in some fashion from the now well-attested Middle Woodland pottery in the region, or whether Late Woodland pottery in the Province is a distinct late Precontact or Contact-period arrival without immediate local precedent.

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2024 Archaeology Department Update

Memorial University

Donna Teasdale & Maria Lear
Memorial University

From the Labs **Community based project highlights in Conservation:**

This year we worked with the Shipwreck Preservation Society and Ocean Quest to complete conservation work on a large artillery shell and associated shipping crate retrieved from the Rose Castle wreck. The Rose Castle was a carrier merchant ship with iron ore on board and was supplying Europe with ore from Bell Island during WWII. 1942 Germany U boats torpedoed the anchored vessel just off of Bell Island where it sunk and 24 crew members lost their lives. The conservation treatment of the artillery shell and crate was done over a number of years where both the copper alloy shell and wooden crate had to be desalinated, stabilized, dried and reassembled. Conservation work is now complete and the ordnance will be donated to the Bell Island Museum for exhibit.

This summer the Shipwreck Preservation Society along side of other diving groups retrieved a bomb control box from a military plane that crashed into the Gander River during WWII. The RCF Liberator Bomber was conducting a night practice flight where it crashed killing all four on board. The plane was not discovered until 2022. This year, the group dove the wreck site and retrieved the bomb control box. Conservation work has begun on the artifact and will be completed in the New Year. Once completed it will be placed on exhibit at the Aviation Museum in Gander to honour those lives lost.

From Collections

March – guest speaker with SEM Ltd/techNL “Find Your Future in Tech”: discussed use of geophysical & survey mapping in archaeology. No fee - part of community engagement?

May – guest presenter at 56th CAA, Saskatoon: speaking to issue of legacy archaeological collections. Obtained conference funding via CUPE1615 Professional Development Fund

Summer (fieldwork) – a collaborator on Barry’s

SSHRC Insight Grant: GPR in Ferryland, project specific

Participated Vero/Paul’s project in L’anse aux Meadows (GPR + archaeological excavation)



2024 Report on The Rooms Archaeology and Indigenous Peoples Collections

Lori Temple
Collections Manager

Throughout 2024 The Rooms Archaeology Unit continued to support researchers, artists and members of the province's Indigenous communities by providing access to the collections. Work continues on updating our storage spaces and collections management software program EMu which continues to improve our ability to manage our collections and associated data.

Highlights of 2024

In October 2024 The Rooms Conservator Miki Lee and Collections Manager Lori Temple traveled to Parks Canada Red Bay National Historic Site to bring new artifacts from The Rooms, as well as to deinstall and pack artifacts on loan from The Rooms currently exhibited in the Interpretation Centre. This work was done to prepare for Parks Canada's move to their new Red Bay facility, scheduled to open in summer 2025.

With financial assistance from a Museums Assistance Program (MAP) grant, The Rooms undertook a 3D scanning project which introduces Indigenous communities to the collections, museum/gallery operations and 3D scanning technology. Invitations were sent to all provincial Indigenous community partners and members of Nunatsiavut and NunatuKavut took part in the project during the fall and early winter of 2023. In February 2024, The Rooms hosted another group of participants from Nunatsiavut and members of the Innu Nation are scheduled to visit in the spring of 2025.

Statistics for Archaeology and Indigenous Peoples Collection in 2024 include:

- 127 requests received for information, loans, research visits, tours and photograph use.
- 51 researchers/visitors used the collections and archaeology lab.
- Over 20 museums throughout the province displayed archaeology artifacts from our collections through our Community Loans program. The

Rooms also continues to support exhibitions internationally and across the country at The Poole Museum, Poole U.K., The Canadian Museum of History, the National Gallery of Canada and several Parks Canada locations.

- Archaeology artifacts were transferred to The Rooms via the Provincial Archaeology Office through 12 submissions from archaeologists and members of the public representing 1741 artifacts and samples from 91 sites.

Anyone wishing to access our collections for research can contact Lori Temple, Collections Manager for the Archaeology & Indigenous Peoples Collections, at (709) 757-8076 or by email at

LoriTemple@therooms.ca



**The Rooms Conservator Miki Lee
packing a 16th century drinking glass at the Parks Canada Red Bay Interpretation Centre in Labrador.**



Report, Adventure Canada Greenland and Wild Labrador Expedition Cruise

Jane & Callum Thomson
Adventure Canada



View of Nachvak Fiord.

Background

The following narrative is an account of a voyage with Adventure Canada along the Labrador coast in October of 2024. Our shore visits and zodiac/ship cruises in Northern Labrador included Eclipse Sound, Nachvak, Ramah and Saglek Bays, a site visit at Hebron Moravian Mission Site and the town of Nain.

The Adventure Canada expedition ship carries a maximum of 175 passengers on educational journeys to unusual destinations that can be difficult

to reach other than by ship. It uses inflatable Zodiac boats to carry up to twelve passengers each with their driver-guides from the ship, to explore natural history and cultural attractions. Normally visits to archaeological sites are arranged so that passengers are divided into smaller groups with staff scattered across the area to supervise access and supervised by the staff archaeologists.

During our trips we normally visit natural and archaeological sites and communities, and these visits are complemented by onboard lectures about the re-

gion's culture, art, anthropology, history and natural history. Shore excursions are led by expert staff, mainly local residents and university-trained biologists, archaeologists and historians. Mandatory briefings are given to all passengers on the ship and zodiac operations, behaviour in bear country, and the laws governing archaeological site protection.

One of the highlights for many participants in these voyages is to see archaeological sites that few people will ever visit, as well as the places where the descendants of the inhabitants live today.

Visitation to these sites always carries the potential for damage to our historic resources, and so preparation of the participants is given primary attention. Before each landing our guests are reminded of the legislation protecting archaeological sites and artifacts and then are given concrete examples of things they should do and not do. For example, watch care-

fully where you are stepping and avoid standing on rocks or walking through stone alignments, never pick up anything, take photographs of everything you find of interest and report possible archaeological discoveries to the accompanying archaeologist.

During lectures, the rationales behind these regulations are more fully explained, but in summary, they are reminded that context is history: moving an artifact or feature from its position in a site can mean that most of its meaning is lost.

As passengers come ashore, they are gathered into small groups and led to various attractions such as historic or archaeological sites, where the site and its story are related. In remote and sensitive locations, they are always accompanied and kept in sight of the experienced guides. In areas where bears are a concern, limits are placed upon passengers' range of movement so that all are kept within sightlines of

Early morning landing at Hebron.





Hike at Eclipse River.

Labrador and Newfoundland over the past twenty-five years we have worked on these expeditions.

When we visit previously known archaeological sites, notes are made, and digital photographs are taken to record either any visible disturbance or to indicate that the site looks undisturbed. When potential new sites are found, as much detail as possible is gathered on the site's location, nature and condition, given time constraints and other passenger-related duties. A site form is completed, GPS co-ordinates recorded, and digital photographs taken. A report on all sites visited is prepared and sent to the authorities.

trained, armed staff. While visiting an archaeological site, they are divided into groups that can be easily monitored and managed. Prior to the visit, they are cautioned again about conservation concerns such as disturbance of structural walls, stepping on or moving or picking up artifacts.

While the potential for damage to archaeological sites can never be underestimated, we believe that these types of visits can be important for the future conservation of historic resources. When visitors have the right information and are charged with the passion for preservation, they take this back to their home communities and become a force for positive action. This is what we aim for in our onboard lectures, evening recaps of daily events, and onsite interpretation.

As trained archaeologists, we also keep an eye open in new landing areas for any sites that may not have been recorded previously. This has resulted in the adding to site inventories of many sites during expedition cruises in Greenland, Nunavut, Nunavik,

Narrative

The passengers for this journey were picked up at Kangerlussuaq in Greenland on September 29, and the ship then proceeded to visit attractions in Greenland before crossing the Davis Strait to Labrador.

Orange Shirt Day coincided with this voyage, and so much of the onboard programming centered on the theme of Reconciliation, with most of our Inuit staff giving talks and workshops about their lived experiences.

The evening before our first landing in Nunatsiavut passengers were given a briefing during 'Recap hour' with mandatory attendance by all passengers regarding conduct expected of them should we visit archaeological sites. They were told about the need to maintain a perimeter around a site and the reasons and importance behind the regulations, including not walking over rocks or picking up anything.

About one hundred and fifty passengers chose to make the landings at Ekortiarasuk Fjord, Eclipse Harbour, Nachvak Fjord, Ramah Bay and



Callum interpreting tents rings at Ekortarsuk (Above photo and below).





Inuit staff at Moravian building Hebron
 Maria Merkuratsuk on the L and Liz Pijogge, R.

visiting the art studio where a few prints and sculptures were offered for sale at the town and visitor centre; following a cultural performance some passengers returned to the ship for lunch and then came back ashore to explore the town on their own until sailing time.

Our final stop was at Indian Harbour where we went ashore to do a short hike at the old village site before leaving Labrador for St. John's where the cruise ended.

We are grateful to the people of Nunatsiavut, Labrador and Newfoundland for generously sharing their knowledge and guiding us safely through this magnificent land.

Hebron. Site record forms were completed for the Hebron visit according to Nunatsiavut archaeology permit regulations. An additional site record form was completed for a new site located during our visit and hike at Ekortiarasuk Fiord in Torngat National Park.

At Hebron, our guests were guided on-shore by Inuit elders as well as staff archaeologists and were greatly moved by the opportunity to see this lovely old village and to read the monument carrying the apologies of the provincial and federal governments for the forced removal of its people. The restoration of the old Moravian building was beautifully done and is lovingly cared for by a new generation of Inuit descendants.

On October 8 we paid a visit to Nain where a moving cultural presentation was given to all the passengers in the school gym, as well as



Guest reading Hebron apology.



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13. Rankin, Lisa K. 2024. Labrador Inuit at the Crossroads of Cultural Interaction In *Before Canada, Northern North America in a Connected World, ca. 1000-1800 AD*, edited by Allan Greer, pp. 193-220. McGill/Queen’s Press, Montreal.
14. Rankin, Lisa K., Julia Brenan, David Finch, Scott Neilsen and Anatolijs Venovsevs. 2023. Military Legacies and Indigenous Heritage in Canada’s Newest Park Reserve. In *Toxic Heritage: Legacies, Futures and Environmental Injustice*, edited by Elizabeth B. Kryder-Reid and Sarah May, pp. 93-105. Routledge, New York.
15. Venovcevs, Anatolijs. 2024. “Between use and abandonment: an archaeology of mothballing” in Bjørnar Julius Olsen, Stein Farstadvoll & Geneviève Godin (eds.), *Unruly heritage: archaeologies of the Anthropocene*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic.
16. Whitridge, Peter and Erica Hill (eds). 2024. *Reimagining Human-Animal Relations in the Circumpolar North*. Routledge, London.
17. Whitridge, Peter. 2024 Manufacturing reality: Inuit harvesting depictions and the domestication of human-

animal relations. In *Reimagining Human-Animal Relations in the Circumpolar North*, edited by Peter Whitridge and Erica Hill, pp. 40-87. Routledge, London.

18. Whitridge, Peter and Mari Kleist. 2024. Necrontology: Housing the dead in precontact Labrador and Greenland. In *Exploring Ontologies of the Precontact Americas: From Individual Bodies to Bodies of Social Theory*, edited by Gordon F.M. Rakita and Maria Cecilia Lozada, pp. 15-42. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.

MA (2024)

Jeffrey Baird, A Palynological View of Selected Norse-era Cultural Landscapes and Subsistence Strategies in Greenland

Carlos E. Salazar Guerra, Testing a Methodology for High-resolution Archaeoentomology to Examine Human-environment interactions at L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland

Alessandra McMillan, Death and Heritage: An Archaeological Analysis of the Differential Treatment of Two Historic Burial Grounds in Ferryland, Newfoundland

Tienne Moulard, *Decentering the Western and Incorporating Care: Prioritizing Indigenous Ontology in Curation Frameworks*.

Emlyn Tuck, Monuments and Memory: An Examination of the Newfoundland and Labrador Commemoration Landscape and its place in the Global Monumentality

PhD (2024)

Robyn Lacy, Sic Finis: 17th-century Burial Places and Spaces in Northeast North America and Newfoundland

Jessica Munkittrick, Regional Insights into childhood lead exposure from historical North American Skeletal Remains

Rita Onah, An Archaeology of Resilience: Decolonizing Igbo and Labrador Inuit Histories

Recognitions

Lisa Rankin was awarded the Smith-Wintemberg Award from the CAA and was inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada

Speller, J. and Veronique Forbes. On the role of peat bogs as components of Indigenous cultural landscapes in Northern North America. *Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research* 54 (1): 96-110. *selected for the 2022 Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research Editors' Choice Award

**If you have any comments or suggestions for the next
Archaeology Review please contact Stephen Hull.**

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