

N E W S L E T T E R

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Deadline for next issue: April 30.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- \* Report on Excavations  
in the Chilcotin
- \* Report on Departure  
Bay Midden
- \* Unique film series

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N. Russell  
Editor

## EXCAVATIONS AT ANAHIM LAKE, B. C.

During the summer of 1968-1969, the National Museum of Man carried out investigations at Anahim Lake, west central interior British Columbia. Work concentrated at two sites, Potlatch (FcSi-201) and Goose Point (FcSi-200), both located near the shore of the lake. The sites were recorded in a survey made in 1967 to locate camps of the early historic Chilcotin Indians.

Seven house structures were partially or completely excavated. One of these was a large rectangular structure possibly patterned after those of the Bella Coola Indians, but of somewhat different construction. Important features included a deep trench on each side in which wall foundations were set; two fire hearths in line with the long axis of the building; an entrance in the centre of the side nearest the lake; and the butt of one support post almost centrally located. Outside and in front of the building were three small trash mounds.

Artifacts from the house were largely of European origin, including gun parts, chinaware, glass, iron nails, and fragments of copper. Some items of aboriginal manufacture are probably associated with the house structure, but confusion was caused by the house having been constructed over an earlier working floor which yielded a quantity of microblades. The cultural level was so thin that the two components were mixed, but fortunately the earlier occupation extended outside the rear wall where it occurs in isolation.

Three houses agreed with the pattern described for the Chilcotin winter lodge. These vary in size, but all are circular pit houses with four central support posts grouped around a hearth and a broad or narrow bench around the periphery. The superstructure was probably conical with a roof entrance. Large storage pits were present in two of these lodges. Material recovered was largely aboriginal, but small amounts of European trade material was always present.

Two other semi-subterranean structures differed from the Chilcotin winter lodge in being much shallower and lacking a bench, interior posts, and cache pits. No trade goods were present, and one house yielded a disproportionately larger number of microblades, while the other was associated with a projectile point form typical of the Middle Period rather than of historic times. A final circular depression about the same size as the house pits had no recognizable floor, and contained a large number of hearths and areas of burned rock. This may in fact not be a structure at all, but rather represent an area where fish were smoked and dried.

Artifact and faunal analysis is still in a preliminary stage. The stone material is predominantly of obsidian, and several artifact types appear to be diagnostic of the Chilcotin or of Athabaskan-speaking groups in general. Although bone preservation was not very good, a fair collection of barbed points, wedges, beamers, and other tools was recovered. Faunal remains included both large and small game as well as fish. The presence of mink and beaver remains suggests that these early Chilcotins were already taking part in the fur trade, probably by way of Bella Coola.

Our evidence at present indicates that at least two occupations occurred in the area. The earlier one is characterized by the shallow rather featureless house pits, associated with microblades. These appear to be definitely prehistoric, but the actual age will remain uncertain until the results of radiocarbon tests are known. The second occupation is that of the Chilcotin Indians in early historic times. It is hoped that further work will show whether there is a relationship between the occupations, or whether a temporal gap between the two exists.

Roscoe Wilmeth, Head,  
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Ottawa

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#### Dr. Clifford Carl

The death on Easter Friday of Dr. Clifford Carl will be much regretted by any Society members who knew him.

Dr. Carl, 62, was Director of the Provincial Museum for 29 years, retiring last New Year's in order to devote full time to re-organizing the Museum's biological branch.

Dr. Carl was also a Past President of both the Victoria Natural History Society and the Aquarium Society and Honorary President of the B. C. Indian Art and Welfare Society.

An obituary in the Victoria Times noted that the Vancouver-born marine biologist was world famous for his writing, his lectures and his knowledge.

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## THE DEPARTURE BAY MIDDEN

Recollection by Bill Dobson, CBC-TV

My information on the Departure Bay midden, just north of Nanaimo, has been picked up in the manner of folklore. My family moved to the bay in 1940 and we lived there for about twenty years. As a youngster growing up in the area, I heard a great many stories passed down through several generations from some of the earliest residents, and I was shown some of their relics, mainly stone and bone hunting and cooking implements. Many of these had been found on the beach or in shallow excavations for septic tanks.

One elderly resident, known to us simply as Mrs. Harper, was said to be a direct descendant of a band of Indians who were attacked sometime shortly before white men came. In an item I prepared for television, I mentioned raiding parties by the Haidas from the Queen Charlotte Islands but, in later conversations with my father, he said he had also heard that the attack had come from some of the Squamish bands. However it was, as I said, little more than folklore.

In 1943 my family began to excavate for a new house almost at the centre of the level section of Departure Bay. We hired a man with a horse and scoop to dig for the basement. In the first day of scooping, we began to notice a lot of bones and, on closer examination, found arrow heads, spear heads, harpoon points, a couple of bowls and shaped stones. At one corner of the excavation we dug into a full skeleton, apparently buried in a curled up position, with the hands clutched under the chin. About three skulls were uncovered in that hole.

Wondering what to do about these finds, we asked the advice of a long-time resident, Morgan Harris, who lived next door. Mr. Harris phoned the legislature and the provincial museum and explained what had been found, but there was no follow-up.

During the following ten years, the family built two more houses in the area. In the basement excavations for these, many more skeletons and implements were uncovered but, by this time, we were taking such things for granted and saved only the best examples.

We were proud of Departure Bay, still an unspoiled beauty spot. We enjoyed learning of the known historical background as a harbor for the vessels which carried coal from the Wellington mines.

In recent years, the wash from winter storms has cut well back into the shorefront and concern was expressed about the eventual safety of the houses and the main road which runs through the Bay. Late last year, it was decided that a seawall and waterfront promenade should be built. During the initial excavation for this project, workmen

uncovered more relics and saw the various layers of earth, shells and ash which appeared. Again the provincial museum was called and John Sendy went up from Victoria to examine it. After his initial brief look, Mr. Sendy ventured a guess that the strata could date back as far as two thousand years and it appeared to him that the area had been inhabited at irregular intervals.

The site was surveyed and Mr. Sendy began an archaeological dig at the seafront. After about six days, his team turned up numerous bones, a good deal of ash and many fishing implements. There were also a few stone weights and fishing barbs.

When doing my brief story on the dig, I walked back into the residential area with Mr. Sendy and told him of some of the earlier finds. He felt it would be an exciting project to do a further dig from the surface farther back. He speculated that it was here the Indian people lived. They cooked their food and prepared their fishing apparatus nearer the water. The area opened by the team from Victoria was, by definition, a 'midden'. It was where the people dumped their shells and animal bones during preparation of food and after eating.

As to the speculation on when the first people lived there, Mr. Sendy told me that evidence turned up in his two digs indicates only about 1,000 years of habitation. However, he again speculated that there could be evidence of earlier habitation farther back from the shore.

All this information is based solely on observation and should not in any way be construed as the work of an expert. However, it's my belief that the entire level area of Departure Bay covers a wealth of pre-history. I'd be interested to see the museum arrange with residents to conduct further digs in the area taken in by their back yards.

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#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

##### A.S.B.C. DIARY

- April 8 - Monthly meeting at Museum Auditorium, 8 p.m.  
 Speaker: Dr. Alfred Siemens, Professor of Geography, U.B.C.  
 Subject: Prehistoric ridged fields along the Candelaria River at Campeche, Mexico (Lowland Mayan)
- May 13 - Monthly meeting  
 Speaker: Miss Gay Calvert, Archaeologist at Centennial Museum  
 Subject: St. Mungo Cannery Site

April 26 - Guided tour of important archaeological sites in Tsawwassen, Beach Grove and Point Roberts area. Society founder member and local resident, Dick Brunt, will repeat an earlier highly successful tour starting in members' cars at 10:00 a.m. at the Tsawwassen Safeway. Estimated two to three hours' duration. No charge. Bring your lunch if you wish to make a day of it.

### AT THE MUSEUM

#### Civilization, a BBC-TV Series

A unique series of thirteen films with narration by Kenneth Clark (Lord Clark of Saltwood) is being made available to the Vancouver Museums Association as a public service by White Spot Limited. These magnificent colour films span the ideas and events comprising Western civilization from the collapse of Rome to the present day. Films will be shown in the Centennial Auditorium on Saturdays at 2 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Thursdays at 8 p.m., commencing Saturday, April 18 and running to Sunday, May 17. Admission is free.

A complete schedule of film titles and dates is available at the Museum and information may be obtained from the Vancouver Museums Association office, 736-4431, Local 55. For those wishing to be sure of seeing a specific performance, tickets for that day's showing may be picked up at the Museum information desk on the day of the performance from 12 noon.

#### Other Films

May 22 and 23	8 p.m. in the Museum Auditorium
	Desert People (documentary on Australia's stone-age aborigines)
	Admission: Adults 50¢
	Children 25¢

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#### EXCAVATIONS IN BRITAIN - 1970

Anyone interested in training and general interest excavations taking place in Britain during the coming summer may obtain full information by phoning Gladys Groves at 631-1456. The brochure on hand is too lengthy to reproduce here but copies can be sent on request. Complete details are given as to times, fees, accommodation, etc.

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The Archaeological Society membership now numbers 135.

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## Magazines of Interest to Members of the Society

Compiled by Sharon Russell

While there is no longer one journal or magazine devoted to archaeology in B. C., there are a number, both scholarly and popular, which sometimes contain articles of interest to amateur archaeologists. The following is a list of some of them. If society members know of others, perhaps they would like to submit them for inclusion in further newsletters. Vancouver Public Library subscribes to many of these magazines.

Syesis. This is a very scholarly scientific publication, put out by the B. C. Provincial Museum. As yet there has been only one issue, comprising vol. 1, pts. 1 and 2, though it is intended that the journal should be biannual or quarterly. The first issue (Dec. 1968) contained two articles of interest:

Stryd, A.H., and J. Baker. "Salvage excavations at Lillooet, British Columbia," pp. 47-56. A well-illustrated description of the excavation of a burial site.

Mitchell, D.H. "Excavations at two trench embankments in the Gulf of Georgia region," pp. 29-46. Results of preliminary excavations at two trench embankment sites. Illustrated, with references.

B. C. Studies. Another scholarly publication, primarily historical, containing articles and reviews. It began in 1963 and comes out in three issues a year. Each issue contains a bibliography of B.C. Of the three issues so far published, one has contained an article of archaeological interest:

Borden, Charles E. "The Skagit River atlatl: a reappraisal," no. 1, winter 1968-69, pp. 13-19. An illustrated discussion of a wooden artifact dredged from the Skagit River some years ago.

The Beaver. A magazine of such infinite variety that it must please everyone sooner or later. Many articles could be of interest to members of the society, and are at least peripheral to archaeology. Two in the last two years are worth noting:

Sanger, David. "7,000 years prehistory in British Columbia," Spring, 1968, pp. 34-40. A well-illustrated report on excavations in the Lytton-Lillooet area, by National Museum archaeologist well known in B.C.

Hooper, Jacqueline. "Artists in Haida-Gwai," Autumn, 1969, pp. 42-46. A short, illustrated article about the visit of writer-photographer Anthony Carter and his artist wife to the Queen Charlotte Islands.

(Subscription to The Beaver is \$3.00 a year and good value.)

Vancouver Life (Western Homes and Living). Has had several articles in the last year on Indian crafts or archaeology:

February, 1969 - on Indian weaving.

June, 1969 - on Indian masks.

September 1969 - John Corner on Indian pictographs.

March, 1970 - Frank Appleton on the Salish basket weavers.

Other magazines worth watching are:

Canadian Geographical Journal

B. C. Outdoors

North and B. C. Motorist and even Beautiful B. C. from time to time - and, of course, the A. S. of B. C. Newsletter...

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