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N. Russell
Editor

THE MIDDEN

PUBLICATION OF THE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Grandma

Produced by the Publications Committee every two months. +++Contributions --to be received by February 1st for the next issue-- should be addressed to the chairman: Miss Gladys Groves, 504-2005 Pendrell, Vancouver 5, B.C.

THE BARBED POINT

(An occasional and unofficial editorial)

MIDDEN --your Newsletter's new name-- at least has a good pedigree. The word is of considerable antiquity, and Scandinavian origin.

But to Society members it has a more familiar ring. The shell middens of our west coast are very typical of B.C. archaeology, and to the dirt archaeologists are a real symbol of what the society represents.

Jokingly we may call them garbage heaps, but, like middens the world over, they comprise layer upon layer of rich cultural deposits...the jumbled jigsaw puzzle of history...almost the only untapped source for future understanding of the past.

In its simplest sense they contain a wealth of treasures for museums as yet undreamed of: when properly excavated and interpreted their contents will fill, perhaps, a Marpole Museum of Man or an Alberni Anthropological Museum, or the City of Whonnock Diorama of History...

But in a subtler sense they also represent the Society's greatest challenge. Middens are the target of the vulgar pothunter, the wretched treasure-seeker hell-bent on destroying our history. So they are the things most needing our protection, and it has to be one of the Society's major roles to seek out, record, and protect middens throughout the province.

In fact, some considerable thought went into choosing this name, though at first it may seem derisory. The executive met in solemn debate on at least three occasions. And in case you don't believe it, here are some of the serious and not-so-serious suggestions put forward before *The MIDDEN* won by an overwhelming vote: *The Pit Report*, *The Keekwillie*, *The Katz Spaul* (say it fast!), *Strata Data*, *The Artifact*, *Detritus*, *The Level Bag* (there was a long pause after that), *The Cultural Layer* (and all that), *Want Adze* (boo, hiss). But *The MIDDEN* covers all of them!

ANOTHER "POINT"

The headlines said "Museum move stirs storm" and "Museum boss full of ideas". And scuttlebutt suggested that the recent appointment of Helmut Wanner of Fort Worth Museum, Texas, as Vancouver Museum's new director had really stirred up a storm.

It remains to be seen whether the sweeping changes implied by his reported "clean sweep" plans will really happen. But many people would appreciate some gentle changes, particularly in increasing the numbers of objects on exhibition. And there is desperate need for an improvement in the storage facilities. Only Dr. Borden, at U.B.C., is worse off for space --he is now reported to have moved his entire laboratory into the boiler room.

LAST CHANCE

This may be your last MIDDEN, if you have not renewed your ASBC membership for season starting 1st September 1970. Last chance, as overdues will be chopped from the mailing list forthwith.

Address for dues:

Treasurer,
George Archer,
3162 Astor Drive,
Burnaby 2.

Membership rates:

Single: \$5
Family: \$8
Student: \$2

ATTENTION, TIMBUCTU

Out-of-towners can now subscribe to The MIDDEN without being ASBC members. Address enquiries to the Treasurer, George Archer.

SUPER CHRISTMAS IDEA!

Give a MIDDEN for Christmas. Call George Archer, treasurer (939-3185) for details of ASBC membership, or send him a cheque made out to ASBC now.

"FOCUS ON VANCOUVER"

Watch for a new periodical of this name, produced by Elizabeth Walker, of Vancouver Public Library's North-West Collection.

INDIAN "OBJET" SOLD IN LONDON

The National Museum in Ottawa has just acquired a new item to add to its West Coast Indian display - a whalebone "war club". The weapon was purchased at a Sotheby's auction in London, England, for about \$1,000.

MIDDEN'S FAME SPREADS

Among recent requests for a subscription to The MIDDEN was one from a high school in Inuvik. But so far no Vancouver schools have applied!

ENTRIES FOR YOUR NEW DIARY

- Jan. 7/14/21/28: Four Thursday evening (8.p.m.) lectures at the Centennial Museum on "Early Sailings to the North-West Coast." Reduced admission charge to card-carrying ASBC members.
- Jan. 8/15/22/29: Four Friday evening talks on "Native food uses", Centennial Museum, 8.p.m.
- Jan. 13: Dr. C. Borden guest speaker at ASBC meeting, Centennial Museum 8.p.m.
- Feb. 10: Films on stone tools at ASBC meeting, Museum 8.p.m., with flint-knapping demonstration by Paul Sneed.
- Feb. 23: ASBC members invited to Archaeological Society of America meeting, with Dr. C.W.J. Eliot and Dr. J. Russel reporting on their joint dig in Turkey.
- Feb: Every Saturday morning: A series on "The Art of Knot-tying", in the Maritime Museum.
- Feb. and March, every Thursday night: Dr. Wilson Duff will give eight lectures on "The Haida" in Centennial Museum, 8.p.m.

OLIVER WELLS

The recent death of Oliver Nelson Wells will be much regretted. Member of a pioneer Fraser Valley family, Mr. Wells, 63, died in a highway accident while visiting Scotland recently.

He was well known as a historian, anthropologist, farmer and a conservationist. He and his brothers ran the old Edenbank Farm as a show place and wildlife refuge, and with his brother Casey he wrote a book about his grandfather and about the eastern valley. In 1967 he was named Chilliwack's Citizen of the Year.

A long-standing member of the Chilliwack Historical Society, he was on its executive when he died. He was particularly active in working with the Indians of the area, encouraging the rediscovery of their crafts and legends.

DID YOU MISS IT?

[In an effort to help members who may have missed relevant stories in the press. The MIDDEN will from time to time reprint abridged items. The following excellent article by Richard Simmins comes from the Province Spotlight magazine, 16 October. Only excerpts are included.]

In 1971, B.C. is celebrating yet another centennial--this time marking the anniversary of the province's entry into Confederation...

The provincial government has come out in favor of a medical research centre--a worthy project that could be realized out of general government, as opposed to centennial, revenues. Or the medical profession might make such a gift to the province itself, a most commendable contribution.

What is desperately needed either out of centennial funds or through grants from Victoria and Ottawa, is approximately \$3.5 million for a new Museum of Anthropology at the University of B.C.

Timing is important if one of the world's great anthropological collections is not to deteriorate further. Unless a major crash program is undertaken to alleviate what must be the most deplorable physical conditions of any significant museum anywhere, a precious collection will disintegrate...

[Mr. Simmins explains at length the virtues of the collection. He continues:] A great collection exists. The housing is such that the inevitable deterioration can almost be classified as institutional vandalism...

The responsibility, in my opinion, lies directly with the board of governors of the university, which has done nothing to assist the museum in the last 25 years.

The attitude is one of sympathetic indifference. The excuse is that academic needs, research facilities and classrooms come before this great collection.

The university has made no application to the provincial or federal governments so the blame cannot rest with government.

There is supposedly a master development plan for the campus. The university museum has no priority whatsoever. According to official sources, its needs do not exist...

Finally, the collections at UBC are irreplaceable and can never be assembled again. They are not the property, despite the University Act, of the board of governors. They are part of the heritage of the people of B.C.

It is in the national interest that they be preserved, displayed and made accessible to all.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

An editorial reprinted from the Museum Round-up, quarterly publication of the B.C. Museums Association.

We are being haunted again by the shortcomings of Antiquities Legislation...the problem of abuses within the limitations of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Protection Act. During November 1969, there was a mild flap at Kelowna when a Department of Highways crew working on private property near Winfield unearthed some Indian skeletons and artifacts. Kelowna Museum Custodian Ursula Surtees, after some difficulty and after the damage was done, was able to stop the work long enough until Provincial Museum personnel were able to rush to the site. In the meantime, some of the artifacts disappeared, presumably into lunchbuckets. However, in her inimitable fashion, Mrs. Surtees was able to make some inroads of her own with the Minister of Highways. Word has now gone out to Highways staff to immediately report the discovery of middens etc. to the Victoria Office.

But the real purpose of this Editorial is to bring to your attention another serious aspect of legislation. Recently a gentleman from New Westminster started circulating a 35-page mimeograph booklet "Collector's Guide to B.C. Indian Artifacts". A description of 160 sites for \$2 a copy. It's been done before, as we recall a similar pamphlet on Similkameen sites. And an old Okanagan mining town received recent publicity. What bothers us is first that there appears no legal way to stop such publicity, and second that there is never any mention of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Protection Act. Just "Come and Get it".

In our view there is considerable morality involved in the thin line of working within or without the Act. One of the biggest problems with the legislation is policing designated sites. There just aren't enough Royal Canadian Mounted Police to patrol the scattered areas. Moreover, all sites aren't officially designated. But surely, there should be some way of giving all such sites better protection than they now enjoy, without worsening the situation by permitting the publication and publicizing of such information as given in the above "Collector's Guide", which can do nothing less than invite collectors to the scene of the crime.

We believe that the whole matter of adequate and effective legislation and realistic enforcement of such legislation must be a direct concern of the British Columbia Museums Association, and that we must set personal and collective examples toward the necessary goals.

ANOTHER MISSING LINK FOUND?

Could the Katz village and petroglyph site, near Hope, be 5,000 years old? For details see Gordon Hanson's tentative findings, to be published in the next issue of The MIDDEN.

The Executive of the Archaeological Society
of B.C. wishes all members a very
Happy Christmas!

GOOD BOOKS, READ LATELY

B.C. Studies, Nos 6+7, Special Issue, Fall & Winter 1970, "Archaeology in British Columbia: New Discoveries." Ed. R.L. Carlson. \$4.00.

Those who were lucky enough to attend the UBC Extension lecture series on New Discoveries in B.C. Archaeology have probably wished many times since that the series was available in print for future reference. These lectures were particularly interesting as they covered so many recent excavations, some for the first time anywhere.

We now have such a publication, in an entire double issue of B.C. Studies, edited by Dr. R. Carlson who moderated the series. It includes papers based on all the lectures, with the exception of Dr. Carl Borden's which is published elsewhere. Dr. Borden has contributed instead a useful and interesting paper on the cultural history of the Fraser Delta. The papers cover archaeology in many areas of B.C. in which excavations took place in 1968 or 1969, including the St. Mungo Cannery dig, the Queen Charlotte Islands, Bella Coola and Mayne Island. Each one is a concise report on the dig and its preliminary findings. References are made where appropriate to other articles in the volume. There are copious illustrations including maps, charts and beautifully clear artifact drawings. There is also a useful cultural chronology of B.C., incorporating data from the papers, and a brief historical introduction by Dr. Carlson. Finally, K.R. Fladmark has compiled a full 25-page bibliography of B.C. archaeology, which is worth the price of the volume in itself.

This volume is of continuing interest to every member of the Archaeological Society whether or not they attended the original lectures, to read now, and to refer to many times in the future. The only possible source of regret is that the final panel discussion on the future of archaeology in B.C. could not be included, or at least a resume of it.

Pfeiffer, John E. The Emergence of Man. New York, Harper & Row, 1969. 476p. \$10.00

The Emergence of Man is a book about man's evolution and prehistory; but it is also much more. John Pfeiffer has written a highly informative, easily-read compendium on what is now known about our prehistoric ancestors, the main new techniques used to gain this knowledge, and how such knowledge may help modern man to understand himself.

In the process he covers, in well-organized chapters (each of which can be read on its own) man's primate origins and development up to the beginnings of agriculture. He devotes several chapters to discussing studies of baboons, chimpanzees and other animals in the wild, showing how the study of animal behaviour can throw light on the behaviour of early man and his ancestors. Another chapter deals with the lives of contemporary hunter-gatherers, particularly the Aborigines of Australia and the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert. He shows how the use of particular tools, of fire for different purposes, and of varying types of shelter all may help the prehistorian see old sites in a new light.

The section on experimental archaeology will fascinate any digger. It includes the fashioning and using of prehistoric tools and the seeding of artificial sites for the purpose of teaching or for testing methods of digging for different kinds of artifacts in different soils. In his final chapters, Pfeiffer discusses how the study of prehistory, anthropology and animal behaviour can contribute towards contemporary man's understanding of himself and his future. What we were has a lot to do with what we are and will become.

It all adds up to a fascinating account of the evolution of man. There is an extensive bibliography for the further reading which this book is sure to inspire.